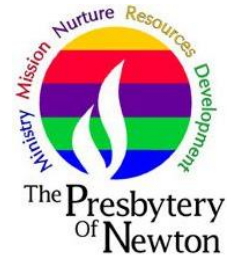


# The Presbytery of Newton Background Check Policy

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## **Policy**

The Presbytery of Newton requires a criminal background check and sex offender registry check on all prospective teaching elders, certified Christian Educators, Commissioned Ruling Elders, Parish Associates, Honorably Retired Teaching Elders, Inquirers, and Candidates seeking membership in the Presbytery of Newton.

Adults acting on behalf of the Presbytery of Newton as chaperone, advisor, and/or small group leader for Presbytery sponsored youth programs, events, retreats, mission trips or Triennium are required to have a criminal background check or provide documentation that a criminal and sex offender background check has been done within the previous three years.

## **Purpose**

The policy helps Pastor Nominating Committees, The Committee on Ministry and the Committee on Preparation for Ministry to make informed decisions about those seeking membership in the Presbytery and for Inquirers and Candidates. The policy seeks to mitigate the risk of lawsuits based on inadequate pre-employment screening. Its ultimate goal is to protect our churches and the Presbytery.

## **The Background check**

The Presbytery has contracted with an investigative firm, National Background Investigations, Inc., (NBI) of Stevensville, Maryland to perform the checks. NBI checks county court records for arrests and convictions in the past seven years and the sex offender registry.

The background check will be conducted during the evaluation, interviewing, and selection process. The above-mentioned seeking membership in the Presbytery will sign a release form, the original copy of which will go to the Stated Clerk. A copy will be sent the Presbytery Leader. When this form has been returned, the Stated Clerk will request the background check from NBI.

All prospects for membership in the presbytery shall be informed early in the evaluation, interviewing, and selection process of this policy in order to avoid surprises.

### **Information**

The Presbytery Leader and/or the Stated Clerk will review the report and will communicate the contents of the report to the appropriate party. The reports will be kept confidential and under lock and key at the Presbytery Offices. The Presbytery through the COM or CPM shall bear the expense of the background check.