

# CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK POLICY

July 1, 2021

It is the policy of the Archdiocese to promote an environment in which children and vulnerable adults who participate in the Church's ministry and services can expect to do so in safety and without fear, in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect. Therefore, a criminal background check will be completed on all church personnel of the Archdiocese who have contact with minors or vulnerable adults.

## Definitions:

- **“Adult”** (major) means any individual eighteen (18) years of age or older, this does not include vulnerable adults as defined in this policy.
- **“Minor”** is any individual under the age of eighteen (18). Students in high school over the age of 18 enrolled in youth programs of the archdiocese, including schools, are covered under the policies of the archdiocese as a minor.
- **“Church Personnel”** is any priest or deacon (cleric), seminarian, aspirant, deacon candidate, religious in formation, or lay faithful who serve the Archdiocese or its related entities in ministry to minors or vulnerable adults as either clergy, employees or volunteers.
- **“Vulnerable Adult”** is an individual 18 or older who is dependent on the care of others and who is ministered to by church personnel.
- **“Supervisor”** is a pastor of a parish, principal of a school, or the director of an archdiocesan office or related entity or their delegate responsible for the oversight of those individuals who serve in the Archdiocese.
- **“Contact with Minors”** or **“Vulnerable Adults”** includes any church personnel having the possibility of on-going, unsupervised contact with minors or vulnerable adults; any church personnel foreseen to have more than 8 hours contact with minors; any church personnel attending an over-night event.
- **“Related entity”** includes parishes, schools, agencies, and institutions with direct accountability to the Archbishop of New Orleans.

## Procedure:

All church personnel who have contact with minors or vulnerable adults must have a criminal background check completed satisfactorily before they begin to work with minors or vulnerable adults. All church personnel are required to immediately notify their supervisor of any arrest following a previous background check.

Each person will create an account on the current database platform used by the archdiocese and request the criminal background check after signing up for a specific parish/school/organization of the archdiocese.

Every effort will be made to ensure confidentiality of all information. If there is a record, the requesting location will consult with the Archdiocese Safe Environment Coordinator prior to allowing the person to serve in ministry with minors or vulnerable adults.

**Louisiana State Police and FBI Fingerprint checks are required for anyone who receives a paycheck from a Catholic School in the Archdiocese of New Orleans.** (Louisiana Child Protection Act, R.S. 17:15 “Criminal History Review” and R.S. 15:587.1)

### **Ineligibility**

An individual shall be ineligible to participate in a service or ministry position of the Archdiocese or its related ministries which involve contact with minors or vulnerable adults:

- If the person refuses to complete the required criminal background check
- Conviction of any crime that results in the death of the victim
- Conviction of any crime involving sexual assault/molestation
- Conviction of any felony assault/battery
- Conviction of any misdemeanor assault/battery charge in the last five years
- Conviction of three or more misdemeanor assault/battery charges
- Conviction of any felony distribution or possession of marijuana or narcotic drugs listed in Schedules I to V
- Conviction of any crime involving the promotion, advertisement, distribution, possession, or possession with intent to distribute pornography involving minors
- Conviction of abuse or neglect of a minor or vulnerable adult
- Conviction of human trafficking
- Arrests and/or pending criminal proceedings

### **Rechecks**

All church personnel who have contact with minors or vulnerable adults must have a criminal background check completed satisfactorily every three years as long as they continue in service.

### **Note**

Notwithstanding what a criminal background check may indicate, the Archdiocese and its related entities, reserve the right to refuse employment and/or volunteer services depending on the circumstances shown by the background check.

2021

