

Safe Leaders

In the Diocese of Algoma it is mandatory for each parish to have a screening process that protects the safety of its volunteers and those to whom they minister. There are **10 Elements** in the Screening Process, and their application varies according to the nature of the volunteer's duties.

- 1. Determine the risk** Churches can control the risk in their programs. Examining the potential for danger in programs and services may lead to preventing or eliminating the risk.
- 2. Write a clear position description** Careful position descriptions send the message that a church is serious about screening. Responsibilities and expectations can be clearly set out, as well as the screening requirements.
- 3. Establish a recruitment process** Whether a church posts notices for volunteer positions or sends home flyers, they must indicate that screening is part of the application process.
- 4. Use an application form** The application form provides needed contact information. If the volunteer position requires other screening measures (driver's record, police records check), the application form will ask for permission to do so.
- 5. Conduct interviews** Interviews help ensure that candidates meet the position requirements.
- 6. Follow up on references** Identifying the level of trust required in the position and asking specific question will help determine the applicant's suitability
- 7. Request a Police Records Check (PRC) when necessary** PRCs signal that the church is concerned about the safety of its clients.
- 8. Conduct orientation and training sessions** Screening does not end once the volunteer is in place. Orientation and training sessions offer an opportunity to observe volunteers in a different setting.
- 9. Supervise and evaluate** The identified level of risk associated with a volunteer position will determine the necessary degree of supervision and evaluation. If the risk is great, it follows that the volunteer will be under close supervision.
- 10. Follow up with program participants** Volunteers should be made aware of any follow-up activities that may occur. These could include spot checks for volunteers in high-risk positions.

Ministries with children and youth are typically considered **'High Risk'** for screening purposes, so you should expect to engage in each of the 10 Elements to the extent your parish determines is appropriate.

Additional resources can be found at www.dioceseofalgoma.com

SOME QUESTIONS TO PREPARE YOU FOR THE PROCESS....

Job Description

How do I envision my role/duties in this ministry?

Application and Interview

Why do I want to volunteer for this ministry?

What talents and experience do I bring to this ministry?

Reference Check

Who would I choose as my character references, and why?

Training and Follow-Up

What questions do I have about my ministry duties?

What questions do I have about the Risk Management policy?

What is the procedure for reporting an incident?

What encouragement and support do I need from my parish?
