

Diocese of Crookston Safe Environment Certification Manual

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Safe Environment Certification Manual

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Section 1

Introduction

Why Do We Need Safe Environment Certification?

The Diocese of Crookston and its parishes have an obligation to create a safe environment for the children and vulnerable adults who are given into our care.

One vital component of this safe environment is background checks. Background checks are done to ensure that anyone who comes into contact with a child or vulnerable adult in our care does not have a history of criminal offenses that may make them a danger. Background checks are also done on employees to search for evidence of a criminal history that may adversely affect their work for the parish/school/diocese.

The second vital component of this safe environment is training. The diocese considers all of its employees and volunteers to be mandated reporters; therefore we train these people to prevent, identify, and report abuse.

Safe Environment Certification Manual

The purpose of this manual is to help parishes comply with the Safe Environment Certification requirement of the Safe Environment Policy. The manual does this in the following ways:

- Provides additional clarification of the standards presented in the Safe Environment Policy.
- Provides additional clarification of the positions requiring Safe Environment Certification.
- Details the types of background checks that will be done to comply with the Safe Environment Policy and state law.
- Provides a set of instructions detailing how the background checks will be performed.

Parish Safe Environment Coordinator

The Safe Environment Coordinator is the person at the parish level who is responsible for ensuring that all positions requiring Safe Environment Certification are filled by persons that are certified. This includes the following tasks:

- With the pastor's assistance, identifying all positions in the parish that require Safe Environment Certification.
- Ensuring that anyone working in a position requiring Safe Environment Certification has a current Safe Environment Certificate. In order to have a current Certificate, the person must have a valid background check and must have completed all required Safe Environment training.
- Maintaining files on all employees, volunteers, and independent contractors who have Safe Environment certification.

- Ensuring the confidentiality of all information gathered during the Certification process.

Notes on Terms

When used in this manual, the terms “**diocesan**”, “**diocesan clergy**”, “**diocesan personnel**”, “**diocesan volunteers**”, “**parish**”, “**parish personnel**”, “**parish volunteer**”, and “**minor**” are used in accordance with the definitions given for these terms in the Safe Environment Policy.

When used in this manual, the term “**background check**” refers to the entire background check package performed on a person. For employees, this includes the criminal background check, employment background check, and BCA check (if required). For volunteers and independent contractors, this includes the criminal background check.

Section 2

Safe Environment Certification

Anyone wishing to perform one of the duties outlined in Section 3 of this manual must have **Safe Environment Certification (SE Certification)**, for short). In order to receive Certification, a person must meet two requirements:

- The person must have a current **background check** through the Diocese. Section 4 of this manual discusses the background check requirement.
- The person must complete all applicable **Safe Environment Training**. Because the Safe Environment Training requirement will vary from year to year, it will not be detailed in this manual. For the most current Safe Environment Training requirements, visit the Safe Environment web site at www.crookston.org/sep.

Safe Environment Certificate

Once a person has completed the background check and the Safe Environment training, they will be considered Safe Environment Certified. To acknowledge this, a Safe Environment Certificate will be issued. This Certificate verifies that the person has completed all Safe Environment requirements in effect as of the date on the Certificate. **No person will be allowed to work in a position requiring Safe Environment Certification unless the parish, parish school, or diocese has a valid Safe Environment Certificate for that person.**

Whenever the parish, parish school, or diocese has a new person apply for a position requiring Safe Environment Certification, the institution should first ask that person if he/she has a current Safe Environment Certificate. If the person can provide a current Certificate, the institution should make a copy of the Certificate and put it in the person's file; no additional steps are needed at this time [unless the person is a new employee; in this case, an Employment Background Check and a BCA Check (if it is a location with a school) are still required]. If the person does not have a current Certificate, then the institution will need to run the person through the background check and Safe Environment Training procedures.

A Safe Environment Certificate is valid for one year from the date of issuance. In order to receive a new certificate, the person must complete any new Safe Environment Training requirements. A new background check will also be required if it has been more than 5 years since the person's last background check.

Conditional Certification of Employees

As stated above, no person will be allowed to work in a position requiring Safe Environment Certification unless the parish, parish school, or diocese has a valid Safe Environment Certificate for that person. This can be a problem for new employees, however, because they have different background check requirements than volunteers

and independent contractors. New employees are required to have an employment background check and a BCA check (if they work at a parish with a school) in addition to the criminal background check that is done on volunteers and independent contractors. These two checks can take months to complete. To account for this, an exception is made for employees. Once an employee has completed the criminal background check and the Safe Environment training, that employee is considered to be **conditionally cleared** and can begin working for the parish. Once the reports from the other two checks are received, a certificate will then be issued.

Section 3

Positions Requiring Safe Environment Certification

The Safe Environment Policy of the Diocese of Crookston details a number of background check and training requirements that must be met for certain positions in the Diocese. These background check and training requirements are referred to as “**Safe Environment Certification**” (or “**SE Certification**”, for short.) **Anyone who wishes to work in a position that requires SE certification must complete the Certification requirements; refusal to do so prohibits the person from working in that position.**

There are three categories of positions requiring SE certification: employees, volunteers, and independent contractors. This section provides a definition of each category. For additional guidance, refer to the Suggested List of Positions That Require SE Certification in Appendix A. Note that this is only a suggested list; it is not meant to be all-inclusive or to cover all situations that may occur at a parish, parish school, or diocese. **Remember that the goal is require SE certification for anyone who may potentially have unmonitored access to children and vulnerable adults.**

Please note that the Safe Environment Policy gives the Vicar General/Moderator of the Curia the authority to require SE certification on additional diocesan or parish personnel or volunteers.

Employees

Employees: All employees in a parish, parish school, or diocesan institution must have SE certification. This is true even if the person does not work with minors or vulnerable adults.

Substitutes: Substitute employees (such as substitute teachers) are treated as employees for purposes of the Safe Environment Policy and therefore must have SE certification.

Clergy: All clergy (priests and deacons) ministering in the Diocese of Crookston are treated as employees for purposes of SE certification. This includes clergy applying for incardination into the Diocese. Visiting clergy are required to have SE certification, but they are treated as independent contractors and not as employees.

Seminarians/Deaconate Program Candidates: All persons who apply for entrance into the seminary or permanent diaconate program are treated as employees for purposes of SE certification.

Religious Order Workers: All religious order members (brothers and sisters) working for a parish, parish school, or diocesan institution are treated as employees for purposes of SE certification.

Volunteers

Volunteers Working Directly with Minors: All persons who wish to volunteer in a position involving contact with minors must have SE certification.

Volunteers with Indirect Access to Minors: SE certification is required for all persons who wish to volunteer in a position that does not serve minors directly but which may include unmonitored access to minors. In other words, if there is any chance that a volunteer may have unmonitored access to minors in a parish, parish school, or diocesan setting, the person must have SE certification.

Volunteers Working With Elderly and Vulnerable Adults: SE certification is required for all persons who wish to volunteer in a position that includes ministry to the elderly and vulnerable adults.

Exception-Volunteers Who Are Minors: SE certification is not required for any volunteer who is under 18 years of age. However, ***volunteers who are minors cannot be given unmonitored access to other minors in a parish, parish school, or diocesan setting***; any access these minors have to other minors must be directly supervised by a responsible adult (one who has SE certification). That means the adult must be in the same room with the minor volunteer when he/she is around other minors.

Special Note on Visitors: A visitor is someone who comes to the parish, parish school, or diocese to attend an event. Examples include parents attending a school/RE event or having lunch with their child at school. A visitor is not required to have SE certification. To be classified as a visitor, the person must have ***no responsibility or authority***, either explicit or implicit. That means the visitor *cannot* help out in any way or be responsible for the children. The visitor must also *never* be left alone with any child but their own. If this person is helping out with an event or is in any way responsible for children, then that person is a volunteer, not a visitor, and must follow the guidelines for volunteers stated above.

Independent Contractors

Independent Contractors: Independent contractors are people who work for a firm that the parish or diocese has contracted with. This can include building contractors, bus driving companies, and cleaning companies. Any independent contractor who is working in a position involving contact with minors must have SE certification. SE certification is also required for all independent contractors who may potentially have unmonitored access to minors in a parish, parish school, or diocesan setting. SE certification is also required for all independent contractors who will be working with the elderly and disabled on behalf of the parish, parish school, or diocese.

Student Teachers: Student teachers are treated as independent contractors and must have SE certification.

Public School Employees: On occasion, public school employees will come into contact with children during the parish school day. Examples include public school employees who give band lessons to the students or provide special education services. If you have a situation where this occurs, contact the Office

of Safe Environment at the Diocese of Crookston to determine if SE certification is required

Visiting Clergy: Visiting clergy are treated as independent contractors and must have SE certification.

Section 4

Background Checks

The diocesan office responsible for background checks is the Office of Safe Environment. All questions concerning background check policies and procedures should be directed to this office.

Components of Background Check

The term “**background check**” refers to the entire background check package performed on a person. For employees, this includes the criminal background check, employment background check, and BCA check (if required). For volunteers and independent contractors, this includes the criminal background check. These components are described below.

Criminal Background Check: The diocese has contracted with ChoicePoint to perform criminal background checks. The criminal background check has three components:

- ChoicePoint National Criminal File: This check searches the following databases: Department of Corrections, Prison, Parole & Release Files; Administrative Office of Courts; Department of Public Safety (DPS); ChoicePoint Proprietary Criminal Record Data; Federal Fugitive File and Government Watch Lists; and Sex and Violent Offender Register/Predator Records.
- County Courthouse Check: The National Criminal File (NCF) is built through updates from the various county courthouses. Any offenses that have occurred since the county last sent an update would not be in the National Criminal File. For this reason, the NCF check is supplemented with a county courthouse check for every county the applicant has lived in within the past year.
- Social Security Number Verification: Because some of the databases searched by ChoicePoint are referenced by Social Security Number, a Social Security Number Verification is done to verify that the Social Security Number given by the person actually belongs to that person.

Employment Background Check: In addition to the criminal background check, the Safe Environment Policy also requires an employment background check on all new employees. This check involves sending a short questionnaire to the employee’s former or other current employer. If the employee has been unemployed or self-employed for more than three years prior to starting employment, then this check is not necessary. The employee still needs to complete the Employment Background Check form however; in the blank labeled “Name of Previous/Other Current Employer”, the person should write “N/A”, then sign and date the form in the appropriate places.

BCA Check: All employees at parishes with schools must have a background check through the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, pursuant to Minn. Stat.

§123B.03. (Note that this requirement applies to all employees at parishes with schools, whether the employee is working for the school or not.) There are two exceptions to this statute.

- If you hire a teacher who was initially licensed within the past twelve months, you are not required to do a BCA check on this individual. This does not apply to license renewals, only the initial licensure.
- If you hire an employee that had a BCA check done through another school within the past twelve months, you are not required to do another BCA check if you can obtain the results of that prior check and have no reason to believe that circumstances have changed.

Overview of Background Check Procedures

The background checks are performed at the parish level, and the results are processed at the diocesan level.

The criminal background check is done through ChoicePoint using an online system. The Parish Safe Environment Coordinator will log onto the ChoicePoint website and enter the data for the person being checked. The employment background check and BCA check are also sent out by the Parish Safe Environment Coordinator (if necessary). The results of these checks are sent to the Office of Safe Environment, which reviews these results. The parish will be notified once the background check is completed.

Sections 5, 6, and 7 of this manual contain a detailed set of instructions for performing background checks for each category of parish worker (employee, volunteer, and independent contractor).

The Fair Credit Reporting Act establishes strict guidelines that must be followed if a person is going to be treated negatively based on information obtained in a background check. If this situation occurs, the Office of Safe Environment will handle the issue to ensure that all legal requirements are met.

Background Check Forms

There are two forms that have to be completed in order to process a background check. These forms are available online at www.crookston.org/sep/bc.

- Acknowledgement and Consent Form: This form accomplishes three things:
 - The form contains a background questionnaire concerning sexual abuse.
 - The form contains an acknowledgement that the person has been notified of the Safe Environment Policy and has received a copy of the Code of Conduct of the Diocese of Crookston, and that the person agrees to conduct him/herself in accordance with these policies.
 - The form authorizes the parish, parish school, and diocese to do a background check on the person.

There are three versions of this form; one for employees, one for volunteers, and one for independent contractors. The three versions

are basically the same; the reason for the different versions is to help keep track of which category the person belongs to.

- Employment Background Check Form: This form only needs to be filled out by new employees. It authorizes the parish, parish school, and diocese to do a background check with the person's previous or other current employer. If the employee has been unemployed or self-employed for more than three years prior to starting employment, the person should write "N/A" in the blank labeled "Name of Previous/Other Current Employer", then sign and date the form in the appropriate places.

The Acknowledgement and Consent Form and Employment Background Check Form (if applicable) must be completed at the time of hire; one copy of the form is kept in the parish's files, and one copy is sent to the Diocese. The appropriate Acknowledgement and Consent Form must also be completed on an annual basis by all people in positions requiring SE certification; this form is kept in the parish files (a copy of the annual form does not need to be mailed to the Diocese).

Minimum Standards

For purposes of determining eligibility for ministry, the Diocese has adopted the standards set forth in Minnesota statute 245C.15, Disqualifying Crimes or Conduct, as our minimum standards. Anyone whose background check contains an offense listed in this statute will not be cleared for ministry. The person will be given an opportunity to appeal this decision. See Section 8 of this document for more information on the appeals process.

Keep in mind that statute 245C.15 is the *minimum* standard. The Office of Safe Environment has the right to take action for offenses not listed in this statute if it is deemed necessary.

Effect of Previous Background Checks

A background check that an individual had done through some other agency does not meet the requirements set forth by the Safe Environment Policy. All people desiring to work in positions requiring SE certification must have a background check done through the Diocese in order to receive an SE Certificate.

Yearly Completion of Forms

The Acknowledgement and Consent Form must be filled out yearly by all people desiring to work in positions that require SE certification. The forms signed annually by existing workers are to be kept on file at the parish; a copy *does not* need to be sent to the Diocese.

Redoing Background Checks

A person must have a criminal background check as part of their initial certification process. The criminal background check must be redone every five years.

Although the parish is only required to do a background check on a person every five years, one can be done at any time at the discretion of the pastor. Each year each

person desiring to work in a position requiring SE certification completes the Acknowledgement and Consent Form, which gives the parish, parish school, or diocesan institution the authority to do a background check on this person. If the pastor perceives a need to perform a background check on any existing personnel, a background check may be done.

Security of Information

The background check procedure gives the parish access to information that is highly confidential. The parish must establish procedures to safeguard this information

Criminal background checks are performed by ChoicePoint, which offers a web-based background check product. Each parish has an individual account with ChoicePoint. Each parish should have only one or two people who are authorized to access the parish's account for purposes of ordering background checks. For security purposes, only the Diocese will be able to view the results of a criminal background check.

The parish will maintain a file on each person who has had a background check performed. These files must be kept in a secure place, and only the pastor and one or two other people should have access to these files. The file will contain the following items:

- Completed Acknowledgement and Consent Forms
- Completed Employment Background Check Form (employees only)
- Safe Environment Certificates

Social Security Numbers

ChoicePoint accesses a wide variety of databases when performing a criminal background check. Because some of these databases are indexed by Social Security Number, it is necessary to collect a person's SSN to perform the check. This can be a problem because some people are reluctant to give out their SSN because of fears about identity theft.

The diocese recognizes the very real threat of identity theft, and appreciates the concerns of people who are trying to protect themselves from this crime. The diocese also has an obligation to create a safe environment for the minors and vulnerable adults who are given into our care. A vital part of creating this safe environment is performing background checks on the people who will come into contact with the minors and vulnerable adults while they are in our care, and a Social Security number is needed to do this. Therefore we need to strive to achieve our goal--creating a safe environment through background checks--without causing harm to the people we are checking.

This is why the security measures detailed elsewhere in this manual are vitally important. The parish must securely store all information obtained during the background check process, and access to this information must be limited to only one or two personnel. By following these procedures we can show our people that we are doing everything in our power to protect them, so that they can feel safe and secure in their decision to entrust this vital information to us.

If a person does not want to write their Social Security number on the Acknowledgement and Consent form, that person can instead verbally give their number to the person ordering the background check.

One thing to point out to people is that the background check can actually help stop identity theft. One component of the background check process is a Social Security Number Verification. ChoicePoint contacts one of the three major credit check companies to confirm that the Social Security Number given to us by the individual actually belongs to that individual. If someone else is using the person's SSN, that will be detected during the background check and the person will be notified of this discrepancy.

Section 5

Procedures for Performing a Background Check- Employee

1. The employee fills out the necessary paperwork. These forms are available at www.crookston.org/sep/bc.
 - a. Acknowledgement and Consent Form for Employees
 - b. Employment Background Check Form
2. Ask the employee if he/she has a current certificate. If the employee has a current certificate, then make a copy of the certificate and put it in the employee's file. No criminal background check is needed; go to step 4.
3. Perform the **criminal background check**.
 - a. Go to the ChoicePoint web site, <https://www.volunteersselectplus.com>.
 - b. Enter your "Account Number" and "Password", then press the "Click Here To Login" button.
 - c. A Notice screen will come up. Review the information in this Notice, then press "OK" at the bottom of the page.
 - d. Occasionally you will get a System Message screen. If this occurs, read the message then press the "Continue" button.
 - e. Click on the words "Order a Report Now!"
 - f. Select the person's state based on their current address.
 - g. Select the following items: SSN Verification, County Courthouse, and National Criminal File. For "Position Type?", select "Employee". Make sure that the "Candidate authorization obtained?" box is checked. Then press "Continue Search".
 - h. Enter the person's information, then click the "Submit Search" button. All needed information is found on the Acknowledgement and Consent Form.
 - i. The person's current address should be entered in the "Candidate Information" section. Other previous addresses are entered in the "Additional Courthouse Address" section.
 - i. The "Is This Correct?" screen will come up. Review the data for accuracy, then press "Submit/Retrieve Later".
4. Perform the **BCA Check** (only for parishes that have schools).
 - a. Prepare a letter to the BCA. A sample letter can be obtained by going to www.crookston.org/sep/bc and clicking on the "Forms" button.
 - i. On the line in the upper-right-hand corner, put today's date.
 - ii. On the lines in the middle of the letter, list all employees that you are requesting background checks on.
 - iii. Write your phone number in the box at the end of the last sentence.
 - iv. Sign the letter under the words "Sincerely yours,". Also print your name under your signature.
 - v. Make a copy of the completed letter for your files.
 - b. Mail the following items in an envelope addressed to the MN BCA:
 - i. Letter to BCA.

- ii. Copy of Acknowledgement and Consent Form for Employees.
 - iii. Check made out to "MN BCA"-amount is \$8 per background check requested.
 - iv. Stamped envelope addressed to the Diocese of Crookston, Attn: Background Checks.
 - 1. If you're requesting more than one background check, make sure that you have adequate postage on the return envelope. Assume that two pieces of paper will be sent back for every background check requested.
5. File one copy of the following forms in the employee's file and send one copy to the Diocese of Crookston, Attn: Background Checks.
- a. Acknowledgement and Consent Form for Employees
 - b. Employment Background Check Form
 - c. Letter to BCA (if applicable)
6. Occasionally the **Social Security Number Verification** will report a discrepancy for the employee's Social Security Number. There are three possible reasons for this discrepancy:
- a. The employee's Social Security Number is not found.
 - b. The employee's Social Security Number is shown as registered to someone else.
 - c. The employee's Social Security Number is shown as registered to more than one person.
- If any of these situations occur, the Office of Safe Environment will request that the Parish Safe Environment Coordinator personally verify the employee's Social Security Number. To do this, the employee will need to show their Social Security Card to the Parish Safe Environment Coordinator. The Parish Safe Environment Coordinator will then complete a Social Security Number Validation Form (available online at www.crookston.org/sep/bc). One copy of the Validation Form should be sent to the Diocese of Crookston, Attn: Background Checks, and one copy will go in the employee's file.
7. Once the background check has been completed and all other safe environment requirements have been met, the parish will receive two copies of the Safe Environment Certificate from the Diocese. One copy should go into the employee's file, and one copy should be given to the employee.

Section 6

Procedures for Performing a Background Check-Volunteer

1. The volunteer fills out the necessary paperwork. These forms are available at www.crookston.org/sep/bc.
 - a. Acknowledgement and Consent Form for Volunteers
2. Ask the volunteer if he/she has a current certificate. If the volunteer has a current certificate, then make a copy of the certificate and put it in the volunteer's file. No further action is needed.
3. Perform the **criminal background check**.
 - a. Go to the ChoicePoint web site, <https://www.volunteersselectplus.com>.
 - b. Enter your "Account Number" and "Password", then press the "Click Here To Login" button.
 - c. A Notice screen will come up. Review the information in this Notice, then press "OK" at the bottom of the page.
 - d. Occasionally you will get a System Message screen. If this occurs, read the message then press the "Continue" button.
 - e. Click on the words "Order a Report Now!".
 - f. Select the person's state based on their current address.
 - g. Select the following items: SSN Verification, County Courthouse, and National Criminal File. For "Position Type?", select "Volunteer". Make sure that the "Candidate authorization obtained?" box is checked. Then press "Continue Search".
 - h. Enter the person's information, then click the "Submit Search" button. All needed information is found on the Acknowledgement and Consent Form.
 - i. The person's current address should be entered in the "Candidate Information" section. Other previous addresses are entered in the "Additional Courthouse Address" section.
 - i. The "Is This Correct?" screen will come up. Review the data for accuracy, then press "Submit/Retrieve Later".
4. File one copy of the Acknowledgement and Consent form for Volunteers in the volunteer's file, and send one copy Diocese of Crookston, Attn: Background Checks.
5. Occasionally the **Social Security Number Verification** will report a discrepancy for the volunteer's Social Security Number. There are three possible reasons for this discrepancy:
 - a. The volunteer's Social Security Number is not found.
 - b. The volunteer's Social Security Number is shown as registered to someone else.
 - c. The volunteer's Social Security Number is shown as registered to more than one person.

If any of these situations occur, the Office of Safe Environment will request that the Parish Safe Environment Coordinator personally verify the volunteer's

- Social Security Number. To do this, the volunteer will need to show their Social Security Card to the Parish Safe Environment Coordinator. The Parish Safe Environment Coordinator will then complete a Social Security Number Validation Form (available online at www.crookston.org/sep/bc). One copy of the Validation Form should be sent to the Diocese of Crookston, Attn: Background Checks, and one copy will go in the volunteer's file.
6. Once the background check has been completed and all other safe environment requirements have been complied with, the parish will receive two copies of the Safe Environment Certificate from the Diocese. One copy should go into the volunteer's file, and one copy should be given to the volunteer.

Section 7

Procedures for Performing a Background Check- Independent Contractor

1. The person fills out the necessary paperwork. These forms are available at www.crookston.org/sep/bc.
 - a. Acknowledgement and Consent Form for Independent Contractors
2. Ask the person if he/she has a current certificate. If the person has a current certificate, then make a copy of the certificate and put it in the person's file. No further action is needed.
3. Perform the **criminal background check**.
 - a. Go to the ChoicePoint web site, <https://www.volunteersselectplus.com>.
 - b. Enter your "Account Number" and "Password", then press the "Click Here To Login" button.
 - c. A Notice screen will come up. Review the information in this Notice, then press "OK" at the bottom of the page.
 - d. Occasionally you will get a System Message screen. If this occurs, read the message then press the "Continue" button.
 - e. Click on the words "Order a Report Now!".
 - f. Select the person's state based on their current address.
 - g. Select the following items: SSN Verification, County Courthouse, and National Criminal File. For "Position Type?", select "Employee". Make sure that the "Candidate authorization obtained?" box is checked. Then press "Continue Search".
 - h. Enter the person's information, then click the "Submit Search" button. All needed information is found on the Acknowledgement and Consent Form.
 - i. The person's current address should be entered in the "Candidate Information" section. Other previous addresses are entered in the "Additional Courthouse Address" section.
 - i. The "Is This Correct?" screen will come up. Review the data for accuracy, then press "Submit/Retrieve Later".
4. File one copy of the Acknowledgement and Consent Form for Independent Contractors in the person's file, and send one copy to the Diocese of Crookston, Attn: Background Checks.
5. Occasionally the **Social Security Number Verification** will report a discrepancy for the independent contractor's Social Security Number. There are three possible reasons for this discrepancy:
 - a. The independent contractor's Social Security Number is not found.
 - b. The independent contractor's Social Security Number is shown as registered to someone else.
 - c. The independent contractor's Social Security Number is shown as registered to more than one person.If any of these situations occur, the Office of Safe Environment will request that the Parish Safe Environment Coordinator personally verify the

- independent contractor's Social Security number. To do this, the independent contractor will need to show their Social Security Card to the Parish Safe Environment Coordinator. The Parish Safe Environment Coordinator will then complete a Social Security Number Validation Form (available online at www.crookston.org/sep/bc). One copy of the Validation Form should be sent to the Diocese of Crookston, Attn: Background Checks, and one copy will go in the independent contractor's file.
6. Once the background check has been completed and all other safe environment requirements have been complied with, the parish will receive two copies of the Safe Environment Certificate from the Diocese. One copy should go into the person's file, and one copy should be given to the independent contractor.

Section 8

Procedures for Dealing with Negative Background Check Results

All results from background checks are sent to and evaluated by the Diocese of Crookston. The diocese, not the parish, is responsible for dealing with any negative information that is uncovered during the background check process.

For purposes of determining eligibility for ministry, the Diocese has adopted the standards set forth in Minnesota statute 245C.15, Disqualifying Crimes or Conduct, as our minimum standards. Anyone whose background check contains an offense listed in this statute will not be cleared for ministry. The person will be given an opportunity to appeal this decision.

If a background check reveals that a person applying for ministry has a disqualifying offense, the following steps will be taken:

- 1) A pre-adverse action notice is sent to the person *by the Diocese* as required under the Fair Credit Reporting Act. This notice informs the person that something negative has been uncovered during the background check and that adverse action will be taken because of this. Accompanying the notice are a copy of the background check report, a copy of the person's rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act, and a decision review application for the person to use if they wish to appeal the decision.
- 2) The person then has a reasonable period of time to appeal this decision *to the Diocese* using the decision review application.
- 3) If the person appeals the decision, the case will be taken to the Moderator of the Curia for review. He will make the final decision as to whether the person will be allowed to minister.
- 4) If the person has not appealed the decision in a reasonable period of time, or if the appeal has been denied by the Moderator of the Curia, the person will be prohibited from ministry. The following steps will be taken:
 - a) The Diocese of Crookston will send an adverse action notice to the person informing them of this decision.
 - b) A letter will be sent to the pastor notifying him that the person will not be allowed to minister.
 - i) A copy of this letter should go in the person's file.

Appendix A

Suggested List of Positions That Require Safe Environment Certification

Employees

All employees, including substitutes
Clergy and Religious Order Workers

Volunteers

RE Coordinator
RE Teacher/Catechist
Teacher Aide (School or RE)
Classroom Helper (School or RE)
Participant in Foster Grandparent Program
Coach/Assistant Coach
Playground/Lunchroom/Bus/Library Monitor
Parish Nurse
Anyone working with an after-school or daycare program
Driver
Chaperone
Anyone working with a youth choir/band
Anyone working with a youth group
Anyone working with kids to put on a program or pageant
Liturgical Trainer
Maintenance Worker/Custodian*
Office Staff*
Minister to the Homebound**
Hospital/Nursing Home Visitor**
BeFriender**

Independent Contractor

Student Teachers
Public school employees who work with students from parochial school (band teacher, special ed, etc.)
Contracted bus drivers
Public Health Nurse/Other Medical Personnel
Employees of Firm Contracted for Maintenance/Custodial Work***

* Background checks are required only if the person may potentially have access to minors.

**Background checks are required if these positions involve contact with vulnerable adults.

*** Background checks are required if the person may potentially have access to minors and vulnerable adults.