

Safety in Ministry

November 5, 2020

Hello!



Ryan Carter, Director of Sales

rcarter@protectmyministry.com

About Protect My Ministry

Headquartered in Tampa, Florida, Protect My Ministry serves more than 35,000 churches and faith-based organizations in all 50 states by providing high-quality background checks and risk management solutions.

Under the leadership of a kingdom-driven management team, Protect My Ministry equips customers with training that summarizes the role, application, and depth of background checks.

Preparing for Both the Expected & Unexpected

■ Do you have a plan for:

- if the power goes out?
- if a child goes missing?
- if you suspect a child in your children's ministry is being abused?

■ If parents feel like they're at a place where their kid cannot comfortably or safely attend this children's ministry, they're going to look for a different place to go to church.

Getting Started

■ Developing a plan should start with the children's ministry point leader, then move to:

- Your leadership team
- Staff members
- Key volunteers



■ Then it moves to four areas of focus:

- Emergencies
- Parents
- Classrooms
- Volunteers

Emergencies

- Fire evacuation procedure
- Weather emergency procedure
- Missing child procedure
- Suspicious person procedure
- Power outage procedure
- Active shooters

These procedures should explain to staff members and volunteers two things: 1. what to do with kids in these situations, and 2. how to handle parents in these situations.



Emergencies

The first thing parents are going to do in an emergency situation is move towards their kids. Child safety in emergency situations often involves telling parents to stay away or wait because there may be designated processes you need to set up.

■ You may need to tell parents to:

- To stay away
- Wait in a designated zone
- Hang tight until you give them the green light to check out their kids, even if it's in a different place.

Parents

- Check in and check out policy
- Parent responsibility policy
- Wellness policy
- Parent custody policy
- Media release form



Classrooms

Kids will spend more time in your classrooms than anywhere else in the church. The simpler you can make it for volunteers to navigate safety issues, the more they can focus on investing in kids.

■ Areas to consider:

- Allergy guardrails
- Discipline guardrails
- Classroom cleanliness guardrails
- Handicap and special needs guardrails
- Security stickers

Volunteers

When it comes to children's safety in your organization, **your volunteers should be your number one priority, because you can't navigate a children's ministry alone.**

■ Some other things to consider:

- Interview guide
- Teacher position description
- Ministry team commitment
- Child abuse education

Background Checks 101

When making personnel, churches should consider the backgrounds of volunteers and employees.

■ Depending on the role a person will serve in, consider the following:

- criminal record
- work history
- education
- financial history



Step 1: Create a Consistent Policy

- For example, asking only people of a certain race about their financial histories or criminal records is evidence of discrimination.
- Your policy should also address re-screening. The best practice is to re-screen annually, but many churches choose to re-screen volunteers every 2 to 3 years.

Step 2: Know Your Obligations

■ Before running a background check, you must:

- Tell the volunteer or employee – in writing and on a separate notice from the application - that you might use the information for decisions about his or her employment/ volunteerism. This is called a Notice of Disclosure & Authorization
- Inform the volunteer or employee of his or her right to a description of the nature and scope of the investigation.
- Get written permission to do the background check.

Note: Some states may have additional requirements to provide state-specific disclosures and notifications.

Step 3: Running the Background Check

1. Starts at the county level
2. Counties "report" to state agencies
3. Consumer Reporting Agencies (CRAs) build technology that searches and compiles the data from these and other sources



If you find a disqualifying record...

- Before you take an adverse action based on information found in a background report, you must:
 1. A copy of the consumer report you relied on to make your decision
 2. Provide a copy of "A Summary of Your Rights Under the Fair Credit Reporting Act," which you should have received from the company that sold you the report



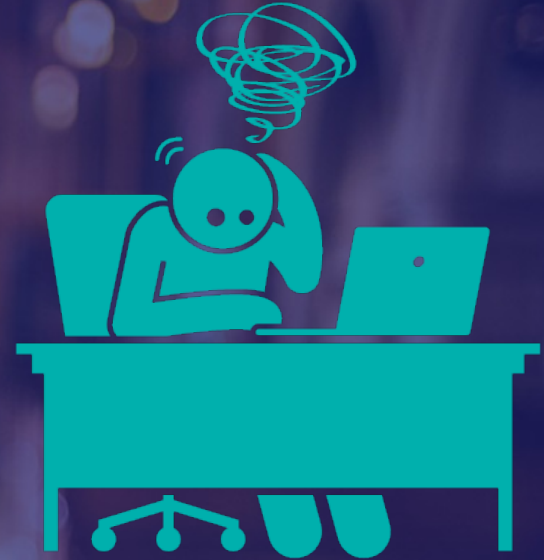
If you find a disqualifying record...

- After an adverse action is taken, you *must* tell the volunteer or employee (orally, in writing, or electronically):
- That he or she was rejected because of information in the report
 - The name, address, and phone number of the company that sold the report
 - That the company selling the report didn't make the hiring decision
 - That they have the right to dispute the accuracy or completeness of the report



Overwhelming?

Setting up safety protocols can be daunting. Protect My Ministry makes the process simple with out-of-the-box ready resources.



Safety Rocket

■ 25 branded and unbranded documents

■ 1+ hour of video presentations

■ Ebooks

■ 6 modules

- Children's safety
- Background checks
- Human resources
- Insurance
- Safety procedures
- Facilities



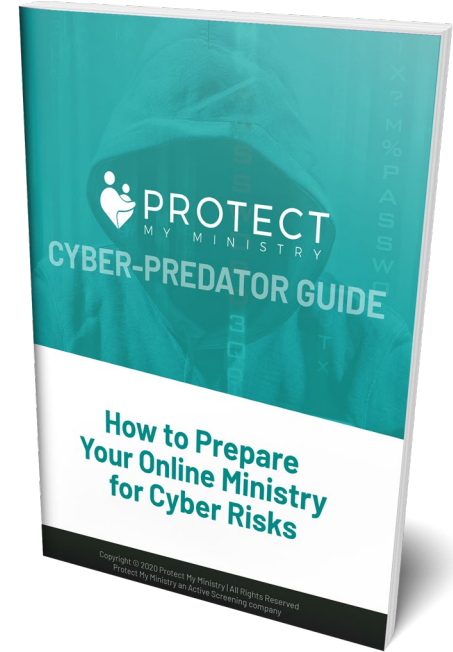
Child Safety Training for Volunteers

- In addition to preparing for the unexpected, volunteers should also receive training for abuse and prevention.
- Protect My Ministry's Child Safety Training Course is an online course comprised of 5 lessons centered around identifying characteristics of abuse and how to report suspected abuse.



Cyber-predator eBook

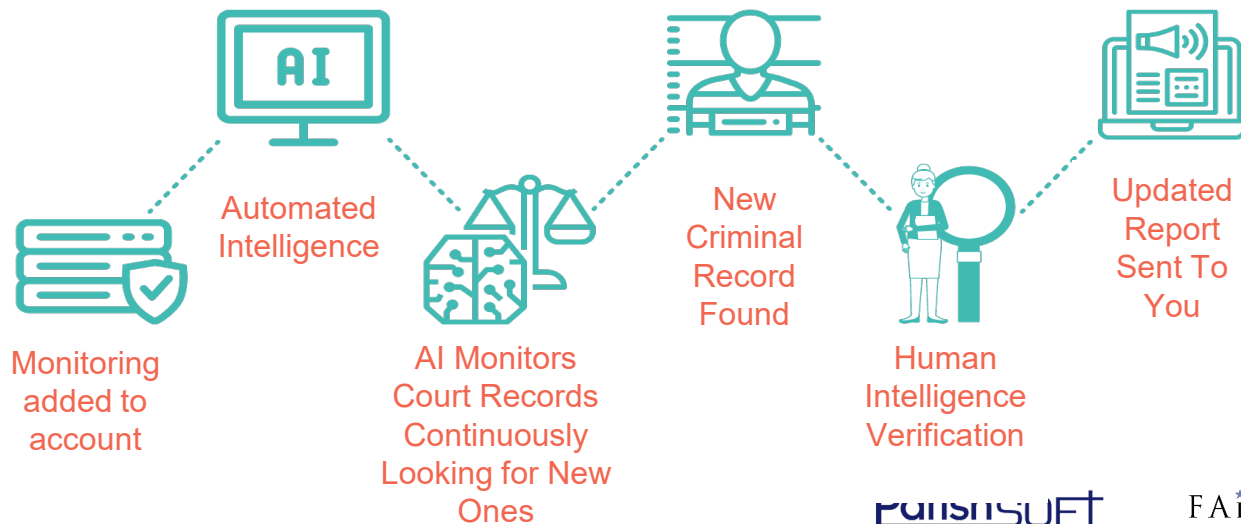
Cyber predators come in many forms and can cause irreparable harm to your ministry. This free guide outlines the steps to take to keep your church and online youth ministry a safe zone, protected against predators.



Real-Time Monitoring

How Does It Work?

automated technology and humans.



Social Media Screening

Our Social Media Screening solution is the only social media background screening service to be reviewed by the Federal Trade Commission. The report we provide is designed to automate social media screening workflows and make them fair.



Social media screenings can help prevent problems in these
areas of concern
for churches and ministries:



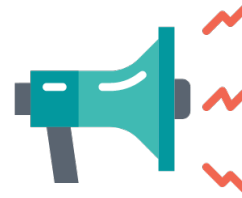
Hostility,
harassment,
& bullying



Safety of
employees
& customers



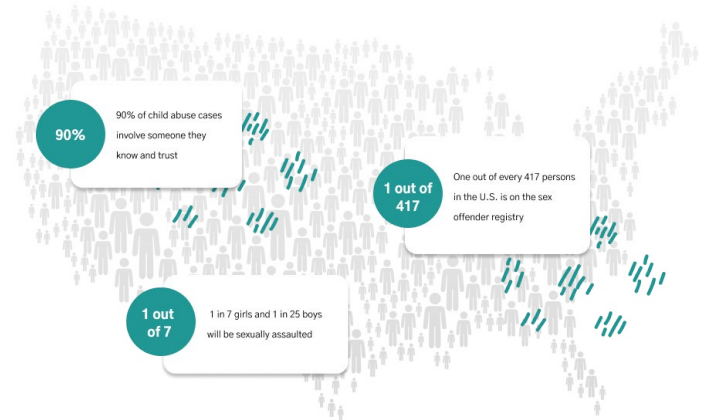
Negligent hiring
practices &
lawsuits



Risk of bad
publicity

Staff and Volunteer engagement

- There are to be **clear** and **well publicized** diocesan/eparchial standards of ministerial behavior and appropriate boundaries for clergy and for any other paid personnel and volunteers of the Church with regard to their contact with minors.
- Make sure all policies are clear and agreed to by staff and volunteers



Closing remarks:

- Do you have a safety plan in place that has considered all possible scenarios?
- Are you training your employees and volunteers on the safety procedures consistently?
- Are you running background checks, and are they the right checks?
- How often are you rescreening volunteers and employees?
- Think through, document, and implement your plan

Thanks!



You can find me at:
rcarter@protectmyministry.com