



Safe Environment Guide

Thank you for your willingness to be a partner in ministry! Our parish simply could not offer so many ministries and opportunities to catechize, evangelize, and support young people without your service, dedication, and generosity.

All of our efforts to provide a safe environment help our young people to become disciples of Jesus Christ. The safe environment policies and standards of the Diocese of Cleveland are in place to protect God's children in our Catholic parishes, schools, and other organizations.

They reflect the principles outlined by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Charter for the Protection of Children & Young People as applied in the Diocese of Cleveland. If you are a parish volunteer or employee who will be around minors under age 18 (1) more than once a month, or (2) more than 4 hours per month, the following steps are required before you begin your service.

We know this process can seem burdensome, but most of these tasks are one-time only. This guide will help you achieve and maintain active status as a volunteer who works with children and youth.

These video presentations provide an introduction to our diocesan efforts and our role in creating a safe environment. Please watch these videos to learn more about why a safe environment is so important.

[Child Protection Policy In-Service - Intro & Updates](#)

[Child Protection Policy In-Service - Social Media Policy](#)

[Child Protection Policy Inservice - Background Screens](#)

Steps to Compliance

Step 1 - Application & References

Compliance with diocesan safe environment policies begins when you submit an application and three (3) references. *You may have already completed this step if you are an employee or a part of an affiliate organization.*

For catechists/youth ministry volunteers [Click here to obtain a volunteer application and reference form for PSR Catechist/Youth Ministry Volunteer.](#)

Please also print and complete the [Acknowledgement of Uncompensated Volunteer Form](#) and submit this with your application. To obtain a volunteer application for CYO Coach, please contact the [Athletic Director.](#)

2 - Virtus Session & Training Bulletins

Attend a Virtus “Protecting God’s Children” Awareness Session

This training conducted by VIRTUS® certified facilitators is about the prevention of child sexual abuse. The training makes participants aware of the signs of child sexual abuse, the methods and means by which offenders commit abuse, and five easy steps one can use to prevent child sexual abuse.

This workshop is offered throughout the Diocese of Cleveland. To attend you will need to create a Virtus account and register for the session at www.virtus.org.

This is an important first step because compliance is tracked through the Virtus database.

Click the "First-time registrant" button on the left-hand side to create an account, or log in with your user ID and password if you previously created an account.

Then select "Cleveland, OH (Diocese)" in the drop-down menu.

Virtus Training Bulletins

You will receive an email from Virtus every month with a prompt to read the latest bulletin. Each bulletin has a question at the end. When you answer the question correctly the Virtus database logs the training bulletin as

completed. Please keep your account updated with a current and working email address.

For those without internet access, a binder with 25 training bulletins is available from the Virtus Staff Rep or Liaison.

3 - Diocesan Policies

Read the following policies and submit their respective acknowledgement forms to the parish office.

[Policy for the Safety of Children in Matters of Sexual Abuse, Revised 2016](#)

[Standards of Conduct for Ministry, Revised 2016](#)

[Acknowledgement Forms](#)

For more information, visit the [Diocese of Cleveland Office for Protection of Children & Youth](#).

4 - Background Check

You will need to obtain a background check.

This will be your initial background check prior to beginning your service as a volunteer. If you have been a resident of Ohio for the past five years your

background check can be through Ohio BCI. If you have been a resident of Ohio for less than five years it should be through the FBI.

You will need your driver's license or state ID & social security number. Please have the reporting agency send results to Holy Trinity Parish, 33601 Detroit Road, Avon, Ohio 44011. *See the list of area locations below.*

Please note: BCI "Reason for Fingerprint" Code would be:

NO ORC Other: *"teaching PSR" or "coaching CYO" the role for which you volunteer.*

After five years, a repeat/on-going background check is required through Selection.com.

On the fifth anniversary of your initial background check, you will be prompted through your Virtus account to an online background check process with selection.com.

Selection.com is a safe and secure website that provides background check services to companies and non-profit organizations for their purposes of vetting potential hires and volunteers. The system will automatically run a check using your SSN every 3 months. Once you have enrolled yourself into the program, Selection.com will run a check for you and all of our staff and volunteers every 3 months to see if there are any incidents that would affect your ability to work with children. The checks performed are designed to only bring up those incidents that directly pertain to working with minors, so the parish will not see "everything you've ever done". The parish will not enter your Social Security number into Selection.com; you will. The parish will not be handling your Social Security number at any point.

On-going background checks are the best way to continuously ensure that only responsible persons are serving our young people. The Diocese of Cleveland is employing both of these methods (one-time fingerprinting and recurring Social Security number scans through criminal databases).

Initial background check locations

[Armor Background Screeners LLC \(BCI & FBI\)](#)

(216) 218-1283

159 Crocker Park Blvd

4th Floor

Westlake OH 44145

Monday to Friday 9:00 am to 5:00pm

By Appointment Only

[FastFingerprints \(BCI & FBI\)](#)

(877) 932-2435

(Inside Gemini Tower I)

1991 Crocker Road, Suite 600

Westlake OH 44145

Mon. - Fri. 8:00am - 12:00pm & 1:00pm - 5:00pm

Sat. 9:00am - 12:00pm

By Appointment Only

[Rae-Ann Suburban Skilled Nursing \(BCI & FBI\)](#)

(440) 871-5181

29505 Detroit Road
Westlake OH 44145
Mon. - Fri. 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
By Appointment Only

Lorain County Sheriff's Office

(440) 329-3710
9896 Murray Ridge Road
Elyria, OH 44035
Mon. - Fri. 8AM-6 PM

Educational Service Center of Lorain County

(440) 324-5777 EXT. 1113
1885 Lake Avenue
Elyria, OH 44035
Mon. 9 AM-11 AM & 1:30 PM - 4 PM 4:00



If you suspect child abuse, you MUST call civic authorities.

In Lorain County, call Lorain County Children Services Board - 440-329-5340. After business hours 440-329-2121.

In Cuyahoga County, call Cuyahoga County Department of Children and Family Services - 216-696-KIDS (5437).

If you suspect child sexual abuse within the Diocese of Cleveland, call the 24 hour response line AFTER you call civil authorities 216-334-2999.

For victim assistance call 216-334-2999.
