



***DIOCESE OF LA CROSSE***

***SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM***

***October 15, 2003***

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# SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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**DIOCESE OF LA CROSSE:  
SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

**MANDATE**

The Diocese of La Crosse Revised Policy and Procedures on Sexual Misconduct for the Diocese of La Crosse promulgated October 18, 1997, and the Revised Policy and Procedures Child Sexual Abuse Policy and Procedures of the Diocese of La Crosse promulgated September 25, 2019, and clarified and updated September 25, 2019, and the policies contained in this Safe Environment Program, shall be followed by all priests, deacons, and other personnel, lay and religious, paid and volunteer, while serving in the Diocese of La Crosse.

## THE CODE OF CONDUCT

1. **Sexual Misconduct Policy.** (*Revised Policy and Procedures on Sexual Misconduct for the Diocese of La Crosse, 10/18/97 – Red Book*)
  - A. Sexual misconduct by any diocesan agent, while performing the work of the Diocese, is contrary to Catholic faith and morals, is outside of the scope of his or her duties and responsibilities, and is absolutely prohibited.
  - B. No person shall be subjected to sexual misconduct by any diocesan agent, including clergy, consecrated persons, employees or volunteers of the Diocese of La Crosse.
  - C. All diocesan agents shall comply with all federal, state or local, civil and criminal laws, prohibiting sexual misconduct; all laws requiring the reporting of known or suspected instances of sexual misconduct; and all requirements, procedural and substantive set forth in this policy.
  
2. **Revised Policy and Procedures Child Sexual Abuse Policy and Procedures of the Diocese of La Crosse.** (*Revised Policy and Procedures on Child Sexual Abuse Policy and Procedures of the Diocese of La Crosse, 2/5/2003 and as updated in 2019 – Green Book*)
  - A. Sexual abuse of a child is a crime and an “appalling sin in the eyes of God” (see address of Pope John Paul II to the Cardinals of the United States, 4/23/2002)
  - B. Sexual abuse of a child by any diocesan priest or deacon is contrary to Catholic faith and morals, is outside the scope of his duties and responsibilities and is absolutely prohibited.
  - C. No child shall be subjected to sexual abuse by any diocesan priest or deacon.
  - D. All diocesan agents shall comply with all federal, state or local, civil and criminal laws, prohibiting sexual abuse of minors; all laws requiring the reporting of known or suspected instances of sexual abuse of minors; and all requirements, procedural and substantive set forth in this policy.
  
3. **Morality Clause - Contracted School Teachers and Administrators in the Catholic Schools and Administrators of Faith Formation Programs (Religious education, youth ministry and contracted religious).**

“The employee as teacher (administrator) in a Catholic educational system, agrees that as a condition of employment, he/she will support and exemplify in conduct both Catholic Doctrine and morality. He/she must be consistent in expression and example, with the teaching and practice of the Catholic faith and shall not teach, advocate, encourage or counsel beliefs or practices contrary to the Catholic faith.” (Educator Professional Contracts) (2019).

**4. Morality Clause - Diocese of La Crosse Catholic Schools Policy and Regulation Manual for Schools.**

- A. Students: Sexual Misconduct/Sexual Harassment - DSP 5512  
01/19/94, Revised 07/31/03.

“Policy:

The Diocese of La Crosse has strong and clear policies prohibiting any form of child sexual abuse and sexual misconduct. A copy of the Diocese of La Crosse’s *Child Sexual Abuse Policy and Procedures* and the Diocese of La Crosse’s *Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures* are attached as Addendums. These policies apply to all students in the Catholic Schools of the Diocese of La Crosse.

Provisions: . . .

4. No student shall be subject to sexual harassment or other sexual misconduct, as a Catholic school student.
5. Any student or employee who engages in sexual harassment and/or other sexual misconduct shall be subject to severe disciplinary measures up to and including dismissal as a student or discharge from employment.”

**5. Morality Clause - Diocese of La Crosse Parish Administration Manual.**

- A. Sexual Harassment Policy.

“All employees of the parish are entitled to work in an atmosphere free from sexual harassment.” (Parish Administration Manual, revised spring 1999)

## **PRACTICAL GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCT WHEN INTERACTING WITH A CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON**

To: The diocesan bishop, clergy, religious, employees and volunteers, working in and on behalf of its schools, parishes, Offices of Religious Education and Youth and Young Adult Ministry, and other diocesan parishes or schools programs or agencies engaged in extensive services with and counseling, educational and spiritual ministries to children and young persons.

- A. Children are dependent on adults and agents, particularly adults or agents in positions of trust and leadership. It is vitally important therefore, that reasonable prudence be exercised by all adults or agents that perform services on behalf of the Diocese, parishes or schools, which involves interaction with children.
  
- B. The following is a set of practical guidelines for conducting yourself which must be observed by all clergy, religious, lay employees and volunteers of the Diocese parishes or schools when dealing with children. These guidelines are intended to assist you employing good judgment when interacting with children. If you find it necessary to depart from these guidelines due to some extraordinary circumstance, you should be aware of your departure and must be able to justify your actions. If one-on-one involvement with a minor is unavoidable, you must use prudent judgment in your dealings with the minor.
  
- C. All bishops, clergy, religious, lay employees and volunteers of the Diocese parishes or schools will observe the following guidelines when engaging in ministry to or otherwise interacting with children:
  - (1) Children under eighteen (18) years of age who are not relatives of the clergy or religious may not stay overnight in any parish rectory-throughout the Diocese, unless accompanied by a parent or guardian.
  - (2) You shall avoid any physical contact with a child that would be deemed inappropriate if carried out in the presence of the child's parent.
  - (3) Except in unavoidable circumstances that require otherwise, for example a preschooler who needs assistance in the restroom, you are not to be alone with a child in a residence, school, sleeping facility, locker room, restroom, dressing facility, or other closed area.
  - (4) You shall avoid any one-on-one counseling, tutoring, training, or other assistance or service with a child, it must be conducted in an open room setting without closed doors, except for a door with a window, and only if readily observable by others who may be in the room or in the hallway outside the room.

- (5) You shall seek responsible adults to be present at events involving children, such as games and athletic activities.
- (6) At youth group trips and school field trips you shall have enough adult chaperones, preferably of the same sex as the participants, to provide adequate supervision based on the type of activity.
- (7) As an individual adult you shall never take an overnight trip alone with a child who is not a relative.
- (8) Alcohol, for sacramental purposes, in the form of wine, may be given to those under the age of 21 only in very limited quantity. Otherwise, you shall never provide alcohol to anyone under the age of 21.
- (9) Alcohol shall not be used by adult supervisors or chaperones if activities with or responsibilities for children are scheduled.
- (10) You shall always maintain a professional relationship in dealing with children.
- (11) If one-on-one counseling, tutoring or other training or care of a child requires frequent or regular appointments, parents shall be notified that these appointments are occurring and provide the schedule of appointments.
- (12) All of us have an obligation to take appropriate steps to protect children, particularly when they are in the care of the Church. If you observe another adult violating these guidelines or engaging in other conduct which causes you to have reason for concern for the well-being of a child, you shall confront that adult in a forthright manner and report your concerns to your supervisor, pastor or the Vicar for Clergy. If you have reason to believe that child abuse or neglect has occurred or is occurring, you shall follow the diocesan policy on reporting instances of child abuse to civil authorities and report the matter to your supervisor and otherwise follow the Child Sexual Abuse Policy and Procedures of the Diocese of La Crosse.



**DISTRIBUTION AND RECEIPT  
OF THE DIOCESE OF LA CROSSE  
SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

All current and future bishops, priests, deacons, religious, employees and volunteers in the Diocese of La Crosse shall be provided a copy of the *Revised Policy and Procedures of Sexual Misconduct for the Diocese of La Crosse*, 10/18/97 (Red Book), *Revised Policy and Procedures on Child Sexual Abuse Policy and Procedures of the Diocese of La Crosse*, 9-25-19 (Green Book), and Diocese of La Crosse Safe Environment Policy and Procedures.

Each bishop, priest, deacon, religious, employee and volunteer shall acknowledge in writing that as a condition of service in the Diocese parishes or schools, they shall receive, understand and abide by the policy and procedures contained in these documents. (See Verification of Safe Environment Training for Staff and Volunteers, p. 10)

The following diocesan officials shall be responsible for distribution and receipts:

- for priests and deacons – Office of Safe Environment
- for seminarians – Office of Safe Environment
- for religious - Office of Safe Environment
- for school employees and volunteers - Office of Safe Environment
- for all CCD employees and volunteers – the Parish Pastor or Administrator
- for all employees and volunteers in Youth and Young Adult Ministry- Office of Safe Environment
- for all other (i.e. clerical, custodial, etc.) employees and volunteers in each parish - the Parish Pastor or Administrator
- for all employees employed in the Diocesan Curia - Office of Safe Environment under the direction of the Vicar General/Moderator of the Curia/Chief of Staff



## Annual Verification of Safe Environment Training

- As a paid staff member and/or volunteer in the Diocese of La Crosse, I acknowledge receipt of the *Revised Policy and Procedures on Sexual Misconduct for the Diocese of La Crosse*, (Red Book) 10/18/97, *Revised Policy and Procedures on Child Sexual Abuse Policy and Procedures of the Diocese of La Crosse*, (Green Book) 9-25-19 and the Diocese of La Crosse Safe Environment Policy and Procedures, and have read and understand the *Child Sexual Abuse Policy and Procedures of the Diocese of La Crosse* and *The Revised Policy and Procedures on Sexual Misconduct for the Diocese of La Crosse*.
- I agree, as a condition of service in the Diocese of La Crosse, to abide by these policies and procedures.
- I am not currently, nor ever have been in violation of this policy.
- I have also viewed the Safe Environment Training Video.

## Confidential Questionnaire

- I have reviewed the annual Confidential Questionnaire and verify that nothing has changed since last year.

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Print Name

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Signature

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Date

Please return to:

Safe Environment Program  
Diocese of La Crosse  
PO Box 4004  
La Crosse, WI 54602-4004

**DIOCESE OF LA CROSSE  
GUIDELINES FOR REPORTING INSTANCES  
OF CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT**

The Diocese of La Crosse through its policies and procedures seeks to provide a prompt, appropriate and compassionate response to reporters of sexual abuse of a child by a priest or deacon. Anyone wishing to make a report of an allegation of sexual abuse should send that report to Complaint Intake Agent, at the Diocese of La Crosse, 3710 East Ave South | P.O. Box 4004, La Crosse, WI 54602-4004 or by phone at 608-791-0179. The form is available through the Diocese of La Crosse, Office of Safe Environment or on the diocesan website at <http://www.dioc.org/safe-environment/> Copies of the diocesan policy are available through your local parish or school and on the diocesan website. If you have any questions about the Diocese of La Crosse and the implementation of the Charter for the Protection and Children and Young People, please contact the Office of Safe Environment, Diocese of La Crosse, at (608) 788-7700.

## DIOCESAN PARISH AND SCHOOL COOPERATION WITH CIVIL AUTHORITIES

Whenever an agent of the Diocese of La Crosse parish and school has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is or has been a victim of child sexual abuse by diocesan agents, he/she shall comply with all laws requiring the reporting of such suspicions to the appropriate county department in the county in which the action allegedly occurred. Any investigations following such reports of suspected instances of child abuse will be accorded the complete and willing assistance of the appropriate diocesan parish or school personnel.

In addition diocesan parish or school agents shall concurrently report such suspicions to the diocesan Bishop.

Wisconsin Law, Chapter 48 Wis. Stats., requires mandatory reporting of suspected child abuse by certain mandatory reporters. Chapter 48.981 (2) provides in part:

(2) PERSONS REQUIRED TO REPORT. (a) Any of the following persons who has reasonable cause to suspect that a child seen by the person in the course of professional duties has been abused or neglected or who has reason to believe that a child seen by the person in the course of professional duties has been threatened with abuse or neglect and that abuse or neglect of the child will occur shall, except as provided under sub. (2m), report as provided in sub. (3) (emphasis added): . . .

4. A nurse. . . .
9. A medical or mental health professional not otherwise specified in this paragraph.
10. A social worker. . . .
12. A professional counselor. . . .
14. A school teacher.
15. A school administrator.
16. A school counselor. . . .
18. A child-care worker in a day care center, group home, as described in s.48.625 (1m), or residential care center for children and youth.
19. A day care provider. . . .
21. A member of the treatment staff employed by or working under contract with a county department under s. 46.23, 51.42, or 51.437 or a residential care center for children and youth. . . .
24. A dietitian.
25. A speech-language pathologist. . . .

(bm) 1. Except as provided in sub. 3. and sub. (2m), a member of the clergy shall report as provided in sub. (3) if the member of the clergy has reasonable cause to suspect that a child seen by the member of the clergy in the course of his or her professional duties:

- a. Has been abused, as defined in s. 48.02 (1) (b) go (f); or
- b. Has been threatened with abuse, as defined in s. 48.02 (1) (b) to (f), and abuse of the child will likely occur.

2. Except as provided in sub. 3. and sub. (2m), a member of the clergy shall report as provided in sub. (3) if the member of the clergy has reasonable cause, based on observations made or information that he or she receives, to suspect that a member of the

clergy has done any of the following: (emphasis added)

a. Abused a child, as defined in s. 48.02 (1) (b) to (f).

b. Threatened a child with abuse, as defined in s 48.02 (1) (b) to (f), and abuse of the child will likely occur.

3. A member of the clergy is not required to report child abuse information under subd. 1. Or 2. That he or she receives solely through communications made to him or her privately or in a confessional setting if he or she is authorized to hear or is accustomed to hearing such communications and, under the disciplines, tenets, or traditions of his or her religion, has a duty or is expected to keep those communications secret. Those disciplines, tenets, or traditions need not be in writing.

(c) Any person not otherwise specified in par. (a), (b) or (bm), including an attorney, who has reason to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected or who has reason to believe that a child has been threatened with abuse or neglect and that abuse or neglect of the child will occur may report as provided in sub. (3) (emphasis added).

(d) Any person, including an attorney, who has reason to suspect that an unborn child has been abused or who has reason to believe that an unborn child is at substantial risk of abuse may report as provided in sub. (3) (emphasis added).

(e) No person making a report under this subsection may be discharged from employment for so doing.

The following is a list of county human services offices in each of the 19 counties of the Diocese of La Crosse to which cases involving children in need of services are to be reported.

Adams County  
Human and Social Services Department  
108 East North Street  
Friendship, WI 53934  
(608) 339-4505

Buffalo County  
Department of Human Services  
407 South 2nd Street  
Alma, WI 54610  
(608) 685-4412

Chippewa County  
Human Services  
711 North Bridge Street  
Chippewa Falls, WI 54729  
(715) 726-7788

Clark County  
Social Services  
517 Court Street  
Neillsville, WI 54456  
(715) 743-5233

Crawford County  
Human Services  
111 West Dunn Street  
Prairie du Chien, WI 53821  
(608) 326-0248

Dunn County  
Human Services  
808 Main Street  
Menomonie, WI 54751  
(715) 232-1116

Eau Claire County  
Human Services  
721 Oxford Avenue  
Eau Claire, WI 54702  
(715) 839-2300

Jackson County  
Health and Human Services  
420 Hwy. 54 West  
Black River Falls, WI 54615  
(715) 284-4301

Juneau County  
Human Services  
220 East La Crosse Street  
Mauston, WI 53948  
(608) 847-2400

La Crosse County  
Human Services  
300 North 4th Street  
La Crosse, WI 54601  
(608) 785-6054

Marathon County  
Social Services  
400 East Thomas Street  
Wausau, WI 54403  
(715) 261-7500

Monroe County  
Human Services  
14301 CTH B, Box 19  
Sparta, WI 54656  
(608) 269-8600

Pepin County  
Human Services  
740 Seventh Avenue West  
Durand, WI 54736  
(715) 672-8941

Pierce County  
Human Services  
412 West Kinne Street  
Ellsworth, WI 54011  
(715) 273-6766

Portage County  
Health and Human Services  
817 Whiting Avenue  
Stevens Point, WI 54481  
(715) 345-5350

Richland County  
Health and Human Services  
221 West Seminary Street  
Richland Center, WI 53581  
(608) 647-8821

Trempealeau County  
Social Services  
36245 Main Street  
Whitehall, WI 54773  
(877) 538-2311 Ext. 290

Vernon County  
Department Human Services  
318 Fairlane Drive, Suite 100  
Viroqua, WI 54665  
(608) 637-5210

Wood County  
Human Services  
400 Market Street  
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495  
(715) 421-8600  
or  
(715) 387-6374

**DIOCESE OF LA CROSSE  
SCREENING, EVALUATION AND MONITORING GUIDELINES  
FOR DIOCESAN MINISTERS, EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS**

Every reasonable effort shall be made to screen, evaluate and monitor diocesan ministers, employees and volunteers who have regular contact with children. The following are guidelines to be implemented throughout the Diocese of La Crosse.

**I. Candidates for Ordination to the Priesthood or Permanent Diaconate.**

Each candidate for ordination to the priesthood and/or the Permanent Diaconate shall receive psychological screening and evaluation, a social and religious background check, a medical evaluation and a comprehensive (fingerprint) criminal background check. In addition to other forms, all candidates shall be required to complete the Diocese of La Crosse Confidential Safe Environment Questionnaire and Verification for Safe Environment Training at the time of entry into the Seminary and update the form annually thereafter. A comprehensive criminal background check shall be conducted at the time the candidate is accepted for the 1.) Seminary training and immediately prior to ordination 2.) to the Diaconate and 3.) the priesthood.

The Safe Environment Coordinator under the direction of the Vicar for Clergy is responsible for completing the above screening guidelines for candidates for the priesthood and candidates for the Permanent Diaconate.

**II. Diocesan Priests and Deacons.**

Each bishop, priest and deacon of the Diocese of La Crosse shall be subject to a basic criminal background check and shall be required to complete the Diocese of La Crosse Confidential Safe Environment Questionnaire and Verification for Safe Environment Training. The Diocese of La Crosse Confidential Safe Environment Questionnaire shall be updated annually by each Bishop, priest and deacon. The basic criminal background check shall be repeated for each bishop, priest or deacon no less than every three years.

The Office of Safe Environment is responsible for completing the above screening guidelines for diocesan consecrated persons.

**III. Non-Diocesan Priests or Deacons.**

Each priest or deacon, seeking assignment or faculties in the Diocese of La Crosse shall be required to provide the Diocese of La Crosse with a letter of disclosure and an unconditional letter and recommendation from his current Bishop and/or religious superior specifically disclosing any credible history of child sexual abuse or allegations in addition to other mandated screening requirements and/or sexual misconduct. In addition, before assignment, each such priest or deacon shall be required to complete the Diocese of La Crosse Confidential Safe Environment Questionnaire and Verification of Safe Environment Training and be subject to a comprehensive (fingerprint) criminal background check. After assignment in the Diocese, every three years, for each priest or deacon, a follow-up basic criminal background check shall be conducted. In addition, the Diocese of La Crosse Confidential Safe Environment Questionnaire and Verification of Safe Environment Training shall be updated annually.



The Vicar for Clergy is responsible for completing the above screening guidelines for non-diocesan priests or deacons.

#### **IV. Non-Diocesan Religious Communities and Schools**

This policy applies to non-diocesan religious communities who have regular contact with children including but not limited to Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration (FSPA), Sisters of St. Benedict (OSB), Sister's of St. Joseph of the Third Order of St. Francis (SSJ-TOSF), Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest (ICRSS), Order of Friars Minor, Capuchin (OFM, CAP), Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate (FFI) and Educational Academies.

All non-diocesan religious communities and schools who are permitted to provide services to children in the Diocese of La Crosse by the Diocesan Bishop shall, as a condition of providing such services initially and annually certify to the diocese that it has a safe environment program in place and implemented substantially similar to that of the Diocese of La Crosse.

#### **V. Non-Ordained Diocesan Consecrated Persons**

This policy applies to Brothers of St. Pius the Tenth (CSPX), the Institute of St. Joseph (ISJ), Consecrated Virgins and Hermits permitted by the Diocesan Bishop to reside or function in the Diocese of La Crosse. All diocesan consecrated persons shall be subject to a basic criminal background check and shall be required to complete the Diocese of La Crosse Confidential Safe Environment Questionnaire and Verification for Safe Environment Training. The Diocese of La Crosse Confidential Safe Environment Questionnaire shall be updated annually by each consecrated person. The basic criminal background check shall be repeated for each diocesan consecrated person no less than every three years.

The Office of Safe Environment is responsible for completing the above screening guidelines for diocesan consecrated persons.

#### **VI. Diocese of La Crosse Parish/School Employees**

##### **A. School Employees**

In addition to other forms, before the start of service, all persons employed in the diocesan schools in the Diocese of La Crosse shall complete the Diocese of La Crosse Confidential Safe Environment Questionnaire and Verification of Safe Environment Training. After hire, the Diocese of La Crosse Safe Environment Questionnaire and Verification of Safe Environment Training form shall be updated annually. Before start of service is finalized, all school employees shall be subject to a comprehensive (fingerprint) criminal background check. After hire, every three years the employee shall be subject to a basic criminal background check.

For licensed and/or certified teaching personnel, before hire, a license check shall be obtained from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction or other state licensing agency.

The Director of Schools or Principal at each location is responsible for completing the above screening guidelines for school employees.

**B. Youth Ministers (paid)**

In addition to other forms, all persons employed in the Diocese of La Crosse in Youth Ministry shall complete the Diocese of La Crosse Confidential Safe Environment Questionnaire and Verification of Safe Environment Training. Before hire, all youth ministers shall be subject to a comprehensive (fingerprint) criminal background check. After hire, the Diocese of La Crosse Confidential Safe Environment Questionnaire and Verification of Safe Environment Training shall be updated annually. After hire, every three years the employee shall be subject to a basic criminal background check.

The Parish Pastor or Administrator is responsible for completing the above screening guidelines for paid Youth Ministers.

**C. Directors or Coordinators of Religious Education (paid)**

In addition to other forms, all persons employed as directors or coordinators of religious education in the Diocese of La Crosse shall complete the Diocese of La Crosse Confidential Safe Environment Questionnaire and Verification of Safe Environment Training. Before hire, all directors or coordinators of religious education shall be subject to a comprehensive (fingerprint) criminal background check. After hire, the Diocese of La Crosse Confidential Safe Environment Questionnaire and Verification of Safe Environment Training shall be updated annually. After hire, every three years the directors or coordinators of religious education shall be subject to a basic criminal background check.

The Parish Pastor or the Administrator is responsible for completing the above screening guidelines for Directors or Coordinators of Religious Education.

**D. Non-School Parish Employees (paid)**

In addition to other forms, all persons employed by parishes other than school employees, Youth Ministers, or DRE's, employed in the Diocese of La Crosse shall complete the Diocese of La Crosse Confidential Safe Environment Questionnaire and Verification of Safe Environment Training. Before start of service, all such parish employees shall be subject to a basic criminal background check. After hire, the Diocese of La Crosse Confidential Safe Environment Questionnaire and Verification of Safe Environment Training shall be updated annually. After hire, every three years the parish employee shall be subject to a basic criminal background check.

The Parish Pastor or the Administrator is responsible for completing the above screening guidelines for non-school parish employees.

## **E. Diocesan Curia Employees (paid)**

In addition to other forms, before start of service, all diocesan Curia employees shall complete the Diocese of La Crosse Confidential Safe Environment Questionnaire and Verification of Safe Environment Training. Before start of service, all diocesan Curia employees shall be subject to a basic criminal background check. After hire, the Diocese of La Crosse Confidential Safe Environment Questionnaire and Verification of Safe Environment Training shall be updated annually. After hire, every three years the employee shall be subject to a basic criminal background check.

The Office of Safe Environment under the direction of the Vicar General/Moderator of the Curia/Chief of Staff is responsible for completing the above screening guidelines for diocesan Curia employees.

## **VII. Diocesan Parish or School Volunteers.**

Before the start of service, all volunteers in the Diocese of La Crosse parish or schools who engage in activities involving regular contact with minors shall be subject to the following screening and supervision:

### **A. School Volunteers**

Before rendering any services, all school volunteers, including but not limited to teacher aides, lunch supervisors, drivers, coaches, chaperones, and student teachers, shall complete the initial Diocese of La Crosse Confidential Safe Environment Questionnaire and Verification of Safe Environment Training. Before rendering any services, all such volunteers shall be subject to a basic criminal background check. For each volunteer, the Diocese of La Crosse Confidential Safe Environment Questionnaire and Verification of Safe Environment Training shall be updated annually. In addition, every three years, the volunteer shall be subject to a basic criminal background check.

The Director of Schools, or the Principal at each location is responsible for completing the above screening guidelines for school volunteers.

### **B. Youth Ministry Volunteers**

Before rendering any services, all youth ministry volunteers, shall complete the Diocese of La Crosse Confidential Safe Environment Questionnaire and Verification of Safe Environment Training. Before rendering any services, all such youth ministry volunteers shall be subject to a basic criminal background check. For each youth ministry volunteer, the Diocese of La Crosse Confidential Safe Environment Questionnaire and Verification of Safe Environment Training shall be updated annually. In addition, every three years, the volunteer shall be subject to a basic criminal background check.

The above screening of youth ministry volunteers shall be under the general supervision of the Parish Pastor or the Administrator.

### **C. Religious Education Volunteers**

Before rendering any services, all religious education volunteers, shall complete the Diocese of La Crosse Confidential Safe Environment Questionnaire and Verification of Safe Environment Training. Before rendering any services, all such religious education volunteers shall be subject to a basic criminal background check. For each religious education volunteer, the Diocese of La Crosse Confidential Safe Environment Questionnaire and Verification of Safe Environment Training shall be updated annually. In addition, every three years, the volunteer shall be subject to a basic criminal background check.

The Pastor or the Administrator is responsible for completing the above screening guidelines for religious education volunteers.

### **D. Other Church Volunteers**

Before rendering any services, parish volunteers other than those volunteering in school activities, youth ministry activities, and/or CCD activities, who will have regular contact with minors shall complete the Diocese of La Crosse Confidential Safe Environment Questionnaire and Verification of Safe Environment Training. Before rendering any services, all such volunteers shall be subject to a basic criminal background check. For each volunteer, the Diocese of La Crosse Confidential Safe Environment Questionnaire and Verification of Safe Environment Training shall be updated annually. In addition, every three years, the volunteer shall be subject to a basic criminal background check.

The Pastor or the Administrator is responsible for completing the above screening guidelines for other church volunteers.

**DIOCESE OF LA CROSSE PARISH AND SCHOOL  
SAFE ENVIRONMENT EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

**I. Norms.**

All bishops, priests, deacons, religious, consecrated persons, employees, volunteers, parents and children who have regular contact with children shall be educated and trained in the issue of abuse of children to include sexual abuse.

**II. Bishops, Priests, Deacons, Religious and Consecrated Persons:**

- A. All current bishop, priests, deacons, religious and consecrated persons of the Diocese of La Crosse, since 1997, and before, have been fully educated and trained regarding issues of child sexual abuse.
- B. Before starting service, each new bishop, priest, deacon, religious or consecrated person shall be trained regarding issues of child sexual abuse.
- C. As part of ongoing education, the bishop, priests, deacons, religious and consecrated persons of the Diocese of La Crosse shall receive annual updates on the issue of child sexual abuse.
- D. The Office of Safe Environment under the direction of the Vicar for Clergy and the Director of Consecrated Life are responsible for completing the above education and training guidelines for priests, deacons, religious and consecrated persons.

**III. School Employees and Volunteers.**

- A. All current teachers and administrators of the Diocese of La Crosse, since 1997 and before, have been fully educated and trained regarding issues of child sexual abuse.
- B. Before starting service all non-teachers, non-school administrators and all school volunteers shall be educated and trained regarding issues of child sexual abuse.
- C. Before starting service, each new teacher, administrator, school employee and/or volunteer in the diocesan schools shall be trained regarding issues of child sexual abuse.
- D. As part of ongoing education, the teachers, administrators, school employees and volunteers shall receive annual updates on the issue of child sexual abuse.
- E. The Office of Safe Environment under the direction of the Director of Catholic Schools or Principal at each location is responsible for completing the above education and training guidelines for school employees and volunteers.

#### **IV. Religious Educators - Teachers and Volunteers**

- A. All religious education teachers, employees and volunteers shall be fully educated and trained regarding issues of child sexual abuse before starting service.
- B. Before starting service, each new employee or volunteer of religious education shall be trained regarding issues of child sexual abuse.
- C. As part of ongoing education, each teacher or volunteer of religious education shall receive annual updates on the issues of child sexual abuse.
- D. The Parish Pastor or Administrator is responsible for completing the above education and training guidelines for religious educators - teachers and volunteers.

#### **V. Youth Ministry Employees and Volunteers**

- A. All youth ministry employees and volunteers shall be fully educated and trained regarding issues of child sexual abuse.
- B. Before starting service, each new youth ministry employee or volunteer of youth ministry shall be trained regarding issues of child sexual abuse.
- C. As part of ongoing education, each youth ministry employee shall receive annual updates on the issues of child sexual abuse.
- D. The Parish Pastor or Administrator is responsible for completing the above education and training guidelines for youth ministry employees and volunteers.

#### **VI. Diocesan Catholic School Children**

- A. All students enrolled in the diocesan Catholic schools shall be fully educated and trained regarding issues of child sexual abuse.
- B. As part of the educational curriculum of each Catholic school, annually, all students enrolled in the Catholic schools of the Diocese of La Crosse shall receive annual education and training on the issues of child sexual abuse.
- C. Presidents, administrators, and/or principals of each school under the general supervision of the Director of Schools shall be responsible for completing the above education and training guidelines for diocesan catholic school children.

#### **VII. Religious Education Students.**

- A. All students enrolled in diocesan religious education programs shall be fully educated and trained regarding issues of child sexual abuse.

- B. As part of the educational curriculum of each diocesan religious education program, annually, all students enrolled in the religious education program of the Diocese of La Crosse or parish shall receive annual education and training on the issues of child sexual abuse. This requirement may be satisfied by educational programming offered to the child in the child's public school.
- C. DRE's and CRE's under the general supervision of the Parish Pastor or Administrator shall be responsible for completing the above education and training guidelines for religious education students.

**VIII. Parents.**

- A. All parents of students enrolled in the diocesan catholic schools, the diocesan or parish religious education programs and the diocesan or parish youth activities programs shall be offered training regarding issues of child sexual abuse.
- B. Parents shall be offered annual updates on issues involving child sexual abuse.
- C. Presidents, administrators, and/or principals, Parish Pastors or the Administrator under the general supervision of the Director of Schools shall be responsible for completing the above education and training guidelines for parents.

**IX. Parish Employees and Volunteers.**

- A. All parish employees and volunteers who have regular contact with children shall receive and be fully educated and trained regarding issues of child sexual abuse.
- B. All parish employees and volunteers shall receive annual updates regarding issues of child sexual abuse.
- C. The Pastor or Parish Administrator shall be responsible for completing the above education and training guidelines for parents.

**X. Diocesan Curia Employees.**

- A. All employees of the Diocese of La Crosse Curia shall receive education and training on the issue of child sexual abuse.
- B. Each employee shall receive annual updates on the issue of child sexual abuse.
- C. The Office of Safe Environment under the direction of the Vicar General/Moderator of the Curia/Chief of Staff shall be responsible for completing the above education and training guidelines for diocesan Curia employees.

## **XI. Content.**

1. Training programs for adults shall include the following:
  - A. What constitutes child abuse, including sexual abuse?
  - B. What actions, policies and procedures are used to prevent child abuse in any form?
  - C. How does an adult identify instances of abuse of a child, including sexual abuse?
    - (1) What signs should an adult look for in a child who may be abused?
    - (2) What signs should an adult look for in a person who may be abusing a child in any way?
  - D. What actions should an adult take when they believe that child abuse, to include sexual abuse, may be occurring?
  - E. What are the laws and policies regarding the reporting of abuse, to include sexual abuse of children?
  - F. *The Revised Policy and Procedures on Sexual Misconduct for the Diocese of La Crosse, 10/18/97, the Revised Policy and Procedures on Child Sexual Abuse Policy and Procedures of the Diocese of La Crosse, 9-25-19, and the Diocese of La Crosse Safe Environment Policy and Procedures.*
2. Training programs for children and young people shall include the following:
  - A. Age appropriate materials pertaining to personal safety.
  - B. Information concerning improper touching and relationships.
  - C. The need to report improper activity.
  - D. Where to report and to whom to report improper activity.

## **XII. Records of Training.**

1. The Diocese of La Crosse, the parishes and/or schools shall maintain records of the education and training of its bishop, priests, deacons, religious, and consecrated persons. The records regarding such training shall be maintained by the office charged with the responsibility of conducting such training.
2. Records shall be kept indefinitely. No records shall be destroyed without diocesan approval. All records shall be exclusively stored on diocese, parish or school premises in a secure location.



### **XIII. Records of Background Checks.**

The Diocese of La Crosse its parishes and/or schools, by delegation to the diocesan attorney the responsibility to conduct, evaluate and report all background checks to the respective office, parish and/or school. Records regarding such background checks shall be kept indefinitely, and no records shall be destroyed without diocesan approval. All such records shall be stored with the diocesan attorney in a secured, privileged location.

The diocesan attorney, consistent with contractual agreements and federal and state law shall maintain such records and disclose those records only consistent with the requirements of the Diocese of La Crosse Safe Environment Program or as otherwise required by law.

### **XIV. Methods of Publication of Training and Education Materials.**

- A. The Diocese of La Crosse shall provide materials to be used in delivering the education and training to all bishop, clergy, religious, consecrated person, employees, volunteers, children and parents concerning child sexual abuse, reporting requirements and the procedures regarding child sexual abuse.
- B. These materials shall be distributed through the parishes and schools of the Diocese of La Crosse and be used both for the initial training and orientation of all clergy, religious, consecrated persons, employees, volunteers, children and parents.
- C. The diocesan magazine, Catholic Life, shall publish the Safe Environment Policy and Procedures and periodically publish the Diocese of La Crosse Policy and Procedure regarding Child Sexual Abuse.
- D. The diocesan website shall contain including but not limited to the diocesan policy and procedures and the contact persons to report instances of child sexual abuse and periodic updates by the diocesan attorney.
- E. The Diocese of La Crosse will sponsor live educational programs with presentations by the Director of Safe Environment and/or diocesan attorney.