

Archdiocese of San Antonio Procedures for Reporting Abuse

If you have knowledge or suspicion that a child has been abused/neglected by a family member or stranger call CPS at 1-800-252-5400 or local law enforcement. A report can also be made online at www.txabusehotline.org

If you or someone you know has been a victim of sexual abuse by a priest, deacon, or other church personnel and you wish to file a complaint:

- Contact the Office of Victim Assistance & Safe Environment at (210) 734-7786, or 1-877-700-1888, or email: ovase@archsa.org.
- *You have the right to contact law enforcement or CPS at any time.*
- All calls or emails will be responded to within 48 hours.
- The Office of Victim Assistance & Safe Environment will ask for the following information:
 - The nature of the alleged abuse
 - The name and age of the victim at the time of the alleged abuse
 - The age of the victim at the time of the report
 - Contact information for the victim
 - The name of the alleged perpetrator
 - The date(s), time(s), location(s), and frequency of the abuse
- Non clergy cases are forwarded to an agency supervisor or to the Human Resources Dept.
 - Investigations will be handled on a local level
- For cases involving a member of the clergy:
 - A written report will be created and forwarded to the Archbishop or his designee.
 - The Office of Victim Assistance & Safe Environment will provide follow-up services including but not limited to counseling and spiritual guidance.
 - *The victim has the right to contact a lawyer at any time during this process.*
 - The Archbishop or his designee will offer to meet with the victim.
 - The Archbishop or his designee will contact the District Attorney.
 - The Archbishop will notify the Archdiocesan Review Board; who will then notify an investigator.
 - The investigator will report all findings to the ARB.
 - Based upon their investigation, the ARB will make a recommendation to the Archbishop.
 - This recommendation will state if the allegation is credible and requires further actions.
 - If the allegation is considered credible:
 - A full investigation will be conducted according to Canon Law
 - The alleged perpetrator will be suspended from ministry
 - The faith community will be notified
 - If the perpetrator is cleared, he/her will be returned to ministry and their name will be restored
 - If the perpetrator is not cleared, then he/she will be permanently removed from ministry
- For any allegation, the Archdiocese will offer immediate assistance
 - Professional counseling services will be offered to the alleged victim
 - The professional counseling service will be offered through a list of approved providers
 - The alleged victim may choose his/her own counselor after approval by the Archdiocese
 - The Archdiocese will require progress reports from the counselor on a monthly basis for continued payment of service

Seeing to the welfare of victims is a primary duty of the Archdiocese of San Antonio when confronted with evidence of abuse. We are committed to providing respect, confidentiality, and pastoral healing to all who have experienced abuse by the clergy.