



Diocese of Austin

Ethics and Integrity in Ministry 101

An EIM procedures manual for
PARISH DREs and YOUTH MINISTERS

** to be used in conjunction with the Diocese of Austin *Policies on Ethics and Integrity in Ministry*

Welcome!

“Let the children come to me” (Mt 19:14). As Jesus’ disciples, we are called to continue his invitation to our young people to be part of our community. The Diocese of Austin’s Ethics and Integrity in Ministry program is intended to help our parish and Catholic school staff and volunteers provide a welcoming and safe environment for our children and others who might be vulnerable to those who wish to cause harm.

This manual explains the tasks required of specific parish and school staff members in order to be in compliance with the Diocese of Austin *Policies on Ethics and Integrity in Ministry*, as well as the USCCB *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*.

Much of this information is also available on our diocesan website, www.austindiocese.org; follow the link for Ethics and Integrity in Ministry. Please use this as a resource in your effort to support all who serve our children, youth and vulnerable adults. Contact the EIM Office at (512) 949-2447 if you have any questions or if you need assistance.

May God continue to bless you as you serve his people in so many ways.

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EIM terminology and information

EIM: Ethics and Integrity in Ministry is the program for the protection of minors and vulnerable adults in the Diocese of Austin.

EIM site administrator(s): The individual(s) designated by the pastor at a parish (or principal at a Catholic school) to manage EIM compliance at the site.

EIM compliant: An individual or site (parish, Catholic school or diocesan agency) that has completed all EIM requirements and has made a commitment to follow the EIM policies of the Diocese of Austin. EIM compliance is required of all persons who serve in any ministry, program or organization that serves youth or vulnerable adults in any manner, or which functions at a time and place where minors or vulnerable adults are typically present.

EIM requirements for individuals: Complete an Application for Ministry (which initiates a background check), attend an EIM workshop every three years and sign (electronically) a Code of Ethics form, agreeing to support and abide by the EIM policies of the Diocese of Austin.

EIM requirements for parishes or schools: Verify the EIM compliance of employees and those volunteers in service to minors or vulnerable adults. Assist with individual compliance questions. Suspend from ministry those who are not compliant until they have taken corrective steps. Schedule and promote annual *Called to Protect for Youth* workshops for sixth and ninth grade students and the *Called to Protect for Children* curriculum to educate Kindergarten through fifth grade students about age appropriate personal safety information.

Application for Ministry: MUST BE SUBMITTED prior to serving in any ministry which requires EIM compliance, the application gathers particular information about any individual who wishes to serve in any ministry requiring EIM compliance. Submission of the form can be done online (most timely and secure) or using a paper application, and grants permission to the Diocese of Austin to conduct a criminal records check.

eAppsDB: The online electronic application and database system used by the Diocese of Austin for the Ethics and Integrity in Ministry program.

EIM Workshop: On August 1, 2016, the diocese began using a new education program which replaced our previous Basic/Refresher workshop format. The workshop uses a video titled *Fulfilling Our Commitment to Heal and Protect*, as well as discussions, to explain the experience of sexual abuse of minors and to teach the skills of prevention and response. In addition, our diocesan EIM policies are reviewed throughout the program and participants receive printed material to take home for reference and further information. EIM Workshop attendance is required every three years.

Called to Protect for Youth (CTPY): A three- to four-hour safety education and abuse prevention workshop for middle parish and high parish students. The Diocese of Austin requires every parish and Catholic school to schedule CTPY workshop(s) each year for their sixth grade and ninth grade students. Students who missed the program the previous year should also be included.

Called to Protect for Children (CTPC): A safety education and abuse prevention program for Kindergarten through fifth grade students. CTPC is required to be taught annually by the religious education teacher using the CTPC curriculum and activity pages. Students in each grade complete three simple, developmentally appropriate lessons each year; the topics build sequentially at each grade level.

Site: The general term used for a parish, Catholic school or diocesan agency.

The purpose of this manual

This EIM procedures manual was created to assist those that work in parish, Catholic school and diocesan agency ministries in the Diocese of Austin in understanding and complying with the EIM policies of the diocese. By providing guidelines on “how to ‘do’ EIM” at each site, each person responsible for ensuring compliance should feel more confident in understanding their role and be able to complete their required EIM tasks. Additionally, we hope that having this information in a manual format will assist during times of transition so that ‘new folks’ will know what their responsibilities are vis-à-vis EIM policies and procedures. Regarding format, each primary site leader has a version of this document devoted to their particular EIM responsibilities. However, as the bulk of EIM compliance tasks are performed by the EIM site administrator, many details are more fully specified in the EIM site administrator version.

EIM and confidentiality

*This specific section on confidentiality should be read by **all members** of the parish staff responsible for any aspect of the EIM program.*

We are called, as members of and workers in the vineyard of the Lord, to serve one another with justice and love. However, the very fact that we have to have an Office of Ethics and Integrity in Ministry reminds us that some have abused the trust placed in them and that we must always strive to live as God calls us to.

The EIM Office is responsible for receiving and evaluating a great deal of information, and we are humbled by the trust placed in us to do so in a confidential and ethical manner. Over the years we have established and refined procedures so that EIM compliance requirements are not only as “user friendly” as possible, but also that the information provided is securely received, processed, evaluated and maintained. It is important that those of us entrusted to safeguard the information we receive treat it as we would want our own information treated.

At the site level we ask that the pastor or principal approve the individual(s) responsible for accessing sensitive EIM-related information and to help ensure that these persons understand the responsibility of confidentiality that they have in their position. Thus, at each parish or school there is at least one person assigned a User ID and Password to access the EIM database as the administrator. Only information needed to assist in verifying EIM compliance is accessible to those individuals assigned a User ID/Password. This information is to be used solely to verify EIM compliance and may not be discussed with anyone, other than the pastor/principal, for any other purpose. NOTE: the pastor or principal is the only person at the site who will receive specific information from the diocesan EIM Office about an individual regarding any issue pertaining to a background check or decision about compliance, and he or she may not discuss these specifics with any other person.

Following these guidelines, we will work together to achieve our Bishop’s mandate that all who serve in any kind of ministry do so with great integrity and with the highest ethical standards. Thank you for your commitment to help keep all persons safe from preventable harm and to support our diocesan policies concerning ethics and integrity in ministry.

Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People

The charter was created by the USCCB in 2002 in response to the numerous and serious allegations made by many victims of sexual abuse by clergy over many years and was revised most recently in 2018 to re-affirm the bishops' commitment to creating a safe environment within the church for children and young people. This was a challenging time for the bishops and priests, but throughout the process of developing the charter they emphasized their commitment to the protection of children, which must also be the work of all God's people.

The first articles of the charter address the needs of victims: outreach, healing and reconciling, and procedural requirements for each diocese related to responding to an allegation of abuse. The next articles address effective response to allegations: reporting allegations to civil authorities, removing clergy (temporarily or permanently) as warranted, establishing clear and well-publicized policies regarding boundaries, and communicating about allegations in a timely and transparent manner. The next four articles specify requirements for accountability to ensure the church is doing what it says it is doing. The final articles address issues of collaboration with various entities to help prevent harm from coming to children in the future.

Articles 12 and 13 most immediately affect the lay faithful, and the workings of our local church, because they address the training and background check requirements. These are the foundation for most of the policies and procedures that have been developed in our diocese since 2002. Please go to <http://www.usccb.org/ocyp/charter.pdf> to read the full text of the charter.

The Charter concludes with this message from the bishops:

*Let there be no doubt
or confusion on anyone's part:
For us, your bishops, our obligation to
protect children and young people and
to prevent sexual abuse flows
from the mission and example
given to us by Jesus Christ himself,
in whose name we serve.*

Since the charter was established, part of the accountability has been the completion of an audit every year by each diocese in the U. S. The audit is conducted by an outside firm and uses a standard audit instrument to ensure uniform information collection throughout the country. Within the diocese each parish and school completes an annual EIM Self Audit to help evaluate strengths and challenges.

Ethics and Integrity in Ministry for parishes and Catholic schools

The parish pastor or Catholic school principal is ultimately responsible for the compliance of the parish or schools with all Ethics and Integrity and Ministry policies. A pastor or principal that is supportive of the EIM program emphasizes to all members – clergy, educators and lay paid and volunteer persons – the importance of working together to ensure the safety of all youth and vulnerable individuals in the parish or school community. He or she sets an expectation of high standards of ethical and moral conduct for all parishioners or members of the school community, and that the integrity of those who lead and serve should be above reproach.

The pastor or principal typically designates a trusted, responsible member of their staff to implement the day-to-day tasks of EIM compliance. This person is called the EIM site administrator. But these are not the only individuals responsible for ensuring EIM compliance at a site. Additional partners in the EIM program are the director or coordinator of the religious education program and the youth minister at the parish, and perhaps the vice principal or religion coordinator at the school. The pastor or principal may also designate other or additional persons to assist with implementing the EIM program. Finally, the diocesan EIM Office is a valuable resource and is available to assist in implementation of EIM policies and procedures.

EIM compliance requirements for all clergy, paid staff and volunteers

Instated on Jan. 1, 2002, and revised in September 2018, Section 4 of Diocese of Austin Policies on Ethics and Integrity in Ministry requires the following adult individuals to maintain EIM compliance: clergy; seminarians and deacon aspirants and candidates; religious brothers and sisters; employees of any parish, Catholic school, or other diocesan agency; independent contractors who regularly provide services where minors, elderly adults, or adults with disabilities may be present; members of any Catholic school board; pastoral council members; finance council members; EIM Review Board members; any person who is considered to be a leader of a ministry, program, or organization; members of any independent Catholic organization that may serve youth of a parish, Catholic school, or other diocesan agency, even if the primary function of the organization is not necessarily to serve youth (e.g., ladies or men's clubs, Catholic Daughters of America, Knights of Columbus, Knights of Peter Claver, and organizations promoting vocations); and, individuals who serve in any ministry, program, or organization that provides services to or at which minors, elderly adults, or adults with disabilities may be present, including but not limited to: (1) any activity in a Catholic school; (2) religious education; (3) youth ministry; (4) parish nursery and mother's day out or pre-school programs; (5) parish or school sponsored scouting groups; (6) homeschooling organizations that use church property; (7) liturgical ministries (e.g., hospitality, ushers, extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, lectors, choir, or music ministry); (8) homebound ministry; (9) St. Vincent de Paul Society conferences; and (10) hospital ministry; and, any other individual as required by a pastor, principal, or director of a diocesan agency (e.g., requiring EIM compliance of all who engage in any type of ministry).

Visit eappsdb.com/austin to complete the online Application for Ministry, to update an existing EIM account or to sign up to attend an EIM Workshop (required at least once every three years throughout individual's service in ministry).

EIM responsibilities for the DRE

DRE CHECKLIST

Details about the tasks included on this summary list are explained more fully in the next section.

- I. Maintain your own **EIM compliance** – attend an EIM Workshop as needed.
- II. Verify **EIM compliance** of all catechists. Remind all catechists to maintain EIM compliance by attending a workshop every 3 years.
- III. Schedule the ***Called to Protect for Children*** program each year for K-5th grade students and complete and submit the CTPC Program Report upon program completion.
- IV. Schedule the ***Called to Protect for Youth*** workshop each year for 6th and 9th grade students (if responsible for these grades) and complete and submit the CTPY Program Report upon completion).
- V. **Report** suspected cases of abuse to the civil authorities and complete a Notice of Concern to document actions taken by you/the parish and to address matters to be reviewed by the diocese.

I & II. EIM COMPLIANCE – DRE AND CATECHISTS

- A. Maintain your personal EIM compliance; complete the EIM Application for Ministry (one time only) and attend an EIM workshop every three years.
- B. ALL adult religious education volunteers MUST be EIM compliant all the time. Before they begin any work with minors, volunteers must submit the EIM Application for Ministry which permits the diocese to run a background check and creates their EIM account. Applicants must attend an EIM Workshop within 60 days of submitting the application, and every three years thereafter.
- C. At the beginning of each school year, and at other times when there may be volunteer turnover (i.e. 2nd semester/spring session), verify EIM compliance of all catechists and other RE volunteers. Your parish EIM site administrator can assist you with verifying compliance of your members and providing a list of those to notify who are due to attend an EIM Workshop or who need to complete any part of the EIM process.
- D. Screen potential catechists as needed. In cases where there is a question about an applicant based on the criminal background check or other issues, the DRE should complete the interview and reference check procedures and review these results with the pastor prior to approving the applicant for ministry at the parish.
- E. EIM Workshops are scheduled based on requests by parishes/schools and are available across the diocese throughout the year. **It is critical to encourage catechists and other volunteers to regularly monitor their own EIM compliance and plan ahead to attend a workshop before becoming ****non-compliant**** (past due). Volunteers may not serve if they are non-compliant.** Please coordinate with your EIM site administrator to schedule a workshop if needed for your catechists.

III. *Called to Protect for Children (CTPC)*

As Catholics, we believe that every human being is created in the image and likeness of God. CTPC is the safety education piece of our diocesan Ethics and Integrity in Ministry program designed specifically for elementary grade students K-5. Go to the austindiocese.org/parish-admin for important information about CTPC.

- A. Since the 2009-2010 schoolyear, every parish and Catholic school in the Diocese of Austin is required to teach the CTPC program annually to all Kindergarten through fifth grade students. This is not an optional parish/school program; active promotion of the CTPC program impresses upon parents that you believe it is important that we do all we can to help keep children safe from preventable harm.
- B. In three brief sessions (15-20 minutes) per grade, per year, the catechist provides students with basic understanding about rules appropriate touch, boundaries, how to respond to uncomfortable situations and introduces technology safety. The specific grade level lessons should be provided to catechists with adequate time for them to prepare to teach the lessons. Contact the EIM Office if your parish needs to purchase a CTPC binder.
- C. *Called to Protect for Children* is not part of the human sexuality or religion curriculum in our parishes and is not to replace the catechetical curriculum in parish religious education programs. CTPC should be actively promoted and students and their parents must understand the importance of safety and sexual abuse awareness and prevention education; program absence should have a valid reason. This topic cannot be taken lightly.
 - 1. Parents should be notified well in advance that the CTPC program will be taught during the year. Go to austindiocese.org/parish-admin to find the forms needed to notify parents. Initial notification should occur at the beginning of the school year; specific notification of the upcoming CTPC program should be given to 2-3 weeks prior to the program.
 - 2. Parents may come to the school to view the curriculum at a time convenient to the school staff. Due to copyright rules, they may not make/receive copies of the materials other than the parent information and worksheets (CTPC) provided. Often times the opportunity to review this information will reduce the concern and anxiety of the parent who may be uncertain about the appropriateness of the program for their child.
 - 3. After reviewing information about the program, if a parent does not want their child to participate in the CTPC or CTPY program, they should request and complete the waiver form which is found on the website. NOTE: the parish is not responsible for making special arrangements for supervision of any child that will not participate in the class because the parent has signed a waiver. The parent may have to provide supervision for their child during that time.
- D. Any parent that signs a waiver, and parents of any student that is absent for a class session, should be given the Learning Objectives page and the missed Lesson Activity sheet(s) for the appropriate grade level to review with their child. These and other parent resources can be found at austindiocese.org/parent. Students unable to attend due to illness or other unspecified absence are not required to “make up” the classes and should plan to attend the following year.
- E. Upon completion of all three sessions for all grades, the DRE should complete the CTPC Program Report. Please provide a copy of this document to your EIM site administrator for the Parish Self Audit, maintain a copy for your records (to which you should attach your attendance lists), and send a copy to the EIM Office. Signed waiver forms should be kept with your copy of the CTPC Program Report – do not send waivers, attendance lists, etc. to the EIM Office.

IV. *Called to Protect for Youth (CTPY)*

As Catholics, we believe that every human being is created in the image and likeness of God. CTPY is an interactive sexual abuse education and prevention program that gives our middle and high school students practical tools, in language and a medium they can understand, to

realize this fundamental teaching of our faith. Go to the austindiocese.org/parish-admin for important information about CTPY.

- A. Parishes and Catholic schools in the Diocese of Austin are **required to provide** the CTPY program annually for their sixth and ninth grade students; middle and high school students in other grades who are new to the school since the last CTPY workshop should also be invited.
- B. Use the CTPY request form to schedule your CTPY with the EIM Office. If you do not have a facilitator to do the program for your parish, the EIM Office will assist in finding a facilitator for your program. Due to the maturation process that occurs in these years, students should attend CTPY in both 6th and 9th grades.
 - 1. Once your CTPY request is received by the EIM Office – and a facilitator is secured for your CTPY – you will receive a confirmation by e-mail. Please reply to this e-mail if information is incorrect; otherwise the CTPY is confirmed as indicated in the email. If you do not receive a confirmation email for your CTPY within a reasonable amount of time, contact the EIM office to verify your request was received.
- C. The parish should make serious effort to schedule this program to maximize attendance; active promotion of the CTPY program impresses upon parents that you believe it is important that we do all we can to help keep children safe from preventable harm.
- D. *Called to Protect for Youth* is not part of the human sexuality or religion curriculum in our parishes and is not to replace the catechetical curriculum in parish religious education programs.
 - 1. Minors wishing to volunteer in “helper roles” are encouraged to attend a CTPY workshop. They do not complete the EIM process until they turn 18 and are not to be placed in positions where they are solely responsible for supervising other minors.
- E. Although CTPY attendance is not required for student participation in ministry, students and their parents must understand the importance of safety and sexual abuse awareness and prevention education; program absence should be for a valid reason. This topic should not be taken lightly, and attendance should be strongly encouraged and expected.
 - 1. Parents should be notified well in advance that CTPY will be taught during the year. Go to austindiocese.org/parish-admin to find the forms needed to notify parents. Initial notification should occur at the beginning of the school year; specific notification of the upcoming CTPY should be given to 2-3 weeks prior to the program.
 - 2. Depending on availability of the CTPY facilitator, a parent preview of CTPY may be provided upon request.
 - 3. After reviewing information about the program, if a parent does not want their child to participate in CTPY, they should request and complete the waiver form which is found on the website. NOTE: the parish is not responsible for making special arrangements for supervision of any child that will not participate in the class because the parent has signed a waiver. The parent may have to provide supervision for their child during that time.
- F. Any parent that signs a waiver, and parents of any student that is absent for a class session, should be given the ‘How can I reinforce the message with my children?’ handout (CTPY) to review with their child. These and other parent resources can be found at austindiocese.org/parent. Students unable to attend due to illness or other unspecified absence are not required to “make up” the classes and should plan to attend the following year.
- G. Upon completion of all three sessions for all grades, the DRE should complete the CTPY Program Report. Please provide a copy of this document to your EIM site administrator for the Parish Self Audit, maintain a copy for your records (to which you should attach your

attendance lists), and send a copy to the EIM Office. Signed waiver forms should be kept with your copy of the CTPC Program Report – do not send waivers, attendance lists, etc. to the EIM Office.

NOTE: It is recognized that many parishes in the diocese do not have a full-time youth minister for high school religious education or may have a youth minister primarily responsible for organizing social and service-oriented programs and that the DRE is responsible for catechesis for these students. In these situations, the DRE is responsible for EIM compliance for the youth ministry program at the parish. This includes scheduling the CTPY workshop and completing and submitting the CTPY Program Report to the EIM site administrator and the EIM Office.

EIM responsibilities for the youth minister

Youth minister CHECKLIST

Details about the tasks included on this summary list are explained more fully in the next section.

- I. Maintain your own **EIM compliance** – attend an EIM Workshop as needed.
- II. Verify **EIM compliance** of all youth ministry catechists. Remind all catechists to maintain EIM compliance by attending a workshop every 3 years.
- III. Schedule the ***Called to Protect for Youth*** workshop each year for 9th grade students (and 6th grade if responsible for middle school) and complete and submit the CTPY Program Report.
- IV. **Report** suspected cases of abuse to the civil authorities and complete a Notice of Concern to document actions taken by you/the parish and to address matters to be reviewed by the diocese.

I & II. EIM COMPLIANCE – YOUTH MINISTERS/CATECHISTS

- A. Maintain your personal EIM compliance; complete the EIM Application for Ministry (one time only) and attend an EIM workshop every three years.
- B. ALL adult youth ministry catechists MUST be EIM compliant all the time. Before they begin any work with minors, volunteers must submit the EIM Application for Ministry which permits the diocese to run a background check and creates their EIM account. Applicants must attend an EIM Workshop within 60 days of submitting the application, and every three years thereafter.
- C. At the beginning of each school year and other times when there may be volunteer turnover (i.e. 2nd semester/spring session) and well before retreats, DCYC, etc., verify EIM compliance of all catechists and other RE volunteers. Your parish EIM site administrator can assist you with verifying compliance of your members and providing a list of those to notify who are due to attend an EIM Workshop or who need to complete any part of the EIM process.
- D. Screen potential catechists as needed. In cases where there is a question about an applicant based on the criminal background check or other issues, the DRE should complete the interview and reference check procedures and review these results with the pastor prior to approving the applicant for ministry at the parish.
- E. EIM Workshops are scheduled based on requests by parishes/schools and are available across the diocese throughout the year. It is critical to encourage catechists and other

volunteers to regularly monitor their own EIM compliance and plan ahead to attend a workshop before becoming ****non-compliant**** (past due). Volunteers may not serve if they are non-compliant. Please coordinate with your EIM site administrator to schedule a workshop if needed for your catechists.

III. *Called to Protect for Youth (CTPY)*

As Catholics, we believe that every human being is created in the image and likeness of God. CTPY is an interactive sexual abuse education and prevention program that gives our middle and high school students practical tools, in language and a medium they can understand, to realize this fundamental teaching of our faith. Go to the austindioocese.org/parish-admin for important information about CTPY.

- A. Parishes and Catholic schools in the Diocese of Austin are **required to provide** the CTPY program annually for their sixth and ninth grade students; middle and high school students in other grades who are new to the school since the last CTPY workshop should also be invited.
- B. Use the CTPY request form to schedule your CTPY with the EIM Office. If you do not have a facilitator to do the program for your parish, the EIM Office will assist in finding a facilitator for your program. Due to the maturation process that occurs in these years, students should attend CTPY in both 6th and 9th grades.
 1. Once your CTPY request is received by the EIM Office – and a facilitator is secured for your CTPY – you will receive a confirmation by e-mail. Please reply to this e-mail if information is incorrect; otherwise the CTPY is confirmed as indicated in the email. If you do not receive a confirmation email for your CTPY within a reasonable amount of time, contact the EIM office to verify your request was received.
- C. The parish should make serious effort to schedule this program to maximize attendance; active promotion of the CTPY program impresses upon parents that you believe it is important that we do all we can to help keep children safe from preventable harm.
- D. *Called to Protect for Youth* is not part of the human sexuality or religion curriculum in our parishes and is not to replace the catechetical curriculum in parish religious education programs.
 1. Minors wishing to volunteer in “helper roles” are encouraged to attend a CTPY workshop. They do not complete the EIM process until they turn 18 and are not to be placed in positions where they are solely responsible for supervising other minors.
- E. Although CTPY attendance is not required for student participation in ministry, students and their parents must understand the importance of safety and sexual abuse awareness and prevention education; program absence should be for a valid reason. This topic should not be taken lightly, and attendance should be strongly encouraged and expected.
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 2. Depending on availability of the CTPY facilitator, a parent preview of CTPY may be provided upon request.
 3. After reviewing information about the program, if a parent does not want their child to participate in CTPY, they should request and complete the waiver form which is found on the website. NOTE: the parish is not responsible for making special arrangements for supervision of any child that will not participate in the class because the parent has

signed a waiver. The parent may have to provide supervision for their child during that time.

- F. Any parent that signs a waiver, and parents of any student that is absent for a class session, should be given the ‘How can I reinforce the message with my children?’ handout (CTPY) to review with their child. These and other parent resources can be found at austindiocese.org/parent. Students unable to attend due to illness or other unspecified absence are not required to “make up” the classes and should plan to attend the following year.
- G. Upon completion of all three sessions for all grades, the DRE should complete the CTPY Program Report. Please provide a copy of this document to your EIM site administrator for the Parish Self Audit, maintain a copy for your records (to which you should attach your attendance lists), and send a copy to the EIM Office. Signed waiver forms should be kept with your copy of the CTPC Program Report – do not send waivers, attendance lists, etc. to the EIM Office.

NOTE: It is recognized that many parishes in the diocese do not have a full-time youth minister for high school religious education or may have a youth minister primarily responsible for organizing social and service-oriented programs and that the DRE is responsible for catechesis for these students. In these situations, the DRE is responsible for EIM compliance for the youth ministry program at the parish. This includes scheduling the CTPY workshop and completing and submitting the CTPY Program Report to the EIM site administrator and the EIM Office.

IV. REPORTING ABUSE OR AN EIM VIOLATION

- A. Due to the nature of the topic of abuse, it is possible during the course of any of our education programs that an individual may recognize that they are a victim, or know a victim, and might need support. It is recommended that you determine what counseling resources you might have within your parish community and encourage those persons to be available during EIM programs in case of need. The EIM Office is able to suggest resources or provide assistance.
 - 1. If a minor discloses that they are being (or have been) abused, or you suspect abuse, you (or the person to whom they disclose) are required by law to report this information within 48 hours to the TX Department of Family and Protective Services. TDFPS maintains a 24-hour abuse hotline at (800) 252-5400; or a report may be made on their website at www.dfps.state.tx.us.
 - 2. The minor may be reluctant to tell you about their situation. It is important to listen openly, but you must notify them at the beginning that you will have to make a report to authorities to ensure that the abuse stops – you can’t keep this secret. This may be difficult, but it is an important step in beginning the healing process. You are not responsible for any investigation.
- B. The process for reporting concerns and/or allegations of any EIM violation, including abuse, are specified in the EIM policies. A copy of the current policies should be available at the parish/school and may be found at austindiocese.org/eim-policies.
- C. A Notice of Concern should be completed for any allegation of abuse or policy violation. This assists the individual with the concern to clearly describe the situation or occurrence. The Notice of Concern may be found on the EIM page of the diocesan website.

Visit austindiocese.org/eim-policies for additional guidance on EIM matters.