



Diocese of Harrisburg

Youth Protection Program

Code of Conduct for Adult Employees and Volunteers

Revised November 2011

The following standards enumerate and limit particular inappropriate actions when dealing with minors and must be adhered to by all adult employees and volunteers serving in the Diocese of Harrisburg.

- Employees and volunteers will treat everyone with respect, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration.
- Employees and volunteers will exercise prudent professional caution in all interactions with minors.
- Employees and volunteers are to avoid situations of being alone with children and/or youth at Church-sponsored activities, on church property, or in any capacity where serving as an official representative of the Church.
- Employees and volunteers must establish clear, appropriate boundaries and limits in all interpersonal relationships with minors.
- Employees and volunteers should not accept expensive gifts from children and/or youth or their parents without prior written approval from their pastor or administrator.
- Employees and volunteers must refrain from giving expensive gifts to children and/or youth without prior written approval from the parents or legal guardian and the pastor or administrator.
- There must be a sufficient number of adult chaperones for all youth trips, especially overnight trips. One adult should never be the sole chaperone on any youth trip. All required background clearances must be obtained before any employee or volunteer chaperones any Church-sponsored trip. When staying overnight, no adult should sleep in the same room, or small tent with any minor other than his or her own child.
- Employees and volunteers must accept personal responsibility to provide a Safe Environment for minors in all activities sponsored by the Diocese of Harrisburg.
- Employees and volunteers must report suspected incidents of sexual abuse to the pastor, administrator or appropriate supervisor; the Diocese of Harrisburg Youth Protection Hotline (800.626.1608); and the county Children and Youth Agency. Failure to report suspected abuse to civil authorities is in violation of canon, civil and criminal laws.
- Employees and volunteers must be knowledgeable of the mandated reporting requirements for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and follow these mandates.
- Employees and volunteers must seek professional assistance if he/she becomes aware of developing an unhealthy attraction to minors or if he/she frequently seeks their companionship (rather than that of adult peers).
- Employees and volunteers will not use physical affection to initiate inappropriate contact with minors or touch a minor in a sexual or other inappropriate manner.

- Employees and volunteers will not engage in any act of the sexual abuse of a minor, which is here defined as: any offense against the 6th commandment of the Decalogue with a minor. Such an offense must be an external, objectively grave violation and may include (but is not limited to): (1) any actual or attempted sexual contact with a minor; sexual voyeurism of a minor, including but not limited to acquisition, possession or distribution of obscene or pornographic materials or images of minors, or the employment, use persuasion, inducement, enticement or coercion of any person to engage in or assist any other person to engage in any sexually explicit conduct or posing, or any simulation of sexually explicit conduct or for the purpose of producing any visual depiction of sexually explicit conduct involving minors; (3) any sexual harassment, which may include but not limited to: (a) derogatory verbal comments of a sexual nature, such as epithets, jokes, and slurs, or unwanted sexual advances; (b) displaying lewd visuals such as posters, photographs, cartoons, drawings or gestures including derogatory sexually oriented materials; (c) unwanted physical contact or sexual overtones that interfere with a person's work or academic performance or that create an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or academic environment; (d) threats and demands to submit either to sexual requests as a condition of continued employment, other benefits, etc., or to avoid some other loss or offer of benefits in return for sexual favors; and (e) retaliation for having reported or threatened to report sexual harassment.
- Employees and volunteers will not use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol or use tobacco products, while supervising minors at Church-sponsored activities or while serving as an official representative of the Church.
- Employees and volunteers will not purchase, download, possess, receive or distribute child pornography; nor possess, distribute, receive, or share any pornography while supervising minors at Church-sponsored activities, while on church property, or in the presence of minors.
- Employees and volunteers will not humiliate, ridicule, threaten, demean, or degrade minors nor tolerate such behaviors in the environment for which they are responsible; nor harm the reputation of others, including minors, by disclosing their faults or failings to persons who have no reason to know them, or by making false accusations against another individual.
- Employees and volunteers will not use physical discipline in any way for behavior management of minors. No form of physical discipline is acceptable. This includes but is not limited to: spanking, slapping, pinching, shaking, hitting or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behavior of a minor.
- Employees and volunteers will not use inappropriate expressions of affection with minors in any Church-sponsored activities or on church property, including but not limited to: lengthy embraces; kisses on the mouth; holding children on their lap who are capable of sitting on their own, touching bottoms, chests or genital areas; touching knees or legs; tickling, wrestling and piggyback rides; any type of massage, whether by a minor to an adult or to another minor or by an adult to a minor; sleeping in bed with a minor; any form of unwanted affection; compliments that relate to physique or body development; and any form of affection given to a minor in private.
- Employees and volunteers will not engage in any sexually oriented conversations with minors, except in the course of their teaching office or in response to specific questions, nor discuss any personal sexual activities, fantasies or frustrations.
- Employees and volunteers will not undress in the presence of minors nor enter a locker room or other dressing room for minors without at least one other adult present (with an exception for coaches).