



Version: 1.1

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Background Check Policy for Volunteers and Employees

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure a safe and secure environment for all members of our community, particularly vulnerable groups such as children, elderly and youth. This policy outlines how background check results for volunteer Leads and employees will be reviewed and used in making decisions regarding their roles within the mosque.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers who have recurring, direct, or supervisory interaction with youth or young adults, including but not limited to:

- Youth Committee staff and volunteers involved in planning, organizing, supervising, or executing youth programs
- Pillars Academy teachers, instructors, aides, and classroom assistants
- Security staff and volunteers serving on mosque premises or at mosque-sponsored events
- Sports Committee staff or volunteers who interact with youth or supervise youth programs
- Any other individual designated by leadership as having access to youth or authority in youth-related programming

No individual may begin service in a covered role until screening requirements are completed and approved.

3. Background Check Requirement

All prospective employees and Volunteer Leads, particularly those who will be working in roles involving interaction with minors, youth, or vulnerable adults, are required to undergo a background check. This background check will include, but is not limited to, the following:

3.1 Criminal History Check:

National and local criminal records, including any convictions for violent offenses, child abuse, sexual offenses, or other offenses that pose a risk to vulnerable populations.

3.2 Sex Offender Registry Check:

Search of national and local sex offender registries.

3.3 Identity Verification:

Verification of the applicant's identity, including Social Security Number and address history.

4. Review, Confidentiality & Data Handling

1. Screening results shall be reviewed only by authorized leadership or a designated compliance officer, i.e., the Executive Director or a Board Member.
2. All background check information shall be treated as confidential and stored securely.
3. Results shall be used solely to assess suitability for service and risk mitigation.

5. Disqualification Criteria

5.1 Automatic Disqualification Criteria:

An individual shall be disqualified from organizing, executing, or participating in programs involving youth or young adults if the background check reveals:

- Any offense involving sexual misconduct, abuse, exploitation, or assault
- Any crime involving a minor
- Registration on a sex offender registry
- Violent felony offenses, including but not limited to homicide, aggravated assault, domestic violence, or kidnapping
- Human trafficking or exploitation-related offenses

5.2 Conditional Disqualification (Board Review Required)

The following offenses may result in disqualification based on leadership review:

- Drug-related felonies
- Weapons-related offenses
- Financial crimes involving fraud, theft, or exploitation (especially for roles with financial access)
- Repeated misdemeanor offenses indicating a pattern of unsafe or inappropriate behavior

Leadership may consider:

- Nature and severity of the offense
- Time elapsed since the offense
- Evidence of rehabilitation
- Relevance to the role and level of access to youth

In cases of minor infractions or older non-violent offenses, the mosque may allow the individual to serve, provided additional precautions or restrictions are put in place.

6. Right to Appeal:

Individuals may appeal a decision if they feel there has been a misunderstanding or misrepresentation in the background check report. The individual must provide any additional documentation or evidence needed to clarify or correct the report.

7. Ongoing Monitoring

Employees and Volunteers are expected to notify Pillars immediately of any legal issues, arrests, or convictions that occur during their period of service. Annual re-checks may also be conducted as needed.

8. Exceptions

No exceptions will be made to the requirement for background checks for those working with children. Individuals with a disqualifying record will not be permitted to serve in these roles under any circumstances.

9. Implementation and Enforcement

This policy will be enforced by a designated member of the Board of Directors along with the Executive Director. All decisions regarding the results of background checks will be made in alignment with the values of the mosque, prioritizing safety, fairness, and confidentiality.