

# CONTINUING RESOLUTION

## CR12.04.H23. BACKGROUND CHECKS AND CLEARANCES

WHEREAS, the welfare and safety of our children and youth is a paramount concern of this congregation, particularly as they are involved in activities and ministries of this congregation; and

WHEREAS, this congregation desires to provide a safe and nurturing environment for children and young adults; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania provides Criminal Record Checks and Child Abuse History Clearances; and

WHEREAS, Instituting a program for the requirement of criminal record checks and child abuse history clearances for those adults involved with children and young adults deters the predatory behavior of sexual offenders and abusive behavior from adults towards children and young adults; and

WHEREAS, such background checks and clearance programs also deter potential litigation against youth ministries staff and volunteers, and organizations such as religious institutions; and

WHEREAS, Proverbs 2: 11-13 (Contemporary English Version) proclaims “Sound judgment and good sense will watch over you. Wisdom will protect you from evil schemes and from those liars who turned from doing good to live in the darkness”;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Latrobe, PA (hereafter church) shall adopt the following policies and guidelines regarding background checks and clearances for youth ministry staff, leaders, and adult volunteers over the age of eighteen (18):

### I. DEFINITIONS

1. The term “background check” shall mean Act 34 Pennsylvania Police Clearance and the term “clearance” shall mean Act 151 Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance.
2. The term “documentation” shall mean written documentation from the appropriate State agency showing clearance for an individual.

### II. INDIVIDUALS REQUIRING BACKGROUND CHECKS AND CLEARANCES

1. All called ministry staff and hired personnel. This includes, but is not limited to pastors, deacons, any other rostered ministers, choir directors, nursery attendants, secretaries, and sextons.
2. All individuals in supervisory positions who are involved with children or youth ministries. This includes but is not limited to Worship Leaders, Sunday Church School teachers and superintendents, acolyte directors, youth group advisors, Club FRED directors, Vacation Bible School directors and catechism guides.
3. All teachers and adult aides for all children/young adult programs. This includes but is not limited to Sunday Church School, Club FRED, Vacation Bible School, Day in the Park, and Good Friday Day Camp.
4. Any and all other individuals, at the discretion of a pastor, who work with or are involved with the children and youth ministries of this congregation. This includes, but is not limited to, the director of a newly formed activity, and adult chaperones of children and youth activities.

### III. OBTAINING BACKGROUND CHECKS AND CLEARANCES

1. Clearance forms may be obtained by contacting the church office for instructions on how to apply for the required clearances or completed online at <https://TrinityLatrobe.com/clearances>.
2. Background check and clearance documentation is considered current and valid only if obtained for participation in youth ministries at the church or from an individual's current employer. Persons continuing in positions identified in II. above shall not need to update such documentation once provided to the church. However, updated background check and clearance documentation shall be provided the church should an individual cease to function in any of the positions identified in II. above and then wish to participate again in our youth ministries.
3. Any person who desires reimbursement for the fees to obtain a background check or clearance, shall be reimbursed such fees after submitting the background check and clearance documentation to the church office.

### IV. INDIVIDUALS WHO MAY NOT PARTICIPATE IN YOUTH MINISTRIES

1. An unsatisfactory criminal record check which shall preclude participation of any individual adult in youth ministries at the church includes convictions for any of the following: criminal homicide; aggravated assault; unlawful restraint; kidnapping; rape; endangering the welfare of a child; deviate sexual intercourse; obscenity; corruption of a minor; criminal abuse of a child; indecent exposure; indecent assault; concealing the death of a child; selling a child; and prostitution.
2. Any infraction identified as unacceptable from the Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance.

### V. RECORDS MAINTENANCE

1. Background check or clearance documentation shall be held in the strictest of confidence. Review of individual background check and clearance documentation shall be limited to the called ministry staff. Access to background check and clearance documentation files shall be restricted to the called ministry staff, Child Protection Policy Committee (hereafter CPPC) chair, and church office staff. No records, results, or documentation of any background check or clearance may be placed into the church's file without the approval of the individual who submitted such documentation.
2. The church shall maintain a file containing the records of those individuals who have received and submitted background check or clearance documentation to the church office. This file shall be maintained in the church office and any individual whose records are contained in the file may request to view or copy his or her documentation, but not the documentation of others.

### VI. INDIVIDUALS WITHOUT A BACKGROUND CHECK AND CLEARANCE

1. In the event that any individual without background check or clearance documentation shall be alone with a child, that individual is required to inform a called ministry staff member of that situation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this church strongly encourages all adults, with or without having provided background check or clearance documentation, not to put themselves in a position to be alone with a child or young adult. Should such a need arise (i.e., counseling, transportation, etc.), such individuals shall obtain parental consent and inform a called ministry staff member ahead of this one-on-one encounter.