

<p>VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS from the Office of Child Protection</p>
--

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 the following requirements within thirty days of employment or volunteering:

- Attend a Protecting God's Children class (this is a LIVE and interactive workshop with facilitation that is done in person or virtually via Zoom or like platforms)
- Electronically acknowledge the Diocesan Code of Conduct, which is provided during the Virtus registration process.
- Follow the instructions to complete the Sterling Volunteers background screening application background offered during the Virtus registration process.
- Read and review the [Diocesan Child Protection Policy](#)

To begin the process, [register online](#) for a LIVE workshop and create a Virtus account. To do this, you ***MUST have an email you can access that is unique to you. You will also need to provide your social security number for the background check portion.*** It is further recommended that you do this in one sitting, which can take 10-40 minutes depending on the data you input.

Steps are as follows:

1. Go to www.virtus.org and select "First-time Registrant"
 - If you already have an account, this is also where you can also sign in and access.
 - If you are unsure if you have an account, please contact the Virtus helpdesk at 1-888-847-8870 for assistance before proceeding
2. Then click "begin the registration process"
3. Select organization via the drop-down menu -- ***For all parish volunteers the organization is "Rockville Centre, NY - Safe Environment (Diocese)"***
4. Select "No" to the question, "Have you previously registered with VIRTUS Online?" (If your answer is yes, you must recover your login and will not be able to proceed)
5. Now you will be prompted to create a user ID and password.

- It is recommended that you make a secure password of at least 8 characters with at least one capital letter, number, and special character.
6. Now you will fill out your profile. Answer the questions/fields to the best of your ability.
 - **Please be specific about your role/title (e.g. do *not* just state "volunteer," but state in which area, such as, catechist, coach, usher, etc.)**
 - Please include ***all*** parishes/diocesan entities you will be volunteering in beginning with your primary one.
 - Make sure to check off that you will be working with minors if you will be (religious ed catechists and CYO coaches ***must*** check yes for this)
 - During the process you will also have to digitally acknowledge our two codes of conduct. It is recommended that you also download, print, and review them asap.
 7. At the end of making your profile, you will select which Virtus session you would like to attend
 - Please make sure to see if there are any notes (like session conducted in another language) before committing to a date and location
 - **You do NOT have to register for as session being conducted in the parish in which you plan to volunteer.**
 8. Once you register for a Virtus session, you will be prompted to proceed to the Background Screening Platform
 - Your email will be carried over from the Virtus application and you will need to create another account with this email and a new password (if your Virtus password is secure enough, you may want to use the same one, otherwise you will need to make a new password that is secure).
 - Follow the prompts to include your name, social security number, contact information, and current address.
 9. Once you have successfully completed the background check application, your full profile will be complete and all that there will be left to do is attend the Virtus workshop. Once that happens, you will be fully Safe Environment Compliant.

Please note, that in most cases you will not have to re-take Virtus and you may always access your profile via the credentials you provided at time of registration. ***However***, the Diocese of Rockville Centre requires all those who remain in active ministry ***be rescreened at 5 year intervals*** whether volunteering or employed. You should be prompted via email when it is time to submit to a new background screening.

Currently Active Volunteers:

If you are currently 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 e-mail 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 resign the Code of Conduct when you log into your Virtus account.

Edit/Update Your Virtus Account:

To access your Virtus account, go to 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. Once in your account, review your account information-particularly your e-mail 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.

The streamlined process for managing safe environment compliance is reliant mainly on these online accounts. It is imperative that volunteers keep their information current, especially as regards locations and roles. Secondary and tertiary volunteer locations should be added and removed as necessary so the relevant entities can maintain access to a volunteer's Virtus account and manage compliance requirements.

What if I attended a Virtus workshop but never made or do not know if I have an online account?:

- ***If you have a copy of your Virtus certificate***, you may present it to the Safe Environment Coordinator for your parish/entity who can assist you in linking that attendance to a past session. You will still need to make an online account, but instead of opting to register for a class in the future, you would

select a past session and navigate via the drop-down menu to the Virtus workshop listed on your certificate.

- ***If you do not have a copy of your certificate but did attend a virtus class***, the only way would be to contact the training location, facilitator of the training, or the diocesan [Office of Protection](#). Depending on the nature of the record, your attendance may not be recoverable from these avenues and you may need to retake the workshop.

Although the workshop does not *need* to be repeated, the video content is updated frequently and it is recommended that volunteers, staff, and parish clergy consider attending updated Virtus seminars anyway. Once you make or recover your online Virtus account, you may want to consider signing up for a new workshop instead of going through the trouble to link a past one, especially if it has been a number of years since you attended it.