GUIDEONE® INSURANCE + SafeChurch®

Background Checks: How to Perform a Check and Use the Results

It is recommended, and in many cases required, that every organization has a written and followed plan that calls for background checks. These checks should be conducted on every employee and volunteer who works with or has contact with children or youth. The purpose of background checks is to protect children and youth who are entrusted to your care and to preserve the mission and ministry of the organization.

Process for Conducting Background Checks

Prior to conducting a background check, written permission must be obtained from the prospective employee or volunteer. Then, local and national organizations that conduct background checks should be contacted.

GuideOne is pleased to offer policyholders affordable background checks through its Check & Protect program.

By utilizing the Check & Protect program for all your background checks, your church has access to cost effective, easy-to-access, and timely searches.



The Check & Protect program gives you access to many different checks, including multi-state, state criminal, state sexual offender, employment, and motor vehicle checks to name a few.

Once the background check is completed and reviewed on a prospective employee or volunteer, your organization must decide if it is going to hire the applicant or allow him or her to volunteer. When making this decision, the following should be taken into consideration:

- **Failure to disclose criminal history**. This includes convictions and deferred adjudication (sentencing).
- **Probation**. Consider if the person is currently, or has been, on probation for a crime.
- **Pending charges**. Even if the court has not heard the charge, this should be disclosed.
- **Adjudicated cases.** Take into consideration if the person has been convicted or sentenced for any of the following offenses (examples of disqualifying offenses from PA statute):
    - Criminal homicide
    - Aggravated assault or assault with a deadly weapon
    - Rape or sexual assault, including statutory rape or assault
    - Kidnapping or unlawful restraint
    - Other crimes of violence
    - Harassment or stalking

- Indecent assault
- Indecent exposure
- Endangering or injuring the welfare of a child
- Involuntary deviate intercourse
- Felonies related to prostitution, obscene, and other sexual material or performances
- Offenses involving corruption of minors, including child prostitution and child pornography
- Sexual abuse of a child
- Recent convictions involving theft or alcohol or drug offenses.
- Crimes going against the mission of the organization.

In making your decision, it may be helpful to check with the local school district and/or other organizations serving children and youth in your area to see what offenses disqualify an individual from working with youth in their organization.

Maintain Confidentiality

Any information collected should be kept confidential except for the person or committee making the selection. And all background checks, records, and follow-ups should be kept confidential in the applicant's personal file.

Investing the extra time and money into background checks is well worth the effort. These screenings are essential for safeguarding children, supporting your team, and maintaining your ministry's positive reputation and community trust.

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