



Worker Screening Procedures for Developing Assemblies

According to Alaska Ministry Network policies, all persons working with minors at Developing Assemblies must be screened using the process explained in this document. All persons currently working with youth or children must be screened immediately. Whenever a new person desires to work with children or youth in the church, they must be screened prior to beginning ministering to minors.

The Application

The screening application consists of four parts.

Part 1 – This is the section to be filled out and turned in to the AMN office. It requests personal information, church history, and prior youth/children’s work.

Part 2 – This is the certification by the local church that they have indeed screened this individual. It is necessary for the church to **check both the first and third boxes** for this person to be accepted as a worker. This certifies that the church does have part 3 of the application on file, and that the church has checked the references. There is a form that can be used for reference checks on our website. It is vital that the local church check the references of the worker. In the case where there is not a Senior Pastor at the church, or if the Senior Pastor is unavailable, the signature of the Pastoral Staff Member or Church Board Member is acceptable. This form is to be turned in to the AMN office.

Part 3 – This part is to be retained in the files of the local church. It is a more detailed application that includes reference checks. The local church should make sure this application is filled out completely, check the references, and conduct an interview with the individual. This form should NOT be sent in to the AMN office.

Part 4 – This is the authorization for the AMN to run a criminal records check on the potential worker. The AMN office will run a thorough criminal records check on each adult worker serving at all Developing Assemblies. This authorization must be returned to the AMN office.

The Process

Melanya will keep a database of all approved workers. When an application is received, she will process the application and approve or disapprove the worker based upon these criteria:

Criteria:

1. A complete application
2. A signed certification that the local church has screened the person, including a written application, interview, and reference checks.
3. An acceptable criminal records check. Acceptable is defined as:
 - a. If there are criminal records on the check, we will conduct an individualized assessment to determine if the person will be approved. We may ask the Pastor or Presbyter of the person to conduct an interview with the individual to explore the circumstances surrounding the event in question.

Once the individual has been determined to be approved, the name will be placed on the approved worker database. The church will be notified when the application has been approved or disapproved. All criminal records information will be kept strictly confidential in the AMN office, unless we need to discuss a record with the pertinent Pastor or Presbyter as outlined above.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Who is responsible for making sure that all workers have been screened?

It is the responsibility of the Pastor and local church leaders to ensure that all persons working with minors have been screened. Each year on the annual ministry report, the Pastor will certify that all workers have been screened.

If the worker has already been approved by the Network to work with minors at a Network camp, do we need to repeat the process?

No, if the worker is on our current approved list for working a Network event, they have already been through the process. However, do not assume that they are on the list, please check with our office to verify.

What is the scope of the criminal records check?

The criminal records check we conduct is done through Pinnacle Investigations, out of Washington. They will conduct a Social Security Association, Alias & Maiden name research, national sex offender search, and criminal history.

How much will this cost and who will pay for it?

The fee for this check is \$20. Each worker or church is responsible to cover this fee. We will not run the criminal records check without receiving the payment.

Do we have to run a criminal records check on everybody every year?

No. A criminal records check is valid for three years. And when we run another check on a repeat worker after 3 years, the charge is only \$10. Our database will track the last criminal records check for each worker. In fact, we will only be requiring workers to fill out parts 1,2,and 4 every three years. In

January or February of the third year, the workers will receive a notification that they must renew their forms with us. Once a worker is approved, that approval is good for three years.

What if the church already conducts criminal records checks? Do we still need to have the worker do a criminal records check with the Network?

Yes. The reason for this is that not all criminal records checks have the same scope and it is very important that we are consistent.

What if the worker is credentialed with the Assemblies of God? Do we still need to run a criminal records check?

Maybe. The General Council has not always required criminal records checks, and so not all credentialed ministers have been screened at this level. Melanya will be able to determine if there is a valid criminal record check in the person's file. If there is, and it is not over 3 years old, it will not be necessary.

What if the person is a Pastor or on Pastoral staff? Does this apply to them?

Yes, it applies to everyone, including Pastors.

What if the worker has lived in a different country?

The criminal records check can take longer. You should plan up to a month for processing time.

Why are we doing this?

Because we want our churches to be safe. Unfortunately, we live in a society where sex offenders are trying to gain access to children and churches can be vulnerable due to relaxed screening processes. This has been recommended by Dr. Richard Hammar, the chief legal counsel for the Assemblies of God, as well as by our insurance company. But most importantly, we want to create a safe environment where our children and youth can encounter God.