

## **GUIDELINES ON BACKGROUND CHECKS – THE HOLY SYNOD OF BISHOPS, MARCH 2014**

The Holy Synod, at its most recent meeting held March 18-21, 2014, issued the following **Guidelines on Background Checks.**

Documentation from the background checks on all lay church workers for whom such checks are required by OCA regulations shall be requested and received by the parish rector (or head of church institution) and stored confidentially and securely. If the background check raises questions about the person's suitability for church service, then the rector (or head of church institution) is to pass this information on to the ruling bishop and consult with him about the next steps to take.

Documentation from background checks on readers, subdeacons, deacons and priests is to be requested and received by the ruling bishop and stored confidentially and securely. If the background check raises questions about the person's suitability for church service, then the bishop is to determine the next steps to take.

A basic background check must be obtained, and renewed every three years, for all readers, subdeacons, deacons, priests, and bishops in the Orthodox Church in America, as well as for all laypersons who have more than incidental contact with children in the course of their work in the Church.

To comply with this policy, a "basic background check" includes the following categories of information:

- Social Security trace / verification
- County criminal search
- County civil search
- Nationwide Federal criminal search
- Nationwide Federal civil search
- Sex Offender Registry search
- I-9 Verification
- Driver's history search

Internet sites recommended by the OCA Office for Review of Sexual Misconduct Allegations for these and related purposes are listed below.

Background Checks:

1. Single Source Services [www.singlesourceservices.com](http://www.singlesourceservices.com)
2. Employers Choice Online [www.employerschoiceonline.com](http://www.employerschoiceonline.com)

Sexual Abuse Prevention Training:

1. Darkness to Light: Stewards of Children [www.D2L.org](http://www.D2L.org)