

# BACKGROUND SCREENING UPDATE

## *The Office for the Protection of Children and Young People*

The Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People (The Charter) promulgated by the Bishops of the United States in 2002 outlines specific practices and guidelines providing standards of safety in parishes and dioceses throughout the United States. As directed in The Charter, the Diocese of Rockville Centre requires all employees, clergy, and volunteers to complete three requirements within thirty days of employment or volunteering:

1. Attend **Protecting God's Children Program (Virtus)**
2. Sign the Codes of Conduct
3. Complete a background screen application. The Diocese requires all those who remain in active ministry be rescreened at 5-year intervals. volunteers/employees.

### **A Word on Background Screening of Volunteers:**

The Office for the Protection of Children and Young People (OFPCYP) has streamlined the volunteer application process enabling volunteers to complete the three safe environment requirements in one step. Individuals wishing to volunteer in a parish or school:

1. Register to attend a Protecting God's Children class and create a Virtus account on the Virtus website: [www.Virtus.org](http://www.Virtus.org)
2. Electronically acknowledge the Diocesan Code of Conduct - provided during the Virtus registration process.
3. Follow the instructions to complete the Sterling Volunteers background screening application offered during the Virtus registration process.

### **Active Volunteers:**

If you are active in a parish ministry, have already attended Virtus and have been background screened, you may be at—or beyond—the **5yr. rescreening requirement**. If this is the case, you will receive an email from **Sterling Volunteers** asking you to complete the background screening application online. You may access the background screening application by following the prompt in the email or logging into your Virtus account. **Please be aware—this is not a scam nor has your email been hacked.** The OFPCYP has been working with your parish to update the Safe Environment records and noted it is time for you to be rescreened. You may also be prompted to electronically re-sign the Code of Conduct when you log into your Virtus account.

### **Edit Your Virtus Account:**

To access your Virtus account [www.Virtus.org](http://www.Virtus.org) you will need your Username and Password. If you need assistance, please contact Virtus: 1-888-847-8870 or [helpdesk@virtus.org](mailto:helpdesk@virtus.org). Once in your account, review your account information—particularly your email address. If your account requires updating, please hit the TOOLBOX tab at the top of the screen. On the left side of your screen, in the green column, click "Update My Account." You will be able to make the necessary changes. Please remember to hit the SAVE button at the bottom of the screen.

Questions or concerns: [mmcmahon@drvc.org](mailto:mmcmahon@drvc.org); [amendoza-cantos@drvc.org](mailto:amendoza-cantos@drvc.org); [jwinter@drvc.org](mailto:jwinter@drvc.org); [pditomasso@drvc.org](mailto:pditomasso@drvc.org)

Thank you to all who continue to serve in a ministry during these extremely challenging days.