

**REFERENCE CHECK POLICY
APPROVED BY COM 8/6/2007**

Recommended Policies and Procedures regarding Reference and Background Checks for potential members of Denver Presbytery:

A. For possible candidates for pastoral positions

The PNC liaison will review with the PNC the material “Contacting References” in the On Calling a Pastor Handbook and “Suggestions for Conducting Reference Checks” in A Journey Between Pastors.

The PNC liaison will provide the PNC chair with a copy of the “Form to Secure Permission to Inquire and Reveal Information” found in A Journey Between Pastors to be signed by the potential candidate granting permission to conduct secondary reference checks.

Once the PNC has narrowed the search to those persons they wish to personally interview, the PNC liaison will submit the names and the presbytery of membership or care to the Stated Clerk. In consultation with the COM moderator, the Stated Clerk will manage the Presbytery staff-to-Presbytery staff reference and background checks. These reference and background checks must be made before the PNC commits to a face-to-face interview.

Background Checks managed by the Stated Clerk may include checks on employment, motor vehicle, credit and criminal records if there is indication that such a check would be appropriate. In all situations where the position involves extensive work with children a criminal background check shall be made at the expense of the candidate or the PNC.

Information acquired through Presbytery-to-Presbytery staff reference calls shall be shared with the PNC liaison who will communicate with the PNC chair. If the reference and background checks result in negative information concerning the candidate’s ability to do effective ministry in the particular calling church, such concern shall be shared through the PNC liaison. Such information should not be shared with the pastor under consideration.

If background checks result in information that would make it irresponsible or inappropriate for the Presbytery to receive into membership the candidate, the Presbytery staff shall consult with the COM moderator, ministry team coordinator and PNC liaison to determine if the candidate is unacceptable and will not be approved by COM. If so determined, the COM moderator will report such finding, without undo specificity to the PNC chair.

B. For other potential minister members of Presbytery

In consultation with the COM moderator, the Stated Clerk will manage the Presbytery staff-to-Presbytery staff reference and background checks. These may include checks on employment, motor vehicle, credit and criminal records.

If background checks result in information that would make it irresponsible or inappropriate for the Presbytery to receive into membership the candidate, the Presbytery staff shall consult with the COM moderator, the Care of Ministers ministry team coordinator and any other appropriate persons to determine if the candidate is unacceptable and will not be approved by COM.

C. Proposal for Timing of Criminal Background Checks

Criminal background checks, in fulfillment of our sexual misconduct policy, will be done at the same time as reference checks from presbyteries. Liaisons to churches will need to send an electronic copy of the policy and permission to do the background checks to the candidates. We will need to have signed copies of these policies and permission slips and clearance completed before a church expends funds to bring a candidate from outside the Presbytery for face-to-face interviews for called or temporary positions.