ARCHDIOCESAN CHILD PROTECTION DECREE

Saint Clement Parish follows the archdiocesan policy on child abuse. All clerics, educators, and others, who serve the children on a regular basis, whether as employees or volunteers, are to be educated on this decree.

For the complete decree, you can check the Archdiocesan website; www.catholiccincinnati.org . Click on "Protecting our Children" The site contains the text of the Child Protection Decree and more details on fingerprinting.

Volunteers must attend a session of the Archdiocesan Child Protection Decree. Dates and times vary. Check the parish bulletin, school newsletters, and Archdiocesan website (http://www.catholiccincinnati.org/childorient/childprotection_calendar.htm) for announcements.

BACKGROUND CHECKS

Effective March 31, 2003 the Archdiocesan Decree on Child Protection requires all employees and volunteers who have significant contact with children to have a criminal background check. A regular volunteer is defined as a catechist, scout leader, server coordinator, coach, etc. who functions in a regular, significant relationship with children. Any volunteers who works with children more than three hours a month or who works with children more frequently than once a month should comply with the archdiocesan policy. It does not include the occasional volunteer, such as chaperone for individual activities.

If a person currently volunteers at two locations, only one background check is necessary. At the time of the background check, the person should identify all locations where he/she volunteers. Since June 30, 2004 all volunteers must have been fingerprinted. If a volunteer has been an Ohio resident for five years previous to the background check, only the Ohio BCII check is required. If the volunteer has not continuously lived in the state of Ohio for the five years previous to the background check, a FBI check is also required. The Ohio BCII background check is $28.00 The FBI check is $30.00. Personal checks are not accepted, only cash or money orders.

The Ohio BCII is an internet WebCheck. It is done electronically via a computer. Volunteers must have a government issued identification with picture, (eg., driver's license). A Social Security number is required for all fingerprinting checks. Without a picture ID and the Social Security number, the fingerprint check will not be administered. Therefore, the person may not volunteer. Fingerprinting sites can be found at http://www.catholiccincinnati.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=420&Itemid=976.

All reports are sent directly from the State of Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigations and Identification to the Office of the Archbishop. The Parishes will be informed if the volunteer is or is not able to work with children. Parishes will not be told the reason why the volunteer was turned down. This is to protect the pastoral relationship.

Who needs the background check?

Occasional field trip chaperone	No
Volunteer in a classroom	Yes
Serve as a Room Parent	Yes
Volunteer with extra curriculars-drama, etc.	Yes
Volunteer as a coach	Yes
Volunteer in Bingo	No
Volunteer as Sunday School Catechist	Yes

CHILD PROTECTION FINGERPRINTING

- The Archdiocesan Decree on Child Protection requires all employees and volunteers who have significant contact with children to have a criminal background check. This involves being fingerprinted.

- The Child Protection Decree defines a volunteer as any person over 18 who functions in a regular relationship with children. Moreover any volunteer who works with children more than three (3) hours a month or who works with children more frequently than once a month. It does not include the occasional volunteer such as a driver or chaperone for individual activities.

- Minors under the age of 18 may not be fingerprinted according to Ohio State Law.

- Anyone who is not fingerprinted by June 30, 2004 may not work with or interact with children until they complete a background check.

- Anyone who is not currently working with children but intends to be a coach, scout leader, early childhood religion teacher, room mother, librarian or in any capacity during the next school year, is encouraged to complete the fingerprinting and background check now. This will avoid any delay in being able to perform your work as a volunteer.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The Archdiocese of Cincinnati understands your concern for the confidentiality and protection of your personal information, including your fingerprints and Social Security Number. This information is only used as needed and we have taken every precaution to safeguard this data. The following frequently asked questions (FAQ's) and answers may help you understand the process.

Why is the Archdiocese of Cincinnati fingerprinting employees and volunteers?

The Archdiocesan *Decree on Child Protection* requires employees who have regular, significant contact with children and volunteers who work regularly with children must have a criminal background check from the Bureau of Criminal Investigation and Identification. If they have not continuously lived in the State of Ohio for the last five years, then they must also complete an FBI check. (Policies B.2 and B.5)

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* requires that dioceses evaluate the background of those working with children by utilizing the resources of law enforcement agencies. (Article 13)

The State of Ohio provides congregations and their agents (among others) immunity from civil liability if a background check is completed for a volunteer who has regular contact with children and that volunteer later harms a child. (Ohio Senate Bill 187, April 22, 2001)

Why do I need to be fingerprinted?

The State of Ohio processes criminal background checks by using fingerprints. This process checks records for all counties in the state. The Bureau of Criminal Investigation and Identification (BCII) is responsible for this process under the authority of the Office of the Attorney General.

What is the WebCheck?

The WebCheck is an electronic process using digital images of the two thumbs and the two index fingers. This process is successful 98% of the time. The traditional method of rolled prints using ink and cards has an error rate of 25%. The turn around time on the WebCheck is usually within 48 hours. The turn around time on the cards is 30 days.

Why can't I have my fingerprints taken at the local police station?

The Archdiocese of Cincinnati wants accurate verification and wants to maintain the strictest of confidentiality. By doing the WebCheck, the information is sent directly to the State of Ohio (BCII) and the results are returned directly to the Archbishop's Office.

How do I know that the information and fingerprints are secure?

When your fingerprints are completed using the WebCheck, the information is transmitted directly to the BCII. The information is not maintained on the computer and the transmission is encrypted and can only be read by the BCII. When reports are sent to the Office of the Archbishop, this information is also encrypted.

What type of information is the background check looking for?

The State of Ohio performs a variety of background checks. The Archdiocese requests a background check for the "care, custody and control of children." Other background checks are performed for care of the elderly, licensing, law enforcement, driving records, etc. The background check we use looks at those laws which could impact children and a person's suitability for working with children.

What type of reports are sent to the Archdiocese?
If a person has no record, a report is sent to the Archdiocese stating that there is no record of criminal activity for that person. This report is transmitted by encryption and may be downloaded and printed but may not be transferred to our computer. If there is a record of criminal activity, a *written* report is *mailed* to the office of the Archbishop. Only the Archbishop reads these reports. Records of criminal activity are never sent over the computer.

Is my report shared with my pastor/administrator?
No, the only information that is shared with the pastor/administrator is whether the person may or may not work with children.

How long are my fingerprints kept on file?
The WebCheck prints are kept on file by the BCII for a period of 13 months after which they are purged from the database at the State of Ohio. The rolled prints (card and ink) are destroyed after three months. The FBI destroys the prints as soon as the report is complete (usually three months).

Where are the fingerprinting sites?
Please check the Archdiocesan webpage located at:
http://www.catholiccincinnati.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=420&Itemid=976
or contact the school office.

The charge for the Ohio webcheck fingerprinting is $28.00.
The FBI background check is $30.00.
Cash or money orders only. No personal checks accepted.