

DIOCESE OF NEW ULM

POLICY BULLETIN

October 4, 2007

Administration
Diocesan 13.3

**CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS FOR ALL PASTORAL LEADERS
AND THOSE WHO WORK WITH MINORS**

To the Priests, Religious, and People of the Diocese of New Ulm:

All clerics, incardinated in the diocese or elsewhere, and other pastoral leaders in the Diocese of New Ulm will have a comprehensive background check processed every five (5) years. The diocese will cover the cost of background checks for incardinated clerics and pastoral leaders.

All diocesan, parish, and school employees, whether or not they work unsupervised with minors, are required to have a background check processed before beginning employment. The diocese will cover the cost for background checks processed on all new diocesan employees; parishes/schools will cover the cost for all new parish/school employees, and all new volunteers who are unsupervised with minors.

A volunteer is someone who has been asked or entrusted by the diocese, parish, or school to teach, supervise, chaperone, drive, or assume other duties without monetary compensation while being unsupervised with minors in or out of the diocese.

Lay persons employed by the diocese and its institutions on a part time, seasonal, or on a regular basis, as well as Seminarians, those enrolled in the Permanent Diaconate Formation Program, and others who coordinate a diocesan/parish/school ministry will be treated as employees for the purposes of the Safe Environment program. They will be required to have a comprehensive background check.

An "independent contractor" is any non-employee layperson hired or engaged to perform services on behalf of the Diocese of New Ulm including any parish, school, or other diocesan entity that is controlled by or operated by the diocese. Additionally, all speakers and visitors to the diocese who have unsupervised contact with minors are considered "independent contractors." Any and all contracted companies or individuals who have unsupervised contact with minors will be treated as "independent contractors." "Independent contractors" also includes those who may *potentially* have unmonitored access to children and young people.

Clerics from other dioceses are welcome in the New Ulm Diocese, whether for a single event (i.e., to witness a marriage) or for a lengthy substitution. For the purpose of Safe Environment, they are considered as "independent contractors." Prior to beginning ministry, they must receive permission for their ministry by the Bishop of New Ulm through the Vicar General or the diocesan Safe Environment Coordinator. The visiting cleric is required to request permission to minister at least one (1) month prior to the date ministry begins. Please see the diocesan Safe Environment Manual.

Outside clerics, visitors, and speakers to the diocese, whether or not they will be unsupervised with minors, must be pre-approved by the diocesan Safe Environment Coordinator and the Chancery. Please see the diocesan Safe Environment Manual for “independent contractor” procedures.

“Independent contractors” who are unsupervised with minors are required to submit the results of a background check from their diocese/religious order/parish/sponsoring organization and a statement signed by their superior attesting to the completion of a safe environment program. The diocesan Safe Environment Coordinator will ensure the comprehensiveness and the suitability of the background check against those done by the Diocese of New Ulm. If the check is not sufficient, the Diocese of New Ulm will require the “independent contractor” to submit an Authorization for a Background Check form processed by the diocese which will be paid for by the hosting diocesan office/parish/school. Please see the diocesan Safe Environment Manual for “independent contractors” procedures.

Additionally, all persons serving on councils and/or committees concerning youth/minors, and all advocates will be considered “independent contractors” for the purposes of Safe Environment and are obliged by the same requirements.

At the discretion of the Bishop’s Delegate in Matters Pertaining to Sexual Misconduct or the diocesan Safe Environment Coordinator, other diocesan or parish employees or volunteers may be required to sign the Acknowledgement and Consent Form, and to undergo comprehensive background checks. Repeat background checks may be requested at the discretion of the Bishop’s Delegate in Matters Pertaining to Sexual Misconduct or the diocesan Safe Environment Coordinator for an individual pastoral leader, diocesan/parish/school employee, volunteer, or “independent contractor.”

Cordially yours in Christ,

The Most Reverend John C. Nienstedt
Apostolic Administrator of New Ulm

Msgr. Eugene L. Lozinski
Chancellor