

**Policy Regarding Background Checks for  
Priests and Deacons Coming into the Diocese of Green Bay**

**I. Priests and Deacons, diocesan or religious, who will be residing and exercising ministry within the Diocese of Green Bay on a stable or long-term basis (more than six months).**

This pertains to those who will receive an appointment from the Bishop for a diocesan apostolate or who will receive an appointment from someone other than the Bishop for a non-diocesan assignment (e.g. a religious priest/deacon/brother who is appointed by his religious superior to be the director of a retreat house operated by that religious order). This also pertains to those who will be residing within the Diocese of Green Bay and exercising ministry on an occasional basis (e.g. a retired priest from another diocese).

- a. The request for faculties and/or the request for or notification of an appointment will be processed by the Vicar for Ministers Department.
- b. A letter is needed from the local ordinary or religious superior of the priest or deacon stating that he is in good standing. This letter must be dated within the last year.
- c. The secretary for the Vicar for Ministers will prepare the Safe Environment Package to send to the priest/deacon. The following are included in the package:
  - i. Letter to the priest/deacon from the Chancellor
  - ii. Our Promise to Protect (includes Code of Pastoral Conduct)
  - iii. Form for priest/deacon to sign saying he has read and agrees with the policy
  - iv. Instructions for completing E-apps application for criminal background check
  - v. Instructions on how to register for VIRTUS on-line
  - vi. Schedule of dates that VIRTUS workshops are offered
- d. Before an appointment/faculties letter is prepared for the Bishop's signature, the Vicar for Ministers and Chancellor will receive confirmation from the Safe Environment Department that the following requirements have been met:
  - i. Clean or approved Background Check
  - ii. Completion of VIRTUS training or registration for VIRTUS training within 30 days of the cleric's arrival.
  - iii. Signed copy of the Our Promise to Protect received
- e. All priests serving in a diocesan apostolate or assisting with parish ministry in the Diocese of Green Bay are required readers of VIRTUS bulletins.
- f. On an annual basis, the Bishop of Green Bay will write major superiors of religious institutes, societies of apostolic life, etc. to request an update regarding their compliance with *Praesidium* and the status of their members who are residing and/or exercising ministry in the Diocese of Green Bay.

**II. Priests and Deacons who will be coming into the Diocese of Green Bay for temporary, short-term ministry (less than six months).**

Priests and Deacons who will be coming into the Diocese for limited, short-term ministry, e.g. a baptism, wedding, funeral, for a friend or relative, retreats, parish missions, etc. This pertains

only to diocesan institutions and institutions of religious communities. If one year or more has passed before the priest/deacon returns to the Diocese again, this process must be renewed.


- a. A *celebret* or letter is needed from the local ordinary or religious superior of the priest or deacon stating that he is in good standing. This *celebret* or letter must be dated within this last year.
- b. Copies of this *celebret* or letter are to be forwarded to the pastor of the parish or superior of the institution where the ministry will take place, and the office of the Chancellor of the Diocese of Green Bay, where they will be kept on file.
- c. Priests and Deacons who will be coming in to the Diocese of Green Bay as speakers, e.g., retreats, parish missions, talks and conferences, etc. This pertains only to diocesan institutions and institutions of religious communities. If one year or more has passed before the priest/deacon returns to the Diocese again, this process must be renewed.
- d. If the priest or deacon is coming into the Diocese of Green Bay as a speaker at a parish, school or other institution of the Diocese of Green Bay, permission for speakers from outside the Diocese of Green Bay is to be obtained through the office of the Chancellor according to the speaker permission policy. This provision pertains to diocesan institutions only, not non-diocesan institutions.

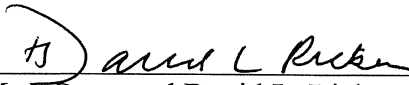
**III.** Priests and Deacons who are involved in the Missionary Co-Op. Program through World Mission Services. If one year or more has passed before the priest/deacon returns to the Diocese again, this process must be renewed.

- a. Arrangements are made through World Mission Services.
- b. A letter from the local ordinary or religious superior of the priest or deacon stating that he is in good standing. This letter must indicate the good standing of the cleric and the background checks that are customary in the country of the cleric's origin.
- c. World Mission Services, upon obtaining this letter, is to forward a copy to the office of the Chancellor, where it is to be kept on file.

I hereby establish and promulgate this policy as particular law for the Diocese of Green Bay, effective September 1, 2011. This revises the policy established by my predecessor, Most Reverend David A. Zubik, on September 30, 2005.

Given at the Chancery, Green Bay, Wisconsin, on August 15, 2011.

  
Chancellor

  
Most Reverend David L. Ricken, DD, JCL  
Bishop of Green Bay