



604 Washington St. • PO Box 369 • Ogdensburg, NY 13669
(315) 393-2920 • Fax (315) 393-2150
www.dioogdensburg.org

September 20, 2011

Ongoing Background Checks – Diocesan Policy

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Priests, Deacons, Religious, Principals, Department & Office Heads

FROM: Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley, Bishop of Ogdensburg

RE: Ongoing Background Checks

Since 2002, the Church in the United States has experienced a crisis which involved the sexual abuse of children and young people. Very substantial steps have been made to face this issue and deal with it in a forthright and effective manner. Background checks have proven to be a verifiable method of providing information for our use, particularly when we are dealing with new hires. Within our Diocese, background checks have been performed since 2003. In a continued effort to comply with the *Charter for the Protection of God's Children (Article 13)*, it is important to keep our records current and updated.

Prudent management calls for us to do ongoing background checks at a later date on employees and volunteers for whom background checks were performed when they began service of the Church. Random ongoing background checks will now be performed on all employees and volunteers for whom initial checks are required (cf. *Pastoral Handbook V.9a*) at a rate of 10% of our employees per year. Each person so covered will be subject to this background re-check every ten years.

When a person is selected, a **Background Check Release** form will be mailed to him or her. The priest, deacon, religious, employee, or volunteer must complete the form and return it to the Diocese. The background check will then be performed and the results shared with the proper employer.

The Diocese will maintain strict confidentiality in creating, storing, accessing, transferring, and disposing of authorized background checks and all reports relating to such background checks. Payment for each ongoing check will be the responsibility of the parish or institution where the person is employed.

Your compliance with this requirement is important to promote the integrity of ministry in the name of Jesus Christ and to foster an environment of safety for the people being served in the Diocese of Ogdensburg. If you have any questions regarding this directive, please contact Elaine Seymour, Charter Compliance Coordinator, at (315) 393-2920 or eseymour@dioogdensburg.org.