

# PROMISE TO PROTECT



# PLEDGE TO HEAL

SECRETARIAT OF CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION



United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

**CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF JACKSON**

**PROTECTION OF CHILDREN PROGRAM**

**TRAINING AND RECORD-KEEPING**

## Protecting God's Children

The Diocese of Jackson is committed to ensuring that no one being served by the church be (is) at risk of sexual abuse or exploitation by clergy, religious or lay church personnel. The spiritual well-being of all the victims, their families and others in the community is of particular concern to the church. In accordance with our policy, all victims are offered counseling and pastoral care.

Anyone who has been a victim of abuse or exploitation by clergy, religious or lay church personnel and has not yet reported it is encouraged to do so. Our victim assistance coordinator, Valerie McClellan, a licensed social worker, is available to assist in making a report. Please contact her at 601-326-3728.

For more information about diocesan policies and procedures and to learn what the diocese is doing to create a safe environment for everyone, please visit the diocesan website at [www.jacksondiocese.org](http://www.jacksondiocese.org) and click on "Office for the Protection of Children".

Joseph R. Kopacz

Bishop of Jackson

## **SCREENING**

- A criminal background check will be conducted prior to and during an applicant's service. A criminal background rescreening will be initiated every three years on the anniversary date of an applicant's active service in the Protection of Children Program. All clergy, religious, employees and significant volunteers must complete the Diocese of Jackson Application for Employees and Volunteers. The applicant is provided a copy of the Protection of Children Policy Book. An acknowledgement form must be signed by the applicant indicating the policy has been read and they understand the policy before beginning a ministry.

### **Who has to receive the background screening?**

- New volunteers and employees and those who have regular contact with children/youth are required to complete the application and the application information be submitted in the Protection of Children Database for a criminal background screening.

### **Name of the background screening company:**

Integrated Screening Partners (A ProMesa Company)  
5316 Highway 290 West – Suite 500  
Austin, TX 78735  
1-800-474-4420

### **Who pays for the background screening?**

- Parishes and schools pay for the screening. The charge for a screening is \$10.00 per applicant.

### **How often do we submit background screenings?**

- Active employees/volunteers are rescreened every three years.

### **Do the scouts have to complete the background screening for the Diocese?**

- Yes, all diocesan sponsored leaders and assistant leaders and anyone having regular contact with minors and/or attending any overnight trip must complete the screening prior to the trip. If a parent attends meetings, but sits in the back of the room and does not interact with the children/youth, they do not have to be screened. Remember that no adult can be asked to be alone with any child or group of children unless they have completed the criminal background screening and attended diocesan safe environment training.

### **What are we checking in the background screening?**

- National Criminal File Search, Social Security Trace and Sex Offender Registry. A county search is initiated on educators. We will never do a credit check or an employment history check.

### **Are the priests/deacons/religious required to have background screenings?**

- Yes.

## **AUSTIN COMPUTING SOLUTIONS**

### **Who maintains the Protection of Children Database?**

- Austin Computing Solutions  
P. O. Box 203446  
Austin, TX 78720-446

### **How can this program help at the parish/school level?**

- This program will allow our volunteer and employee information to be shared within the Diocesan system. We will be able to check on completion of safe environment requirements and the application process for persons who are involved in a ministry at more than one site. When someone moves to a new parish/school, the new site can gain access to the employee or volunteer information. The database is a tremendous resource in accessing information for the annual USCCB audits.

### **Who is responsible for the required fee for Austin Computing?**

- The initial charge for entering an application in the Protection of Children Database is \$1.00 and \$.45 each following year to store and maintain the information. When someone leaves your site, please contact the Diocesan Office of Protection of Children to have the applicant removed from the database so you are not charged maintenance fees for an inactive applicant.

## **TRAINING**

- Each school, church and other diocesan sponsored program will provide the **VIRTUS, Protecting God's Children** initial training for all **NEW** employees and significant volunteers. A trainer is required to facilitate the **Protecting God's Children** training. Each new person is required to sign an attendance record of the training attended. Copies of the signed VIRTUS training attendance record must be forwarded to the Diocesan Office of Child Protection as soon as the training is completed. (The copies must be a signed attendance record. This attendance record must be signed by each employee/significant volunteer in order to serve as accurate documentation and proof of actual attendance at the required initial training session.)
- The Diocese of Jackson has designated that all **active** employees/significant volunteers participate in ongoing safe environment training with the program, **VIRTUS, Online** program. All those who minister to children and young people will be provided an User ID by VIRTUS. The VIRTUS online program consists of a monthly safe environment bulletin submitted to each applicant via email. The applicant will read the bulletin, answer a multiple-choice question at the end of the bulletin and submit the answer to VIRTUS. It is very important that all applicants have an email address in the Protection of Children Database.
- Children/youth in the churches and school are required to receive an **annual** safe environment lesson (**Called to Protect**). If a child is absent on the date the lesson is presented, the lesson material is to be sent home so that the parent may review the material with their child/children. Each school homeroom and parish education class must document the number of students that have been instructed in child protection catechesis. A copy of the Catechesis Session Document must be forwarded to the Diocesan Office of Protection of Children Office.

- The parent information meeting is required **annually**. It is important the parent meeting be scheduled and held prior to the presentation of the catechesis session. The information presented in the parent meeting consists of the lesson material presented to the children. The attendance sheet for the parent meeting should be forwarded to the Diocesan Office of Child Protection of Office.
- Employees/Significant Volunteers who are no longer working with children/youth must be archived in the Protection of Children Database. Please contact Vickie Carollo at [vickie.carollo@jacksondiocese.org](mailto:vickie.carollo@jacksondiocese.org) for archiving inactive applicants.

### **Who has to receive the Adult Safe Environment training?**

- Any adult, volunteer or employee, having regular contact with children/youth or anyone who goes on any overnight event with minors must receive the training.

### **Who provides the training?**

- There is a trainer at each parish and school who has been trained by VIRTUS.

### **How long does the training last?**

- Average training time is approximately two hours.

### **When do we train a new employee/volunteer?**

- Initial training must be provided within 60 days of employment/volunteer services.

### **What lessons do we use for the children and youth?**

K-6 <sup>th</sup> Grades	Praesidium material can be found on the Diocesan Protection of Children Website
Grades 7-12	Praesidium material can be found on the Diocesan Protection of Children Website

### **When are we required to present the safe environment lesson to the children?**

- Our goal is to present the safe environment lesson during October, Respect Life Month; however, the lesson must be presented no later than December 31st each year.

### **Where do I send the completed training reporting forms?**

- All Protection of Children reporting documents are located on the Diocesan Office of Child Protection Website. Copies of reporting documents are to be forwarded to:

**Vickie Carollo**  
**Office of Protection of Children**  
**Diocese of Jackson**  
**P. O. Box 2248**  
**Jackson, MS 39225-2248**  
**Office: 601/960-8471 Fax: 601/812-5743**  
[vickie.carollo@jacksondiocese.org](mailto:vickie.carollo@jacksondiocese.org)