

The Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana

Background Checks

Certain persons are required to have background checks in order to serve as a volunteer for ministries or activities with children or youth or as a condition of their employment. More information about requirements for serving in ministries and activities with children and youth is found in Safeguarding God's Children: Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse.

I. In the Diocese of Louisiana the following apply to background checks:

A. Clergy

As **part of the ordination process and upon transfer to the Diocese of Louisiana** a background check through Oxford Documents or a service providing a comparable level of services is required. The search will include searches of criminal records, sex offender registries, and department of motor vehicle searches for each state in which the person has lived during the past seven (7) years, as well as reference checks. This search will be initiated by the Diocese and the results of the search will be maintained in secure confidential Diocesan files. This search should be renewed every six (6) years.

B. Youth Directors and High Level Leaders for Children or Youth Ministries

Youth Directors and other persons who serve regularly in a leadership capacity with children or youth ministries must have a background check through Oxford Documents or a service providing a comparable level of services. The search will include searches of criminal records, sex offender registries, and department of motor vehicle searches for each state in which the person has lived during the past seven (7) years, as well as reference checks. This search will be initiated by the Diocese and the results of the search will be maintained in secure confidential Diocesan files. This search should be renewed every six (6) years.

C. All Paid or Volunteer Staff Working Regularly with Children or Youth

All paid or volunteer staff, other than those described in A or B above, who work regularly with children or youth must have a "Confidence Package" background check plus a department of motor vehicles check from Praesidium, Inc. or an equivalent background check approved by the Safe Church Coordinator in consultation with persons knowledgeable about the legal and practical issues of background checks. If the applicant has lived outside Louisiana anytime during the past seven (7) years a search of the criminal records, sex offender registry and department of motor vehicles records must be performed for each state in which the applicant has resided during that time. The search will be initiated by the rector or priest-in-charge, or his/her designee, at the church at which the applicant works or volunteers. A copy of the results of the background

check must be kept in the applicant's secure confidential file. This search should be renewed every six (6) years.

D. Other Paid or Volunteer Staff, Including All Who Assist with Children or Youth More Than Four Times Per Year, All Who Accompany Children or Youth on Overnights, VBS and Sunday School Volunteers, Children's Chapel Volunteers, Nursery Workers

All other paid or volunteer staff, other than those described in A, B or C above, must have a "Confidence Package" background check, and for those who may be providing transportation, a department of motor vehicles check, by Praesidium, Inc. or an equivalent background check approved by the Safe Church Coordinator in consultation with persons knowledgeable about the legal and practical issues of background checks. If the applicant has lived outside Louisiana anytime during the past seven (7) years a search of the criminal records, sex offender registry and, for those who may be providing transportation, department of motor vehicles records must be performed for each state in which the applicant has resided during that time. The search will be initiated by the rector or priest-in-charge, or his/her designee, at the church at which the applicant works. A copy of the results of the background check must be kept in the applicant's secure confidential file. This search should be renewed every six (6) years.

E. Schools

Schools shall follow the requirements set forth by appropriate licensing and accrediting institutions or agencies. The current standard for background checks for school employees is the Louisiana State Police "Fingerprint" Background Check.

F. More Thorough Check of Louisiana Records

If a more comprehensive check of Louisiana records is desired, a background check through the Louisiana State Police Internet Background Check system may be used. This background check should be initiated by the Diocesan Safe Church Coordinator.

II. Updated Background Checks

Background checks must be updated every **six (6) years** through the Praesidium, Inc. "Confidence Package" background check, including a department of motor vehicles check for those for whom it is required, or an equivalent background check approved by the Safe Church Coordinator in consultation with persons knowledgeable about the legal and practical issues of background checks. Oxford Documents checks for clergy, youth directors and high level leaders for children or youth ministries should also be renewed every six (6) years.

III. Leaving Louisiana and Returning

If a person who is required to have a background check moves out of state and then returns to Louisiana, that person must have a new background check performed before engaging in any employment or service as a volunteer for which a background check is required.

IV. Files and Records

Background checks and related documents should be maintained indefinitely in secure confidential files by the Diocese or congregation, as appropriate.

V. Information on approved background check providers: (fees are as of May 2016)

Oxford Documents

- All requests to Oxford Documents will be made through the Diocese

www.oxforddoc.com

Praesidium Inc.

- The Confidence Package (\$12) is the basic search for most categories
- A \$4.50 department of motor vehicles search is necessary for certain categories
- Searches through Praesidium are typically initiated by the rector or rector's designee

www.praesidiuminc.com

800-743-6354

Louisiana State Police Internet Background Checks

- These searches are typically done as a follow up if more information from Louisiana records is needed.
- The fee is \$26.
- These searches will typically be requested by the Diocesan Safe Church Coordinator

<https://ibc.dps.louisiana.gov/default.aspx>

225-925-6096

Louisiana State Police "Fingerprint" Background Checks

- Bureau of Criminal Identification and Information
- This is the standard search in Louisiana for school employees (mandated for public schools)
- Fingerprints must be obtained at local law enforcement offices
- Fee: \$42 for background check and \$10 for fingerprinting

Some information including an application form can be found at

<http://www.lsp.org/technical.html>

225-925-6096

Free searches, which do not fulfill the Diocesan Safeguarding certification requirements, are available at:

Louisiana Sex Offender Registry
<http://www.lsp.org/socpr/default.html>
Free online searches

National Sex Offender Registry
<https://www.nsopw.gov/en>
Free online searches

Approved by the Executive Board May 14, 2016