



# Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux

## AUDIT FORM

Safe Environment Audit Visit and  
Required Documentation for Audit Year  
July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020

Location Name/City \_\_\_\_\_  Church  School

Safe Environment Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_

phone: \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_

**Audit Date: July 1, 2019** - \_\_\_\_\_ (The end date is the date you count your Audit Totals, it can be any day between May 15, 2020 – June 30, 2020. Catholic Schools should complete this form before the end of the current school year.)

### Safe Environment Training Certificates

Ministry Category	Certificates Issued
<b>Church Parishes &amp; other Entities, complete this section</b>	
Priests, diocesan or religious <i>(including in residence)</i>	
Deacons and/or Deacon Candidates	
Women and/or Men Religious	
Commissioned Acolytes	
Parish Staff (paid)	
Parents/Volunteers	
<b>Catholic Schools, complete this section</b>	
Women and/or Men Religious	
School Support Staff (paid)	
Educators (paid)	
Contract Personnel (paid)	
Parents/Volunteers	
<b>Total</b>	

### Circle of Grace (grades K-12)

Total # of Students in Class	Total Trained	Total Not Trained	Total Opt Out

<b>Audit Checklist</b>	<b>Church/School SEC</b> <i>(self-reporting)</i>		<b>Diocesan Audit Visit</b>	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Audit Form Complete (2 pages)				
Documentation: Supporting Ministry Category Totals				
Documentation: Supporting Circle of Grace Totals				
Documentation: copies of Bulletin/Webpage posting Outreach Information				
Safe Environment files are locked				
Safe Environment Files are complete and in order				
Reporting Posters posted in conspicuous places				
Staff understands reporting procedures				
Mandated Reporting flyer or brochure available to all volunteers and staff (website, email, printed)				
Attach a response/description for all <b>No</b> responses				

I verify that we, to the best of our ability, have acquired all documentation and implemented programs required by the USCCB and the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux for the Safe Environment program. We hold all clergy, employees and volunteer's accountable to the standards of our Diocesan Code of Professional Conduct.

I also confirm that we have implemented the *Circle of Grace* Program for our catechetical students grades K – 12. This program is deemed by Bishop Fabre to be in accord with Catholic moral principles.

**Signatures:**

Location SEC: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Pastor or School Principal: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

***Fax or Email before June 30, 2020 (985-850-3240 or mohmer@htdiocese.org)***

*Diocesan SEC will sign when audit visit is conducted:*

Diocesan SEC: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Safe Environment Tracking and Filing System

It is important to set aside a space and determine how your location will track volunteers/employees and the necessary paperwork. Below is a **SAMPLE** layout of a filing system. Please remember the following:


- Files, boxes, folders and binders must be kept in a secure locked location. Keep a list of all individuals that have access to the area where the files are kept.
- The following forms are kept in digital form for the Diocesan Child and Youth Protection Office:
  - Criminal Background Checks
  - Acknowledgement of the Code of Conduct and Behavior Standards
  - Safe and Sacred Training Completion Certificate

### **Section 1: Office Documents**

- Blank forms/handouts (Volunteer Ministry Application, Mandated Reporter brochure, etc...)
- Audit Documentation:
  - Audit Form with supporting documentation (see form for description)
  - Verified lists of Volunteers for youth events (include date and event name)
  - Circle of Grace Totals
  - Copies of Bulletin & website with Safe Environment announcements (at least quarterly)
  - List of trainings, meetings, articles, workshops attended and sponsored (continuing education) related to Safe Environment

### **Section 2: Safe Environment Applicant Files**

- Pending folder for incomplete applicants
- Complete Applicant file
  - Alphabetical Order (last name)
  - Volunteer Ministry Application (with references initialed and dated)
  - Optional, Safe Environment Certificate (all SEC's can access online)
  - Any other documents applicable to the volunteer

 The online Safe and Sacred database should be the first place you should go to view an applicant's SE status. It is kept up-to-date by all SECs.

### **Section 3: Old Safe Environment Files**

- Past Audit Forms and Documentation
- Expired training files
- USCCB recommends that all files should be kept indefinitely.

# PROMISE TO PROTECT



# PLEDGE TO HEAL

BELIEVE IN THE POSSIBILITY OF HELP AND HEALING. THERE IS HOPE.

## Reporting Child Abuse

If abuse is within the home or by a licensed Daycare staff:

- ▶ LA Dept. of Children and Family Services, 1-855-452-5437

If abuse is outside of the home::

- ▶ Local City or Sheriff's Department

If the accused is a priest, deacon, religious brother or sister, seminarian, employee or volunteer of a Diocesan Office, Catholic school, or Church parish in the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux, call the Outreach Line (985) 873-0026 or the Victims' Assistance Coordinator, Sister Carmelita, after it has been reported to the local police or Sheriff's Department.

- ▶ Victims' Assistance Coordinator at (985) 873-0026 or (985) 850-3172

**DO NOT contact the child's family if the child fears going home or you feel there is clear and imminent danger, contact law enforcement.**

**WE ARE HERE TO HELP:** In response to the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux , The Outreach Line is an effort to continue the diocesan commitment to support healing for people who have been hurt or sexually abused recently or in the past by clergy, religious or other employees of the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux.



# Mandated Reporting & Safe Environment Training

Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux  
Office of Child and Youth Protection

## Safe Environment Online Training

[safeandsacred-htdiocese.org](http://safeandsacred-htdiocese.org)

The online Safe Environment Training,  
*Protecting Children in the 21st Century*,  
includes the following:

- Background Check
- Questionnaire
- Child Abuse Course
- Boundaries Course
- Code of Professional Conduct



# PROMISE to Protect Pledge to HEAL

We all have a responsibility to  
ensure the safety of children  
in our parishes, schools, families,  
and local communities.

**Together we can help  
keep children safe.**



Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux  
Office of Child and Youth Protection  
[www.htdiocese.org](http://www.htdiocese.org)

(985) 850-3140



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# Am I a Mandated Reporter?

**YES!** (if you are 18 & over)

- Louisiana State law requires the reporting of suspected abuse if there is reasonable cause to believe/suspect that abuse has occurred. Professions that must report in the state of Louisiana are clergy, health care professionals, mental health professionals, social work professionals, education/child care professionals.
- Teachers and/or child care providers now include anyone who “assists in teaching” of a child as well as the bus driver, coach, professor, technical or vocational instructor, school staff member, college or university administrator, and college or university staff member whether the person “in a volunteer or professional capacity.”
- In other words, all volunteers are included. Organizational or youth activity providers, which means “any person who provides organized activities for children, including administrators, employees, or volunteers of any day camp, summer camp, youth center, or youth recreation program or other organization that provides organized activities for children.
- Also law enforcement professionals and commercial film and photographic print processors.
- The obligation to report now goes beyond the work day to all times!



## I Suspect Child Abuse and Neglect. What Do I Do?

The Louisiana Children’s Code (Article 610) specifies that mandated reporters shall make reports immediately upon learning of incidents of child abuse or neglect.

### If abuse is within the home or by a Licensed Daycare Staff:

Call Department of Children and Family Services

**LA Dept. of Children & Family Services**  
(24 hours a day, 7 days a week)  
**1-855-4LA-KIDS**  
(1-855-452-5437)

### If abuse is outside of the home:

Call local Police or Sheriff’s Department

**Lafourche Parish:** (985) 446-2255  
**St. Mary Parish:** (337) 828-1960  
**Terrebonne Parish:** (985) 876-2500  
**Jefferson Parish:** (504) 364-5300

**Be sure that you have as much information about the victim as possible including:**

- Name, address, age, sex, race of child
- Name of parent or guardian
- Telephone number
- Nature, extent or cause of child’s injuries or endangered condition
- Name, address and telephone of abuser if known.

## How is Abuse Defined?

Abuse refers to an intentional act committed by a person in a position of trust which harms or threatens to harm a minor’s physical or mental welfare.

### Types of Abuse

**Physical Abuse** occurs when an adult injures a child and it is not an accident.

**Neglect** is any maltreatment or negligence that harms a child’s welfare or safety.

**Emotional Abuse** occurs when an adult subjects a child to verbal assault or emotional cruelty.

**Sexual Abuse** involves sexual contact between a child and an adult or significantly older, more powerful person.

This may include direct sexual contact as well as other exploitive behaviors such as:

- inappropriate verbal stimulation;
- taking or showing sexually explicit photographs of or to a child or youth;
- Exposing a child or youth to pornography or adult sexual activity.



## National Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-4-A-CHILD

If you need help or have questions about child abuse, call the Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453) then push 1 to talk to a counselor. The hotline counselors are available 365 days a year to help kids, and adults who are worried about kids they suspect are being abused.

If the accused is Clergy (Priest, Deacon, Religious Brother or Sister or Seminarian), Employee, Volunteer in a Catholic school or Church parish in the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux call the Outreach line or the Victims’ Assistance Coordinator after it has been reported to the local police or Sheriff’s Department.

**Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux Outreach line**

**(985) 873-0026**

**Victims’ Assistance Coordinator**

**(985) 850-3172**

## **Safe Environment Bulletin & Website Announcements**

### **1. Please post in your Parish Bulletin/School Newsletter several times a year and always on your website:**

Diocesan Outreach Line

In response to the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux is offering an Outreach Line (formerly known as the Child Protection Contact Line). The Outreach Line is an effort to continue the diocesan commitment to support healing for people who have been hurt or sexually abused recently or in the past by clergy, religious or other employees of the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux.

The Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux Outreach Line operates from 8:30a.m. to 4:30p.m. Monday through Friday. A trained mental health professional responds to the line. Individuals are offered additional assistance if requested.

Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux Outreach Line Telephone numbers

(985) 873-0026 or (985) 850-3172

### **2. Suggestion: When space is limited, add the Outreach Line information to your parish bulletin in the Parish information section.**

Diocesan Outreach Line/Victims Assistance Coordinator

(985) 873-0026 or (985) 850-3172

For more info. visit [www.htdiocese.org/safe-environment](http://www.htdiocese.org/safe-environment)

### **3. Post as needed (edit wording for your location):**

Safe Environment Training

The Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux is committed to ensuring that children and youth who participate in church/school activities sponsored in our diocese can do so in the safest and most secure setting possible. In an effort to fulfill this commitment, all clergy, employees and regular volunteers are to take the online Safe Environment Training.

Your first step to completing your Safe Environment requirements is to complete the Volunteer Ministry Application (VMA) and turn it in to your Church or Catholic School. Visit our online Safe Environment Training website for the VMA Application and to begin your Safe Environment Training: <http://safeandsacred-htdiocese.org>. Once completed, your Safe Environment training is valid during a three-year cycle beginning on July 1, 2018 thru June 20, 2021.

## 4. Website Suggestions:

- A. View the [Report Abuse](#) page. (webpage)
- B. Sidebar Text (for narrow space)


### REPORTING NUMBERS

To report suspected abuse of a minor, call the  
 LA Department of Children & Family Services  
 (24/7) 1-855-452-5437

If you suspect child abuse by clergy, church officials,  
 church employees or volunteers, please also contact the  
**Victims Assistance Coordinator**  
**(985) 850-3172**

Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux Outreach Line  
 (985) 873-0026.

- C. Add a clickable version of the Mandated Reporter Flyer



**Am I a Mandated Reporter?**  
**YES!** (per LA Code)

- Licensed Child Care requires the reporting of suspected abuse. Abuse is restricted to a behavior/poison that abuse has occurred. Professionals that must report in the State of Louisiana are: clergy, health care professionals, mental health professionals, social work professionals, residential child care professionals.
- Teachers and/or child care providers who include anyone who "exists in teaching" of a child as well as the bus driver, coach, professor, technical or vocational instructor, school staff member, college or university administrator and college or university staff member whether the parties "in a classroom or professional capacity."
- In other words, all volunteers are included. Organizational or public safety providers, which means any person who provides organized activities for children including administrators, employees, or volunteers of any day camp, summer camp, youth center, or youth recreational program or other organization that provides organized activities for children.
- Also law enforcement professionals and commercial film and photography gene processes.
- The obligation to report now goes beyond the work day to all times.

**I Suspect Child Abuse and Neglect. What Do I Do?**

The Louisiana Children's Code Article 902 specifies that mandated reporters shall make reports immediately upon learning of incidents of child abuse or neglect.

**If abuse is within the home or by a Licensed Daycare Staff:**  
 Call Department of Children and Family Services  
**LA Dept. of Children & Family Services**  
 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week)  
**1-855-4LA-KIDS**  
 (1-855-452-5437)

**If abuse is outside of the home:**  
 Call Local Police or Sheriff's Department:  
 Lafayette Parish: (985) 484-1200  
 St. Mary Parish: (337) 823-1960  
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**How is Abuse Defined?**  
 Abuse refers to an intentional act committed by a person in a position of trust which causes or threatens to cause a minor's physical or mental welfare.

**Types of Abuse**

**Physical Abuse** occurs when an adult inflicts a DSD and it is not an accident. Neglect is any malnutrition or negligence that harms a child's welfare or safety.

**Sexual Abuse** occurs when an adult inflicts a DSD to sexual assault or molestation.

**Social Abuse** occurs when an adult inflicts a DSD and an adult or significantly older than general person. This may include direct or indirect acts as well as other exploitive behaviors such as:

- Inappropriate verbal statements;
- Taking or showing sexually explicit photographs of or to a child or youth;
- Dating a DSD or youth to pornography or adult rated activity.

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**1-800-A-CHILD**

If you need help or have questions about child abuse, call the Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-A-CHILD (1-800-424-4451) then push 1 to talk to a counselor. The hotline counselors are available 24 hours a day to help kids and adults who are worried about kids they suspect are being abused.

If the accused is Clergy (Priest, Deacon, Religious Brother or Sister or Seminarian), Employee, Volunteer in a Catholic school or Church parish in the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux call the Outreach line or the Victims Assistance Coordinator or what it has been reported to the local police or Sheriff's Department.

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