



DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER MEMORANDUM

To: Priests and Deacons
Principals
Safe Environment Coordinators
Parish Staff

CC: Diocesan Review Board
Safe Environment Council

From: Mary Ellen D'Intino

Date: October 28, 2019

RE: Revised Code of Conduct and Policy for the Protection of Children & Young People

The Diocese of Manchester's *Promise to Protect, Pledge to Heal*: Policy for the Protection of Children and Young People requires that the Policy as well as the *Serving Christ, Serving Others*: Code of Ministerial Conduct be reviewed at least once every four years. After consultation with the Diocesan Review Board, the Presbyteral Council, the Pastoral Council, and the Safe Environment Council, Bishop Libasci has approved revisions to the Code and Policy, which become effective November 1, 2019. The changes are outlined on the following pages.

Employees and volunteers should be made aware that the documents have been revised, but they are not required to re-sign the acknowledgement page at this time because they will sign the acknowledgement page electronically when they next update their online training. You may inform employees and volunteers of the updates by providing them with the information that is attached to this memo, or by referring them to the diocesan website at www.catholicnh.org/child-safety/policies

While the main changes are outlined below, please be aware that there are some other minor changes such as job titles, dates, and addresses that were updated within the documents.

If you have any questions or concerns about the Code and/or Policy, please do not hesitate to contact me.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES TO
Serving Christ, Serving Others Code of Ministerial Conduct
and
Promise to Protect, Pledge to Heal Policy for the Protection of Children and
Young People

Effective November 1, 2019

Revisions to the *Serving Christ, Serving Others* Code of Ministerial Conduct

In the Section on GENERAL PRINCIPALS OF ETHICS AND INTEGRITY IN MINISTRY

(Page 4) **II. B. 1. Prevention of Sexual Exploitation**

In footnote 3 regarding the definition of “vulnerable adult,” the definition of a vulnerable adult has been updated to reflect the definition provided by Pope Francis in his May 2019 Motu Proprio. A vulnerable adult is “any person in a state of infirmity, physical or mental deficiency, or deprivation of personal liberty which, in fact, even occasionally, limits their ability to understand or to want or otherwise resist the offense.” (Note that this footnote has also been updated on page 2 of the Policy (footnote 7).

(Page 6) **III. A. 3., 4., and 5. – Standards for Working with Minors**

Minor wording revisions have been made. Section A. 3. now indicates that Church personnel may not use medication that causes impairment while working with minors. Section A. 4. has been updated to include the statement that church personnel may not view sexually-oriented or morally-inappropriate materials *while using Church equipment*, and Section A. 5. further emphasizes that when discussing human sexuality with teenagers, adults must convey information that is consistent with Catholic teaching.

(Page 7) **III. C. 4. – Supervision of Programs Involving Minors**

Number 4 in Section II. C. is new and reflects previously established policy regarding adult-minor supervisory ratios.

(Page 7) **IV. B. – Maintaining Appropriate Boundaries**

The language in this section was updated to emphasize that adults must adhere to appropriate boundaries not only when counseling others, but in all ministerial relationships.

In the Section on VIOLATIONS OF THE CODE OF MINISTERIAL CONDUCT

(Page 8) **I. C. – Reporting Procedures for Allegations of Bishop Misconduct**

Section C has been added to provide information about how to report allegations of bishop misconduct. Currently, a temporary regional system is in place, but a national system is expected to be put into place in 2020. Therefore, this section refers the reader to the Diocese of Manchester website in order to access the third party reporting system. Further information is available at: <https://www.catholicnh.org/family2/youth/child-safety/report/> in the Section entitled, “How to Report Bishop Misconduct/Abuse.”

(Page 8) **II. B. 2. – Reporting Procedures**

A revision was made in this section to clarify that, in addition to other methods, Code of Conduct violations can also be reported through the Delegate for Ministerial Conduct email address: delegate@rcbm.org. (Note that this update was also made on page 8 of the Policy in respect to reporting retaliation).

(Page 9) **IV – Disciplinary Action**

A sentence has been added at the end. It states, “When it has been determined that a violation of the Code of Conduct has occurred and remedial or corrective action is recommended, it is expected that the response of the individual who violated the Code will be one of thoughtful consideration, willingness to examine one’s own behavior, and sincere commitment to change.”

Revisions to the *Promise to Protect, Pledge to Heal* Policy

In the Section on APPLICABILITY AND GENERAL DEFINITIONS

(Pages 1 and 2) **II. D. 3. c. and II. I. – Definition of “Volunteer” and “Regularly”**

The definitions of a volunteer and of a person who “regularly” works with minors have been revised to reflect changes recently made to the USCCB *Charter for the Protection of Children* and the Diocese of Manchester *Screening and Training Protocol*. Church personnel are considered to “regularly work with minors” when they have contact with minors as defined in the *Screening and Training Protocol*. The *Screening and Training Protocol* may be found at: <https://www.catholicnh.org/assets/Documents/Child-Safety/Policies/ScreeningTrainingProtocol.pdf>. Note that these changes are also reflected in the definitions section of the Code of Conduct.

(Page 2) **II. J. – Those Considered to Work with Minors**

An addition has been made to the list of those considered to work with minors to reflect that volunteers who assist with large-scale diocesan youth events may fall into this category. In addition, camp personnel have been excluded from this definition (and other sections) because the diocesan camps are separately incorporated and may or may not adopt this Policy.

In the Section on PREVENTION

(Page 2) **II. B. – Transfers for Assignment/Ministry**

This section was previously titled, “Transfers for Residence,” and the new title more accurately describes this section. The section has been revised for purposes of clarification and now states that before a priest or deacon can be transferred for a ministerial assignment or supply ministry to the Diocese from another diocese or religious province, the Diocese shall seek from that diocese or religious province documentation of suitability for ministry, including documentation that there is nothing in his background that would render him unsuitable to work with minor children or that would disqualify him from ministry.

(Page 3) **IV. – Independent Contractors**

The requirements for independent contractors have been updated to clarify that, in addition to undergoing background screening, independent contractors who have regular contact with minors must also complete training.

In the Section on INTERVENTION

(Page 5) **I. C. – Rights of the Complainant and Accused.**

A sentence has been added which states, “Those accused are presumed innocent pending the results of an investigation.”

In the Section on REPORTING OF INCIDENTS, ALLEGATIONS, AND CONCERNS

(Page 7) **I. D. – Reporting Allegations Involving a Bishop**

This section has been updated to inform the reader that allegations involving a bishop should be reported through the independent third party reporting system.