

Overview of Safeguarding Screening and Training

SGC refers to *Safeguarding God's Children: Policies Protecting Children and Youth 2023*

SGP refers to *Safeguarding God's People: Safe Ministry with Adults 2023*

1. **The Safeguarding Record Systems (SRS) of the diocese will be used to obtain, track, and retain all required documentation for screening and training**, except as provided in the policies.
 - Screening and training for lay persons are managed by the Safeguarding Records Administrator (SRA) of the organization in which they serve.
 - Clergy screening is by a separate process outside of SRS and managed by the Bishop's office in Houston. Clergy training is managed by the Safeguarding Office in Austin.
2. The **screening and training** for persons who volunteer or are employed in an organization **depend upon the position or positions in which they serve**. See *Safeguarding Requirements by Position*.
3. **Screening** generally requires:
 - A personal interview
 - An online application and reference checks
 - A nationwide sex offender and criminal history background check in any state where the applicant has resided in the past seven years.
4. With very few exceptions, a **person who is current in screening and training for a position in one organization of the diocese, is qualified to serve in the same position in another organization** of the diocese without further screening or training.
5. **Persons who are screened and trained in Safe Church, Safe Communities in another Episcopal diocese** will be evaluated by the Safeguarding Office to determine what screening and additional training will be required. All such persons will be required to take A Universal Policy Review of EDOT Safeguarding Policies.
6. **Safeguarding requirements for screening are tracked separately from Safeguarding training requirements**. For example, if a current background check is on file with SRS, and a person is invited into a new position in the organization or in another organization of the diocese, no additional screening will be required. A person may require additional training for a new position even though they are current in their screening requirements.

7. A **background check must be renewed every five years** to remain current in screening, but additional screening is otherwise not required unless the background check reveals new information, or unless screening expired 6 or more months prior to the renewal of the background check.
8. **All positions shown in *Safeguarding Requirements by Position* require Universal Training.** Universal Training consists of three online video courses that are accessed and tracked online through SRS and Praesidium Academy. The three video courses are *Safe Church*, *Safe Communities: Introduction and Theological Background*, *Safe Church*, *Safe Communities: Healthy Boundaries*, and *A Universal Review of EDOT Safeguarding Policies*. To complete Universal Training the first time, all three courses must be taken. Thereafter, Universal Training must be renewed every 5 years by viewing *A Universal Review of EDOT Safeguarding Policies*.
9. **Many positions also involve Specialized Training.** Specialized Training consists in watching one or more online video courses that are accessed through SRS and Praesidium Academy. For example, employee and volunteer staff positions require watching a video training called *Preventing Sexual Harassment in the Workplace*. Specialized Training requirements vary by position and must be renewed every 3 years.
10. **Positions that involve working with children or youth, ministry to Vulnerable Adults, or ministering in Pastoral Relationships, require a Live Engagement training**, either in person or on a virtual platform, to build proficiency in applying the policies. Live Engagement training is scheduled through SRS.
11. Before being invited to complete an application in SRS for a position that involves working with or around children and youth, ministry with Vulnerable Adults, or Pastoral Relationships, **a volunteer must be known by the leadership of the diocese or organization for at least six months**. Any exception must be approved by the [Safeguarding Minister](#).
12. The Safeguarding thresholds for **lay persons** to work with or around children or youth, serve in a ministry with Vulnerable Adults (see SGP policies), or minister in a Pastoral Relationship (see SGP policies) are described below. Any exceptions to these requirements must be approved by the Safeguarding Office.
 - No volunteer (except for a Parent Volunteer under *SGC VI.C.1*) or employee will be allowed to work regularly with or around children or youth, engage in a ministry with Vulnerable Adults, or minister in a Pastoral Relationship until **all screening requirements for the person's position(s) have been completed and approved** in SRS or under an Independent Screening Agreement.

- For the volunteer or employee to be allowed **to continue working** in the above capacity, the **screening and training requirements must be completed within 45 days** from when they were initiated.
- With respect to working with or around children or youth, **no person may serve as a Qualified Adult** for purposes of the Two Adults Rule, the Responsible Person, etc., (see *SGC VI.C.4.d*) **unless all screening and training requirements are current** in SRS.

13. No **member of the clergy** (other than a Parent Volunteer under *SGC VI.C.1*) will be allowed to work regularly with or around children or youth until **provisionally licensed** to work as a member of the clergy in the diocese. For a member of the clergy **to continue working** with or around children, **all screening and training requirements must be completed with 90 days** from the start or hire date of the member of the clergy. **Persons preparing for ordination** are treated as lay persons for purposes of *Section VI.A.4*.

14. **No person who is known to have a civil or criminal conviction or record of child abuse, or who has admitted to the sexual abuse of a child or youth, may be employed or permitted to volunteer to work with or around children or youth in the diocese.**