

September 28, 2024

*Ven. Chariton the Confessor; Prophet Baruch; Martyr Wenceslaus*

Dear Vladyka, Fathers, brothers, and sisters,

There is nothing really new to report on background checks in the Diocese, but I take this opportunity to remind you of how background checks are handled. Please take a moment to review this information.

There is a form at <https://ministryopportunities.org/portal/OrthodoxChurch>, which needs to be filled out by anyone needing a background check. It collects various personal information, such as address, date of birth, SSN, etc., which is necessary to run a background check. It also secures the person's legal consent, without which we can't process the background check. Because some of the information we need is rather confidential/sensitive, and because we need the person to give authorization directly, we are *not* asking you to collect all of this information. If someone needs a background check, you just give them the link to the form. I'll process the background check from there. If you have questions about whether someone has completed the form or had a previous background check, I'll be happy to answer those.

Once someone is in our background check system, we renew their background check *automatically* every three years. This means that, if someone leaves a position that requires a background check (see below), you should let me know so that I can mark them as inactive and not run unnecessary repeat checks on them. If you'd like a list of who I currently have in the system for your parish, let me know, and we can try to get our records in line with the list of who's currently serving in your parish.

Once again, the people for whom background checks are **required** are:

- Any major or minor clergy all the way down to readers;
- Adult (over 18) altar servers;
- Sunday School Teachers;
- Choir Directors;
- "Anyone having more than incidental contact with youth," which basically means anyone working with youth in any official capacity.

Background checks for council members, and for anybody else working in the parish in an official capacity (e.g. groundskeepers/custodians) are **recommended** but not required.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have further questions, please contact me.

In Christ,

Fr. Joel N. Brady

Rector, Holy Apostles Orthodox Church, Lansing, NY

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