

## Code of Conduct

Our Policy reflects our promise to protect, respond, and heal. Responsibility for adherence to Ordinariate Policy and to the Code of Conduct contained therein rests primarily with the individual. Church Personnel (priests, deacons, candidates, seminarians, employees, educators, and volunteers) who disregard the Policy or the following Code of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary action by the entity that employs, supervises, or authorizes their ministry or employment, whether it be the Bishop, a pastor, or another person within the Church structure. Corrective action may take various forms – from a verbal reprimand to removal from employment or the ministry, temporarily or permanently – depending on the specific nature and circumstances of the offense and the extent of the harm.

The Ordinariate expects the following:

- Church Personnel agree to do their best to prevent abuse and neglect among children, youth and at-risk adults involved in church activities and services, and to receive and follow this Policy in their service in parishes and activities.
- Church Personnel agree not to physically, sexually or emotionally abuse or neglect a child, youth or at-risk adult.
- Church Personnel agree to comply with this Policy for contact with and supervision of children, youth and at-risk adults in parishes and activities of the Ordinariate.
- In the event that Church Personnel observe any inappropriate behaviors or possible Policy violations with children, youth or at-risk adults, or have reasonable suspicion that abuse of one has or may occur, he/she agrees to report their observations immediately to appropriate civil and Ordinariate authorities.
- Church Personnel understand that the Ordinariate will not tolerate abuse of children, youth and at-risk adults and agree to comply in spirit and in action with this Policy.
- Church Personnel agree to submit themselves to evaluations of fitness for work with children, youth and at-risk adults according to the Policy of the Ordinariate, including policies on background checks and other evaluative processes.
- Church Personnel agree not to espouse any view contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church to children, youth and at-risk adults.
- Church Personnel agree not to use, possess or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs at any time while working with children, youth or at-risk adults.
- Church Personnel agree not to commit an illegal or immoral act in the presence of children, youth or at-risk adults.
- Church Personnel agree to educate themselves, and in turn educate others, such as other volunteers, spouses, parents, children, youth and at-risk adults, about appropriate boundaries in ministry, the nature, signs and symptoms of abuse, this Policy and its implementation, reporting of abuse and responses to claims of abuse, according to this Policy.
- Church Personnel agree to notify the Ordinariate Safe Environment Coordinator within 30 days if they have been charged with, convicted of, granted deferred adjudication or plead nolo contendere to any felony or any misdemeanor involving moral turpitude.

## Specific Guidelines for Conduct

### **Physical Contact**

1. Physical contact between Church Personnel and a child, youth or at-risk adult who is not a family member runs the risk of being misconstrued, by the child, youth or at-risk adult or by persons witnessing the contact. However, while care should be taken, the Ordinariate does not wish to exclude any type of demonstration of praise or affection between Church Personnel and the people to whom they minister.
2. Appropriate forms of physical contact include:
  - Brief side hugs
  - Pats on the shoulder or back or on the head when culturally appropriate
  - Handshakes
  - “High-fives” and hand slapping
  - Arms around shoulders
  - Holding hands while walking with small children
  - Sitting beside small children
  - Holding hands during prayer
3. Nonetheless, if the child, youth or at-risk adult on the receiving end of physical contact expresses explicitly or implicitly (i.e., by verbalizing or by withdrawing, physically stiffening, etc.) that he or she does not desire the physical contact, this desire should be honored immediately unless it is contact that prevents external physical harm to self or another child, youth or at-risk adult (e.g., moving a protesting individual out of harm’s way).
4. Physical contact which is always inappropriate between Church Personnel and a child, youth or at-risk adult who is not a family member includes, but is not limited to, kissing on the mouth, touching of the breasts/buttocks/genitals, whether over or under clothing, massaging or wrestling and touching underwear.
5. Discipline used in ministerial settings should be constructive and reflect the values of the Church. Corporal punishment is never permitted and physical force may only be used to stop a behavior that may cause immediate harm to the individual or to others.
6. Unless part of the specific task (such as in a day care setting), Church Personnel should avoid, in a ministerial setting, dressing, bathing or diapering infants or children, unless the child is a family member. If Church Personnel must do so, he/she must remain in an area observable by other safe environment compliant adults and/or work with another safe environment compliant adult. A safe

environment compliant adult is defined for the purposes of this Policy as one who has been certified through the Ordinariate Safe Environment Office to have contact in ministry with children, youth or at-risk adults.

### **Sexual Conduct**

1. Since all are called by Baptism to the virtue of chastity, Church Personnel should be an example of chastity in all relationships at all times.
2. Church Personnel who provide pastoral counseling or spiritual direction services must avoid developing inappropriate intimate relationships with children, youth or at-risk adults, other staff and parishioners, and should behave in a professional manner at all times.
3. No Church Personnel shall exploit another person for sexual purposes.

### **Supervision in a Ministry Setting**

1. For the safety of all involved, a team approach is required in ministry to children, youth, and at-risk adults. When one safe environment compliant is in contact with children, youth or at-risk adults, they must remain in an area observable by another safe environment compliant adult, or a second safe environment compliant adult must be present or within line of sight. This applies also to virtual contact i.e. Zoom meetings and emails must have at least two safe environment compliant adults.
2. The ratio of adults to children, youth or at-risk adults should be no less than one safe environment compliant adult per twelve (12) youth and one safe environment compliant adult per eight (8) children.
3. If males and females under the age of eighteen will be participating in an Ordinariate activity, then both male and female safe environment compliant adults must be present.
4. Sharing beds or sleeping bags is prohibited. Church Personnel are prohibited from sleeping in the tents, hotel rooms or other rooms with children, youth or at-risk adults unless another safe environment compliant adult is present at all times.
5. Church Personnel are prohibited from using physical punishment in any way for behavior management of children, youth or at-risk adults in Ordinariate activities. No form of physical discipline is acceptable. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force. Physical force may only be used to stop a behavior that may cause immediate harm to the individual or others.
6. Church Personnel are prohibited from using harsh language, degrading punishment, or mechanical restraint such as rope or tape for behavior management.
7. Church Personnel are prohibited from providing alcohol to anyone under the age of 21.

8. Church Personnel are prohibited from participating in or allowing others to conduct any hazing activities in ministry.
9. Gender-specific, age-appropriate measures should be taken to ensure the safety of children, youth, and at-risk adults using restrooms. Any adult intervention necessary to assist small children in observing proper toilet habits requires the presence of two safe environment compliant adults at all times. Under no circumstances may Church Personnel dress, undress, shower or bathe in the presence of a child, youth or at-risk adult who is not a family member.
10. In any activity or event for which a parish or school organizes transportation, Church Personnel may not transport a child, youth or at-risk adult, other than a member of their own family, without another safe environment compliant adult in the vehicle. Parents or guardians must complete written permission forms before Church Personnel transport children, youth or at-risk adults.
11. If Church Personnel offer pastoral counseling or spiritual direction to a child, youth or at-risk adult, it must occur in a place where private conversations are possible, but in view of another safe environment compliant adult. Under no circumstances should this occur at the residence of Church Personnel or any other place that may reasonably lead to confusion as to the nature of the interaction.
12. Church Personnel may not accept expensive gifts from a child, youth or at-risk adult, or give such gifts to such individuals, without prior approval of the parent/guardian, unless the individual is a member of the person's family.

### **Sexually Explicit Material**

1. Church Personnel are prohibited from possessing any sexually oriented material on Ordinariate property, except as expressly permitted as part of an Ordinariate-approved educational program.
2. Church Personnel are prohibited from using the Internet to download or view sexually oriented material on Ordinariate property. Ordinariate-owned computers are subject to regular audit especially during changes in Church Personnel or ministerial assignment.
3. Church Personnel are prohibited from discussing their own sexual activities and/or fantasies, including the use or sharing of pornography, with any child, youth or at-risk adult.
4. Church personnel are prohibited from using an Ordinariate computer to access, view and/or download pornography of any kind. The acquisition, possession, and distribution of pornographic images of children are also strictly forbidden.
5. The acquisition, possession, or distribution of pornographic images of children, youth or at-risk adults by Church Personnel, by whatever means or using whatever technology, is defined a grave delict (crime) in Church Law and is strictly forbidden.