



## CODE OF PASTORAL CONDUCT

### Code of Conduct for Employees, Volunteers, Contractors, Religious and Clergy

#### General Information and Standards for Pastoral Counseling

1. Be aware of your own and others' vulnerability when working alone with minors. Avoid being alone with children or youth at church activities and instead use a team approach to managing activities and emergency situations involving minors.
2. Physical contact with minors can be misconstrued and should occur
  - a. Only when completely nonsexual and otherwise appropriate; and
  - b. Never in private
3. The illegal possession or use of drugs or alcohol at all times and the use of alcohol when working with minors are strictly prohibited.
4. Clergy must not allow individual children or youth to stay overnight in the cleric's private accommodations or residence.
5. Employees, volunteers, religious and contractors should not provide shared, private, overnight accommodation for individual children or youth including, but not limited to, accommodations in any church-owned facility, private residence, hotel room, or any other place where there is no other adult supervision present.
6. In rare, emergency situations, when accommodation is necessary for the health and well-being of a child or youth, one should take extraordinary care to protect all parties from the appearance of impropriety and from all risk of harm.
7. Personnel and other administrative decisions shall meet civil and Canon Law obligations and also reflect Catholic social teachings and diocesan policies.
8. One shall not use their position to exercise unreasonable or inappropriate power and authority.
9. Be aware of warning signs that indicate potential problems with one's own spiritual, physical, mental, and/or emotional health and seek help immediately whenever you notice the warning signs.
10. Adults who are expected to have regular or continuing contact with minors must complete the diocesan *Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments* training and educational program.
11. All prospective and current employees, volunteers, and contractors whose service gives them direct contact with minors shall be subject to a background and reference check, including a criminal history record check as permitted by law, for any history of sexual misconduct involving minors.



12. Each volunteer providing service to minors must read and sign the Volunteer Code of Conduct before providing services. In addition to the Code of Conduct requirements, the Volunteer Code of Conduct mandates that volunteers
  - a. Treat everyone with respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration. Volunteers may not use profanity in the presence of children or youth, nor may they humiliate, ridicule, threaten, or degrade children or youth;
  - b. Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition, or comparison when working with children or youth. Volunteers shall not use any discipline that frightens or humiliates children or youth, including spanking, shaking, or slapping;
  - c. Refuse to accept expensive gifts from children or youth or their parents without prior written approval from the pastor or administrator;
  - d. Refrain from giving expensive gifts to children or youth without prior written approval from their parent or guardian and the pastor or administrator;
  - e. Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse of children or youth;
  - f. Refrain from smoking or using tobacco products in the presence of children or youth;
  - g. Refrain from using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol at any time while volunteering;
  - h. Refrain from posing any health risk to children or youth (i.e., no fevers or other contagious situations); and
  - i. Refrain from touching a child or youth in a sexual or other inappropriate manner.

### **Standards for Technology Usage**

13. Technology usage includes without limitation the following:
  - a. Church and Ministry Websites
  - b. Social Networking Websites
  - c. Email and Text/Instant Messaging
  - d. Blogging
  - e. Online Video and Chat Rooms
  - f. Registration Technologies and Securing Private Information
14. Parishes, schools, and Diocesan organizations that directly minister to minors should develop and implement policies and procedures for technology usage that strike a balance between safety and pastoral effectiveness. These policies should be guided by three essential values –
  - a. Prudence – weighing the merit of the technology in light of pastoral effectiveness and potential risks
  - b. Reasonableness – is usage of the technology practical for the ministry?
  - c. Transparency – All communications and actions are open to the scrutiny of others; policies for usage are clear, intelligible, and observable.
15. Electronic communications with minors should not be undertaken lightly. All employees, volunteers, contractors, religious and clergy must always adhere to Catholic values and transparency with respect to such communications.



16. Adult ministers should establish separate social networking sites and webpages for personal and professional use. Separate email accounts should also be maintained for professional/church and personal communications.
17. Professional, ministry-based blogs should only be utilized to promote upcoming events or programs and for the purpose of evangelization and providing resources and information specific to the ministry setting.
18. Parents/guardians must have access to everything provided to their children and be made aware of how social media is being used, be told how to access the sites, and be given the opportunity to be copied on all material sent to their children via social networking (including emails and text messages).
  - a. Parent/guardian consent needs to be obtained when communicating by email, texting and/or instant messaging with minors.
  - b. Public websites administered by parishes, schools, Diocesan organizations, etc. should not contain personal and/or contact information about minors.
  - c. Written permission from a parent or guardian must be obtained prior to posting photographs, or other identifying information, of minors on websites.
  - d. When posting videos online, extreme care must be taken to protect the privacy of minors; such videos should only be utilized to advertise ministry-related events and activities.
19. Care should always be taken to maintain professionalism and appropriate boundaries with all forms of communication.
  - a. Email, texting, and instant messaging should only be used with matters that deal with an individual's professional relationship. There should be absolutely NO personal exchanges.
  - b. Always avoid any communication that might be construed as having inappropriate sexual or romantic overtones. Do NOT reply to any such email from a minor. Instead, make a copy of the inappropriate communication and immediately notify your supervisor.
  - c. Always copy parents/guardians on messages sent to minors.
  - d. Streaming video should be used only for education, communication, and promotional purposes within the context of the ministry setting. At no time is one-on-one video or chat room interaction appropriate between adults and minors.
20. Employees, volunteers, contractors, religious and clergy who provide pastoral counseling or spiritual direction services must avoid developing inappropriately intimate relationships with minors, other staff, or parishioners.



## Harassment

21. All employees, volunteers, contractors, religious and clergy shall provide a professional work environment that is free from physical, psychological, written, or verbal intimidation or harassment. Harassment encompasses a broad range of physical, written, or verbal behavior, including without limitation the following:
  - a. Physical or mental abuse.
  - b. Racial insults.
  - c. Derogatory ethnic slurs.
  - d. Unwelcome sexual advances or touching.
  - e. Sexual comments or sexual jokes.
  - f. Requests for sexual favors used as a condition of employment or to affect other personnel decisions, such as promotion or compensation.
  - g. Display of offensive materials
22. Sexual harassment by, or of anyone while performing work for the Church, whether paid or volunteer, is strictly prohibited. Sexual harassment is unacceptable in the workplace itself and in other work-related settings such as business trips, court appearances and business-related social events.
23. Individuals who believe they are being harassed are encouraged to firmly and promptly notify the offender that their behavior is unwelcome and inappropriate.
24. If such informal, direct communication is either ineffective or impossible, the individual should report the harassment to:
  - a. Any member of the Diocesan Review Board.
  - b. Their supervisor.

## Ethical or Professional Misconduct

All employees, volunteers, contractors, religious and clergy must hold each other accountable for maintaining the highest ethical and professional standards. When there is an indication of illegal actions by anyone within this category, immediately notify the proper civil authorities and the person in charge of the facility or a designated delegate.

25. When it appears that employees, volunteers, contractors and clergy have violated diocesan policies or other religious, moral, or ethical principles,
  - a. Report such issue(s) to a supervisor or next higher authority; or,
  - b. Refer the matter directly to the Office of the Bishop, or the person in charge of the facility, or a designated delegate.
26. When an uncertainty exists about whether a situation or course of conduct violates diocesan policies or other religious, moral, or ethical principles consult with
  - a. Peers;
  - b. Others knowledgeable about ethical issues; or,
  - c. The Office of the Bishop or person in charge of the facility, or a designated delegate.



## **Sexual Misconduct**

27. Religious and clergy who are committed to a celibate lifestyle are called to be an example of celibate chastity in all relationships at all times.
28. Sexual misconduct by employees, volunteers, contractors, religious and clergy is strictly prohibited.
29. Sexual misconduct means any sexual conduct that is contrary to the doctrine and moral teaching of the Catholic Church and Canon Law and any sexual conduct prohibited by the laws of the State of Hawaii, including sexual harassment, sexual abuse, and sexual exploitation.
30. Sexual misconduct by employees, volunteers, contractors, religious and clergy should be taken seriously and reported to the person in charge of the facility or a designated delegate and to the civil authorities if the situation involves a minor.
31. In cases involving the sexual abuse of a minor or vulnerable adult, the person in charge of the facility or designated delegate who receives the complaint shall immediately notify the appropriate public agency and the Bishop, or, in the event of his temporary absence, the Vicar General. In all other cases, the person receiving the complaint shall immediately refer the complaint to an investigation team appointed by the Bishop, or, in the event of his temporary absence, the Vicar General.
32. Employees, volunteers, contractors, religious and clergy should review and know the contents of the child abuse regulations and reporting requirements for the State of Hawaii and should follow those mandates.



**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICIES  
AND CODE OF CONDUCT AGREEMENT**

Our children are the most important gifts God has entrusted to us. I promise to strictly follow the rules and standards in this Code of Conduct as a condition of my providing services to the children and youth of our diocese.

**I WILL:**

- Treat everyone with respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration.
- Avoid situations where I am alone with children and/or youth at church activities.
- Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition, or comparison when working with children and/or youth.
- Refuse to accept expensive gifts from children and/or youth or their parents or guardians without prior written approval from the pastor or administrator.
- Refrain from giving expensive gifts to children and/or youth without prior approval from the parents or guardians, pastor, or administrator.
- Report suspected abuse to the pastor, administrator, or appropriate supervisor, and the local Child Protection Services agency. I understand that failure to report suspected abuse to civil authorities is, according to the law, a petty misdemeanor.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse of children and/or youth.

**I WILL NOT:**

- Smoke or use tobacco products in the presence of children and/or youth while volunteering.
- Use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol at any time while volunteering.
- Use, possess, or be under the influence of illegal drugs at any time.
- Acquire, possess and/or distribute pornography, including but not limited to child pornography, when working in the ministry setting.
- Pose any health risk to children and/or youth (i.e., no fever or other contagious situations).
- Strike, spank, shake, or slap children and/or youth.
- Humiliate, ridicule, threaten, or degrade children and/or youth.
- Touch a child and/or youth in a sexual or other inappropriate manner.
- Use any discipline that frightens or humiliates children and/or youth.
- Use profanity in the presence of children and/or youth.

I understand that in working with children and/or youth, I am subject to a thorough background check including criminal history as permitted by law. I understand that any action inconsistent with this Code of Conduct or failure to take action mandated by this Code of Conduct may result in my removal from working with children and/or youth.

I have read the Diocesan Safe Environment policies, including this Code of Conduct Agreement, and understand all stated rules and standards. By signing below, I acknowledge receipt of the Diocesan Safe Environment policies and agree to abide by all terms of this Code of Conduct Agreement.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Print Name**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Signature**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_