



This form may be filled out electronically. For best results, use Adobe Reader. <http://get.adobe.com/reader/>
The form may be saved and emailed back completed, or printed and returned.

1. In connection with my employment or volunteer ministry, I understand that a consumer report or an investigative consumer report may be requested that will include information as to my character. I understand that as directed by Church policy and consistent with the volunteer position I hold, you may be requesting information from public and private sources about my court records or criminal background.
2. I acknowledge that a telephonic facsimile (FAX) or photographic copy shall be as valid as the original. This release is valid for most federal, state and county agencies.
3. I hereby authorize, without reservation, any law enforcement agency, institution, information service bureau, school, employer, reference or insurance company contacted by the Church or its agent, to furnish the information described in paragraph 1.

The following information is required by law enforcement agencies and other entities for positive identification purposes when checking public records. It is confidential and will not be used for any other purposes. I hereby release all persons, agencies, and entities providing information or reports about me from any and all liability arising out of the requests for or release of any of the above mentioned information or reports.

Applicant's Full Name _____

Other names you have used _____

Applicant's Address _____

Street _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____ Phone number _____

Social Security Number _____ Date of Birth _____

Signature _____ Today's Date _____

Please list all of the Cities and States where you have lived.

City _____ State _____

City _____ State _____

City _____ State _____

City _____ State _____

COMPLETE PAGE 2 OF THIS FORM

Disclosure Regarding Procurement of a Consumer Report (Criminal Background Check)

In connection with your ministry, we may procure a consumer report on you as part of the process of considering your candidacy as a volunteer who has regular contact with children. In the event that information from the report is utilized in whole or in part in making an adverse decision with regard to your volunteer ministry, before making the adverse decision, we will provide you with a copy of the consumer report and a description in writing of your rights under the law.

Please be advised that we may obtain an investigative report including information as to your criminal record. Please be advised that you have the right to request, in writing, within a reasonable time, that we make a complete and accurate disclosure of the nature and scope of the information requested. Such disclosure will be made to you within 5 days of the date on which we receive the request from you or within 5 days of the time the report was first requested.

The Fair Credit Reporting Act gives you specific rights in dealing with consumer reporting agencies. You will find these rights summarized in the document A Summary of Your Rights. By your signature below, you hereby authorize us to obtain a consumer report about you in order to consider you for volunteer ministry.

This report will be processed by: **Lexis Nexis**

Applicant's Full Name _____

Other names you have used _____

Applicant's Address _____

Street _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone Number _____ Cell Phone Number _____

Email Address _____

Gender _____

Social Security Number _____ Date of Birth _____

Signature _____ Today's Date _____

*Give copy with Summary of Rights to applicant.
Retain a copy for your files.*

A Summary of Your Rights Under the Fair Credit Reporting Act

The federal Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) promotes the accuracy, fairness, and privacy of information in the files of “consumer reporting agencies.” A criminal background check is a consumer report under the FCRA. For purposes of this check LexisNexis is a consumer reporting agency. No other consumer reports, such as credit reports will be obtained under the release and disclosure signed by you. Here is a summary of your major rights under the FCRA.

For more information, including information about additional rights, go to www.ftc.gov/credit or write to: Consumer Response Center, Room 130-A, Federal Trade Commission, 600 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20580.

- **You must be told if information in your file has been used against you.** If the Southwood Presbyterian Church uses a consumer report (criminal background check) to deny your employment or volunteer service—or to take another adverse action against you—we must tell you, and must give you the name, address, and phone number of the agency that provided the information.
- **You have the right to know what is in your file.** You may request and obtain all the information about you in the files of LexisNexis. You will be required to provide proper identification, which may include your Social Security number. In many cases, the disclosure will be free. You are entitled to a free file disclosure if:
 - a person has taken adverse action against you because of information in your criminal background check;
 - you are the victim of identify theft and place a fraud alert in your file;
 - your file contains inaccurate information as a result of fraud;
 - you are on public assistance;
 - you are unemployed but expect to apply for employment within 60 days.

In addition, by September 2005 all consumers will be entitled to one free disclosure every 12 months upon request from each nationwide credit bureau and from nationwide specialty consumer reporting agencies. See www.ftc.gov/credit for additional information.

- **You have the right to dispute incomplete or inaccurate information.** If you identify information in your file that is incomplete or inaccurate, and report it to the consumer reporting agency, the agency must investigate unless your dispute is frivolous. See www.ftc.gov/credit for an explanation of dispute procedures.
- **Consumer reporting agencies must correct or delete inaccurate, incomplete, or unverifiable information.** Inaccurate, incomplete or unverifiable information must be removed or corrected, usually within 30 days. However, a consumer reporting agency may continue to report information it has verified as accurate.
- **Access to your file is limited.** A consumer reporting agency may provide information about you only to people with a valid need — usually to consider an application with a creditor, insurer, employer, landlord, or other business. The FCRA specifies those with a valid need for access.
- **You must give your consent for reports to be provided to employers.** A consumer reporting agency may not give out information about you to your employer, or a potential employer, without your written consent given to the employer. For more information, go to www.ftc.gov/credit.
- **You may seek damages from violators.** If a consumer reporting agency, or, in some cases, a user of consumer reports or a furnisher of information to a consumer reporting agency violates the FCRA, you may be able to sue in state or federal court.
- **Identity theft victims and active duty military personnel have additional rights.** For more information, visit www.ftc.gov/credit. States may enforce the FCRA, and many states have their own consumer reporting laws. In some cases, you may have more rights under state law. For more information, contact your state or local consumer protection agency or your state Attorney General.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS

What is the purpose of requiring checks?

We, as a church, value the relationship we have with the youngest and most vulnerable of our faith. Our children are precious, and we must do everything in our power to protect them from harm. While a criminal background check on those who work with children is not a foolproof method of keeping our children safe, it is one small thing that we can do to assure that those who work with our children do not have a history that would make their presence incompatible with our safe environment program. Our goal is to do what we can to create the safest environment possible for our children and young people. We hope that our volunteers understand the importance of this objective, and cooperate fully with this program.

Is a credit check being done?

NO. The only check is of the volunteer's criminal background. The federal law that requires us to provide information and a summary of rights is called the Fair Credit Reporting Act, but it covers any kind of an "investigation" of background, and thus it covers criminal background checks. Under that law, a criminal background check is included in the definition of "consumer report." Do not be confused by the references to "credit" and "consumer report" because the only check being performed is a criminal background check.

Is every church volunteer required to submit to a background check?

The only volunteers who will be required to submit to a criminal background check are those who have regular contact with children and young people.

How is the check completed?

The Church has contracted with LexisNexis to coordinate the background checking program. Each person who is checked will be required to sign release and disclosure forms.

What information will be disclosed to the Church when this check is completed?

Various types of information will be received in a report prepared by the vendor. This report will be received by the Church. Once the employee or volunteer has completed the release forms, the following types of checks may be done:

- (1) Social Security Validation: This is a report that allows the Church to determine if the employee or volunteer has provided a validly issued Social Security number, and that the name given is the correct name for that person. The report will disclose if that person has previously used other names, so that a criminal history check can be performed.
- (2) National Crime Check: This report provides information available in a national criminal history database which contains information from various Departments of Corrections and prison systems across the country. This report will reveal if the employee or volunteer has been in the prison system anywhere in the country.
- (3) Federal Convictions: This report provides a report that includes any time spent in Federal custody.
- (4) Sex Offender Report: This report provides a hit if the name, Date of Birth or social security number are tied to a registered sex offender.
- (5) Statewide Crime Report: This is the most reliable way to assure that all relevant criminal history is revealed. In many states, the only way to assure that all relevant criminal records are checked is to physically check the records in the county of residence. This check will reveal the type of offense, the date it occurred, and the disposition. Many misdemeanor charges are also included in this report.

What information will we be required to provide in order to have the check completed?

In order to complete the check, volunteers will be required to provide the following information:

- (1) Name; (2) Date of Birth; (3) Social Security Number; (4) Telephone Number

Can the volunteer continue to work while the check is being performed?

Because we anticipate that the checks will be completed very quickly, volunteers can continue to work while the checks are being performed. However, those who do not timely complete the information required for a check may be asked to not work until the check is completed.

What will happen if a criminal offense appears on the report?

Criminal offenses that appear on a report will be screened by the appropriate staff person(s) to determine whether they indicate a potential problem with the safety and security of children. Thus, criminal offenses that are unrelated to that person's position, or are not related to working with children, will be considered irrelevant. A criminal history which does raise a potential problem, however, will be reviewed with the volunteer and with the appropriate staff person(s). If the check reveals an offense that will require the volunteer to cease working with children or young people, a report will be sent to the volunteer and they will be allowed an opportunity to explain before being asked to step down.