Diocese of Allentown
Secretariat for Youth Protection
Background Check Policy

Employee Requirements

The Diocese of Allentown requires that **all** employees successfully complete all required background checks, safe environment training, and acknowledgment of safe environment policies **prior** to beginning employment with the Diocese or any Diocesan entity. Employees include those performing their duties for compensation from parishes, schools, institutions, administrative offices, and any other Diocesan entity. All full-time and part-time employees, including those who are minors, must adhere to the background check requirements. Instructions for completing background checks will be provided in the onboarding packet by the Diocese of Allentown's Human Resources Office.

Every **five (5)** years, the Diocese of Allentown requires all employees to undergo additional background checks, Mandated Reporter Training, and Safe Environment Refresher Training.

The following background checks, training, and acknowledgment of safe environment policies must be successfully completed **prior** to the start of employment:

Background Checks Required for Employees:

- Diocese of Allentown Background Check Authorization Form
- Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Record Check (Pennsylvania Access to Criminal History or PATCH)
- Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Check
- Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Criminal Background Fingerprint Check (applicable only to employees who are at least eighteen (18) years of age)
- National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR) Clearance

Training Required for Employees:

- Protecting God's Children Safety Training (completed at the start of employment)
- Pennsylvania Mandated Reporter Training (only approved Department of Human Services Mandated Reporter Training certification will be accepted)
- Periodic Safe Environment Refresher Training (as directed by the Diocese of Allentown)

Policy Acknowledgments Required for Employees:

- Diocese of Allentown Code of Conduct
- Diocese of Allentown Sexual Abuse Policy
- Diocese of Allentown Social Media and Electronic Communications Policy
- Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Policy

Employment in Diocesan Schools:

Prior to hire, all applicants for teaching positions in a Diocesan school must pay for and provide, at their interview, an original Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Record Check, a Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance Certificate, a National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR) Verification Certificate (if available), and the Unique Enrollment Identification Number (UEID) provided by IDEMIA/ IdentoGo given at the time of their scanned FBI Fingerprint through the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). These documents must be dated and initialed by the Diocesan official reviewing them. The UEID number should be forwarded to the Diocese of Allentown's Safe Environment staff for the results to be pulled from the PA Safe Check verification system. If an applicant for employment in a Diocesan school does not have the NSOR Verification Certificate available at the time of the interview, the NSOR background check may be completed post-interview but must be completed prior to commencing employment.

Out-of-State Applicants:

Applicants for employment with the Diocese of Allentown or its related entities who reside outside of Pennsylvania, or have not resided in Pennsylvania for more than one year, must complete, in addition to Pennsylvania background checks, a TruView background check. The applicant will be required to complete the TruView authorization form and submit it to the Diocese of Allentown's Safe Environment staff to complete. TruView may take up to two weeks for an out-of-state background check to be completed. In addition to the other background check requirements, out-of-state applicants are prohibited from starting employment for the Diocese or any of its parishes, schools, or other entities prior to completion of the TruView background check.

Financial Services Employees:

The Diocese of Allentown requires that applicants for positions, where the duties of the position include the responsibility for management of or overseeing finances in parishes, schools, and other Diocesan institutions, must obtain a Credit Report prior to hire, subject to the requirements of the Fair Credit Reporting Act. The determination whether a Credit Report is required shall be in the sole discretion of the Diocese. The Diocese of Allentown's Human Resources Office will provide the TruView Credit Report Authorization Form to applicants for

such positions. TruView reports may take up to two weeks after submission of the authorization form. Applicants for these financial services positions are prohibited from starting employment for the Diocese or any of its parishes, schools, or other entities prior to completion of the TruView credit report check.

Volunteer Requirements

Individuals, even minors, who volunteer in/at: (1) schools, (2) CYO leagues/practices, (3) youth ministries, (4) ministries serving Vulnerable Adults, and (5) places where, in the reasonable belief of the Diocese, it is likely that the volunteer will have direct contact with minors and/or Vulnerable Adults must successfully complete background checks, safe environment training, and acknowledgment of safe environment policies **prior** to beginning their volunteer service. This requirement means that all individuals who volunteer at a school or at CYO and/or youth ministry events must have successfully completed background checks, training and acknowledgement of policies, regardless of the capacity of their volunteer role. By way of example only, this means that individuals who volunteer in a snack stand at a play or youth sports game must have their background checks. Every **five (5)** years, the Diocese of Allentown requires these volunteers to undergo additional background checks, Mandated Reporter Training, and Safe Environment Refresher Training.

Background Checks Required for Volunteers

- Diocese of Allentown Background Check Authorization Form
- Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Record Check (Pennsylvania Access to Criminal History or PATCH)
- Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Check
- Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Criminal Background Fingerprint Check (applicable only to volunteers who are at least eighteen (18) years of age
- National Sex Offender Registry Clearance (NSOR)

Training Required for Volunteers:

- Protecting God's Children Safety Training (completed at the start of service)
- Pennsylvania Mandated Reporter Training (only approved Department of Human Services Mandated Reporter Training certification will be accepted)
- Diocese of Allentown Safe Environment Refresher Training (as required by the Diocese of Allentown)

Policy Acknowledgments Required for Volunteers:

- Diocese of Allentown Code of Conduct
- Diocese of Allentown Sexual Abuse Policy
- Diocese of Allentown Social Media and Electronic Communications Policy
- Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law Policy

Definition of a Vulnerable Adult:

Vulnerable Adults are those individuals over the age of eighteen (18) who, due to incapacity, mental or physical illness, advanced age, or other factors, are unable to care for themselves, make informed decisions, or seek help independently.

Other Volunteers:

Volunteers who are not required to undergo background checks under the prior section of this policy are, however, required to complete a Volunteer Registration Form and adhere to all Diocese of Allentown policies. Minor volunteers under the age of eighteen (18) must have written parental permission to volunteer for the specific volunteer role/position in which they serve. The signed parental permission form shall be maintained by the Local Safe Environment Coordinator. **This permission must be renewed each academic year.**

These Diocesan volunteers must complete the following requirements prior to performing any volunteer services:

Training Requirements:

- Protecting God's Children Safety Training (minor volunteers attending Diocese of Allentown Schools meet this requirement by taking the Circle of Grace training during the academic year).
- Diocese of Allentown Safe Environment Refresher Training (as required by the Diocese of Allentown)

Required Policy Acknowledgments:

- Diocese of Allentown Code of Conduct
- Diocese of Allentown Sexual Abuse Policy
- Diocese of Allentown Social Media and Electronic Communications Policy
- Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law Policy

Effect of Criminal Convictions and Guilty or No-Contest Pleas on Applications for Employment and Requests to Volunteer for the Diocese of Allentown Parishes, Schools, Institutions, and Ministries

If an applicant for employment or individual seeking to volunteer has been convicted of, pleads guilty to, pleads no contest to, or agrees to an accelerated rehabilitative disposition (ARD) for any crime (excluding, however, minor motor vehicle violations where one's license is not suspended or revoked), the Diocese will conduct an individualized assessment to determine if the judicial outcome is related to the applicant's suitability for employment for the specific job sought, or to the individual's suitability for the specific volunteer position. Factors that will be considered in this individualized assessment include, but are not limited to: (1) the number of offenses for which the individual was convicted or pled; (2) the severity of the offense(s); (3) the individual's age at the time of the judicial outcome; (4) the length of time that has elapsed since the judicial outcome(s); (5) the length and consistency of the individual's employment history before and after the judicial outcome(s); (6) the individual's rehabilitative efforts following the judicial outcome(s); and (7) any other relevant factors. The decision regarding an applicant's suitability for employment or volunteer service will be made by the Diocese of Allentown in its sole discretion and will be final.

If an employee or volunteer has been convicted of, pleads guilty to, or pleads no contest to any crime at any time while an employee or volunteer of the Diocese, the employee or volunteer, as the case may be, must promptly notify the Local Safe Environment Coordinator and the Diocese of Allentown Human Resources Office (employees) or the Secretary for Catholic Health, Human Services and Youth Protection (volunteers) of same. The Diocese will then conduct an individual assessment to determine if the judicial outcome is related to the individual's or specific volunteer position. Factors that will be considered in this individualized assessment include, but are not limited to: (1) the number of offenses for which the individual was convicted or pled; (2) the severity of the offense(s); (3) the individual's age at the time of the judicial outcome; (4) the length and consistency of the individual's employment history before and after the judicial outcome(s); and (6) any other relevant factors. The decision regarding an applicant's continued suitability for employment or volunteer service will be made by the Diocese of Allentown in its sole discretion and will be final.

Questions regarding this Policy or any of its requirements should be directed to the Secretariat for Youth Protection's Safe Environment Office at 610-871-5200, ext. 2204.