Employee/Volunteer Screening Checklist

A safer ministry starts before a volunteer ever steps into a room with minors. No single screening step tells you everything; each layer helps build a fuller picture of the person you are entrusting with children or students.

☐ **Six Month Waiting Period**

Require individuals to be actively involved in the church for at least six months before serving with minors. This gives church leaders time to get to know the individual, observe behavior patterns, and reduce opportunities for someone to quickly gain access to children.

☐ **Application**

Require every prospective employee/volunteer to complete a written application that includes personal history, previous ministry experience, references, and relevant screening questions. A thorough application establishes accountability and provides information that can be verified through the rest of the screening process.

☐ **References**

Contact multiple references who can speak to the applicant's character, reliability, judgment, and suitability for working with minors. Don't simply collect names. Actually contacting references may reveal information or concerns that won't appear on an application or background check.

☐ **Background Check**

Conduct an appropriate criminal background check before allowing an individual to serve and renew it according to your church's established policy. Background checks are an essential screening tool, but they only reveal documented history, which is why they should never be the only screening step.

☐ **Internet Review**

Review publicly available online information and social media for content or behavior that may raise concerns about an applicant's judgment, boundaries, or suitability for ministry with minors. This provides another window into the person's public conduct and can identify issues worth discussing during the interview.

☐ **Interview**

Meet personally with every prospective volunteer to discuss their application, experience, motivation for serving, and understanding of ministry expectations and boundaries. An interview allows leaders to ask follow-up questions, address inconsistencies, and assess whether the person is a good fit for the role.

☐ **Identification Verification**

Verify the applicant's identity using a valid government-issued photo ID and confirm that identifying information matches the application and background check. This helps ensure you are screening the correct person and prevents inaccurate or intentionally false identifying information from undermining the process.

DOCUMENT THE PROCESS

If you screened it, document it. Keep a secure record of each completed screening step, including dates, results, follow-up actions, approvals, and required renewals. Good documentation demonstrates that your church consistently follows its established screening process, not simply that a background check was run.

Screening is not a one-time event. Establish a schedule for renewing background checks, training, and other screening components according to your church's policy.

If you have further questions or need additional guidance,
feel free to reach out! Happy to help!

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