



Diocese of Davenport

Office of the Bishop

TO: All Clergy, Employees and Volunteers
FROM: Most Rev. Thomas R. Zinkula, Bishop of Davenport
RE: Safe Environment
DATE: July 1, 2021

+ T.R.Z.

On June 14, 2002, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops approved a Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. The Charter addresses the Church's commitment to deal appropriately and effectively with cases of sexual abuse of minors by clergy and other Church personnel. The abuse of minors by anyone serving the Church in ministry, employment or a volunteer position, whether the sexual abuse was recent or occurred many years ago, will not be tolerated. The bishops have committed themselves to the pastoral and spiritual care and emotional wellbeing of those who have been sexually abused and of their families.

In addition, the bishops work with parents, civil authorities, educators and various organizations in the community to create and maintain the safest environment for minors and vulnerable/dependent adults.

The solution to this problem must involve the whole Church. Our policies and procedures reflect the Diocese of Davenport's continuing efforts to provide for the safety of the people among whom it carries on its pastoral mission, while protecting the reputation and dignity of clerics and others who may be subject to inaccurate or false allegations. The Diocese upholds the highest ethical standards for its members and personnel and strives to maintain safe environments for its people.

The Safe Environment Program encompasses the following:

- Diocesan Safe Environment website: <http://www.davenportdiocese.org/safe-environment>
- Local Safe Environment designee at each parish/school in the Diocese
- Background checks and credit checks (at hiring/engagement, every 5 years or when a person changes role)
- Acknowledgment of Diocesan Policies (at hiring/engagement, every 5 years or when a policy changes)
- Adult Training for those working with minors and/or vulnerable adults (at hiring/engagement and annual recertification)
- Safe Environment Curriculum for K-12 children in parish programs or Catholic schools
- Diocesan Policies Relating to Sexuality and Personal Behavior
- Support from diocesan staff

Who is required to complete the Safe Environment Program?

Priests · Deacons · Candidates for Ordination · Seminarians · Deacon Formation Aspirants · All parish and school employees working with minors and or vulnerable adults · Pastoral Associates · Principals · Administrators · School Teachers · DREs · Youth Ministers · Employed Coaches · School Aides left alone with minors · Host Parents · Safe Environment Local Designees · Overnight Chaperones · Scout Leaders · Knights of Columbus Leaders

To be compliant means:

- All required personnel are registered in VIRTUS
- All required personnel complete a background check and or credit check and agree to diocesan policy
- All required personnel complete annual video training recertification
- All K-12 children are provided instruction using the approved Safe Environment Curriculum
- Each entity has submitted required audit documentation annually and complies with all diocesan policies

Accountability

Local designees at each entity are responsible for making sure all people in active ministry are compliant with diocesan policy. Information regarding compliance is submitted annually to the auditors.

We welcome all to be a part of our Diocese and, if compliant with diocesan policies, to be involved in ministry in our schools and/or parishes. Questions or concerns regarding our Safe Environment programs should be directed to the local Safe Environment designee of the applicable entity or the Diocesan Safe Environment Coordinator.