



**La Crosse Area Synod**

**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

God's Work. Our Hands.

---

Rev. Jim Arends, Bishop

Rev. Elizabeth (Libby) Howe, Assistant to the Bishop

October 2010

## **BACKGROUND CHECKS PERFORMED FOR YOUTH EVENTS**

We live in an age that requires us to be extremely careful when sponsoring events that involve youth and adults supervising, chaperoning, or driving youth. The synod office has requested, for the past several years, that adults performing any of the above activities in conjunction with a synod sponsored event complete one of our "Adult Volunteer Application" forms so that background checks can be performed on all adult volunteers. Though this may seem like a violation of our privacy (specifically giving our date of birth and Social Security number) and an inconvenience when someone may only have very limited contact with any youth, it is well worth the minimal inconvenience now rather than enduring a potential lawsuit down the road. Our society has become much more prone to litigation proceedings and, sadly, that affects the church as much as schools, daycares, etc. The present fee for doing a background check through the synod office is \$20.00

Often, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America churchwide office in Chicago requires background checks be performed and on file for congregational, synod or Churchwide youth events. We may need to turn people away from attending synod sponsored youth events without proof of background checks being done on all participating adults ahead of time. We seek your compliance in making this transition go as smoothly as possible.

If adult volunteers have already had a background check done, the synod office will only need a copy of the official report from that check. Congregations may also choose a company to perform their own background checks and then supply the synod office with the report.

Please assist us in encouraging our youth to be involved in church-sponsored activities and then also providing for their safety.

Rev. Jim Arends, Bishop