



PROMISE TO
PROTECT



PLEDGE TO
HEAL



Protection of Children Policy
for Lay Church Personnel

Revised July 1, 2016

**PROTECTION OF CHILDREN
DIOCESE OF JACKSON**

For

LAY CHURCH PERSONNEL

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MOST REVEREND JOSEPH R. KOPACZ, D.D., PH.D.
CATHOLIC DIOCESE of JACKSON

July 1, 2016

Dear Friends,

The Diocese of Jackson along with the Catholic Church throughout the United States is committed to fostering safe environments for children who are entrusted to our care, whether in the parish, schools, or other ministry settings. All forms of abuse and neglect must be eradicated, in particular sexual abuse from sexual misconduct. All forms of abuse violate the human dignity of the person, and are contrary to what Jesus taught us. I am grateful to all church personnel in our diocese as they continue to study and put in place the best literature and practices so as to create safe environments for all who come to our parishes, schools and ministries. The recent implementation of the VIRTUS program represents our commitment to excellence, especially regarding the program's monthly bulletins based on the latest research and best practices.

Over the years the Diocese of Jackson has periodically revised and added to the policies that guide the implementation and monitoring of safe environments throughout our parishes, schools and institutions. The last such update was July 2014. Along with the implementation of the VIRTUS program, we draw your attention to some refinements as well as adding new documents in one convenient place such as the travel policy. This current document like the previous, finds its direction from the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People and the Essential Norms for Diocesan Eparchial Policies Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priest or Deacons, approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in 2002 and revised in 2011.

By this letter I hereby promulgate this revised Protection of Children for Diocese of Jackson for Lay Church Personnel; it will take effect July 1, 2016. It applies to all personnel and volunteers throughout the Diocese in all parishes, schools, offices, agencies, and other institutions which operate under the administrative authority of the Jackson Diocese. On July 1, 2016 this current document supersedes all previous existing policies of the Jackson Diocese which deal with the policies contained herein.

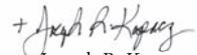
This document seeks to protect, enhance and restore the trust that our faith calls for between agents of the Church and the people entrusted to our care, especially children and youth.

To victims and their families I extend my sincere apology and ask for your forgiveness on behalf of the Diocese of Jackson for the harm inflicted by any agent of our local church. If there are any cases of abuse that have not been brought to our attention, once again I urge any victims to please come forward.

All members of the Church are called upon to be vigilant in implementing this document to the fullest. I offer my sincere appreciation and thanks to all the faithful for their support and work in this area. Our children need safe environments to thrive as God's children and grow into the fullest potential for which he created all. We are committed to fostering safe environments for all.

May God bless you, protect and guide you,

Sincerely yours in Christ,


Joseph R. Kopacz
Bishop of Jackson

Creating a Safe Environment For Our Children

Catholic Diocese of Jackson

Introduction:

It is important that diocesan personnel be informed about the **Protection of Children-Diocese of Jackson** Document, its various components on the prevention of child abuse and procedures that are followed when reports of child abuse or sexual misconduct by Church personnel are received. In addition, this document provides information on other procedures to promote a safe environment for youth in our schools, parishes and other diocesan sponsored programs. For the purpose of this document, all regulations applying to children also apply to vulnerable adults.

Purpose:

The Catholic Diocese of Jackson has a program to reduce the risk of child abuse in order:

- To provide a safe and secure environment for the children and youth in faith communities of the Jackson Diocese.
- To provide a screening process for all employees and volunteers working with children and youth.
- To assist the Diocese in evaluating a person's suitability to work with children and youth.
- To provide an annual catechesis on gospel values and self protection skills for all school age children.
- To provide a system to respond to the victims and their families, as well as the accused.
- To reduce the possibility of false accusations against clergy, employees, volunteers and contract workers.

Definitions:

For the purpose of this document only:

Sexual Abuse of a minor means any form of injury or abuse of a sexual nature.

Sexual misconduct means any form of sexual conduct that is unlawful; that is contrary to the moral instructions, doctrines, and canon law of the Catholic Church, and causes injury to another. It may constitute either/or sexual abuse, sexual harassment or sexual exploitation.

Child Pornography. For the purposes of this document, the production or possession of child pornography shall be considered sexual abuse of a minor. Possession or production of child pornography is not only a grave offense against children; it is a criminal offense and is required by law to be reported to civil authorities.

Diocese means the Roman Catholic Diocese of Jackson, including but not limited to parishes, schools, agencies, and institutions with direct accountability to the Bishop of Jackson.

Church Personnel means any priest, religious, employee or significant volunteer working in or on behalf of the Jackson Diocese.

Adult Supervisor means anyone 21 years of age or older.

Minor shall mean all persons under the age of eighteen.

Vulnerable adult means any person 18 years of age or older who is unable to protect his or her own rights, interests, and/or vital concerns and who cannot seek help without assistance because of a physical, mental or emotional impairment.

Volunteer is an unpaid person entrusted with the care and supervision of children.

Undocumented Volunteer is a person with no valid United States government identification.

Youth Assistant is a volunteer between the ages of 18-20 and whose voluntary efforts must be monitored by an adult that is compliant with all aspects of the Protection of Children Policy. The youth assistant must be out of high school/youth group for a minimum of one year.

Contract worker means any person who is not covered under the definition of Church Personnel, but may be a worker who regularly interacts with children by providing a service under a separate contract.

Screening Procedures

The following screening procedures are to be used with clergy, religious, staff and volunteers who work with children, youth, or vulnerable adults. All collected information will be treated as confidential. An initial screening is required prior to employment or volunteer service and repeatedly renewed during service.

Catholic Diocese of Jackson Application for Employees and Volunteers: All clergy and religious must complete this form. Staff and volunteers who have regular contact with children must complete this form as well. See definition of volunteer above.

All sections within the application form must be completed fully unless the statement at the beginning of the box applies to the applicant. Please note that an additional form is required when applying for a teaching position in a Catholic School.

Upon completion of this form, the employee or volunteer will be provided with a copy of the Protection of Children policy and other protection of children materials. He or she must sign a form acknowledging receipt of the policy.

Volunteers applying for a volunteer position: It is required that those applying for volunteer positions in a parish must have attended the parish for at least three years and be reasonably well known by parish leaders. If not, a recommendation is to be obtained from the volunteer's former parish indicating their suitability for the volunteer ministry.

Contract Workers: Before a contract worker who has significant contact with children and youth may provide services to a parish, school or diocesan sponsored program or activity, he or she must complete the diocesan criminal background screening or must have completed a comparable screening process by the contracting entity.

Drivers: A motor vehicle record check must be obtained on all adult drivers (21 years of age or older) who transport youth. The motor vehicle record check shall be repeated periodically. Only adult drivers who do not have any DUI's within the last seven years and who do not have more than two moving violations within the last five years may be used.

Confidentiality: All personal information obtained through the following sources should be kept confidential: The Catholic Diocese of Jackson Application for Employees and Volunteers, reference information, interview, criminal background check, etc. It is recommended that all material be kept in a locked file cabinet. These paper records will be destroyed, that is shredded, seven years after an individual's employment ends or the volunteer service ceases. Electronic records may be kept longer.

Training Procedures

Each school, parish and other diocesan sponsored program will provide both initial and ongoing training for staff and volunteers on providing a safe environment for children.

- A Protection of Children initial Called to Protect training is required within 60 days of employment or volunteer services. The applicant is provided a copy of the Protection of Children document. An acknowledgement form must be signed by the applicant indicating the policy has been read and they understand the policy before beginning a ministry. Initial training is provided by trained facilitators as part of orientation for all volunteers and staff.
- The Diocese has contracted with VIRTUS Protecting God's Children Online Awareness Training Program created by The National Catholic Risk Retention Group. It is expected that the online monthly format provides ongoing safe environment training for all clergy, religious, employees and volunteers who have significant contact with children and young people.

Educational materials on providing safe environments for children are available to church personnel as part of the Diocese's continuing education and training program.

Supervision Procedures

In order to provide a safe environment for children and youth, each school, parish or other diocesan sponsored program will provide adequate supervision for children entrusted to their care. They shall adhere to the following procedures:

- In the supervision of preschool children, have at least one adult female involved.

- Taking into consideration the age of youth and the type of activity, have an adequate number of male and/or female adults present at events involving children and youth.
- All undocumented adults who are in a supervisory position with minors must be trained and should be accompanied by an adult who is compliant with Protection of Children Policy if at all possible. If this is not possible, the undocumented adult in a supervisory position must be accompanied by another trained adult.
- For events involving children or youth in higher risk settings, such as overnight lock-ins, overnight trips, etc., it is mandatory to have two or more adults present.
- Elementary age students will only be released to a parent or legal guardian. The parent or guardian must designate in writing who the other person will be if they themselves are unable to receive their child.
- Obtain written parental permission, including a signed medical treatment form, before taking children or youth on trips. These forms should be kept for at least one year.
- Before permitting any minor to participate in athletic events or any other high risk activity, obtain parental approval.
- Whenever children or youth will be out of direct visual contact of the adult supervisor, use a “buddy system”. The children or youth must have been instructed on how to use the buddy system.
- For any overnight activities, all adult leadership and sponsors must be screened, trained and approved in advance by the appropriate pastor/school principal.

Behavioral Guidelines For Working With Children Or Youth

All clergy, religious, staff and volunteers of the Diocese will observe the following guidelines for dealing with minors or vulnerable adults:

- Do not allow any minor to stay overnight in any Church rectory or living quarters of priests unless they are an immediate family member or are accompanied by a parent or guardian.
- Do not be alone with a minor in a residence, sleeping facility, locker room, rest room, dressing facility, or other closed room or isolated area that is inappropriate to a ministry relationship.
- Do not take an overnight trip alone with a minor who is not a member of your immediate family.
- Do not sleep in the same bed with a minor. If an adult supervisor stays in a hotel or other sleeping room with a group of minors, the supervisor should sleep in his or her own bed using a roll away or cot if necessary.
- Do not provide minors with anything that is prohibited by law, such as alcohol, tobacco, drugs, etc.
- Do not sponsor church or school activities which do not comply with curfew laws for minors.
- Use caution and discretion in any physical contact with a minor. All physical contact should be public, appropriate and non-sexual.
- An adult should never be alone or isolated with a minor. However, if this does occur due to unforeseen circumstances, it should be in a well-lighted public place while waiting for a parent, guardian or another adult.
- Do not engage in physical discipline of a minor. Discipline problems should be handled in coordination with your supervisor and/or the parents of the minor.
- Topics, vocabulary, recordings, films, games or the use of computer software or any other form of personal interaction or entertainment that could not be used comfortably in the presence of parents should not be presented to minors. Sexually explicit or pornographic material is strictly prohibited.
- Do not administer medication of any kind, prescription or non-prescription without written parental permission.
- If you recognize inappropriate personal or physical attraction developing between yourself and a minor, notify your supervisor and maintain clear professional boundaries between yourself and the minor. If possible, refer the minor to another adult supervisor ASAP.
- If one to one pastoral care of a minor should be necessary, avoid meeting in isolated environments. Schedule meetings at times and use locations that create accountability. Limit both the length and the number of sessions, and make appropriate referrals. Notify parents of meetings.
- Do not give minors keys to church facilities. If the minor has a key as a result of being a church employee or volunteer, the minor should be properly screened.
- Do not transport youth unless you have received prior authorization by the pastor/principal. See all screening requirements for "Drivers" in the Transportation Guidelines.

- Do not take photographs of minors while they are unclothed or dressing.
- If you observe anyone, adult or minor, abusing a minor, take appropriate steps to immediately intervene and restore minor's safety. Report the abuse to the civil authority as well as the Diocesan Office in accord with diocesan policy and state law.

Disqualifying Offenses

No person may serve with children or youth if he or she has:

- ever been convicted or received deferred adjudication for any disqualifying offense, or
- has presently pending criminal charges for any disqualifying offense. Each circumstance involving a criminal charge or conviction, including a plea of nolo contendere (no contest) may be appealed to the Vicar General and reviewed by the Review Committee.

Disqualifying offenses include but are not limited to:

1. A felony classified as an offense against a person or an offense against a family. Offenses against a person include, but are not limited to, murder, assault, sexual assault, and abandoning or endangering a child. Offenses against the family include, but are not limited to bigamy, incest, interference with child custody, enticing a child, and harboring a runaway child.
2. A felony classified as an offense against public order or indecency. Offenses against public order or indecency include, but are not limited to, prostitution, obscenity, sexual performance by a child, possession, or promotion of child pornography, and disorderly conduct.
3. A misdemeanor or felony involving sexual assault, lewd or indecent acts involving a child, injury to a child, abandoning or endangering a child, sexual performance by a child, possession or promoting child pornography, enticing a child, bigamy or incest.
4. A felony involving the possession or distribution of any substance defined as a "controlled substance" in the statutes of the State of Mississippi or some other state. If a conviction is more than seven years old, the circumstances of the conviction and sentencing may be reviewed by the Diocesan Review Committee. The committee may recommend to the Vicar General or Bishop that the person be allowed to serve with children and youth (In light of the effectiveness of using recovering addicts in substance abuse rehabilitation programs, upon approval of the Vicar General, employees or volunteers with controlled substance convictions may be allowed to work in such programs.)

At all times, the diocese reserves the right to include within the disqualifying offenses any and all additional offenses or conduct determined to be inconsistent with serving children, youth or other protected persons in the diocese.

Appeal Process

Any person who applies and is not accepted for employment or volunteer service or whose service as a member of the clergy, an employee or a significant volunteer is terminated for any reason under these guidelines, will have the right of appeal as set forth in the Appeal Process.

If non-acceptance is based on the criminal background check for clergy, employees and volunteers:

The applicant shall be given the name and address of the agency reporting the criminal history of the applicant, so that he or she will have the opportunity to obtain a similar report from such agency. In the event that such a report is obtained by the applicant and he or she reasonably believes an error has been made by the reporting agent, then, upon written request, a second criminal background check shall be obtained and the application reconsidered.

If non-acceptance is based upon the interview process for a significant volunteer:

The applicant, upon written request, shall have the right to have a second interview and to have his or her application reconsidered by the Review Committee within three months after the date of the non-acceptance.

Conclusion

This document has been prepared in an effort to create a safe environment for our children and youth. As Catholics, we are called to participate intimately in sustaining God's creation by caring for our children and youth in the best way that we can. The Diocese of Jackson is committed to the well-being of every child under its care. When children realize their potential and fulfill their dreams, the community as a whole flourishes and we are all enriched beyond measure. Our children deserve safe environments and as church we are committed to keeping our churches, schools and institutions safe environments.

Given at Jackson, Mississippi this the 1st day of July 2016.



Joseph R. Kopacz
Bishop of Jackson



Reverend Kevin Slattery
Vicar General

Code of Ethical Principles and Standards for Church Employees and Significant Volunteers

Diocese of Jackson

Introduction:

On October 10, 2003, The Diocese of Jackson adopted a Code of Ethical Principles and Standards for Church Employees and Volunteers. A copy of the entire document is available to all employees and volunteers of the Diocese. The document is also available on the diocesan website: www.jacksondiocese.org. The following segments of the document are quoted since they deal most specifically with the Protection of Children. These Ethical Principles and Standards apply to all employees and volunteers for churches and schools of the diocese.

Church employees include the following: all priests, deacons, religious men and women, all paid lay personnel and those who contract for services in offices and programs of the Diocese and also all lay persons who volunteer for work in offices and programs of the Diocese on a significant basis as defined in the section: Creating a Safe Environment For Our Children (page 3-8).

Responsibility for adherence to this Code of Ethical Principles and Standards rests with the Church employees themselves. However, disregard of this Code by Church employees will be dealt with by the appropriate employing/appointing organization's representative such as: program director, employee supervisor, pastor, resident pastoral minister, mission coordinator, religious superior or bishop. Remedial action may take various forms from counseling to removal from ministry.

The conduct of Church employees, both public and private, has the potential to inspire and motivate people, or to scandalize and tear down their faith. These employees must be aware of the responsibilities that accompany their actions. They also know that God's goodness and graces support them in their ministry.

Conduct with Minors

Adults and volunteers must be aware of their own vulnerability and that of any individual minor with whom they may be working. In every instance possible, a team approach to youth ministry activities should be considered. Adults and volunteers should avoid establishing any exclusive relationship with a minor and exercise due caution when they become aware of a minor desiring such a relationship. Both the participants and members of the Church community can misunderstand such relationships.

Physical contact with minors can be misconstrued by both minors and other adults, and should only occur under appropriate public circumstances.

Adults and volunteers must never use or supply alcohol and/or illegal drugs when working with minors.

Adults and volunteers must never provide any sexually explicit, inappropriate, or offensive materials to minors.

Adults and volunteers should read and understand diocesan policies and procedures concerning allegations of sexual misconduct involving minors or vulnerable adults.

Adults and volunteers should not promote or endorse the practice of “hazing” or any similar formal rite of initiation to become a member of any diocesan organization.

Sexual Conduct

Adults must not exploit the trust of the parish community for sexual gain or intimacy.

Adults must not exploit persons for sexual purposes.

It is the personal and professional obligation of the adult to be knowledgeable about what constitutes sexual exploitation of another and to be familiar with the laws of the State of Mississippi regarding sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, and sexual assault.

Church employees, clergy, religious and lay people, who have made a commitment to celibacy are called to witness this in all relationships. Likewise, those who have made a marital commitment or have chosen to live solely are called to witness to this fidelity in all their relationships.

Any allegations of sexual misconduct will be taken seriously and reported to the Victim Assistance Coordinator or the Vicar General if a priest, deacon or lay employee/volunteer is involved. Diocesan protocol and procedures will be followed to insure the rights of all involved and to facilitate justice for the aggrieved.

Adults should be knowledgeable of the State of Mississippi regulations and know the proper reporting requirements as outlined in the Mississippi Reporting Statutes Reporting Procedures. Church employees also must comply with all mandatory reporting requirements except if the information was received under the seal of confession or privileged spiritual guidance. In such cases, no reporting can occur.

If an adult is in doubt whether he/she should make a report, the report should be made and the Department of Human Services will determine whether an investigation is warranted.

Professional Behavior

Adults should not engage in physical, psychological or verbal harassment.

Harassment encompasses a broad range of physical or verbal behavior, which can include, but is not limited to, the following:

- physical or mental abuse;
- racial insults;
- unwelcome sexual advances or touching;
- sexual comments or sexual jokes;
- requests for sexual favors used as a condition of employment or affecting any personnel decision such as hiring, promotion, or compensation;
- display of offensive materials.

Harassment can occur as a result of a single severe incident or a pattern of conduct, which results in the creation of a hostile, offensive or intimidating environment.

Adults are to follow the established procedure for reporting of harassment, and are to ensure that no retaliation for bringing forward a claim of harassment will be tolerated.

Given at Jackson, Mississippi this the 1st day of July 2016.



Joseph R. Kopacz
Bishop of Jackson



Reverend Kevin Slattery
Vicar General

Diocese of Jackson
Protection of Children
Electronic Communications Policy

Introduction:

For the purpose of this policy “employees/volunteers” refers to adults working or volunteering with minors. As such, all employees/volunteers are representatives of the Catholic Church. As we move forward with technology, it is important that all adults, specifically our employees and volunteers, recognize their role in keeping young people safe. Our main methods of communication regarding church activities and events with minors will be through electronic media including emails, text/instant messages, cell phones and social media sites while maintaining proper guidelines.

The goal of the Electronic Communication Policy is to provide a safe environment for our children, to teach our children safe procedures when using electronic communication devices, and to protect the reputations of employees/volunteers and the Catholic Church.

Whenever an employee/volunteer is acting in their capacity as a “representative” of the Catholic Church, they shall abide by this electronic communication policy. Any violations of this policy and the regulations below are counter to the goals of creating a safe environment for our children and youth. Consequently, failure to observe this policy places young people and children at risk and can result in termination of employment or the volunteer status.

This policy is not intended to limit your ability to communicate with minors of your church or organization but to allow the communication to revolve around a professional or organizational level. It is imperative in keeping with our goal of creating and teaching a safe technological environment that our communications with minors stay within appropriate boundaries that maintain a professional ministry relationship.

Church and Ministry Websites:

One of the best ways to promote youth events and activities are through your parish or organizational websites. It is recommended that you create a secured youth or youth ministry page/website dedicated to their activities and calendar of events.

- It is critical that someone is dedicated to keeping these sites updated on a regular basis.

- All web content should consistently represent the views/teachings of the Catholic Church.

- **No personal information or contact information regarding minors should be posted or available on public websites.**

- Written permission from parents or guardians must be obtained prior to posting pictures or identifying information of minors on any website. Be sure when posting pictures of minors to only provide a first name if you are going to provide captions.

- Moderators should make sure “comment boxes” or “feedback” sections, if available on the media, are properly moderated to prevent abuse and misuse of the media.

These are necessary best practices to follow when utilizing any website and the following practices should be consistently met for any/all Catholic parish or organizational websites in order to provide protection for church staff, minors and those who use the media:

- Minimum of two adults in a functioning official organizational capacity should have full access to all organizational accounts/sites.

- No inappropriate pictures/information of any parish or organizational staff/volunteers should appear on any page/site. This does include family pictures, social events, home phone numbers/addresses and personal emails accounts, etc.

- Your official logo or standard pictures/images should appear on the site to identify it as the organization’s official site and not a personal/individual site/account.

- An organizational email account (i.e. - youthministry@ourladyofhope.org) should be created to allow minors/visitors a means of communication to a specific department and not an individual. Organizational email accounts for leaders, administrators and volunteers (as needed) should be created for professional communication means.

- Any social media sites (Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, etc.) that are linked to your website/page should have the organizational email account associated with it and not a personal email account. This keeps a barrier between “someone” reaching out to the minor or the “organization” reaching out. This also allows a means to create/delete administrators for the website/page so when there are staff/volunteer turnover, things still run smoothly and changes are properly made and maintained.

Social Networking:

Social networking may be used to connect minors with Church ministry activities as specified in the following:

- If these sites are used to connect minors to church activities and ministries, ministry leaders must set up a separate site for dedicated parish use and the site name must reflect this. The leaders must also utilize the dedicated organizational email account to create the website/page. The ministry site must be completely separate from any personal site. Make sure to check on the terms of use, age restrictions and privacy options/controls for each site you plan to use prior to establishing a page for your organization and ensuring it is set up securely and properly. Make sure that the “no tagging” option is set to ensure no one’s privacy is breached.
- Both adults should be registered to have email alerts of page activity sent to their official organizational email accounts. This allows for quicker response time to urgent requests and helps to ensure all postings are appropriate. Also, with the potential of teen crises or time relevant information needed, it is vital that the page is frequently monitored by official organizational personnel.
- Parents should be informed that a social networking site is being utilized as a standard part of the ministry.
- All information displayed on the social networking sites must reflect the values of the Catholic faith and should always follow the teaching of the church.
- Employees/volunteers are prohibited from communicating with minors using personal social networking unless it is sent from the organizational site and you are an administrator. Communication should include the supervisor as well. This allows only the proper people to communicate exactly what is going on and eliminates any miscommunications for events/activities.
- Personal social networking profiles and blogs of employees/volunteers must be private and inaccessible to minors. The intent of this policy is not to dictate what is on your personal site; however, minors should not be given access to your site. This allows us to maintain the appropriate boundaries and in keeping it a professional relationship.

- Parents are encouraged to set up a public email address that is used by the parent and the minor child as the account for church contact with the child and parent.
- Ensure that the “chat mode” is disabled on your church or organizational social website.
- In using the Message feature through social media, another adult such as parent, supervisor, pastor, or LEM must be included in the message sent.

Text Messaging:

Text messaging is only to be used when communicating about a church or organizational activity. Messages of a personal nature are not to be sent to minors by Church employees or volunteers. Do not encourage minors to use texting for communicating personal messages to you in your role as employee/volunteer of the Church.

- Parents should be informed that text messaging is being used as a form of communication with the minors of your church/organization and that it is a standard part of the youth ministry.
- Text messages sent to minors must be copied to the Supervisor or his/her Church designee and/or parent/guardian.
- Parents/guardians are to be copied if they have made the request and provided a cell number.
- If an employee/volunteer receives a text message of an inappropriate personal nature from a minor, the employee/volunteer is prohibited from responding to the minor. In order to prevent any appearance of impropriety, the employee/volunteer should notify his/her supervisor or pastor of this incident immediately and forward the text. The parent/guardian should be contacted by the supervisor or pastor.
- If an employee/volunteer receives a text message from a minor indicating an emergency situation, the employee/volunteer must immediately contact the pastor, supervisor, and/or parent/guardian.

E-Mailing and Instant Messaging:

- Employees/volunteers are prohibited from sending instant messages to minors and/or e-mailing minors using their personal e-mail accounts. All emails/instant messages should only come through the designated organizational email account of the employee/volunteer and copy the pastor/supervisor and parent/guardian.
-
- This process maintains the appropriate boundaries and keeps the relationship professional.
- Parents should be informed that emails are being used as a form of communication with the minors of your church or organization and that these are standards of the youth ministry.
- Parents are to be copied on all emails/instant messages if they have made the request and provided a valid email account.
- If a minor attempts to communicate via the employee/volunteer personal e-mail account or by instant message, the employee/volunteer must notify his/her supervisor or pastor immediately.

The following are a few best practices to keep in mind when sending emails and instant/text messages:

- When possible use organizational email accounts and not personal accounts.
- Communications should always be professional and relevant to the current activity/need.
- Maintain professionalism and keep appropriate boundaries in all communications. Do not overstep the boundaries of adult/child relationships.
- Avoid communications that involve sexual overtones. Do not reply to any messages received from teens of this nature. Make and keep a copy of the inappropriate communication and notify your supervisor or pastor immediately.
- Be aware that what you write will more than likely be read by others. It is easy to share and forward messages.
- There is no such thing as a private email/instant message, social media post or text message.
- Ask yourself if you would be embarrassed if a supervisor/pastor read your message. If the answer is yes, then don't send it.

- Finally, emails can easily be misread or misunderstood. Always double check to see if anything could be “read” into what you have typed. If you think it can be misread, either retype it or don’t send it.
- Never send messages when you are in a hurry or when emotions are involved.

Given at Jackson, Mississippi this the 1st day of July 2016.



Joseph R. Kopacz
Bishop of Jackson



Reverend Kevin Slattery
Vicar General

POLICY AGAINST SEXUAL ABUSE OF A MINOR BY LAY CHURCH PERSONNEL

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF JACKSON

INTRODUCTION

This is the policy of the Diocese of Jackson pertaining to allegations of sexual abuse of a minor against lay church personnel. The obligation to protect children and young people and to prevent sexual abuse flows from the Mission of the church and the example given by Jesus Christ himself, in whose name we serve. Sexual abuse of a minor violates human dignity and the mission of the Church and will not be tolerated. A person who is guilty of such abuse commits a grave injustice against the victim, the victim's family and the Church community. The primary goals in establishing this policy and the procedures contained herein are the well-being of children, the spiritual health of the community and the integrity of the Church. The Church also recognizes its obligation to lay church personnel against whom allegations are made to ensure that they are treated fairly when accusations are made against them. In civil and canon law, a person is presumed innocent until proven otherwise. Therefore, care should be taken to ensure that this principle is always observed, even when encouraging a thorough yet sensitive inquiry.

The Bishops of the United States adopted two documents on the subject of sexual abuse of minors in the year 2002. The **Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People** hereafter sometimes called "Charter" was adopted on June 14, 2002 and the **Essential Norms for Diocesan/Eparchial Policies Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests or Deacons** hereafter sometimes called "Norms" was promulgated on December 12, 2002 and revised in 2011. The Diocesan **Policy Against Sexual Abuse of a Minor by Lay Church Personnel** hereafter called "Policy" (which was last promulgated on January 1, 1994) is now being revised to reflect the principles outlined in the Charter and Norms. In addition, the diocese has published two other complimentary documents, which further the goals of this Policy. They are entitled **Code of Ethical Principles and Standards for Church Employees and Volunteers, Diocese of Jackson** and **Creating a Safe Environment for Our Children, Diocese of Jackson** and are included in this document.

This policy and the procedures which flow from it shall be fair and responsive to the pastoral needs of the victim, the victim's family, the community, and the accused person. This policy deals specifically with sexual abuse of a minor or vulnerable adult ("Minor") as defined below. At all stages of the proceedings addressed by this policy, the Diocese of Jackson will cooperate with the civil authorities and comply with the legally established reporting requirements of the State of Mississippi as outlined in the current document **Mississippi Reporting Statutes/Reporting Procedures**. The Diocese shall publish its policies and procedures relating to sexual abuse so that those affected can readily seek and receive the assistance afforded by them.

The Diocese of Jackson will apply this policy with fairness, compassion and sensitivity when an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor is made against lay church personnel. This policy sets forth a process of internal church governance and is not determinative of any civil or criminal liability of the accused, the Diocese or any religious order involved.

A prime objective of all investigations conducted under this policy is the determination of the fitness of the accused person for the ministry previously exercised in the Church or for any other ministry in the Church. In order to obtain the fullest information possible, such investigations and the information resulting from them shall be held confidential by all concerned except for mandatory reporting required by law.

The following personnel will be involved in the administration of this policy: the Bishop, Vicar General, and/or the Bishop's Delegate. In addition, the Bishop shall appoint the following personnel: a Fitness Review Administrator, a Victim Assistance Coordinator, an Investigative Associate, and a Review Committee.

This policy is to be communicated to all personnel (as defined in this policy) of the Diocese, its parishes, schools or separately incorporated apostolates and to those who are seeking employment or offering their services as volunteers. They are to acknowledge, in writing, that they have received a copy of this policy and that they are indeed aware of its implications and their obligation to report any allegation of sexual abuse to the appropriate authority. (C.F. **Creating a Safe Environment for Our Children, Diocese of Jackson** and **Code of Ethical Principles and Standards for Church Employees, Diocese of Jackson**) A form of acknowledgement is to be signed at the time of hiring or prior to commencement of volunteer service and kept on record at the place of employment or volunteer service.

I. DEFINITIONS - The following definitions are for the purpose of this policy only:

A. MINOR - A minor is a person under 18 years of age.

B. VULNERABLE ADULT - A vulnerable adult is a person 18 years of age or older who is unable to protect his or her own rights, interests, and/or vital concerns and who cannot seek help without assistance because of a physical, mental or emotional impairment.

C. DIOCESE - The Diocese includes the Roman Catholic Diocese of Jackson including but not limited to parishes, schools, agencies, institutions and apostolates, whether incorporated or not, with direct accountability to the Bishop of Jackson.

D. CHURCH PERSONNEL – Church personnel include the following:

1. All paid lay personnel, employees and those who contract for services in offices and programs of the Diocese.

2. All volunteers defined as any unpaid person engaged in or involved in a diocesan or parish activity, and who is entrusted with the care and supervision of children.

II. POLICY

Sexual abuse of a minor by lay church personnel (as defined in this policy) is contrary to the moral instructions, doctrines and Canon Law of the Catholic Church and is obviously outside the scope of duties of church ministry and employment for all personnel. Such abuse is prohibited and will be considered grounds for immediate termination of employment or voluntary service. All personnel of the Diocese must comply with applicable church and civil laws regarding incidents of actual, alleged or even suspected sexual abuse of a minor and with the contents of this policy.

III. REPORTING TO DIOCESE

A. Allegations or serious suspicions of sexual abuse of a minor must be reported as soon as possible, preferably within 48 hours, to the Vicar General, the Bishop's Delegate, the Investigative Associate or the Fitness Review Administrator, whether such allegations are a matter of fact or of serious suspicion. All such reports will be forwarded to the Fitness Review Administrator if the initial report was not made to the Fitness Review Administrator.

B. A priest shall be appointed to have the same duties as the Vicar General, in the latter's absence or unavailability. He shall be called the Bishop's Delegate. References to the Vicar General hereafter regarding investigating the complaint refer to both the Vicar General and the Bishop's Delegate. In addition, the Bishop will appoint an Investigative Associate who will be a woman and who will cooperate with the Vicar General in receiving allegations under this policy.

IV. ASSISTANCE TO THOSE AFFECTED

A. The Diocese shall make appropriate assistance available to those who may be affected by an alleged incident of sexual abuse of a minor.

B. The Diocese shall designate a Victim Assistance Coordinator who shall minister to the victim, victim's family and where necessary other persons affected. The Victim Assistance Coordinator shall identify appropriate professional and other resources and make them available to aid in the care of a victim or other persons affected. The extent of the assistance is to be determined by the Diocese.

C. The victim is encouraged to have a Personal Advocate. The purpose of the Personal Advocate is to support him/her through the difficult process of revealing his/her complaint. Should the victim request a Personal Advocate, a list may be provided from which he/she may choose.

D. The Diocese shall reach out with compassion to the community affected in order to promote healing and understanding.

E. If requested, the Vicar General will make available to the accused person an appropriate individual who can provide assistance, advice and moral support and who can facilitate referrals to resource persons, advocates and other professionals as necessary.

V. PRELIMINARY ACTION AND INQUIRY BY THE FITNESS REVIEW ADMINISTRATOR

A. Upon receipt of the allegation, the Fitness Review Administrator shall promptly determine that all civil reporting requirements relating to sexual abuse of a minor have been fulfilled. The Fitness Review Administrator shall also provide the person making the allegation with a written statement containing information about reporting such allegations to public authorities, **Sample Form for Reporting Suspected Child Abuse**.

B. The functions of the Fitness Review Administrator shall normally include the following:

1. Examine discreetly and pastorally the allegation to determine if further processing is warranted. Factors to be considered include, but are not limited to, a) a generally identifiable accuser; b) a specified accused; and c) some particularization of the charge.

General facts and proofs must be alleged by the accuser. Without such an allegation the basis for evaluating an accusation is missing. Guiding principles for assessing allegations will include specificity and believability: specificity with regard to facts and proofs, believability on the part of the accuser.

2. Secure the services of the Victim Assistance Coordinator.

3. Report the allegation to the Bishop, Vicar General, relevant administrators and other persons the Bishop may designate. The Pastor, Diocesan Superintendent of Education, Executive Director of Catholic Charities, and administrators of other separately incorporated apostolates represent the relevant administrators for accused employees or volunteers serving in their areas of responsibility. The relevant administrator will then inform the accused person's direct supervisor of the allegation and will thereafter keep the direct supervisor informed concerning the status of the investigation and any recommendations resulting from the investigation.

4. Receive and analyze information on the allegation. To the extent possible, the person making the report should provide the Fitness Review Administrator with the name of the person who is the subject of the allegation, the name(s) of the alleged victim(s), an accurate description of the alleged abuse, the relevant dates, times and circumstances in which the abuse allegedly occurred and the names, addresses and telephone numbers of other persons who may have knowledge of the alleged abuse.

5. Inform the accused and request his/her explanation and provide the accused

with information sufficient to enable him/her to respond to the allegations.

6. Determine whether the well-being of children requires the immediate withdrawal of the accused from his/her place of work or volunteer service. The Fitness Review Administrator will promptly communicate a recommendation concerning a leave of absence to the Bishop and to the relevant administrator (as described more fully above) of the entity which the accused serves for approval and implementation. In making this determination and recommendation, the Fitness Review Administrator may consult with the Bishop, Vicar General, relevant administrators and other persons the Bishop may designate. The decision regarding a leave of absence will be communicated at a meeting with the following in attendance: the relevant administrator of the site of employment/volunteer service of the accused, the Fitness Review Administrator, the Vicar General, the Diocesan attorney, the accused and counsel for the accused. If the accused is put on a leave of absence, at no time should the accused return to his/her place of work or volunteer service. Whether the leave is paid or unpaid will be dependent upon the facts of the situation.

C. The Fitness Review Administrator ordinarily will not process anonymous allegations. If there is insufficient information to permit reasonable inquiry, the Fitness Review Administrator will report the fact of all allegations to the Review Committee and the Review Committee will review the Fitness Review Administrator's action.

D. At all stages of the investigation and any subsequent proceedings, the accused must be advised to obtain personal legal counsel. This would be especially important in the event of civil or criminal action against the accused. The accused is directly responsible for providing himself/herself with legal counsel who shall not be the diocesan attorney. Any legal personnel conducting the investigation represent the Bishop and the Diocese of Jackson only.

E. Since the seal of confession is inviolable (Canon 983 par. 1), at no time after the allegation has been made shall the Bishop or any of the priests involved in the process hear the sacramental confession of the accused. In all discussions with the accused person, priests or other ministers carrying out this policy are acting for the Diocese as employer, not as spiritual advisors to the accused. Such discussions are not protected by the "Priest-Penitent Privilege". Priests or ministers not involved in carrying out this policy will be available to the accused person for sacramental confession or spiritual advice.

F. The accused person is not bound to admit to an offense, nor may an oath be administered to the accused (Canon 1728, #2, cf. and Fifth Amendment). The person shall be informed of this right before being questioned, even in a preliminary inquiry.

G. In a case where the accused person is an employee/volunteer of an institution owned and/or staffed by a religious order, the relevant superior shall participate with the diocesan authorities in the application of diocesan procedures. The Vicar General shall

report the outcome to the religious superior and shall from time to time answer such legitimate inquiries about the progress of the matter that the superior may make. If on the other hand, the religious order's own procedures for dealing with such matters have been invoked, a report of the outcome shall be made to the Vicar General and the superior shall from time to time answer any legitimate inquiries that the Vicar General may make. No matter which policy is used a spirit of mutual cooperation will be followed in order to achieve the justice that this situation demands.

H. For all allegations to be processed further, the Fitness Review Administrator will:

1. Schedule and give effective notice of a meeting of the Review Committee to occur no later than approximately 48 hours, or as soon thereafter as possible, after the allegation was received.

2. Review available personnel information on the accused person, make appropriate inquiries about the allegation and prepare a report of all available information for presentation to the Review Committee either orally or in writing at the scheduled meeting.

VI. COMPOSITION OF THE REVIEW COMMITTEE

A. In accord with Norm 5 of the Norms, the Review Committee will be composed of at least five persons of outstanding integrity and good judgment in full communion with the Church. The majority of the Review Committee members will be lay persons. At least one member should be a priest who is an experienced and respected pastor of the Diocese and at least one member should have expertise in the treatment of the sexual abuse of minors. The members will be appointed for a term of five years, which can be renewed. It is desirable that the Vicar General and Bishop's Delegate participate in the meetings of the Review Committee. Neither party will have a deliberative vote.

B. None of the lay persons on the Review Committee shall be employees of the Catholic Diocese of Jackson or its separately incorporated apostolates nor have any fiduciary relationship with it.

C. The Review Committee meetings shall reflect the pastoral character of this process which is consultative and advisory, not adversarial and adjudicative. The meetings are not hearings. They are sessions at which the Review Committee receives and considers information, deliberates and formulates its determinations and recommendations. The Review Committee in its discretion will determine the information it requires or considers and the rules of evidence shall not strictly apply.

D. The Review Committee is independent of any Canonical Judicial Process which may be initiated after the Review Committee makes its recommendations to the bishop. The Review Committee, in accord with norm 4 of the Norms, will function as a confidential consultative body to the bishop in discharging his responsibilities. The functions of this committee will include:

1. Reviewing allegations brought to its attention and making recommendations to the Bishop and the relevant administrator regarding the continued employment or volunteer service of persons against whom allegations of sexual abuse of a minor have been made, or the return to employment or volunteer service following a leave of absence from an assignment because of an allegation of such abuse.

and;

2. Reviewing Diocesan policies for dealing with sexual abuse of minors

3. Offering advice on all aspects of these cases, whether retrospectively or prospectively.

VII. INITIAL REVIEW

Following the receipt of the allegation, the Review Committee shall meet as soon as possible, preferably within 48 hours, in order to conduct an initial review.

A. Questions for review: At its first meeting, the Review Committee shall determine: 1) whether the Fitness Review Administrators original determination about leave of absence of the accused person from his/her work assignment or place of volunteer service adequately provides for the safety of children; 2) whether the other preliminary actions taken by the Fitness Review Administrator were appropriate; and 3) what further action should be taken with respect to the allegation.

B. Information to be considered by the Review Committee: the Fitness Review Administrator's report; information provided by the Vicar General or other persons identified by the Bishop; and any other information which the Review Committee believes helpful and is able to obtain.

C. Determination and recommendations: The Review Committee shall determine whether there is reasonable cause to suspect that the accused person engaged in sexual abuse of a minor, which was an external, objectively grave violation(s) of the sixth commandment. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the Diocesan Bishop with the advice of the Review Committee to determine the gravity of the act. On the basis of that determination, the Review Committee shall make recommendations to the Bishop and the relevant administrator about the following:

1. If the accused person has been put on a leave of absence from his/her work assignment or place of volunteer service pending inquiry, whether such leave of absence should continue; if the leave should not continue, whether any restrictions should be imposed on a person returning to work or volunteer service;

2. If the accused has not been put on a leave of absence, whether he/she should be put on leave of absence; if the person will continue in their work or volunteer service, whether any restrictions should be imposed.

3. Whether the preliminary actions taken by the Fitness Review Administrator were appropriate and whether further action by the Fitness Review

Administrator is required;

4. Whether the file may be closed at this stage of the proceedings or held open pending action by public bodies, further inquiry by the Fitness Review Administrator or further action by the Review Committee;

5. If the accused person's conduct does not constitute sexual abuse of a minor but is otherwise inappropriate, whether further action is warranted, and suggestions as to such action;

6. If it is determined that the allegation is unfounded, the inquiry will be terminated and the following persons will be so informed: the Bishop, the relevant administrator, the accused, and the person making the accusation.

VIII. ADDITIONAL INQUIRY AND ACTION BY FITNESS REVIEW ADMINISTRATOR

After the initial meeting of the Review Committee, the Fitness Review Administrator shall conduct such additional inquiry as is appropriate or as may be directed by the Review Committee, including interviews of witnesses and review of documents including those reflecting action taken by public bodies. The Fitness Review Administrator shall prepare one or more written reports of these inquiries for the Review Committee. These reports should include descriptions of actions taken by the Fitness Review Administrator, such additional inquiry as may be required and identification of information that was unavailable to the Fitness Review Administrator and why that information was not available.

IX. ACTION FOLLOWING FINAL INVESTIGATION

A. After the final investigation is completed, the Fitness Review Administrator will prepare a written report of the Review Committee's findings and recommendations which will be presented to the Bishop and to the relevant administrator (and the relevant religious superior when appropriate) for approval and implementation.

B. If the accused has admitted that the allegations are true or if the final investigation either (1) indicates that the allegations are substantiated or (2) reveals other facts supporting disciplinary action, the Committee's report will include recommended disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or volunteer service.

C. If the allegation is determined to be unfounded and the investigation does not reveal any other facts requiring disciplinary action, the Committee's report will include a recommendation that the inquiry be terminated. If approved, the accused and the person making the accusation will be notified of the termination of the inquiry. If the accused is an employee or volunteer of a religious order, the relevant superior will also be informed. If in the meantime, the allegation has become public, appropriate steps must be taken to repair the damage done to the reputation of the accused where possible.

D. If appropriate, the Bishop and/or his delegate shall visit the parish and/or institution at the conclusion of the investigation. For example, such a visit would be inappropriate if it merely gave publicity to an unfounded and heretofore unpublicized accusation. If such a meeting is held, it will be conducted with discretion and sensitivity to both the accused and the person making the allegation. It will provide information about what happened in as full and accurate a way as possible. This information sharing may help other victims come forward and begin the healing process in the parish or institution. Likewise, pastoral and professional assistance should be continued for those directly involved and their families until it is no longer necessary or appropriate.

X. SUPPLEMENTARY REVIEWS

The Review Committee may conduct supplementary reviews as may be necessary to discharge its duties:

A. Questions for review: The Review Committee may consider new information about a determination or recommendation made in connection with a prior review, exercise its responsibilities as described above, or oversee the work of the Fitness Review Administrator, the victim-assistance program, or any other matter within its responsibility.

B. Initiation: A supplementary review may be initiated by the Review Committee, the Fitness Review Administrator, the Bishop, Vicar General, or the Bishop's Delegate. In addition, the accused, a person who made an allegation, a victim, or the family of a victim may apply to the Review Committee in writing for such a review and shall include in the application a statement of the question or point for review, the applicant's position with respect to the matter and any supporting explanation or information. A response shall be made to the inquirer after the next meeting of the Review Committee.

C. Information to be considered: The Review Committee may consider the application for review, the Fitness Review Administrator's reports, information provided by the Bishop, the Vicar General, the Bishop's Delegate or other persons identified by the Bishop and any other information which the Review Committee believes helpful and is able to obtain.

D. Determinations and recommendations: The Review Committee may make determinations and recommendations as it deems appropriate.

XI. ONGOING SAFEGUARDS

All institutions of the Diocese utilizing employees or significant volunteers and all employees and significant volunteers will follow the procedures contained in the

prevention component of this document: **Creating a Safe Environment for Our Children, Diocese of Jackson** and will abide by the principles and standards contained in the **Code of Ethical Principles and Standards for Church Employees and Volunteers, Diocese of Jackson**, and **Volunteers Code of Ethics**. These institutions will enforce these policies, principles and standards to ensure that those employed or accepted for volunteer service can be expected to comply with this policy and to maintain an environment which discourages sexual abuse of a minor.

XII. ONGOING HEALING AND SPIRITUAL GROWTH FOR THE WHOLE FAITH COMMUNITY

A. The Bishop must take great care to ensure that every effort is made to address ongoing long-term effects of sexual abuse of a minor. An on-going process of healing and spiritual growth is necessary for the whole faith community. The Bishop will be sensitive to any segment of the faith community which may be particularly hurting.

B. Since the faith community is itself an agent of reconciliation, it should be encouraged to participate in the recovery process thereby enabling it to develop means to understand these problems and help those affected by them.

XIII. CONCLUSION:

A. Sexual abuse of a minor by lay church personnel violates human dignity and the mission of the Church. Such abuse will not be tolerated.

B. The Diocese is committed to ensuring that children being served by the Church are not at risk of sexual abuse by church personnel.

C. There is no easy solution to such painful situations. The procedures outlined above have as their purpose the protection of minors and respect for the dignity of all involved.

D. The Church in dealing with such tragedies can help the entire community to grow and develop, especially assisting it in combating the scourge of sexually abusive conduct.

E. In particular, special care should be taken to demonstrate the Church's concern for children and their families in accord with the prevention component: **Creating a Safe Environment for Our Children, Diocese of Jackson** and **Code of Ethical Principles and Standards for Church Employees and Volunteers, Diocese of Jackson**.

F. The spiritual well-being of all persons affected by sexual abuse of a minor is of primary concern - - "The salvation of souls, which must always be the supreme law in the Church," (C. 1752).

Given at Jackson this the 1st day of July 2016.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joseph R. Kopacz".

Joseph R. Kopacz
Bishop of Jackson

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kevin Slattery".

Reverend Kevin Slattery
Vicar General

SUMMARY OF PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

I. To Mississippi Civil Authorities

A. Reports are to be made to The Department of Human Services: 1-800-222-8000 or (601) 359-4991 or in an emergency to the appropriate police authority.

Mississippi Law requires that any person who has "reasonable cause to suspect" that a child is a neglected child or an abused child shall cause an oral report to be made immediately to the Department of Human Services.

The report should contain:

- 1 Name and address of the child;
- 2 Name and address of his/her parents or other persons responsible for his/her care;
- 3 The child's age;
- 4 Nature and extent of the child's injury, including any evidence or previous injuries;
- 5 Any other information that might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injury and the identity of the perpetrator;
- 6 Name and address of the suspected perpetrator if known.

B. An oral report should be followed up by a written report and sent to Department of Human Services, 750 North State Street, Jackson, MS 39202.

The written report should contain:

- 1 Name and address of child;
 - 2 Name of parents;
 - 3 Name and address of suspected perpetrator;
 - 4 Date and time of suspected abuse;
 - 5 Relationship of suspected abuser to child;
 - 6 Name and addresses of witnesses;
 - 7 Brief statement of Facts indicating abuse;
 - 8 Date and time of report;
 - 9 Signature of person reporting, phone number and address.
-

II. To Diocesan Authorities (if the perpetrator is a Parish/Diocesan employee/ or volunteer)

A. Notify the Vicar General at (601) 969-2290 or the Victim Assistance Coordinator at (601) 326-3728.

B. Send a copy of the written report made to DHS to the Diocesan Chancellor. The address of the Diocese is as follows: P.O. Box 2248, Jackson, MS 39225-2248

**Department of Human Services
750 North State Street
Jackson, Mississippi, 39202**

Sample form for reporting Suspected Child Abuse by diocesan or parish personnel while performing their ministry of the Jackson Diocese.

Please print (or type) and if possible use black ink.

1 This report is being submitted by:
Name: _____
Address _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____

2 Date of Report: _____

3 Person(s) suspected of abuse
Name: _____
Title: _____
Parish: _____
Age if known: _____ Sex: Male _____ Female _____
Address: _____
City _____
State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____

4 Suspected victim(s) of abuse
Name: _____
Parents name (if under 18): _____
Address: _____
Parish or agency: _____
Age of victim: _____ Sex: Male _____ Female _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone: _____
Date of report made to Department of Human Services: _____

5 Describe incident of suspected child abuse, including date, time, location:

6 Identify eyewitnesses to the incident, including names, addresses and phone numbers, if available:

7 Medical treatment or counsel sought:

Where: _____

When: _____

8 Other information which may be helpful to the investigation.

Please mail the completed form to the Department of Human Services at the address given above

*** If the alleged perpetrator is a diocesan or parish employee please send a copy of this report to the Vicar General, Catholic Diocese of Jackson, P. O. Box 2248, Jackson, MS. 39225**

**DIOCESE OF JACKSON
NOTICE OF RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE ACCUSED**

RIGHTS OF THE ACCUSED

The rights of the accused during the investigation include:

- The right to know the nature of the allegations.
- The right to defend against the allegations.
- The right to due process.
- The right not to incriminate her/himself.
- The right to civil and canonical counsel.
- The right to discretion in the conduct of the investigation and to have her/his good name protected during the investigation.
- The right to know the results of the investigation.

OBLIGATIONS OF THE ACCUSED

The obligations of the accused during the investigation include:

- The obligation not to interfere with the investigative process.
- The obligation not to have contact with the complainant during the investigative process.
- The obligation to observe any special provisions or restrictions imposed by the Bishop or his designee.

By affixing my signature below, I acknowledge that I have read and understand this statement of rights and obligations.

Signature & Date

Printed Name

Name & Date (Refused to sign)

Witness Name (Please Print): _____ Witness Signature: _____

Witness Name (Please Print): _____ Witness Signature: _____

Notice to All Employees and Volunteers of the Diocese of Jackson

Our young people are precious to us. The Catholic Diocese of Jackson is committed to inquiring into the background of all persons who are expected to have regular contact with our youth. To achieve this, a background check will be conducted. This report includes a criminal background search. Any adverse report could affect the person's employment, continued employment or volunteer status. Please complete the attached application so that this background search can be conducted.

The position you occupy or are applying for is very important to the Catholic Church because you will be working with our youth. Your rights are also important to us. The youth under our care likewise have a right to a safe environment. We ask that you take the time to read the attached "Consumer Summary, A Summary of Your Rights Under the Fair Credit Reporting Act." You need to understand your rights before giving your consent to authorize the Diocese of Jackson to complete the background investigation. If you have any questions, please contact your supervisor.

Para información en español, visite www.consumerfinance.gov/learnmore o escribe al Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, 1700 G Street N.W., Washington, DC 20552.

A Summary of Your Rights Under the Fair Credit Reporting Act

The federal Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) promotes the accuracy, fairness, and privacy of information in the files of consumer reporting agencies. There are many types of consumer reporting agencies, including credit bureaus and specialty agencies (such as agencies that sell information about check writing histories, medical records, and rental history records). Here is a summary of your major rights under the FCRA. **For more information, including information about additional rights, go to www.consumerfinance.gov/learnmore or write to: Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, 1700 G Street N.W., Washington, DC 20552.**

- You must be told if information in your file has been used against you. **Anyone who uses a credit report or another type of consumer report to deny your application for credit, insurance, or employment – or to take another adverse action against you – must tell you, and must give you the name, address, and phone number of the agency that provided the information.**
- You have the right to know what is in your file. **You may request and obtain all the information about you in the files of a consumer reporting agency (your “file disclosure”). You will be required to provide proper identification, which may include your Social Security number. In many cases, the disclosure will be free. You are entitled to a free file disclosure if:**
 - a person has taken adverse action against you because of information in your credit report;
 - you are the victim of identity theft and place a fraud alert in your file;
 - your file contains inaccurate information as a result of fraud;
 - you are on public assistance;
 - you are unemployed but expect to apply for employment within 60 days.

In addition, all consumers are entitled to one free disclosure every 12 months upon request from each nationwide credit bureau and from nationwide specialty consumer reporting agencies. See www.consumerfinance.gov/learnmore for additional information.

- You have the right to ask for a credit score. **Credit scores are numerical summaries of your credit-worthiness based on information from credit bureaus. You may request a credit score from consumer reporting agencies that create scores or distribute scores used in residential real property loans, but you will have to pay for it. In some mortgage transactions, you will receive credit score information for free from the mortgage lender.**
- **You have the right to dispute incomplete or inaccurate information.** If you identify information in your file that is incomplete or inaccurate, and report it to the consumer reporting agency, the agency must investigate unless your dispute is frivolous. See www.consumerfinance.gov/learnmore for an explanation of dispute procedures.

- **Consumer reporting agencies must correct or delete inaccurate, incomplete, or unverifiable information.** Inaccurate, incomplete or unverifiable information must be removed or corrected, usually within 30 days. However, a consumer reporting agency may continue to report information it has verified as accurate.
- **Consumer reporting agencies may not report outdated negative information.** In most cases, a consumer reporting agency may not report negative information that is more than seven years old, or bankruptcies that are more than 10 years old.
- Access to your file is limited. **A consumer reporting agency may provide information about you only to people with a valid need -- usually to consider an application with a creditor, insurer, employer, landlord, or other business. The FCRA specifies those with a valid need for access.**
- You must give your consent for reports to be provided to employers. **A consumer reporting agency may not give out information about you to your employer, or a potential employer, without your written consent given to the employer. Written consent generally is not required in the trucking industry. For more information, go to www.consumerfinance.gov/learnmore.**
- **You may limit “prescreened” offers of credit and insurance you get based on information in your credit report.** Unsolicited “prescreened” offers for credit and insurance must include a toll-free phone number you can call if you choose to remove your name and address from the lists these offers are based on. You may opt out with the nationwide credit bureaus at 1-888-5-OPTOUT (1-888-567-8688).
- You may seek damages from violators. **If a consumer reporting agency, or, in some cases, a user of consumer reports or a furnisher of information to a consumer reporting agency violates the FCRA, you may be able to sue in state or federal court.**
- **Identity theft victims and active duty military personnel have additional rights.** For more information, visit www.consumerfinance.gov/learnmore.

States may enforce the FCRA, and many states have their own consumer reporting laws. In some cases, you may have more rights under state law. For more information, contact your state or local consumer protection agency or your state Attorney General. For information about your federal rights, contact:

TYPE OF BUSINESS:	CONTACT:
1.a. Banks, savings associations, and credit unions with total assets of over \$10 billion and their affiliates	a. Consumer Financial Protection Bureau 1700 G. Street N.W. Washington, DC 20552
b. Such affiliates that are not banks, savings associations, or credit unions also should list,	b. Federal Trade Commission: Consumer Response Center – FCRA

in addition to the CFPB:	Washington, DC 20580 (877) 382-4357
2. To the extent not included in item 1 above:	
a. National banks, federal savings associations, and federal branches and federal agencies of foreign banks	a. Office of the Comptroller of the Currency Customer Assistance Group 1301 McKinney Street, Suite 3450 Houston, TX 77010-9050
b. State member banks, branches and agencies of foreign banks (other than federal branches, federal agencies, and Insured State Branches of Foreign Banks), commercial lending companies owned or controlled by foreign banks, and organizations operating under section 25 or 25A of the Federal Reserve Act	b. Federal Reserve Consumer Help Center P.O. Box. 1200 Minneapolis, MN 55480
c. Nonmember Insured Banks, Insured State Branches of Foreign Banks, and insured state savings associations	c. FDIC Consumer Response Center 1100 Walnut Street, Box #11 Kansas City, MO 64106
d. Federal Credit Unions	d. National Credit Union Administration Office of Consumer Protection (OCP) Division of Consumer Compliance and Outreach (DCCO) 1775 Duke Street Alexandria, VA 22314
3. Air carriers	Asst. General Counsel for Aviation Enforcement & Proceedings Aviation Consumer Protection Division Department of Transportation 1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E. Washington, DC 20423
4. Creditors Subject to the Surface Transportation Board	Office of Proceedings, Surface Transportation Board Department of Transportation 395 E Street, S.W. Washington, DC 20423
5. Creditors Subject to the Packers and Stockyards Act, 1921	Nearest Packers and Stockyards Administration area supervisor
6. Small Business Investment Companies	Associate Deputy Administrator for Capital Access United States Small Business Administration 409 Third Street, S.W., 8 th Floor Washington, DC 20549
7. Brokers and Dealers	Securities and Exchange Commission 100 F Street, N.E.

	Washington, DC 20549
8. Federal Land Banks, Federal Lank Bank Associations, Federal Intermediate Credit Banks, and Production Credit Associations	Farm Credit Administration 1501 Farm Credit Drive McLean, VA 22102-5090
9. Retailers, Finance Companies, and All Other Creditors Not Listed Above	FTC Regional Office for region in which the creditor operates <u>or</u> Federal Trade Commission: Consumer Response Center – FCRA Washington, DC 20580 (877) 382-4357

Residential History

_____ Check here if you have lived in your current residence for 5 or more years.

If you have lived in your current residence for 5 or more years, please do not complete residential history. You only need to check the box at top of this section.

Dates (mm/yyyy)	Street Address	City/State/Zip	Country
Beg. Date _____ End Date _____			
Beg. Date _____ End Date _____			
Beg. Date _____ End Date _____			

Employment History

_____ Check here if you: (1) are a volunteer, (2) are applying for a paid teaching position in a catholic school or (3) have no employment history.

Start with current employer and indicate employment history for the last 3 employers. If current employer, end date should be current.

Dates of Employment (mm/yyyy)	Company name And address (City, State, Zip)	Immediate Supervisor name & Phone Number	Position Held/Job Description	Reason for Leaving position
Beg. Date _____ End Date _____				
Beg. Date _____ End Date _____				
Beg. Date _____ End Date _____				

Educational History

_____ Check here if you: (1) are a volunteer, (2) are applying for a paid teaching position in a catholic school or (3) have no educational history.

Educational history should include high school and forward. If currently enrolled in program, end date should be current.

Dates (mm/yyyy) (Start with most recent)	School name And address (City, State, Zip)	Type of School	Name of Program or Degree	Program Completed?
Beg. Date _____ End Date _____				
Beg. Date _____ End Date _____				
Beg. Date _____ End Date _____				

Volunteer History

Check here if you have no volunteer history or are applying for a paid employee position.

Volunteer history should include 5 of your most recent activities. If you do not have 5, list as many as you do have. If you are still participating in a volunteer program, end date should be current.

Dates (mm/yyyy) (Start with most recent)	Organization City, State, Zip	Contact	Contact Phone Number	Position/Duties
Beg. Date _____ End Date _____				
Beg. Date _____ End Date _____				
Beg. Date _____ End Date _____				
Beg. Date _____ End Date _____				
Beg. Date _____ End Date _____				

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Confidential Background Check Information

Please note: Information in this section is only used as part of a confidential criminal background check and review by a diocesan official.

Yes No Have you ever for any reason been suspended, dismissed or asked to resign a paid or volunteer position?

If yes, please explain: _____

Yes No Have you ever been convicted or plead guilty or no contest to, placed on probation for, given probation, given community supervision, or given adjudication for a crime or are you now under charges for any criminal offense?

If yes, please explain: _____

Yes No Have you ever been accused of or arrested for physically, sexually, or emotionally abusing a child or an adult?

If yes, please explain: _____

Answering 'yes' to the above three (3) questions will not automatically exclude you from employment or volunteer service.

Social Security Number: _____ - _____ - _____

Driver's License: State _____ Number _____

Date of Birth: Month _____ Day _____ Year _____
(Birth date information is required for identification purposes only.)

Gender: Male _____ Female _____

Yes No Have you changed your last name in the past 7 years?

If yes, what was your previous last name? _____

Yes No At any time during the past 5 years have you lived in a different state (within the United States) or do you currently live outside the state this Diocese is located in?

If yes, what state did you live in? _____

Declarations

The **Catholic Diocese of Jackson** appreciates your willingness to share your faith, gifts and skills. Providing safe and secure programs for our members is of utmost importance to us. The information gathered in this application is designed to help us provide the highest quality Catholic programs for the people of our community. Please read and initial each of the statements below.

_____ I declare that all statements contained in this application are true and that any misrepresentation or omission is cause for rejection of my application or dismissal from my ministry involvement.

_____ I hereby authorize the **Catholic Diocese of Jackson** to conduct a personal and professional background check for the purposes of my application at the **Catholic Diocese of Jackson**. The **Catholic Diocese of Jackson** may contact any references, past and current employers, church, youth organizations, agencies where volunteer service has been completed, and any individual or organization which might be relevant to my desired position. I hereby release all of the above stated persons from any and all liability for damages that might occur during the **Catholic Diocese of Jackson's** contact with the individuals for purposes of employment or volunteer services.

_____ I also hereby give complete permission for the **Catholic Diocese of Jackson** to conduct a criminal background check, arrest records check, abuse registry check, and driving record check for the purposes of my employment or volunteer services.

_____ I understand and agree that information may be obtained from sources that I provided above and that this information will be held confidentially by the **Catholic Diocese of Jackson**. I have also read and understood the above stated information within this release and am signing below of my own free will.

_____ I understand that a criminal background check will be conducted prior to and during my service. I authorize investigations of all statements contained in the application.

_____ I agree to observe all of the **Catholic Diocese of Jackson** guidelines and policies for the program in which I am applying.

_____ I understand that the **Catholic Diocese of Jackson** has a **ZERO TOLERANCE FOR ABUSE** and takes all allegations of abuse seriously. I further understand that the **Catholic Diocese of Jackson** cooperates fully with the authorities to investigate all cases of alleged abuse. Abuse of minors or vulnerable adults is grounds for immediate dismissal and possible criminal charges.

_____ I understand that I can withdraw from the application process at any time.

_____ I understand and agree that false statements and/or omissions regarding past conduct and/or present situations may be grounds for denial of the application to provide employment and/or volunteer services and that refusal to inform the **Catholic Diocese of Jackson** of the contents of a sealed criminal record will result in the automatic denial of the application.

_____ I understand that nothing in this application should be construed as a contract of employment. I confirm that unless I have a written contract signed by a Diocesan representative vested with authority to execute such contracts my Employment is "at will".

_____ I understand that the **Catholic Diocese of Jackson** does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin and/or ethnic origin, sex, age or disability in any employment decision.

_____ My signature indicates that I have read and understand the above. **Do not sign until you have read and initialed the above statements.**

Applicant Signature _____ Date: ____/____/____

Selected Sites

Please indicate the city and the name of the parishes/schools with which you would like this application to be registered.

City Where Parish is Located	Name of Parish/School

If additional space is needed, please use reverse side.

**Lay Church Personnel
Acknowledgment of Receipt
of
Protection of Children-Diocese of Jackson**

I have read the following documentation and I am prepared to abide by the following policies and procedures to which I have attached my initials in parenthesis:

- | | | |
|---|--|-----|
| 1 | Bishop Kopacz Letter | () |
| 2 | Creating a Safe Environment For Our Children | () |
| 3 | Electronic Communications Policy | () |
| 4 | Code of Ethical Principles and Standards for Church Employees and Volunteers | () |
| 5 | Policy Against Sexual Abuse of a Minor By Lay Church Personnel | () |
| 6 | Civil Reporting Requirements/Diocesan Reporting Procedures | () |
| 7 | Guidelines Concerning All Youth and Student Trips | () |

I have read the above listed policies/procedures and documentation. I understand their meaning and agree to conduct myself in accordance with their principles.

Printed Name

Signature

Date

CONSENT TO RELEASE RECORD(S) DRIVER SERVICES POLICY:

DRIVER NAME: _____ DL NO. _____ DOB: _____

By signing below, I voluntarily give consent to the Mississippi Department of Public Safety to release the following record(s), including personal information within my driver license file. I request the record(s) indicated by my signature below to be released by the Department of Public Safety, their agents and employees, to the following person, company, corporation or legal entity:

RELEASE RECORD/INFORMATION TO: _____

- _____ MVR Summary
- _____ Other Record (SPECIFY)

(DRIVER'S SIGNATURE OF CONSENT)

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

COUNTY OF _____

PERSONALLY appeared before me, the undersigned authority in and for the county and state aforesaid, the within named _____, who states upon his/her oath and personal knowledge that all matters, facts and things set forth in the above and foregoing document are true and correct as therein stated.

(DRIVER'S SIGNATURE)

SWORN TO AND SUBSCRIBED BEFORE ME, this the _____ day of _____, 20____

(MY COMMISSION EXPIRES)

(NOTARY PUBLIC)

(DATE)

(PRINT - RECIPIENT OF RECORDS)

(SIGNATURE OF RECIPIENT OF RECORD)

(ADDRESS OF RECIPIENT OF RECORD)

NOTICE: As required by the Federal Driver Privacy Protection Act (DPPA), 18 U.S.C. Section 2721, the Mississippi Department of Public Safety will not release personal information from your driver record unless you consent by waiving your right to privacy under the DPPA; OR, unless the Department is required by DPPA to release personal information without your consent, such as in connection with matters of safety, theft, emissions, product alterations, recalls, advisories, certain federal laws; or unless the DPPA authorizes the Department to release it, such as to governmental entities, courts, insurance companies and to others specified.

GUIDELINES CONCERNING ALL YOUTH AND STUDENT TRIPS

I. Introduction

- a. The following Guidelines Concerning all Youth and Student Trips has been approved by the Diocese of Jackson and is intended for the Diocesan parishes, schools, and other related entities in accord with all other official documents of the Diocese of Jackson.
- b. These guidelines are to be followed by all participants, pastors, LEM's, school administrators, teachers, DREs, youth directors, supervisory personnel, chaperones, volunteers, or anyone working in an official capacity of the Diocese of Jackson when traveling for day or overnight trips, both inside and outside of the Diocese.
- c. Types of events include, but are not limited to, Diocesan, parish, school, and/or other Diocesan related entities' retreats, field trips, sports tournaments, mission trips, pilgrimages, conventions, conferences, and recreational trips.
- d. The Diocese of Jackson requires all official personnel to be at least 21 years of age or older to supervise participants enrolled in any Diocesan school, pre-kindergarten program of education, parish youth group, or religious education program. Siblings, friends, etc. must register to participant in the above group events. All participants are subject to the supervision of the official Diocesan personnel while attending the activities.

II. General Information

a. Authorization

- I. Trips and other functions must be approved, both for planning and implementation, by the principal in the case of elementary and secondary schools, by the Pastor/LEM in the case of parishes, or by the youth office in the case of any related entities. International travel will require the Bishop/Vicar General approval. Approval from the Pastor/LEM/Superintendent must be given for any out of state trip. Diocesan guidelines for all trips and functions should be observed at all times and shall prevail over any other guidelines provided in the case of a clear conflict.

- II. The authorized Consent, Release of Liability and Indemnification Form for Trips and Events of Diocesan Schools/Youth Outreach/Religious Education Programs as well as the Medical Authorization for Minor forms provided by the Diocese are required for all participants. No authorization will be given to those participants who do not submit the proper medical and liability release forms.
 - III. Chaperones and supervisory personnel for domestic travel must be provided by the entity at a suggested ratio of no more than 10 participants to 1 adult for groups in grades 7-12, and no more than 5 participants to 1 adult for Pre-K-6th grade. It is suggested that chaperones be gender specific, i.e., if there are participants of both genders, then there should be chaperones of both genders. All adult chaperones and supervisory personnel must be compliant with Protection of Children Policy requirements.
- b. Requirements for Participants of Different Age Levels
- I. Elementary school age—Pre-K through 6th grade—trips are limited to one day in duration with no overnight stay. These trips must have an educational or spiritual component/purpose.
 - II. Middle school age—7th through 8th grade—trip experiences should include spiritual, educational, or faith building components. International travel is not approved for students of middle school age.
 - III. High school age—9th through 12th grade—trip experiences should include spiritual, educational, or faith building components.
- c. Transportation
- I. Commercial carrier or contracted transportation which is licensed and insured is required.
 - 1. Any travel organization used must be licensed.
 - II. Commercial bus carriers should providesee charter bus supplement.

III. Diocesan-owned school bus

1. Transportation of students is permitted in a diocesan-owned school bus which for the purposes of this policy is defined as any motor vehicle designed to transport more than 16 persons, including the driver, and that is used to transport students to and from school or in connection with school activities.
2. If the transportation vehicle, defined as a bus, is provided by a Diocesan entity, school, or parish, then the driver must be in compliance with Diocesan policy for drivers.
3. All school/parish buses and their operators must meet the requirements of state and federal law with regard to licensure, drug and alcohol testing, equipment, and safety specifications, physical examinations, etc.

IV. Diocesan-owned passenger vehicles

1. Defined as:
 - a. A passenger car not to exceed 8 passengers
 - b. A multi-purpose vehicle (e.g., van, SUV, etc.) designed to transport 10 or fewer persons provided the vehicle meets all federal passenger car standards

V. Personal vehicles

1. Proof of insurance is required with minimum limits of \$100,000/\$300,000.
2. A motor vehicle check will be conducted of the driver, and the driver must be compliant with the Diocesan Protection of Children Policy. All drivers must be at least 21 years of age.
3. All personal cars and their drivers should comply with all applicable local, state, and federal laws.
4. It is mandated that drivers refrain from using their mobile phones while driving with the exception of hands-free navigation.

VI. Plane, train, and boat transportation

1. All safety guidelines laid out by official staff of the plane, train, or boat must be followed at all times.
2. It is recommended that participants have travel insurance when traveling by boat, train, or plane.

VII. Further guidelines:

1. Use of 11-15 seat passenger vans is not allowed.
2. No weapons are to be carried in any vehicle at any time.
3. No alcohol or illegal substances are allowed in vehicle.

VIII. Chaperones and supervisory personnel shall not at any time purchase questionable or illegal items for participants (i.e., cigarettes, alcohol, drugs, weapons, condoms, and sexually aggressive materials) and shall confiscate these items when found.

1. If illegal weapons or drugs are confiscated, a police report shall be made and the confiscated items shall be turned over to the police.
 - a. Parents or guardian will be called immediately to come and take responsibility for their student who will not be permitted to continue as part of the group regardless of the event.
 - b. An incident report must be filled out.
2. No smoking is allowed in any vehicle when youth are present. Smoking should be at a separate location away from youth.
3. Students are not permitted to travel to or from the field trip destination by means other than with the group unless written requests are made by the parents and approved by the Principal/Pastor/LEM.
4. When trips extend beyond the regular school hours, the supervising teacher, youth director, or other supervisory person is responsible for students until they are released to parents/guardians.

d. Accommodations

I. Hotel rooms

1. Group accommodations must be reserved and confirmed well in advance of an anticipated trip.
2. Care is to be taken when booking hotels for groups. A request must be made upon making reservations that, if possible, all of the rooms be on the same floor or location in the hotel. **THERE IS TO BE NO CO-ED SLEEPING ARRANGEMENT.**
3. Chaperones and supervisory personnel are not to be housed in the same room with participants except for the participant's parent or guardian; in which case, the parent may sleep in same bed with his/her child with two other children in another bed.
4. If possible, it is recommended that two rooms which house two parents, their respective children, and any other children should be adjoining.
5. All rooms must be checked by the youth directors, chaperones, and supervisory personnel before assigning them to participants to avoid males and females having adjoining doors. Adjoining rooms should only be shared by participants of the same gender.
6. Participants must always be informed and reminded of safety rules and security measures, especially regarding room safety.
7. Always have 2 adult chaperones together when checking youths' rooms.
8. No participant is to be allowed to leave the hotel property or go swimming in the hotel's pool or use the whirlpool or the hotel's exercise room without adult supervision.
9. Participants must never be allowed access to the hotel rooms of participants of the opposite gender, youth directors, chaperones, or supervisory personnel.
10. For safety reasons, chaperones and supervisory personnel must have room keys available for participants rooms at all times. These keys may be kept at the front desk with a list of approved personnel who may access the keys.

II. Other lodging requirements

1. Chaperones and supervisory personnel are not to be housed in the same room with participants except for a participant's parent or guardian.
2. Any priest or religious participant is to room alone. Seminarians are to room together.
3. In large dorm situations, chaperones and supervisory personnel may be housed in the same area as participants provided that at least 1, ideally 2, chaperones/supervisory personnel are assigned to the dorm. **THERE IS TO BE NO CO-ED SLEEPING IN THIS DORM ARRANGEMENT.**
4. In situations where males and females share a common large room (such as a parish hall), a sufficient number of supervisory personnel are to be provided on a rotating schedule to ensure constant supervision. Sleeping areas for males and for females are to be clearly segregated.

e. Other requirements

- I. Youth directors, supervisory personnel, and chaperones are not allowed to have participants remain over night at their homes.
- II. All movies are to be pre-approved by youth directors, chaperones, and supervisory personnel in order to assure that they are age appropriate and comply with Catholic teachings. All parents are to be notified and approval given for their child to participate in the viewing of a movie. Approval can be given orally.
- III. Each child/adult is to wear pajamas that are modest (sweats, shorts & t-shirt, etc.).

f. Medications

- I. Self-medication by children is not allowed except for injections. Parents must provide a complete list of medications taken by their child. This should include a prescription number (if applicable), quantity received, drug strength, expiration date, and dosage schedule. For over the counter

medications, they should provide the name of medication, quantity received, drug strength, expiration date, and dosage. A log should be kept for dispensing the medication including the date, time, and signature as the medication(s) are administered. Parent/s must sign a consent form if they wish the chaperone to give ibuprofen/Tylenol to their child participant when said child is in need of such.

- II. Do not administer inoculations of any kind. Children needing this type of medication (i.e., insulin) are to be supervised by the chaperone.

g. Incident Report Form

- I. This form should be filled out completely as soon as possible after any accident/injury occurs. It is best to complete this form while all the details, including conditions and witnesses are still fresh in your mind. Keep this form on file at the parish/school. If the incident is a diocesan trip, a copy of the incident report should be forwarded to the appropriate office at the Chancery.

h. Chaperones

- I. Defined as Teachers, Directors of Religious Education, Youth Directors, Core Team Members, Catechists, etc....
- II. The Pastor, LEM, Principal, or Supervisor must ensure that all chaperones and supervisory personnel are in compliance with all Diocesan policies and procedures.
- III. Chaperones and supervisory personnel are to carry cellular phones on trips for use in case of emergencies.
- IV. Trip emergency information for each participant must be provided to the school or parish with the names of the chaperones and supervisory personnel, hotel or lodging name, address, and telephone numbers. This information is contained in the Parental Permission Liability Form. The trip leader must carry the original forms.
 1. All participants should be supplied with a contact list of all the chaperones on the trip and the hotel/s, if any, where they are staying on the trip.

2. Parents must be provided with contact information for the lead chaperones as well as an itinerary.
- V. Individual emergency cards must be completed by each participants and kept on their person at all times to document each participant’s emergency contact information and includes information regarding any allergies the participant might have.
- VI. Chaperone Guidelines/Behavior Standards
1. Chaperones should be at least 21 years of age and compliant with Protection of Children Policy. It is permissible to have “helpers” ages 18-20; however, these individuals should be supervised by an adult chaperone. Each chaperone will be assigned a group of students for which they are responsible. Regular daily responsibilities include:
 - a. Make sure students are present on the bus or other means of transportation every time transportation is used.
 2. Make sure the students are in their room at curfew.
 3. Make sure students are awake on time.
 4. Make sure students understand daily itinerary.
 5. Observe students for suspicious behavior that might involve breaking the rules.
 6. Be on guard for students being loud, obnoxious, and/or rude. Do not tolerate this behavior.
 7. Assist in medical emergencies and contact person in charge immediately.
 8. Inquire within assigned group about any individual medical conditions.
 9. No students or chaperones should leave the group for unauthorized excursions.
 10. Chaperones may search students’ rooms and belongings at any time with or without the students’ permission.
 11. Check rooms for any damage or things left behind.

12. Make sure students are properly dressed at all times.

13. The “buddy system” must be used at all times. The “buddy” assignments will be made well in advance of the trip and should have input from teachers, youth ministers etc. to ensure that best pairings are made and, thus, avoid having 2 youths who may not perform well together. Buddies will not change for the duration of the trip.

VII. Behavior standards for chaperones and group leaders include: All clergy, religious, staff and volunteers of the Diocese will observe the following guidelines for dealing with minors or vulnerable adults:

- Do not allow any minor to stay overnight in any Church rectory or other living quarters of priests unless they are an immediate family member or are accompanied by a parent or guardian.
- Do not provide minors with anything that is prohibited by law, such as alcohol, tobacco, drugs, etc.
- Do not sponsor church or school activities which do not comply with curfew laws for minors.
- Use caution and discretion in any physical contact with a minor. All physical contact should be public, appropriate and non-sexual.
- An adult should never be alone or isolated with a minor. However, if this does occur due to unforeseen circumstances, it should be in a well-lighted public place while waiting for a parent, guardian or another adult.
- Do not engage in physical discipline of a minor. Discipline problems should be handled in coordination with your supervisor and/or the parents of the minor.
- Do not be alone with a minor in a residence, sleeping facility, locker room, rest room, dressing facility, or other closed room or isolated area that is inappropriate to a ministry relationship.
- Do not take an overnight trip alone with a minor who is not a member of your immediate family.
- Do not sleep in the same bed with a minor. If an adult supervisor stays in a hotel or other sleeping room with a group of minors, the supervisor should sleep in his or her own bed using a roll away or cot if necessary.
- Topics, vocabulary, recordings, films, games or the use of computer software or any other form of personal interaction or entertainment that could not be used comfortably in the presence of parents should not be presented to minors. Sexually explicit or pornographic material is strictly prohibited.
- Do not administer medication of any kind, prescription or non-prescription without written parental permission. (Appropriate forms are in the appendices).

- If you recognize inappropriate personal or physical attraction developing between yourself and a minor, maintain clear professional boundaries between yourself and the minor. In the best case scenario, refer the minor to another adult supervisor ASAP.
- If one to one pastoral care of a minor should be necessary, avoid meeting in isolated environments. Schedule meetings at times and use locations that create accountability. Limit both the length and the number of sessions, and make appropriate referrals. Notify parents of meetings.
- Do not give minors keys to church or school facilities. If the minor has a key as a result of being a church employee or volunteer, the minor should be properly screened.
- Do not transport youth unless you have received prior authorization by the pastor/ principal.
- Do not take photographs of minors while they are unclothed or dressing.
- If you observe anyone, adult or minor, abusing a minor, take appropriate steps to immediately intervene and restore minor's safety. Report the abuse to the civil authority in accord with diocesan policy and state law.

III. International Travel

- a. While the Diocese of Jackson recognizes the many benefits that international travel provides, there is concern about the safety of students, volunteers, and employees participating in these trips as well as the liability involved.
- b. International Travel with Youth is defined as any travel outside the United States, sponsored or organized by a parish, school, the Diocese, or by any other Diocesan related entity in which youth under the age of 18 (or 19 and still in high school) will be involved without being under the direct supervision of a parent or legal guardian.
 - I. If any one participant in any international trips sponsored or organized by a parish or school is under the age of 18 (or 19 and still in high school) and is not traveling and sleeping under the direct supervision of a parent or legal guardian then the trip must be in full compliance with this policy.
- c. International travel for young people is permitted as part of parish/school activities in accordance with the following policy:
 - I. Documentation:
 1. The following documentation must be submitted to the Diocese:
 - a. Application for International Travel—applications must be:
 - i. Completed and signed by the Pastor/LEM/Principal and Lead Chaperone.

- ii. Submitted for approval at least 6 months prior to travel.
 1. Approval of this application must be received prior to making any travel deposits or signing any contracts.
 2. Generally speaking, approval will be granted only after considering the level of risk associated with travel plans including destinations and modes of transportation both at the time of planning and at the time of the trip itself.
 3. Risk will be evaluated according to threat levels assigned by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (www.dhs.gov) and the U.S. Department of State (www.travel.state.gov)
 4. The Diocese may suspend travel at any time.
- b. Detailed Itinerary for International Travel:
 - i. This form will require a detailed description of activities, destinations, accommodations, transportation, and medical facilities. It will also solicit information about proof of insurance, number, and make-up of participants, and compliance with both this policy and the Protection of the Children policy. It must be:
 1. Completed and signed by the Pastor/LEM/Principal and the Lead Chaperone only after approval of the trip.
 2. Submitted to the Bishop/Vicar General at least 3 months prior to travel.

II. The following documentation must be retained by the Lead Chaperone for all participants. It is required that they be kept in a location that is secure but accessible for the duration of the trip, in the event of emergency or violation of policy.

1. Consent form—a copy should be retained at the local parish.
2. Copy of passport—original is carried by participant during travel.
3. Copy of international travel insurance ID, if any.
4. Copy of primary medical insurance card—copy both sides of primary insurance card
5. Code of Conduct—carry the original signed copy of the Code of Conduct while traveling. Individual signed copies must be retained by the Parish/School.

III. The following documentation must be retained by the designated Parish/School contact for all participants. These forms are not to be submitted to the Diocese. It is required that they be kept in a location that is secure but accessible for the duration of the trip in the event of emergency.

1. Consent form—a copy of this form should be made after all signatures are obtained. The copy is kept by the Parish/School contact for each participant; the original is carried by the Lead Chaperone.
2. Code of Conduct—original signed Code of Conduct forms from all participants are kept by the Parish/School contact.
3. Copy of passport
4. Copy of international travel insurance ID, if any
5. Copy of medical insurance
6. Any additional forms required by the Parish Youth Ministry Program, Parish, School, Diocese, or Diocesan related entity.

d. Participants:

I. All participants:

1. Must have completed and submitted all applicable documentation;

2. Are expected to attend and participate in all required activities and events; and
3. Are expected to have reviewed the itinerary of the trip and have a reasonable expectation of fulfilling the physical and emotional elements that participation requires.

II. Youth:

1. Youth eligible to travel internationally are those who are 16 years of age at the time of travel.
2. Youth must have reviewed trip materials with a parent or legal guardian at the time of travel.

III. Parish/School contact:

1. The Parish/School contact must be a responsible adult 21 years or older who does not travel with the group. The Parish/School contact:
 - a. Must be designated by the Lead Chaperone and/or the Pastor/LEM/Principal.
 - b. Must be available domestically to act as a point of contact for parents and travelers for the duration of travel.
 - c. Must keep the documentation to be retained by the Parish/School secure but readily available for the duration of travel in the event of an emergency.

IV. Chaperones:

1. All chaperones (including the Lead Chaperone) must be approved by the Pastor/LEM/Principal and be at least 21 years of age.
2. It is recommended that there be at least 2 adult chaperones for up to five youth, and one additional chaperone for every five thereafter (for example: at least 3 chaperones for up to 10 youths, 4 chaperones for up to 15 youth, and so on) for international travel.
3. The ratio of male and female chaperones ideally should reflect the ratio of male to female participants.

4. The duties of all chaperones include but are not limited to:
 - a. Knowing what students are assigned to their group.
 - b. Knowing where their group is at all times; setting specific boundaries of time and acceptable locations; remaining in close proximity to their group and being readily located.
 - c. Enforcing curfew and checking rooms periodically.
 - d. Enforcing the Youth Code of Behavior.
 - e. Being familiar with schedules and layouts of facilities and helping youth do the same.
 - f. Attending and participating in all required activities.
 - g. Accompanying or being accompanied by another adult chaperone when entering a youth's sleeping room.
 - h. Being aware of and in compliance with this policy for the duration of the trip.
 - i. Reporting any illness, injury, or emergency to the Lead Chaperone as soon as possible.

V. Lead Chaperone:

1. One adult Lead Chaperone must be designated and entrusted with supervisory responsibilities. It is required that the Lead Chaperone has organized and led at least two domestic trip with young people prior to leading an international trip. (For this purpose, a domestic trip is defined as one that lasted for at least four consecutive overnights.) The supervisory duties include but are not limited to:
 - a. Ensuring that proper documentation has been submitted to the Diocese and retained by the Parish/School.
 - b. Ensuring that approval of the trip has been granted by the Pastor/LEM/Principal and the Diocese.
 - c. Keeping proper forms secure but readily accessible for the duration of the trip.

- d. Providing participants and parents with a detailed itinerary that includes the physical and emotional elements that may be required of participants.
 - e. Ensuring that the trip and all participants including chaperones are in compliance with this policy.
 - f. Acting as a point of contact for all chaperones, and being responsible for keeping the trip in line with the approved itinerary as well as making any final decisions regarding the behavior and well-being of participants.
 - g. Acting as a point of contact for the Diocese, parents, and Parish/School for the duration of the trip.
 - h. Assigning youth and young adult participants to a specific adult chaperone who will be responsible for their whereabouts and behavior throughout the trip.
 - i. Reviewing access needs and special conditions of participants and making good faith efforts to accommodate them.
 - j. Ensuring that at least one adult chaperone hold a current first aid and CPR certification.
 - k. Designating at least one adult chaperone to hold and distribute medications.
 - l. Ensuring that an adult is available domestically as a Parish Contact, to act as a point of contact for parents and travelers. The Parish/School contact is also responsible for keeping the documentation retained by the Parish secure but readily available in case of emergency.
- e. International Supplemental Medical Insurance
- I. International supplemental medical insurance is required for each participant from the time they depart the United States until the time they return.

- II. This insurance may be provided for the group through a travel agent, a host organization, or through arrangements made with an insurance company.
 - III. Verification that the group has such insurance for the duration of international travel must be provided on the Detailed Itinerary for International Travel.
- f. Transportation
- I. All travel to and from the U.S. by airplane, rail, passenger vessel, mass transit, highway, etc., and all travelers must be in compliance with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and Transportation Security Administration. (www.tsa.gov/travelers/)
 - II. Automobiles
 - 1. In addition to the general rules for driving automobiles, in cases of driving outside the U.S., the driver must possess an International Driver's License.
 - 2. The vehicle must be in compliance with all local ordinances and valid automobile insurance which is comparable to that required in the U.S. should be obtained.
- g. Illegal substances and weapons—in addition to the policies stated in the Code of Conduct:
- I. Participants are never permitted to drink alcoholic beverages while traveling on a youth ministry trip, even when the legal age for alcohol use is lower in a foreign country than in the United States.
 - II. Participants are never permitted to buy, sell, possess, transport, or partake in substances deemed illegal in the United States even if they are legal in the foreign country.
 - III. Any participant who is found to be in violation of this policy will be sent home at their own/parents' expense and will not be allowed to travel with parish youth ministry for a period of time to be determined by the Pastor and the Youth Minister Coordinator/Principal.
- h. Accommodations

- I. In addition to the general rules relating to accommodations for domestic travel, lodging with host families is not acceptable for international trips.
- i. Miscellaneous
 - I. Vaccinations:
 1. All participants must be in compliance with vaccination requirements of the Center for Disease Control (www.cdc.gov/travel).
 - II. Check for any U.S. Travel Alerts/Warnings if trip is planned outside of the United States by visiting <http://travel.state.gov/travel>.
 - III. If the trip is to a non-English speaking location, arrange to have someone that speaks the language travel with you.
 - IV. If trip is located outside the U.S., participants should dress appropriately and according to the customs and dress standards of the country in which you are visiting.
 - V. Be aware of the conditions of local tap water. Boiled or bottled water as well as bottled or canned beverages are safest. Select foods carefully and avoid raw foods that cannot be peeled or boiled.
 - VI. Contact the local U.S. Embassy upon arrival and notify them of your presence in the country and date of departure. It is also recommended that you contact the local Diocese.

ADDENDUM

Applicable Provisions from the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People

Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People

In 2002, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops issued the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People (“Charter”). Two articles in the Charter are in regard to adults who have regular contact with minors.

Article 12—Safe Environment Programs

Article 12 of the Charter provides as follows: Dioceses/eparchies will establish “safe environment” programs. They will cooperate with parents, civil authorities, educators, and community organizations to provide education and training for children, youth parents, ministers, educators, and other about ways to make and maintain a safe environment for children. Dioceses/eparchies will make clear to clergy and all members of the community the standards of conduct for clergy and other persons in position of trust with regard to sexual abuse.

The Diocese of Jackson has selected the Called to Protect by Praesidium, Inc. program as its initial safe environment program for adults in regular contact with minors. The VIRTUS Protecting God’s Children Online Awareness is the ongoing safe environment program for adults in regular contact with minors.

Article 13—Criminal History Background Check

Article 13 of the Charter provides as follows: Dioceses/eparchies will evaluate the background of all diocesan/eparchial and parish personnel who have regular contact with minors. Specifically, they will utilize the resources of law enforcement and other community agencies. Every adult in regular contact with minors and all members of the clergy and religious must have a criminal history background check.

Definition of a Minor.

A minor is an individual who has not yet attained his/her 18th birthday. For purposes of this Policy, all students in our secondary school are considered minors, and this Policy applies to them. (DIOCESAN PROTECTION OF CHILDREN POLICY DEFINES A MINOR: CHILDREN SHALL MEAN ALL PERSONS UNDER THE AGE OF EIGHTEEN.)

Safety of minor, adult, and institution.

This Policy is written for the purpose of the safety and protection of the minor. This Policy is also intended to provide for the safety and protection of the adults involved and the Diocesan institution responsible for the activity.

Please contact the Chancery for the appropriate travel forms:

Office of Catholic Education (601) 969-2742

Office of Youth Ministry (601) 949-6934

Office of Religious Education and Formation (601) 960-8473



CATHOLIC DIOCESE *of* JACKSON