



## Background Evaluation Procedure

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***NOTE: This procedure is for parish and school safe environment coordinators (local SECs) to use with applicants for employment or volunteer service. The diocesan Safe Environment Coordinator will complete background checks on all priests, deacons, seminarians, deacon candidates, chancery employees and special cases. The Catholic Schools Office (CSO) will complete all background checks on head principals and substitute teachers.***

1. The **A – B – C's** of the Safe Environment Program for an applicant to complete include:
  - A. **Application:** Employee, Volunteer, or Under 18 Code of Conduct
  - B. **Background check:** Barada Basic Package, Barada School Employee Package, or Under 18 National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW) search
  - C. **Catholic Mutual Group (CMG Connect) safe environment training:** completed online at CMG learning platform or Under 18 Code of Conduct
2. All diocesan employees (persons on the diocesan payroll), regardless of their level of contact with minors, are to have their background checks and safe environment training completed before they begin their responsibilities. Note: Some steps in the procedure will vary for employees who are adults and for employees who are under 18 years of age.
3. If an applicant for employment worked for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend previously, the diocese **may** use the background check that was conducted earlier and is on file. The background check on file will be accepted only if it is the correct background check package for the new position and the background check results are dated within one year of the date of application for the new position. For example, an applicant for a school position must have a School Employee Background Check Package on file and it must be dated less than one year from the current date. *The local SEC must contact the diocesan Safe Environment Coordinator to confirm acceptance of a previously completed background check. At that time, the diocesan SEC will run a free search at the Indiana Courts and Clerks Access Site and share the results with the local SEC.*
4. All volunteers who will have regular contact with minors are to have their background checks and safe environment training completed before they begin their responsibilities. Note: Some steps in the procedure will vary for volunteers who are adults and for volunteers who are under 18 years of age.

5. Application: Every applicant completes an application found at:  
<http://www.diocesefwsb.org/Criminal-Background-Checks>

*Note: The Catholic Schools Office will provide school administrator, teacher, and substitute teacher applications to anyone applying for those positions. The applicant must complete the appropriate application.*

<b>Applicant:</b>	<b>Application to complete:</b>
Employee (age 18 and over)	<i>Employee Application – Ministerial or Non-Ministerial version</i>
Employee (Under 18 years)	<i>Employee Application – Ministerial or Non-Ministerial version Commitment to the Code of Conduct and Authorization</i>
Volunteer (age 18 and over)	<i>Volunteer Application</i>
Volunteer (Under 18 years)	<i>Commitment to the Code of Conduct and Authorization Volunteer Application (optional use by a parish or school)</i>

The pastor or principal must ensure that every application is reviewed for completeness and that any questions that arise from the review are answered by the applicant. The parish/school SEC will file the application and a copy of a photo ID in the applicant’s safe environment file.

6. Reference Checks and Work Verification:

For **employee** positions – The pastor, principal or their designee must contact all references listed on the application and document responses. With applicants for school employment, by law, the most recent employer must be contacted for a reference.

For **volunteer** positions – References checks are not required for volunteers by the diocese. A parish/school may include reference checks as part of its process if desired. If the applicant supplies information to answer question #1 on the volunteer application that she/he has worked in another diocesan office, parish, or school, the parish/school SEC must contact that entity to verify that no issues exist with this volunteer serving minors.

7. Background Check: For all applicants, the parish/school SEC will complete a criminal background check using one of the methods listed below. Paper forms for background checks found at: <http://www.diocesefwsb.org/Criminal-Background-Checks>

**For parish and non-school employees, parish volunteers, school volunteers (Age: 18 years of age and older)** *This does not include high school volunteer coaches.*

**Procedure:** Local SEC orders *Barada Basic Package* using one of the three methods. Send request to [customerservice@baradainc.com](mailto:customerservice@baradainc.com). Make sure you order the correct package and give your parish or school name to Barada.

**Method (choose one of the three methods below):**

1. Ask Barada to send an email message to the applicant with a link to the background check package. Applicant completes process online. Paper permission forms are not required. Permission is given electronically at the Barada website. Applicant will receive one email message from [customerservice@baradain.com](mailto:customerservice@baradain.com). Ask the applicant to look for the message and act quickly. For security, the link will expire after two weeks.
2. Ask applicant to complete paper permission forms and then send the forms to Barada with ordering information. Send forms by US mail, email or fax. Keep a copy of the paper forms in the safe environment file for the applicant. Use paper forms with Spanish speaking applicants. The Barada website is in English only.
3. Use paper permission forms and Barada website to "Create Profile" and order background check. Use care to enter name and all personal information exactly. Keep paper forms in the safe environment file for applicant.

**For parish and non-school employees, parish volunteers, and school volunteers (Age: Under 18 years of age)**

**Procedure:** Local SEC runs *Dru Sjodin NSOPW* ([www.nsopw.gov](http://www.nsopw.gov)) search; step by step instructions are found on diocesan Youth Protection website, Coordinators' Resource tab

**Method:** No permission is required to run this search and it is free of charge. Make sure you complete a national search at this website. Print the results and place them in the applicant's safe environment file. Send a copy to the diocesan safe environment database manager at [safe@diocesefwsb.org](mailto:safe@diocesefwsb.org).

**For school employees and high school volunteer coaches (Age: 18 years of age and older)**

**Procedure:** Local SEC orders *Barada School Employee Package*

**Method:** Use the same three methods as listed above for ordering a Barada Basic package. Applicant will receive three email messages, one from [customerservice@baradainc.com](mailto:customerservice@baradainc.com) and two from @kidtraks.com. For security, the links will expire after two weeks.

**For school employees and high school volunteer coaches (Age: Under 18 years of age)**

**Procedure:** Local SEC orders *Barada School Employee Package* if the employee will work directly with minors. Local SEC runs *Dru Sjodin NSOPW search* ([www.nsopw.gov](http://www.nsopw.gov)) if the employee will not work directly with minors. See notes above about the NSOPW search.

**Method:** When running the Barada School Employee Package on an applicant under 18 years of age, the paper forms must be used to ensure parental consent. Keep the permission forms on file in the applicant's safe environment file.

When the background check is completed, Barada Associates will send the parish/school SEC an email message with a secure link to access the results of an applicant's background check. The SEC must have her/his Barada user id and password to access the results. The local SEC must review the results to ensure that all parts of the background check package are complete and accurate. If the name is misspelled, the date of birth is incorrect, or the SSN is incorrect, the results are not valid, and it must be reordered. Results must be kept electronically and/or in hard copy in a secure location. Barada Associates will also send the results to the diocesan Safe Environment Database Specialist.

The diocesan SEC will send the local SEC an email message when any applicant has a flagged background check. The local SEC must share the information with the parish pastor and school principal. After a decision is made, the local SEC, pastor or principal will reply to the diocesan SEC as to whether they approved the applicant for service. The local SEC will also confirm the position that the applicant sought.

8. Documentation in Diocesan Database:

The Safe Environment Program Database Specialist will update the diocesan Safe Environment Program database at the Catholic Mutual Website (CMG Connect) (<https://fortwaynesouthbend.cmgconnect.org/>). This database contains information on adults and minors who have completed safe environment requirements for the diocese. The database specialist will input the results of the background check and certify the applicant as approved. *(See the last pages of this procedure for more information on this process.)*

No person under 18 years of age is to create an account in the CMG Connect database. The local SEC will create the account for a person under 18 years of age. No person under 18 years of age is to complete safe environment training using the CMG Connect curriculum. For a person who is under 18 years of age that will be employed or volunteer, the local SEC must send the database specialist ([safe@diocesefwsb.org](mailto:safe@diocesefwsb.org)) a copy of the results of the NSOPW search and a copy of the Code of Conduct for Youth working with Younger Children.

9. Addition to Payroll: For new employees, the local SEC will complete the ***New Employee Verification Form*** and send to the diocesan Business Office so the new employee may be added to payroll. Do not sign or send the form until all parts of the process (A – B – C) are complete. The business office will share the form with the diocesan SEC.

10. Rescreening: Rescreen an employee/volunteer at any time for cause. When an adult has begun the CMG Connect safe environment training program, rescreen the employee or volunteer every four years according to diocesan policy. Rescreening requires rerunning the criminal background check as directed in the chart:

<b>For:</b>	<b>Rescreening package needed:</b>
parish employees → (18 years and older)	Barada Basic package
school employees → (includes school employees who are under 18 years and have direct contact with minors)	Barada School employee package or School employee recheck package (either is acceptable)
volunteers → (18 years and older)	Basic package
All others who are under 18 years of age →	NSOPW

Note: Adults who began safe environment requirements before June 2018 and used the previous procedural guidelines have a five-year expiration for their criminal background checks and training.

11. When a volunteer or employee who is under 18 years of age reaches his/her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, the local SEC must order either the Barada basic or school employee package background check for him/her. The SEC must also give the person instructions as to how to complete the CMG Connect training.
12. Maintain all paper and/or electronic files for 26 years after the employee or volunteer terminates service.
13. For information on CMG Connect safe environment training, see page 9 of this document.

## Background Evaluation Procedure (additional information)

### *The Barada School Employee Background Check*

#### *For school employees, some parish employees, and high school volunteer coaches*

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An expanded criminal history search and an expanded child protection index are required for all school employees hired after July 1, 2016. Both requirements are included in the School Employee Background Check Package (*Barada Associates, Inc.*) NOTE: If an employee on the parish payroll will spend at least 40% of his/her time working in a school, the parish should also complete the Barada school employee background check on that employee.

1. Indiana state law requires this expanded criminal history search and expanded child protection index for all school employees. This includes employees under the age of 18 years if they will have direct contact with minors in their work.
2. As of July 1, 2019, the state of Indiana requires the expanded criminal history search on all high school coaches who serve as volunteers.
3. A principal may request permission from the Superintendent to allow a prospective employee to begin work if:
  - Application is completed
  - Reference checks and work verification are completed by hiring supervisor
  - All criminal searches are completed on the School Employee Package
  - No convictions are found on any of the searches
  - Applicant has submitted all information and permission to request the Dept. of Child Services search at the Barada Associates, Inc. website
  - All safe environment training is completed.

The request must be made in writing to the Superintendent by the principal. A written response must be received.

## Background Evaluation Procedure (additional information)

*For College Students who must complete Student Teaching,  
And Students Completing A Practicum (Field Study),*

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To fulfill the safe environment requirements of the diocesan program, student teachers and students completing a practicum (field study) will complete the following:

- 1) A BASIC criminal background check with Barada Associates
  - a. The employee or volunteer application, references, and expanded searches are not required if the student is approved by the diocesan SEC.
  - b. This background check may be waived by the diocesan SEC if the sending university submits a criminal background check for the student that meets the same criteria. The diocesan SEC reviews all background checks and approves those that meet the diocesan standard.
- 2) Safe environment training at the Catholic Mutual Website.

For any student who submits a background check to the diocesan SEC, that office will work with the student to complete the training requirements. The student's safe environment information will be included in CMG Connect – College & Universities site.

All documents should be kept on file at the school with the other confidential safe environment files.

## Background Evaluation Procedure (additional information)

### *For School Contractors and Vendors*

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It is the responsibility of each school principal to determine when contractors/vendors and their employees are required to have a criminal background check. Diocesan School Policy 3720 identifies the type of contracted employees who are required to have *expanded searches* because of their *direct and ongoing contact* with minors.

*Note: Contractors, such as counselors or therapists, who are employed at another school corporation and are providing services to minors in a diocesan schools may provide a **Testimonial of Suitability** (diocesan form provided) for this purpose to verify that the person has successfully completed an appropriate background check performed by that school corporation. If the contractor did not have an appropriate background check conducted by his/her school corporation employer, then one would need to be conducted by the school at which the person is providing services.*

For other contractors who do not fall into the category who may use the Testimonial, diocesan schools must use a Barada background check with the “school employee package” option to meet the policy requirements. If the employees of an outside contractor/vendor will be on school property on a regular basis, but will not have **direct and ongoing contact** with minors, the school may first ask the company to provide verification that it has obtained its own criminal history on each employee and that no employee has arrests or convictions which would pose a safety risk to minors. If the company does not conduct its own background checks, then the school should ask for a list of names of the employees who will be regularly on the school grounds. Each school should conduct a search at the **National Sex Offender Public Website** on each name. If the school wishes, it may also choose to conduct a Basic Criminal Package at Barada Associates on the person. The second search is NOT required by the diocese. If any employee of a contractor or vendor has a conviction, consult with the diocesan SEC to determine the eligibility of that contractor to be on school premises.





## Safe Environment Program Training Procedure for Adults

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1. All priests, deacons, candidates for ordination, employees, and those volunteers who will have regular contact with minors in their volunteer responsibilities must complete the safe environment training program before they begin their responsibilities.
2. Adults (age 18 and over) must begin their safe environment training by completing the INITIAL Priest, Employee or Volunteer Training Module at the Catholic Mutual Group website, *CMG Connect*, (<https://fortwaynesouthbend.cmgconnect.org/>). The local SEC will provide new applicants with information as to how to access the site, register themselves, and begin training. There is a Safe Environment Flyer for this purpose. Additional training modules will be assigned to adults per the diocesan curriculum. The diocesan SEC will assist all priests, deacons, seminarians, candidates for the diaconate, chancery employees and certain special cases in completing their safe environment training.
3. Young person employees and volunteers (under the age of 18 years) must complete the *Commitment to the Code of Conduct and Authorization*. Parents of the young person must sign this form. This two-page form replaces all previous training requirements for young person employees/volunteers.
4. No person under 18 years of age is to create an account in the CMG Connect database. The local SEC will create such accounts. No person under 18 years of age is to complete safe environment training using the CMG Connect curriculum.
5. Training must be completed before the employee/volunteer begins his/her responsibilities.



## SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM DATABASE

### Catholic Mutual Group Website, *CMG Connect*

#### *For maintaining information on background checks and safe environment training*

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Each local SEC logs in to the database with a user name and password at:

<https://fortwaynesouthbend.cmgconnect.org/>

If you do not know your username or password, contact the diocesan safe environment office. Each safe environment coordinator is known as a site administrator on the CMG website. Your site is the parish, school or diocesan office for which you serve as an SEC. At the CMG site, you can access and modify data for your employees, educators, and volunteers. You may search the entire database for information on any adult in the diocese.

Each new adult will create a user account for himself/herself at CMG Connect Website. The adult is to assign his/her account to your site, choose a USCCB role, and choose how she/he participates in the diocese. If all these steps are completed correctly, you will see the data for the adult on your site and the correct training modules will be assigned to this adult. You can edit these choices if they are made incorrectly. The adult "user" can also "Edit Profile" if he/she makes incorrect choices.

Once the adult is located at the correct site and the assigned training curriculum is completed, it will appear in the box labeled "CMG Connect Training Activity" on each profile. You can see which training modules are completed, how much of each one is completed and the date of completion. You are also able to print certificates for completed training modules.

#### **Background Check Status:**

The Safe Environment database specialist will input the information from a background check into the CMG Connect database for each person. If you have questions, please contact the diocesan safe environment office. If you have an employee or volunteer who is under 18 years, you as local SEC will create the user account at CMG Connect for this person. After running the background check at NSOPW, send a copy of the results to the database specialist at [safe@diocesefwsb.org](mailto:safe@diocesefwsb.org).

### **Safe Environment Training:**

The database specialist will input training information into the CMG Connect database for each person under 18 years of age. Each local SEC will send a copy of the Code of Conduct for Youth working with Younger Children to the diocesan office at [safe@diocesefwsb.org](mailto:safe@diocesefwsb.org) for this purpose. If you have questions, please contact the diocesan safe environment office.

### **Certification Status:**

The database specialist will input the information to certify (approve) adults in the CMG Connect database for each person. Certification will be assigned after the applicant has completed all items that are requested. Educators and employees will be certified after all items on the ***New Employee Verification Form*** are confirmed. Volunteers will be certified after they complete their safe environment training and background check. The parish/school is responsible to collect applications and photo IDs for applicants as previously noted. The parish/school staff will communicate to applicants when they may begin their employment or volunteer service.

Additional information as to how to use the CMG Connect database is found in the SEC site administrator's guide prepared by CMG. The guide is found on the Resources tab at the CMG website and on the diocesan website at: <http://www.diocesefwsb.org/Parish/School-Coordiators-Resources-And-Forms>. If you have questions, please contact the diocesan safe environment office.