

Resources for Families

- **Department of Human Services:** DHS has offices throughout Oregon and is available for consultation as well as reporting child abuse. If you suspect abuse or neglect call **1-855-503-SAFE (7233)** This toll-free number allows you to report abuse or neglect of any child or adult to the Oregon Department of Human Services. DHS's website (www.oregon.gov/DHS/children/pages/abuse/cps/report.aspx) has other helpful information on child abuse reporting. You can also report child abuse to the local police department, county sheriff, county juvenile department or Oregon State Police.
- **Crisis Lines:** Domestic crisis lines serve almost every county in the state. Look under Crisis Intervention in the yellow pages of the telephone book and ask for a referral.
- **Parents Anonymous Help Line:** (503) 258-4381 in the Portland metropolitan area. This line helps parents who need to talk, or who need referrals to area agencies or family support groups that specialize in domestic violence. www.morrisonkids.org
- **NW Human Services Crisis Lines:** (800) 560-5535; (503) 581-5535 www.northwesthumanservices.org



2838 E. Burnside Street
Portland, Oregon 97214-1895
(503) 234-5334

ARCHDIOCESE
OF PORTLAND
IN OREGON

**CHILD PROTECTION
POLICY**

SUMMARY

REVISED 2015

2838 E. Burnside Street, Portland, Oregon 97214-1895

This brochure is a summary of the Child Protection Policy of the Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon (“Archdiocese”). The brochure is available in English, Spanish and Vietnamese languages. A copy of the full Child Protection Policy and other statements governing the conduct of Church Personnel are available on the website of the Archdiocese: www.archdpdx.org/cpo or by calling (503) 234-5334.

Child abuse is absolutely contrary to the Gospel values of care and concern that Jesus commands us to have for one another. Child abuse is contrary to all that the Catholic Church believes and professes about the dignity of human persons. It is never to be tolerated.

The policy of the Archdiocese is that all its personnel — clerics, religious, employees, volunteers — are to maintain the integrity of the ministerial relationship at all times. Abusive conduct of any kind, including sexual conduct, between one who is performing duties on behalf of the Archdiocese and a minor, not only is criminal, but also violates that relationship and Catholic moral teaching.

It is vigilance that prevents abuse and sees that no child, no one at all, is victimized by such sinful and hurtful behavior. The Archbishop of Portland in Oregon (“Archbishop”) has updated and promulgated this 2015 Child Protection Policy to focus and aid that vigilance. This Policy incorporates by reference other statements governing the conduct of Church personnel as they relate to minors, including but not limited to: *the Standards of Conduct for Ministry with Children and Youth, the Policy on Travel with Minors, The Code of Conduct for Church Personnel, The Policies and Best Practices for Use of the Internet and Social Media*, employee handbooks and any other applicable policy or practice guiding the conduct of Church personnel. The policy also intends full compliance with applicable canon and civil law.

Preventing Child Abuse

The Archdiocese, each parish and each school is committed to preventing and fully addressing child abuse by any Church personnel and recognizing and responding to signs of child abuse in the children it serves. The following evidence this commitment:

- **Screening.** All Church personnel whose service involves direct personal contact with minors must under go a criminal background check. Regardless of the extent to which their positions involve minors, all employees of the Archdiocese, a parish or a school are required to undergo a criminal background check. Ordinarily this screening will be initiated on or before the beginning date of conditional employment or volunteer service and updated periodically thereafter.
- **Education.** All clergy, seminarians, religious, and employees and volunteers whose duties regularly involve minors, will complete safe environment training at the time of hire/start of service and annually thereafter. Employees whose duties do not regularly involve minors will complete training upon hire and every third year thereafter.
- **Child Protection Officer.** A Child Protection Officer is available to assist parishes and schools in implementing the *Child Protection Policy* and safe environment programs.
- **Policy statement.** This policy statement is be distributed and made available to all Church personnel. Parishes and schools are encouraged to display the summary in a public area near the entrance to their facilities.

Reporting Child Abuse

Under Oregon law, the term "child abuse" may refer to the physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse or exploitation, mental injury, or threat of harm to a minor. It includes any activity related to child pornography, even viewing such material. Child abuse of any kind is criminal.

Mandatory Reporters. All employees of the Archdiocese, a parish or a school and any other persons designated by statute as "a public or private official" are required by law to report suspected child abuse to the Department of Human Services (DHS) or to a law enforcement agency. All mandatory reporters are expected to fulfill this legal obligation.

There is an exception to mandatory reporting under the clergy-penitent privilege. A priest or deacon is not required to report information he acquires in a privileged conversation. Further, the sacramental seal of confession is inviolable. A priest is absolutely prohibited from revealing information acquired from a sacramental confession. This confidentiality is recognized under Oregon law. Clergy are encouraged, however, not to accept confidential communications concerning child abuse outside of a sacramental confession.

Voluntary Reporters. Church personnel who are not mandatory reporters (i.e., those who serve as volunteers and who are not designated by statute as a "public or private official") are encouraged voluntarily to report suspected child abuse when they have reasonable grounds to do so. Oregon law protects those who report child abuse in good faith and with reasonable grounds for doing so from liability for making the report.

Members of the public. Church personnel should encourage direct reporting of suspected abuse, regardless of the child involved or whether the suspected abuse involves Church personnel.

Response to Child Abuse Report

A sacred relationship exists between the Catholic Church and its members, whether they are children or adults. Child abuse of any kind and certainly child sexual abuse are matters of gravest concern. Knowledge of such abuse calls for a special response so that the safety of the child and the community is assured and healing can take place.

The first response must always be immediate and direct reporting to the proper civil authorities. The next response should be assistance to bring healing and pastoral care wherever that is possible. With this in mind the Archbishop has designated a special Assistance Coordinator to assure appropriate responses in situations of reported sexual abuse of minors by Church personnel.

**Assistance Coordinator
(503) 416-8810**

When the Archdiocese, a parish or a school is informed of allegations of child abuse by any of its personnel, the needs and rights of all involved must be addressed: those of the person alleging the abuse, the accused, and the community affected.

The assistance coordinator will:

- Respond promptly to persons who contact the Archdiocese concerning child abuse and will offer to meet with them.
- Work with the affected parish or school, as needed, to provide outreach that will best promote healing and reconciliation. Outreach may include professional counseling, spiritual assistance and other services.
- Ensure reporting to civil authorities, if the allegations are subject to reporting under Oregon law and a report has not yet been made. The Archdiocese and the parish or school affected will cooperate fully with civil authorities in their investigation of the charges.

- The Assistance Coordinator (or the parish or school affected) may offer, as appropriate, psychological counseling, pastoral care, and/or an opportunity to meet with Archbishop or his delegate.

The following actions may be taken with respect to the accused:

- Unless civil authorities request otherwise, if this has not already occurred, the accused individual will be informed of the allegations by the Archbishop or his delegate, and will be given an opportunity to respond.
- The accused clergy, religious, employee or volunteer will be placed on administrative leave pending the internal and/or civil investigation.
- If the allegations are substantiated, the person accused will be terminated from any position of service or responsibility within the Archdiocese. An offending priest or deacon will be permanently removed from ministry. If the allegations are not substantiated, efforts will be made to maintain or restore the good name of the accused and provide for his or her well-being.
- Whenever the investigation under civil or canon law raises questions of the continued fitness for ministry of a priest or deacon, the matter will be referred to the Ministry Review Board for further review and recommendation to the Archbishop.
- The Archbishop may take whatever further action he deems appropriate to ensure the protection of children who may be at risk and the safety of the community.

The Archdiocese's Child Protection Policy is based upon the teachings of the Catholic Church and its Code of Canon Law, as well as on civil law.

The Archbishop retains the right at all times to modify this protocol on a case-by-case basis to respond more effectively to specific situations and issues, with due respect for the requirements of civil and canon law.