

Protecting God's Children™ Frequently Asked Questions

Q: “Who has to take Protecting God's Children™ (PGC)?”

- All paid diocesan, parish and school staff and any clergy temporarily assigned to the Diocese of Columbus *regardless of their level of contact with children and youth*
- All volunteers in a program or ministry for children and youth *regardless of their level of contact with children and youth* (examples: Catholic school, PSR program, etc.)
- Volunteers for other parish programs or ministries who have been delegated care, custody, or control of children and youth (example: choir director, sacristan)

Q: “Is there a cost to take the PGC class?”

There is no charge to attend. All workbook materials and handouts are provided by the host parish or school. Participants should bring a pen.

Q: “I took the Boy Scouts of America program; do I still have to take PGC?”

Yes.

Q: “Can I get CEU credit for my job?”

The Diocese is not equipped to provide continuing education credits for this class.

Q: “I’m not Catholic. Do I still have to take Protecting God’s Children to coach?”

Yes.

Q: “Do I have to take the class just to be a driver for a high school field trip?”

Yes. Duration of service does not mitigate compliance.

Q: “I am a victim of sexual abuse and I would find it too disturbing to attend the class. Can I still volunteer?”

The Diocese will work individually with victims. Call the diocesan Safe Environment Consultant at 614-241-2565 for confidential arrangements.

Q: “How do I register for the Protecting God’s Children class?”

You may register on-line at www.virtus.org and click on “Registration.” Choose “Begin the Registration Process”, select “Diocese of Columbus” as your location, and then follow the prompts. If you do not have Internet access, you may contact your parish or school for help or the diocesan Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry.

Q: “How do I find out when and where the classes are being held?”

The current schedule is posted online at www.virtus.org, click on “Registration” and choose “View a list of sessions.” Be sure to select “Diocese of Columbus.”

Q: “Is childcare available at the class?”

No, and children are not permitted to attend. Participants who bring children will be asked to leave and reschedule for another session.

Q: “Where can I get more information?”

Visit the diocesan Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry website at <http://www.cdeducation.org/oym/> and click on “Safe Environment” or contact the diocese at 614-241-2565.

Fingerprinting & Background Check Frequently Asked Questions

Q: “Why do I have to get a background check to volunteer?”

The purpose of conducting criminal background investigations is to prevent those with specific criminal backgrounds from gaining access to our children. (Examples: assault, domestic violence, corruption of minor, sexual crimes, etc.)

Q: “What if my background check reflects an offense from my past?”

While there are serious offenses that would absolutely prevent someone from volunteering with children, not everyone with an offense is precluded from volunteering. These are handled confidentially on a case-by-case basis.

Q: “Where do I get fingerprinted?”

Electronic WebCheck locations are listed by county on the Attorney General’s website at: <http://www.webcheck.ag.state.oh.us/webcheckcommunity.htm>

Q: “What information should I take when getting fingerprinted?”

1. A valid Ohio driver’s license or Ohio photo ID
2. Name & address of parish so that the report can be mailed to the proper location
3. Reason: “Responsible for care, custody, control of children ORC 3319.39”
4. Payment

Q: “Is there a cost for the fingerprinting/background checks?”

Yes. Background checks cost \$22 for BCI and \$24 for FBI. WebCheck locations almost always charge additional fees for their processing services. It’s best to ask ahead of time.

Q: “Which background check do I need? BCI or FBI?”

BCI Check: If applicant has lived in Ohio for at least the past 5 consecutive years

FBI Check: If applicant has lived outside of Ohio at any time during the past 5 consecutive years

Q: “Do I have to be fingerprinted before I attend Protecting God’s Children™?”

The two requirements are separate, and can be done in either order.

Q: “Can I get fingerprinted at the Protecting God’s Children™ class?”

No. The fingerprinting process is separate from PGC classes.

Q: “I had to be fingerprinted for work; can this report be used?”

For the safety of our children, we require that a new background check be conducted before staff/volunteers begin working with children on behalf of the church. The exception is if the background check is less than one year old; in that case, you can request that the BCI&I send another original report to your parish/school.