

## Safe Church FAQs

*The Episcopal Diocese of North Dakota is committed to creating safe environments for all people and provides training and policies to reflect that commitment. Our Safe Church program includes training courses, background check protocols, policies for ministries with children and youth, policies for ministries with vulnerable adults, and a number of additional resources.*

Q: Who needs to take Safe Church training?

**A: Safe Church training is required for the following:**

- All clergy and lay staff
- All volunteers currently involved in ministries with children and/or youth
- All volunteers currently involved in ministries with vulnerable adults
- Vestry members
- Diocesan Council and Standing Committee members

For a list of required courses for each ministry area, please go to Appendix A-2 in the Policy for the Protection of Children and Youth or the Policy for the Protection of Vulnerable Adults.

Q: Who has to have a public records check/background check?

**A: All those engaged in any of the following lay ministries are required by our diocesan safe church policies to have a public records/background check:**

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| ✓ church school or VBS teacher               | ✓ Eucharistic visitors                           |
| ✓ acolyte leader/trainer                     | ✓ treasurer & related financial responsibilities |
| ✓ camp counselor/other camp staff            | ✓ driver for program-related transportation      |
| ✓ youth group/confirmation leader/mentor     | ✓ choir director                                 |
| ✓ nursery worker                             | ✓ organist                                       |
| ✓ <i>any other</i> youth-involved volunteers | ✓ administrative support                         |

Q: How do I sign up for training at Praesidium?

**A: A congregation should email a list of those currently engaged in the ministries in Appendix A-1 and A2. Please email the list to the Diocesan Office ([office@ndepiscopal.org](mailto:office@ndepiscopal.org)) – subject line: Safe Church Training and include the name(s), email address(es), and congregation in the body of the email. Within a few days, each volunteer will receive an email from “Praesidium Do Not Reply.” The volunteer should check their spam/junk folder in case it goes there. They should then follow the instructions in the email to create an account in Praesidium Academy and obtain access to the courses.**

Q: How do I sign up for a public records/background check?

**A: To initiate the records check process, congregations should provide the Diocesan Office ([office@ndepiscopal.org](mailto:office@ndepiscopal.org)) with the name(s), email addresses, and congregation of those individuals needing public records/background checks (see list above).**

**After those names/email addresses and congregation are provided, each individual will receive an email from Sterling Volunteers (with the subject line: "Invitation from The Episcopal Diocese of North Dakota"). In that email is a link (Order My Background Check) that allows them to create an account (login/password) and some brief information about the process. Check spam and junk folders if the email doesn't come to your inbox.**

Q: When do I need to take or retake Safe Church training?

**A: If you are engaged in one or more of the ministry areas identified above or are about to begin volunteering, you should take the required training immediately. You are required to take Safe Church training for your ministry(ies) every three years. Before you begin serving in a new ministry, you may be required to take additional courses.**

Q: How often do I need to do a public records/background check?

**A: Public records/background checks are good for five years.**

Q: Are in-person workshops available for Safe Church training?

**A: Currently, training is only available online. However, in-person training may be available in the future. Please contact the Diocesan Office for more information.**