

DIOCESE OF SAN DIEGO

BACKGROUND SCREENING PROCESS FOR VOLUNTEERS

In support of the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* and as required by our Diocesan Policy for Safe Environment, parishes and institutions in the Diocese of San Diego are required to perform background checks of all employees working in the parish and of all volunteers who have regular contact with minors.

Each pastor, working with parish leaders of programs and ministries that involve children or youth should identify those volunteers who have regular contact with minors and screen all current volunteers for a criminal records through VolunteerSelect. A list of suggested volunteer positions to be screened is attached. The process for screening volunteers is described below. Prospective volunteers should be screened prior to their commencement of service.

Employees and volunteers currently fingerprinted or otherwise screened for criminal records for other parish programs, such as a parish school, pre-school, or day-care program, need not be screened again through Choice Point's ScreenNow or Volunteer Select.

A Volunteer Background Check Disclosure and Authorization Form must be signed by each volunteer to be screened and returned to your designated individual to initiate the screening process. This separate authorization form for volunteers has been prepared to provide specific assurances that the report will not include any investigation of immigration status with the U.S. government services. All volunteers to be screened should be provided a copy of the Summary of Rights Under the Fair Credit Reporting Act, as well. Although the screening of volunteers will NOT include any credit check, the law in California requires that our criminal records search be called an "investigative consumer report" and that the summary of rights be provided to volunteers as well.

An individual account number and password for use with Choice Point's VolunteerSelect web site has been assigned for each parish to screen volunteers, and a memo confirming the account number and password information has been mailed to the pastor.

For each volunteer to be screened, designated ministry leaders of the parish should:

- ◆ Provide an information sheet and letter from the pastor regarding the screening. A Volunteer Background Check Disclosure and Authorization Form and a sample letter from pastors to volunteers are attached.
- ◆ Secure written authorization from the volunteer.

Pastors should also designate an individual to input the screening request that will:

- ◆ Enter the request for screening into the appropriate secure website: ScreenNow for employees, and VolunteerSelect for volunteers.

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- ◆ Notify the Office for Human Resources by email of the names of individuals who have checked the box on their authorization form and requested a copy of their background report.
- ◆ Retain signed authorization forms in confidential files at the parish.

The screening process for volunteers will include a pre-selected package that with the following background checks: Social Security Verification, National Criminal File, and California State Sex Offender Registry. A Background Screen Users Guide is attached that details information for the parish representative in the processing of screening requests. Reports from the screening of criminal files will only be received in the diocesan Office for Human Resources. Pastors will be personally notified if there is information about a criminal record that might disqualify an individual from volunteer service in the intended ministry. The Office for Human Resources will provide a copy of the report directly to each individual if one is requested.

Blank authorization forms, in English and Spanish are available at the diocesan web site: www.diocese-sdiego.org under Administration, Human Resources, Personnel Forms. Further assistance is available from Choice Point at telephone (800) 962-2091.

List of Attachments:

1. Examples of Volunteer Ministries subject to Background Screen
2. Volunteer Background Check Disclosure and Authorization Form
3. Sample letter from pastor to volunteers
4. Background Screen Users Guide