

DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER
BACKGROUND SCREENING AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS
AND PERMISSIONS FOR EXTERNAL PRIESTS AND PERMANENT DEACONS

An “external” priest or deacon is an ordained member of a religious institute or society of consecrated life or incardinated in a diocese other than the Diocese of Manchester.

Priests and deacons who will serve in “supply” ministry¹ for more than 2 weeks or is assigned by the Bishop of Manchester to ministry in the Diocese of Manchester:

1. Background Screening and Training Requirements:
 - a. A letter of suitability and good standing from his diocesan bishop or religious superior submitted to the Bishop. The letter must contain the following provisions:
 - The priest or deacon’s name, date of birth, date of ordination, and current position;
 - A statement that the priest or deacon enjoys a good reputation and is qualified to exercise ministry in his diocese;
 - A statement that there is nothing in the background of the priest or deacon that would limit or disqualify him from the assignment in his diocese;
 - A statement that there is nothing in the background of the priest or deacon that would render him unsuitable to work with minor children;
 - The date(s) and name(s) of the sexual abuse prevention program the priest or deacon attended; and
 - The date(s) that the priest or deacon underwent a criminal records check.
 - b. Criminal record check(s) in accordance with the Diocese of Manchester Screening and Training Protocol to the Safe Environment Office;
 - c. Check of the National Sex Offender Registry by the Safe Environment Office;
 - d. Signed acknowledgement of the Diocese of Manchester’s Code of Conduct & Policy for the Protection of Children to the Safe Environment Office;
 - e. Completion of *Background Screening Authorization for Clerics, Religious and Persons in Ecclesiastical Studies* to the Safe Environment Office; and
 - f. One of the following:
 - i. Completion of an approved safe environment training program in the Diocese of Manchester within the last four (4) years
OR
 - ii. Evidence of completion of a safe environment training program within the last four (4) years from the cleric’s diocese or religious institute AND evidence of instruction on the Diocese of Manchester mandatory reporting requirements for Church personnel to the Safe Environment Office.
2. The Bishop of Manchester’s Permission is Required: The Bishop will prepare a letter to priests or deacons assigned to or serving in regular supply ministry in the diocese. The letter will indicate which “faculties” are granted by the Bishop. The Vicar(s) General, Judicial Vicar, Dean, the priest or deacon’s home diocesan bishop or religious superior, and pastor (if applicable) must be copied on the letter.
3. Record-Keeping:
 - a. Personnel file: a “personnel” or clergy file will be established for the priest or deacon.

¹ “Supply ministry” means ministry as a substitute or fill-in where the priest is not assigned by the bishop. For example, a retired priest who celebrates Mass at a parish for a pastor who is ill or on vacation serves in “supply ministry.”

- b. Notifications: The name and contact information for the priest or deacon will be reported to the Chancellor's and Communications offices.

Priests and deacons who serve for more than 2 weeks in a non-diocesan school or institution but are not assigned by the Bishop of Manchester:²

1. Background Screening and Training Requirements:
 - a. A letter of suitability and good standing from his diocesan bishop or religious superior to the Bishop. The letter must contain the following provisions:
 - The priest or deacon's name, date of birth, date of ordination, and current position;
 - A statement that the priest or deacon enjoys a good reputation and is qualified to exercise ministry in his diocese;
 - A statement that there is nothing in the background of the priest or deacon that would limit or disqualify him from the assignment in his diocese;
 - A statement that there is nothing in the background of the priest or deacon that would render him unsuitable to work with minor children;
 - The date(s) and name(s) of the sexual abuse prevention program the priest or deacon attended; and
 - The date(s) that the priest or deacon underwent a criminal records check.
 - b. Check of the National Sex Offender Registry by the Safe Environment Office;
 - c. Evidence from the religious institute or diocese that the priest or deacon underwent a criminal record check and safe environment training within the past four (4) years to the Safe Environment Office;
 - d. Signed acknowledgement of the Diocese of Manchester's Code of Conduct & Policy for the Protection of Children to the Safe Environment Office; and
 - e. Completion of *Background Screening Authorization for Clerics, Religious and Persons in Ecclesiastical Studies* to the Safe Environment Office.
2. The Bishop's Permission is Required: The Bishop will prepare a letter to the priest or deacon, granting him permission for such ministry in the Diocese. The letter will indicate which "faculties" are granted by the Bishop. The Vicar(s) General, Judicial Vicar, Dean, the priest or deacon's home diocesan bishop or religious superior, and local pastor (if applicable) must be copied on the letter.
3. Record-Keeping:
 - a. Personnel file: a file will be established for the priest or deacon and filed with the other priest and deacon personnel files, even though the priest or deacon is not considered to be "diocesan personnel"
 - b. Notifications: The name and contact information for the priest or deacon will be reported to the Chancellor's and Communications offices.

Priests or deacons who will serve in the diocese for 2 weeks or less:

1. Background Screening and Training Requirements:
 - a. A letter of suitability and good standing from his diocesan bishop or religious superior to the Bishop. The letter must contain the following provisions:
 - A statement that the priest or deacon is in good standing and the place of incardination;

² Examples are priests and deacons who serve in non-diocesan Catholic schools, Catholic colleges, or hospitals.

- The ministry that the priest or deacon intends to do in the Diocese of Manchester and the date of the ministry; and
 - A statement that there is nothing in the background of the priest or deacon that “would render him unsuitable to work with minor children or that would disqualify him from the ministry.”
2. The Bishop’s Written Permission is Not Required.
 3. Recordkeeping: The Letter must be filed in the “Good Standing” files in the vault or scanned and catalogued. The letter should be copied to the pastor, principal, or administrator at the location where the priest or deacon will minister.