

**Southern Ohio Synod
of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

Background Check Policy for Synod Staff and Leadership

Recognizing that the screening of those who interact with children, youth, elderly persons or persons with disabilities is an important measure to reduce the risk of abusive conduct, the Southern Ohio Synod requires criminal history background checks as follows for its staff and representatives.

Each ELCA congregation in the Southern Ohio Synod is responsible for conducting criminal history background checks of its employees and volunteers who work directly with children, youth, elderly persons or persons with disabilities according to the congregation's own background check policy.

Criminal history background checks

At least once every three years, the following persons must authorize the Synod to conduct a criminal history background check:

- Rostered Ministers of Word and Sacrament
- Rostered Ministers of Word and Service
- Any adult (over age 18) who interacts with children, youth, elderly persons or persons with disabilities at or through any Synod-sponsored event, program or training

In addition, any adult who interacts with children, youth, elderly persons or persons with disabilities at or through any Synod-sponsored event, program or training must have been an active member in good standing of a Southern Ohio Synod ELCA congregation for at least six months.

National Sex Offender Registry

Persons who are listed on a sex offender registry may not hold any position of leadership in or on behalf of the Southern Ohio Synod. The following leadership positions are not required to undergo a full background check (unless they interact with children, youth, elderly persons or persons with disabilities at or through any Synod-sponsored event, program or training). They must, however, be checked on the National Sex Offender Registry (<http://www.nsopw.gov>) not more than 30 days prior to the time they are to assume their Synod leadership position. These positions include but are not limited to:

- Synod officers (bishop, vice president, secretary, treasurer)
- Members of Synod Council
- All Synod staff, including Assistants to the Bishop
- Members of the Synod Executive Committee
- Members of any Synod-authorized committee, such as:
 - Consultation Committee
 - Committee on Discipline

- Mutual Ministry Committee
 - Audit Committee
 - Candidacy Committee
- Members of any Synod-created team or task force, such as:
 - Team for Leadership Development and Support
 - Team for Congregational Ministries and Support
 - Team for Outreach Ministries and Support
- Leaders of any Synod-created conferences, clusters, coalitions, area subdivisions or networks