SAFE GATHERINGS

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

WHAT IS SAFE GATHERINGS?

Safe Gatherings is an abuse prevention and boundary awareness program. It incorporates an online application, electronic reference checks, 4 levels of background checks (including county of residence), and online abuse prevention training. Safe Gatherings makes it easy to track approved and pending applicants from your organization.

WHO SHOULD BE SAFE GATHERINGS APPROVED?

Everyone who works with children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults should be screened and trained to work with those vulnerable populations. This includes leaders, staff, and volunteers.

WHAT IS THE COST TO APPLY THROUGH SAFE GATHERINGS?

The price per person varies depending on the applicant's county, state, and level of background check. All applications include national criminal background checks, sex offender registry check, and current county of residence background check. Organizations may upgrade to include a background check for all U.S. addresses for the past 7 years, which we recommend.

WHAT IS THE TRAINING ABOUT?

The comprehensive Safe Gatherings training empowers staff and volunteers to protect children, youth, and vulnerable adults through a greater awareness of the behaviors of sexual predators, types of abuse, signs of abuse, how to respond to disclosure of abuse, mandatory reporting, and more.

HOW DOES THE ONLINE TRAINING WORK?

The 1.5- to 2-hour online training can be taken from any computer or mobile device—online, 24/7. The course bookmarks progress and starts up again where the user leaves off. Progress checks throughout the course test knowledge, scenarios provoke thinking, and the final exam tests on what the user has learned.

WHY CONDUCT BACKGROUND CHECKS AND REFERENCE CHECKS?

The power of a consistent system is consistency. When everyone commits to the same process, there is a greater amount of trust and reliability in the outcome. When people think, "It can't happen here," they are wrong, and the protection of children, youth, and vulnerable adults is at stake.

WHAT IS THE TURNAROUND TIME TO BE APPROVED THROUGH SAFE GATHERINGS?

Approval times can vary. If the applicant completes the course in a timely manner and references respond quickly, he or she can receive approval notice in a few days. The most common delays are caused by references who do not take action after receiving the reference email. Applicants can monitor their status at any time by logging in to Safe Gatherings.

WHO RECEIVES NOTIFICATION THAT AN APPLICANT HAS BEEN APPROVED?
When an applicant completes the approval process, he or she receives an approval email. In addition, the primary administrator for that organization receives notification.

WHY WOULD A PERSON'S APPLICATION BE DENIED?
A criminal record does not absolutely mean that an applicant will be denied, but it's highly probable. Misrepresentation on an application is also grounds for rejection. Our first and foremost objective is to make sure children, youth, and vulnerable adults are protected.

HOW LONG IS SAFE GATHERINGS APPROVAL VALID?
Safe Gatherings approvals are valid for two years, unless customized requirements have been set for a specific organization.

WHAT IF SOME MEMBERS OF AN ORGANIZATION DO NOT HAVE INTERNET ACCESS?
Applicants who do not have Internet access via a cell phone, tablet, or home computer can use a computer at a library, a friend's house, or perhaps one at the church or organization.

IS THERE A MINIMUM AGE TO BE SAFE GATHERINGS APPROVED?
Applicants must be 16 or older in order to be Safe Gatherings approved. Applicants under 18 must have parental permission to apply.

CAN THE TRAINING BE TAKEN IN A GROUP SETTING?
Applicants are reviewed and approved or denied on an individual basis. Each applicant has his or her own application, references, and background checks … and each applicant must pass the test at the end of the training. This system is not designed for a group setting.

HOW MUCH WORK DOES IT TAKE FOR OUR ORGANIZATION TO USE THE SYSTEM?
Very little! It takes less than a 5-minute phone call to set up your organization's account. Our primary mission is to protect the vulnerable, but our secondary goal is to make having a protection program as easy as possible on the organization.

HOW DO I START MY ORGANIZATION'S MEMBERS ON THIS PROGRAM?
Have them go to safegatherings.com and click on the red "Get Started" button at the top. Most churches and organizations are already set up in the Safe Gatherings system. When a person applies through a new organization, the Safe Gatherings staff contacts the organization to make sure the account is set up correctly regarding payment, the proper contacts, etc. If an applicant cannot find an organization in the system, he or she can call Safe Gatherings to get more information.

NEED MORE ANSWERS? CONTACT US TODAY!