

**MANDATES FOR ALL PARISH AND SCHOOL
CATECHETICAL AND YOUTH MINISTRY LEADERS IN THE
ARCHDIOCESE OF SAN ANTONIO
CERTIFICATE YEAR 2008-2009**

1. ARCHDIOCESAN SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY

All parish and school staff and all volunteer personnel in any capacity **must** view the video and read the policy booklet on Archdiocese of San Antonio Sexual Misconduct Policy before they begin their ministry. **There are no exceptions!**

All employees and volunteers must also sign and complete the Archdiocesan Sexual Misconduct Certificate. Call Victoria Esparza, at Human Resources, 210-734-2620, ext. 1324 for more information.

2. CRIMINAL BACKGROUND SEARCH POLICY

The policy of the Archdiocese of San Antonio requires that criminal background searches be conducted on all clergy and employees. Criminal background searches must also be conducted on all volunteers who directly minister, work or volunteer with minors and/or vulnerable persons. No other criminal background searches are acceptable in lieu of the Archdiocesan criminal background search.

Employees and volunteers are asked to complete the **Authorization and Release Form for Criminal Background Search and Code of Ethics & Screening Questionnaire Form**. Refusal to sign and complete this form will result in immediate termination and/or suspension of services.

Criminal background searches will be conducted on all new employees and new volunteers who directly minister, work, or volunteer with minors and/or vulnerable persons and updated every three years on existing employees and volunteers.

3. CHILD ABUSE

It is a legal requirement that anyone who is aware of or suspects that a child (anyone under the age of 18 yrs) is being abused **must** report this incident to the proper authorities. Please follow guidelines outlined in the **Archdiocese of San Antonio Sexual Misconduct Policy**. Professionals are required to report within 48 hours by calling 800-252-5400. Do not probe for information. If you are concerned and can provide the name and address of the child, **CALL**. Child Protective Services or Law Enforcement will investigate.

4. The Office of Victim Assistance & Safe Environment is able to work with the victims of abuse. If you or anyone you know is being abused, or has been abused in the past, by the clergy, staff or volunteer of the church, please contact Steve Martinez, LCSW, LSOTP, at 210-734-7786 or 1-877-700-1888 immediately. They will assess the situation and make sure the victim gets needed information.

5. OVASE- Safe Environment Abuse Prevention Education

Beginning in 2004, every parish, school and institution must incorporate an abuse prevention program with all children, pre-school thru high school, and to parents. This is not a separate program, it is content information to be included in religious education and youth ministry education. Every parish has a named coordinator who can educate catechists to implement the mandatory program. In addition, the data on dates and numbers instructed must be reported to coordinators for audit purposes. For questions, call your local coordinator or Steve Martinez 210-734-7786.

6. PERMISSION SLIP REQUIREMENTS

All children under the age of eighteen (18) must have a permission slip signed by their parents or legal guardian **yearly** for the following:

- a. Consent Forms for medical treatment
- b. Field Trip Permission Slips
- c. Permission to meet in homes or locations outside of church premises.
*An adult, not a family member, other than the homeowners must be present at all classes.
*Homeowners must have some type of Liability Insurance.
- d. Permission to participate in other church related functions not specifically related to Religious Education.
Sample forms may be obtained from the Archdiocesan Catechetical Center or the Office of Youth Ministry.

7. FIELD TRIP PACKETS

Make sure you have obtained the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the **custodial** parents or guardians. It is especially important to obtain all the necessary information on Field Trips, Weekend Retreats and activities off church property. Field Trip Guide packets can be obtained from Risk Management Office. Please review Field Trip memo of 5-28-98.

8. CATECHIST POLICY

- a. All classrooms must have at least one adult teacher or catechist (18 yrs or older) present at all times. Anyone under the age of 18 should never be left alone with children.
- b. There should always be adult supervision before and after all classes, regardless of the ages of the children. Proper procedure will be indicated by each location. Catechists should not transport children home.
- c. If possible, two adults should be together at all times, when working with children as protection against allegations of misconduct.

9. INSURANCE

If you have a written contract or agreement with a retreat center or camp, please forward a copy of the contract or agreement to our office as soon as possible. Please contact Risk Management before you purchase any outside insurance for Retreats, Field Trips, etc. This coverage may already be in force. All Adult Volunteers, Students, and Religious Education Students are now covered under a blanket policy.

10. ARCHDIOCESAN DRIVER POLICY

Any employee or volunteer who drives an Archdiocesan owned or leased vehicle must have an Archdiocesan Driving Permit (renewal every three years) and must attend an approved Defensive Driving Class (within a year of employment). **10 to 15 passenger vans are prohibited from being used to transport children. Drivers must be at least 21 years of age to transport children.** If a volunteer drives a personal vehicle for church sponsored activities or business, then the individual must carry proper insurance requirements and must fill out the **Volunteer Driver Information Sheet** that is available through the Office of Risk Management.

11. COPYRIGHT INFORMATION

It is a Federal Offence to copy materials, music, or videos for distribution without permission of the author, composer, or publisher. Contact the ACC Office for assistance or questions on copyright issues. It is theft to copy words or music in sacrament programs or booklets for parish use without a license number or permission.



**Archdiocesan Catechetical Center
2718 W. Woodlawn
San Antonio, TX 78228
210-734-2620 ext. 1202**



**Office of Youth Ministry
2718 W. Woodlawn
San Antonio, TX 78228
210-734-1625**

**Office of Risk Management
2718 W. Woodlawn
San Antonio, TX 78228
210-734-2620 ext. 1159**



**Office of Victim Assistance and Safe Environment
St. Paul Community Center
1202 Donaldson (at St. Cloud)
San Antonio, Texas 78228
210-734-7786**

**Archdiocesan Office of Human Resources
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