

ANNEX VV3

Roman Catholic Military Ordinariate of Canada



GUIDELINES FOR COUNSELLING RELATIONSHIPS ¹

¹ REVIEWED 2021

Guidelines for Counseling Relationships ²

Exploitation in the context of this counseling relationship refers to Roman Catholic Military Chaplain (RCCHAP) taking unfair advantage of the counseling relationship for the benefit of the counselor.

Sexual exploitation means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust for sexual purposes between RCCHAP and the recipient of his or her counseling services, regardless of who initiates the contact.

Aforementioned,

- Clergy & Lay Pastoral Associates, and members of Religious Institutes providing pastoral counseling or spiritual direction *are generally not licensed* as professional counselors and are expected to limit their counseling to spiritual, religious, moral, or pastoral matters.

Therefore

1. They are expected to remain within their competence in counseling situations and to refer matters to other professionals when appropriate.
2. They are expected to avoid situations and conduct that are exploitive or are likely to give the appearance of exploitation.
3. They are expected to avoid counseling situations and conduct that further their own personal, religious, political or business interests.
4. They are expected to inform all parties of a potential or actual conflict of interest. Resolution of the issues must protect the person being counseled.
5. They must never engage in sexual intimacies with the people they counsel. This includes non-consensual and consensual contact, forced physical contact and sexually explicit conversations not related to counseling issues.
6. They are not to engage in sexual intimacies with relatives, friends, or other individuals who are close to the client when there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the client. They should presume that a potential exploitation or harm exists in such intimate relationships.
7. They are fully responsible for setting and maintaining clear, appropriate boundaries in all counseling and counseling-related relationships.
8. Sessions are to be conducted in appropriate settings at appropriate times and are not to be held in places or at times that might cause confusion about the nature of the relationship for the person being counseled. For example, regular counseling sessions with minors should be scheduled when there is another adult readily available in the building. No sessions should be conducted in private living quarters.

² "Counseling relationships" include pastoral counseling, spiritual direction, and other forms of counseling provided by competent professionals through Church affiliated organizations and services.