

## High Risk Ministries

### Policy Statement

All volunteers in high risk ministries and all parish and eparchial employees are required to be appropriately screened for their ministry.

### Intent of Policy

- To ensure ministries, programs and activities are managed in a safe and professional way.
- To ensure current and new high risk ministry volunteers and parish and eparchial employees meet set standards and are suitable to hold a **position of trust** and/or work with the vulnerable, including church finances.

### Procedure

#### Volunteer/Employee Information Forms

1. All volunteers and employees must complete a **Volunteer/Employee Information Form**.
2. Volunteer/Employee Information Forms are to be kept in the individual's human resources (HR) file.
3. The front page of Volunteer/Employee Information Forms, with the emergency contact information, may be copied and stored in an area that is not public yet is easily accessible in the event of an emergency (for example, in a binder labelled "Emergency Contacts" in the parish office, hall office or sacristy).

#### Interviews

4. High risk ministry volunteers and all parish and eparchial employees are to be interviewed by the pastor and/or parish or eparchial ministry leader about their background, skills, interests and availability to determine their suitability for ministry.
5. All interview notes are to be securely kept with the candidate's other HR documents.

#### References

6. All volunteers in high risk ministries and all parish and eparchial employees must provide three references by completing the **References List/PIC Form**.
7. By completing the References List/PIC Form, candidates acknowledge they must provide a Police Information Check and Vulnerable Sector Check (if required) as a condition of their employment/volunteerism.
8. References must be interviewed by the pastor and/or parish or eparchial ministry leader using the **Reference Check Questionnaire**.

9. The Reference Check Questionnaire may be completed in written form by the reference themselves or by the interviewer in conversation with the person giving the reference.

#### **Police Information Checks and Vulnerable Sector Information Checks**

10. All high risk ministry volunteers and all parish and eparchial employees must provide a **Police Information Check (PIC)** to determine if they have a criminal record that would exclude them from serving in the ministry for which they are being considered.
11. All high risk ministry volunteers and employees in a position of trust or authority over minors and vulnerable persons must provide a **Vulnerable Sector Police Information Check (VSC)**.
12. Volunteers and employees who have indirect involvement or contact with children or vulnerable persons but with sufficient regularity that a relationship of trust might develop must obtain a VSC in addition to the PIC. For example: a camp cook or camp caretaker are not directly responsible for children at camp, however they have access to children on an ongoing basis because of the nature of their work at the camp.
13. If the PIC has identified a criminal conviction, the pastor or ministry leader must speak with the Eparchial Safe Environment Coordinator to determine if the conviction prevents that individual from participation in the ministry for which they are applying.
14. PICs, including a VSCs if applicable, must be renewed every four years.
15. Only the original PIC/VSC with the police agency seal will be accepted. A photocopy will not be accepted.
16. The PIC/VSC must be obtained specifically for that individual's employment or ministry within the Eparchy of Edmonton or its parishes/activities. A PIC/VSC obtained at the request of another organization will not be accepted.
17. Only the pastor or director of an eparchial ministry may see an individual's PIC/VSC. Once it is reviewed, it is placed in a sealed envelope and stored in the individual's HR file.
18. A PIC/VSC obtained for one parish or ministry within the Eparchy is transferrable to another parish or ministry within the Eparchy, as long as the nature of the ministry is the same and the vulnerable sector served is the same.
19. Someone who moves from general risk to high risk ministry or employment must provide a PIC, and VSC if working with the vulnerable sector, for their new ministry position.

20. Payment for the PIC is the responsibility of the eparchial office, parish, camp or other organization requesting the PIC.

### **Annual Attestation**

21. All high risk ministry volunteers and all eparchial and parish employees will sign an **Annual Attestation**, confirming that the clear status of their PIC/VSC has not changed since the time when their clear PIC was submitted.
22. The Annual Attestation will be completed each September until a new PIC/VSC is required at the end of the fourth year of employment/ministry.
23. Annual Attestations are stored with the individual's HR file.

### **Covenant of Care**

24. All volunteers and employees must read and sign a **Covenant of Care**, thereby committing to follow all eparchial safe environment policies, including the Eparchy of Edmonton's **Code of Conduct**.

### **Safe Environment Training**

25. All parish and eparchial employees and all high risk ministry volunteers, as well as those in a leadership position, are required to complete the Eparchy of Edmonton's **Safe Environment Training**.
26. A record of those who have completed their training is held at the Pastoral Centre.
27. Those who complete the Safe Environment Training will receive a certificate of completion.
28. A copy Safe Environment Training Certificate is to be included in the individual's HR file.

### **Record Keeping**

29. All human resources information and documentation pertaining to each employee or volunteer is private.
30. All HR documentation, including the Volunteer Information Form, References List/PIC Form, Reference Check Questionnaire, PIC, VSC, Annual Attestations, and all other relevant documents, must be filed according to each individual employee or volunteer and must be kept in a locked cabinet at the parish or eparchial office.
31. Only the pastor and the parish or eparchial volunteer coordinator are to have access to the HR files.