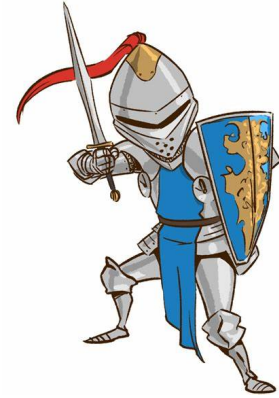


Sterling Volunteers Local Admin Guide



Welcome! to the role of local admin for Sterling Volunteers—an important and often underestimated role. First off, we would like to say, Thank you! For taking on this responsibility. We understand it's not the most glamorous or exciting or enjoyable role in the world but, again, it is important.

Why is this role so important? You are a big gatekeeper to the physical, emotional, financial, and spiritual prosperity of your church or school. There are sexual, financial and other types of predators that could get through undetected without you.

Just imagine what could happen without you. You get the notification that somebody who was well-trusted as a deacon in your church for 13 years just got caught doing something I don't want to even mention with a two-year-old in one of the families of your church. At first, you don't believe it—how could he? He was such a nice guy? Surely there is some kind of mistake. But the reality is that it did happen. Not once, but at least a couple of times with different families in your congregation.

Now this thing typically doesn't just catch the awareness of your church but the community. Then you have a city official talking about your beloved church—by name—on the news that this guy was living in one of your member's homes. Think this is just fiction to scare you? Wish I could say so, but it isn't. This literally happened to a fellow SDA church in Texas.

With just that alone, can you imagine what kind of emotional and spiritual and mental stress and battles this would put your church into? And more—this real example could have been easily avoided. How? If they only would have appointed a local admin to make sure all significant volunteers went through the background check system appointed by the NAD. That is correct. If this particular church would have only put this deacon through a simple, background check, they would have found out that before he took office as deacon,

he was a known sex-offender—a child-molester—and, I believe, would have cut all this off at the pass.

Thankfully, with this real-life case, the government agent, while talking about it on public news, tried to make it clear that the church is not the enemy here—but this isn't always the case. I don't know if there were ever any charges pressed against this church, but this thing happens a lot more than you may realize. There are attorneys out there who make it their specialty to prosecute non-profit organizations (even if that organization in-no-wise condones this behavior), winning millions for families with victims of sex-abuse. This has bankrupted local organizations for the Boy Scouts and Catholic diocese, for example. Now imagine that on top of the emotional and mental strain coming from this public awareness of what happened at your church, the strain from litigation that could possibly be awarded millions.

In these types of cases, the courts will look at the organization to see if they did their due diligence in keeping this from happening. In other words, they will consider whether or not background checks were, in fact, done. Are you understanding better now why you are so important? This just doesn't go to stop sexual predators, but also possibly financial ones and more. You are the knight, and Sterling Volunteers is some of your main armor.

Your #1 Task:

Your main job as a local admin is fairly straightforward: Make sure all qualifying volunteers go through the training/background checks (and keep it maintained). Your job WILL NOT be to determine what happens to someone who fails a test. Your job is also not necessarily to determine what happens to someone who refuses to go through the test. This is the job of the local elders and administration. Now you can breathe a sigh of relief as you realize your task is so much simpler than all that drama.

As a secondary role, you should also make sure that ALL volunteers understand the NCC Volunteer Guidelines (and has a copy of)—a document that is included in this guide. Following these guidelines will prevent even the ability for anyone to make allegations if taken seriously (such as never, ever, ever be alone with the minor child of another church member).

Who is a qualifying volunteer?

Not everyone who volunteers for something in the church is considered a “qualifying” volunteer in the instance of having to go through Sterling before serving (breathe another sight of relief). This means that if someone who visits the church wants to help clean up the dishes from a fellowship meal, you don’t have to put up your hand and say, Stop! You must go through this background check first! ☺

The NAD’s definition of a qualifying volunteer is as such from the NAD Working Policy:

“All volunteers referenced in this section include all adults, over the age of 18, involved in any capacity in children and youth ministries and activities, and all church ministry leaders and officers voted or appointed by the local church”

When in doubt, check them out!

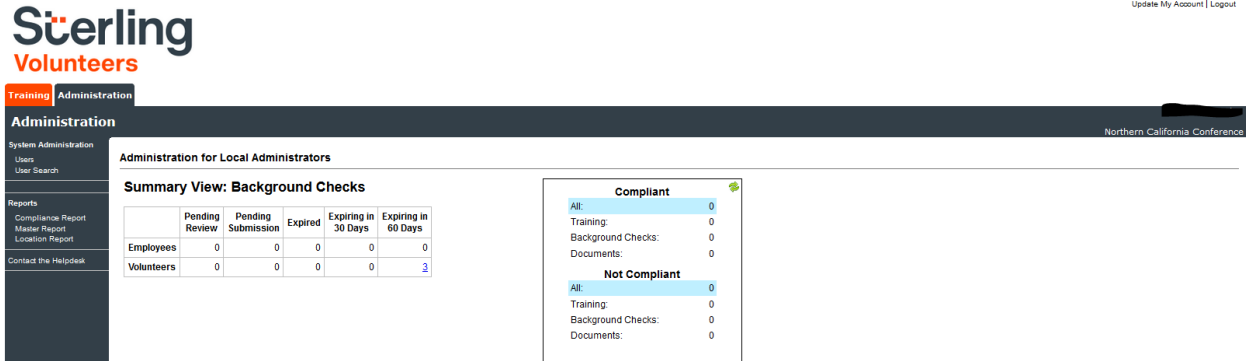
The Process:

This is what happens when someone goes through the process.

1. They use the instructions provided by you with the handout included in this guide
2. If there is nothing on their record, it shows up as Eligible on the “Compliance Report” (more about that report later) and they are good to go
3. If there is something on their record, it comes to us (not you) in an email and we will look at it and decide what the next step would be. Most of the time, it is only due to some minor traffic violation when they pick a role that has a driver MVR check attached to it (have them pick the “Driver” role if you need a DMV check done. However, on occasion, there are more serious things that do show up of which we will end up contacting whoever is the main administrator for that entity and let them know what is going on (principal or pastor or head elder usually)
4. For traffic violations, the NAD Working Policy states:
“All drivers shall be properly licensed...The recommended age for drivers shall be twenty-one (21) years. A minimum allowable age of nineteen (19) years old...Drivers shall have an acceptable driving record during the previous three years with not more than two traffic citations and no accidents that results in a conviction of a misdemeanor or criminal charge while driving any vehicle”
5. Our cycle is every three years (disregard if any emails come from Sterling that say yearly). This means that about every three years from the background check completion, these individuals will be notified automatically by Sterling to redo their training/background check.

Inside of Sterling Volunteers

Now let's get to the nitty-gritty of using this program.



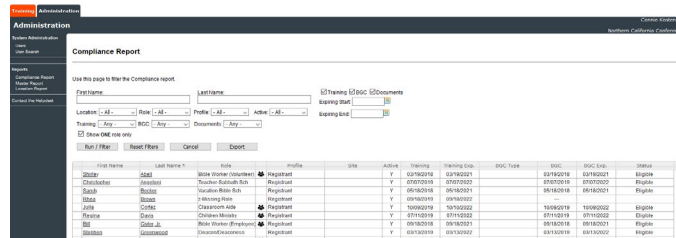
When you log in, you will notice two tabs now (instead of just one) that include Training and Administration. As you might guess, the Administration tab is where all the fun is for the local admin.

The **NUMBER 1** thing you need is the "Compliance Report" under the Administration tab.

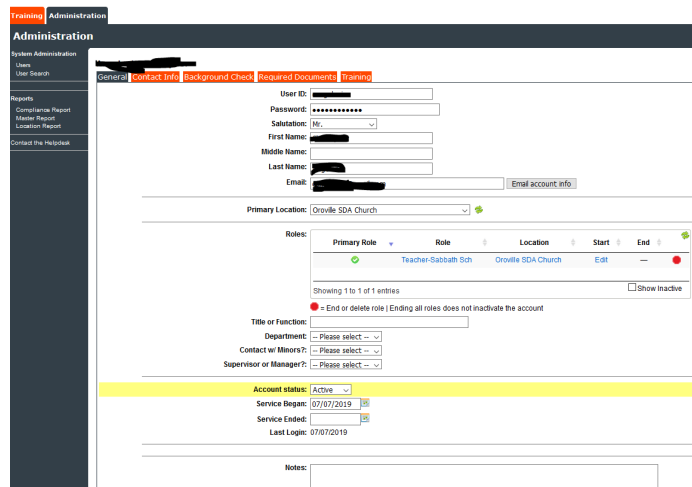


Go ahead and click on this "Compliance Report".

This will bring up something that looks like the following:



Notice all of the names and that you can filter your list in all sorts of ways. If you click on the names, it will bring you to their specific information. You can filter by Roles, BGC Expire Dates, etc.



You can now look up their contact, BGC (background check) and training info.

The All-Seeing Compliance Report

Okay, it doesn't show that much detail about the person, but it gives you pretty much all the pertinent info to fulfill your job as a local admin. It shows you:

1. Who has at least started the process
2. Who has finished the process
3. The dates of finishing their training and background check
4. The expiration dates for their checks/training
5. The all-important "Status"

What does it all mean?

Let's start with the most important—the "Status." There are three different *types* of options for the Status.

1. Eligible = Good to go! 😊
2. Ineligible = Rare. Means they are NOT to be used as a qualifying volunteer in any wise. The entity will have been notified prior to this. Sometimes it means that an entity has been notified and gotten no response so this should get its attention.
3. Eligible-[some type of restriction] = This means they are eligible for everything except for the one thing listed. Most common is "Eligible Non-Driver". Usually means they fell outside of the NAD guidelines for a driver.

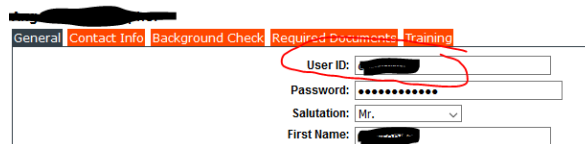
Other symbols:

1. The exclamation point = Simply means they have started but not finished the process
2. The three little figures in the blank column = Simply means they have multiple roles

Always remember that nothing is irreversible. This status can be changed by us in a very short time. If any questions/concerns, simply contact us.

FAQs/Troubleshooting

1. **I want to switch/add my location(s) to make my info available for other schools/entities:**
 - a. Email us or Sterling with the request
2. **Does it cost anything to the entity?**
 - a. Historically, only the amount that pertained strictly to the DMV (driver) portion of the check was billed to the entities (which is minimal—usually \$3/individual). However, this is subject to change. Bottom line, the most entities will ever have to pay is a fraction of the actual cost. The NCC currently absorbs the vast majority of the costs associated with our background checks. We do not wish our entities to be scared to use this service due to any financial worries (ex: a normal bill may be about \$1,200. The NCC will absorb typically around \$1,100 of it)
3. **Will my information be secure if I go through the background check?**
 - a. This question is usually asked by those who do not understand the reality of information availability currently in the world. The short answer: There will be no significant increase in risk to anyone's info who goes through the process. If you ever have been an employee, applied for a credit card, etc, then your information is already at some type of risk. Even the Pentagon is not full-proof from data breaches. This is the reality in which we live
4. **It doesn't accept my login info?**
 - a. This is something you may come across from time to time. There may be a number of solutions:
 - i. Make sure they are trying to log in to the correct portal. It has happened where folks go trying to google Sterling Volunteers and they end up at the wrong website (www.sterlingvolunteers.com). If they try to log into this website, they will meet with utter defeat every single time. Make sure they are trying to log into www.ncsrisk.org
 - ii. Make sure they are using their actual "User ID" instead of their email (unless they actually put their email as their User ID. You, as the local admin, have the ability to click on their name and go into their General info to see their User ID



The screenshot shows a user profile page with a navigation bar at the top containing tabs for 'General', 'Contact Info', 'Background Check', 'Required Documents', and 'Training'. Below the navigation bar is a login form with the following fields: 'User ID' (with a red circle around the input field), 'Password' (with a masked password of 10 dots), 'Salutation' (with a dropdown menu showing 'Mr.'), and 'First Name' (with a masked name). The 'User ID' field is highlighted with a red circle.

- iii. The majority of the time: Browser issues. For this, there are two main solutions:
 1. **Make sure they ARE NOT using Internet Explorer.** This browser is notorious for not working well with Sterling (and many other things for that instance). Not so sure about the newer Edge but it may work fine. For the PC, use either Firefox or Google Chrome
 2. Cache. If everything else is correct (correct web address, correct User ID, correct browser), then it may just be that the browser cache needs to be cleared. Each browser has its own simple way to be cleared. If anyone doesn't know how to do this, all it takes is a simple search of "Firefox [whatever web browser] clear cache" and you will find step-by-step instructions

5. **Will it negatively affect my credit score if I consent to the statement about credit on the background check?**
 - a. No. This will not actually look up your credit score. It is somehow used as a way to verify your identity.
6. **What about those that come from other conferences and have already gone through Sterling?**
 - a. See #1
7. **What about those who have moved away but still have our location?**
 - a. This is like to #1 and #6. It doesn't hurt anything to have that extra person on your list, but if it erks you that bad, either the NCC or Sterling can erase the location

Tips from those who use it often

- If you want to keep track of who has done something since the previous time for renewals, at the start, run a list by expire date, then, on occasion, run it again and see who doesn't show up
- Remember, when the nominating committee appoints new leaders in the church, you need to be on it. You need to keep a list of all the new leaders on the nominating list so you can keep track of who needs to go through the process
- Remember that folks need to be reminded that if they change their email addresses, they need to update their accounts or they will NOT get renewal emails (by clicking up at the top right on "Update My Account")

Final Thoughts

If you have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to contact the NCC Risk Management. There are sometimes—when not all the instructions are followed—that a background check prompt will not come up. Again, just contact the NCC Risk Management and we will likely be able to fix the problem.

There are some problems, however, that can only be solved by Sterling themselves. Email is probably the best way to get them (at least at the time of this writing during COVID). Here is their email:

AdventistSupport@sterlingvolunteers.com

If you have any suggestions for this guide, please let us know.

And, again, we thank you so much for all that you are doing for the health of our institutions and safety of our most precious assets—our children.