



Commitment to Safe Environment

As a faith-filled people, we respect and value each and every individual, as we are created in the image and likeness of God.

The Diocese of Cheyenne is committed to creating a safe environment where all of God's family—children, their parents and relatives, parish and school personnel, volunteers, clergy and diocesan personnel—will be able to work, live and play in an environment where healthy and responsible relationships prevail.



You can also find more information on the diocesan website at www.dioceseofcheyenne.org

If you have been abused or victimized by church personnel...

Please believe there is hope and healing. We encourage you to come forward and make a report. Know that every diocese in the United States has a Victim Assistance Coordinator who is available to help you obtain support for your needs.

If you suspect abuse of a minor, your first call should be to law enforcement or the Department of Family Services.

If you or someone you know has been the victim of sexual abuse by a member of the clergy, or an employee or volunteer of a parish in the Diocese of Cheyenne, and would like to report or discuss this, please contact:

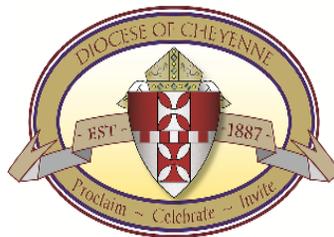
Mary Adams

Victim Assistance Coordinator

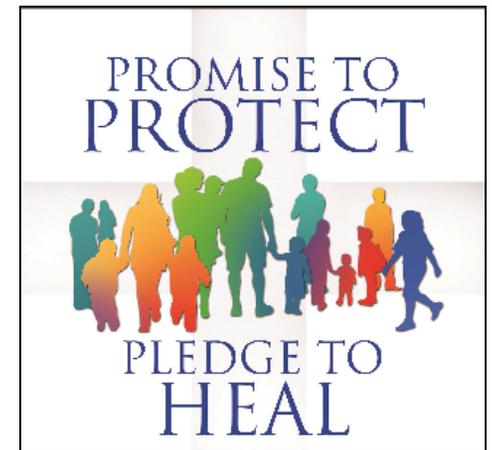
307.220.0485

adamsmaryj@outlook.com

Please understand that the Diocese of Cheyenne is bound by civil and canon law to report sexual abuse of a minor to civil authorities. Anyone who believes that they have been sexually abused is strongly encouraged to report as well.



Sexual Abuse Response and Healing



“Instead of reacting to abuse, the Church must be the light of Christ shining in the world. Please pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit as we seek to bring wholeness to all who have been harmed by sexual abuse in the Church and in society. Pray that the Church will shine as a Light of the World.”

Bishop Steven Biegler

December 2018



Sexual Abuse Response and Healing

What can I expect if I contact the diocese?

If you make a complaint about any Church personnel, past or present, you can expect that the Victim Assistance Coordinator will listen to you, make a complete report and answer any questions about the process of reporting abuse. The victim Assistance Coordinator in the Diocese of Cheyenne will help you through the reporting process and assist you with any pastoral support you may need. We recognize that making a report is often the first step toward healing and recovery.

What will the diocese do about the allegation?

All reports of sexual abuse will be referred immediately to civil authorities. The bishop and other appropriate diocesan officials will be notified.

Any allegation of sexual abuse of a minor or will result in the alleged perpetrator's temporary removal from ministry until an investigation is concluded.

If civil authorities are unable to pursue an investigation of the allegation, the diocese may refer the case to an independent investigator, who will take into account the rights of all parties.

The Diocesan Review Board examines and evaluates all findings of the investigations and advises the Bishop in his determination of the suitability for ministry of priests or deacons accused of sexual abuse of minors.

How will the diocese help me?

The Victims Assistance Coordinator works with each individual to determine the assistance that is necessary and appropriate. This may include:

- Providing prompt, compassionate, professional response and follow-up to victims and their families when a report is brought to the attention of the Diocese's attention;
- Offering referrals for counseling services and pastoral care;
- Facilitating pastoral interviews with Bishop Biegler.

Why should I report sexual abuse?

The Diocese of Cheyenne recognizes that one of the first obligations of the Church with regard to victims is for healing and reconciliation. When you come forward with your report for sexual abuse:

- You may begin healing;
- Justice may be served, and
- No one else will be victimized.

Know that when you report an instance of abuse to the diocese, a carefully defined process begins in order to accomplish several purposes:

- To ensure that all abuse is reported to appropriate civil and Church authorities.
- To comply with all civil and canon laws and the US Bishops *Charter for the Protection for Children and Young People*.
- To take every measure possible to hold the individual accountable.
- To make available resources to enable you to restore your wholeness.

What is the diocese doing to prevent the sexual abuse of others?

The Diocese of Cheyenne has implemented a comprehensive safe environment program that includes all employees and those volunteers working with minors as well as all students in our parishes and schools.

For Adults: The following requirements must be met prior to employment or volunteer service for those who interact with minors and/or vulnerable adults:

- Safe environment education
- State and national background checks, repeated at least every five years
- Acknowledge that they have received and read:
 - ✓ Norms for Responding to Reports of Sexual Abuse of Minors and Vulnerable Adults
 - ✓ Instructions Concerning Interactions with Minors and Vulnerable Adults

For Children: All children in grades K-12 in Catholic schools and religious education programs are required to receive safe environment education. This is NOT sex education. Because of the value and dignity of human life, it is important that children are taught about personal safety, awareness and boundaries.