MinistrySafe, the official abuse prevention system for all churches in Central Texas Conference is very important to all of us. This newsletter will provide you with helpful information for your use.

EDITION #1. You are receiving this newsletter because you are listed as a SSA - Safety System Administrator of your church. The purpose of the newsletter is to answer frequently asked questions, provide supplemental information and resources as they become available, and share best practices related to our Central Texas Conference policies and MinistrySafe procedures.

If you are no longer your church's MinistrySafe SSA, please be sure to change the information on your church's dashboard and contact Sheryl Crumrine (sheryl@ctcumc.org) to update our mailing list.   The newsletters will be archived on the CTC website (http://www.ctcumc.org/ministrysafe). This site also contains a link through which you can submit a topic for consideration to the MinistrySafe Oversight Committee for inclusion in a future newsletter.

We hope this resource will be helpful for you as we move forward into implementing MinistrySafe and to continuing to grow in excellence in our care for children and youth in the years ahead.

Background Checks

How is the security of personal data ensured when running a background check through Skillful Screening Solutions (the company connected to the MinistrySafe dashboard)?

Skillful Screening Solutions has been in business for 20 years. Their database has been maintained and secure for the entire 20 years. The data the volunteer provides for the security background check is stored in encrypted form using state of the art data encryption standards. In short this means the data is stored in a way that makes it as secure as secure can be. That data is never used again or exposed to users. It is "locked down" in the database and "locked out" of view.

Although every church has the option of choosing their own background check provider, one of the advantages of using Skillful Screening Solutions is that when the church enters the volunteer's e-mail address into the background check module, Skillful Screening Solutions e-mails the volunteer directly to get their personal information, so the information is never "floating around" between the individual, the church and the company. Then after the check is run, the company follows the protocol above. If a church is sending the background check information to the volunteer and asking the volunteer to submit it him/herself, there is no need to collect the Social Security Number and Driver's License Number (unless they are driving and it is required by your insurance

company) on the application, so it is not available in church files, etc.

Can a volunteer bring a copy of a background check run by another entity (employer, school, etc)?

Accepting a background checks run by others is strongly discouraged by MinistrySafe. Most people do not understand how the criminal record searches and background check systems truly function; people think that all 'background checks' are the same and if a 'background check' is run by one entity, it is sufficient across the board — much like a car inspection. This is just not true. There is no guarantee that a background check run by another entity covers the recommended checks. Further, this creates the opportunity for applicants to bring background checks from other states or other service organizations and the documentation may be insufficient to ensure they are authentic. MinistrySafe advises that all churches and entities research the most appropriate level of searches for respective positions and run the most appropriate search (levels of searches should deepen when the position is a particularly trusted one where there could be unsupervised interaction with children/youth). There is no one-size-fits-all … and a church should not rely on the level of search chosen by another organization. Run the search by your own vendor at the time of application.

How can I compare background checks and pricing between Skillful Screening Solutions and another vendor?

The Central Texas Conference Center for Mission Support can provide churches with a document that outlines the specific checks included and costs for each of the five levels of background checks. This information is not published on-line because the Central Texas Conference has a reduced pricing

structure. For a copy of the pricing sheet, contact Sheryl Crumrine, CTC Mission Support Assistant at sheryl@ctcumc.org.

If you have questions or issues you would like to see covered in other editions, please submit them to the MinistrySafe Oversight Committee at ministrysafe@ctcumc.org.

Here is information block.