



# ARCHDIOCESE OF PORTLAND

## IN OREGON

### **Background Check Policies and Procedures**

The following policies and procedures are effective immediately at all locations for which the Archdiocese oversees background checks. If you have not already done so, please discontinue using any previous hardcopy background check applications.

#### **I. BACKGROUND CHECK PROCESS**

- A. All background checks will be processed using online applications. Forms will be available in English and Spanish languages. See attachment for the security information.
- B. All employees must be background checked and provide a Social Security number to process the background check.
- C. All volunteers must provide a Social Security number to process a background check. In certain circumstances an exception may be made following the guidelines set forth below in Section III. C.
- D. Any person providing false information on a background check application may have employment or volunteer service denied.
- E. The parish/school background check administrator will log on to Praesidium, Inc. to order a background check. Please refer to the *Background Check Administrator's Manual* sent by Praesidium for details on ordering background checks. The administrator must include the following information:
  1. Applicant's first and last name
  2. Whether the background check will be for an employee or volunteer
  3. Email address of the applicant (if the applicant does not have an email address a parish or school email address can be used.)
  4. Whether the applicant needs the application in English or Spanish
- F. The applicant will receive an email from *BackgroundCheck@Praesidiuminc.com* providing a link to complete the background check application online. The applicant will have 7 calendar days to respond to the email before the link/request expires. The applicant may complete the online background check application from certain electronic devices (tablets and mobile phones).

- G. When the applicant's background check has been completed the parish/school administrator will receive an email indicating the status of the background check: "cleared" or "pending." If the applicant's background check is unclear or reveals a criminal history, the Archdiocesan Child Protection Officer will be notified and the applicant will be given an opportunity to respond to the results of the background check. The parish/school will be notified when the "pending" status has been resolved to "cleared" or "ineligible."

## II. RELATED BACKGROUND CHECK MATTERS

- A. Armatus accounts. During a transitional period, the names of applicants with cleared background checks will be uploaded to Armatus on a weekly basis. Eventually, background check results will be sent immediately to Armatus electronically and the new account will be set up or an existing account updated.
- B. Background check cards will no longer be issued for volunteers. For those employees and volunteers who work in more than one location, the Armatus administrator can review any employee or volunteer record in Armatus and can make a copy of the record for their use. (Armatus Administrative Module, User test results)
- C. Volunteer background checks will continue to be current for 3 years. The parish/school administrator will receive an email at 36 months notifying the location that the background check is expiring. This reminder will only be generated for those whose background checks have been run by Praesidium (i.e., after [date]). Locations will need to continue to check the expiration dates of background checks run prior to the change to Praesidium.

**Reminder:** All background checks that were due to expire between May 1, 2014 and April 30, 2015 have a one year extension on the expiration of background check.

- D. Employee background checks also will expire every 3 years. In order to assist parishes and schools with this change in policy all background checks run on employees more than 3 years ago will need to be renewed by September 30, 2016. This will allow locations to spread the cost of renewing background checks on existing employees over a 2 year period.
- E. Cost of a background check will be \$15.00 per person.

## III. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

- A. Individuals who do not have a Social Security number may volunteer in many ministries in the parish or school that do not require a background check. Service in any activity involving direct personal contact with minors requires a background check.

- B. Background checks require an applicant to supply his/her Social Security number. An applicant with a Social Security number who declines to provide it is ineligible for service in an activity involving direct personal contact with minors.**
- C. In exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the pastor (or in the case of an Archdiocesan high school, the President/Principal), a volunteer applicant who does not have a Social Security number may be background checked without a Social Security number, but only in accordance with the guidelines set forth in 1 through 6 below.
1. The pastor/principal (or designee) preliminarily approves the applicant as a volunteer with minors. (This may include the pastor/principal (or designee) interviewing the person before granting approval.)
  2. The applicant must have resided in the United States for at least 5 years. The applicant must present proof of the 5 year residence (e.g., driver's license or ID card, payroll stubs, utility bills for the pertinent US address(es), student ID card etc.).
  3. Parishes/schools wishing to use a person who has been in the United States less than 5 years as a volunteer involved with minors must complete an international background check. Note: International background checks typically cost at least \$100.00 each and may take several months to complete.
  4. The applicant must submit three written references (each on the Volunteer Reference form) from persons in the local community who know the applicant and who have observed the applicant's interactions with minors. The references cannot be from family members. The parish/school may follow up with a person providing a reference or ask the applicant for additional references.
  5. After the above preliminary steps (1 through 4) have been completed, the applicant must complete the online background check application. The result of the background check will be reported to the location as "cleared," "pending" or "ineligible," as explained above in Section I above.
  6. Since a background check without a Social Security number may limit a search for criminal history, a volunteer with a limited background check (i.e., without a Social Security number) must always work in the physical presence of another individual who has completed a full background check whenever working directly with minors.