



Safe Environment Policy and Procedures

Updated September 2024

“The joy of the Gospel is such that it cannot be taken away from us by anyone or anything (cf. Jn 16:22). The evils of our world – and those of the Church – must not be excuses for diminishing our commitment and our fervour.

Let us look upon them as challenges which can help us to grow.” ~

Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*



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THE DIGNITY OF A PERSON

Every person should be respected and treated with the dignity befitting a child of God.

Every person should expect respect of their boundaries.

Every person may challenge any behavior or comment that is offensive or inappropriate.

It is everyone's responsibility to safeguard those around us.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Background Screening – All church personnel shall allow an inquiry into their background to assess whether any reason exists that would suggest the person is not suitable for the position sought. Such background investigation shall include a Level 2 fingerprint criminal background search (“CBS”). A Level 2 CBS includes a state-wide criminal and juvenile records check through the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and a federal criminal records check through the Federal Bureau of Investigations.

Charter – The document, *2005 Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, developed by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, outlines the goals, duties and responsibilities of dioceses in the United States in response to the issue of child abuse.

Child/minor – A person who is under 18 years of age or a person with a physical or mental handicap who is under 21 years of age.

Church Personnel - For purposes of this policy only, church personnel includes all individuals who minister, work, or volunteer in any school, parish, or ministry of the Diocese whose compliance with this policy is sought. The term has no legal meaning or significance outside the scope of this policy and is not indicative of any employment or agency relationship.

Covered Volunteer - Any unpaid person engaged or involved in a Diocesan activity, or who is involved in a Diocesan ministry and has contact with children, young adults, mentally-challenged children or adults, or the elderly or disabled, whether in a hospital, nursing home, or residential setting, including pastoral visits and distribution of Communion. All persons age 15 or older engaged in work or volunteer activities involving Vulnerable Populations must be fingerprinted.

Covered volunteers including catechists, ministers to the sick, youth ministry volunteers, coaches, volunteers of Bishop Grady Villas, counselors of children or vulnerable persons, Boy/Girl Scout troop leaders, ushers with financial responsibilities those who work with databases, social media or provide information technology (IT) support services and child care center volunteers will be background checked every five years through the FBI/FDLE screening process.

Credible allegation – A claim based upon identifiable facts, such as specific names, places, or time frames, details of incidents or names of corroborating persons.



Employee - Any lay person who is employed by or engaged in ministry in any Diocesan entity, whether part-time or full-time, who is given payment for services rendered, and for whom the Diocesan entity is obligated to withhold payroll taxes (FICA, Medicare, and withholding). This definition does not include independent contractors, consultants, vendors or other persons who are not subject to the supervision of the Bishop of the Diocese and for whom no such duty to withhold payroll taxes exists.

Pastoral Counseling – Counseling as provided by adults who have received specific certification or licensures.

Pastoral Minister – An individual who works with parishioners in ministry in the name of the parish or diocesan institution.

Safe Environment Director – The person responsible for distribution of and adherence to diocesan policies and procedures required to assure a safe environment for Vulnerable Persons. In this Diocese, this position is in the Office of Safe Environment. This individual maintains the records required for the annual audit conducted by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (“USCCB”).

Sexual Abuse – Any unlawful conduct as described by in the State of Florida Statutes.

Victim Assistance Coordinator – An individual designated by the Bishop to be responsible for initial pastoral response and subsequent pastoral care in the name of the Diocese to victims of sexual abuse by church personnel.

Vulnerable Person – A minor under 18 years of age or any person in a state of infirmity, physical, or mental deficiency, or deprivation of personal liberty which, in fact, even occasionally, limits their ability to understand or to want or to otherwise resist the offense or approach.

PREVENTION

In an effort to ensure the safety of those persons under the care of the Diocese, all church personnel, ages 15 and older, will be required to submit a completed Criminal Background Check Form as well as a complete set of fingerprints so as to facilitate a criminal background investigation. Eligibility for employment, volunteer work, or ministry will be contingent and conditioned upon a satisfactory background investigation. This background investigation will be updated every five (5) years. This policy applies even if an individual has been cleared through an FBI or FDLE check conducted by their employer or another entity.



For specific preventive measures and information, please see the diocesan brochure: *Protecting Our Children* found on the Diocese of Orlando website www.orlandodiocese.org. On the home page, click *Holding Ourselves Accountable*, then click *Policies/Resources*. Information includes

- Parental questions and responses regarding abuse
- Signs of child sexual abuse
- Myths about child sexual abuse
- Internet safety

Safe Environment Education

All church personnel, including applicants offered a position, and volunteers working with Vulnerable Populations are required to complete safe environment training and a Level 2 CBS.

Safe Environment Training Video

To fulfill the safe environment training requirements, applicants must view the 25-minute “Safe Environment Certification” video at www.orlandodiocese.org. Users must also acknowledge they have read and received the diocesan Standards of Conduct before completing the online quiz, which consists of 20 questions.

Pass/fail results are emailed to the Safe Environment Office and are displayed on the screen after the quiz is completed. Once an individual has passed the quiz, the screen will display instructions for saving and printing the certificate of completion. The results will also be emailed to the Safe Environment Office for the Diocese of Orlando and the entity for which the person wishes to work for or volunteer in. The link to register for fingerprinting is displayed when the applicant passes the quiz.

If an applicant does not have his/her own printer or email address to retain the certificate, the diocesan entity he/she wishes to minister in can assist with this step.

Background Screening

In an effort to ensure the safety of those persons under the care of the Diocese, all church personnel and covered volunteers will be required to submit a completed Criminal Background Check Form as well as a complete set of fingerprints so as to facilitate a criminal background screening.

All Diocesan employees and covered volunteers including clergy, principals, instructional personnel, seminarians, school and parish employees, directors of religious education, catechists, youth ministry directors and volunteers, religious brothers and sisters, coaches (whether paid or volunteer), music/choir directors, employees and volunteers of Bishop Grady Villas (Magnify), counselors of children or Vulnerable Persons, independent contractors working as substitute teachers or temporary school office personnel, and child care center employees and volunteers will be background checked every five years through the FBI/FDLE screening process. For all individuals, this policy supersedes other requirements of any federal or state policy.

Each Catholic school in the Diocese of Orlando has a “Raptor” comprehensive visitor check-in/check-out system located at the front reception desk to prevent school access to unauthorized persons. Using a valid driver’s license, “Raptor” runs all visitors against the National and State Sex



Offender Registry each time he or she visits the campus. All visitors and volunteers must wear identifying lanyards in plain sight at all times while on school grounds or at school-related events.

Distribution of this Policy

A copy of this policy and the procedures for implementation will be distributed to all parishes and other Diocesan entities. All pastors and designated administrators are to be familiar with this policy and with their respective responsibilities for screening church personnel and are required to fully implement the training and screening within their respective entities.

New Church Personnel

Before beginning work or volunteer activities, the individual must complete the appropriate criminal background process and receive clearance from the Office of Safe Environment. All offers for any position are contingent upon approval from the Office of Safe Environment. All new hires requiring FBI/FDLE checks (and other individuals in emergency cases or when approved by the Office of Safe Environment) will be fingerprinted at an approved Diocesan location identified on the Fingerprint Registration Web site. Every five years, these individuals will be required to be re-screened, according to the appropriate type of screening.

Volunteers

All church personnel, including volunteers, such as coaches and assistant coaches, must be cleared through the background check process before they can begin their duties.

General Fingerprinting Procedure

Employee or volunteer applicants must register on the Fingerprint Registration website. At the time of registration, an appointment may be made to be fingerprinted at a Diocesan approved location.

Third Party Vendors

No third party vendors, other than vendors approved by the Diocese of Orlando Office of Safe Environment, can be used by any Diocesan entity for the purpose of background checks and/or clearance. Results of all fingerprinting and background checks will be processed through the Office of Safe Environment for all Diocesan entities.

Special Procedures for Schools

Instructional personnel certified through the State of Florida will be rescreened every five years in conjunction with the State's certification process (this will include a renewed FDLE/FBI check). All other school employees will be rescreened every five years. The State of Florida certification approval and the related screening results for instructional personnel will be reviewed by the Office of Safe Environment.

International Background Check

Any prospective employee, clergy, religious or volunteer from another country who has not been in the U.S. for at least one year will receive an International Background Check. Special forms are required and available through the Office of Safe Environment. The fee for this type of background check is applicable per the country of origin.

Database/IT Support

Church personnel, including vendors who work with databases or provide IT support services, are required to be FBI background checked because of their handling of sensitive information.



Records

Digital fingerprint images will be retained in a secure electronic database authorized by the Office of Safe Environment. Any identified criminal history, along with Diocesan recommendations for clearance, will be held in a secure location in the Chancery.

Clearance Process

Once the background check process has been completed, the Office of Safe Environment will notify the parish, school, or designated administrator, electronically in writing, of all individuals who have cleared without restriction. When the completed FDLE/FBI background check finds evidence of a conviction or other problem, it is called a "hit," and the pastor, principal, or designated administrator will be notified confidentially, in writing, regarding the results of the background check and the decision to deny employment or volunteer activity, or restrict an individual's employment or volunteer activity. If an individual is cleared, the notification shall be kept on file at the parish, school, or ministry. Restriction or rejection notices shall be kept in a locked, confidential file, in alphabetical order. When an administrator or pastor is replaced, their replacement shall review the confidential file to ensure that they are aware of any restrictions on a volunteer's or employee's activities. In addition, he or she shall verify, in writing, to the Office of Safe Environment that such a review has been completed. Any individual who is rejected or placed on restriction should be told by the pastor, principal, or designated administrator. If the individual feels there is an error, or that he or she is being unfairly treated, he or she will be required to provide written documentation to the Director of Safe Environment before the decision can be reconsidered.

Renewals

Covered volunteers and employees needing to be re-fingerprinted must register on the Fingerprint Registration website.

Clearance with Past Transgressions

Should the process find evidence of a conviction or other problem; it is called a "hit." When a "hit" occurs the pastor, principal, or designated administrator will be notified confidentially, in writing, regarding the results of the background check. The final decision to deny or restrict employment or volunteer activity is then made by the Diocese.

A person may be permitted to work or volunteer, with restrictions. For example, if a person has had a DUI or reckless driving conviction, he/she is not permitted to drive on behalf of the parish or school. Serious crimes, especially those involving violence or sexual abuse, will result in the applicant not being permitted to work or volunteer for the Diocese. Persons who have a criminal conviction related to the responsibilities of the position the individual will assume (e.g., a bookkeeper applicant convicted of forgery or embezzlement; a bus driver convicted of DUI or reckless driving), may be excluded from employment, volunteer service, or ministry. The Diocese also will comply with applicable Florida law. See Appendix A for a list of disqualifying offenses.

Record Maintenance

Digital fingerprint images will be retained in a secure electronic database through a vendor approved by the Diocese of Orlando. Any identified criminal history, along with Diocesan recommendations for clearance or denial, will be held in a secure location in Office of Safe Environment.

State Licensed and Regulated Facilities



Some diocesan facilities are licensed or otherwise regulated by the state and may in some circumstances be governed by additional requirements and only the state can grant an exemption at those facilities.

Reconsideration

Any individual who is placed on restriction will be provided the details of the restriction(s) by their respective pastor, principal or designated administrator. Individuals who are rejected must contact the Safe Environment Director for more information or reasons. If the individual believes there is an error, or that the facts of the case are not properly known, he or she will be required to provide written documentation to the Director of Safe Environment before the decision will be reconsidered.

Restriction or rejection notices shall be kept in a locked, confidential file. When an administrator or pastor is replaced, their replacement shall review the confidential file to ensure that they are aware of any restrictions on a volunteer's or employee's activities. He or she also shall verify, in writing, to the Office of Safe Environment that such a review has been completed.

In addition, individuals who misrepresent or fail to complete accurately their background information, including any criminal record or activity, will be denied employment or volunteer activity, or, if the inaccuracy or misrepresentation is subsequently discovered, the individual may be immediately terminated from employment, volunteer service, or ministry.

Limitations on Use of Screening Information

The Diocese may not use the criminal records, juvenile records, or abuse registry information of a person obtained through this screening process for any purpose other than determining whether that individual meets the minimum standard for good moral character or is otherwise qualified for the position sought.

Volunteers From Outside of the Diocese

In the Diocese of Orlando, for mission trips to other lands, missionaries, regardless of their residence, must be cleared through the Diocese of Orlando Fingerprint and Background Check Program and must have successfully completed the Diocese of Orlando Safe Environment Certification in order to receive permission to participate.

Criteria for Exclusion

No one, other than the Chief Operating Officer/Chancellor or the Safe Environment Director, has the authority to modify or allow any deviation from the Safe Environment Certification and Background Screening procedures set forth in this policy. Any modification or deviation must be approved in writing.

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

It is required that Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion complete Safe Environment Certification (unless they also serve as a 'covered volunteer' in another ministry).

Visiting Priests

In the Diocese of Orlando, no cleric will be allowed to concelebrate, celebrate, and or exercise his priestly ministry without receiving faculties from the Diocesan Ordinary, Bishop John Noonan. Any individual cleric who wishes to minister in the Diocese of Orlando, regardless of length of stay,



assignment, or country of origin is asked to provide any request through his bishop or religious superior to Bishop John Noonan. A letter of faculties from Bishop John Noonan or his designee must be on file before a cleric will be allowed to celebrate Mass or exercise his priestly ministry in the Diocese of Orlando. This also applies to priests who are simply visiting but plan to stay on diocesan property, such as a rectory.

Domestic & International Priests

[Short Stay \(Less than one week\)](#)

[Long Stay \(More than one week\)](#)

DOMESTIC for the visiting cleric from a Diocese or Religious Order with headquarters in the United States

Domestic Short Stay –

1. A current letter of suitability from his Diocese and or Religious Order must be sent to:
Most Reverend John G. Noonan
Diocese of Orlando
50 East Robinson Street
Orlando, Florida 32801
2. Include a cover letter with request stating time of arrival and departure, place where cleric will be housed, and purpose for visit or ministerial duty.
3. Submit the request three (3) months in advance, to ensure proper vetting.

Domestic Long Stay – more than 1 week. In addition to the above, the following requirements must be met:

1. The cleric will be required to comply with our Safe Environment policy which includes fingerprinting, a background check and safe environment training through the Diocese of Orlando.
2. Any cleric arriving for ministry within the Diocese of Orlando must report to the Bishop's office before beginning an assignment.

INTERNATIONAL for the visiting cleric from a Diocese or Religious Order with headquarters outside of the United States

International Short Stay –

1. A current, original letter of suitability from his bishop or religious order superior must be sent to:
Most Reverend John G. Noonan
Diocese of Orlando
50 East Robinson Street
Orlando, Florida 32801



2. Include a cover letter with request stating time of arrival and departure, place where cleric will be housed, and purpose for visit or ministerial duty.
3. Submit the request three (3) months in advance, to ensure proper vetting.

International Long Stay – more than 1 week. In addition to the above, the following requirements must be met:

1. The cleric will be required to comply with our Safe Environment policy which includes fingerprinting, a background check and safe environment training through the Diocese of Orlando. Fingerprinting can be done in the cleric's country of origin. Contact the Office of Safe Environment for the correct process to begin.
2. The determination for a cleric with an RI visa to be granted permission to receive faculties must be decided upon by his bishop/religious superior AND the bishop of the Diocese of Orlando. Pastors of Diocese of Orlando churches are not allowed to make this determination.
3. Any cleric arriving for ministry within the Diocese of Orlando must report to the bishop's office before beginning an assignment.

Tourist Visas B2/B1

The major concern with a priest visiting under a tourist visa is compensation. The wages and reimbursement must be paid by their religious organizations outside the U.S. Priests visiting under a tourist visa should not be used as a substitute for ordinary labor for hire. Therefore, a priest who presents a tourist visa may celebrate Mass publicly, so long as he is not 'filling in' for a priest who is on leave or vacation. They would not be able to hear Confessions to assist with the parish schedule. In addition, the visiting priest may not be compensated. This includes room and board. Visiting priests on tourist visas can only perform a very limited number of religious activities.

Registered Sex Offenders

Anyone who is a registered sex offender must identify him/herself to the parish and/or school. He/she may not participate in any parish/school/volunteer ministry, nor be present on Church property, except to drop off or pick up his/her child. He/she is allowed to participate in the celebration of Sunday Mass, at the pastor's designation.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT FOR CHURCH PERSONNEL

Any form of sexual misconduct is sinful in the eyes of God. Certain forms of sexual misconduct can be criminal as well. Church personnel who engage in any form of sexual misconduct are violating the ministerial relationship, misusing their authority and power, and taking advantage of the vulnerability of those they meet. In these circumstances there is an absence of meaningful consent to any sexual activity, even if the person is an adult. It is the responsibility of church personnel to maintain appropriate emotional and sexual boundaries with those with whom they work or serve. While it is not possible to identify every form of inappropriate conduct that violates a person's boundaries, based on the foregoing, it is **inappropriate** for church personnel to:

- perform any type of sexual act with anyone.
- give inappropriate gifts (such as lingerie).
- threaten or cause personal harm or injury.
- threaten or cause damage to property.
- smoke or encourage smoking on any diocesan property, school or entity.



- observe someone undressing while he/she is changing clothes at school, a sporting event or retreat other than necessary supervision in a locker room or approved changing area.
- denigrate or verbally abuse any person.
- provide medical advice, or medical procedure unless properly authorized or are required by law.
- administer drugs, including over-the-counter medication, in the absence of express written permission.
- provide massages or other physical therapy.
- examine the genitalia of any person, for any reason.
- touch an individual inappropriately.
- use the internet for pornographic access.
- use pornography or participate in any acts of pornography involving adults or minors.
- show sexually suggestive objects or pornography.
- tell tales of sexual exploits, experiences or conflicts.
- make sexual propositions.
- use sexual vulgar language.
- offer a prolonged hug when a brief hug is customary behavior.
- kiss on the lips.
- invite children and young people to their home unsupervised or for overnight stays, even with the permission of the parent or guardian.
- offer children and young people rides to their homes, even with the permission of the parent or guardian.

(We recognize some of these restrictions would not apply due to marital status.)

Behaviors that may indicate poor boundaries

- Over investment in children
- Over identification with children
- Failure to set appropriate limits with children
- Excess animation around children
- Indications of anxiety regarding adult sexuality
- Overly anxious in interviews or under supervision
- Success in getting around the rules
- Lack of meaningful, in-depth relationships with adult peers
- No sense of responsibility for one's actions
- Keeping secrets with children
- Allowing special relationships with individuals
- Allowing individuals to break some rules
- Gifts to individual young person

Supervision of Minors

Determining the number of adults needed for supervision of minors depends on a number of factors, including the following: nature of the activity/event, age of the minors, and location of the activity/event. If you have any questions about the proper ratio or number of chaperones for a particular event, please contact the Diocesan Office of Risk Management.



Supervision Ratios of Adult:Minors

All events and activities require a minimum of two (2) adults, 21 years of age or older, as supervising ministry team members or chaperones.

Unless the group being supervised is either all boys or all girls with a supervising ministry team member or chaperone of the same gender, it is recommended that there be a supervising ministry team member/chaperone of each gender for mixed gender groups. This is required for overnight events.

Events require minimum of two (2) adult supervising ministry team members/chaperones for the first ten (10) young people; with a 1:10 ratio continuing thereafter.

Overnight events require a minimum of two (2) adult supervising ministry team members /chaperones for the first eight (8) young people; with a 1:8 ratio continuing thereafter.

ALLEGATION OF SEXUAL ABUSE OF A VULNERABLE PERSON

All information relating to a Vulnerable Person's incident or others shall be assembled and retained in a written form in a confidential manner.

Reporting

If you are a victim of abuse, or if any clergy, religious, lay employee, or volunteer of the Diocese of Orlando knows or has cause to suspect that a Vulnerable Person has been subjected to any form of abuse, child sexual abuse, or neglect by any person, including another diocesan employee or volunteer, religious or clergy, immediately will observe the following procedures.

- Make a report as required by law directly to the Florida Department of Children and Family Services (DCF).
- Any mandatory report may be made by calling the toll free statewide abuse or neglect registry at **1-800-96ABUSE**, or by calling the local DCF office responsible for receiving such reports. Please note time and place of call, name of person taking the report and any report or case number for future references.
- A verbal report to DCF, shall be confirmed in writing to the local DCF office within forty-eight (48) hours of making the verbal report.
- If the alleged perpetrator is a teacher, social worker, or licensed mental health professional, the event should also be reported to Department of Professional Regulations (DPR) at 1-800-445-6739.
- Please record name of person taking call and case number.
- Comply with instructions given by DPR regarding written report of event and any additional actions.

Immediately after telephoning DCF and DPR, the individual will notify the pastor, school principal, director of religious education, or other responsible supervisor. Immediately after receiving notification of a reported child abuse charge the supervisor will contact the victim assistance coordinator, who will then notify the parents.



Once written reports to DCF, DPR, and any other appropriate agencies are forwarded, the person reporting will give copies of these reports to the responsible supervisor within the same calendar day. Immediately after receiving copies of the written reports, the supervisor will forward them to the victim assistance coordinator.

Content of Report

The name, age, gender, address of the child as well as the name of the parent or guardian, the nature and extent of the abuse, and any other pertinent information should be included. The name, address, age, and gender and any other pertinent information concerning the alleged perpetrator should also be included.

Diocesan

The Victim Assistance Coordinator receiving the report will notify the Bishop that same calendar day. The Bishop and/or his representative will notify the Diocesan Review Board in a timely fashion.

In summary,

When an allegation of child sexual abuse is received:

- Florida Reporting Law is followed. Call toll-free abuse registry hotline at 1-800-962-2873 or 1-800-342-9152 immediately.
- The Victim Assistance Coordinator is notified, 407-246-7179.
- The individual is removed from his/her position pending a law enforcement and internal investigation.
- The Victim Assistance Coordinator commences an investigation as quickly as possible, in coordination with the Chief Operating Officer/Chancellor and the Safe Environment Director, but no later than within one week of the notification of the allegation, and consults with members of the Diocesan Review Board, the Diocesan Attorney, or others as needed.
- The recommendations of the Diocesan Review Board are presented to the Bishop.

Notification to Parent or Guardian

If the complaint is not received from or does not involve the parent or guardian of a Vulnerable Person, arrangements should be made to notify the parent or guardian as soon as possible. (Notice should not be given to the parent or guardian if he or she is the person against whom the complaint is made.)

Parents or guardians should be informed of the report issued to DCF by an individual in authority accompanied by individual making the report.

All allegations of sexual abuse by church personnel or on church premises shall be reported promptly to the Victim Assistance Coordinator (407-246-7179) who shall immediately notify the Diocesan Attorney and verify that DCF has been notified. The Victim Assistance Coordinator shall



notify the Bishop or, in his absence the Vicar General or Chancellor for Canonical Affairs. This reporting occurs after reporting to DCF.

Investigation

When a credible allegation of sexual abuse of a minor by any church personnel is received, the individual is removed from ministry while a preliminary investigation is initiated. In making an assessment and recommendation for action, the Victim Assistance Coordinator shall consult with those designated by the Bishop who are involved in administering issues related to the allegation.

Diocesan Response

The Diocese will cooperate with public authorities about reporting cases when the person alleged to have been abused is no longer a minor. In addition, the Diocese will advise and support a person's right to make a report to public authorities.

Restoration of Position

When the investigation proves the allegation to be not credible, the accused individual will be restored to his/her former position or placed in another diocesan position.

In the case of proven child sexual abuse, no one will be restored to a Diocesan position. If a priest or religious is removed, he or she can longer function in any ministry for any Diocese.

Assistance to Victim

The primary focus of pastoral concern and support is the victim and family. After a report is made to the Diocesan Review Board, appropriate measures are taken to assist in their healing process. Contact with the victim is restricted to the Bishop, the Victim Assistance Coordinator and any other person designated by the Bishop, so as to avoid confusion as to intent or care. Every effort will be made to keep the family of any victim who is still a minor properly informed. Counseling will be offered to the victim and family as appropriate and necessary.

Communication Regarding Allegation and/or Investigation

The Diocese of Orlando's policy with respect to communications reflects a commitment to transparency and openness. Within the confines of respect for the privacy and the reputation of the individuals involved, the Diocese will deal as openly as possible with members of the community, especially with regard to assisting and supporting parish communities.

All communications regarding allegations of child sexual abuse will protect the identity of the victim and reflect the confidential nature of the investigation. Care will be taken to insure that the rights of the alleged perpetrator are not violated.

Internal Communications

Notification to parishes, schools, priests, religious, lay employees, and volunteers will be made through releases provided by the Bishop or his representative. These will be made available as soon as feasible.

Personnel Record



Any employee found guilty of child sexual abuse or abuse of vulnerable adult will have this information noted in his or her personnel file. This determination is cause for termination from employment with the Diocese of Orlando and prohibition of future re-employment.

Inquiries for references in cases of guilty employees should be referred to the Office of Human Resources.

External Communications

All media inquiries will be answered by Diocesan Senior Director of Communications or the spokesperson designated by the Bishop for this purpose. No other diocesan employee or volunteer is to respond to the media except so directed by the Bishop. Every effort will be made to insure that all information is disseminated in a timely and appropriate manner. To that end, media release will be made to appropriate individuals as advisable.

Please see the website www.orlandodiocese.org and click *Holding Ourselves Accountable* for additional information on:

- Citations from Florida Statutes pertaining to Child Sexual Abuse
- USCCB National Review Board and news releases
- Diocesan policies/resources
- Standards of Conduct
- Removal of Church Personnel from Ministry

Alleged Perpetrator

As appropriate, the Diocese will take some or all of the following actions with respect to the alleged perpetrator.

- Individual will be informed of the allegations by the Bishop or his representative and will be given an opportunity to respond to the allegation.
- Pastoral support and spiritual guidance will be offered.
- Individual will be advised of his/her right to seek legal and canonical counsel.
- Individual will be removed from contact with Vulnerable Persons and placed on administrative leave pending the investigation and/or psychological evaluation.
- Individual may be sent for a psychological evaluation.
- Individual may be offered whatever residential or outpatient care is recommended.
- In the case of a religious order person, the allegation will be reported to the major superior of the religious order.

DIOCESAN REVIEW BOARD

The Diocesan Review Board acts in a confidential, consultative manner to advise the Bishop in any matter relating to alleged sexual abuse of a Vulnerable Person involving clergy or religious women. Any allegation of sexual abuse against a Vulnerable Person within the Diocese of Orlando may be reviewed by the Diocesan Review Board.

The Board advises the Bishop:

1. In the discharge of his duties related to allegations of sexual abuse of a Vulnerable Person;
2. Whether diocesan policy and procedures were followed in the case of an abuse.



3. In the development of policy and practices related to the provision of a safe environment;
and
4. In the development of policy and practices related to response to allegations of abuse of a Vulnerable Person.

The Board meets as needed. The term limit for a Diocesan Review Board member is five years. Board members do not receive compensation.

This Board and the Board Chair are appointed by the Bishop. The Board consists of at least five individuals not employed by the Diocese including a:

- Parent
- Survivor or relative of a survivor of sexual abuse
- Representative of law enforcement
- Mental health professional whose practice focuses on victims and/or perpetrators of childhood sexual abuse and recovery
- Priest who serves as Pastor in the Diocese of Orlando

Members of the Diocesan Review Board should be individuals of outstanding integrity and good judgment in full communion with the Church.

Additional participants may be invited to attend Diocesan Review board meetings to act as resources for the Board. These participants can include, among others, the Chancellor for Administration, the Senior Director of Communications, the Diocesan Attorney, and the Director of Safe Environment.

Dangerous Situations

Whether you are participating in celebration of Mass, on a field trip, or participating in ministry through employment or volunteerism, we are called to care for those around us. Sometimes dangerous situations may present themselves which might cause harm to a number of people. These might include a lack of crowd control, harassment or jeering by on-lookers because of participation in a sacred procession or March for Life, or the presence of a person who seems unstable. These are some best practices to help mitigate the difficulties of those situations and to provide for the safety of the people of God.

- If you see something, say something to authorities right away.
- Be aware of your environment and any possible dangers.
- Discover and follow the plan of the organization with which you are participating.
- Look for the two nearest exits anywhere you go, have an escape path in mind and identify places you could hide.
- Understand the plans for individuals with disabilities and other access and functional needs.



Active Shooter Scenario

RUN and escape if possible.

- Getting away is the top priority.
- Leave your belongings behind.
- Help others escape, if possible, but evacuate even if others will not follow.
- Warn and prevent individuals from entering an area where the active shooter may be.
- Call 911 when you are safe, describe the shooter, location, and weapons.

HIDE, if escape is not possible.

- Stay quiet.
- Silence all electronic devices and make sure they won't vibrate.
- Lock and block doors, close blinds, and turn off lights.
- Do not hide in groups – spread out along walls or hide separately to make it more difficult for the shooter.
- Try to communicate with police silently. Use text message or social media to tag your location, or put a sign in a window.
- Stay in place until law enforcement gives the all clear.

FIGHT as an absolute last resort.

- Commit to your actions and act as aggressively as possible against the shooter.
- Recruit others to ambush the shooter with makeshift weapons like chairs, fire extinguishers, books, etc.
- Throw items to distract and disarm the shooter.

While law enforcement secures the area:

- Keep hands visible and empty.
- Know that law enforcement's first task is to end the incident, and they may have to pass injured along the way.
- Officers may be armed with rifles, shotguns, and/or handguns and may use pepper spray or tear gas to control the situation.
- Officers will shout commands and may push individuals to the ground for their safety.
- Follow law enforcement instructions and evacuate in the direction they come from, unless otherwise instructed.
- Take care of yourself first, then you may be able to help the wounded before first responders arrive.
- While you wait for first responders to arrive, provide first aid. Apply direct pressure to wounded areas and use tourniquets if you have been trained to do so.



- Turn wounded people onto their sides if they are unconscious and keep them warm.

Music, Movies & Ministry

A minister serves as a mentor and guide, walking with a young person as they journey in faith. This becomes increasingly difficult in an age where authentic faith has become counter-cultural. Therefore, guidelines have been created to assist adults as they seek truth beauty and goodness in music and movies to share with young people.

- Parental or guardian consent forms must be completed before showing any portion of an R-rated film to high school age students.
- No portion of an R-rated film may be shown to students under high school age.
- Parental or guardian consent forms must be completed before showing any portion of a PG-13 film to anyone under the age of 14.
- Pop culture music must be prescreened. Lyrics with obscenities, or that are demeaning to people of a specific gender, race, creed or sexual orientation, are not to be played within the ministry setting.

Again, it is everyone's responsibility to safeguard those around us. Pope Francis reminds us, "The pain and the shame we feel at the sins of some members of the Church, and at our own, must never make us forget how many Christians are giving their lives in love... They look for ways to communicate values in hostile environments. They are dedicated in many other ways to showing an immense love for humanity inspired by the God who became man." (**Evangelii Gaudium, Nov. 2013**)

Related Links (Enlaces relacionados)

[Diocese of Orlando Social Communications Policy – February 2018 - PDF](#)

[Pronto tendremos la versión en español](#)

[Diocese of Orlando Privacy Policy](#)

[Pronto tendremos la versión en español](#)

[Parental Guardian Consent Form Liability Waiver - October 2014 – PDF](#)

[Forma para consentimiento del Pariente Guardian relevar de responsabilidad - octubre 2013 – PDF](#)

[Parental/Guardian Medical Information and Consent Form - October 2014 – PDF](#)

[Información Médica y Formulario de consentimiento del Pariente Guardián - octubre 2014 – PDF.](#)

[Adult Consent Form and Liability Waiver - September 2014 – PDF](#)

[Formulario de Consentimiento para Adultos y relevo de responsabilidad - septiembre 2014- PDF](#)

[Adult Driver Information Form - October 2014 – PDF](#)

[Pronto tendremos la versión en español](#)

[Image Release Form – October 2015 – PDF](#)



[Forma para autorizar publicación de fotos – octubre 2015](#)



Appendix A

List of Disqualifying Offenses

Prohibited Misdemeanor or Felony Offenses	Statute	Origin
Sexual misconduct with certain developmentally disabled clients and reporting of such conduct	Sec. 393.135	435.04 1012.315
Sexual misconduct with certain mental health patients and reporting of such misconduct	Sec. 394.4593	435.04 1012.315
Medicaid provider fraud	Sec. 409.920	408.809
Medicaid fraud	Sec. 409.9201	408.809
Adult abuse, neglect or exploitation of aged persons or disabled adults	Sec. 415.111	435.04 1012.315
Domestic violence	Sec. 741.28	435.04
Murder	Sec. 782.04	435.04 1012.315
Manslaughter, aggravated manslaughter of an elderly person or disabled adult, or aggravated manslaughter of a child	Sec. 782.07	435.04 1012.315
Vehicular Homicide	Sec. 782.071	435.04
Killing of an unborn quick child by injury to the mother	Sec. 782.09	435.04
Assault, if the victim of the offense was a minor	Sec. 784.011	435.04
Battery, if the victim was a minor	Sec. 784.03	435.04 1012.315
Kidnapping	Sec. 787.01	435.04 1012.315
False imprisonment	Sec. 787.02	435.04 1012.315
Luring or enticing a child	Sec. 787.025	435.04 1012.315
Taking, enticing, or removing a child beyond the state limits with criminal intent pending custody proceedings	Sec. 787.04(2)	435.04 1012.315



Prohibited acts of persons in familial or custodial authority	Sec. 794.041	435.04 1012.315
Unlawful sexual activity with certain minors	Sec. 794.05	435.04 1012.315
Prostitution	Ch. 796	435.04 1012.315
Lewd and lascivious behavior	Sec. 798.02	435.04
Lewdness and indecent exposure	Ch. 800	435.04 1012.315
Arson	Sec. 806.01	435.04 1012.315
Burglary	Sec. 810.02	435.04
Fraudulent acts through mail, wire, radio, electromagnetic, photoelectronic, or photooptical systems	Sec. 817.034	408.809
False and fraudulent insurance claims	Sec. 817.234	408.809
Patient brokering	Sec. 817.505	408.809
Criminal use of personal identification information	Sec. 817.568	408.809
Obtaining a credit card through fraudulent means	Sec. 817.60	408.809
Abuse, aggravated abuse, or neglect of an elderly person or disabled adult	Sec. 825.102	435.04 1012.315
Lewd or lascivious offenses committed upon or in the presence of an elderly person or disabled adult	Sec. 825.1025	435.04 1012.315
Incest	Sec. 826.04	435.04 1012.315
Child abuse, aggravated child abuse, or neglect of a child	Sec. 827.03	435.04 1012.315
Contributing to the delinquency or dependency of a child	Sec. 827.04	435.04 1012.315
Negligent treatment of children	Sec. 827.05	435.04
Sexual performance by a child	Sec. 827.071	435.04 1012.315
Forgery	Sec. 831.01	408.809
Uttering forged instruments	Sec. 831.02	408.809
Forging bank bills, checks, drafts or promissory notes	Sec. 831.07	408.809
Uttering forged bank bills, checks, drafts or promissory notes	Sec. 831.09	408.809
Fraud in obtaining medicinal drugs	Sec. 831.30	408.809



Resisting arrest with violence	Sec. 843.01	435.04 1012.315
Depriving a law enforcement, correctional, or probation office means of protection or communication	Sec. 843.025	435.04
Aiding in an escape	Sec. 843.12	435.04
Aiding in the escape of juvenile inmates in correctional institutions	Sec. 843.13	435.04
Obscene literature	Ch. 847	435.04 1012.315
Encouraging or recruiting another to join in a criminal gang	Sec. 874.05	435.04 1012.315
Drug abuse prevention and control if another person involved was a minor (Sale, Possession, Distribution)	Ch. 893	435.04
Sexual misconduct with certain forensic clients and reporting of such sexual misconduct	Sec. 916.1075	435.04 1012.315
Inflicting cruel or inhuman treatment on an inmate resulting in great bodily harm	Sec. 944.35(3)	435.04
Escape	Sec. 944.40	435.04
Harboring, concealing, or aiding an escaped prisoner	Sec. 944.46	435.04
Introduction of contraband into a correctional facility	Sec. 944.47	435.04 1012.315
Sexual misconduct in juvenile justice programs	Sec. 985.701	435.04 1012.315
Introduction, removal, possession of contraband at juvenile detention facility or commitment program	Sec. 985.711	435.04 1012.315
Additional Prohibited Felony Offenses	Statute	Origin
Assault, battery and culpable negligence	Ch. 784	435.04 1012.315*
Female genital mutilation	Sec. 794.08	1012.315
Voyeurism	Sec. 810.14	435.04 1012.315
Video Voyeurism	Sec. 810.145	435.04 1012.315
Theft, robbery and related crimes	Ch. 812	435.04 1012.315
Fraudulent sale of controlled substances	Sec. 817.563	435.04 1012.315
Fraudulent use of credit cards	Sec. 817.61	408.809
Exploitation of an elderly person or disabled adult	Sec. 825.103	435.04 1012.315