

To: All Pastors, Parish Administrators, Principals, Deanery Coordinators, Directors
From: Theresa Farley, Director of Human Resources
Date: July 24, 2002
Subject: NEW POLICY MANDATORY COMPLIANCE

The Diocese of Pueblo is implementing a background-screening program. This will be effective immediately for all parishes, schools, departments, agencies and institutions of the Diocese. The background screening will apply to all existing employees, new hires, full-time and part-time as well as new volunteers who work with children, senior citizens or people with disabilities, and candidates for clergy (seminary and deacon).

The Diocese has established an agreement with Avert, Inc. to provide these background checks. Each parish/mission/school/agency will have its own account information. A representative from Avert will be contacting the authorized person from each parish/agency to schedule a time to instruct them on how to request the checks, and what forms need to be completed each time a request is made.

John Foster is our Avert account representative. You may reach him at 888-606-7869.

A Copy of the complete background check policy is attached. Please take a few moments to review the policy and the list of positions that require the screenings. In addition to this new policy, we have provided forms to assist all diocesan organizations in completing the records for volunteers. Copy the forms onto the parish/school/agency letterhead.

If you have any questions you may contact me at extension 171(tfarley@dioceseotuehlo.com); or " Judy Dunagan at extension 172 (jdunagan@dioceseofpueblo.com). Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

**DIOCESE OF PUEBLO POLICY
BACKGROUND CHECKS ON EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS**

PURPOSE

In an ongoing effort to protect the integrity of the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Pueblo, its employees, parishioners, students, volunteers, and communities, the diocese is implementing a pre-employment background-screening program. This would be effective immediately for all parishes, schools, departments, agencies and institutions of the diocese. It will be used for all existing employees, new hires, full-time and part-time as well as new volunteers who work with children, senior citizens or people with disabilities, and candidates for clergy (seminary and deacon). A list of positions that are covered by this policy is attached. This check needs to be completed on each new hire before a contract begins, and on each new volunteer, before their volunteer work begins. There will be no exceptions. The parish/school/agency should continue the regular recruiting process including requiring a completed application form, interviewing applicants, checking references, etc. and whatever process is used to select volunteers.

A background check refers to a review of police records to determine if there is a history of criminal activity. School employees will undergo a CBI or Colorado Bureau of Investigation check. Fingerprint cards and a signed consent form are required to obtain this check. Any individual who has lived in Colorado for 24 or fewer months must also request that the CBI obtain a criminal record check from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The same fingerprint card is used for both CBI and FBI background checks.

The parish/school/agency may also request that any potential employees and volunteers that will be working with children/youth must also undergo a Central Registry check. This check will determine whether the person is the subject of a child abuse or neglect report. A Central Registry Inquiry form must be completed to obtain this check.

School employees or volunteers who have previously obtained a criminal records check and move from one facility to another do not need to repeat the criminal check if these procedures are followed: Obtain your CBI clearance letter from your former employer, and present it to the new employer. If you cannot obtain a CBI clearance letter from your former employer, you must have your fingerprints retaken.

Any information obtained about an applicant for employment, employee or volunteer must be kept confidential. The person hiring may inform the applicant, employee or volunteer that the decision regarding their employment/volunteer status was in whole or in part the result of the Central Registry or CBI report.

Payment of the fees for the CBI and Central Registry check are the responsibility of the diocesan parish, school, agency, department or institution. We have established an agreement with Avert, Inc. to provide the background screening services.

Avert offers other types of screenings, including credit reports, driving records, reference checks, social security number verifications, etc. The cost of any reports obtained from Avert is the responsibility of the parish/school/agency.

You may contact Avert:

Avert, Inc.
Attn: John Foster
301 Remington Street
Fort Collins, CO 80524
888-606-7869 FAX 800-237-4011

Diocese of Pueblo

Positions that have contact with Children, Youth, and Young Adults
Require background screening

EMPLOYED PARISH POSITIONS

Director of Religious Education
Assistant Director of Religious Education
Coordinators for Religious Education
Assistant Coordinators for Religious Education
Director of Children's Ministry
Coordinator for Children's Ministry
Family Ministers
Coordinators for Family Ministry
Directors of Sacramental Preparation
Coordinators of Sacramental Preparation

Director of Youth Ministry
Life Teen Coordinator
Assistant Youth Minister
Confirmation Coordinator
Assistant Confirmation Coordinator
Pastoral Assistant
Pastoral Associate
Catechetical Ministers (paid)
Counselors
Nursery Coordinators (stipend)
Custodians

VOLUNTEER-PARISH POSITIONS

Religious Education Coordinator
Religious Education Teacher
Catechist for Children's Religious Education
Middle school Catechist
High school Catechist
Sacramental Preparation Catechist
Social Coordinator (youth)
Drivers
Chaperones
Coaches (school/parish teams for youth)

Small Group Leaders
Retreat Leaders
Parish Committee, (usually youth ministry)
Confirmation Group Leaders
Music team leaders (youth ministry)
Peer Ministry Coordinators
Core Team Leaders (youth ministry)
Nursery Volunteers (during mass)
Vacation Bible School Volunteers

SCHOOL POSITIONS

Principal
Teacher
Teacher's Aide
Librarian
Library Workers Cafeteria/Lunchroom Workers
Maintenance Workers

Coaches
Secretary
Office Staff _____
Drivers
Extracurricular Activity Volunteers
Chaperones (overnight trips)

MINISTRY FORMATION

Priests
Deacons
Seminarians

Candidates for the Seminary
Candidates for Diaconate

Note:

This list is not all-inclusive. If your location has employees or volunteers who are not on this list and work with youth/children, the policy applies to those positions also.

Letter of Agreement Note: use language in brackets and adapt to particular facts at parish/school or both

Date _____

TO: _____ , [Principal] [Pastor]
_____ [School] [Parish]

FROM: _____

RE: Agreement with _____[School] [Parish]

As a registered sex offender who participates at _____ parish and parent/guardian of a student at _____ [School] [Parish], I agree and understand as follows:

1. I may not hold any position related to the [school] [parish] which puts me in contact with children other than my own. I understand this limitation. I understand that this limitation includes any participation in any ministry or in any groups involving youth in my parish. I will inform the other parents with whom any of my children have regular contact of my status.
2. If I have children in the parish school, I understand that this limits how I fulfill my Service Hours. The following are the conditions of agreement regarding my [Service Hours Commitment to the school] [volunteer activities that may be undertaken by me at the parish]: Note: Complete as appropriate but remember that both Archdiocesan polices and Megan's Law limit and may preclude participation.
3. I will not appear on campus or on the parish grounds unless accompanied by another adult who is aware of my status and who is cleared as a volunteer or staff person working with youth at the parish or school.
4. When on campus or on the parish grounds, I will use the designated rest room and only when accompanied by another adult.
5. This letter may be shown (but not provided) to others who inquire about my status or presence on school or parish grounds.

Signed:

Person sending letter

Date

Principal (if involving the school)

Date

Pastor (whether involving only parish or parish & school)

Date