

[DRAFT]

South Texas Presbytery Ad Hoc Committee for Background Check Policy and Procedures Proposal 04/25/2026

STP Policy: [Amending p. 18-19 of STP's Standing Rules]

- The Candidates and Credentials Committees shall be responsible for conducting background checks and character exams about criminal history and abuse prevention for all candidates for ministry and ministers transferring into the Presbytery, whether from another Presbytery within the PCA, NAPARC, or another denomination.
- STP shall pay for each background check.
- All screening results must be received and reviewed by the appropriate Committee prior to the Presbytery meeting at which the candidate or transfer is first to be examined.

Appendix A – For Candidates and Credentials Internal Processes

Screening of Candidates and Ministers Transferring into the Presbytery

- The completion of a written application or oral character exam, including questions related to criminal history, abuse, and protecting the vulnerable.
- At least two references to be contacted. These references should include:
 - Previous employers or any work with abuse survivors or vulnerable persons, whether professional or volunteer. (Candidates coming under care should not include anyone from their current church)
 - At least one reference not supplied directly by the applicant, but relevant to past church involvement or employment, identified by the committee.
- A background check¹ that includes the following information:
 - Confirmation of education and employment
 - Local criminal record check
 - State criminal record check
 - Federal district criminal record check
 - State central child/dependent adult abuse registry check
 - State sex offender registry check
- An internet and social media search (to be conducted by the Committee)
- An interview that explores a candidate's written application or verbally explores a candidate's criminal history and includes questions related to abuse, protecting the vulnerable, as part of the character exam requirements per BCO 13-6, 18, 24-1 (c) (1) (a), 24-1 (e)

If any potentially concerning information comes to light OR if the screening process shows that a candidate has ever been credibly accused or convicted of any type of crime, STP may consult with an expert to help assess the situation. STP's candidates or credentials committee may inform the presbytery of any concerning information.

¹ The Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Title 40, Part 19, Chapter 745, Subchapter F.
https://licensingregulations.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/licensing_regulation/TX_BACKGROUND_CHECKS_JUL_2022_508.pdf

[DRAFT]

Appendix B- Sample Application or Oral Questions for Character Exam

HISTORY

Please list any prior experiences you have working with children and the location:

Have you ever been asked to leave a role working with students or children?

No ___ Yes ___

If yes, please explain:

What do you believe about the value of children?

How do you believe children should be treated?

What do you know about the prevalence of child abuse?

Have you ever been convicted of a crime, or are you currently facing criminal charges?

No ___ Yes ___ *(If yes, please explain and include the date of conviction, nature, and date of sentence)*

Have you ever been convicted or plead guilty before a court of any federal state, or municipal criminal offense? (Excludes minor traffic offenses)

No ___ Yes ___

[DRAFT]

If yes, please explain _____

Have you ever been accused of abusing or neglecting a child?

No ___ *Yes* ___

If Yes, please explain _____

Have you ever at any time used illegal drugs or other illegal controlled substances?

No ___ *Yes* ___

If Yes, please explain _____

Have you ever been convicted of any criminal offense in a country outside the jurisdiction of the United States?

No ___ *Yes* ___

If Yes, please explain _____

Currently to date, do you have any pending criminal charges against you?

No ___ *Yes* ___

If Yes, please explain _____

Have you ever been, or are you currently, under the process of church discipline?

No ___ *Yes* ___

If Yes, please explain _____

ABUSE PREVENTION

Are you familiar with the PCA's Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault Study Report? What are your thoughts about the policy?

[DRAFT]

No ___ Yes ___

Do you have any concerns about the report?

No ___ Yes ___

If yes, please explain: _____

Do you understand that ANY PERSON under Texas law is required to report all child and elder abuse to the authorities immediately? (See Texas Family Code Sec. 26:101)

No ___ Yes ___

Are there any concerns you have or reasons you will not be able to uphold Texas Law regarding mandatory reporting?

No ___ Yes ___

If yes, please explain: _____

PERSONAL REFERENCES

Please list two people who have known you (one personal, one professional/volunteer) who would be willing to provide reference information (No relatives please)

Reference 1:

Name _____ Phone _____

Relationship _____ Years known _____

Email _____

Reference 2:

Name _____ Phone _____

Relationship _____ Years known _____

Email _____

[DRAFT]

Permission to Obtain a Background Check

(This form authorizes the South Texas Presbytery (STP) to obtain background information and must be completed by the candidate for ministry or Minister seeking to transfer into STP. STP must keep this completed form on file for at least five years after requesting a background check.)

In the interest of safety and security I, the undersigned applicant (also known as “consumer”), authorize the South Texas Presbytery through its independent contractor to procure background information (also known as a “consumer report and/or investigative consumer report”) about me, prior to, and at any time during, my oversight within the organization. This report may include my driving history, including any traffic citations; a social security number verification; present and former addresses; criminal and civil history/records; and the state sex offender records.

I understand that I am entitled to a complete copy of any background information report of which I am the subject upon my written request to STP, if such is made within a reasonable time from the date it was produced. I also understand that I may receive a written summary of my rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act. I also understand that STP may share with the Session of the church or the Leadership of the Organization to which I am being called at their request.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT ALL INFORMATION PROVIDED IN THIS AUTHORIZATION IS TRUE, CORRECT, AND COMPLETE. I UNDERSTAND THAT IF ANY INFORMATION PROVES TO BE INCORRECT OR INCOMPLETE, THAT GROUNDS FOR NOT RECOMMENDING ME FOR MINISTRY WITHIN STP WILL EXIST AND MAY NOT BE RECOMMENDED BY THE PRESBYTERY OR ITS COMMITTEES IN THE FUTURE.

Signed this _____ (day) of _____ (Month), 20 ____.

Applicant (Print Name):

Applicant Signature:

[DRAFT]

AD HOC Committee Recommendations:

- To amend p.18-19 of STP's standing rules by adding the STP Policy section (p.1) to the responsibilities of the Candidates and Credentials Committees.
- To amend the STP 2026 budget by adding \$600 annually for background checks.
- That Candidates and Credentials add these processes (Appendix A) to their internal documents and practices.
- To instruct Candidates and Credentials to add questions relevant to past criminal history and abuse prevention to their character exams, whether written or oral, and recommend Appendix B as a sample application or questions for character exam, and to share as information which procedures and questions (whether written or verbal) their committee has adopted for use at the October 2026 meeting.
- For the Candidates and Credentials Committee Chairs to use Clear Investigative Advantage (CIA) to perform background checks and create their own account with CIA, and begin these processes in January 2027.
- To encourage the churches of STP to adopt their own background check policies in line with the thoroughness of this proposal for all ministers, officers, staff, and volunteers working with children, and to perform recurring checks for ALL staff, including ministers.
- To dismiss the AIC.

**Petition to Organize Resurrection Presbyterian Church
as a congregation of the
Presbyterian Church in America**

*We the undersigned petition the South Texas Presbytery to organize
Resurrection Presbyterian Church into a particular church of the
Presbyterian Church in America.*

-
- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. <u>Wend DeHay</u> | 17. <u>[Signature]</u> |
| 2. <u>Sarah DeHay</u> | 18. <u>Hattie Howell</u> |
| 3. <u>Colin Eddings</u> | 19. <u>DAVID HOWELL</u> |
| 4. <u>Nora Eddings</u> | 20. <u>Fred Eddings</u> |
| 5. <u>Bonnie Whiteis</u> | 21. <u>Carla DeHay</u> |
| 6. <u>Brianne Hill</u> | 22. <u>John Maberry</u> |
| 7. <u>Michael Gibson</u> | 23. <u>Kate Maberry</u> |
| 8. <u>Ruth Connell</u> | 24. <u>Bobby Maberry</u> |
| 9. <u>Betsy Connell</u> | 25. <u>[Signature]</u> |
| 10. <u>Lucy DeHay</u> | 26. <u>Carolyn Bryant</u> |
| 11. <u>Charlotte DeHay</u> | 27. <u>Rebecca Leary</u> |
| 12. <u>Catherine Whitehead</u> | 28. <u>Melanie Howell</u> |
| 13. <u>Jasen Whitehead</u> | 29. <u>Natalie Radcliff</u> |
| 14. <u>Lucy Jane Howell</u> | 30. <u>Henry Howell</u> |
| 15. <u>Thomas Van [Signature]</u> | 31. <u>Michael Clement</u> |
| 16. <u>Emily Osborn</u> | 32. <u>Cy Clark</u> |