

Updated Policy of the Archdiocese of Atlanta Concerning the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Individuals from Sexual Abuse by Church Personnel

(REVISED August 1, 2003)

Introduction

The sexual abuse of Children and Vulnerable Individuals is reprehensible and tragic. It betrays the trust Children and Vulnerable Individuals naturally place in adults, especially those responsible for their instruction, welfare and guidance. The damage caused by sexual abuse is devastating and long lasting. It is even more tragic when its consequence is a loss of the faith that the Catholic Church has a sacred duty to foster. Sexual abuse of Children is “by every standard wrong and rightly considered a crime by society; it is also an appalling sin in the eyes of God” (Address by Pope John Paul II, to the Cardinals of United States and Conference Officers, April 23, 2002). Our obligation to protect Children and Vulnerable Individuals stems from the mission and example given to us by Jesus Christ himself, in whose name we serve.

We want to be as transparent and forthcoming as possible regarding the policies and procedures used by the Archdiocese. Our goals as an Archdiocese are to: (1) provide a safe and secure environment for the Children and Vulnerable Individuals in the Archdiocese; (2) provide for a pastoral response to victims, their families, the accused person, and the community; and (3) reduce the damage done by false accusations against Church Personnel.

Section 1. Definitions

The following words and phrases shall, for purposes of this Policy, have the following meanings:

- 1.1 Actionable. A determination by the Archbishop that an allegation is more likely than not true.
- 1.2 Administrative Leave. The status of an accused Church Personnel who has been relieved of assigned duties. The application of this term varies depending on the canonical status of the accused person and does not necessarily equate to the term as used in Canon Law.
- 1.3 Advisory Board. The board described in Section 8 of this Policy.
- 1.4 Archbishop. The canonically appointed Archbishop of Atlanta or the duly appointed Administrator in the event that, under Canon Law, the office of Archbishop is impeded or vacant. For purposes of this Policy, the Archbishop may act personally or through a designated representative.
- 1.5 Child. Any person under the age of eighteen (18) years.
- 1.6 Church Personnel. Bishops, priests, deacons, religious, lay employees and lay Volunteers involved in work for the Archdiocese.
- 1.7 Credible Allegation. An allegation, which offers reasonable grounds for being believed.

- 1.8 Sexual Abuse. Engaging in any of the following conduct with, or involving, a Child or Vulnerable Individual (i) by a person who at the time of the conduct was Church Personnel, or (ii) by an adult who later becomes Church Personnel in a case where the Child was more than five (5) years younger than the adult, or (iii) by a Child, who later becomes Church Personnel, in a case where the offending Child was at least fourteen (14) years old and more than five (5) years older than the other Child.
- a. Conduct that constitutes sexual abuse or sexual exploitation as defined in the Official Code of Georgia Annotated (“O.C.G.A.”) § 19-7-5(b)(3.1) or (b)(4), as those definitions may hereafter be amended or modified, provided, however, that for purposes of this Policy, Sexual Exploitation shall include the statutorily prohibited conduct involving any Church Personnel. (O.C.G.A. § 19-7-5(b)(3.1) and (b)(4), as they exist on the dates of this Policy, are attached as Appendix 1 to this Policy); or
 - b. Any conduct by Church Personnel about which he or she has previously been admonished or warned by the Archbishop in writing is improper conduct.
- 1.9 Volunteer. Any unpaid person involved in a ministry, activity or service under the authority of the Archdiocese.
- 1.10 Volunteer Who Has Regular Contact with Children. A Volunteer whose ministry, activity or service involves custodial responsibility for the care and supervision, or the reasonable anticipation of actual or potential unsupervised contact with a Child or Vulnerable Individual.
- 1.11 Vulnerable Individual. A Vulnerable Individual aged eighteen (18) years of age or older who, objectively viewed, is unable or unlikely to report abuse, without assistance, because of impairment of physical or mental function.

Section 2. Prohibited Conduct

Sexual Abuse is reprehensible and tragic, and Sexual Abuse by Church Personnel will not be tolerated. While the priestly commitment to the virtue of chastity and the gift of celibacy is well known, all Church Personnel are required to observe appropriate boundaries and behavior which will avoid the occurrence of Sexual Abuse.

Section 3. Service Application Forms for Employees and Volunteers

- 3.1 An application, in a form promulgated, or approved in writing, by the Archbishop (“Service Application”) must be completed by each applicant for any paid position in the Archdiocese and also by any Volunteer who has regular contact with Children. All completed “Service Applications” must be kept as part of the parish/agency/school personnel files.
- 3.2 Each applicant for any position in the Archdiocese and each Volunteer who has regular contact with Children must, as a condition of employment, ministry or service to the Archdiocese, consent to a “Background Check.” The “Background

Check” will include a check of references, verification of personal and educational information and criminal history. The pastor or administrator shall be responsible for reviewing the information thus acquired to determine that there is nothing present which would indicate the person is unfit for the employment, ministry or service for which he or she has applied.

- 3.3 A copy of the “Service Application,” including the “Background Check,” the references checked and other forms on file shall be sent to the Secretary of Human Resources for the Archdiocese. Upon termination of employment, ministry or service, a copy of the complete parish/agency/school personnel file is to be sent to the Archdiocesan Human Resources Office.

Section 4. Service Application Forms for Clergy and Religious

- 4.1 All superiors of religious institutes or orders proposing individuals for ministry or residence in Archdiocesan parishes or institutions, as well as those simply requesting priestly faculties in the Archdiocese, are required to state clearly in writing that there is no known history which would render the individual being proposed unsuitable to work with a Child or a Vulnerable Individual, including, but not limited to, any past allegation of Sexual Abuse or other misconduct of a sexual nature. This may be done through the use of form “Statement of the Religious Superior.”
- 4.2 Clergy, religious or seminarians seeking assignment to perform ministry within the Archdiocese of Atlanta must, before beginning the assignment, have on file with the Archdiocese the “Application by a priest for service in the Archdiocese of Atlanta.”
- 4.3 Clergy, religious or seminarians seeking assignment to perform ministry for a week or more must complete the form, “Application for Assignment,” and as a condition of assignment must consent to a “Background Check,” which will be performed by the Archdiocese, before such assignment is made.
- 4.4 No pastor, parochial vicar, religious or director of any Archdiocesan institution or facility is permitted to grant residence, or full-time, part-time or regular weekend ministry to any priest, religious or layperson without prior approval from the Archbishop.
- 4.5 Before any clergy or religious is proposed to another diocese for assignment, transfer, or residence, the Archbishop will make notification, similar in nature to the “Statement of Religious Superior,” to the local ordinary of the new residence.

Section 5. Reporting Requirements

- 5.1 Any Church Personnel who has reasonable cause to believe that Sexual Abuse has occurred and who has mandatory reporting requirements under federal, state or local law, including, but not limited to, O.C.G.A. § 19-7-5 shall report, or cause a report of that abuse to be made as required by law, unless to do so would violate the priest-penitent relationship of the Sacrament of Penance. A copy of that report shall be sent immediately and confidentially to the Archbishop, or the Vicar General, or, in their absence the Chancellor or Vice Chancellor of the Archdiocese, who, in turn,

will advise the Archbishop. The Archbishop will provide a copy of the report to the Advisory Board.

- 5.2 Church Personnel who are not required to report Sexual Abuse pursuant to Paragraph 5.1 of this Policy, but who have reasonable cause to believe that Sexual Abuse has occurred shall immediately confidentially report the information to the Archbishop, or the Vicar General, or, in their absence, to the Chancellor or Vice Chancellor of the Archdiocese, unless to do so would violate the priest-penitent relationship of the Sacrament of Penance. The Archbishop will assign a person to investigate the allegations and will provide a summary to the Advisory Board.
- 5.3 Each reported incident of alleged Sexual Abuse shall be investigated immediately by the Archbishop or his designated representative, in cooperation with any state or federal criminal investigation, with a high degree of pastoral care for the alleged victim and his or her family, the person reporting the incident, the accused person and all other persons whose lives reasonably can be expected by the Archbishop to be affected significantly by the alleged incident.
- 5.4 In the event a report received by the Archbishop presents a Credible Allegation of Sexual Abuse, the Archbishop or his designated representative shall in turn report the information to the appropriate government authorities as provided by O.C.G.A. § 19-7-5(d). Whether or not a report received by the Archbishop presents a Credible Allegation in the opinion of the Archbishop, a copy of the report shall be sent to the Advisory Board.
- 5.5 Without limiting the provisions of Subsections 5.1 through 5.4 of this Policy, it is the policy of the Archdiocese to comply with all applicable civil laws with respect to the reporting of allegations of sexual abuse of minors to civil authorities and to advise and support a person's right to make a report to public authorities.

Section 6. When Allegations are Made Against a Lay Employee or Volunteer

- 6.1 When any allegation of Sexual Abuse with respect to an Archdiocesan lay employee or Volunteer is reported to the Archbishop, the Archbishop shall immediately notify the Advisory Board of the person(s) alleged to be involved, and the substance of the allegations.
- 6.2 Immediately after receipt of an allegation of Sexual Abuse with respect to a lay employee or Volunteer, the Archbishop shall cause a preliminary investigation to be undertaken in accordance with Archdiocesan employment policies and may undertake such additional or independent investigation, as he deems necessary. Based on the results of preliminary investigations the Archbishop shall make a determination as to the credibility of the allegations and communicate his determination in a timely manner to the victim or the victim's representative, the accused person, and the Advisory Board. The Archbishop may request that the Advisory Board advise him in making his determination as to whether an allegation is a Credible Allegation.

- 6.3 If the Archbishop determines that an allegation of Sexual Abuse involving a lay employee or Volunteer is a Credible Allegation, then in addition to any action taken pursuant to Archdiocesan employment policies, the accused person shall be:
- (i) *Notified in a timely manner of the nature of the allegation;*
 - (ii) *Placed on administrative leave pending the completion of the Archdiocesan investigation; and*
 - (iii) *Directed to remain away from any school, parish office, parish facility, agency, and other location, which is the subject of the complaint until the Archbishop has determined whether the allegation is Actionable.*
- 6.4 The Archbishop may request that the Advisory Board advise him in making his determination as to whether an allegation is Actionable. If a lay employee or Volunteer admits that he or she has engaged in Sexual Abuse, does not contest Credible Allegations of Sexual Abuse, or there is a determination by the Archbishop that an allegation of Sexual Abuse is Actionable, sanctions will be imposed in accordance with any applicable provisions of Canon Law, the regular employment policies of the Archdiocese as amplified by this Policy, and Section 12 of this Policy. The Archbishop shall communicate his determination as to whether the allegation is Actionable to the victim or the victim's designated representative, the accused person, the Advisory Board and others required to be notified pursuant to Archdiocesan employment policies.
- 6.5 In instances where an allegation of Sexual Abuse is determined not to be Actionable, the Archbishop will make a determination as to whether the accused person is to be restored to duty and/or whether in his or her former position. The Archbishop may request the advice of the Advisory Board in making that determination. The Archbishop shall communicate his final determination as to restoration of duties to the alleged victim or the victim's designated representative, the accused person, and the Advisory Board.
- 6.6 When an allegation is determined by the Archbishop not to be Actionable, the Archdiocese will make good faith efforts to restore the ministerial reputation and status of the accused person.
- 6.7 In response to a Credible Allegation of Sexual Abuse involving a lay employee or Volunteer, the Archbishop will take reasonable action to provide the family of the victim with appropriate spiritual care and pastoral support. Such care and support will be coordinated through the Office of Child and Youth Protection (formerly known as Project Aware). Any pastor-priest or other person designated by the Archbishop to assist in this pastoral process should avoid being concerned with the validity of the allegations. His or her function is strictly pastoral in nature without regard to the truth of any allegation or to the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. The person who reported the alleged Sexual Abuse shall also be given appropriate pastoral care.
- 6.8 In all instances of alleged Sexual Abuse by a lay employee or Volunteer, reasonable care will be taken to protect the rights of all parties involved, particularly those of

the person claiming to have been Sexually Abused and the person against whom the charge has been made. It is the responsibility of any lay employee or Volunteer who is accused of Sexual Abuse to obtain his or her own personal legal representation.

Section 7. When Allegations are Made Against Clergy or Religious in Service to the Archdiocese or Residing in an Archdiocesan Rectory, Convent or Facility

- 7.1 When any allegation of Sexual Abuse with respect to Archdiocesan clergy, or any other clergy or religious within the Archdiocese, is reported to the Archbishop, the Archbishop shall notify the Advisory Board of the person(s) alleged to be involved and the substance of the allegations.
- 7.2 Immediately after receipt of an allegation of Sexual Abuse involving a member of the clergy or religious the Archbishop shall undertake a preliminary investigation of the allegation, which investigation will be initiated and conducted in harmony with Canon Law. Based upon the results of his investigation, the Archbishop shall make a determination as to the credibility of the allegations, and communicate his determination in a timely manner to the victim or the victim's representative, the accused person, and the Advisory Board. The Archbishop may request that the Advisory Board advise him in making his determination as to whether an allegation is a Credible Allegation.
- 7.3 If the Archbishop determines that an allegation of Sexual Abuse that has been made against a member of the clergy or religious is a Credible Allegation, the accused person shall be:
 - (i) *Notified in a timely manner of the nature of the allegations;*
 - (ii) *Immediately relieved of his or her active ministerial duties pending the outcome of the Archbishop's investigation; and*
 - (iii) *Directed to remain away from any school, parish office, parish facility, agency, and other location, which is the subject of the complaint until the Archbishop has determined whether the allegation is Actionable.*
- 7.4 The Archbishop may request that the Advisory Board advise him in making his determination as to whether an allegation is Actionable. If a member of the clergy or religious admits that he or she has engaged in Sexual Abuse, does not contest Credible Allegations of Sexual Abuse against him or her, or if there is a determination by the Archbishop after an appropriate process in accord with Canon Law that an allegation of Sexual Abuse is Actionable, sanctions will be imposed in accordance with Section 12 of this Policy. If an allegation is determined by the Archbishop to be a Credible Allegation or Actionable, the Archbishop shall consult with the Advisory Board in making an assessment of the accused person's fitness for ministry. The Archbishop shall communicate his final determination as to whether the allegation is Actionable, and the sanctions imposed, in writing to the victim or the victim's designated representative, the accused person, and the Advisory Board.

- 7.5 As provided in Subsection 12.5 of this Policy, in every case involving allegations of Sexual Abuse against clergy or religious, the processes as provided for in and the various provisions of Canon Law will be observed and in the event of an irreconcilable conflict between the applicable provision of Canon Law and this Policy, the provisions of Canon Law will prevail. This may include a request by a priest or deacon for dispensation from the obligation of holy orders, or by the bishop proceeding to seek dismissal from the clerical state even without the consent of the priest or deacon. In accordance with due process, the accused person will be encouraged to retain the assistance of civil and canonical counsel. When necessary, the Archdiocese will provide canonical counsel to any accused priest or deacon.
- 7.6 Where an allegation of Sexual Abuse by a member of the clergy or religious is not admitted or it is determined by the Archbishop after an appropriate investigation not to be Actionable and the Archbishop has not determined that the accused person is unfit for ministry, the Archdiocese will make reasonable efforts to restore the ministerial reputation and status of the priest, deacon or religious.
- 7.7 If the Archbishop determines that an allegation of Sexual Abuse, which has been made with respect to a member of the clergy or religious from a diocese other than the Archdiocese of Atlanta is Actionable, the Archbishop will immediately notify the appropriate superior of the actions, which have been taken and will be taken by the Archdiocese.
- 7.8 In response to a Credible Allegation of Sexual Abuse involving a member of the clergy or religious, the Archbishop will take reasonable action to provide the family of the alleged victim with appropriate spiritual care and pastoral support. Such care and support will be coordinated through the Office of Child and Youth Protection. Any pastor/priest or other person designated by the Archbishop to assist in this pastoral process should avoid being concerned with the validity of the allegations. His or her function is strictly pastoral in nature without regard to the truth of any allegation or to the circumstances surrounding any alleged incident. The person who reported the alleged Sexual Abuse shall also be given appropriate pastoral care.
- 7.9 In all instances, care will be taken to protect the rights of all parties involved, particularly those of the person claiming to have been a victim of Sexual Abuse and the person against whom the allegation has been made.

Section 8. Advisory Board

- 8.1 The Advisory Board shall consist of at least five (5) persons of outstanding integrity and good judgment, in full communion with the Church. The majority of the Board shall be laypersons not in the employ of the Archdiocese, at least one of whom shall have particular expertise in the treatment of the sexual abuse of minors. One member of the Board shall be an experienced and respected pastor of the Archdiocese. The members of the Advisory Board, in their role as board members, are not acting as experts in psychology, law, Sexual Abuse, or any other area. They will rely upon information provided to them by the Archdiocese and independent sources, and have no duty of independent verification. The role of the Advisory Board is to provide the Archbishop with advice and counsel pursuant to this Policy.

- 8.2 The Board is a confidential consultative body to the Archbishop, and in such capacity shall:
- (i) *Serve in an advisory capacity to the Archbishop in assessing allegations of Sexual Abuse involving members of the clergy or religious as set forth in Section 7 of this policy, or against other Church Personnel as set forth in Section 6 of this Policy;*
 - (ii) *Advise the Archbishop, in a confidential manner, when requested, on the fitness for ministry and/or continued employment of persons alleged to be or to have been involved in Sexual Abuse and/or further steps to take with clergy with regard to fitness for continued ministry;*
 - (iii) *Review Archdiocesan policies and procedures and guidelines that may be established by various Archdiocesan departments for dealing with allegations of Sexual Abuse by clergy or other Church Personnel in order to recommend to the Archbishop any modifications in those policies and procedures, if appropriate.*
- 8.3 The Board is advisory to the Archbishop and shall report to him in writing of its recommendations. If the Archbishop requests the advice of the Advisory Board, the Archbishop shall provide all pertinent evidence relating to the alleged Sexual Abuse to the Advisory Board. If any recommendation from the Advisory Board is not unanimous from the members of the Board, a minority report shall also be made in writing.
- 8.4 The members of the Advisory Board shall be chosen by the Archbishop. With regard to the lay members of the Board, conflicts of interest, either actual or implied, shall be avoided. Each member of the Advisory Board serves at the pleasure of the Archbishop. Each member will be appointed for a term of five (5) years, which can be renewed.
- 8.5 The Advisory Board may adopt such policies and procedures as may be necessary to conduct its duties as are consistent with the provisions and intent of this Policy.

Section 9. Archdiocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection

- 9.1 The Archdiocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection shall aid in the immediate pastoral care of persons who claim to have been a victim of Sexual Abuse by Church Personnel. In addition, the office will ensure that the family of the alleged victim will receive appropriate spiritual care and pastoral support.
- 9.2 The office will be headed by a coordinator. This individual, at the direction and instruction of the Archbishop, will coordinate and monitor the spiritual care and pastoral support supplied to alleged victims and to the family members of alleged victims of Sexual Abuse including but not limited to, counseling, spiritual assistance, support groups, or other social services agreed upon by the alleged victim and the Archdiocese.
- 9.3 The Office of Child and Youth Protection will also, at the direction and instruction of the Archbishop, assist the Archdiocese in establishing and maintaining “safe environment programs.” The office will cooperate with parents, civil authorities,

educators and community organizations to provide education and training for children, parents, pastors and ministers, educators and others about ways to make and maintain a safe environment for Children.

Section 10. Complaints – Cooperation with Authorities

- 10.1 The Archbishop shall adopt procedures for making complaints or allegations of Sexual Abuse involving Church Personnel. The procedures shall be made readily available in printed form and will be the subject of periodic public announcements regarding those procedures.
- 10.2 The Archdiocese shall cooperate with authorized state and federal civil and criminal authorities in their investigation of allegations of sexual abuse of minors involving Church Personnel.

Section 11. Media and Communications

- 11.1 (a) The Archdiocese is committed to openness and transparency in its dealings with the community, especially with the parish communities and other constituent communities of the Archdiocese which may be directly affected by ministerial misconduct involving minors and will meet this commitment to the extent possible while also respecting the privacy and reputations of individuals involved.
- (b) The Archbishop's office is responsible for all media contacts; therefore, all media inquiries regarding this Policy, alleged Sexual Abuse involving Church Personnel, and related matters which are made to schools, parishes, or agencies of the Archdiocese should be referred to the Archbishop's office, which will consult with, guide and coordinate relevant persons in the handling of subsequent media inquiries and responses.
- 11.2 The Archdiocese will not enter into confidentiality agreements with respect to alleged Sexual Abuse, except in cases where confidentiality is requested by a victim or survivor of such Sexual Abuse for grave and substantial reasons proffered by the victim or survivor, which reasons are noted in the text of the confidentiality agreement.

Section 12. Sanctions

- 12.1 Where Sexual Abuse by a lay employee or Volunteer is admitted or an allegation of Sexual Abuse is determined by the Archbishop to be Actionable, the accused person shall be immediately terminated as a Church Personnel.
- 12.2 (a) Where Sexual Abuse by a member of the clergy or religious is admitted, or an allegation of Sexual Abuse is determined by the Archbishop to be Actionable after an appropriate process in accord with Canon Law:
- (i) *The accused person shall be permanently removed from active ministry and will not receive a future assignment;*

- (ii) *The accused person shall not be transferred for ministerial assignment to another diocese;*
- (iii) *Under no circumstances shall the accused person ever be allowed to minister in the Archdiocese of Atlanta; and*
- (iv) *If the penalty of dismissal from the clerical state has not been applied (e.g., for reasons of advanced age or infirmity), the accused person shall be required to lead a life of prayer and penance; and if he is a member of the clergy, he will not be permitted to celebrate Mass publicly, to wear clerical garb, or to present himself publicly as a member of the clergy.*

(b) It is the intent of this Policy that after there has been a determination of even a single Actionable occurrence of Sexual Abuse, the accused member of the clergy or religious will not remain in active ministry and will not receive a future assignment.

12.3 (a) If the accused person is an Archdiocesan priest and a determination is made that an allegation of Sexual Abuse is Actionable or that the accused person is unfit for ministry, the Archbishop may refer him to a facility for comprehensive medical and psychological evaluations and intervention, if possible, so long as this does not interfere with any investigation by state or federal civil and criminal authorities. If the accused person refuses such referral, the Archbishop shall take appropriate steps in accordance with Canon Law to enforce his decision.

(b) If the accused person is a religious and the Archbishop determines that the allegation is Actionable, a decision as to rehabilitation will be made by his or her religious superior.

12.4 The Archbishop shall consult with the Advisory Board with respect to the imposition of sanctions and remedial actions under this Section 12.

12.5 In every case involving clergy and religious who are subject to Canon Law, the processes and sanctions as provided for in Canon Law will be observed and in the event of an irreconcilable conflict between the applicable provision of Canon Law and this Policy, the provisions of Canon Law will prevail. The necessary observance of canonical norms internal to the Church is not intended to hinder the course of any civil or criminal action.

12.6 Clergy, staff or volunteers who fail to comply with the provisions of this policy will be subject to actions by the Archdiocese as may be deemed necessary up to and including termination from any positions with the Archdiocese and/or with any parish, mission or other Catholic institutions and organizations which are subject to the administration, authority or governance of the Archdiocese in accordance with civil, criminal and Canon Law. Applicants for positions with the Archdiocese who fail to comply with the provisions of this policy, as applicable, will be denied such positions.

Appendix 1

Sexual Abuse and Sexual Exploitation are defined in Official Code of Georgia Annotated (O.C.G.A.) Section 19-7-5 as follows:

Sexual Abuse

“Sexual abuse” means a person’s employing, using, persuading, inducing, enticing, or coercing any minor who is not that person’s spouse to engage in any act, which involves:

- (A) Sexual intercourse, including genital-genital, oral-genital, anal-genital, or oral-anal, whether between persons of the same or opposite sex;
- (B) Bestiality;
- (C) Masturbation;
- (D) Lewd exhibition of the genitals or pubic area of any person;
- (E) Flagellation or torture by or upon a person who is nude;
- (F) Condition of being fettered, bound, or otherwise physically restrained on the part of a person who is nude;
- (G) Physical contact in an act of apparent sexual stimulation or gratification with any person’s clothed or unclothed genitals, pubic area, or buttocks or with a female’s clothed or unclothed breasts;
- (H) Defecation or urination for the purpose of sexual stimulation; or
- (I) Penetration of the vagina or rectum by any object except when done as part of a recognized medical procedure.

As is the case in O.C.G.A. Section 19-7-5, “Sexual Abuse” does not include consensual sex acts involving persons of the opposite sex when the sex acts are between minors or between a minor and an adult who is not more than five years older than the minor.

Sexual Exploitation

“Sexual exploitation” means any conduct allowing, permitting, encouraging or requiring that any child or infirm person engage in:

- (A) Prostitution, as defined in O.C.G.A. Section 16-6-9 or
- (B) Sexually explicit conduct for the purpose of producing any visual or print medium depicting such conduct, as defined in O.C.G.A. Section 16-12-1 00.

Acknowledgement of Receipt

I hereby acknowledge that on _____ I received a copy of the Archdiocese of Atlanta's "Updated Policy of the Archdiocese of Atlanta Concerning the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Individuals from Sexual Abuse by Church Personnel", revised effective August 1, 2003, that I have read the Policy, understand its meaning, and agree to conduct myself in conformity with the Policy as the Policy may be amended in the future. I also understand that this acknowledgment will be kept in my personnel file.

Name: _____

[please type or print]

Signed: _____

Parish/School/Organization: _____

Date: _____

Check one:

____ Priest

____ Deacon

____ Religious

____ Seminarian

____ Employee

____ Volunteer Who Has Regular Contact with Children

Code of Conduct for Church Personnel for the Archdiocese of Atlanta, Especially in Regard to Interaction with Minors and Vulnerable Individuals

Preamble

The Archdiocese of Atlanta holds every person associated with the Archdiocese in any official capacity accountable for maintaining the integrity of all ministerial and professional relationships. The purpose of this Code of Conduct (“Code”) is to set forth the basic principles and guidelines. A comprehensive list of specific acts constituting a violation of this Code would be impossible. In addition to strict compliance with legal requirements, Church Personnel in the Archdiocese of Atlanta are expected to be guided by the basic principles of the Catechism of the Catholic Church in the conduct of Archdiocesan affairs and to comply with all Archdiocesan policies including never engaging in any act which constitutes Sexual Abuse of a minor (“Sexual Abuse”) as defined in the Archdiocese’s Policy regarding Sexual Abuse of Minors, as amended from time to time (“Sexual Abuse Policy”) and the guidelines contained in this Code. No Church Personnel may engage in any activity within or outside of the conduct of their ministry which might affect the Archdiocese or the members of the Catholic community which would violate any applicable law or the standards set out in this Code or which constitutes Sexual Abuse.

Common sense must be followed. However, the following Code is provided for the purpose of explicitly drawing attention to the special care, which must be taken in ministering to minors or other vulnerable individuals. Archdiocesan clergy, Religious, seminarians, personnel and volunteers must avoid contact with minors or vulnerable individuals that might be misconstrued by reasonable people or lead to misunderstandings. Given the consequences of sexual misconduct, clergy, Religious, seminarians, employees and volunteers should exercise caution and common sense to avoid situations which potentially might be misconstrued and to preclude any occasion that could give scandal or cause injury, whether that injury is intended or not by the individual.

Application of Code

The Archdiocese expects you to conduct yourself according to this Code and to support others in doing so.

If you do not comply with this Code or if you permit a member of Church Personnel under your supervision to fail to comply with this Code, you are not meeting your responsibilities and you will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or ministry if you are an employee or lay volunteer, and action under canon law if you are a member of the clergy or Religious.

Supervisors are responsible for communicating the expectations contained in this Code, the “Ministerial Standards” Specific to One’s Ministry, and the Sexual Abuse Policy to all Church Personnel under their leadership.

This Code, the “Ministerial Standards” Specific to One’s Ministry and the “Procedures for Processing Allegations” are established as mechanisms for reporting and addressing non-

compliance and for routinely assessing our operations and activities to ensure compliance with this Code and the Sexual Abuse Policy, other Archdiocesan policies and the law.

If you know about or suspect non-compliance with this Code, Ministerial Standards specific to one's ministry, or Sexual Abuse you are expected to report the non-compliance in accordance with the provisions of the "Procedures for Processing Allegations" adopted pursuant to the Sexual Abuse Policy. Any retaliation or threatened retaliation against you for reporting, in good faith, such actual or suspected non-compliance will be considered a serious violation of this Code, resulting in appropriate disciplinary action for anyone who retaliates against you, up to and including termination of employment or ministry and/or action under canon law.

If you have questions about any of the provisions or the application of this Code, the "Ministerial Standards" Specific to One's Ministry or the Sexual Abuse Policy, you should contact the Office of the Vice Chancellor at 404-885-7445.

The following specific guidelines are to assist you with meeting the standards of conduct set out in this Code and the "Ministerial Standards" specific to one's ministry and to avoid allegations of Sexual Abuse. Although they are not exhaustive, they are intended to provide guidance and direction with respect to issues that may arise in the course of your day-to-day work.

Implementation and Accountability

1. Compliance with Policies

In the Archdiocese of Atlanta, compliance with Archdiocesan policies is part of everyone's job, although ultimate responsibility for adherence to this Code rests with the individual. In order to repair scandal, restore justice and reform offenders, appropriate action will be taken when any Church Personnel disregards or fails to comply with the expectations and behaviors defined in this Code. As a condition of your employment and/or ministry in the Archdiocese of Atlanta, you must be familiar and comply with this Code, the Sexual Abuse Policy, the "Ministerial Standards" Specific to One's Ministry, and all other Archdiocesan policies that apply to you. Violations of this Code, the "Ministerial Standards" Specific to One's Ministry or any other Archdiocesan policy is grounds for disciplinary action and possible legal prosecution. This Code provides you with guidance about the Archdiocese's expectations in regard to your conduct and basic legal responsibilities as Church Personnel of the Archdiocese. There are some standards specific to one's ministry, which are more precise than the Code of Conduct. In instances where guidelines conflict between the "Ministerial Standards" and the Code of Conduct, the "Ministerial Standards" for a specific ministry are to be followed.

2. Compliance with the Law

Compliance with laws and regulations that apply to the Archdiocese is an absolute minimum requirement to maintaining our Catholic values and standard of conduct. While we are called to a higher standard, this minimum requirement means that each of us is responsible for understanding the laws that apply. Violating the law can seriously damage the Archdiocese's reputation, subject the Archdiocese to liability and subject you to personal civil or criminal liability. The Archdiocese's leadership will support you in meeting your responsibility to comply with the law and will provide you with the resources necessary for compliance.

Questions concerning any legal responsibility should be referred to the Vice Chancellor at 404-885-7445.

3. “Am I My Brother’s Keeper?” Pledge To Report Abuse of Minors

Who Is A Mandatory Reporter?

- Mandatory reporters are legally required to report allegations and suspicions of sexual abuse. Failure to report can result in legal action. Mandatory reporters include:
- Physicians licensed to practice medicine; interns; residents; hospital and medical personnel; dentists; podiatrists; registered professional nurses or licensed practical nurses;
- School teachers; school administrators; school guidance counselors, visiting teachers, school social workers, or school psychologists;
- Licensed psychologists; persons participating in internships to obtain licensing as psychologists; professional counselors, social workers, or marriage and family therapists; child-counseling personnel;
- Child welfare agency personnel (including any child-caring institution, child-placing agency, maternity home, family day-care home, group day-care home, and day-care center); child service organization personnel;
- Law enforcement personnel;
- Persons who process or produce visual or printed matter.

(Ga. Code Ann. §§ 19-7-5(c)(1); 16-12-100(c)) (WESTLAW through 2001)

Mandatory Reporters

If you are a mandatory reporter and have reasonable cause to believe that sexual abuse has occurred, you must complete all of the following steps:

REMEMBER: There is to be no investigation by you or anyone else at the parish/school/diocesan level.

1. If the alleged/suspected victim is a minor, call the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) in the county where the abuse occurred.
 - a) A list of DFCS contact numbers can be found at www.archatl.com.
 - b) Be prepared to give them the child’s name, address, age, the nature of the suspected abuse, the name of the suspected perpetrator, and his/her relationship to the child.
 - c) Follow-up with a letter to DFCS.
2. Call the Office of the District Attorney in the county where the abuse occurred.
 - a) A list of DA office contact numbers can be found at www.archatl.com.
 - b) Be prepared to give them the suspected victim’s name, address, age, the nature of the suspected abuse, the name of the suspected perpetrator, and his/her relationship to the suspected victim.
 - c) Follow-up with a letter to the District Attorney’s Office.

3. If the alleged abuse involves archdiocesan personnel (priests, deacons, teachers, employees or volunteers) do all of the following after contacting DFCS and the District Attorney's Office:
 - a) Call 1-888-437-0764 (24 hours a day) to file a report.
 - b) Call the Archbishop's Office at 404-888-7804 so that the Archdiocese of Atlanta can be an active participant in cooperating with the appropriate state and local authorities. The report to the Archdiocese is NOT in lieu of the report to the appropriate state and local authorities.
 - c) Immediately fill out and return the form, "Report of Suspected Child Abuse by Archdiocesan Personnel." This form is available at www.archatl.com.
4. Once you complete the form, mail it to:

The Archbishop's Office
680 West Peachtree Street, NW
Atlanta, GA 30308, in an envelope marked "Confidential,"
or fax it to 404-978-2770 with a cover sheet.

Non-Mandatory Reporters

If you are a non-mandatory reporter and have reasonable cause to believe that sexual abuse has occurred, you must immediately report the information to the Archdiocese.

REMEMBER: There is to be no investigation by you or anyone else at the parish/school/diocesan level.

If the alleged abuse involves archdiocesan personnel (priests, deacons, teachers, employees or volunteers) do all of the following:

1. Call 1-888-437-0764 (24 hours a day) to file a report.
2. Call the Archbishop's Office at 404-888-7804 so that the Archdiocese of Atlanta can be an active participant in cooperating with the appropriate state and local government authorities. The report to the Archdiocese is NOT in lieu of the report to state and local government authorities.
3. Immediately fill out and return the form, "Report of Suspected Child Abuse by Archdiocesan Personnel." This form is available at www.archatl.com.
4. Once you complete the form, mail it to:

The Archbishop's Office
680 West Peachtree Street, NW
Atlanta, GA 30308, in an envelope marked "Confidential,"
or fax it to 404-978-2770 with a cover sheet.

As a non-mandatory reporter, you are not legally required to, but you may also do the following after reporting to the Archdiocese:

1. If the person about whom you are calling is a minor, call the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) in the county where the abuse occurred.
 - a) A list of DFCS contact numbers can be found at www.archatl.com.
 - b) Be prepared to give them the child's name, address, age, the nature of the suspected abuse, the name of the suspected perpetrator and his/her relationship to the child.
 - c) Follow-up with a letter to DFCS.

- 2) Call the Office of the District Attorney in the county where the abuse occurred.
 - a) A list of DA office contact numbers can be found at www.archatl.com.
 - b) Be prepared to give them the suspected victim's name, address, age, the nature of the suspected abuse, the name of the suspected perpetrator, and his/her relationship to the suspected victim.
 - c) Follow-up with a letter to the District Attorney's Office.

Reporting of Non-Compliance

If you know about or suspect misconduct, illegal activities, fraud, misuse of the Archdiocese's assets or violations of this Code, the "Ministerial Standards" or Archdiocesan policy you are to report these concerns to the Vice Chancellor at 404-885-7445. There will be no retribution against you for making such a report in good faith. In fact, the Archdiocese strictly prohibits retaliation or threatened retaliation against you for reporting, in good faith, actual or suspected wrongdoing.

Principles

Church Personnel of the Archdiocese of Atlanta shall:

- Actively support the teachings of the Catholic Church and work to build up the body of Christ in thought, word, deed and action.
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of each person from conception to natural death, and conduct relationships with others in a manner that is consistent with Catholic teaching. This is an even higher obligation for supervisors.
- Meet civil and canon law obligations.
- To the best of their ability, protect children, youth and vulnerable adults from all forms of abuse or neglect.
- Keep all information received in the course of counseling, spiritual direction or other professional or ministerial contact in the strictest confidence except as mandated by law.
- Refrain from making false accusations against another or revealing the faults and failings of another to those who have no right to know.
- Be responsible stewards of Church resources, human and financial, observing canon and civil law.
- Maintain a high level of competence in their particular ministry, and prudently attend to their own physical, spiritual, mental and emotional well-being.
- Avoid accepting or conferring an office, position, assignment or compensation, which may present even the appearance of a conflict of interest.
- Promptly report incidents of ethical misconduct or Sexual Abuse by other Church Personnel to the proper Church authority.
- Review and know the contents of the child abuse regulations and reporting requirements for the State of Georgia and follow those requirements as applicable.
- Review and know the contents of the child abuse regulations and reporting requirements for the Archdiocese of Atlanta and follow those requirements as applicable.
- Read, sign, understand and comply with this "Code of Conduct," "Ministerial Standards" Specific to One's Ministry and the "Updated Policy of the Archdiocese of Atlanta Concerning the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Individuals From Sexual Abuse by Church Personnel" (August, 2003) before engaging in any form of ministerial work.

Behavioral Guidelines for Church Personnel Working with Minors

Pastoral Standards for Volunteers, Lay Employees, Religious and Clergy include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Church Personnel are expected to maintain a high ethical and professional standard in their interaction with minors.
2. Church Personnel, unless they are the parent(s) and/or legal guardians of the child, are prohibited from using physical discipline in any way for the behavior management of minors, except insofar as restraint may be necessary to prevent them from inflicting harm on themselves or others, in which case a detailed written record of the incident is to be made as soon as possible and maintained on file.
3. Church Personnel may never show, provide or make available in any way to minors sexually explicit or morally inappropriate materials. In essence, any discussion, materials, and personal interaction with minors are prohibited if they could not occur or be used in the presence of the minor's parents or guardians. This does not preclude Archdiocesan-approved curricula in schools or religious education programs.
4. Church Personnel are prohibited from the using, possessing or being under the influence of any mind or mood altering substances, including alcohol, while working with minors. Church Personnel are prohibited from providing minors with any alcoholic beverage, tobacco, drugs or any substance prohibited by law. Medications of any kind may be administered to minors only with written parental permission unless you are the parent and/or legal guardian of the minor.
5. Church Personnel should schedule one-on-one counseling sessions or meetings with minors at times and locations that promote accountability and meet accepted standards of propriety. Pastors, principals or the administrator of the appropriate Archdiocesan agency and parent(s) or legal guardians must be notified in writing of any scheduled meeting involving a minor to assist in maintaining a safe environment for our children. Additionally, informal meetings should be the exception not the rule. However, if a minor approaches you and seeks immediate, brief assistance it should be documented and communicated to the pastor, principal, or the administrator of the appropriate Archdiocesan agency and parent or legal guardian if a meeting takes place that has not been scheduled or cleared by a parent or legal guardian in advance.
6. Church Personnel are prohibited from sleeping in the same bed, van, hotel room, sleeping bag or tent with a minor unless the adult is a parent, guardian or sibling. Sharing a bedroom, other than a large dormitory style room, should always be avoided. Church Personnel should not take an overnight trip alone with a minor who is not an immediate family member. Church Personnel should avoid being alone with a minor (not a member of the family) in a locker room, rest room, dressing, changing or showering facility. Furthermore, Church Personnel may not take photographs of minors who are unclothed or dressing, for example, in a locker room or bathing facility, nor shall they permit such photographs to be taken by others.
7. Church Personnel may not give minors keys to any Archdiocesan church or school facility.

8. Church Personnel shall not act as a chaperone for activities that conflict with curfew laws pertaining to minors.
9. Church Personnel observing or becoming aware of anyone (adult or minor) abusing a minor, must take immediate steps to intervene to provide a safe environment for the minor and report the misconduct in accord with Archdiocesan policies and civil law.
10. Church Personnel shall never date or give the appearance of dating a minor, engage in sexualized contact with a minor, give gifts that have more than an intrinsic value, or grant special privileges or opportunities to a specific minor.
11. Church Personnel shall not tutor, counsel, meet with individually or allow overnight stays in their personal residence to individuals to whom they minister unless they are the parent(s) and/or legal guardians. If you teach at the school or parish and have a child who is enrolled at the parish or school ask another responsible adult, preferably one who is not a relative, to assist you with supervision during a social event held at your home.
12. Church Personnel shall not engage in any form of behavior including: (a) verbal harassment, such as derogatory comments, jokes, or slurs; (b) visual harassment, such as derogatory or sexually explicit posters, cards, calendars, cartoons, graffiti, drawings, messages, notes or gestures; (c) sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.
13. Church Personnel shall not engage in any behavior that violates a prior written warning from the Archbishop.

Guidelines for the Supervision of Minors

Guidelines include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Unless Church Personnel have a parent's or legal guardian's knowledge and consent in the form of a written permission slip, they are never to drive minors, unless there is a medical emergency or the child is theirs.
2. Programs for minors shall not be conducted by only one adult without additional adult presence.
3. Church Personnel shall report uncontrollable or unusual behavior of minors to parents as soon as possible.
4. Facilities shall be monitored during church services and all school and other activities.
5. Parents shall be encouraged to be part of all services and programs in which their children are involved.
6. Parental permission shall be obtained, including a signed medical treatment authorization form, before taking minors on trips. All due precautions for the safety and well-being of the children must be taken on such trips.

7. Written parental approval must be obtained before permitting any minor to participate in athletic or other activities that involve potential risk.

Acknowledgement of Receipt

I hereby acknowledge that on _____ I received a copy of the Archdiocese of Atlanta's "Code of Conduct for Church Personnel for the Archdiocese of Atlanta, Especially in Regard to Interaction with Minors and Vulnerable Individuals", revised effective September 21, 2004, that I have read the Code, understand its meaning, and agree to conduct myself in conformity with the Code as the Code may be amended in the future. I also understand that this acknowledgment will be kept in my personnel file.

Name: _____

[please type or print]

Signed: _____

Parish/School/Organization: _____

Date: _____

Check one:

____ Priest

____ Deacon

____ Religious

____ Seminarian

____ Employee

____ Volunteer Who Has Regular Contact with Children

Ministerial Standards for Educators and Educational Volunteers Who Have Regular Contact with Children and/or Vulnerable Individuals

Dos

Do know that pedophiles among Catholic educators and educational volunteers are very much a small minority, but that a small number have put you in a very stressful situation regarding your relationships with children and/or vulnerable individuals.

Do know that it is not your fault. You are also a secondary victim of the pedophiles who have abused our children and/or vulnerable individuals.

Do know that you are right to feel uneasy and uncomfortable because of it.

Do know that you have a responsibility to protect yourself because the public often views you with caution. This is a side effect of the secondary abuse that you are experiencing as a result of pedophiles.

Do learn and comply with the Child Abuse Reporting Procedures under both the *Archdiocesan Policy* and Georgia law. Have these policies easily accessible in your office for reference.

Do know and comply with the Behavioral Guidelines, Guidelines for the Supervision of Minors, and Guidelines Specific to Employees contained in the *Archdiocesan Code of Conduct*. Have these policies easily accessible in your office for reference.

Behavioral Guidelines, Which Should be Observed to Protect You and Those to Whom You Minister

Do love the children and/or vulnerable individuals with a carefully disciplined love.

Do make sure that any physical contact with a child and/or vulnerable individual is done in a manner that is beyond reproach and is in a very public place.

Do treat every “child” (defined under the *Archdiocesan Policy* and Georgia law as a person “under 18 years of age”) and vulnerable individual with the dignity he or she deserves by virtue of his or her creation by God in His image and likeness.

Do avoid being alone with a child and/or vulnerable individual in a closed room unless you are the child’s and/or vulnerable individual’s parent or legal guardian. Protect yourself by having the door open/or closing a “see-through,” glass-paneled door if the child and/or vulnerable individual insists on privacy with you.

Do have a parent or another adult around if the child and/or vulnerable individual does not need privacy.

Do offer comfort and solace to those who are upset or grieving. Try not to do it by physically holding or hugging a child and/or vulnerable individual, if possible, unless you are the parent and/or legal guardian of the child and/or vulnerable individual.

Do use only chaste language when speaking with a child and/or vulnerable individual.

Do dress modestly at all times, particularly when in the presence of a child and/or vulnerable individual.

From time to time you may find yourself unavoidably left with a child and/or vulnerable individual because of a parent or guardian's failure to arrive at your facility on time to pick up that child and/or vulnerable individual at the conclusion of an Archdiocesan-sponsored program. While this is always a difficult and frustrating situation, it must be understood by all concerned that the safety and welfare of that child and/or vulnerable individual under those circumstances continues to be the moral and legal obligation of you and those associated with your program on behalf of the Archdiocese. In view of the foregoing, the following guidelines are set forth to provide you with an overview of how such situations should generally be handled:

- Under no circumstances should any child and/or vulnerable individual be left unattended. That child and/or vulnerable individual remains your obligation until such time as a family member or other responsible adult takes physical custody of that child and/or vulnerable individual.
- All reasonable efforts should be undertaken to contact the parent or legal guardian or other responsible family member of the child and/or vulnerable individual to arrange for the child's and/or vulnerable individual's pick up.
- In the event those efforts are successful but the adult appearing to pick up the child and/or vulnerable individual is neither the parent nor the designated emergency contact person according to current records, you must confirm the identity of the adult and their relationship to the child and/or vulnerable individual. Obviously, you must conclude through the use of sound judgment that the adult is an appropriate person to take custody of the child and/or vulnerable individual.
- In the event that all of these efforts are unsuccessful, you should call the local police authority and report the abandonment of the child and/or vulnerable individual and request the police to come to your facility to take custody of the child and/or vulnerable individual. The timing and decision to call local police authorities is to be based on your good judgment and professional assessment of the situation.
- You should not undertake to transport the child and/or vulnerable individual in your automobile to another location unless you have the written permission of the parent or legal guardian, there is a medical emergency, or the child and/or vulnerable individual is a relative.
- In the event that a parent or guardian's failure to pick up a child and/or vulnerable individual in a timely manner is a repeated or consistent problem, this matter should be handled like any other disciplinary issue involving breach of program policies and procedures.

This may result in the parents being directed to withdraw their child and/or vulnerable individual from the program.

Don'ts

Don't blame yourself for this Church crisis. It is not your fault. The pedophile is the cause of the crisis, not you.

Don't isolate or remove yourself from the children and/or vulnerable individuals. They need you. You are an important person in their growth and development in their relationship with God and the Church.

Don't ignore your own feelings about the way your life has been impacted by the media coverage of abuse of children and/or vulnerable individuals in the Catholic Church. Make time for prayer and spiritual direction. Do what it takes to remain healthy and spiritually strong.

Behavioral Guidelines, Which Should be Observed to Protect You and Those to Whom You Minister

Do not physically or emotionally abuse any child and/or vulnerable individual, including, but not limited to, physically or emotionally punishing a child and/or vulnerable individual.

Do not sexually abuse or exploit any child and/or vulnerable individual, as that term is defined under Georgia law, section 1.5 of the *Archdiocesan Policy*, or canon 1395.2 of the 1983 *Code of Canon Law*.

Do not permit any child and/or vulnerable individual to enter your home or living quarters unless accompanied by a parent or guardian unless the child and/or vulnerable individual is a relative. If you teach at the parish/school and have a child and/or vulnerable individual who is enrolled in the parish/school ask another responsible adult, preferably not related to you, to assist you with supervision during a social event held at your home.

Do not permit a child and/or vulnerable individual to have possession of a key to any Archdiocesan facility.

Do not take an overnight trip alone with any child and/or vulnerable individual unless the child and/or vulnerable individual is a relative.

Do not dress or undress yourself in the presence of a child and/or vulnerable individual or allow a child and/or vulnerable individual to dress or undress in your presence unless the child and/or vulnerable individual is a relative.

Do not allow a child and/or vulnerable individual to sleep in the same room with you unless the child and/or vulnerable individual is a relative.

Do not provide any child and/or vulnerable individual with alcohol, tobacco, legal or illegal prescription or non-prescription drugs unless you are the child's and/or vulnerable individual's parent or legal guardian.

Do not accompany a child and/or vulnerable individual, who is not accompanied by a parent or guardian, to any place that serves alcohol unless you are the child's and/or vulnerable individual's parent or legal guardian.

Do not provide any child and/or vulnerable individual with pornography or permit a child and/or vulnerable individual to have pornography in his or her possession in your presence.

Do not pay for or otherwise accompany a child and/or vulnerable individual to watch any movie or video that does not have a PG-13 rating, and never on your own unless you are the parent or legal guardian. If you teach at the parish/school and have a child and/or vulnerable individual who is enrolled in the parish/school ask another responsible adult, preferably one who is not related to you, to assist you with supervision during any social event.

Do not accompany a child and/or vulnerable individual to an amusement park or other recreational activity unless accompanied by the child's and/or vulnerable individual's parent or guardian or unless it is a school-sponsored field trip. If you teach at the parish/school and have a child and/or vulnerable individual who is enrolled in the parish/school, ask your spouse or another responsible adult, preferably one who is not related to you, to assist you with supervision during any social event.

Do not agree to meet children and/or vulnerable individuals at any social event outside of parish/school time unless you are the parent and/or legal guardian of the child and/or vulnerable individual.

Do not use profanity or sexually expressive or vulgar language, but particularly when in the presence of a child and/or vulnerable individual.

Do not allow music to be played which contains profanity, sexually expressive or vulgar language.

Do not tutor a child and/or vulnerable individual at your home unless the child and/or vulnerable individual is a relative.

Do not drive a child and/or vulnerable individual in your automobile unless you have a written permission slip from the parent or guardian, there is a medical emergency, the child and/or vulnerable individual is a relative, or you are the child's and/or vulnerable individual's parent or legal guardian.

Do not allow a child and/or vulnerable individual to remain in the presence of only one other person, who is not the child's and/or vulnerable individual's parent or guardian.

Do not meet with a child and/or vulnerable individual in a room without a window or without the door being open unless you are the child's and/or vulnerable individual's parent child and/or vulnerable individual or legal guardian.

Do not give to or accept personal gifts, with more than an intrinsic value, from children and/or vulnerable individuals unless you are the child's and/or vulnerable individual's parent or legal guardian.

Do not discuss your personal life with students unless you are the child and/or vulnerable individual's parent or legal guardian.

Do not discuss the personal lives of fellow clergy, educators, employees and volunteers with children and/or vulnerable individuals.

Do not accept a baby-sitting or a house-sitting assignment of any duration for any child and/or vulnerable individual.

Do not visit children and/or vulnerable individuals at their homes without the written permission of the parents and/or legal guardians.

Do not call children and/or vulnerable individuals at home either on land lines, cell phones or pagers unless the child and/or vulnerable individual is a relative or the parent or legal guardian has given you written permission to communicate with the child and/or vulnerable individual in this fashion.

Do not e-mail children and/or vulnerable individuals at home or provide them with your personal e-mail address unless the child and/or vulnerable individual is a relative or the parent or legal guardian has given you permission to communicate with the child and/or vulnerable individual in this fashion

Do not date currently matriculated children and/or vulnerable individuals, regardless of their age.

Acknowledgment of Receipt

I hereby acknowledge that on _____ I received a copy of the Archdiocese of Atlanta's "Ministerial Standards for Educators and Educational Volunteers Who Have Regular Contact with Children and/or Vulnerable Individuals" effective September 30, 2004. I have read the "Ministerial Standards" specific to this ministry and agree to conduct myself in conformity with the Standards as they may be amended in the future. I also understand that this acknowledgment form will be kept in my personnel/volunteer file.

Name: _____

[please type or print]

Signed: _____

School/Organization: _____

Date: _____

Check one:

_____ Principal

_____ School Personnel

_____ Director of Religious Education

_____ Educational Volunteer Who Has Regular Contact with Children and/or

Vulnerable Individuals

Ministerial Standards When Dealing With Vulnerable Individuals

Do

Do know that pedophiles who prey on vulnerable individuals are very much a tiny minority but that a small number have put you in a stressful situation regarding your relationships with vulnerable individuals.

Do know that it is not your fault. You are also a secondary victim of the pedophiles who have abused vulnerable individuals.

Do know that you are right to feel uneasy and uncomfortable because of it.

Do know that you have a responsibility to protect yourself because the public often views you with caution. This is a side effect of the secondary abuse that you are experiencing as a result of pedophiles.

Do learn and comply with the Child Abuse Reporting Procedures under both the archdiocesan Policy and Georgia law. Have these policies easily accessible in your office.

Do know and comply with the Behavioral Guidelines, Guidelines for the Supervision of Minors, and Guidelines Specific to Employees contained in the *Archdiocesan Code of Conduct*. Have these policies easily accessible in your office.

Behavioral Guidelines, Which Should be Observed to Protect You and Those to Whom You Minister

Do love the vulnerable individuals to whom you minister with a carefully disciplined love.

Do make sure that any physical contact with a vulnerable individual is done in a manner that is beyond reproach and in a very public place.

Do treat every vulnerable individual (defined under the *archdiocesan policy* and Georgia law) with the dignity he or she deserves by virtue of his or her creation by God in His image and likeness.

Do avoid being alone with a vulnerable individual in a closed room unless you are the vulnerable individual's parent or legal guardian. Protect yourself by having the door open/or closing a "see-through," glass-paneled door if the vulnerable individual insists on privacy with you.

Do offer comfort and solace to those who are upset or grieving. Try not to do it by physically holding or hugging a vulnerable individual, if possible, unless you are the parent and/or legal guardian.

Do realize that a vulnerable individual, who is unable to speak, can say “no” to physical affection and refrain from displays of affection through their body language.

Do use only chaste language when speaking.

Do dress modestly at all times.

Do always plan to provide adequate supervision before and after Archdiocesan functions. A ratio of one volunteer to every three vulnerable individuals is suggested during these planned activities. During study sessions and off-site activities, a ratio of one volunteer to every two vulnerable individuals is preferred.

From time to time you may find yourself unavoidably left with a vulnerable individual because of a parent or guardian’s failure to arrive at your facility on time to pick up that vulnerable individual at the conclusion of an Archdiocesan-sponsored program. While this is always a difficult and frustrating situation, it must be understood by all concerned that the safety and welfare of that vulnerable individual under those circumstances continues to be the moral and legal obligation of you and those associated with your program on behalf of the Archdiocese. In view of the foregoing, the following guidelines are set forth to provide you with an overview of how such situations should generally be handled:

- Under no circumstances should any vulnerable individual be left unattended. That vulnerable individual remains your obligation until such time as a family member or other responsible adult takes physical custody of that vulnerable individual.
- All reasonable efforts should be undertaken to contact the parent or guardian or other responsible family member of the vulnerable individual to arrange for their pick up.
- In the event those efforts are successful but the adult appearing to pick up the vulnerable individual is neither the parent nor the designated emergency contact person according to current records, you must confirm the identity of the adult and their relationship to the vulnerable individual. Obviously, you must conclude through the use of sound judgment that the adult is an appropriate person to take custody of the vulnerable individual.
- In the event that all of these efforts are unsuccessful, you should call the local police authority and report the abandonment of the vulnerable individual and request the police to come to your facility to take custody of the vulnerable

individual. The timing and decision to call local police authorities is to be based on your good judgment and professional assessment of the situation.

- You should not undertake to transport the vulnerable individual in your automobile to another location unless you have the written permission of the parent or legal guardian, there is a medical emergency, or the child and/or vulnerable individual is a relative.
- In the event that a parent or guardian's failure pick up in a timely manner a vulnerable individual is a repeated or consistent problem, this matter should be handled like any other disciplinary issue involving breach of program policies and procedures. This may result in the parent/guardian being directed to withdraw their vulnerable individual from the program.

Don'ts

Don't blame yourself for this Church crisis. It is not your fault. The pedophile is the cause of the crisis, not you.

Don't isolate or remove yourself from vulnerable individuals. They need you. You are an important person in their growth and development in their relationship with God and the Church.

Don't ignore your own feelings about the way your life has been impacted by the media coverage of abuse of child and/or vulnerable individuals in the Catholic Church. Make time for prayer and spiritual direction. Do what it takes to remain healthy and spiritually strong.

Behavioral Guidelines, Which Should be Observed to Protect You and Those to Whom You Minister

Do not physically or emotionally abuse any vulnerable individual, including, but not limited to, physically or emotionally punishing a vulnerable individual.

Do not sexually abuse or exploit any vulnerable individual as defined by *Archdiocesan Policy*.

Do not permit any vulnerable individual, unless you are their parent or legal guardian, to enter your home or living quarters unless accompanied by a parent or guardian. If a social event including a vulnerable individual is held at your home, have an adult who is not related to you, in attendance if possible, or at least three other responsible volunteers for each person with a disability assisting you with supervision during that event.

Do not sleep alone in the same room with a vulnerable individual, unless you are a relative.

Do not take an overnight trip alone with a vulnerable individual, unless you are a relative.

Do not use open bathroom facilities in the presence of a vulnerable individual, unless you are a relative.

Do not dress or undress yourself in the presence of a vulnerable individual, unless you are a relative.

Do not allow a vulnerable individual, unless you are a relative, to dress or undress in your presence.

Do not provide toileting assistance for a vulnerable individual unless you are a relative. If a vulnerable individual regularly needs assistance in the bathroom, family members, a guardian, medical personnel, or official caregivers should provide this assistance. If a vulnerable individual needs emergency bathroom assistance, two responsible adults of the same gender as the vulnerable individual should assist. Plan for this assistance before the need arises.

Do not fail to make plans for dressing, toileting, transferring and bathing assistance needs well in advance of any weekend/overnight retreat or conference. If a family member, guardian, medical personnel, or official caregivers are not available, only previously trained staff and previously trained responsible adult volunteers should provide this function. If those persons are not available, the vulnerable individual should not attend.

Do not provide any vulnerable individual, unless you are their parent or legal guardian, with alcohol or tobacco.

Do not provide any vulnerable individual, unless you are their parent or legal guardian, with a drug of any kind.

Do not allow a vulnerable individual, unless you are their parent or legal guardian, to self-medicate in your presence.

Do not permit a vulnerable individual to have possession of a key to any Archdiocesan facility.

Do not allow a vulnerable individual unsupervised access to any Archdiocesan facility.

Do not permit a vulnerable individual to leave the Archdiocesan church or facility during a scheduled class, event or function without supervision.

Do not accompany a vulnerable individual, unless you are their parent or legal guardian, to any place that serves alcohol.

Do not provide any vulnerable individual with pornography or permit a vulnerable individual to have pornography in his or her possession in your presence.

Do not take photos of vulnerable individuals without the consent of their parent or legal guardian.

Do not pay for or otherwise accompany vulnerable individuals, unless you are their parent or legal guardian, to watch any movie, video or television program unless it has a G or PG-13 rating.

Do not accompany a vulnerable individual to an amusement park or other recreational activity unless also accompanied by the vulnerable individual's family member, guardian or official caregiver or unless it is an official Church- or Disabilities Ministry-sponsored event.

Do not use profanity, sexually expressive or vulgar language in the presence of a vulnerable individual.

Do not allow music to be played that contains profanity, is sexually expressive, or has vulgar language.

Do not meet alone with a vulnerable individual unless you are his/her parent or legal guardian.

Do not teach or counsel a vulnerable individual at your home unless you are his/her parent or legal guardian.

Do not allow a vulnerable individual to remain in the presence of only one other person who is not the vulnerable individual's family member, guardian, medical personnel, or official caregiver. Arrangements should be made in advance for another volunteer to monitor such situations.

Do not give or accept personal gifts, having any intrinsic value, to or from a vulnerable individual unless you are their parent or legal guardian.

Do not discuss your personal life with a vulnerable individual unless you are their parent or legal guardian.

Do not discuss the personal lives of clergy, employees, staff or volunteers with a vulnerable individual.

Do not have any physical contact while dancing with a vulnerable individual unless you are a relative.

Do not accept a baby-sitting or house-sitting assignment for any vulnerable individual served by this ministry.

Do not visit vulnerable individuals at their homes without the permission of the parent and/or legal guardian.

Do not permit undocumented volunteers (no Social Security number, known background check, and/or no evidence of safe environment training, and/or no code of conduct signature) to assist you with the care of vulnerable individuals.

Do not date any vulnerable individual served by this ministry.

Acknowledgment of Receipt

I hereby acknowledge that on _____ I received a copy of the Archdiocese of Atlanta's "Ministerial Standards When Dealing with Vulnerable Individuals" effective September 30, 2004. I have read the "Ministerial Standards" specific to this ministry and agree to conduct myself in conformity with the Standards as they may be amended in the future. I also understand that this acknowledgment form will be kept in my personnel/volunteer file.

Name: _____

[please type or print]

Signed: _____

School/Organization: _____

Date: _____

Check one:

_____ Employee

_____ Volunteer Who Has Regular Contact with Vulnerable
Individuals

Safe Environment Compliance ADULTS



Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

Parish or School or Department: _____

I have contact with children in the following role(s):

- Clergy
- Religious
- Employee
- Volunteer

SIGNATURE

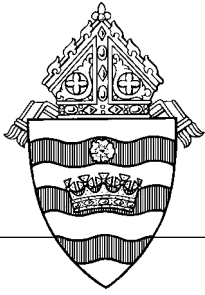
I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT I HAVE RECEIVED AND WATCHED "YOU MATTER," THE ARCHDIOCESE OF ATLANTA SAFE ENVIRONMENT TRAINING VIDEO. I UNDERSTAND AND AGREE TO COMPLY WITH THE REPORTING PROCEDURES AND POLICIES THAT ARE IDENTIFIED IN THIS FILM. ADDITIONALLY, I HAVE SIGNED THE FOLLOWING SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:

CHECK ALL THAT APPLY:

- Sexual Abuse Policy
- Completed Background Consent Form
- Employee/Volunteer Application
- Completed Background Report
- Code of Conduct
- Ministerial Standards

SIGNATURE: _____ **DATE:** _____

Please send a copy of this form to your parish, school or agency.



Archdiocese of
Atlanta

Volunteer Background Investigation Consent

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Atlanta certifies that all reports, whether oral or written, will be kept strictly confidential and, except as required by law, information will only be revealed to the applicant or a person whose duty requires him or her to participate in the decision for the transaction for which the report was ordered. The Archdiocese further certifies that the purpose of the investigation is very limited in scope and information received will be used for the sole purpose of making a determination regarding the qualifications of an individual to serve as a volunteer.

I, _____, hereby authorize the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Atlanta and/or its agents to make an independent investigation of my background, references, character, criminal or police records, including those maintained by both public and private organizations and all public records for the purpose of confirming the information contained on my Application and/or obtaining other information which may be material to my qualifications as a volunteer.

I release the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Atlanta and/or its agents and any person or entity, which provides information pursuant to this authorization, from any and all liabilities, claims or law suits in regards to the information obtained from any and all of the above referenced sources used. The following is my true and complete legal name and all information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge:

Full Name Printed:

Maiden Name or Other Names Used:

Please list all residence addresses for the past seven years. (Use a separate sheet if needed.)

Present Address: How Long?

City: State: Zip:

Former Address: How Long?

City: State: Zip:

Former Address: How Long?

City: State: Zip:

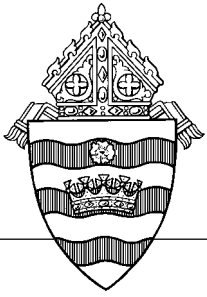
*Race: *Sex: Male Female

*Date of Birth: SS#:

Driver's License Number: State of License:

Signature: Date:

*NOTE: The above information is required for identification purposes only, and is in no manner used as qualifications for employment. The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Atlanta is an Equal Opportunity Employer, and does not discriminate on the basis of Sex, Race, Religion, Age, Handicap or National Origin.



Archdiocese of
Atlanta

Volunteer Notification & Authorization

This is used to inform you that a consumer report or an investigative consumer report is being obtained from a consumer reporting agency for the purpose of evaluating your qualifications to serve as a volunteer.

In addition to any criminal history this report may contain information relating to your character and general reputation through personal references. You may also have a right to request additional disclosures regarding the nature and scope of the investigation.

To whom it may concern:

I hereby authorize and request any school, police department, agency or other persons having personal knowledge about me, to furnish bearer with any and all information in their possession regarding me in connection with an application to serve as a volunteer including consumer report information that may include motor vehicle records. I am willing that a photocopy of this authorization be accepted with the same authority as the original, and I specifically waive any written notice from any present or former employer who may provide information based upon this authorized request. I understand this authorization is to be part of the written volunteer application, which I sign.

I have been given a copy of this form.

Date:

Print Name:

Signature:

Date of Birth *(for identification purposes only)*:

SS# *(for identification purposes only)*:

Name change/former name *(through marriage or otherwise)*:

A Summary of Your Rights Under the Fair Credit Reporting Act

The federal Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) is designed to promote accuracy, fairness, and privacy of information in the files of every "consumer reporting agency" (CRA). Most CRAs are credit bureaus that gather and sell information about you -- such as if you pay your bills on time or have filed bankruptcy -- to creditors, employers, landlords, and other businesses. You can find the complete text of the FCRA 15 U.S.C. 1681-1681u, at the Federal Trade Commission's web site (<http://www.ftc.gov>). The FCRA gives you specific rights, as outlined below. You may have additional rights under state law. You may contact a state or local consumer protection agency or a state attorney general to learn those rights.

- **You must be told if information in your file has been used against you.** Anyone who uses information from a CRA to take action against you -- such as denying an application for credit, insurance, or employment -- must tell you, and give you the name, address, and phone number of the CRA that provided the consumer report.
- **You can find out what is in your file.** At your request, a CRA must give you the information in your file, and a list of everyone who has requested it recently. There is no charge for the report if a person has taken action against you because of information supplied by the CRA, if you request the report within 60 days of receiving notice of the action. You also are entitled to one free report every twelve months upon request if you certify that (1) you are unemployed and plan to seek employment within 60 days, (2) you are on welfare, or (3) your report is inaccurate due to fraud. Otherwise, a CRA may charge you up to eight dollars.
- **You can dispute inaccurate information with the CRA.** If you tell a CRA that your file contains inaccurate information, the CRA must investigate the items (usually within 30 days) by presenting to its information source all relevant evidence you submit, unless your dispute is frivolous. The source must review your evidence and report its findings to the CRA. (The source also must advise national CRAs -- to which it has provided the data -- of any error) The CRA must give you a written report of the investigation, and a copy of your report if the investigation results in any change. If the CRA's investigation does not resolve the dispute, you may add a brief statement to your file. The CRA must normally include a summary of your statement in future reports. If an item is deleted or a dispute statement is filed, you may ask that anyone who has recently received your report be notified of the change.
- **Inaccurate information must be corrected or deleted.** A CRA must remove or correct inaccurate or unverified information from its files, usually within 30 days after you dispute it. **However, the CRA is not required to remove accurate data from your file unless it is outdated (as described below) or cannot be verified.** If your dispute results in any change to your report, the CRA cannot reinsert into your file a disputed item unless the information source verifies its accuracy and completeness. In addition, the CRA must give you a written notice telling you it has reinserted the item. The notice must include the name, address and phone number of the information source.
- **You can dispute inaccurate items with the source of the information.** If you tell anyone -- such as a creditor who reports to a CRA -- that you dispute an item, they may not then report the information to a CRA without including a notice of your dispute. In addition, once you've notified the source of the error in writing, it may not continue to report the information if it is, in fact, an error.
- **Outdated information may not be reported.** In most cases, a CRA may not report negative information that is more than seven years old; ten years for bankruptcies.
- **Access to your file is limited.** A CRA may provide information about you only to people with a need recognized by the FCRA -- usually to consider an application with a creditor, insurer, employer, landlord, or other business.
- **Your consent is required for reports that are provided to employers, or reports that contain medical information.** A CRA may not give out information about you to your employer, or prospective employer, without your written consent. A CRA may not report medical information about you to creditors, insurers, or employers without your permission.

This overview is provided as a courtesy and is not intended as legal advice. It addresses the specifics of FCRA as they pertain to reports ordered for employment purposes.

- **You may choose to exclude your name from CRA lists for unsolicited credit and insurance offers.** Creditors and insurers may use file information as the basis for sending you unsolicited offers of credit or insurance. Such offers must include a toll-free number for you to call if you want your name and address removed from future lists. If you call, you must be kept off the lists for two years. If you request, complete, and return the CRA form provided for this purpose, you must be taken off the lists indefinitely.
- **You may seek damages from violators.** If a CRA, a user or (in some cases) a provider of CRA data, violates the FCRA, you may sue them in state or federal court.

The FCRA gives several different federal agencies authority to enforce the FCRA:

FOR QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS REGARDING:	PLEASE CONTACT:
CRA's, creditors and others not listed below	Federal Trade Commission Consumer Response Center - FCRA Washington, DC 20580 202-326-3761
National banks, federal branches/agencies of foreign banks (word "National" or initials "N.A." appear in or after bank's name)	Office of the Comptroller of the Currency Compliance Management, Mail Stop 6-6 Washington, DC 20219 800-613-6743
Federal Reserve System member banks (except national banks, and federal branches/agencies of foreign banks)	Federal Reserve Board Division of Consumer & Community Affairs Washington, DC 20551 202-452-3693
Savings associations and federally chartered savings banks (word "Federal" or initials "F.S.B." appear in federal institution's name)	Office of Thrift Supervision Consumer Programs Washington, DC 20552 800-842-6929
Federal credit unions (words "Federal Credit Union" appear in institution's name)	National Credit Union Administration 1775 Duke Street Alexandria, VA 22314 703-518-6360
State chartered banks that are not members of the Federal Reserve System	Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Division of Compliance & Consumer Affairs Washington, DC 20429 800-934-FDIC
Air, surface, or rail common carriers regulated by former Civil Aeronautics Board or Interstate Commerce Commission	Department of Transportation Office of Financial Management Washington, DC 20590 202-366-1306
Activities subject to the Packers and Stockyards Act, 1921	Department of Agriculture Office of Deputy Administrator - GIPSA Washington, DC 20250 202-720-7051

**ChoicePoint Consumer Center
P.O. Box 105108
Atlanta, Georgia 30302
1-800-845-6004**

This overview is provided as a courtesy and is not intended as legal advice. It addresses the specifics of FCRA as they pertain to reports ordered for employment purposes.

Archdiocese of Atlanta
VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

The information obtained in this is for
the internal use of the Archdiocese of Atlanta only.

Name of Parish/School/Agency:

First Name and Initial	Last Name	Social Security Number	
_____	_____	_____ - _____ - _____	
Address – Street	City	State	Zip-Code
_____	_____	_____	_____
Home phone	Business phone		
_____ - _____	_____ - _____		
Occupation, employer and business address:		Years at this Employment	Date of Birth: _____ / _____ / _____
_____		_____	Volunteer position: _____

Driver's license no.	State	Expiration	_____ / _____ / _____

1. Volunteer background.

Position	Organization	Year
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
2. Experience working with youth in other organizations.

3. Previous residences (for last 7 years).

4. Current memberships (religious, community, business or professional organizations).

5. References. Please list non-family members who are familiar with your character.
Name _____
Telephone _____
Name _____
Telephone _____
Name _____
Telephone _____

6. Additional information (circle each answer)
 - a. Do you use illegal drugs? Yes No
 - b. Have you ever been convicted of a crime? (If yes, explain below) Yes No
 - c. Have you ever been the subject of an investigation involving sexual abuse? (If yes, explain below) Yes No
 - d. Has your driver's license ever been suspended or revoked? (If yes, explain below) Yes No
 - e. Other than the above, is there any fact or circumstance involving you or your background that would call into question your being entrusted with the supervision, guidance, and care of young people? (If yes, explain below) Yes No

I understand that:

- a. My services to the Archdiocese of Atlanta are on a voluntary basis and I am not entitled to nor shall I receive any compensation or employee benefits of any kind.
- b. The information that I have provided may be verified, if necessary, by contacting persons or organizations named in this application, or by contacting any person or organization that may have information concerning me, or by conducting a criminal background check. I hereby release and agree to hold harmless from liability any person or organization that provides information. I also agree to hold harmless the Parish/School, the Archdiocese of Atlanta, and the officers, employees and volunteers thereof.
- c. By signing this application, I have read the attached information and apply for registration as a volunteer with the Archdiocese of Atlanta. I agree to comply with the policies, rules and regulations of the Archdiocese of Atlanta and the local Parish/School. I affirm that the information I have given on this form is true and correct.

APPROVALS FOR VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION:

We are unaware of anything contrary to the information stated in this application. This application has been reviewed according to the policies of the Archdiocese of Atlanta and this applicant meets the standards of the Archdiocese of Atlanta.

Signature of Business Manager/
Director of Department

Date

Signature of Pastor/Principal/
Department Head

Date

ACCEPTED:

Signature of Archbishop or designee

Date

✕ _____
Signature of Applicant **Date**