

**DIOCESE OF SYRACUSE  
CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY**

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October 28, 2009

My Dear Friends:

The Diocese of Syracuse unconditionally believes in the dignity of all people and places a special emphasis on the safety of our children and young people. In this policy, I invite every parishioner of the Diocese of Syracuse, and all people of good will, to join me in promoting a culture of dignity and safety for all the children and young people of our diocese.

With this policy, the Diocese of Syracuse has adopted for local implementation the actions of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in the passage of their June 2002 documents. The ***Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*** forms the basis of this policy.

This *Child and Youth Protection Policy* went into effect on October 10, 2003. During the first year of implementation of this process, portions of the screening and safe environment protocols were developed. I direct all pastors, principals, directors, agencies and department heads to participate fully in the continuing application of this important process of safeguarding all of God's children and young people.

This policy extends to all clergy, all religious, all employees and all volunteers of the diocese whose ministry or role places them in contact with children and young people. Questions about this policy should be directed to the Chair of the Safe Environment Committee.

This is an important commitment requiring our dedication. I encourage all to take every appropriate step to create and maintain a safe environment for children and young people.

Cordially yours in Christ,

Most Rev. Robert J. Cunningham  
Bishop of Syracuse

## Section B

### Introduction: The Purpose of this Policy and its Programs

All children have the right to be safe and protected from harm in all environments - home, school, religious institutions, neighborhoods and communities. The Diocese of Syracuse embraces this right to safety and is dedicated to promoting the protection of children and young people. It will continue to take steps to create a safe environment, to prevent their sexual abuse and to bring the healing ministry of the diocese to bear wherever possible. The Diocese of Syracuse expects that all persons and entities under its auspices will comply with this policy.

This child protection policy builds on a history of policies issued by the Diocese of Syracuse that were most recently updated in 2003. It is responsive to our concern for children and young people and to the provisions contained in the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* and the *Essential Norms for Diocesan/Eparchial Policies Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests or Deacons* approved by the full body of U.S. Catholic bishops at its November 2002 General Meeting.

With renewed faith, we recommit ourselves to the goals of this policy:

- a. To provide a safe environment for each child.
- b. To reiterate and strengthen educative and screening procedures focusing on preventing child abuse by diocesan personnel and volunteers.
- c. To address the spiritual, physical and emotional care of the abused child and the family as well as the affected Catholic community.
- d. To address the spiritual, physical and emotional care of the individual against whom the charge was made.
- e. To respect the requirements of civil and canon law.

#### ***From the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People***

#12 “Dioceses/eparchies will establish “safe environment” programs. They will cooperate with parents, civil authorities, educators, and community organizations to provide education and training for children, youth, parents, ministers, educators, and others about ways to make and maintain a safe environment for children. Dioceses/eparchies will make clear to clergy and all members of the community the standards of conduct for clergy and other persons in positions of trust with regard to sexual abuse.”

#13 “Dioceses/eparchies will evaluate the background of all diocesan/eparchial and parish personnel who have regular contact with minors. Specifically, they will utilize the resources of law enforcement and other community agencies. In addition, they will employ adequate screening and evaluative techniques in deciding the fitness of candidates for ordination.”

#### ***From “Essential Norms for Diocesan/Eparchial Policies...”***

#2 “Each diocese/eparchy will have a written policy on the sexual abuse of minors by priests and deacons, as well as by other Church personnel.”

# Section C AN OVERVIEW OF DIOCESAN YOUTH PROTECTION PROGRAM

## Chapter 1 Education: Youth Protection Training

### Principle:

The Diocese of Syracuse is committed to preventing child sexual abuse before it occurs and to respond when it has occurred or is alleged. By raising the awareness and understanding of abuse issues among priests, deacons, religious, staff members, volunteers and other adults who work with or have contact with children and young people under the care of the Diocese and by increasing their knowledge and ability to deal effectively with child sexual abuse issues once they arise, risks to child safety and well being can be reduced. By educating children and young people on how to be safe and stay safe, the Diocese will enhance the ability of children and young people to protect themselves and encourage an environment that allows them to communicate any potential endangerment.

### 1.1 Purpose and Objective

The objective of these programs is to prevent, recognize and appropriately report child sexual abuse through ongoing educational programs provided by the Diocese, determined by our Diocesan Safe Environment Committee.

The initial educational requirement for all personnel and volunteers will be participation in *Protecting God's Children for Adults*, a program of the VIRTUS program of the National Catholic Risk Retention Group, Inc., unless otherwise directed by the Diocesan Bishop.

### 1.2 Persons and Situations Where Attendance at the Educational Program is Required

The following diocesan personnel shall participate in an ongoing education program (approved by the Diocesan Safe Environment Committee) on child sexual abuse specifically designed to address their area of service:

- a. Clergy and members of religious communities associated with the diocese.
- b. Catholic School principals, assistant principals, teachers, guidance counselors, librarians, all school volunteers and staff at all levels, including substitute teachers, aides, janitors, food service workers, school nurses, and office personnel of all diocesan Catholic elementary, middle and high schools.
- c. Directors, assistants, catechists and staff of religious education programs.

- d. Diocesan personnel providing child care services
- e. Youth ministers, directors/coaches of children and young people's activities (e.g., athletic, youth choir).
- f. All employees and volunteers who have contact with children and young people.
- g. Any person, employee or volunteer for any entity/agency insured by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Syracuse Self-Insured Program who has contact with children and young people.
- h. Any other person directed by the Diocesan Bishop to attend training.
- i. Temporary/contracted employees whose appointment is or will be at least 90 days in duration.
- j. Those associates, consultants, and/or providers who have contact with children and young people will be invited to participate in *Protecting God's Children for Adults* and will be invited to undergo ADP screening, or provide evidence of the same.

All business, education, and or professional associates, consultants and or providers to the agencies, departments, parishes and schools of the Diocese of Syracuse will be provided with a copy of this policy, and sign a receipt.

### **1.3 Educational Curriculum**

- 1.3.1** The basic curriculum is for all clergy and religious; all employees; and those volunteers having contact with children and young people; and those parents, staffs, and other adults who respond to our invitation to participate in safe environment training. These sessions may include, but are not limited to, the following subjects:
- a. Appropriate boundaries and established prohibitions in ministry to children and young people.
  - b. Nature of child sexual abuse problems.
  - c. Signs and symptoms of sexual abuse in children and young people.
  - d. Laws and diocesan policies relating to child sexual abuse allegations, including reporting.
  - e. Policies and procedures to prevent child sexual abuse by clergy, Church personnel or others who come into contact with children and young people.
  - f. Policies and procedures to prevent child sexual abuse on any Church-owned property or at Church-sponsored events and activities.
  - g. Policies and procedures to respond to disclosure and/or allegations of child sexual abuse.

**1.3.2** Scheduled sessions for clergy and religious will also include the following:

- a. Ministering to adults, children and young people about the prevention of sexual abuse and exploitation
- b. Ministering to victims of child sexual abuse.
- c. Penitential privilege and the seal of confession.

**1.3.3** Parents, staff, and other adults including members of the community, who are only indirectly involved in providing care, will be invited and encouraged to attend training that includes the core curriculum in 1.3.1 and the following subjects:

- a. Conversations between parents and children and young people regarding a child's personal safety
- b. Strategies for protecting children and young people from potential sexual abuse.

**1.3.4** Pastors, principals, and program leaders shall provide to children and young people involved in the ministries of the diocese, opportunities to attend scheduled training sessions that include, but are not limited to, the following subjects:

- a. Basic personal safety skills, including the "3Rs - Recognize, Resist & Report".
- b. Recognition of dangerous and abusive situations.
- c. Appropriate and inappropriate physical contact and other interpersonal boundary violations.
- d. Ability to say "no" to unwanted situations.
- e. Ability to identify trusting adults with whom to speak.
- f. Importance of disclosure if inappropriate or unwanted actions are directed to self or others.
- g. Recognition that abusive situations are never the fault of the child.

## **1.4 Deadlines for Completing Training**

New staff and volunteers who will have contact with children and young people shall enroll in appropriate preventive education programs at the earliest possible date and no later than sixty (60) days following the assumption of their duties. The basic level of training is offered in multiple locations and all who have contact with those under 18 will participate in *Protecting God's Children for Adults*.

Pastors/parochial administrators, departmental directors, principals and agency directors will ensure that all personnel required to receive training do so within the requisite time period or are removed from non-monitored contact with children and young people until such time as the required training program is completed. Parishes, schools and agency offices will maintain lists of those who have completed the training requirement. Copies of attendance records will be forwarded to the

Safe Environment Program Administrator who will authorize written indication of training participation

## **1.5 Availability of Training**

Training shall be available at both local and diocesan organizational levels. New staff and volunteers may:

- a. Attend a regularly scheduled training session in the parish, diocese, religious community/institute or organization; or,
- b. Arrange for individual training with a Diocesan certified trainer if no other training opportunity is available in a timely manner.
- c. Participate in on-going online web-based training, if so designated by professional or volunteer role.

## **1.6 Educational Programs for Students in Parochial Schools, Religious Education Programs, Youth Ministry and Camp Staffs**

The Superintendent of Schools will ensure that age-appropriate sexual abuse prevention education programs are available at both the elementary (K-6th grade) and middle/secondary (7th-12th grade) levels. Such programs shall be provided regularly to children and young people in all grades of every Diocesan Catholic school as well as to children and young people participating in parish religious education programs.

The Diocesan Director of Religious Education will provide oversight for the religious education program component.

Diocesan Catholic Charities Programs, Camp Directors and Youth Ministers will assure that age-appropriate Youth Protection education programs will be made available to program participants under the age of 18.

## **1.7 Internal Program Records**

The following permanent records shall be kept at the Diocesan Chancery:

- a. The number of training courses offered by VIRTUS Trained Facilitators and a listing of the number and names of those to whom training was offered.
- b. The number of persons attending training courses by category, for example: clergy, religious, employees, volunteers, parents, children and young people.
- c. Percentage estimates of employees and volunteers who have been trained.
- d. The identity of web-based training courses and web-based continuing education programs available.
- e. Proportion of new staff and volunteers trained by deadlines in Section 1.4.
- f. Participant evaluations of training content and learning opportunities.

## **Section C**

### **An Overview of the Diocesan Youth Protection Program**

#### **Chapter 2**

#### **Applications and Background Checks**

##### **Principle:**

The Diocese of Syracuse recognizes that criminal history record checks are an element in ensuring the safety of children and young people and protecting them from inappropriate actions or behaviors of others.

##### **2.1 Completion of Clearance Requirements**

The pastor/parochial administrator, principal or agency director will ensure that all employees and volunteers in the parish, school or agency have submitted the appropriate Application for Employment or Volunteer Services and submitted a completed authorization form to provide for a Criminal History Record Check, when required. This authorization shall be in compliance with the requirements, if any, of the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA). Further, the courtesy of approval will be extended to those volunteers and applicants who are not subject to the FCRA regulation.

Employees and volunteers who have completed clearance information and are awaiting return of a Criminal History Record Check can be granted, in writing, provisional status by the Chair of the Safe Environment Committee, his/her designee, Diocesan Personnel Director, or the Superintendent of Catholic Schools. Such individuals shall be appropriately monitored and not left unattended in the presence of children and young people until clearances are received and approved by the Chair of the Safe Environment Committee or his/her designee.

##### **2.1.1 Privacy Protections in Background Checks**

The Chair of the Safe Environment Committee and/or the Safe Environment Program Administrator will review all adverse criminal background check results.

- Either the Chair of the Safe Environment Committee or his/her designee will supply the appropriate pastor or supervisor with a written list of those who have been approved to engage in ministry.
- The Chair of the Safe Environment Committee or his/her designee will use the following procedure in the event of an adverse report about an individual.

- The individual receiving an adverse report will be notified of an adverse finding by the screening agency, the Chair of the Safe Environment Committee or his/her designee.
- The individual receiving an adverse report will have the opportunity to clarify his/her record in this regard using the techniques provided by the screening agency.
- If the adverse finding in the criminal background check is upheld, the applicant may choose to withdraw their application or they may ask that their application be reviewed consistent with the criteria set forth in appendix A. This review will be facilitated by the Chair of the Safe Environment Committee, the ministry or area supervisor, and the Diocesan Assistance Coordinator with due regard for confidentiality. Their finding in the matter will be presented to the Diocesan Bishop for approval or other consideration.
- Criminal History Record Checks shall be securely and separately maintained in the files of the Safe Environment Program Administrator with access limited according to legal principles of confidentiality.
- All applicable state and federal laws will be enforced regarding privacy protection in criminal history record checks.

## **2.2 Applicants for Employment and/or Volunteer Service**

All applicants for employed or volunteer positions shall complete an appropriate diocesan application, and return as directed prior to any employment or acceptance for volunteer service.

The waiver permitting the background check is a standard part of the employment and volunteer applications of the diocese. Employment or acceptance is contingent upon a satisfactory result of the Criminal History Record Check and background check consistent with this policy.

## **2.3 Persons Subject to Criminal History Check**

Current employees, and those volunteers of any Diocesan parish, school, department, agency, corporation or institution who have contact with children and young people (see Section E, Chapter 11), shall complete and have returned to the Chair of the Safe Environment Committee, or his/her designee authorization for Criminal History Record Check. In addition, other entities insured by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Syracuse Self-Insured Program, or other insured entity, shall complete and have returned to the Chair of the Safe Environment Committee, or his/her designee authorization for Criminal History Record Check. For current employees, an opportunity will be provided to sign any authorization required by the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) at the conclusion of the basic level of VIRTUS training known as *Protecting God's Children for Adults*.

## **2.4 Inter-diocesan reciprocity for clearance and training**

Persons from other dioceses who have completed child and youth protection training and a criminal background check at parity with that required in the Diocese of Syracuse may provide proof of same to the Chair of the Safe Environment Committee or his/her designee for consideration to be registered to work with children and young people in the Diocese of Syracuse.

## **2.5 Authority of Diocesan Bishop**

The Diocesan Bishop has the authority to designate additional Diocesan personnel or volunteers who shall be required to complete and return the Diocesan Application for Employment or Volunteer Services and submit to a completed Criminal History Record Check.

All employees and volunteers serve at the discretion of the Ordinary.

## **2.6 Updating Clearance Information**

Diocesan personnel and volunteers will be required periodically (at least every five years) to complete and return to the Chair of the Safe Environment Committee, his/her designee or the Diocesan Personnel Office an updated authorization for Criminal History Record Check.

## **2.7 Religious ministering in the Diocese**

It is the responsibility of the Vicar for Priests, Director of the Permanent Diaconate, Director of Seminarians and/or the Vicar for Religious to ensure that all priests, deacons, religious and seminarians in their constituencies, have completed the appropriate applications and criminal background checks prior to beginning their work.

## **2.8 Religious Communities**

Superiors of religious communities proposing names of individual religious for ministry or residence in the diocese, or requesting parochial faculties, are required to state clearly, in writing, to the Vicar for Priests, the Vicar for Religious, or the Chair of the Safe Environment Committee, whichever is applicable, that there is no history which would render the individual unsuitable to work with minors. The letter from the religious superior must state in writing that he/she has reviewed employment and the Criminal History Record of the individual proposed. This is especially pertinent in cases where an individual does not have a social security number that would enable a Criminal History Records Check.

Additionally, all such religious communities are expected to abide by applicable Diocesan policies and procedures as outlined in this policy should allegations of sexual misconduct with minors be made against an individual religious while serving in a Diocesan parish or facility.

## **2.9 Clergy and Seminarians from Other Dioceses**

Bishops of diocesan priests, deacons and seminarians from other dioceses ministering or residing in any Diocesan parish or institution, or requesting faculties in the Diocese, are required to present written evidence of a current criminal background check satisfactory to the Diocesan Bishop or his designee. Clergy and seminarians from other dioceses and religious communities are required to adhere to the policies and procedures outlined in this document and the guidelines for transfers outlined in the *Essential Norms*.

Clergy visiting or temporarily residing in the diocese are expected to carry with them a *celebret* from their home diocese or religious order. Diocesan clergy in the Province of New York are exempt, by virtue of existing faculties, from carrying a *celebret* with them inside of the Province of New York.

Those clergy or seminarians seeking residence in a diocesan facility are required to participate in the Diocesan Safe Environment training programs and a Criminal History background check that is consistent with the Diocese of Syracuse criminal-free history requirements.

## **2.10 Applicants for Priesthood or Permanent Diaconate in the Diocese of Syracuse**

Individuals making application for the priesthood or the permanent Diaconate, as well as priests seeking incardination, shall be required to complete the Diocesan Application for admission to training, receive psychological testing, and submit to Criminal History Record Checks. Applicants will submit a notarized written statement indicating that they have no history that would render them unsuitable to work with children or young people.

## **2.11 Provisional Status for Clergy or Religious**

Persons who have completed background checks but are awaiting the return of the Criminal History Record Checks will be appropriately monitored and not left unattended in the presence of a child until written reports are received and approved by the Vicar for Priests, Vicar for Religious, or the Chair of the Safe Environment Committee.

## **2.12 Waivers of Comprehensive Clearance Information**

The Chair of the Safe Environment Committee with the appropriate Vicar, or the Chancellor may, in writing, exempt clergy, religious, or others whose age, infirmity, or situation is deemed by them to provide an assurance of safety to children and young people.

## Section D An Overview of the Diocesan Assistance Program

### Chapter 3 Reporting Requirements<sup>5</sup>

#### **Principle:**

The Diocese of Syracuse recognizes that the protection of children and young people is a responsibility shared by the entire community, including the diocese, parish, parents, teachers, healthcare professionals, public safety officials, public and private social services agencies and the general public. The Diocese is committed to working with civil authorities to protect children and young people, report alleged incidents of abuse consistent with this policy, and to cooperate in investigations and judicial proceedings.

#### ***Reporting Sexual Abuse of Children and Young People***

**The first internal step in reporting actual or suspected sexual abuse of a minor by any member of the clergy, employee, religious or volunteer in the Diocese of Syracuse is to contact the Diocesan Assistance Coordinator, who will coordinate the response process. Contact: Diocesan Assistance Coordinator, telephone 315-470-1465, or P.O. Box 511, Syracuse, NY 13201-0511.**

**The Diocese will immediately report current cases involving a minor and any clergy member, employee, religious, or volunteer to the appropriate civil authorities.**

Mandated Reporters who suspect reportable abuse of a child should contact the State Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-635-1522, as required by law.

#### **3.1 Other Reporting and Related Procedures**

- a. Any member of the clergy, member of a religious community, employee of a religious community, employee or volunteer of the Diocese of Syracuse who believes that a child is in imminent danger shall **immediately** contact the police. If child sexual abuse is suspected, then notify the Diocesan Assistance Coordinator who will coordinate the appropriate response.
- b. The Diocesan Assistance Coordinator or the Diocesan Chancellor will notify the supervisor of the location where the accused person works and the location where the incident allegedly occurred when the accused individual is a Diocesan priest, deacon, religious, employee or volunteer.
- c. The Diocesan Bishop or his designee will provide a report of the suspected child sexual abuse to the major superior of a religious or the bishop of a diocesan priest who is not a priest of the Diocese of Syracuse.

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<sup>5</sup> These reporting requirements are to be followed by all agents of the Diocese, including clergy, religious, lay employees and lay volunteers.

- d. Any person alleging that he/she was a victim shall be informed of his/her right to report to the appropriate civil authority. The diocese shall support any alleged victim in their exercise of this right.
- e. In a case in which the individual designated to receive the report is the accused, the report should be directed to the designee's superior.
- f. The Diocese of Syracuse shall, consistent with this policy, directly report to and coordinate with civil authorities in the appropriate manner.

### **3.2 Parochial/Diocesan School Situations Where Abuse is suspected**

- a. Anyone who suspects child sexual abuse, involving a diocesan school when the accused is a member of the clergy or religious, or an employee or volunteer of the diocese should **immediately** call the Diocesan Assistance Coordinator (315-470-1465), or in her/his absence the Diocesan Chancellor (315-422-7203) consistent with paragraph 3.4, and the Principal of the school or his/her designee.
- b. The principal shall immediately notify the pastor/parochial administrator and the Superintendent of Catholic Schools or his/her designee.

### **3.3 Exceptions**

There are two **exceptions** to this policy:

- 1. Priest-penitent relationship: Not every conversation between someone and a priest falls under the priest-penitent context, but when this context does exist the sanctity of the absolute confidentiality of information shared by an individual and his/her confessor is inviolate.
- 2. As a result of certain licenses and certifications some information shared by an adult may have the status of "privileged communication". This will be further clarified for employees at their work site.

### **3.4 What specific information should be reported?**

The Assistance Coordinator will conduct an appropriate inquiry after receiving the information that is readily available.

The following information should be reported to the extent it is known by the reporter:

- a) name, address, age and current whereabouts of the alleged victim.
- b) name and address of parent, guardian or caretaker, in cases involving a minor.
- c) name, address and whereabouts of the person or persons suspected of the abuse, if known.
- d) nature, extent and date of the alleged maltreatment and any history of injury possibly occurring.
- e) who else has knowledge of the allegation and whether it has been reported to any third party, including civil authorities.

**Section D**  
**An Overview of the Diocesan Assistance Program**  
**Chapter 4**

**DIOCESE OF SYRACUSE POLICY RELATING TO CLERGY MISCONDUCT WITH MINORS**  
6/2003

**Principle:** The Diocese of Syracuse acknowledges that sexual and physical misconduct with minors by clergy is contrary to the mission of the Church, canon and civil law, and inconsistent with the dignity of every human being.

**Clerical Education and Awareness:** The Diocese of Syracuse recognizes the ongoing need to educate its clergy concerning the characteristics of exploitive behavior, the maintenance of clerical integrity, and the requirements of civil and canon law. The goal of the diocesan educational program is to prevent any misconduct, actual or perceived, and to provide intervention procedures in such an event.

**Reporting Responsibility:** All who minister within the Diocese of Syracuse having credible cause to suspect an incident of sexual or physical misconduct involving clergy and any person under 18 years of age shall report the incident to the person appointed as Assistance Coordinator and shall comply with all applicable civil and canon laws with respect to the reporting of allegations of sexual abuse.

**Diocesan Response:**

1. The Assistance Coordinator shall immediately contact and offer to meet with anyone who claims to have been abused by a member of the diocesan clergy to address ways in which the Church may pastorally assist them or their family and shall report such allegations to the bishop. If desired, the bishop will also be available to victims and their families. Psychological assistance will be offered to those alleging abuse.
2. The Diocese will advise and support the person alleging abuse of their right to notify appropriate law enforcement and social service agencies and to retain private legal counsel. The diocese will cooperate with and respect any judicial process. In the instance of abuse by clergy of a person still a minor at the time of disclosure to the diocese, the diocese shall report the instance to the proper authorities.
3. The bishop or his representative will confront the accused cleric with the accusation while respecting his right to respond, consistent with the steps to be taken under Canon Law. If there is sufficient evidence that sexual abuse of a minor has occurred, the accused will be requested to undergo a volunteer independent psychological evaluation. The cleric will be advised of his right to retain private and canonical counsel.
4. Depending on findings and any pending proceedings, future ministry, if any, will be determined by the bishop in consultation with the Assistance Coordinator and Diocesan Review Board and consonant with the *Essential Norms for Diocesan/Eparchial Policies Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests or Deacons*.
5. The Diocesan Review Board will also consult with the bishop relative to the implementation of this policy and its effectiveness.

**Section D**  
**An Overview of the Diocesan Assistance Program**  
**Chapter 5**  
**Internal Diocesan Procedures**

**Principle:**

The Diocese of Syracuse will take precautions to ensure that children and young people are safe and protected from harm. Despite such preventive measures, allegations of suspected abuse may occur. When allegations of suspected abuse against minors are made against any party, the Diocese will consider the rights and interests of all parties.

**The first step in the reporting procedure is always to contact the Diocesan Assistance Coordinator, who will then coordinate the process, and take appropriate actions.**

**5.1 Allegations made Against a Lay Employee or Lay Volunteer**

- a. In response to an allegation of child sexual abuse against a lay employee or volunteer, the pastor of the parish or senior administrator/ agency head will:
  1. Contact the Diocesan Assistance Coordinator to assure that treatment, support and essential assistance is provided.
  2. Contact the family of the alleged victim and offer spiritual care and support.
  3. Inform the victim/family of the availability of assistance through the Diocesan Assistance Coordinator.
  4. Function in a strict pastoral nature without regard to the truth of any accusation or to the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident.
- b. The individual against whom an allegation has been made will receive prompt notification of the general nature of the allegation(s), with due regard for confidentiality to the extent practicable, by the Diocesan Assistance Coordinator and pastor/parochial administrator, principal or agency head, and be placed on administrative leave.

The individual against whom an allegation has been made is to be:

1. Directed in writing to remain away from location(s) which are the subject matter of the complaint until a resolution of the complaint is concluded.
2. Directed in writing not to contact or attempt to contact the alleged victim nor the victim's family.
3. Informed of the investigative process and the expectations for his/her cooperation.
4. Advised of the opportunity to obtain an attorney at his/her own expense.

- c. If the employee is arrested and charged, a review of the facts will be made to determine if he or she should be placed or continued on administrative leave.
- d. If a lay employee or volunteer admits guilt, does not contest guilt, or there is a finding of guilt in criminal court, he or she will be terminated immediately. This information shall become part of the permanent employee or volunteer file, as appropriate.
- e. In instances where allegations of sexual abuse are not supported, a consultation by the pastor/parochial administrator, principal or agency head with the Assistance Coordinator and Chancellor will take place to determine the most appropriate course of action and the restoration of the good name of the accused.

## **5.2 Allegations against Clergy or Religious in Service to the Diocese or Residing in a Diocesan Rectory, Convent or Facility**

- a. In response to an allegation of child sexual abuse in a parish by a priest, deacon or religious, the Diocesan Assistance Coordinator or Chancellor will immediately notify the Bishop. When a member of a Religious Order (brother, priest or sister) is accused, the Bishop, or his designee, will contact the Major Superior of the particular Religious Community.
- b. The Diocesan Bishop or his representative will comply with the existing "Diocese of Syracuse Policy Relating to Clergy Misconduct with Minors" (cf. Section D, Chapter 4), including:
  - 1. Contact the family of the alleged victim and offer spiritual care and support.
  - 2. Contact the Diocesan Assistance Coordinator to assure that treatment, support and essential assistance is provided to the victim in a timely manner.
  - 3. Inform the alleged victim or, in the case of a child, the alleged victim's family of the availability of assistance through the Diocesan Assistance Coordinator.
  - 4. Function in a strictly pastoral nature without regard to the truth of any accusation or to the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident.
  - 5. Advise and support the person alleging abuse of his/her right to notify appropriate law enforcement and social service agencies and to retain private legal counsel.
- c. In response to credible allegations against a Diocesan priest or deacon, as determined by the Bishop, due Canonical process will be used to notify the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, which will determine whether a church tribunal or the Congregation will adjudicate allegations.

- d. A priest or deacon who admits guilt or eventually is found guilty will be permanently removed from the ministry and not allowed to function or represent himself as a priest or deacon and may be laicized.
- e. In the case of a priest, deacon or religious from another diocese, the Diocesan Bishop or his designee will, after an allegation of child sexual abuse has been deemed credible by the bishop, immediately direct the priest, deacon or religious to leave the Diocesan properties and facilities and will notify the appropriate bishop or superior advising of the individual's immediate removal from our Diocesan properties and facilities.

### **5.3 Allegations Against other Individuals**

In response to an allegation of child sexual abuse committed in a diocesan facility or property or during a related program by an individual who has or does not have direct association with the Diocese, a pastor, department head, or principal leader shall immediately notify the Diocesan Assistance Coordinator who will guide the appropriate process.

### **5.4 Diocesan Review Board**

The Diocese of Syracuse has established a Diocesan Review Board to assist the bishop as a consultative body in assessing allegations and fitness for ministry; to regularly review policies pertaining to the personal safety of children; and to advise the bishop on all aspects of the response required in connection with the sexual abuse of minors.

- a. The Diocesan Review Board shall consist of not less than five members, nor more than seven. Its members shall include one priest, at least one member with expertise in the sexual abuse of minors, and at least one member with expertise in law enforcement. The Review Board shall select, by a majority vote from among its members, a chairperson who shall serve for one year, re-electable.
- b. Members shall serve upon written appointment by the diocesan bishop for a period of five years, renewable. The Board shall meet at least quarterly and otherwise as needed, at the discretion of the bishop.
- c. The Diocesan Assistance Coordinator, the bishop (and his appointees) and diocesan counsel shall be present at meetings of the Board at the discretion of the Board.
- d. All matters discussed and all information presented to the Board shall be maintained in a confidential manner, to be disclosed only to the extent necessary to the parties involved, to the bishop or persons designated by the bishop or as required by church or civil law.

- e. Functions of the Board shall include:
  - 1. Review on an annual basis, diocesan written policies on the sexual abuse of minors by priests, deacons, or other church personnel in order to recommend to the diocesan bishop any modifications or additions to the existing policy.
  - 2. Assess retrospective allegations referred to the Board by the diocesan bishop and all new allegations of sexual abuse of minors by priests, deacons, or other church personnel. The Board shall advise the bishop as to its findings and recommendations.
  - 3. Make recommendations to the diocesan bishop concerning fitness for types of ministry in conjunction with the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*.
  - 4. Assist in related issues as requested by the bishop.
- f. All clergy, religious, employees, and volunteers serving the Diocese are expected to cooperate fully with the board and its representatives.
- g. Current biographies of the members of the Diocesan Review Board are available at the diocesan website: [www.syrdio.org](http://www.syrdio.org).

## **5.5 The Safe Environment Committee**

In accord with the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, each local church is to provide for the youth protection training, criminal background screening and safe environment protocols. In the Diocese of Syracuse the Safe Environment Committee and its Chair have been appointed by the Diocesan Bishop to research, recommend, and implement a program by which the Diocese of Syracuse will comply with these mandates.

The bishop has appointed officials of diocesan departments as members of this ex-officio group. The Diocesan Bishop in consultation with the Diocesan Review Board supervises the work of the Safe Environment Committee. Current membership and their contact information can be found at [www.syrdio.org](http://www.syrdio.org).

## **5.6 Record Keeping**

Accurate permanent records of reports received, whether supported or not, and all actions taken and notifications by the Diocese and/or other church authorities, in response to such reports, shall be kept on file in strict and secure confidence by the Diocesan Assistance Coordinator.

**Section D**  
**An Overview of the Diocesan Assistance Program**  
**Chapter 6**  
**Diocesan Response to False Allegations**

**Principle:**

As in the recognition of significant trauma experienced by abuse victims, the Diocese of Syracuse also recognizes the trauma and harm of false accusations. The Diocese will strive to minimize any personal or professional adverse consequences of unsupported allegations and to preserve the future ministry opportunities of persons falsely accused of child sexual abuse in accord with canon law.

**Restoring the Good Name of Someone Falsely Accused:**

The Diocese will work in consultation and with the consent of the falsely accused individual to restore his/her good name and reputation. The Diocese will inform the faith community of the outcome of the investigative process and of the need for support.

The Diocese will provide appropriate support to assist individuals wrongfully accused to address the consequences of accusations and to restore the effectiveness in their job duties and/or volunteer services.

**Section D**  
**An Overview of the Diocesan Assistance Program**

**Chapter 7**  
**Pastoral Care and Victim Assistance**

**Principle:**

The relationship between the Church and its members and the others to whom the Church ministers is sacred. The Diocese of Syracuse recognizes that this sacred trust is broken and harm is done when clergy or others sexually abuse children. In order to repair harm and promote healing, the Diocese will offer compassionate pastoral care to victims of child sexual abuse, the victims' immediate families, and the affected faith communities and will work to promote safe, healthy communities of faith.

**7.1 Diocesan Assistance Coordinator**

The Diocese has designated the Assistance Coordinator who receives notification of all allegations of child sexual abuse to promptly inform the alleged victim of his/her rights and obligations, and to organize and direct timely and responsive pastoral care provided by the Diocese.

The Diocesan Assistance Coordinator will serve as the liaison with any person who alleges sexual abuse as a minor, will explain Diocesan policies and reporting requirements, assist the person to receive appropriate pastoral care, and will meet with victims, their families, and the affected parish and faith communities.

**7.2 Counseling Assistance for Victims and Their Families**

Pastoral care to persons who were minors when harmed by sexual abuse and their families shall be offered. The Diocesan Assistance Coordinator will facilitate assessment, counseling and therapeutic interventions by accredited and competent counselors, as mutually agreed upon by the individual receiving pastoral care or the victim's parent/guardian in the case of a minor child and the Diocese.

The reasonable cost of assessment and counseling for the victim and, in certain cases family members, will be assumed by the Diocese provided that:

- a. A qualified professional counselor makes an initial assessment, which is acceptable to the diocese.
- b. The assessment contains recommendations for length of counseling and treatment goals.
- c. The recommendations are to be in accordance with the standard of care practiced in the community.

- d. Treatment plans and goals are routinely monitored by a qualified professional counselor and reviewed no less than every six months.

### **7.3 Additional Forms of Pastoral Care**

Appropriate pastoral care also may include medical evaluation and treatment, spiritual guidance, identification of support groups and other social services and resources for healing depending upon the circumstances and particular needs of the victim, which shall be determined and mutually agreed upon by the Diocese and the victim or the victim's parent/guardian in the case of a minor.

**Section D**  
**An Overview of the Diocesan Assistance Program**

**Chapter 8**  
**Diocesan Communications**

**Principle:**

The Diocese of Syracuse's policies and procedures governing its internal and external communications should promote the development of cooperative, responsive and candid relationships. Within the confines of respect for privacy of the individuals and policies involved, the Diocese will communicate openly with the members of the media, faith community and general public regarding child sexual abuse and related issues.

Inquires may be directed to the Diocesan Director of Communications at 315-470-1476.

**8.1 Active Communication of Child Sexual Abuse Issues**

The Office of Communications will work with an affected parish, school or diocesan institution and appropriately collaborate with the media and broader diocesan community to disseminate information in order to increase the awareness and understanding of the prevention, identification and treatment of child sexual abuse.

All communications shall occur within the confines of respect for the privacy and reputation of those involved, as well as any applicable canon and civil laws.

**8.2 Responding to the Media**

The Director of the Office of Communications is to be responsible for coordinating all media contacts and responses. All media inquiries made to schools, parishes, etc. should be referred to that office for guidance and coordination of relevant persons in the handling of media inquiries.

**8.3 Communicating with Affected Communities**

Recognizing the importance of supporting parishes and/or schools affected by misconduct involving minors, the director of the Office of Communications will coordinate with relevant offices and leadership to ensure parishioners and/or school families receive timely, factual and pastorally appropriate communication from the Diocese, school and/or parish.

**Section D**  
**An Overview of the Diocesan Assistance Program**

**Chapter 9**  
**Internal Program Auditing**

**Principle:**

The Diocese of Syracuse shall evaluate the effectiveness of its child protection efforts at regular intervals to determine whether it is meeting the needs of the Church, the faith community and the victims and their families effectively and responsively, seeking to build high levels of trust and confidence.

**9.1 Evaluation Process**

The Safe Environment Committee, in collaboration with the Diocesan Assistance Coordinator, with the advice of the Diocesan Review Board, will develop a formal evaluation process for the policy, which will assess the effectiveness of the victim's assistance efforts, professional in-service training activities, outreach, education programs and coordination with non-diocesan agencies.

**9.2 Annual Report**

Each department, parish and agency in the Diocese shall submit an annual report to the Diocesan Safe Environment Committee documenting compliance and summarizing actions taken to implement the Diocesan Child and Youth Protection Policy, including development and implementation of an on-site Safe Environment Committee. The reports, filed to coincide with the fiscal/program year, shall follow the criteria provided by the Diocesan Safe Environment Committee.

**9.3 Review of Child Protection Policy**

The Diocesan Child and Youth Protection Policy will be reviewed by the Safe Environment Task Force one year following the date of its enactment and annually thereafter. This review shall include (1) an assessment of the adequacy of the Diocesan reports and methods that have been implemented to measure progress and accountability and (2) recommendations for amended measures and methods of progress and accountability. The review will be presented to the Diocesan Bishop and to the Diocesan Review Board. This policy may be modified from time to time by the Diocesan Bishop.

**9.4 Policy Compliance**

All clergy, employees and volunteers of the Diocese of Syracuse are expected to adhere to this policy. The Diocesan Personnel Policy shall clearly state that corrective actions will be taken and consequences will

result from failure to adhere to the Child and Youth Protection Policy. Violations may result in removal from all leadership, professional and volunteer positions.

- 9.5** Allegations of violation of this policy will be reviewed in a manner to be determined by the Diocesan Bishop in consultation with the Diocesan Review Board and the Safe Environment Committee.
- 9.6** Existing personnel policies regarding Sexual Harassment and Abuse remain in full force.

**Section E**  
**Diocesan Principles and Protocols:**

**Chapter 10**  
**Ten Basic Elements of the Diocesan Child & Youth Protection Program**

1. **Training** - Create awareness by requiring proper education and on-going training for clergy, employees, parents, religious, volunteers and children.
2. **Screening** – Take precautions by requiring applications, codes of conduct, criminal records check, interviews and the use of reference checks.
3. **Adequate Leadership** – Two trained leaders or at least one trained leader and a parent of a youth participant, one of whom must be 21 years of age or older, are required to be present whenever youth are engaged in a diocesan sponsored or related event or service, including employment in a parish or rectory. Adults should avoid being in a vehicle with an unrelated minor without permission of the parent/guardian. The parish, department, agency or program is responsible for assuring adequate leadership. Catholic School personnel and Catholic Charities Personnel should note program specific guidelines in implementing this standard.

Diocesan agencies/programs shall establish and enforce a ratio of adults to children or youth, depending on the age and nature of the group.

The Diocesan Risk Management program recommends at a minimum that the ratio be two adults (one of whom must be VIRTUS trained) for the first seven youth participants, and an additional adult for each additional seven youth participants.

4. **Open Access** - Doors are not to be locked when adults are alone with children or youth. In all situations, adults are to assure appropriate privacy for youth even as the adult remains fully accessible. Teachers and volunteers involved in education should follow the best practice norms provided by the State Education Department and other accrediting agencies. Catholic Charities workers will abide by the certification, licensing, practice and supervision program requirements mandated for their areas at all times.
5. **Visibility** – Every effort should be made to assure one-on-one child/youth to adult contact be conducted in the view of adults and youth. Offices, classrooms, and other venues are to provide visibility via an unobstructed internal window. This statement does not apply to confessionals.

Parishes, agencies and departments shall develop a written compliance plan and ensure that it is available for review.

6. **Respect for Personal Privacy** – Adult leaders must respect the privacy of

children and youth in all situations but may intrude to the extent that health and safety require. Adults must protect their own privacy in all situations. For example: Two, gender appropriate, adults must be present whenever locker or dressing rooms are being supervised, except in response to an emergency situation.

Photographs and/or videos of minors are taken periodically for use in parish/parochial publications. Use of these photographs and/or videos naming those minors is strictly prohibited without the written consent of the parent or guardian.

7. **Separate Accommodations** – Adults and minors will not share sleeping quarters, except in the case of parents and their own children. Separate bathroom and shower facilities, or separate times for use of these facilities, are to be provided. Any exception will require written parental permission.
8. **Appropriate Behaviors & Boundaries** – Adults will always provide healthy Catholic Christian examples of behavior in actions, attire, behavior, and language. Adults will not use alcohol, illegal drugs, sexually explicit materials or tobacco in the presence of children/youth. Adults should be aware of comfort levels with comments, hugs, questions, etc. Leaders should strive to be aware of how what is said or done is perceived by the listener.
9. **Hazing, secret ceremonies or secret organizations are strictly prohibited.**
10. **Vigilance** – The Diocesan Child and Youth Protection Policy is to be in effect at all times. Each Diocesan department, parish, school, and agency shall have an on-site Safe Environment Committee, developed and convened periodically to ensure compliance with this policy.

After approval by the Diocesan Safe Environment Committee, parishes and departments may offer program specific guidelines.

**Section E**  
**Diocesan Principles and Protocols**

**Chapter 11:**  
**Mandated Training Categories and Participants**

Categories of those in Ministry to Children and Young People mandated to take part in *Protecting God's Children for Adults*:

**Clergy:** Bishops, priests and deacons.

**Members of Religious Communities** involved in agencies, departments, parishes or schools.

**All Employees** of the diocese or its parishes, departments or agencies.

**Catholic Schools:** Teachers & aides, principals, support staff, athletic personnel, maintenance/custodial staff, and volunteers.

**Catholic Charities:** Staff who serve youth, including professional counselors, and child or youth program leaders.

**Athletic Personnel:** School & Parish, including Athletic Directors, Cheerleading Coaches, Team Coaches, Team Assistant Coaches, those who officially travel with teams, and volunteers.

**Parish Staffs & Volunteers:** Rectory staffs, parish secretaries, custodial, and maintenance personnel. Specialized Ministers who provide religious education, Sacrament programs, liturgical and music ministries that involve youth. Also to be included are regular chaperones, those who provide transportation for youth, special events personnel, and food service personnel who have contact with children and youth.

**Catechetical Leaders:** All levels from Pre-K to High School, including the programs of Sacrament Preparation for First Penance, First Eucharist, and Confirmation. Special Programs Staff (i.e. VBS) and Religious Education Support staff are to be included.

**Youth Ministry Programs:** Youth Ministers (advisors, directors, and coordinators), staff who serve youth, personnel and volunteers supporting the CYO and other parish youth programs. Volunteer and professional leaders in any youth program sponsored by a parish. Youth programs that use parish space and who provide their own screening and youth protection training, such as the Boy Scouts of America and the Girl Scouts USA, are not mandated but are encouraged to take part in *Protecting God's Children for Adults*.

**Child Care Providers:** All individuals involved in directly providing after school programs, day care, child care for parish events including nurseries offered during Mass.

**Summer Youth Program Workers:** Camp staff members and the staff and volunteers of summer parish youth programs.

## Section F Definitions

Following are definitions used for the purposes of this policy:

- 1.1 **Accused:** A person charged with or alleged to have committed an act of sexual abuse or a serious violation of this policy.
- 1.2 **Administrative Leave:** Relieving an accused individual of his/her assigned duties by written notice from the Diocesan Bishop.
- 1.3 **ADP Screening and Selection Services:** The company contracted by the Diocese of Syracuse to provide the background checks on employees and volunteers in response to the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*.
- 1.4 **Appropriate Monitoring:** Ongoing, in-person monitoring of the conduct and performance of individuals with provisional status and individuals who are pursuing status as Diocesan employees or volunteers, but who have yet to complete the requisite clearance procedures. Those individuals acting as monitors are to be formally designated for this responsibility by the Safe Environment Committee.
- 1.5 **Background Check:** The verification of information provided on Application for Employment or Volunteer Service including verification of references, interview, and Criminal Records Check.
- 1.6 **Chair of the Safe Environment Committee:** that individual annually designated by the Diocesan Bishop to oversee the Safe Environment Program.
- 1.7 **Child/Children:** In Canon and Civil Law any person under the age of eighteen (18), as for sexual offenses in Criminal Law, under the age of seventeen (17).
- 1.8 **Child Sexual Abuse:** Consists of any of the following:

**a. From the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*:**

“Sexual abuse of a minor includes sexual molestation or sexual exploitation of a minor and other behavior by which an adult uses a minor as an object of sexual gratification. Sexual abuse has been defined by different civil authorities in various ways, and these norms do not adopt any particular definition provided in civil law. Rather, the transgression in question relates to obligations arising from divine commands regarding human sexual interaction as conveyed to us by the sixth commandment of the Decalogue (CIC, c. 1395.2; CCEO, c. 1453.1). Thus, the norm to be considered in assessing an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor is whether conduct or interaction with a minor qualifies as an external, objectively grave violation of the sixth commandment (USCCB, Canonical Delicts Involving

Sexual Misconduct and Dismissal from the Clerical State, 1995, p. 6). A canonical offense against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue (CIC, c. 1395.2; CCEO, c. 1453.1) need not be a complete act of intercourse. Nor, to be objectively grave, does an act need to involve force, physical contact, or discernible harmful outcome. Moreover, “imputability [moral responsibility] for a canonical offense is presumed upon external violation ... unless it is otherwise apparent.” (CIC, 1321.3; CCEO, c.1414.2). (Cf. CIC, cc. 1322-1327, and CCEO. 1413, 1415, and 1416). If there is any doubt about whether a specific act fulfills this definition, the writings of recognized moral theologians should be consulted and the opinion of a recognized expert be obtained (Canonical Delicts, p. 6). Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the diocesan bishop/eparch, with the advice of a qualified review board, to determine the gravity of an alleged act.”

b. As guidance see New York State Penal Law:

- Section 130(3): “sexual contact” means any touching of the sexual or other intimate parts of a person not married to the actor for the purpose of gratifying sexual desire of either party. It includes the touching of the actor by the victim, as well as the touching of the victim by the actor, whether directly or through clothing.
- Section 130(10): “sexual conduct” means sexual intercourse, deviate sexual contact, aggravated sexual contact, or sexual contact.

c. As guidance see New York State Office of Children and Family Services, publication 1154 – 06/03. Situations in which the parent or other person legally responsible for a child under the age of 18, commits or allows to be committed, any one of the following activities:

1. The intentional touching of a child’s mouth, genitals, buttocks, breasts or other intimate parts for the purpose of gratifying sexual desire; forcing or encouraging a child to touch the parent or other person legally responsible, in this way for the purpose of gratifying sexual desire.
2. Engaging or attempting to engage a child in sexual intercourse or deviate sexual intercourse.
3. Forcing or encouraging a child to engage in sexual activity with other children or adults.
4. Exposing a child to sexual activity or exhibitionism for the purpose of sexual stimulation or gratification or another.
5. Permitting a child to engage in sexual activity which is not developmentally appropriate when such activity results in the child suffering emotional impairment.
6. Using a child in a sexual performance such as a photograph, play, motion picture, or dance regardless of whether the material itself is obscene.

- 1.9 Contact with Children:** Contact with children and young people in which the duration and scope in both time and exposure to children and young people is neither trivial nor limited and may occur on a routine and/or ongoing basis.
- 1.10 Credible Accusation:** An allegation that, based upon the facts of the case, meets one or more of the following thresholds:
- a. Natural, reasonable, plausible and probable,
  - b. Corroborated with other evidence or another source, or
  - c. Acknowledged/admitted to by the accused.
- 2.0 Criminal History Record Check:** The providing of social security number, name, birthdate, and all recent addresses will be used to provide information on the existence of criminal arrest record.
- 2.1 “Diocese,” as used in this document** indicates the diocesan officer or office designated by the Diocesan Bishop.
- 2.11 Diocesan Personnel:** Those persons identified in Section E, Chapter 12 who are required to participate in *Protecting God’s Children for Adults* and screening. All other personnel and volunteers of the diocese are encouraged to participate.
- 2.2 Diocesan Review Board:** See Section D, Chapter 5, Part 4 of this policy.
- 2.3 Exempt Status:** Priests, deacons, religious, lay volunteers and/or visitors to the Diocese of Syracuse who have temporary assignments and perform duties that are of limited duration and scope in both time and exposure to children and young people as approved by the Chair of the Safe Environment Committee.
- 2.4 Lay Volunteer:** A person who provides without compensation an ongoing service or activity that is officially recognized as such by the Diocese of Syracuse and/or Diocesan personnel.
- 2.5 Mandated Reporters:** persons who under current state statute are obligated to report certain incidents of child sexual abuse and child neglect.
- 2.6 Minor:** See Child
- 2.7 *Protecting God’s Children for Adults*** is a product of the VIRTUS program of National Catholic Risk Retention Group, Inc.
- 2.8 Permanent or Temporary Care or Custody or Responsibility for Supervision of a Child:** The passing of responsibility for temporary care or supervision of a child may be given by a parent, guardian or authorized person, regardless of duration, for a church or school related activity.

- 2.9 Provisional Status:** Employees and volunteers pending complete review of background checks and Criminal History Record Checks, can obtain “provisional status” from the Diocesan Safe Environment Committee.
- 2.10 Safe Environment Committee:** see section D, chapter 5, part 5 of this policy
- 2.11 Young People:** See Child

## APPENDIX A

### PROCEDURAL QUESTIONS TO BE USED FOR ADVERSE FINDINGS IN A CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK

As relates to the working with or supervising children and young people

- What are the specific duties and responsibilities (of the employment) sought by the applicant?
- What effect will the criminal offense for which the person was convicted have on his/her ability to perform the duties of the position applied for?
- The length of time that has elapsed since the conviction?
- What was the age of the person at the time of the offense?
- What, if any, information is produced by the person or on his/her behalf in regard to his/her rehabilitation and good conduct?
- How does the information provided effect the employer's interest in protecting the safety and welfare of specific people or the general public and in protecting property?
- The recommendation of the panel

## APPENDIX B HELPFUL WEB SITES

[www.syrdio.org](http://www.syrdio.org)

Diocese of Syracuse

[www.ocfs.state.ny.us](http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us)

New York State Office of Children & Family Services

[www.usccb.org](http://www.usccb.org)

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

[www.virtus.org](http://www.virtus.org)

Program site for Protecting God's Children

## APPENDIX C ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Diocese of Syracuse expresses its gratitude to all those individuals who aided in the development and implementation of this *Child and Youth Protection Policy*.

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