



# CREATING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

## *in the* ARCHDIOCESE *of* MILWAUKEE

- No priest or deacon 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 contact with minors. More than 85,000 adults and 100,000 children have participated in the initiative.
- State and national criminal background checks are required for all adults, including deacons, priests, and bishops, staff and volunteers who have interaction with minors in a Church setting. This must be done prior to beginning service and every five years subsequently.
- All employees and volunteers must sign The Code of Ethical Standards that clearly outlines expected and acceptable behavior. This must be done prior to beginning service and every five years subsequently.
- CMG Connect is our centralized safe environment record keeping and training platform, through Catholic Mutual, that incorporates all safe environment requirements in one location that allows our parishes and schools to view safe environment records of staff, clergy, and volunteers.
- Parishes and schools in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee are required to submit an annual compliance report of its safe environment practices and procedures. Parishes and schools are visited by the Safe Environment Program Manager to check for compliance concerns.
- 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 on-site audits of its safe environment practices and procedures; including parish and school visits. The archdiocese has been found to be in full compliance after each audit.
- 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 2020, Archbishop Jerome ListECKI approved the creation of a Fitness for Ministry Board. This board provides a process to review any clergy, staff, or volunteer's fitness for ministry in our parishes or schools for other abuses or misconduct.
- In 2020, Archbishop ListECKI approved a plan for bishop accountability. This process allowed for reports of sexual abuse against a bishop to be reported to and investigated.
- In 2020, the Archdiocese of Milwaukee adapted a third party reporting system for misconduct and abuse through Convercent.
- In 2021, additional abuse prevention training will be added as a requirement for employees and volunteers to renew their safe environment certification. This training is done every 5 years after their initial abuse prevention training session.