



CREATING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

in the **ARCHDIOCESE of MILWAUKEE**



All efforts and programs in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee that relate to protecting God's children come under the umbrella of Safeguarding All of God's Family. As a faith-filled people, we respect and value each and every individual, as we are created in the image and likeness of God. The Archdiocese of Milwaukee is committed to creating an environment of healthy and responsible relationships where all of God's family will be able to work, live and play.

The Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People

The Charter is a comprehensive set of procedures established by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in June 2002 for addressing allegations of sexual abuse of minors by Catholic clergy. The Charter also includes guidelines for reconciliation, healing, accountability and prevention of future acts of abuse.

The Charter's policies and procedures were reviewed and revised in 2011.

Maintaining Compliance with the Charter

For Children All children and youth in grades K4 through 12, both in day school and religious education, are required to receive safe environment education. This is NOT sex education. Because of the value and dignity of human life, it is important that we teach children and youth about personal safety, awareness and boundaries. As God's children, we deserve love and respect.

For Adults The following requirements must be met prior to employment or volunteer service:

- Safe environment education for all clergy and religious (men and women), paid personnel and volunteers.
- State and national background checks for all clergy and religious, paid personnel and volunteers, repeated at least every five years.
- All clergy and religious, paid personnel and volunteers must read and sign a form acknowledging they have received and read the Code of Ethical Standards for Church Leaders.
- All clergy and religious, paid personnel and volunteers must receive and read a copy of the Mandatory Reporting Responsibilities.

ARTICLE 12

"Dioceses 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 others about ways to make and maintain a safe environment for children. Dioceses will make clear to clergy and members of the community the standards of conduct for clergy and other persons in positions of trust with regard to sexual abuse."

ARTICLE 13

"Dioceses are to evaluate the background of all incardinated and non-incardinated priests and deacons who are engaged in ecclesiastical ministry in the diocese and of all diocesan and parish/school or other paid personnel and volunteers."*



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*Volunteers are defined as those individuals who have regular contact with children and young people.

Initiatives and Actions Implemented by the ARCHDIOCESE of MILWAUKEE since 2002

- No priest with a substantiated allegation of sexual abuse of a minor serves in public ministry, in any way, in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.
- The Archbishop has a Community Advisory Board composed of representatives from various social services agencies and experts in the area of sexual abuse. The Board meets regularly, providing guidance in the Archdiocese's response to victims of sexual abuse by church personnel.
- All archdiocesan, parish personnel and volunteers are bound by the mandatory reporting laws of the State of Wisconsin. The Archdiocese of Milwaukee requires all adults to exercise reporting responsibilities for suspected abuse or neglect of a minor, whether or not they are designated mandatory reporters under Wisconsin law.
- Sexual abuse prevention training and safe environment education is required by the Archdiocese of Milwaukee for all archdiocesan and parish employees as well as volunteers who have regular contact with minors. More than 45,000 adults and 100,000 children have participated in the initiative.
- State and national criminal background checks are required for all adults, including priests and bishops, staff and volunteers who have regular interaction with minors in a Church setting.
- All employees and volunteers must sign The Code of Ethical Standards that clearly outlines expected and acceptable behavior. The Archdiocese of Milwaukee participates in a yearly on-site audit of its safe environment practices and procedures. Every year, the archdiocese has been found to be in full compliance.
- Religious order priests are subject to the same standards upheld in the Charter. When a religious order priest requests faculties to minister publicly within the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, that priest's superior is required to provide a statement verifying his suitability for ministry, including assurance that he has not been credibly accused of abuse of a minor, has undergone a criminal background check and has completed safe environment training.
- The Archdiocese of Milwaukee participates in a yearly on-site audit of its safe environment practices and procedures; including parish and school visits. Every year, the archdiocese has been found to be in full compliance.
- There is a whistleblower policy in place to protect anyone who makes a sexual abuse report from suffering consequences related to making the report.
- In 2010, Archbishop ListECKI approved a policy for Social Networking. This policy outlines practices and guidelines to be followed in order to maintain healthy boundaries and safe environments in a virtual world.
- In 2011, Archbishop ListECKI celebrated the first Mass of Atonement as another step in the archdiocese's journey of facing our sins, acknowledging the wrongs of the past and moving forward to a better future. This Mass is celebrated annually.
- In 2011, Safe Environment Week was established and designated as one week during April's Child Abuse Prevention Month so that all parishes and schools could simultaneously focus on abuse prevention and archdiocesan initiatives already underway.
- In 2012, Archbishop Jerome ListECKI approved a policy for Overnight Trips with Minors. The policy addresses not only overnight trips with minors, but any function that might take place away from the parish or school.
- In 2013, partnered with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children with their Take 25 initiative and they also provided parish and schools with Online Education Safety Kits.
- In 2015, partnered with Catholic Mutual to create a user friendly safe environment platform that would incorporate all safe environment requirements in one location.
- In 2016, upgraded the Catholic Mutual safe environment platform, including adding Selection.com as a background check provider. Selection.com provides the highest level of due-diligence when screening employees and volunteers.

Revised 2016



Keeping Children Safe from Sexual Abuse Policies and Practices of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee

The Archdiocese of Milwaukee makes children's safety a priority. The Church is different today because of the courage of victims/survivors who have come forward, told their painful stories and worked diligently to implement initiatives designed to protect children today.

For More Information

Learn more about Safeguarding All of God's Children in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee by visiting our Web site:
www.archmil.org/offices/safeguarding

Obtain a full copy of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People from the USCCB's Web site:
www.usccb.org/ocyp/charter.pdf