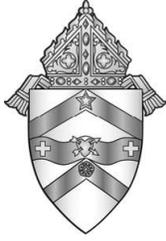




Policies on Ethics and Integrity in Ministry

Diocese of Austin

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Diocese of Austin
6225 E Hwy 290, Austin, TX 78723

August 1, 2011

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

Ten years ago, in the summer of 2001, the Diocese of Austin inaugurated a groundbreaking program called *Ethics and Integrity in Ministry* (EIM). Then-Bishop of Austin, Archbishop Gregory Aymond, guided a group of professionals to develop a safe environment program that recognized and proclaimed that the Church must first be a protector of all God's children. Our diocesan EIM program was born out of that Catholic belief that we are each called to protect those who are vulnerable.

As Bishop of the Diocese of Austin, I am committed to the protection of children and vulnerable adults from preventable harm, joining the many thousands of men and women in our diocese who have already made this commitment by completing our EIM process over the past ten years.

Ethics and Integrity in Ministry is an education and screening program required of all individuals in the Diocese of Austin (paid and volunteer) that serve our youth and those adults considered vulnerable due to age or some incapacity. The program requires the completion of two components: the submission of an Application for Ministry which includes permission for the Diocese of Austin to complete a background check; and attendance of an *Ethics and Integrity in Ministry* Basic workshop (and a Refresher workshop every three years thereafter). The workshop includes a media series titled Called to Protect, discussions (using a workbook) related to the program, and a review of our diocesan policies on Ethics and Integrity in Ministry. At the end you will sign the Diocese of Austin Code of Ethics stating your agreement to abide by the EIM policies of the diocese.

As you participate in this process, you join more than 45,000 people in our diocese who have also made this commitment to ensure the safety of children and vulnerable people in our Catholic church. I am grateful for the many ways you live your baptismal call to serve by offering your time and gifts to the service of God's people in our diocese. It is through the efforts and collaboration of priests, religious, deacons, lay ministers and volunteers that we are able to serve those who are entrusted to us and to lead them in the ways of faith.

Wishing you God's blessings and with gratitude for your service, I remain

Gratefully in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe S. Vasquez".

Most Reverend Joe S. Vasquez
Bishop of Austin

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La traducción al español de este documento se encuentra disponible en la página de internet www.austindiocese.org

I. General Definitions

A. Church personnel

For the purposes of these Policies on Ethics and Integrity in Ministry (the “policies”), issued by the Catholic Diocese of Austin, a Texas non-profit corporation (the “Diocese of Austin” or “Diocese”), **the following are included in the definition of “Church personnel”:**

1. Priests and Deacons (Clerics)
 - a. Clerics incardinated in the Diocese of Austin.
 - b. Clerics who are members of religious institutes or in other forms of consecrated life, and who are assigned to pastoral work in the Diocese or who are otherwise engaged in the care of souls, the public exercise of divine worship, and other works of the apostolate (c. 678).
 - c. Clerics of other jurisdictions who are assigned to pastoral work in this Diocese, whether seeking incardination within the Diocese or not.
 - d. Clerics who are otherwise legitimately residing within the territory of the Diocese, including retired clerics and those engaged in part-time or supply ministry.

In addition to the provisions of these policies, the above mentioned clerics are also bound by the Essential Norms for Clergy.

2. Seminarians and Religious
 - a. All seminarians legitimately enrolled in the seminary program of the Diocese.
 - b. Those that are enrolled in the permanent diaconate formation program.
 - c. Members of religious institutes, societies of apostolic life and secular orders and movements engaged in the care of souls, the public exercise of divine worship, and other works of the apostolate (c. 678), operating in the Diocese and/or the parishes, schools or Catholic agencies in the Diocese.
 - d. Hermits and consecrated virgins legitimately residing within the Diocese.
3. The Lay Faithful
 - a. All paid personnel of, and those who contract (or sub-contract) their services to, the Diocese and/or the parishes, schools or other Catholic agencies in the Diocese.
 - b. Volunteers of the Diocese and/or the parishes, schools or other Catholic agencies in the Diocese that work or serve with minors and/or vulnerable adults in any ministry, program or organization that serves youth or vulnerable adults in any manner, or which functions at a time and place where minors and/or vulnerable adults are typically present.

These policies are implemented pursuant to ecclesiastical authority and do not confer on behalf of any paid personnel or volunteers of any parish, schools, or Catholic agencies in the Diocese of Austin an employment status with the Diocese, such claim being expressly denied by the Diocese.

B. Minor

A minor is defined as any person under the age of 18.

1. When a person turns 18, they are required to complete the EIM process in order to serve in ministry to minors.
2. A member of a youth ministry group that turns 18 prior to graduation/completing the youth ministry year does not need to complete the EIM process in order to remain a *member only* of the youth ministry group.

C. Vulnerable Adult

A vulnerable adult is defined as any adult who would be considered uniquely vulnerable to abuse because of physical or mental disability that substantially impairs the person's ability to provide adequately for their own care or protection.

D. Types of Misconduct

Misconduct includes, but is not limited to, the following behaviors:

1. Immoral conduct: Conduct that is contrary to the discipline and teachings of the Catholic Church and which may result in scandal to the faithful or harm to the ministry of the Catholic Church.
2. Harassment: The illegitimate and offensive use of power where the purpose or the effect is to create a hostile, intimidating, or offensive work environment.
3. Exploitation: Taking advantage of a person or relationship for the self-serving benefit of the service or ministry provider.
4. Breach of Confidentiality: The improper disclosure of information shared during the course of pastoral care or spiritual direction.
5. Conflict of Interest: The taking advantage of a pastoral care or spiritual direction relationship in order to benefit or further the interests of the service provider.
6. Abuse: Abuse includes physical abuse, sexual abuse and emotional abuse.
7. Physical abuse: Non-accidental injury that is intentionally inflicted upon a person.
8. Sexual abuse: Any contact of a sexual nature that occurs between an adult and a minor or between an adult and a vulnerable adult, or in a relationship where one party takes sexual advantage of the other, which is intended to produce sexual stimulation of the perpetrator. This includes, but is not limited to, sexual exploitation, sexual assault, fondling, making a minor watch sex acts or pornography, non-consensual sexual physical contact, or using a minor in any aspect of the production of pornography.
9. Emotional abuse is mental or emotional injury that results in an observable and material impairment in the person's growth, development or psychological functioning.
10. Neglect is the failure to provide for a person's basic needs or the failure to protect a person from harm.

E. Ethics and Integrity in Ministry

The term "EIM" is an acronym used in these policies to refer to "Ethics and Integrity in Ministry."

II. Principles of Ethics and Integrity in Ministry: Code of Ethics

Relationships among people are a foundation of Christian ministry and are central to Catholic life. Defining healthy and safe relationships is not meant, in any way, to undermine the strength and importance of personal contact or the ministerial role. Rather, it is to assist all who fulfill the many roles that create the living Church to demonstrate their love and compassion for children and adults in the most sincere and genuine relationships.

It is with the intention that relationships in ministry be experienced at all times as charitable and without intention to do harm or allow harm to occur that the following Code of Ethics has been adopted by the Diocese of Austin. Those that serve in ministry in the Diocese of Austin are asked to carefully consider each standard in the code and within the policies before agreeing to adhere to the standards and continue in service to the Diocese.

Those who serve in ministry in the Diocese of Austin shall:

- Exhibit the highest Christian ethical standards and personal integrity.
- Conduct themselves in a moral manner that is consistent with the discipline, norms and teachings of the Catholic Church.
- Provide a professional work environment that is free from harassment.
- Not take advantage of a counseling, supervisory or authoritative relationship for their own benefit.
- Not act in an abusive or neglectful manner.
- Share concerns about suspicious or inappropriate behavior with their pastor, their principal, the Vicar General, the Superintendent of Catholic schools or the Bishop.
- Adhere to the requirements of the law of the State of Texas regarding the reporting of any suspected abuse of a minor.
- Accept their personal responsibility in the protection of minors from all forms of abuse.
- Follow the policies on Ethics and Integrity in Ministry.

Persons attending an EIM workshop will sign a copy of the “Code of Ethics” as verification of workshop attendance and review of the [Policies on Ethics and Integrity in Ministry](#). The signed Code of Ethics form will be used to record the workshop date in the attendee’s electronic database (eAppsDB) account and will then be kept on file at the individual’s primary site of ministry.

III. Guidelines for Ethical Behavior

A. Definitions

1. Ethical behavior is behavior that is consistent with the morals and teachings of the Catholic Church. It is fundamental to the mission of the Diocese of Austin that Church personnel exhibit the highest ethical standards and personal integrity.
2. Scandal is an attitude or behavior which leads another to do evil. Scandal damages virtue and integrity. It is a grave offense if by deed or omission another is deliberately led into a grave offense (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, No. 2284).

B. Prohibited Conduct

1. Church personnel enjoy a public trust and confidence. It is essential then that they view their own actions and intentions objectively to assure that no observer would have grounds to believe that immoral conduct exists. They have a responsibility to strive to uphold ethical behavior in their day-to-day work and personal lives. This expectation of ethical behavior exists for both “in person” and “virtual” interactions (which would encompass online and electronic communications and all social media use).
2. Church personnel are prohibited from engaging in conduct, or situations that can give the appearance of:
 - a. Immoral conduct,
 - b. Harassment,
 - c. Exploitation, sexual exploitation or sexual intimacies,
 - d. Breach of confidentiality,
 - e. Conflict of interest,
 - f. Abuse,
 - g. Actions which are disruptive to the ministry and public worship,
 - h. Procurement or participation in the procurement of abortion, or committing homicide or euthanasia,
 - i. Possession or distribution of pornographic material,
 - j. Adultery, promiscuity or co-habitation,
 - k. Abuse of alcohol, drugs or gambling,
 - l. Stealing or any other form of theft,
 - m. Assault or fighting, or
 - n. Scandal.
3. Additionally, Church personnel should not harm the reputation of others by:
 - a. Disclosing without legitimate cause the faults or failings of others to persons who have no cause to know them.
 - b. Making false allegations against another.

IV. Guidelines for Integrity in Ministry

A. Definitions

1. Integrity is characterized by honesty, soundness of judgment and sincerity of manner. Church personnel are expected to maintain a high standard of integrity and a work environment free from harassment.
2. Harassment encompasses a broad range of physical, psychological, written, or verbal behavior that includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Abuse,
 - b. Racial insults,
 - c. Derogatory ethnic slurs,
 - d. Demeaning a person based on gender,
 - e. Sexual comments or sexual jokes,
 - f. Unwelcome sexual advances or touching,
 - g. Requests for sexual favors as a condition of employment, or to affect other personnel decisions, such as promotion or compensation,
 - h. Display of offensive materials, or,
 - i. Intimidation.

B. Prevention of Harassment

Church personnel shall not engage in harassment and shall not tolerate harassment by those with whom they work.

V. Guidelines for Pastoral Care and Spiritual Direction

A. Definitions

1. Pastoral care is a ministry of care and compassionate presence where the provider offers emotional support and family education to individuals and families, and connects these individuals and families with community mental health and counseling resources as needed.
2. Spiritual direction is a ministry of “holy listening” where the spiritual director serves as a companion to help an individual listen and look at the action of the Holy Spirit in their life, and helps them to listen to God speaking to their own heart. It is a ministry by which one person helps another in practice of the spiritual life. (Please refer to The Ministry of Spiritual Direction in the Diocese of Austin, April 2008)

B. Prevention of Exploitation

Those engaged in pastoral care or spiritual direction shall work within their limitations and competencies and shall refer people to professionals when appropriate. They shall also:

1. Set and maintain clear and appropriate boundaries.
2. Be judicious in use of physical contact which should always be respectful and consistent with the intent to provide a safe and comfortable environment.
3. Conduct pastoral care and spiritual direction in appropriate settings at appropriate times; and sessions should not be held at places or times that would cause confusion about the nature of the relationship for the person being served and others.

C. Importance of Confidentiality

1. Information disclosed during the course of pastoral care or spiritual direction shall be held in the strictest confidence possible, with due regard for the norm of civil or canon law.
2. The nature of confidentiality, including its limitations, should be discussed with each person who seeks pastoral care or spiritual direction.
3. If, during the course of work with a minor, it is discovered that there is a serious threat to the welfare of the minor and that communication of confidential information to a parent or legal guardian is essential to the minor’s health and well-being, then only information necessary to protect the health and well-being of the minor should be disclosed.
4. In accordance with the norm of canon law (c.983), the sacramental seal is inviolable by divine mandate; therefore, it is absolutely forbidden for a confessor to betray the confidence of a penitent in any way and for any reason. This is applicable both while the penitent is living and, if applicable, after he or she has died.
5. With the exception of knowledge gained in the Sacrament of Penance, knowledge that arises from ministerial contact may be used in teaching, delivering homilies, or other public presentations only when effective measures have been taken to absolutely safeguard both the individual’s identity and the confidentiality of the disclosures. In the rare event that such disclosures are used, good pastoral judgment is of the utmost importance when making decisions about the use of information in public ministry.

D. Conflicts of Interest

1. Church personnel shall not engage in a conflict of interest. Even the appearance of a conflict of interest can call into question integrity and professional conduct.
2. If a conflict of interest exists or arises, all concerned parties should be informed. Resolution of the issues must protect the person being served.
3. Clear, appropriate boundaries regarding business, professional, and social relationships must be established and maintained to avoid conflicts of interest.

VI. Guidelines for Work or Service in Ministry with Minors and/or Vulnerable Adults

A. Definitions

1. Work or service in ministry with minors and/or vulnerable adults pertains to any ministry, program or organization that serves youth or vulnerable adults in any manner, or which functions at a time and place where minors or vulnerable adults are typically present.
 - a. This includes, but is not limited to: religious education, youth ministry, Catholic schools, homeschooling organizations that use church property or identify as a parish ministry, homebound/hospital ministry, parish nursery and mother's day out/pre-school programs, liturgical ministries (i.e. hospitality/ushers, extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, lectors, choir/music ministry, etc), societies of St Vincent de Paul, parish/school sponsored scout groups and other activities/programs for youth.
 - b. EIM compliance is required for the leadership of parish and diocesan organizations that may serve youth even though their primary function is not necessarily to serve youth (i.e. ladies/men's clubs, Knights of Columbus, Knights of Peter Claver, Serra Club/vocations ministry, etc); for members of such organization the EIM compliance requirement may be waived if participation is limited to times and places when minors are not typically present.
 - c. Pastors and principals may determine that those in any parish/school leadership position (i.e. ministry and organization leaders and Pastoral, Finance and Stewardship Council members, school advisory board members) should be in compliance with these diocesan EIM policies as a symbol of leadership within the parish/school and support of the policies of the church.
 - d. The pastor or principal may choose to include additional ministries/organizations to this listing at the local level.
2. Abuse includes physical abuse, sexual abuse and emotional abuse.
3. Physical abuse is non-accidental injury that is intentionally inflicted upon a person.
4. Sexual abuse is any contact of a sexual nature that occurs between an adult and a minor or an adult and a vulnerable adult. This includes any activity which is meant to arouse or gratify the sexual desires of the adult.
5. Emotional abuse is mental or emotional injury that results in an observable and material impairment in the person's growth, development or psychological functioning.
6. Neglect is the failure to provide for a person's basic needs or the failure to protect a person from harm.

B. Screening of Those Who Work or Serve in Ministry with Minors and/or Vulnerable Adults

1. Without exception, **clergy/religious/seminarians, persons employed in any parish, Catholic school or diocesan office or agency and applicants for volunteer positions that involve work or service in ministries with minors and/or vulnerable adults, must complete the appropriate EIM Application for Ministry** ("application") which permits the Diocese to conduct a criminal background check. Go to www.austindiocese.org to complete the application on-line or print a paper copy to complete and submit. Paper applications will be

entered into the EIM database. A criminal records check for the State of Texas, or any other US state where the applicant has resided during the past five years, as well as sex offender registry checks, will be conducted upon submission of the application.

- a. Notwithstanding the above, companies or individuals providing intermittent services (i.e. plumber) are to be supervised when on parish/school property and should be segregated from minors; thus they do not need to complete EIM process to provide such service.

NOTE: The EIM Application for Ministry must be submitted prior to beginning any volunteer work or service in ministry with a minor or vulnerable adult; for new employees at any parish, Catholic school or diocesan office or agency, completing the EIM application within the first week is a condition of continued employment. The application should be submitted prior to EIM workshop attendance, or immediately after attendance. Submitting the application also creates a field to record EIM workshop attendance; if no application is submitted then workshop verification cannot be guaranteed and the individual risks having to repeat workshop attendance.

2. Additional screening procedures, such as reference checks and face-to-face interviews, are required for all candidates for employment and are recommended for new volunteer applicants.
3. Volunteer applicants should be registered members of the parish/school community for at least six months prior to beginning work or service in ministry with minors or vulnerable adults. Exceptions may be made by the pastor or principal.
 - a. Applicants new to the parish/school community should not transport minors.
4. Applicants who transfer to a parish or school in the Diocese **from another diocese** must complete the EIM Application for Ministry, which initiates the background check and creates the field for recording workshop attendance. If a transfer applicant presents verification of training from another diocese, this may or may not meet the workshop requirements of the Diocese of Austin; contact the EIM Office for workshop verification. If previous workshop attendance is approved, the applicant should then attend an EIM Refresher workshop to understand the policies of the Diocese of Austin and sign the Code of Ethics form. The six-month wait applies to these transfers. Exceptions may be made by the pastor or principal.
5. Church personnel transferring from one parish or school **within** the Diocese of Austin to another **within** the Diocese should update their EIM application account in the eApps database to reflect their site change and any other information that has changed. The six-month wait will not apply to these transfers/additions.
6. Criminal records are automatically rechecked every three years through the eApps system; there is no action required on the applicant's part to facilitate this process. Parish, school and organization EIM site administrators verify the continued ministry status of individuals at each site prior to rechecks.
7. In general, minors do not complete the EIM process. See VI G for additional information regarding minors serving in ministry.

C. Training of Those Who Work or Serve in Ministry with Minors and/or Vulnerable Adults

1. Without exception, **clergy/religious/seminarians, persons employed in any parish, Catholic school or diocesan office or agency and applicants for volunteer positions that involve work or service in ministries with minors and/or vulnerable adults, shall participate in an EIM Basic abuse prevention training workshop within 60 days of**

- completing the Application for Ministry.** Persons that do not attend within 60 days will have a *non-compliant* notation on their EIM application in the database and will be asked by their parish/school EIM site administrator to suspend their service in ministry until training is completed. For employees, EIM compliance/workshop attendance is a condition of continued employment.
2. Attendance of a workshop in another diocese may or may not meet the workshop requirements of the Diocese of Austin (see VI B).
 3. The EIM Basic workshop (required for new applicants) is 3-hrs long and includes:
 - a. Viewing the media series titled Called to Protect that educates about sexual abuse and ways to prevent it.
 - b. Discussion and opportunities to take notes in a workbook participants keep.
 - c. Reviewing pertinent sections of the Diocese of Austin's Policies on Ethics and Integrity in Ministry.
 - d. Reviewing and signing the "Code of Ethics." This document is proof of workshop attendance and is the participant's signed commitment to comply with the Code of Ethics and the EIM policies of the diocese.
 4. As of August 2008, clergy and paid staff, and volunteers working in service to youth and vulnerable adults at any parish, Catholic school or diocesan agency, are required to **attend an EIM workshop every three (3) years**. They may attend an EIM Basic workshop or a 1½ hr EIM Refresher workshop to fulfill the 'refresher' requirement. The EIM Refresher uses a format similar to the Basic Workshop; however, it uses the *Called to Protect for Youth* DVD series used to educate middle and high school students.

D. Supervision of Programs that Involve Minors and/or Vulnerable Adults

1. In particular circumstances, parents may be able to observe programs and activities in which their children are involved (i.e. join their child for lunch once or twice a year, attend school/athletic performances, etc). However, parents who desire to volunteer, participate in, or have continuous, ongoing contact with their child's program(s) are required to complete the EIM process.
2. Parish/school leaders shall be aware of all programs for minors and vulnerable adults that are sponsored by the parish or school. A list of these programs should be maintained by the parish or school and include activities, purpose, sponsors or coordinators of the programs, adult/volunteer membership, meeting times and locations. These programs shall be reviewed at least annually to determine whether they have adequate supervision, verify compliance of new members, etc.
3. All new programs for minors (or vulnerable adults) should be reviewed and approved by the pastor or principal.
4. Building designs and remodels should be reviewed to ensure maximum visibility and compatibility with EIM/safe environment building practices in all spaces when necessary and appropriate (i.e. windows in doors, signage on restrooms identifying those for adults, etc).
5. Ordinarily a confirmation candidate should select his or her own sponsor. If the parish assigns or assists in the selection of sponsors, they are considered volunteers and must abide by these diocesan policies.
6. Multi-age organizations and ministries present particular challenges when the age span within the group is greater than a few years, or in the case of those groups that include older teens and young adults.

- a. When all members are minors, older youth acting in “helper” roles with younger children are to be supervised by the adults responsible for the ministry.
 - b. When minors and young adults are members of the same organization, the young adult members (18 and older) must be compliant with all EIM policies.
7. Program Supervision and Monitoring Guidelines (on-site)
- a. There shall be **at least two** EIM compliant adults supervising any program involving minors. Church personnel found to be non-compliant must submit the EIM application immediately in order to continue serving (and attend an EIM Basic workshop within 60 days).
 - i. In a structured classroom setting (i.e. Catholic school classroom) there shall be at least one EIM compliant adult; the principal or program supervisor should be actively monitoring classrooms/program rooms.
 - b. One adult should never be alone with one minor. If there is a need for a confidential discussion with a minor, it should occur in a location that is in view of other persons.
 - c. These are the minimum ratio guidelines for on-site programs/events other than structured classroom settings. The ratios use an adults: minors formula with the understanding that there must always be a minimum of 2 EIM compliant adults present:
 - i. Nursery age: 0-23mos – 1:6; 24mos-4yrs – 1:8
 - ii. Elementary age: K-5th – 1:12
 - iii. Middle school age: 6-8th – 1:15
 - iv. High school age: 9-12th – 1:20
 - v. NOTE: As Catholic school classroom teachers typically have more training and experience supervising larger groups of students than are recommended for most parish programs/events, school ratios may be greater than those stated above.
 - d. The majority of adults supervising a program/event involving minors should be 21+ years of age; at the minimum one adult **must** be 21+ years of age.
 - e. Minors may be released only to parents, legal guardians, or other adults designated by parents or legal guardians at the end of program/event (children may not be released to older minor siblings). When there is a question about the propriety of releasing a minor, the immediate supervisor should be contacted before releasing the child.
 - f. Uncontrollable or unusual behavior of minors should be reported immediately to parents.
8. Off-site Event and Chaperone Guidelines (day and overnight trips)
- a. Due to the increased supervision challenges of off-site events, the following standards shall be observed by those involved in the transportation and supervision of minors for any such event:
 - i. Any off-site event that involves minors shall be supervised by **at least two** EIM compliant adults. Co-ed events should include male and female chaperones in proportion to the minors attending. The following ratios use an adults: minors formula with the understanding that there must always be a minimum of 2 EIM compliant adults present:
 - 1. Elementary school age and younger: 1:6
 - 2. Middle school age: 1:8
 - 3. High school age: 1:10
 - ii. Minors should only be transported with written permission of parent or legal guardian.
 - iii. Best practice for transporting minors to/from parish or school sponsored events is the use of pre-arranged group transportation (i.e. bus or van) rather than private vehicles.

- iv. Chaperones assigned to transport minors must be at least 25 years old; proof of valid driver's license, vehicle registration and insurance must be documented at the parish/school for each driver. Requests for exceptions for drivers between 21 and 25 years old must be submitted in writing to the diocesan Chancellor at least a week prior to the function/event.
- v. If there is only one adult available per vehicle, there should be at least two minors present in the vehicle.
- vi. When private vehicles are used to transport minors, a transportation plan should be provided to all drivers to include route, pre-arranged stops and contact information for all drivers; such plan avoids the need to caravan while en-route. Minors should be transported directly to and from their destination using the pre-approved itinerary. No extra stops should be made unless approved by the director of the program or the stop is out of necessity (i.e. fueling the vehicle, emergency first aid, restroom stop, etc).
- vii. Physical contact with minors while in vehicles is prohibited.
- b. Best practices regarding high school aged drivers include:
 - i. A minor who drives to a Catholic school each day should "register" at the school office at the beginning of each school year and should provide proof of valid driver's license, vehicle registration and insurance.
 - ii. It is recommended that minors be transported by pre-arranged group transportation for parish and school events rather than transport themselves.
- c. Overnight lodging logistics should be well planned and information clearly communicated to parent or legal guardian.
 - i. A minor shall never spend the night in the private accommodations or residence of clergy, teachers or any adult supervisor without the presence of parent or legal guardian.
 - ii. In making lodging arrangements, consideration should be made to select an option that provides sleeping arrangements which are easily supervised. Depending on the event, lodging options might include hotel room, lodge/bunk house, multipurpose room, etc.
 - iii. All sleeping and changing/shower areas must be clearly segregated between males and females.
 - iv. All changing/shower areas must be clearly segregated between adults and minors. In the event that this is not possible, separate times should be designated for adult/ minor bathroom and shower use.
 - v. All sleeping areas should be segregated between adults and minors, taking appropriate supervision of minors into consideration.
 - 1. Hotel rooms: chaperones may not stay alone in the same room with a minor or minors. All rooms should be on the same floor with chaperone rooms on either side of minors' rooms. When practical, chaperones should take turns staying awake to monitor rooms.
 - a. A parent may stay in a room with their own child but no other minors.
 - 2. In larger lodging rooms/cabins housing many minors, if necessary a chaperone (ideally 2 chaperones) may sleep in the room in a cot or separate bed next to the doorway. Otherwise chaperones should sleep in a nearby space and take turns monitoring minors' quarters.
 - 3. Contact the EIM office well in advance of event to evaluate other types of lodging challenges.

E. Standards for Interactions with Minors and/or Vulnerable Adults

The following are standards regarding interactions with minors in church sponsored programs. They are not necessarily designed or intended to address interactions within families.

1. Appropriate contact between adults and minors constitutes a positive part of church life and ministry. Examples of appropriate contact with minors for Church programs include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Verbal praise,
 - b. Brief side hugs or arm around the shoulder,
 - c. Brief pat on the shoulder or upper back,
 - d. Hand-shakes, "High-fives", knuckle bumps or hand slaps,
 - e. Brief touching of hand, face, head, shoulder or arm of minor,
 - f. Holding hands while walking with small children,
 - g. Sitting beside small children,
 - h. Kneeling or bending down for a brief hug with small children,
 - i. Holding hands during prayer,
 - j. Using a minor's home/family phone number for calls/messages to minors,
 - k. Copying parents and other adult leaders of the program/ministry on all e-mails or postings to minors (although the technology method can be different),
 - l. Using parish or school phones and e-mail addresses to contact minors,
 - m. Instructing minors to contact adult leaders via a parish or school phone number, e-mail address, etc.
 - n. Ensuring there are at least two adult moderators from the parish/school for any social network site; passwords and site names should be available to parish/school leadership.
 - o. Securing permission of parents/legal guardians before posting photos of minors or details of ministry/program activities on any electronic media. Identifying information (i.e. names or tags, home address, etc.) should never be used.
2. Some forms of contact have been used by adults to initiate inappropriate interactions with minors. In order to maintain the safest possible environment, examples of contact with minors that are not to be used in Church programs include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Long and/or inappropriate embraces,
 - b. Kisses on the mouth,
 - c. Holding minors over three years old on the lap or in one's arms; holding younger minors should only be "as needed" (e.g. for comfort) or at the invitation of the parent,
 - d. Touching knees, legs, buttocks, chests or genital areas,
 - e. Being alone in isolated areas such as closets, staff-only areas or other private rooms,
 - f. Touching/playing with hair of a minor,
 - g. Being on a bed with a minor (unless a bed becomes designated "seating space" during daytime hours),
 - h. Wrestling with minors, tickling minors or piggyback rides
 - i. Any type of massage, whether given by minor to adult or adult to minor,
 - j. Any form of unwanted affection,
 - k. Comments that relate to physique, body development, express affection and/or involve other boundary violations. This includes comments that are positive or negative, oral or written via any form of media.
 - l. Inviting minors to be "friends, fans, etc" on personal social networking sites, or
 - m. Using personal social media/networking sites for parish, school or diocesan communications with minors.

F. Prohibited Behaviors

1. The use of physical discipline in any way for behavior management of minors is prohibited. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force.
2. Minors should not be invited to the private accommodations or residence of clergy, teachers or any adult supervisor without the presence of parent or legal guardian or another program minister. The pastor or principal should be aware of any such meeting at a private residence.
3. Church personnel should not use personal e-mail accounts or social media/networking sites to contact minors. Even on personal sites not intended for ministry work, Church personnel should be aware and careful of the types of things posted on their personal site.
4. Abuse and neglect of minors are contrary to the teachings of the Church and are prohibited and Church personnel have a responsibility to protect minors from all forms of abuse and/or neglect. Examples of prohibited behaviors include, but are not limited to:
 - a. speaking to minors in a way that is harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating,
 - b. swearing at a minor,
 - c. physically abusing a minor,
 - d. sexually abusing a minor,
 - e. neglecting a minor,
 - f. encouraging a minor to violate the law,
 - g. offering alcohol or illegal drugs to a minor, or
 - h. offering pornography to a minor.
5. Furthermore, when Church personnel are in the presence of minors, prohibited behaviors include, but are not limited to:
 - a. swearing or using vulgar language,
 - b. being under the influence of alcohol,
 - c. using, possessing or being under the influence of illegal drugs,
 - d. discussing their own sexual activities,
 - e. possessing or displaying sexually oriented or morally inappropriate printed or electronic materials (e.g. magazines, cards, videos, films, clothing, internet sites, etc.),
 - f. engaging in any sexually oriented conversations with minors unless the conversations are part of a legitimate lesson and discussion for teenagers regarding human sexuality issues (On such occasions, the lessons will convey to youth the Church's teachings on these topics. If youth have further questions not answered or addressed by their individual teachers, they should be referred to their parents or guardians for clarification or counseling.),
 - g. undressing or being nude,
 - h. taking a shower, or
 - i. sleeping in the same bed, sleeping bag or tent with a minor, unless the adult is an immediate family member of the minor.

G. Guidelines for Minors Serving in Ministry

1. The opportunity for youth to serve in a volunteer capacity within their parish or school is an important part of their Catholic education and a foundation for the beginning of a life of Catholic stewardship. When parishes provide opportunities for young people to share their time and talent in supervised ministerial settings as “helpers,” it is recommended that minors serving in this capacity attend the *Called to Protect for Youth* program.
 - a. Minors serving in liturgical ministries are not required to be compliant with the EIM policies as are adult volunteers. Attendance of a CTPY workshop is encouraged, but not required.
2. In general, minors do not complete the EIM process. The diocese strongly recommends against placing minors in any supervisory-type position generally reserved for adults.
 - a. Minors under 15 yrs old may never serve in an adult-type supervisory position.
 - b. Any minor aged 15-17 that a parish and parent chooses to place in an adult-type supervisory position, in service to other minors, shall complete the entire EIM process.
 - c. Minors cannot be counted as chaperones in supervision ratios.
3. Participation in a *Called to Protect for Youth* program.
 - a. The Catholic Church and our bishop strongly believe that the parent(s) is the first teacher of the faith to their own child(ren), including issues related to abuse and abuse prevention. In support of these efforts, the Diocese of Austin has selected and promotes a developmentally appropriate program for our youth to help them learn the basic concepts of personal safety in regards to sexual abuse. The *Called to Protect for Youth* (CTPY) program also provides a supplement for parents to guide additional discussion about the topic within the family.
 - b. *Called to Protect for Youth* is an abuse prevention program intended to educate our youth about boundaries, how those boundaries might be violated and what to do if they are violated. CTPY is **not** a human sexuality education program.
 - c. The parishes and Catholic schools in the Diocese of Austin are required to provide abuse prevention training to the youth of the Diocese by the Charter for the Protection of Youth and Young People (Article 12) and is audited on this requirement annually by agents of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Students are not required to attend in order to participate in ministry, but attendance should be strongly promoted and encouraged by the parish and school for the well-being of the students.
 - d. Each parish and Catholic school in the Diocese of Austin shall conduct a *Called to Protect for Youth* workshop every year for students in 6th grade, 9th grade and any students new to the parish since the last workshop. Parents may view the program in advance. Those that decide not to allow their child to attend a CTPY program may sign an opt-out waiver.
 - e. Each parish and Catholic school in the Diocese of Austin shall teach the *Called to Protect for Children* curriculum every year for students in K-5th grade. Parents may view the program in advance. Those that decide not to allow their child to attend the CTPC program may sign an opt-out waiver.

H. Guidelines for Use of Social Media and Electronic Communications

The use of the Internet, blogs and social media can facilitate communication between minors and Church personnel, and is permitted for legitimate school- and parish-sponsored purposes with certain restrictions. In “virtual contacts,” as in direct encounters, boundaries must be clearly defined and adhered to in order to protect both minors and adults. **EIM policies apply to all interactions between adults and minors whether face-to-face, written or oral communications, using social networks, texting or other digital communication.**

The Diocese of Austin adheres to the USCCB's [Social Media Guidelines](http://www.usccb.org/comm/social-media-guidelines.shtml) found at <http://www.usccb.org/comm/social-media-guidelines.shtml>. Additionally, the National Federation for Youth Ministry's [Recommended Technology Guidelines for Pastoral Work with Young People](http://www.nfcym.org/resources/documents/TechnologyGuidelinesNov2010.pdf), found at <http://www.nfcym.org/resources/documents/TechnologyGuidelinesNov2010.pdf>, should be reviewed regarding best practices for use of social media and electronic communications in youth-serving organizations and ministries. Parishes, schools and diocesan sites are encouraged to develop and post acceptable use policies and procedures for social media use that provide for transparency and accountability.

All information discussed or displayed on any parish, school or diocesan e-mail account or social media/networking site must reflect the Catholic faith and should not call any teaching of the Church into question. All communications between adult leaders and minors should be transparent and for legitimate ministry related purposes. Church personnel should ensure any personal sites reflect Catholic values, and understand they are witnessing to the faith in their social networking whether public or private.

VII. Response to Allegations or Concerns of Abuse or Misconduct

A. Reporting requirements

1. Abuse of Minors or Vulnerable Adults
 - a. In accordance with Texas law, any citizen who has cause to believe a minor or vulnerable adult is being, or may have been, abused, is required to report his or her suspicions to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS) or local civil authorities (police). Reports should be made within 48 hours (and must be made in that time-frame by mandatory reporters). To report child or elder abuse, TDFPS maintains a 24-hour abuse hotline at 1-800-252-5400; or a report may be made on their web site at www.dfps.state.tx.us. *This reporting requirement is the same for allegations against Church personnel and/or a parent or caregiver.*
 - b. **The investigation of allegations of abuse is the responsibility of civil authorities.** Church personnel should not conduct any investigation of abuse allegations unless directed to do so by civil authorities.
 - c. Reports of suspected or known abuse may be made confidentially to civil and diocesan authorities, unless otherwise required to be disclosed by canon law or State of Texas law.
2. EIM Policy Violations
 - a. Once reported to civil authorities, suspected or known abuse of a minor or vulnerable person that may involve Church personnel, and/or other suspected or observed violations of the Ethics and Integrity in Ministry policies of the Diocese of Austin, shall be reported immediately to any of the following persons:
 - i. Their immediate supervisor.
 - ii. The pastor of the parish or principal of the school.
 - iii. A designated representative of the Diocese (contact information is on page 5 of these policies).
 - iv. One may submit an anonymous, specific and verifiable letter to the Vicar General or Bishop of Austin.
 - b. It is recommended that persons making a report of abuse or policy violation use the Diocese of Austin Notice of Concern form (See Appendix A) to maintain documentation of the report. If a report to TDFPS was made, a copy of that report should be attached to the Notice of Concern.
 - c. The Diocese of Austin will cooperate fully with investigations by all civil authorities and will report indications of illegal actions discovered during policy violation investigations to civil authorities.
3. Handling non-EIM related Reports of Abuse of Minors or Vulnerable Persons
 - a. Once reported to civil authorities, suspected or known abuse of a minor or vulnerable person that may involve a parent, legal guardian or caregiver should be reported to the pastor or principal and documented, including a copy of the report to TDFPS.

B. Responding

1. Abuse of Minors or Vulnerable Adults
 - a. When an allegation of abuse is reported to a pastor, principal or agency supervisor, he or she shall:
 - i. Report the abuse to the civil authorities,

- ii. Report the allegation to a designated representative of the Diocese,
 - iii. Notify the parent, legal guardian or caregiver,
 - iv. Inform the accused of the allegation and, during the investigation,
 - 1. place the employee on temporary leave with pay.
 - 2. temporarily remove the volunteer from ministry/organization responsibilities.
 - b. **The investigation of allegations of abuse is the responsibility of civil authorities.** Church personnel should not conduct any investigation of abuse allegations unless directed to do so by civil authorities.
 - c. When an allegation is made against a family member, the parent or legal guardian will be notified as soon as possible that a report was made to civil authorities about an allegation of abuse (explaining that it was their legal responsibility to do so).
 - d. Pastoral care and support may be provided to the victim, family and to the accused during the investigation.
2. EIM Policy Violations
- a. When incidents or concerns of policy violations are reported to a pastor, principal or agency supervisor, he or she shall:
 - i. Gather additional information about the nature of the concern and may contact the Vicar General, Superintendent of Catholic Schools or EIM Coordinator for consultation, and
 - ii. Inform the accused of the allegation and, during the investigation,
 - 1. place the employee on temporary leave with pay.
 - 2. temporarily remove the volunteer from ministry/organization responsibilities.
 - b. When allegations, incidents or concerns of policy violations are reported to the Superintendent of Catholic schools, Vicar General or EIM Coordinator, he or she may:
 - i. Use the information gathered to begin an investigation or defer back to the pastor, principal, or agency supervisor, depending on the nature of the incident,
 - ii. Refer the incident to an agent of the Diocese or an independent investigator for further investigation,
 - iii. Consult with the appropriate diocesan professionals regarding specifics of the incident (i.e. Director of Human Resources, Chancellor, Bishop), and
 - iv. Document and report findings and conclusions to the pastor, principal or agency supervisor.
 - c. If during the investigation there is cause to believe a minor or vulnerable adult is being, or may have been, abused, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services or the police must be contacted immediately.

C. Documentation

1. It is recommended that persons making a report of abuse or policy violation use the Diocese of Austin Notice of Concern form (See Appendix A) and submit it to the pastor, principal, agency supervisor, Vicar General or Superintendent of Catholic schools as appropriate. If a report to TDFPS was made, a copy of that report should be attached to the Notice of Concern.
2. Any parish, school and/or diocesan investigations shall be documented. Documentation of investigations will be stored in the personnel file (or an "Incident File" in the case of a parish or school volunteer) of the individual that is the subject of the investigation, and forwarded to the Vicar General, Superintendent of Catholic schools or EIM Coordinator if needed or requested.

D. Discipline Procedures

1. The Standard of Review for decisions regarding discipline following investigations of allegations, incidents or concerns of misconduct, is held at the absolute discretion of the decider (typically the pastor, principal, Vicar General, Superintendent of Catholic schools or Bishop).
2. Procedures for discipline of clergy will be consistent with these policies and the appropriate norms of canon law.
3. Employees at parishes, schools or other Catholic agencies in the Diocese of Austin are at-will employees. Employers should follow their employee policies handbook to address all employment discipline issues.
4. In cases where abuse of a minor is alleged against a cleric, the provisions of universal and particular ecclesiastical law and the Essential Norms for Clergy will govern the preliminary investigation and any subsequent actions or processes.
5. When the conduct of a volunteer at parishes, schools or other Catholic agencies in the Diocese does not meet the standards of the Policies on Ethics and Integrity in Ministry, it is the responsibility of the pastor, principal or ministry/program supervisor to address the problem(s) in a timely and equitable manner. The procedure may include any of the following discipline options: *the supervisor may move to any option in the discipline procedure at any time.*
 - a. Counseling. Many conduct deficiencies are identifiable and can be addressed and resolved through informal counseling. Effective counseling must be presented in written form and should include the following:
 - i. Clear identification of the problem with specific examples.
 - ii. A mutually agreed upon action plan to resolve the problem.
 - b. Formal Warning. A formal warning meeting may be initiated when 1) counseling fails to resolve the problem, or 2) the problem is of such a nature that immediate and formal resolution is required.
 - i. A formal warning/discipline procedures meeting initiated by the supervisor shall be documented and signed by both parties. The problem(s) should be clearly explained, with examples, and the plan to resolve the matter should be detailed.
 - c. Probation. Probation may be initiated when a warning process has not succeeded or when the misconduct is such that a second infraction would clearly warrant termination.
 - i. The probation process consists of the same elements as the formal warning process with an emphasis on the fact that failure to meet the conditions of the probation may result in termination if significant improvement is not demonstrated consistently in the probation period (typically 6 months).
 - ii. At the successful conclusion of probation, the individual should be notified in writing that he or she is no longer on a probationary status.
 - d. Suspension or revocation of rights to serve in a ministry. This option may be administered at the sole discretion of the pastor, principal, Vicar General, Superintendent of Catholic schools or Bishop at any point in the discipline procedure.
 - e. Termination. Termination may be administered when there is failure to improve conduct previously addressed through counseling, formal warning or probation; the problem is of such a nature that immediate and formal resolution is required; or at the sole discretion of the pastor, principal, vicar general, Superintendent of Catholic schools or Bishop at any point in the discipline procedure.
 - i. If an infraction of these policies with regard to the abuse of a minor is confirmed, the individual is subject to termination.
6. Church personnel in any formal disciplinary process are ineligible for transfers within the Diocese if their work is with minors or vulnerable adults.

7. All counseling and discipline procedure communications shall be documented and included with the report form/Diocese of Austin Note of Concern (see Appendix A), any counseling or discipline procedure document and other pertinent documentation.
8. Documentation of all discipline procedure communications and documents shall be stored in the personnel file (or an "Incident File" in the case of a parish or school volunteer) of the individual that is the subject of the investigation within the parish/school, and copies forwarded to the Vicar General, Superintendent of Catholic schools or EIM Coordinator as appropriate.
9. The EIM Coordinator will be notified of the outcome, and if the employee or volunteer is terminated or removed from service in ministry, will make the appropriate notations in the eApps database to maintain clear communication in the event that the individual moves to another location within the Diocese.

REPORTING PROCESS

Type of Report	Report to Whom	Who Gathers Information for the Diocese
Immoral Conduct, Harassment, Exploitation, Breach of Confidentiality, Conflict of Interest	Program supervisor, pastor, principal, Vicar General, Chancellor, Superintendent, HR or a designated representative of the Diocese	Pastor, principal, agency supervisor, Vicar General, Superintendent, an agent of the Diocese or an independent investigator
Suspicious or Inappropriate Behavior with a Minor or Vulnerable Adult	Police, TX Department of Family & Protective Services, the program supervisor, pastor, principal, Vicar General, Superintendent or a designated representative of the Diocese	Pastor, principal, agency supervisor, Vicar General, Superintendent, an agent of the Diocese or an independent investigator
Abuse of a Minor or Vulnerable Adult	Police or TX Department of Family & Protective Services and the program supervisor, pastor, principal, Vicar General, Superintendent, Bishop of Austin or a designated representative of the Diocese	Pastor, principal, agency supervisor, Vicar General, Superintendent, an agent of the Diocese or an independent investigator
Any Report of Misconduct by a priest, deacon, religious or principal	Police, TX Department of Family & Protective Services, pastor, principal, Vicar General, Chancellor, Superintendent, Bishop of Austin or a designated representative of the Diocese	Vicar General, Superintendent, Bishop of Austin, an agent of the Diocese or an independent investigator
Other EIM Policy Violations	Program supervisor, pastor, principal, or the EIM office	Pastor, principal, agency supervisor, EIM office, an agent of the Diocese or an independent investigator

***Individuals making a report should not gather information or investigate on their own; they should, however, complete a Diocese of Austin Notice of Concern to document their report. A report may always be made directly to the Vicar General, Chancellor, Superintendent of Catholic schools, EIM Coordinator or the Bishop directly (contact information for all is on page 5 of these policies). Reports may be made confidentially, if needed, to both civil authorities and diocesan representatives; however, such reports may not receive any reply as there may be no way to determine the original complainant. While confidentiality shall be supported in most instances, if required by law, or at the sole discretion of the Bishop, the identity of the reporter may be disclosed to individuals/agencies.

VIII. The Pastoral Response to Reported Misconduct in Ministry

Representatives of the Diocese of Austin shall respond in a timely manner to all allegations, incidents or concerns related to violations of the policies on Ethics and Integrity in Ministry.

A. Care of the Reporting Individual(s)

1. The diocesan representative shall, in a timely manner, inform individuals who report a policy violation that the diocese has received the allegation and is responding, and when appropriate, update the individual during the investigation process.
2. The reporting individual may meet with the pastor, principal, Coordinator of Pastoral Care, EIM Coordinator, Chancellor, Vicar General and/or Bishop during the investigation process.
3. The Diocese will provide some form of response to the reporting individual at the conclusion of the investigation.
4. The Diocese may offer counseling, other support services to individuals impacted by reported policy violations. This assistance for an individual will vary with the facts and/or circumstances of each allegation.

B. Care of the Accused

1. The accused shall be informed of an allegation in a timely manner and of any initial disciplinary action to be taken during the investigation process.
2. The rights of the accused shall be taken into consideration throughout the investigation process. Every effort will be made to protect the legitimate interests of the accused individual.
3. During investigations of allegations, the accused may be removed from contact with involved parties to ensure the integrity of the investigation and the safety of all during the information-gathering process. This action should in no way be interpreted as a presumption of guilt. The accused may resume his or her position, at the sole discretion of the Bishop, Vicar General or Superintendent of Catholic schools, upon completion of the investigation.
4. In the event that allegations are founded and the accused is not permitted to resume ministry within the Diocese of Austin, he or she may be offered pastoral care. Any allegation of misconduct involving a priest or deacon shall be investigated in accord with the Essential Norms for Clergy. The Bishop, in reaching final decisions, shall be guided by the appropriate norms of canon law.
 - a. The EIM Coordinator will indicate a “restricted” status in the accused EIM Application for Ministry.

C. Care of the Affected Community

1. Information about an allegation which affects a parish, school or other diocesan agency shall be shared in a pastorally appropriate manner, while respecting the privacy and confidentiality of all individuals involved and any applicable civil and canon laws.
2. The diocese may provide pastoral care to the members of the affected parish, school or other diocesan agency when needed.

D. Role of the Coordinator of Pastoral Care

1. The Coordinator of Pastoral Care shall be responsible to the Bishop, but communicates most directly with the EIM Coordinator and Vicar General.
2. The Coordinator of Pastoral Care may collaborate with the Review Board and the Bishop in providing responses to any allegations of violations of the policies on Ethics and Integrity in Ministry.
3. The Coordinator of Pastoral Care shall provide an initial interview with an individual making an allegation of abuse. However, the process of investigating is directed by the Bishop, Vicar General, Chancellor, Superintendent of Catholic school or the EIM Coordinator.
4. The Coordinator of Pastoral Care shall aid in the pastoral care for all individuals involved, and arrange for counseling with qualified individuals if deemed appropriate.

E. Role of the diocesan Ethics and Integrity in Ministry Review Board

1. The Review Board may assist the Bishop as a confidential, consultative body in addressing allegations of violations, and in promoting, the Policies on Ethics and Integrity in Ministry.
2. The Bishop may seek a recommendation from the Review Board concerning an individual's fitness for service.
3. The Review Board may offer advice on all aspects of cases. The board may offer advice retrospectively and prospectively on these matters.
4. The involvement of the Review Board as a consultative body to the Bishop may be communicated to all individuals involved in reported misconduct.
5. The Review Board shall review the Policies on Ethics and Integrity in Ministry and accompanying procedures at least every three years. Recommendations for changes shall be presented to the Bishop for approval.
6. The Bishop shall appoint members to the Review Board at his discretion.
7. The Review Board shall include representation from the following groups: the clergy, professions of the social sciences, the legal profession and laity, preferably parents. At least five members shall be Catholics in full communion with the Church. Membership is voluntary and there is no compensation.
8. The identity of the full Review Board membership shall not be publicized; however, the chair of the Review Board may be publicized in diocesan information.
9. All discussions regarding allegations and instances of abuse are strictly confidential.
10. Review Board members shall follow the same screening and training requirements as all others that work or serve in ministry with minors. Additionally, each member shall sign a confidentiality statement.

F. Role of the diocesan Office of Ethics and Integrity in Ministry (EIM)

1. The Office of Ethics and Integrity in Ministry shall provide information to those who work or serve in ministry to minors and vulnerable adults, and the public, that will increase the awareness and understanding of the need for ethics and integrity in ministry, especially in regard to the prevention, identification and treatment of abuse and neglect.
 - a. Information about the EIM policies and procedures can be found on the diocesan website and in the monthly Catholic Spirit.

2. The Office of Ethics and Integrity in Ministry shall provide information and support to parishes, schools and diocesan offices with education programs, maintain a diocesan Web-based system for criminal record checks and monitoring, and ensure ongoing implementation of the Policies on Ethics and Integrity in Ministry.
 - a. Copies of the EIM policies shall be provided to each parish, school and diocesan office for reference and availability to parishioners/members.
3. The Office of Ethics and Integrity in Ministry shall direct all EIM related media contacts to the Director of Communications for professional courtesy and response when appropriate. The staff of an affected faith community shall be made aware of the requirement to direct all media inquiries to the director of the Communications Office, and be provided with essential contact information for the director (mobile phone number, home phone number, etc.).

***These policies were developed by the Catholic Diocese of Austin
in consultation with the Ethics and Integrity in Ministry Review Board.***

God of mercy and love, you call us to a life of holiness and provide us with the means to live by your wisdom and love. You entrust to us the work of your creation, especially the care and protection of children and others who are vulnerable. You sent your Spirit to guide us in our responsibilities for building up your family of believers. By that same Spirit, help us as we learn and work together to help protect all of our sisters and brothers from preventable harm and keep all your children safe. Grace us with faith, courage, hope, understanding and charity as we embrace the way you set before us to live the truth of the Gospel in love. We pray for all victims of abuse, that they know your love and healing, and for all perpetrators of abuse that they may have a true conversion of heart and turn to you. Amen



Diocese of Austin
Ethics and Integrity in Ministry
Notice of Concern

Date/time/location of occurrence: _____

Type of Concern: (please check all that apply)

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Immoral Conduct | <input type="checkbox"/> Harassment | <input type="checkbox"/> Breach of Confidentiality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict of Interest | <input type="checkbox"/> Exploitation | <input type="checkbox"/> Policy Violation with a Minor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Policy Violation with an Adult | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other Concern: _____ | | |

Known or suspected abuse of a minor or vulnerable adult. Y N

Has this been reported to the Texas Department of Family & Protective Services and/or the police? Y N

If yes, provide report number and date/time of report. Report #: _____

Date/time of Report: _____

Nature of Concern: (please use additional paper for any answers requiring more space)

Describe the situation: What happened, who was involved, who was present, who was notified? [If reported to TDFPS, what were their recommendations?]

What action was taken? How was the situation handled, who was involved, who was questioned, were police called?

What is the follow-up plan? Does anyone else need to be notified? Will the situation need monitoring?

Has this situation occurred and/or been reported previously? If yes, provide details.

Submitted by: _____ Date: _____
 (Printed name)

Signature: _____

Contact information: Phone Number: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Please submit this Notice of Concern to:

- Your pastor or Catholic school principal; or
- The Coordinator of the EIM Office, the Superintendent of Schools or the Vicar General; or
- The Bishop of Austin.

Mail form to: 6225 Hwy 290 East, Austin, TX 78723 or fax form to: (512) 949-2529.
 For more information please contact the EIM Office at (512) 949-2447.

This report may be submitted anonymously if it includes specific and verifiable information.