

## **SCREENING REQUIREMENTS FOR SUMMER CAMPS**

The State of Florida's Department of Children and Families (DCF) has strict regulations that apply to all Summer Camps. Summer Camps sponsored by the Diocese, or its individual parishes, ministries or schools must comply with these regulations. The statute (fs 409.175), makes it clear that: (1) DCF "shall have access to the personnel records of such facilities to ensure compliance with the screening requirements." (2) Failure to comply could result in termination of the operation of the Summer Camp. Note that the state screening requirement is *in addition to* the existing DOSA Safe Environment screening requirements. (See "Notes" below for Vacation Bible Schools and Independent Camps.)

The Diocese of St. Augustine, in compliance with the USCCB's *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* has established a policy for screening those who work/volunteer with the vulnerable population in the Diocese of St. Augustine. All clergy, employees, and covered volunteers working with these vulnerable populations are required to comply with the DOSA requirements for screening and Safe Environment training.

The requirements between the DOSA and DCF policies differ fundamentally and in complex ways. Because we must comply with both policies, **it is unavoidable that some Summer Camp personnel will be required to be screened by both DOSA and DCF.**

The following is a brief review of the requirements:

### **DOSA REQUIREMENTS FOR SUMMER CAMP PERSONNEL:**

DOSA policies for clergy, employees and covered volunteers who work at the summer camps remain unchanged. Those 18 years of age and over must submit to a Level 2 Criminal Background check that meets USCCB's screening requirements and attend a Protecting God's Children Class BEFORE working with youth. (Just to be complete, attendance at a session of Protecting God's Children is not required if working with the infirm or the elderly vulnerable population.) *These requirements are unchanged.*

### **DCF REQUIREMENTS FOR SUMMER CAMP PERSONNEL:**

- 1) Except as noted in 2) below, ALL summer camp "personnel" as defined in the statute, must be screened. This includes owners, operators, employees and volunteers that provide care for children. See: <http://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/child-care/provider-resources/summer-camps> and: <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/programs/backgroundscreening/docs/summercamps/Summer-Camp-Info-brochure.pdf>
- 2) Volunteers who assist on an occasional basis for less than 10 hours per month do not need to be screened, as long as a person who meets the screening requirement is always present and has the volunteer in his/her sight. (Note this means that non-screened personnel cannot, for example, take children to the bathroom without being accompanied by a person who is screened.)
- 3) All employees and volunteers under the age of 18 (12 and up) must be screened.
- 4) All summer camp personnel must be screened no more than 60 days before they begin employment (this includes volunteers) and must be rescreened annually, unless

they continually work in a profession caring for vulnerable populations and are not unemployed for more than a 90 day period, and the Level 2 screening was completed within the last 5 years. (The annual re-screening for DCF is at a substantially reduced rate in 2015.)

- 5) The results from the background screening and the DCF form: “Affidavit of Good Moral Character” should be maintained in each personnel file. (See “Help” below.)
- 6) These requirements must be completed BEFORE having contact with any vulnerable person.
- 7) **Because it is a DCF policy, questions about the policy should be directed to the DCF background screening help desk: (888) 352-2842, rather than DOSA. (See (2) below under “HELP”)**

#### **COMPLIANCE:**

- **All** teachers, coaches and administrators, all volunteers age 12 and up, and operators (person/s in charge) of Summer Camps must comply with DCF screening whether they are screened for DOSA or not:
  - 1) Screening is through DCF and the Background Screening Clearinghouse (DCF portal). <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/programs/backgroundscreening/> (Note the [exception to screening requirements for certain volunteers explained in 2\)](#) above.)
  - 2) Each Parish, School or Parish & School will designate a person who will coordinate DCF screening, the “DCF Screening Coordinator.”
  - 3) The DCF Screening Coordinator will:
    - a. Using **ORI Number EDCFSC30Z** register their camp or camps with the **DCF Clearinghouse**.  
See <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/programs/backgroundscreening/clearinghouse/> for clearinghouse instructions.
    - b. Arrange for screening of all those who require DCF screening
    - c. Maintain Records for each volunteer containing screening results, Affidavit, and other forms required by DCF
    - d. Advise the DOSA Safe Environment office of your ORI and ORA numbers
    - e. Permit DOSA Safe Environment office to have access to your Clearinghouse Account when requested.
    - f. Inform DCF when Summer Camp Volunteer hours ends through the Clearinghouse Portal.
    - g. **For details of how to actually do DCF required Screening contact DCF directly. See “Help” below.**
  - 4) Each person who is required to be screened under DCF will:
    - a. Contact the local (school/parish/ministry) DCF Coordinator to arrange for screening

- b. Complete a notarized *Affidavit of Good Moral Character* also maintained locally in each Summer Camp personnel file.

**HELP:**

**(1) For Help With DOSA Policy:**

- a. Visit <https://safe.dosafl.com> and click "Policies & Guidelines."
- b. Contact the Safe Environment office: Donna Wilhelm, (904) 262-3200, extension 104, or email [dwilhelm@dosafl.com](mailto:dwilhelm@dosafl.com).

**(2) For Help With Florida DCF Summer Camp Screening Policy Questions:**

- a. Screening questions FAQ  
[http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/programs/backgroundscreening/faqs\\_camps.shtml](http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/programs/backgroundscreening/faqs_camps.shtml)
- b. **DCF BACKGROUND SCREENING HELP DESK: (888) 352-2842**
- c. Affidavit of Good Moral Character Form:  
<http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/dcfforms/Search/OpenDCFForm.aspx?FormId=377>

**NOTES:**

- (1) **Vacation Bible Schools:** These are not Summer Camps for purposes of the DCF screening requirement, but must comply with DOSA screening requirements. This has not changed from past years.
- (2) **Independent Summer Camps:** These Summer Camps are operated on school/parish/diocesan property, but not sponsored by a diocesan entity. Examples of this are coach-sponsored summer sports camps. As independent camps, the coaches/directors of these camps will themselves be responsible for compliance directly with/through DCF.