



The **Safe Environment Program** is a comprehensive child safety and child sexual abuse prevention program, which creates a network of prevention and protection for the children entrusted into the Archdiocese's care. The various components of the program include:

- ❖ Background checks and clearances
- ❖ Child sexual abuse prevention training

Volunteers who have **any possible contact** with children are required to obtain all of the required background checks, clearances and training as mandated by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia Children & Youth Protection Office.

Volunteers include, but are not limited to: PREP catechists and aides, CYO board members and coaches, HASA board members and volunteers, Youth Group Leaders, during school volunteers and aides, after school club organizers, Scout Leaders, and Theology of the Body Leaders.

Required Background Checks

1. PA State Police Criminal Record Check

- ❖ Can be obtained online at <https://epatch.state.pa.us>
- ❖ Form is \$10, payable via debit/credit card with results available within a few minutes
- ❖ Renewal is required every 5 years

2. PA Department of Public Welfare Child Abuse Clearance Check

- ❖ Form can be obtained online through the <http://www.dpw.state.pa.us>
- ❖ Form is \$10, payable via money order only, and must be mailed to Dept. Of Public Welfare
- ❖ Volunteers must attach a copy of the results of their PA State Police Criminal Check to their form
- ❖ Renewal is required every 5 years

3. Federal Criminal Background Check:

- ❖ A Federal background check is required for all volunteers, who do not live in PA or have lived outside of PA during the past two years. Information is available online at <http://www.pa.cogentid.com>
- ❖ Form is \$33, payable via debit/credit card
- ❖ Clearance is good for 5 years

Safe Environment Training

1. VIRTUS Training: (Protecting God's Children/Safe Environment)

- ❖ This is a one time class required for all volunteers
- ❖ Go to <http://virtus.org> to register for a class
- ❖ You must return the white copy of your signed attendance sheet to the Parish House

2. Mandated Reporter Training

- ❖ This is a one time online training course
- ❖ Go to www.childyouthprotection.org and click on the heading "Training Institute"
- ❖ You must print out the completion certificate and return to the Parish House

3. Communication Technology Addendum

- ❖ Only volunteers who attended the VIRTUS training before July 1, 2011 are required to complete this training
- ❖ Go to <http://www.childyouthprotection.org/docs/Use%20of%20Technology%20Addendum%20Review.pdf>
- ❖ Follow the instructions on page 1
- ❖ You must return a copy of the completion certificate to the Parish House

All clearances and trainings should be obtained before working with children. If not obtained, they may work with children under supervision if they can show proof that background check requests have been submitted and they have registered for required training. All background checks must be received within 30 days and training certificates must be received within 60 days. **Those who do not comply will be moved to "inactive status" until all requirements have been completed and work with children will be suspended until compliance is met.**