

**MANDATES FOR ALL PARISH AND SCHOOL
CATECHETICAL AND YOUTH MINISTRY LEADERS IN THE
ARCHDIOCESE OF SAN ANTONIO
CERTIFICATE YEAR 2011-2012**

1. ARCHDIOCESAN SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY

All parish and school staff and all volunteer personnel in any capacity **must** view the Archdiocese of San Antonio Sexual Misconduct Policy video and read the policy booklet before they begin their ministry. **There are no exceptions!**

All employees and volunteers must also sign and complete the Archdiocesan Sexual Misconduct Certificate. For booklets, please call the Human Resources Office at 210-734-2620, ext. 1163.

2. CRIMINAL BACKGROUND SEARCH POLICY

The policy of the Archdiocese of San Antonio requires that criminal background searches be conducted on all clergy and employees. Criminal background searches must also be conducted on all volunteers who directly minister, work or volunteer with minors and/or vulnerable persons. No other criminal background searches are acceptable in lieu of the Archdiocesan criminal background search.

Employees and volunteers are asked to complete the ***Criminal Background Search Authorization and Release Form***. Refusal to sign and complete this form will result in immediate termination and/or suspension of services.

Criminal background searches will be conducted on all new employees and new volunteers who directly minister, work, or volunteer with minors and/or vulnerable persons and updated every three years on existing employees and volunteers.

3. CHILD ABUSE

It is a legal requirement that anyone who is aware of or suspects that a child (anyone under the age of 18 yrs) is being abused must report this incident to the proper authorities. Please follow guidelines outlined in the **Archdiocese of San Antonio Sexual Misconduct Policy**. Professionals are required to report within 48 hours by calling 800-252-5400. Do not probe for information. If you are concerned and can provide the name and address of the child, **CALL**. Child Protective Services or Law Enforcement will investigate.

4. The Office of Victim Assistance & Safe Environment (OVASE) was created in order to provide pastoral healing for anyone who has been abused by clergy, church staff, or church volunteer. OVASE provides free counseling and/or referrals to anyone who has been abused. Please contact the office for information or for assistance at 210-734-7786 or 1-877-700-1888.

5. OVASE- Safe Environment Education

Per the USCCB, it is mandated that all adults who minister to children must receive Safe Environment Training. The training for adults is good for three years. All children and youth enrolled in religious education or in Catholic schools must also receive Safe Environment Training. Children and youth must be trained on a yearly basis. Every parish and Catholic school has assigned a Safe Environment Coordinator who is in charge of training adults and educating them on how to protect children and youth. In addition, the data on dates and numbers instructed must be reported to coordinators for audit purposes. For questions on the training process or to identify your Safe Environment Coordinator, contact Steve Martinez at 210-734-7786.

6. PERMISSION SLIP REQUIREMENTS

All children under the age of eighteen (18) must have a permission slip signed by their parents or legal guardian **yearly** for the following:

- a. Consent Forms for medical treatment
- b. Field Trip Permission Slips
- c. Permission to meet in homes or locations outside of church premises.
*An adult, not a family member, other than the homeowners must be present at all classes.
*Homeowners must have some type of Liability Insurance.
- d. Permission to participate in other church related functions not specifically related to Religious Education.
Sample forms may be obtained from the Archdiocesan Catechetical Center or the Office of Youth Ministry.

7. FIELD TRIP PACKETS

Make sure you have obtained the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the **custodial** parents or guardians. It is especially important to obtain all the necessary information on Field Trips, Weekend Retreats and activities off church property. Field Trip Guide packets can be obtained from Risk Management Office. Please review Field Trip memo of 5-28-98.

8. **CATECHIST POLICY**

- a. All classrooms must have at least one adult teacher or catechist (18 yrs or older) present at all times. Anyone under the age of 18 should never be left alone with children.
- b. There should always be adult supervision before and after all classes, regardless of the ages of the children. Proper procedure will be indicated by each location. Catechists should not transport children home.
- c. If possible, two adults should be together at all times, when working with children as protection against allegations of misconduct.

9. **INSURANCE**

If you have a written contract or agreement with a retreat center or camp, please forward a copy of the contract or agreement to our office as soon as possible. Please contact Risk Management before you purchase any outside insurance for Retreats, Field Trips, etc. This coverage may already be in force. All Adult Volunteers, Students, and Religious Education Students are now covered under a blanket policy.

10. **ARCHDIOCESAN DRIVER POLICY**

Any employee or volunteer who drives an Archdiocesan owned or leased vehicle must have an Archdiocesan Driving Permit (renewal every three years) and must attend an approved Defensive Driving Class (within a year of employment). **10 to 15 passenger vans are prohibited from being used to transport children. Drivers must be at least 21 years of age to transport children.** If a volunteer drives a personal vehicle for church sponsored activities or business, then the individual must carry proper insurance requirements and must fill out the **Volunteer Driver Information Sheet** that is available through the Office of Risk Management.

11. **COPYRIGHT INFORMATION**

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210-734-2620 ext. 1202



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San Antonio, TX 78228
210-734-1625

Office of Risk Management
2718 W. Woodlawn
San Antonio, TX 78228
210-431-3465



Office of Victim Assistance and Safe Environment
St. Paul Community Center; Annex Building
1201 Donaldson (at St. Cloud)
San Antonio, Texas 78228
210-734-7786



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