

POLICY FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND ADULTS



The
DIOCESE OF QUINCY

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OVERVIEW

WELCOME FROM THE BISHOP

To the Clergy, Vestries, Lay Leaders, Volunteers, and People of the Diocese of Quincy,

PAX!

Our Lord said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 19:14, ESV). This brief command carries eternal weight. It reveals the heart of our Savior and names the sacred responsibility entrusted to his Church. As followers of Jesus, we are called to care for the most vulnerable in our midst, not only children but also the elderly, people with disabilities, and all who may be at risk of harm or exploitation. This ministry is not optional. It is part of our witness to the gospel, our obedience to Scripture, and our participation in the ministry of Christ.

As your bishop, I commend to you this Safeguarding Policy for the Diocese of Quincy. This document serves as a tool not only to ensure legal compliance and institutional responsibility but also to foster spiritual faithfulness. It helps us to walk in the light, as God is in the light (1 John 1:7), and to be a people marked by justice, mercy, and truth. When we protect others, especially those who cannot protect themselves, we reflect the character of our God who defends the orphan and the widow, binds up the brokenhearted, and heals the wounded.

Discussions around abuse and safeguarding can stir painful memories and deep concerns, but the conversations are necessary. Sexual abuse is a grievous sin that has wounded many in the Church and the world. If you are among those who carry the scars of such pain, I want you to know that your story matters. You are not alone. The Diocese of Quincy is committed to walking with you in truth, healing, and hope. We believe that Jesus Christ is not only the Good Shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep but also the Risen Lord who brings new life out of suffering and death.

Our theological convictions shape our actions. As Anglicans, we affirm the teaching of Holy Scripture and the tradition of the Church regarding the dignity of every human person, created in the image of God. We uphold the goodness of human sexuality, rightly ordered within the covenant of marriage between one man and one woman, and we call all members of the Church to lives of holiness, chastity, and integrity. These convictions are not barriers, but signposts that point us toward the freedom and flourishing found only in Christ.

Clergy, in particular, are to be examples to the flock (1 Peter 5:3). Being an example means not only maintaining personal holiness but also having a proactive commitment to transparency, accountability, and care. I ask every priest and deacon in this diocese to lead the way in implementing and modeling the safeguarding practices found in this manual. Accountability is not a burden; it is a gift. It protects the integrity of our ministries and the well-being of those we serve.

Finally, I encourage all members of our diocese—clergy, lay leaders, volunteers, and parishioners alike—to read this policy with seriousness and hope. It is our shared duty and high calling to protect the people entrusted to our care. In doing so, we glorify God, bear witness to the gospel, and fulfill the vows of our Baptismal Covenant: to seek and serve Christ in all persons, to strive for justice and

peace, and to respect the dignity of every human being.

May the Lord grant us grace to be faithful in this task, courageous in love, and steadfast in truth.

Faithfully yours in Christ,



The Rt. Rev. J. Alberto Morales, OSB
Bishop of the Diocese of Quincy
Anglican Church in North America

PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

This document offers guidance, information, instructions, and standard practices to direct and inform both clergy and laity in the churches of the Diocese of Quincy as you develop your child and adult protection policies. It also serves as a reference manual to inform your decisions and methods regarding the safeguarding of those entrusted to you, providing standards of care and vigilance.

THE DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE

The Bishop, in collaboration with the Standing Committee, has established a Safeguarding Committee responsible for creating and promulgating the Diocesan Policy for the Protection of Children and Adults under the authority and oversight of the Bishop and the Standing Committee, in accordance with the Diocesan Canons. This committee currently includes the Bishop (President), the Canon to the Ordinary (Vice President and Director of Safeguarding), the Canon Lawyer, the Canon for Next Gen Ministry, and the Chancellor.

Occasionally, ideally at least once a year, the committee should review and, if necessary, update the policy based on practical experiences, medical and other scholarly research, legal changes, and other relevant factors.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS POLICY

The Rector, rather than the Diocese of Quincy or the Anglican Church in North America, has the overall responsibility for administering this policy within the parish, mission, or church plant they lead and for providing all reports requested by the diocese. In the absence of a Rector or Vicar, the priest-in-charge will take on this responsibility. Duties may be delegated, except in those areas outlined explicitly as requiring action by the Rector or Vicar.

POLICY SUMMARY

The Diocese of Quincy requires that each church (see definition) have these procedures (or their equivalent) in place to prevent misconduct and/or abuse of both adults and children.

Here are the key points to remember from this policy:

AWARENESS

- All clergy, employees, vestry members, and Child and Youth Workers (see definition below) must undergo screening, background checks, and training on this policy before serving.
- All clergy, employees, vestry members, and Child and Youth Workers are required to complete the sexual abuse prevention training before serving.
- The church maintains records for the laity, while the Diocese maintains records for the clergy.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

- The two-adult rule should always be followed (also known as the rule of three).
- Pastoral counseling is typically limited to three or fewer sessions per person, after which professional, licensed counseling should be recommended.
- Verbal communication should be kind, clean, legal, and age-specific.
- All interactions should remain hands-off, particularly regarding restroom policies, affection, and discipline; stay in public view; children should never be alone; be open to parents being present; adhere to Supervisory Plans and other policies listed below (medical, restroom, transportation, overnight, off-campus, responding, and reporting); ensure a safe environment; follow the recommended ratio of Certified Adults to children or youth.

REPORTING

- Any report of misconduct or abuse should be submitted to the appropriate authorities immediately, as described below.
- Allegations against clergy should be reported directly to the Diocesan Reports Receiver at the email address safeguarding@dioceseofquincy.org. Allegations against a Bishop should be reported to the Archbishop.
- Allegations against all laypersons should be reported directly to senior church leadership (Rector, priest-in-charge, or Senior Warden).

COMPLIANCE

- Churches are responsible for all documentation related to the screening, training, and implementation processes for non-clergy employees, vestry members, and Child and Youth Workers, ensuring compliance with this policy and the requirements of their insurance carriers.
- The Diocese is responsible for all documentation related to the screening, training, and implementation for clergy, ensuring compliance with this policy and the diocesan insurance carrier's requirements.
- Documentation must be completed, submitted, and filed by the start of synod each year.

DEFINITIONS

The Bishop and the Diocese strictly prohibit all types of abuse (as defined in this document) by any member of the clergy, anyone seeking ordained ministry, any employee, staff member, vestry member, or any Child and Youth Worker (as defined) working in any capacity for the Diocese or any diocesan-related institution or church within this Diocese.

For the purposes of this policy, please note the interpretation of the following terms:

- *Certified Adult*: an adult who has completed the screening and training process outlined in this policy. All clergy (including those seeking ordination or transfer), employees, and vestry members must be certified. All Child and Youth Workers must be certified before working with children or youth.
- *Child and Youth Worker*: adult volunteers and paid childcare workers who participate in activities for children and youth within diocesan institutions, programs, and churches. This includes teachers in Sunday school classrooms or discipleship groups, as well as anyone who has access to children in a supervisory role, even if they are not the primary teacher. All Child and Youth Workers must be certified. All supervision of minors must involve two Certified Adults (two unrelated adults are strongly preferred) in every room.
- *Abuse*¹: interactions in which one person acts cruelly, violently, demeaning, or invasively towards another, causing or likely to cause harm or injury. This term encompasses physical, sexual, and psychological (emotional) mistreatment.
 - *Child Abuse*: any deliberate act or threatened act leading to physical, mental, or sexual injury or harm that causes, or is likely to cause, significant impairment to the child's physical, mental, or emotional health. Abuse of a child includes both actions and omissions. Corporal discipline by a parent or legal custodian for disciplinary reasons does not automatically constitute abuse if it does not result in harm to the child. Each state and the District of Columbia has its own definitions of child abuse under civil and criminal laws, and each church in the diocese should be aware of the relevant laws and legal definitions in its jurisdiction. This information can be readily obtained through the Department of Children and Families or similar organizations within each state.
 - *Pastoral Abuse*: Pastoral abuse occurs when someone with spiritual authority displays a pattern of control, intimidation, manipulation, coercion, isolation, elitism, censorship of decision-making, exploitation, or uses the name of God to persuade someone to act in ways that are inconsistent with Scripture or our foundational documents. This pattern may involve using spiritual truths or Scripture to harm others. Pastoral abuse is unacceptable in our churches (see Matthew 7, 11, 23).

¹ Adapted from the American Psychological Association: <https://dictionary.apa.org/abuse>. As a helpful resource, recognizing such laws can change over time, please visit the following website to view links to the child abuse reporting laws in each jurisdiction: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/laws-policies/state/>.

- *Advocate(s)*: individuals chosen by the complainant with the Bishop's consent, or appointed by the Bishop at the complainant's request, to assist in understanding and engaging in the church's disciplinary processes. This includes helping the complainant to formulate and submit a complaint that complies with the canons. Advocates do not act as legal advisors or pastors.
- *Bishop*: the Bishop Ordinary of the Diocese, but this term also encompasses the ecclesiastical body authorized to act in the Bishop's absence, such as the Standing Committee.
- *Camp Director*: [When applicable, each diocese must have its own policies regarding diocesan camps and Camp Directors.]
- *Chaplain*: a spiritual advisor chosen by the complainant or the respondent, or appointed by the Bishop if desired by either party.
- *Child or Youth*: any unmarried person under the age of majority according to state law who has not been emancipated by court order. In most cases, "child" refers to infants through elementary school, and "youth" refers to middle school/junior high through high school-aged minors.
- *Children's Ministry Director*: the individual responsible for overseeing children's ministry in a congregation, whether as an employee or a volunteer.
- *Church*: all fellowships, congregations, parishes, missions, church plants, and any other worshiping entity affiliated with or associated with the Diocese.
- *Clergy*: for the purposes of this document, clergy consists of individuals ordained in the Anglican Church in North America as well as those pursuing ordained ministry (including aspirants, postulants, candidates, ordinands, and transfers), whether they are employed or non-stipendiary.
- *Complainant*: the individual making an allegation.
- *Consent*: Consent is when someone agrees, gives permission, or says yes to participating in sexual, romantic, or emotional activity with another person. Consent is always given freely, and everyone involved in a sexual, romantic, or emotional situation must feel they can say yes or stop the activity at any time. A power dynamic can arise when individuals hold authority, potentially undermining the validity of consent. For instance, a power differential between a supervisor and a subordinate employee may compromise the validity of consent. The fact that sexual activity is initiated by someone other than the church worker does not relieve that worker of responsibility, nor does it make such activity acceptable under those circumstances. Under no circumstances can a child or minor give consent.
- *Consultants*: individuals appointed by the Bishop to advise and consult with the respondent accused of misconduct or abuse and their legal advisors at reasonable times before the issuance of a Presentment. The consultant should have expertise in the ACNA canons and will explain clergy members' rights and available alternatives. The selection of the consultant

may consider the complainant's needs and requests.

- *Dating Relationships*: consensual relationships between clergy or employees and a parishioner, where both parties are exploring a consensual relationship that may lead to a Christian marriage. In these situations, the relationship should be conducted with the knowledge of the Rector (or Bishop, in the case of clergy). Non-clergy consensual dating between individuals not in supervisory relationships is excluded from the definition of sexual exploitation. Clergy must inform their Bishop of any dating relationship.
- *Diocesan Reports Receiver*: an impartial receiver trained to respond to allegations of misconduct or abuse made through a designated diocesan hotline, website, or email address. They are prepared to implement predetermined notification policies based on the written allegation submitted. According to ACNA Title 1, Canon 5, Section 9, each diocese must appoint at least two Diocesan Reports Receivers to handle reports of misconduct. Under no circumstances shall any Chancellor of the Diocese serve as a Diocesan Reports Receiver.
- *Director of Safeguarding*: the individual appointed by the Bishop who oversees the Safeguarding Team for the Diocese, covering all policies, training, prevention, and response initiatives.
- *Misconduct*: any violation or misuse of procedures, policies, practices, or processes by an individual or group aimed at improperly controlling or manipulating others within an organization.
- *Rector*: the individual responsible for a parish, including cases where this individual holds a title other than Rector (such as vicar, priest-in-charge, deacon, or church planter).
- *Respondent*: anyone accused of misconduct or abuse.
- *Safeguarding Team*: a group composed of psychologists, counselors, attorneys, and clergy members or other individuals appointed by the Bishop to oversee policies and procedures regarding misconduct or abuse in the Diocese. The Safeguarding Team will manage training, provide prevention methods and resources, respond to inquiries, assist in crisis response, and recommend policy changes as needed.
- *Sexual misconduct*: includes a range of unwelcome and unwanted sexual conduct, such as grooming, verbal, emotional, and physical sexual harassment, sexual assault, molestation, and all forms of sexual violence. It is not limited to intercourse but encompasses a wide variety of inappropriate behaviors, including inappropriate emotional intimacy, as well as the following:
 - *Sexual misconduct against minors or vulnerable adults*: sexual misconduct involving a person, including but not limited to any sexual involvement or sexual contact with a minor or a vulnerable adult.
 - *Grooming*: a technique used to break down barriers of protection. Abusers employ grooming techniques to gain trust, continually testing boundaries in a manner that allows inappropriate behavior to seep into the relationship without consent or even acknowledgment. Grooming often involves gaining access through trust, targeting

specific individuals as victims, gradually eroding their boundaries, and using methods to silence them.

- *Sexual harassment:* sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, quid pro quo behavior, sexually motivated physical contact, and other unwelcome verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature. This encompasses sexually oriented humor or language, questions or comments about sexual behavior or preference, undesired physical contact, inappropriate remarks about clothing or physical appearance, and repeated requests for social engagements. This applies to both children and adults in any employment, mentoring, or collegial relationship between the individuals involved. Possible examples include:
 - Inappropriate touching.
 - Sexually explicit comments regarding a person's body.
 - Sending sexually explicit or offensive communications, such as text messages, emails, or posts on social media.
 - Voyeurism involves viewing or displaying sexual objects or images.
 - Submitting to such sexual conduct is either explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of an individual's employment or their ongoing status in an institution.
 - Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting the individual.
 - Actions intended to unreasonably disrupt an individual's work performance by fostering an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment; or
 - Subjecting individuals to sexual jokes, inappropriate touching, or displays of sexual visuals that insult, degrade, or sexually exploit men, women, or children.
 - Sexual coercion: the use of physical or emotional power to obtain sexual gratification.
 - Sexual exploitation of adults refers to the development of, or the attempt to develop, a sexual relationship between a clergy member, employee, or volunteer associated with [your diocese] and a person with whom they have a pastoral relationship, regardless of any apparent consent from the individual. Sexual exploitation encompasses actions during a pastoral relationship, including sexual involvement or sexually demeaning comments. The apparent consent of a potential victim to a sexual or romantic relationship rarely determines whether sexual exploitation has occurred. Non-clergy consensual dating between individuals not in supervisory relationships is excluded from this definition of sexual exploitation.
 - Sexual exploitation of children includes, but is not limited to, obscene or pornographic photography, filming, or depiction of children for commercial purposes or exploitation; the employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement, or coercion of any child to engage in or assist any other person in engaging in sexually explicit conduct; or any simulation of sexually explicit conduct to produce a visual depiction of such conduct, or the rape, molestation, incest, prostitution, or other forms of sexual exploitation of children.

- *Youth Director*: the individual responsible for overseeing youth ministry within a congregation, whether they are an employee or a volunteer.

For the purposes of this policy:

- Allegations of misconduct or abuse within the church will be taken seriously and deserve a prompt response from the Diocese.
- The Bishop holds both pastoral and disciplinary responsibilities. When addressing allegations of misconduct or abuse by individuals within the Church, the Bishop should carefully avoid providing pastoral care to either the complainant or the accused. The Bishop and the Safeguarding Team may offer additional support to the respondent(s), complainant(s), and church(es) involved. He may also engage Advocates, Chaplains, and/or Consultants to assist with practical and pastoral care.
- The Safeguarding Team is a committee under the Standing Committee's authority. The Bishop will appoint members of the Safeguarding Team in consultation with the Standing Committee and the Director of Safeguarding.
- An individual can be falsely accused of misconduct or abuse.
- When a parent or guardian is with their minor child, the full responsibility for that child lies with the parent or guardian, even if clergy, employees, vestry, and/or a Child and Youth Worker are also present.
- The Bishop cannot be the sole authority to assess or evaluate the substance of allegations. Please read the Reporting section of this document carefully to understand the procedures for inquiries and investigations.
- Leaders who learn of misconduct or abuse by their clergy or lay leaders typically have an ethical responsibility to follow up on this information by reporting it to the appropriate ecclesiastical authorities and, when necessary, to legal authorities.

AWARENESS

AWARENESS

Education about misconduct and abuse is only one aspect needed to create an environment that safeguards adults and children from harm; awareness and understanding of various misconduct facets are crucial for fostering a healthy church committed to protecting its community.

SCREENING

One of the foundational steps to protecting our people from abuse is the careful screening of clergy, employees, vestry, and Child and Youth Workers. Screening is designed to expose any potential concerns regarding high-risk offenders before they ever set foot in one of our ministries. This should include background checks, reference checks, interviews, and minimum attendance periods. These efforts are completed to do all we can to create a safe environment for our people.

To help understand who must be screened, by when, and where to keep documentation:

SCREENING				
Role	Required	When	Required	Who Keeps Record?
Clergy (includes Transfers & Postulants)	Yes	Before Ordination, Transfer, or Hire [2-year renewal]	Yes	Diocese
Employees	Yes	Before Hire [2-Year Renewal]	Yes	Church
Vestry	Yes	Before Term Start [2-Year Renewal]	No	Church
Child and Youth Worker	Yes	Before Serving [2-Year Renewal]	Yes	Church
Camp Directors	Yes	Before Serving [2-Year Renewal]	Yes	Church

Screening includes the following procedures:

- *Background Checks* - required for all clergy, employees, vestry members, and Child and Youth Workers involved in diocesan institutions, programs, and congregations. These checks must be completed before serving, hiring, ordination, or transfer (as applicable), in accordance with the insurance carrier's requirements.
 - Non-clergy employees, vestry members, and Child and Youth Workers can complete their background checks through [Protect My Ministry](#), using the ACNA-negotiated rate or an equivalent program. This process should include a criminal history check, a sex offender registry check, and, where appropriate, a DMV driving record check (see "Transportation" below). A Credit Bureau Record Check is also recommended for clergy, treasurers, bookkeepers, check signers, and anyone with access to church financial accounts and/or credit cards.
 - Clergy screening is the responsibility of the Diocesan office, not the Anglican Church in North America. Clergy seeking canonical residence or a license must undergo a background check through Oxford Document Management (ODM) or other diocesan-approved screening providers before the acceptance of Letters Dimissory or the issuance of a License. The church is responsible for notifying the diocesan office to initiate a background check as soon as the vestry has decided whom they would like to call. A call should not be considered final until the background check results are received.
 - Clergy background checks will include the following:
 - Inquiries will be made of all Bishops who have had past or present canonical authority over the individual, all schools the individual attended in the past five years, and all employers of the individual during those same five years. If the individual has had more than one employer for over five years, inquiries will be made of the two most recent employers. For clergy who have served as Rector, the term "employer" shall refer to the Senior Wardens of the congregations served in the past five years.
 - Motor vehicle record check and credit bureau check.
 - Sexual misconduct and criminal record check.
 - Local criminal history record checks conducted through local law enforcement agencies.
 - A statewide criminal history records check through the appropriate state law enforcement agencies.
 - References from immediate supervisors at the three most recent places of employment, and results will be documented.
 - When available, a thorough social media search.
 - Each member of the clergy, whether domiciled or licensed in the Diocese, will be required to update and pay for their ODM background check on a rotating five-year schedule managed by the Diocese. Their church may opt to cover this fee.

- All clergy must fully cooperate with every aspect of the screening process and submit all required documents promptly to facilitate completion of these checks.
- *Membership* – Vestry and Child and Youth Workers must complete at least six months of attendance before appointment, which involves active participation in the life of the church, including Sunday morning worship.
- *Application* – For employment and for all volunteers who work with children, the host church should:
 - have the applicant complete a thorough application, which includes (see “Resources” for a sample screening statement):
 - whether they or any immediate family member or person living in their household have been convicted of, pled nolo contendere to, had adjudication withheld for, or have an active arrest for any crime involving abuse or neglect.
 - whether they have been diagnosed with a paraphiliac psychological condition or not.
 - conduct criminal history and National Sexual Offender Registry checks.
 - secure references from immediate supervisors at the three most recent places of employment and document the results.
 - verify the references of the applicant.
 - conduct an in-person interview.
 - when available, a comprehensive social media search should be performed.
- It is recommended that churches familiarize themselves with effective screening practices and recognize high-risk applicants. Protect My Ministry, Brotherhood Mutual, and Ministry Safe each offer training on skilled employee screening.
- Prior Sexual Offenders: [Insert diocesan policy on prior offenders here; see “Resources” below for a sample diocesan policy on prior sexual offenders from the Diocese of Pittsburgh.]

TRAINING

Clergy, employees, vestry members, and Child and Youth Workers must receive adequate training to care for those they serve in ministry. This training includes job functions and covers recommended practices outlined in this policy, ensuring a safe environment for our community. Sexual abuse awareness training through Ministry Safe may be completed online and must be renewed every two years. Protecting Children and Adults training must be completed in person or online every two years.

To help understand who must be trained as well as the timeline for training, see this example:

Ministry Safe		Diocesan Policy for the Protection of Adults and Children			
Awareness Training		Camp Training		Policy Training	
Role	When Required	When Required?	Required?	When	Who Keeps Record?
Clergy (includes Transfers & Postulants)	Before Ordination, Transfer, or Hire; [2-year Renewal]	-	Yes	Within [6 months]; [2 year] renewal	Diocese
Employees	Prior hire; [2 year] renewal	-	Yes	Within [6 months]; [2 year] renewal	Church
Vestry	Prior term; [2 year] renewal	-	No	Within [6 months]; [2 year] renewal	Church
Child and Youth Worker	Prior serving; [2 year] renewal	-	Yes	Within [6 months]; [2 year] renewal	Church
Camp Directors	Prior serving; [2 year] renewal	Prior to hire or serving; [2 year] renewal	Yes	Within [6 months]; [2 year] renewal	Church

- *Sexual Abuse Awareness Training:* The first part of the safeguarding training is currently completed through Ministry Safe and will occur online. This training must be renewed every two years. It should be completed before ordination, transfer, or hiring clergy; before hiring employees; at the start of the vestry term; and before serving as a Child and Youth Worker.
- *Diocesan Policy for the Protection of Children and Adults Training:* The second part of safeguarding training will be provided in person by your church's Safeguarding Coordinator or online by the diocesan Safeguarding Coordinator. This training covers the policy content and must be renewed every two years. In addition to completing this training, all clergy, employees, vestry, and Child and Youth Workers must confirm that they have read the diocesan policy.
- Ministry Safe trainings are automatically made available to the diocese upon completion. Your church's Safeguarding Coordinator or the diocesan Safeguarding Coordinator will complete a form on your behalf certifying your completion of the training.
- Directors of Diocesan Camps must complete the Skillful Screening Training by Ministry Safe before serving as Director (found under the awareness tab on the training page). Each Diocesan-sponsored camp is responsible for ensuring that all clergy, employees, vestry members, and Child and Youth Workers serving at camp have completed Sexual Abuse Awareness Training + Camp training through Ministry Safe. Clergy, employees, vestry members, Child and Youth Workers, and any other camp leaders or workers may submit copies of their certificates to satisfy this requirement. If Child and Youth Workers arrive at camp without certification, the camp should require them to obtain it immediately before serving; otherwise, they should not be permitted to serve.
- Please see additional screening and training resources under “Resources” below.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

INTERACTION

Christian ministry depends not only on right beliefs but also on right behaviors, including interactions with those in the church and the surrounding community. All allegations of misconduct or abuse likely stem from personal interactions. Therefore, it is crucial to establish healthy communities that reinforce suitable boundaries, foster trust, demonstrate care and respect, and pursue justice for those harmed by others. This section provides guidelines for communication, counseling, spiritual formation and discipleship, interactions with minors, and supervisory procedures for minors.

It is not considered harassment or a hostile environment when a leader communicates verbally or nonverbally or takes action, including appropriate discipline, to uphold the biblical, orthodox, and historic Christian faith as expressed in the Holy Scriptures, the Book of Common Prayer, the ACNA Constitution and Canons, and the Anglican formularies, unless such verbal or nonverbal communication or action is unreasonable and inconsistent with the standards of conduct specified in those same authorities.

Verbal interactions among clergy, employees, vestry members, and Child and Youth Workers should be edifying and respectful, avoiding inappropriate topics. Specifically, the following are unacceptable:

- **Intimidation:** behavior aimed at causing fear in an individual, including coercing someone to act against their will due to this fear.
- **Nonverbal Harassment:** includes the distribution, display, or use of any written or graphic material that ridicules, denigrates, insults, belittles, or shows hostility toward an individual or group based on nationality, national origin, race, color, religion, age, biological sex, pregnancy, appearance, mental or physical disability, marital status, or any other status protected by applicable federal or state law. This also encompasses graphic gestures and making sexual gestures through hand or body movements.
- **Verbal Harassment:** involves unreasonable statements or comments that are offensive concerning a person's nationality, national origin, race, color, religion, age, biological sex, pregnancy, appearance, mental or physical disability, marital status, or any other status protected by applicable federal or state law.
- **Inappropriate Use of Technology:** sending sexually explicit or offensive communications (e.g., text messages, emails, social media messages, or posts) is included in the definition of harassment and will not be tolerated [include reference to Diocesan social media policy here]. Use personal interactions on social media platforms to model appropriate behavior and language, both online and offline. Church leaders should recognize that their behavior reflects the character of Christ and the nature of the Church.

[Sexual and other unlawful harassment should be addressed by a separate, stand-alone policy that specifically addresses relevant legal definitions of illegal harassment, that provides precise

mechanisms for reporting, investigating, and addressing unlawful harassment, and that includes appropriate protections for reasonable religious speech and conduct. See “Resources” below for a sample policy.]

Relating well in addressing Sexuality and Identity: Every effort should be made to treat all individuals as creations made in the image of God. We must strive to foster an environment that does not harass, discriminate, intimidate, or devalue God’s creation. We acknowledge that same-sex sexual relationships are sinful, but so too are pornography, fornication, and adultery, as well as non-sexual sins such as greed, neglect of the poor, and self-righteousness.

The call to pastoral ministry encompasses the responsibility to lead with gentleness, scriptural clarity, and a desire to seek the lost. Upholding, proclaiming, and acting in accordance with the biblical, orthodox, and historic Christian faith is not inherently abuse or harassment.

Therefore, to offer pastoral ministry to individuals experiencing same-sex attraction or gender dysphoria, the following recommendations are suggested whenever appropriate:

- For overnight events, the church leadership team and the student's parent or guardian should outline a mutually agreed-upon Supervisory Plan designed to protect all participants.
- Churches, Child and Youth Workers, and Child and Youth Leaders should strive to ensure that all students feel included, welcomed, valued, and respected, rather than feeling isolated. This is crucial, particularly during meals, scheduled morning and evening events, and spontaneous moments. Open, ongoing communication with parents who have specific concerns about their children is encouraged.
- For churches that can, consider providing a family-friendly (non-gendered) bathroom as a gesture of hospitality.
- For more information, please see the Diocese of Quincy's [Policy on Human Sexuality](#).

Pornography creation, viewing, or distribution: printed or visual material containing the explicit description or display of sexual organs or activity intended to stimulate erotic rather than aesthetic or emotional feelings. All clergy are required to avoid creating, viewing, or distributing pornography at all times, not just while working or in church facilities. Any clergy member struggling in this area should contact [Fr. Tom Tirman](#) for an assessment and support with recovery. This is offered without the Bishop's involvement unless clergy fail to follow through on a recovery plan. It is never appropriate to view pornography. When this includes a person under the age of legal majority (18/19), it is considered child abuse. There is no expectation of personal privacy when using church-owned or church-affiliated technology or in ministry contexts.

Additional considerations for communication with children include the following: Verbal interactions between leaders and children should be encouraging, constructive, and mindful of the mission to support parents in fostering their children's spiritual growth and development. To achieve this, clergy, employees, vestry members, and Child and Youth Workers must refrain from speaking to children or parents in a manner that is, or could reasonably be perceived as, harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. Furthermore, clergy, employees, vestry members, and Child and Youth Workers are expected to refrain from using vulgar language in front of children. Any concerns regarding children should be directed to their parents, legal guardians, the appropriate ministry leader, or the clergy.

Clergy, employees, vestry members, and Child and Youth Workers should avoid any sexually oriented communications with children. They must refrain from discussing inappropriate or explicit information about their personal relationships, dating, or sexual activities with any child in the program. Clergy, employees, vestry members, and Child and Youth Workers must report any sexually oriented communications involving a child to the appropriate ministry leader or clergy.

Sexually Oriented Materials: Staff members and volunteers may use age-appropriate materials (subject to limitations imposed by the Rector) when leading discussions on human sexuality or sexual abuse prevention. Any proposed materials should be available for review by the participants' parents. Before introducing these materials, parents should be notified to provide an opt-out option if they have concerns or objections.

Technology and Youth: Social media platforms are crucial for youth ministry staff and volunteer leaders to connect with students. Their world is often built around social media, for better or worse. Engaging in personal interactions in this space allows adults to model appropriate behavior on social media and establish valuable connections with students.

- The Diocese strongly recommends that each church implement a proactive policy regarding social media and other forms of electronic communication in the context of children's and youth ministry. Clergy, staff members, and volunteers should avoid connecting with students on social media when those students are younger than the minimum age established by each social media platform (usually 13).
- Virtual spaces should be treated the same as in-person spaces. This means that two Certified Adults must be online with one youth (known as the two-adult rule, preferably unrelated), participants must be appropriately clothed, and conversations must be in "public" view. For online conference calls, this means these calls cannot take place in the bedroom, and parents must be aware that the student is in conversation with the leaders. Use group apps instead of private messages. If only one Certified Adult is present, a minimum of two students must

also be present. In text and email exchanges with youth, Youth Workers should include another Youth Worker in the messages they send.

- For students under 13 (the usual minimum age for social media platforms, as set by the platforms themselves), obtain parental permission for any communication and welcome parents into that environment.

Photography: Photos of children will not be used against parental wishes and must not include any personally identifiable information about children, either online or in print publications, without prior parental permission. This can be easily managed by incorporating a consent statement in programming registrations that the parent or guardian signs.

PASTORAL ABUSE

Pastoral abuse occurs when a spiritual leader in a position of authority over the receiving party uses their position (or perceived position) of authority to justify misconduct or other forms of abuse. This includes, but is not limited to, patterns of abuse such as manipulation and exploitation, intimidation, censorship, requirements for secrecy and silence, coercion, control through the use of sacred texts or teachings, demands for obedience to the abuser, the suggestion that the abuser has a “divine” position to maintain power or control, isolation as a means of punishment, superiority and elitism, and behaviors such as blaming, shaming, or shunning. It is unacceptable for any Diocesan clergy to abuse their parishioners pastorally. Such behavior is considered conduct unbecoming to the sacred calling of one in holy orders.

Regarding discipline, clergy may face disciplinary action for violations of the offenses specified in the Anglican Church in North America’s Constitution and Canons and in the Diocesan Constitution and Canons.

People may sometimes find they disagree with clergy or feel accountable to or subject to church discipline, which can be a healthy aspect of discipleship. However, this does not equate to pastoral abuse. It is expected that clergy will teach and uphold the doctrine of the church. Please refer to the following for more information regarding the expectations of clergy:

- *The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.*
- *The Book of Common Prayer* (2019): The ordination vows, found under Episcopal Services, outline the expectation of faithful diligence in upholding the doctrine and discipline of Christ.
- *To Be a Christian* (2020): The ACNA Catechism outlines confession, absolution, and forgiveness and describes the Church’s authority.
- *The 39 Articles of Religion*: The ACNA upholds the 39 Articles of 1571 and their amendments, which articulate our views on the Sacraments and the expectations of the clergy. In particular, the recognition that clergy are imperfect and should be examined carefully and, if necessary, removed.
- *The Jerusalem Declaration*: This 2008 declaration outlines our beliefs and expectations regarding Christian living, Sacraments, the authoritative standard of clerical orders, stewardship, unity, and our fidelity to orthodoxy.
- The ACNA’s Constitution and Canons, and the Diocesan Constitution and Canons.

COUNSELING

One of the expectations for all clergy and other pastoral caregivers serving in the Diocese is that they provide pastoral counseling to members of the congregation when necessary and appropriate. Pastoral counseling occurs when church personnel offer spiritual guidance or advice on moral or spiritual matters. It is recommended that this counseling be provided for a limited number of sessions per person. The diocesan recommendation is three sessions. Pastoral counseling typically addresses individual issues or concerns, conflict resolution, confession, crisis counseling, premarital counseling, and marriage counseling. If these crises persist beyond a few sessions or if ongoing counseling is needed, members should be referred to a certified or licensed professional. Fees or donations for pastoral counseling given to an individual are prohibited.

Any clergy or staff member charging fees for counseling must have the appropriate professional credentials and proof of separate professional liability insurance, including coverage for sexual misconduct, at all times. Individuals offering paid spiritual direction or professional counseling must submit that ministry for approval by the Rector (or, in the case of the Rector, the Bishop).

During pastoral counseling sessions, clergy and pastoral caregivers are expected to foster an environment that minimizes any existence or appearance of potentially inappropriate behavior or exploitation. It is also advisable for clergy to consult with their Bishop and/or refer to Diocesan policy on boundaries in pastoral counseling, especially as they pertain to matters such as mandatory reporting and the seal of the confessional. Exploitation occurs when church personnel take advantage of the pastoral counseling relationship for personal gain. Sexual exploitation includes any sexual contact between church personnel and the recipient of the pastoral counseling services, regardless of who initiates it. Under certain circumstances, it is advisable to involve another pastor or staff member in a conversation or session—for example, if a counseling session raises the possibility of illegal activity or abuse, or if someone is making allegations or disclosing abuse or unlawful activity. All clergy, employees, vestry, and Child and Youth Workers should maintain healthy boundaries and strive for emotionally healthy relationships.

Each congregation's leaders are asked consistently to raise awareness about these issues by normalizing the following principles:

- **Transparency:** It can be challenging to clearly express what you think, feel, or observe, but it is a sign of emotional health to speak up when something is wrong. No one can improve or eliminate inappropriate behavior without bringing the issue to light. Avoid triangulation and shielding individuals who are acting inappropriately. Whether it involves porn addiction, gossip, an affair, bullying, sexual jokes or comments, flirting, etc., addressing the issue openly is always the path toward healing, accountability, sanctification, and emotional health.
- **See Something, Say Something:** If something concerns you, please bring it to the attention of the appropriate leaders outlined in this document. Involving multiple leaders in the discussion promotes accountability, transparency, and effective resolution.

Pastoral counseling should always be respectful and consistent, aiming to provide a safe and comfortable environment. It should occur in appropriate settings at suitable times, avoiding places or schedules that might compromise the nature of the relationship for the person being counseled.

Additionally, all clergy, employees, vestry members, and Child and Youth Workers should maintain a physical environment that minimizes any appearance of potentially inappropriate behavior at all times, including when traveling or attending church events after business hours. It is wise to stay in public view whenever possible. It is strongly recommended that the doors to rooms used for pastoral care have windows. Generally, it is not advised for employees to share a hotel room while traveling. No one-on-one pastoral counseling should take place in private living quarters.

SPIRITUAL FORMATION, SPIRITUAL DIRECTION & DISCIPLESHIP

As Christians, we are encouraged to pursue opportunities for discipleship. This often takes the form of 1:1, 1:2, or 1:3 relationships, in which participants meet regularly to build a long-term partnership. This is not the same as pastoral counseling, which is intended for a single focus and therefore has a limited scope. If a partnership focused on spiritual formation, spiritual direction, or discipleship is entered into long-term, consider these safeguards:

- Bring this relationship to the attention of the church's leadership team by informing several individuals of this partnership.
- If multiple people in your church are offering long-term spiritual direction or discipleship, consider meeting quarterly to discuss the process, its benefits for the church, and accountabilities.
- If one clergy member provides long-term spiritual direction or discipleship to another clergy member, make the arrangement transparent by notifying the bishop's office of the relationship.
- Meet in a public space, not in each other's homes.
- It is recommended that it be conducted by participants of the same biological sex in groups of at least three people, whenever possible.
- Adhere to guidelines concerning interaction and physical contact.
- Define the relationship parameters during the first meeting, and explain that either party can terminate the relationship at any time without further notice.
- Consider using a signed agreement that outlines expectations about confession, confidentiality, and mandatory reporting.
- Communicate to whom the participant should report if they have any concerns, including the names and numbers of senior leadership, the bishop, or the Diocesan Reports Receivers.
- Include prayer and the study of Scripture in your regular time together.

To protect the emotional and spiritual well-being of all clergy, they should seek regular spiritual direction to ensure accountability and a robust support system. Spiritual Formation, Spiritual Direction, & Discipleship with Youth: If engaging in long-term spiritual formation, discipleship, or spiritual direction with youth, consider these additional safeguards alongside those mentioned previously:

- Obtain the parent or guardian's consent.
- Gather at a consistent location at a consistent time (same time/place for each occurrence);

- The guidelines outlined in this policy for engaging with youth (including awareness, screening, interaction, and reporting) must be followed.

To protect the emotional and spiritual well-being of everyone involved, Youth Directors and Children's Ministry Directors are advised to seek regular spiritual direction to ensure accountability and maintain a strong support system.

PHYSICAL INTERACTION WITH MINORS

Clergy, employees, vestry members, and Child and Youth Workers often have a profound relationship of trust with those they serve. Betraying that trust by violating sexual boundaries leads to significant emotional and spiritual harm. Such actions deny our calling as Christians and may constitute a violation of the law. We must take every measure to prevent this and respond with swift justice if misconduct or abuse occurs.

Physical contact should aim to benefit the child and must never be grounded in the emotional needs of clergy, employees, vestry, or Child and Youth Workers. The Diocesan policy prohibits all Child and Youth Workers from using physical discipline to manage children's behavior. No type of physical discipline is permissible.

This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behaviors by children. Children are to be disciplined using time-outs and other non-physical behavior management methods. In some circumstances, physical restraint may be used to prevent self-injury by the child and/or harm to others or property. Uncontrollable or unusual behavior should be reported immediately to parents, the Children's Ministry Director, the Youth Director, and/or clergy.

Appropriate physical affection between Child and Youth Workers and children is vital for children's development and is generally appropriate in the church setting.

Here is an example summary table of appropriate and inappropriate physical affection:

Appropriate physical affection
may include:

- High-fives
- Handshakes
- Fist bumps
- Thumbs up
- Side hugs
- Smiling
- Pats on the back

Inappropriate physical affection
may include:

- Wrestling
- Tickling
- Sitting in Laps (Except Nursery Aged Children)
- Kissing in any form
- Initiating Frontal Hugs
- Commenting on Children's Bodies
- Forcing unwanted affection

Inappropriate touching and displays of affection are strictly prohibited. Any inappropriate behavior by anyone must be reported immediately to (1) the Rector and/or clergy in charge and (2) the Senior Warden. If the allegation is against the Rector, notify the Bishop, the Senior Warden, and the supervisor or other clergy. Any suspected abuse should be reported to law enforcement and to the Rector and Senior Warden.

Physical contact and affection should only occur in observable areas. It is far less likely for touch to be inappropriate or misunderstood when physical contact is visible. Any form of physical contact should not suggest even the appearance of wrongdoing. The behavior of Child and Youth Workers in youth and children's ministries must consistently foster trust. Personal conduct must remain beyond reproach.

Do not impose physical contact, touch, or affection on a reluctant child. A child's choice not to be touched must be respected at all times.

SUPERVISORY PLANS FOR CHILDREN/YOUTH EVENTS

The supervisory plan for any given activity guides clergy, employees, the vestry, and Child and Youth Workers, ensuring that appropriate measures are implemented to meet the diocesan standard for supervision.

All Child and Youth Workers involved in the event must be informed about the contents of the supervisory plan. It is advisable to provide a copy of the plan to leaders (and parents, depending on the activity) and to display the plan in a visible area. See “Resources” below for sample versions of Supervisory Plans.

On-site Supervisory Plans must include the following:

- A description of the activity's nature.
- The details of the registration process and the registration form.
- The personnel responsible for managing the activity.
- The following is the recommended ratio of Certified Adults to children, based on Ministry Safe standards. Each congregation should consult their individual state's recommended ratios.
 - Infants: two adults for up to eight
 - Young toddlers: two adults for up to twelve.
 - 2 and 3 years: two adults for up to sixteen.
 - 4 years: two adults for up to twenty
 - School-age: two adults for up to forty
 - Mixed age group: ratio of the youngest child in the group
- The physical environment
- Bathroom procedures, including showering protocols if applicable
- First Aid and Medication Procedures
- Reporting discipline concerns
- The release of children

Offsite Supervisory Plans should include all of the items listed above in the on-site Supervisory Plan, plus the following, which are described in more detail on the pages following:

- Offsite transportation plan
- Dining arrangements
- Sleeping arrangements
- Showering procedures

Monitoring Procedures

Monitoring helps identify issues before they escalate into incidents of abuse and protects adults from false allegations when no abuse has taken place. Research shows that off-site activities can heighten the risk of abuse. Clergy, employees, vestry members, and Child and Youth Workers must always remain vigilant in monitoring and supervising children's and youth activities across all settings and.

Monitoring procedures should include, but are not limited to:

- All children and youth activities must be supervised by at least two Certified Adult leaders, who preferably are not related to each other (known as the two-adult rule).
- No child will ever be left unattended in the building or on the property before, during, or after a church activity.
- Clergy, employees, vestry members, and Child and Youth Workers should not hold

unobserved meetings or interactions with children. In a discipleship or mentoring relationship, interactions should occur in a public place or in the presence of others.

- Monitoring for policy violations.
- An open invitation for parents to visit at any time, with no prior notice.
- A thorough evaluation of new programs and significant changes to a program's structure.
- Always keep interactions with children visible, and ensure that unused rooms are locked whenever possible.
- Supervising children and youth in designated areas within the church building.
- A written Supervisory Plan must be established, either on-site or off-site, for all educational, pastoral, recreational, or other programs involving youth or children.

Restroom Use

Since preschool, nursery, and special needs children may require full assistance with their bathroom activities, all clergy, employees, vestry, and Child and Youth Workers will adhere to the following policies:

Diapering

- Only screened and trained nursery workers or the child's parent or legal guardian will undertake diapering duties for children of any biological sex. Churches are encouraged to be sensitive to the fact that nationally, one out of every four women has survived some form of child sexual abuse, typically by a male offender. To build trust and minimize exposure, based on statistical research, churches may decide that diapering, toilet training, and restroom monitoring will be performed only by certified adult female staff or volunteers, or by the child's parent or guardian.
- Changing diapers should occur in full view of other nursery workers; children must not be left unattended during the process.
- Children should be rediapered and reclothed immediately after the soiled diaper change is complete.

Toilet Training

- No child shall be compelled to toilet train.
- Only Certified Adult nursery workers, or the child's parent or legal guardian, will be involved in toilet training efforts with children.
- When children are assisted in bathrooms, the stall door will remain partially open. Preschool-aged children will never be left unattended in bathrooms.
- Children may receive assistance in straightening their clothing before returning to the room with other children if needed.
- Accidents should be managed by comforting the child and then changing their diaper, underwear, and clothing.

Elementary Aged Children

- Elementary-age children may be accompanied to the restroom for supervision and assistance

when necessary. (However, children should receive only the minimum amount of assistance needed based on their individual capabilities.) Groups of the same age and biological sex may also be used.

- Child and Youth Workers should avoid being alone with a child in the restroom. If a Child and Youth Worker must enter the restroom to check on a child, they should seek out another worker to accompany them. If another Child and Youth Worker is unavailable, they should go to the exterior bathroom door, knock, and ask whether the child needs assistance. If the child requires help, the Child and Youth Worker should leave the exterior bathroom door open when entering the bathroom area and attempt to verbally assist the child in completing their activities while the child remains behind the bathroom stall door.

First Aid and Medication

If possible, medication should be given by the child's parent or guardian. A Child and Youth Worker may administer medication to a child as authorized by the parent. The medication must remain in its original packaging, including over-the-counter medicines.

When medically necessary, a Child and Youth Worker may administer medication or first aid to a child in accordance with the Supervisory Plan. Parents should be informed whenever medication or first aid is administered.

The Release of Children

Whenever a child is entrusted to a Child and Youth Worker, the church assumes responsibility for the child's safety and well-being, including returning the child to their parent or guardian. Child and Youth Workers are responsible for releasing the children in their care at the end of services or activities only to parents, legal guardians, or other individuals designated by parents or legal guardians. It is assumed that a person who drops off a child or student has the authority to pick them up.

If Child and Youth Workers are unsure about the appropriateness of releasing a child, they should promptly contact their supervisor before doing so.

Transportation

Child and Youth Workers may occasionally need to provide transportation for children. The following guidelines should be followed during the transportation of children whenever possible:

- Clergy, employees, vestry members, and Child and Youth Workers responsible for driving minors to a sponsored activity must provide the church with copies of their valid driver's licenses, vehicle registrations, and proof of insurance.
- It is understood that the Child and Youth Worker driving the child must have undergone an insurance-approved background check, including a DMV record check (this is a small add-on charge), as indicated under the "Screening" section above. The use of child safety seats that meet federal standards is required. Churches are advised to consult with their insurance provider regarding the minimum age for adult drivers. Under no circumstances should anyone under the age of 18 be allowed to drive children or youth as part of an event.

- Traveling with minors in a vehicle should adhere to the two-adult rule (two Certified Adults, preferably unrelated) or, at a minimum, the rule of three (except in a parent/child or other familial situation). Seatbelts are ALWAYS required. If an extenuating circumstance requires only one adult and one child to travel together in a vehicle, permission must be obtained from the child's parent or legal guardian. This permission should be in writing, include details regarding when and where, and be signed by the parent/guardian or documented by the Child and Youth Worker if only verbal consent is available. In such cases, the child or youth should be transported in the back seat of the vehicle.
- In extraordinary circumstances, these may be changed for emergencies. In such cases, the Youth Director or Children's Ministry Director (or supervisor) should be notified immediately.
- There shall be no use of a cellphone while traveling with children or youth in a vehicle for a church- or diocesan-related activity except through a vehicle's hands-free system.
- Children and youth should be transported directly to their destination. Unauthorized stops at non-public places should be avoided. Meals, refueling, and restroom breaks should be taken as a group. Those organizing the event should avoid transportation situations that leave only one child being transported.
- Adults should refrain from physical contact with children while in vehicles.
- No one under 25 may drive a vehicle rented by a church unless expressly permitted by the rental agreement.
- No drivers under 25 may operate church-owned vehicles unless the church's auto insurance policy explicitly covers them.
- If a family situation requires a special circumstance, the family may sign a waiver acknowledging the deviation from the Diocesan or church policy; this policy should indicate the family's acceptance of responsibility.

Home Group Procedures

- The Diocese and its churches do not exercise control or responsibility over home groups (defined as small groups meeting in a home for discipleship, such as Bible study, worship, fellowship, etc.). The care and protection of children in such settings is always the responsibility of each child's parents or guardians. Leaders of home groups organized by churches should be encouraged to read this policy, complete the child abuse training provided, and consider supervisory plans for their events, including:
 - Supervised by two screened and trained Certified Adults, preferably unrelated.
 - The safety of the environment.
 - Restroom procedures are tailored to the specific environment and the needs of children.

Overnight Events (including lock-ins, mission trips, retreats, and camps)

- Leaders from any church that offers overnight events, trips, and camps, along with Diocesan-sponsored Camp Directors, should complete additional relevant training (such as Ministry Safe's "Camp Leadership Training") every two years.
- The two-adult rule (two Certified Adults, preferably unrelated) must be followed; a single student should not be alone with any adult. If only one adult is present, at least two students

must be present (the rule of three).

- All leaders and volunteers must be Certified Adults who have previously completed the church's screening and training process.
- Overnight sleeping arrangements must be submitted in writing to the Youth Director for approval before the activity.
- As long as students are awake for an extended period, two trip leaders should remain awake to monitor them and ensure their safe behavior.
- Leaders should consult with parents and apply sound judgment when deciding whether to view PG or PG-13 movies. R-rated films require approval from the Rector and parents.
- Appropriate sleeping attire, including both tops and bottoms, must be worn modestly.
- In the event of a sleepover on campus that includes both boys and girls, they must sleep in separate rooms, adequately supervised by student leaders of the same biological sex.
- Leaders will monitor sleeping students by periodically conducting visual bed checks to ensure they remain in designated sleeping areas. During these checks, leaders should never physically touch a student.
- Whenever possible, leaders will sleep in the same room or in an adjoining room with the door between the rooms left open.
- If overnight arrangements do not include standard beds, each leader and student will use a single sleeping bag or blanket. In these cases, a “one-person-to-one bag or blanket” rule will be followed.

Off-campus, Non-sponsored Youth Activities and Events

Due to the nature of contact work within youth groups, situations may arise in which a Child and Youth Worker organizes an off-campus social event. These events are usually not sponsored by the church and may be open only to certain youth due to the nature of the contact work. It is recommended that these events comply with the Diocesan policy and the individual church's policy, particularly the two-adult rule (two Certified Adults, preferably unrelated). This aligns with best practices and research and protects the church, the leader, and the children involved.

On-campus, Non-sponsored Activities and Events

Due to the nature of facilities and shared ministry, a situation may arise where church facilities are used by non-sponsored groups for activities and events (such as Young Life, the Boy Scouts, parties, etc.). These events may independently provide childcare using available facilities. All churches should review their insurance policies for these activities and ensure compliance with the policies' restrictions and recommendations. It is also advisable that all churches use a Facilities Agreement based on the Diocese of Quincy's [Property Use Policy](#), which clearly articulates the outside organization's responsibilities and liabilities for its program and leaders when an outside group uses the church's facilities.

Nudity

Child and Youth Workers should never be nude in the presence of the children under their care. If a situation arises that may involve nudity (e.g., changing clothes during a pool party, a weekend, or an overnight retreat), the Children's Ministry Director or Youth Director will establish rotation

procedures for showering or changing clothes in the Supervisory Plan for the scheduled event. Children should also refrain from nudity and follow rotation procedures to be sensitive to body image issues and same-sex attraction.

Addictive Substances

When in church facilities, traveling with or in the presence of children or their parents, participating in church-sponsored activities, or working with or supervising children, Child and Youth Workers must not use tobacco products, possess or use any illegal or mind-altering drugs, be under the influence of alcohol, or share or view pornographic material.

Compliance

Each congregation must adhere to the requirements outlined in this Diocesan policy. If an individual church's optional addendum to this policy includes additional reasonable safety measures, all clergy, employees, vestry, and Child and Youth Workers should be accountable to that addendum as well as to this policy.

REPORTING

Anyone who knows or has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child or vulnerable adult has been abused, abandoned, neglected, or exploited in violation of the law should immediately contact the appropriate state abuse hotline. All reports are confidential, and access to these reports is restricted by specific criteria outlined in the relevant state statute(s).

- **California:** <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/reporting/report-abuse/child-protective-services>
- **Florida:** <https://www.myflfamilies.com/services/abuse/abuse-hotline>
- **Illinois:** <https://childabuse.illinois.gov>
- **Iowa:** <https://hhs.iowa.gov/report-abuse-fraud/report>
- **Minnesota:** <https://mn.gov/dhs/report-abuse/>
- **Missouri:** <https://dss.mo.gov/cd/keeping-kids-safe/can.htm>
- **Nebraska:** <https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Child-Abuse.aspx>
- **New York:** <https://ocfs.ny.gov/programs/cps/>
- **Oklahoma:** <https://oklahoma.gov/okdhs/services/reportabuse.html>
- **Tennessee:** <https://www.tn.gov/dcs/program-areas/child-safety/reporting/child-abuse.html>
- **Texas:** https://www.dfps.texas.gov/Contact_Us/report_abuse.asp
- **Wisconsin:** <https://DCF.wisconsin.gov/cps/reportabuse>
- **Mexico:** <https://www.gob.mx/sipinna>
- **Colombia:** <https://www.icbf.gov.co>

After local authorities are notified where necessary, the Diocese also offers confidential reporting mechanisms to document incidents and adhere to its protocols. Reporting is time-sensitive and may not be covered by insurance if not completed within 24 hours.

Diocesan reporting is conducted via the email reporting@dioceseofquincy.org. A direct link to this email address is available [on the diocesan website](#).

Sometimes, when a church leader receives reports of misconduct or abuse, they may compile separate pieces of information provided by various parties. The leader may then identify a pattern or discover information that prompts further investigation and/or a report to state authorities. (Such internal church reporting procedures are not intended to supersede any applicable legal reporting requirements.)

Throughout any inquiry or investigation, it is the responsibility of the Bishop to ensure that the following steps are taken (though these steps should not be executed by the Bishop directly in the case of a conflict of interest): (1) reach out to and care for any complainants (an Advocate, Chaplain, and/or a response team may be utilized in pastoral care); (2) alleged offenders should be treated with dignity and support; (3) maintain confidentiality while using maximum discretion.

The moment someone discloses abuse to another person, the primary responsibility of the listener is

to create a safe environment for the person sharing the information. If possible, ask a Certified Adult or another responsible adult to join in listening to the account. If someone begins a conversation by suggesting they are about to disclose and asks if you can keep a secret, it is advisable to remind them that your main responsibility is to ensure their safety, and sometimes that means seeking help. For that reason, you cannot promise to keep it confidential.

Whenever someone reports abuse, the following is recommended:

1. Listen! Do not probe or ask for details. Allow the person to share only what they are comfortable sharing. Ask open-ended questions, such as “Is there anything else you would like to share with me?” If possible, reflect what you have heard back to the person for clarity’s sake.
2. Refrain from expressing doubt or disbelief, making judgments about the person, or showing shock or outrage. Remain calm and compassionate.
3. Determine if the person is safe and has a secure place to go. Assist them in reaching safety if necessary.
4. Useful phrases to consider include:
 - a. “I hear you, and I take this seriously.”
 - b. “I’m very concerned about what you’ve shared and want to ensure you are safe.”
 - c. “Thank you for being brave enough to share this with me.”
5. Reassure the person that you will keep their story confidential to the best of your ability, while informing them that you may, for legal reasons or otherwise, be obligated to report what has been disclosed.
6. Determine whether you need to report the allegation. Seek assistance from the appropriate authorities (e.g., the Chancellor) if necessary. If the complainant is a child and you’re still unsure, the best practice is to report the allegation.
7. After the conversation, promptly jot down the key points discussed. Store these notes in a secure location to ensure confidentiality.

Someone just disclosed abuse to me.

HOW SHOULD I RESPOND?

SAY	ASK	ACT
<p>DO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be compassionate. Listen! Stay calm.• “I hear you and I take this seriously.”• “Thank you for being brave enough to share with me.”• “I’m very concerned about what you have shared and want to make sure you’re safe.”	<p>DO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask open-ended questions that give the person the opportunity to share without influencing his/her account.• Find out if he/she is safe.• Determine who, what, where, and when, if applicable.	<p>DO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If necessary, help the person find safety.• Determine if you are a mandatory reporter to the state authorities under the circumstances.• If not a mandatory reporter, determine if it is prudent to report to the secular authorities anyway.• Report to appropriate church authorities.• Make notes of the conversation and action taken.

SAY	ASK	ACT
<p>DON’T:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Express judgment, doubt, or disbelief.	<p>DON’T:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Probe or ask for details.• Push the person to tell you more than he/she is comfortable with.	<p>DON’T:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tell anyone who does not need to know.

For instructions on how to respond to and report child abuse specifically, please refer to the sample procedures found under “Resources” below.

ALLEGATIONS AGAINST LAY LEADERS

If someone discloses abuse, the recipient of that information is not responsible for investigating or verifying it; instead, they should report it to the appropriate authorities, who will conduct the investigation.

In all cases, the complainant will be assured that the church is concerned and that the complaint will be investigated promptly and thoroughly. The initial verbal response should not express doubt.

Any clergy involved in the process should not, at any time after receiving the complaint, hear the sacramental confession of any person(s) involved. The clergy will follow the reporting and notification requirements outlined in the diocesan, parish, or other liability policies for insurance

claims.

- When the complainant is a minor or vulnerable adult:
 - All reports of child or vulnerable adult abuse must be reported to state authorities immediately.
 - If an individual accused of abuse is not the child's parent, guardian, or a member of the household, the Rector or designee should reach out to the child's parents or guardians and offer support from the church.
 - The Rector and Senior Warden will be notified.
 - Due to legal implications, the person reporting should contact a Diocesan Reports Receiver, who will implement notification procedures involving the Bishop, Chancellor, Chair of the Standing Committee, and the Director of Safeguarding. The Director of Safeguarding can assist with documentation and expansion of the inquiry if necessary. The church's legal counsel should also be informed.
- When the complainant is an adult:
 - Allegations of adult misconduct/abuse against a non-clergy leader will be reported to the Rector and the Senior Warden.
 - The Rector and Vestry bear responsibility for the church's investigative and disciplinary procedures concerning allegations of adult misconduct or abuse against lay leaders. All aspects of any inquiry or investigation should be thoroughly documented and filed.
 - The Rector or Senior Warden will contact the Director of Safeguarding to ensure transparency and accountability. The Diocese is available to provide guidance and offer documentation templates.
 - Allegations of adult misconduct or abuse against a non-clergy lay leader of the Diocese or a Child and Youth Worker serving in a diocesan program must be reported immediately to a Diocesan Reports Receiver.
- If the Diocese receives a complaint against a layperson, "the Diocesan Reports Receivers shall inform the bishop. The Diocesan Reports Receivers shall also, in consultation with the bishop, inform a Warden and/or the member of the clergy in charge of the congregation that the layperson attends or where the alleged misconduct occurred so that the matter can be addressed at the level of the congregation with support, as needed, from the diocese." ACNA Canon I.5.9.4
- Suspending employment or volunteer activities:
 - The Rector of the church, or another person in charge, may suspend the alleged offender's church-related employment or volunteer activity, pending consultation with the Bishop, until the allegations of misconduct or abuse are resolved.
 - This leave of absence is without prejudice (i.e., it does not imply guilt or innocence of the person under investigation). Payment of salary and benefits to the employee may be discontinued at the discretion of the church-related employer only after consultation with the Bishop.

ALLEGATIONS INVOLVING CLERGY

If someone discloses abuse, it is not the recipient's responsibility to investigate or verify; instead, they should report it to the appropriate authorities, who will carry out the investigation. In all cases, the complainant will be assured that the church is concerned and that the complaint will be

investigated promptly and thoroughly. The initial verbal response should not express doubt.

The Bishop, clergy, or anyone who may later be involved in the process will not, at any time after the initial receipt of the complaint, hear the sacramental confession of any person(s) involved. The Bishop and clergy will adhere to the reporting and notification requirements outlined in the diocesan, parish, or other liability policies for insurance claims. Any member of the clergy who believes they have been accused of misconduct or abuse may request that the Bishop initiate a formal inquiry.

- When the complainant is a minor or vulnerable adult:
 - Any report received about the abuse of a minor or vulnerable adult must be reported to the appropriate civil authorities in accordance with applicable laws, subject to constitutional and statutory exemptions and protections. ACNA Canon I.5.9.1
 - Any complaint of misconduct or abuse by any member of the clergy under the Bishop's authority shall be reported immediately to the Diocesan Reports Receivers.
 - The Diocesan Reports Receiver will assure the complainant that the Diocese is concerned and that the complaint will be investigated swiftly and thoroughly.
 - Suppose the complaint is against a member of the clergy. In that case, the Diocesan Reports Receivers “shall evaluate the report in a timely manner and ... recommend to the Bishop whether the report discloses reasonable grounds to believe an offense under Title IV has been committed. With the advice of the Standing Committee (or its designated subcommittee), the Bishop shall determine whether a report of misconduct... should be dismissed or if such a report should proceed to investigation.” ACNA Canon I.5.9.2.
 - If deemed necessary, the Diocesan Reports Investigation Committee should initiate a canonical investigation of the complaint and, upon completion, “make a recommendation to the Ecclesiastical authority as to whether further juridical process should be pursued.” ACNA Canon IV.3.3.1
 - “If a report is dismissed, the reporting party must be promptly notified of such dismissal.” ACNA Canon I.5.9.2.
 - Each diocese shall ensure the provision of pastoral care for individuals making reports that are not dismissed, as well as for the clergy who are the subjects of such reports. ACNA Canon I.5.9.3
 - If additional legal processes are recommended, the Diocese will adhere to further procedures and standards outlined in the ACNA and Diocesan Canons.
- When the complainant is an adult:
 - All of section 1.b. from the previous paragraph applies.
 - All reports of pastoral abuse (see definition) should be submitted to a Diocesan Reports Receiver through the Diocesan hotline [insert phone number here], online [insert Diocesan website link here], via email [insert Diocesan email address here], or by bringing the matter to the attention of their supervising clergy or Bishop.
 - Suspension of employment or leadership:
 - The Bishop may restrict the alleged clergy offender under ACNA Canons

- until the allegations of misconduct or abuse are resolved.
- This inhibition does not imply guilt or innocence of the person under investigation. The clergy's salary and benefits may be discontinued at the discretion of the church-related employer after consulting with the Bishop.

ALLEGATIONS INVOLVING THE BISHOP

Anyone who believes the Bishop has engaged in misconduct or abuse should submit a written allegation to the Province via email at misconduct@anglicanchurch.net as soon as possible.

CARING FOR THE COMMUNITY

Incidents of child abuse and the secrecy that often surrounds them can cause devastating harm to both the complainants and the church. Therefore, when current or past child abuse has been perpetrated by clergy, employees, vestry, or Child and Youth Workers of the church, the church shall provide consultation to encourage discussion of such incidents and facilitate healing within the church. Under "Resources," "Caring for the Community" provides a suggested model for congregational trauma debriefing.

COMPLIANCE

COMPLIANCE

The Bishop, the Director of Safeguarding, and the Standing Committee [or equivalent] are responsible for creating and promulgating the diocesan “Policy for the Protection of Children and Adults” in accordance with the canons of the Diocese.

The Standing Committee [or equivalent] will update and revise the Policy annually based on practical experiences, medical and other scholarly research, legal developments, and other relevant considerations.

The Rector holds overall responsibility for the compliance and administration of this policy within the church they oversee, as well as for providing all reports requested by the Diocese.

The Diocese of Quincy requires that, at a minimum, each church (see definition) is expected to implement these four procedures concerning adults and children:

Procedure 1: Awareness

Procedure 2: Behavioral Expectations

Procedure 3: Reporting

Procedure 4: Compliance

POLICY OVERSIGHT

The Diocesan Office has the following responsibilities:

- Upholding the Constitution and Canons of the ACNA while maintaining the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese.
- Establishing additional, clear diocesan policies and procedures.
- Following through on those policies and procedures to ensure a consistent and transparent process.
- Reporting to the relevant law enforcement authorities in accordance with applicable law when necessary.

Clergy have the following responsibilities:

- Knowing and adhering to the Diocesan policies and procedures.
- Ensuring that timely training and corresponding written acknowledgments take place for all parties identified in these policies who fall under their supervision.
- Reporting any allegations of clergy misconduct or abuse to a Diocesan Reports Receiver;
- Reporting to the appropriate law enforcement authorities in accordance with applicable law when necessary.
- Providing evidence of adherence to all such policies and procedures to the Diocesan office upon request.

Rectors and Wardens have the following responsibilities:

- Maintaining records of all procedures outlined in this document.

- Upholding the policies outlined in this document, which represent an appropriate standard of care, by adopting these policies as their own.
- Reconciling this policy with the conditions of your specific congregation's insurance coverage and the need for a tailored policy, ensuring that the terms of your insurance coverage are fulfilled.
- Review your insurance policy and contact the diocesan Director of Safeguarding if you have any questions. The Diocese assumes no responsibility for a congregation's non-compliance with its insurance carrier's policy.
- Providing proof of compliance with all relevant policies and procedures to the Director of Safeguarding upon request.

Employees, Vestry, and Child and Youth Workers have the following responsibilities:

- Following the Diocesan policies.
- Reporting any allegations of employee or layperson misconduct or abuse to the Rector and Senior Warden (allegations involving clergy should be reported directly to a Diocesan Reports Receiver).
- Reporting to the relevant law enforcement authorities in accordance with applicable law when necessary.

In some cases, insurance companies require a response within a specific timeframe, or the institution forfeits coverage. Insurers may also require that a congregation adopt written standards of conduct as a condition of coverage. Strong warranty language in specific policies requires strict compliance by insured entities. Failing to meet policy standards may result in the denial of coverage for a claim.

COMPLIANCE DOCUMENTATION

Churches are responsible for tracking the screening and training requirements for all non-clergy Certified Adults within their congregations. The Diocesan office oversees screening and training for clergy, diocesan employees, and diocesan Child and Youth Workers. The Diocese assumes no responsibility for a church's non-compliance with its insurance carrier's policy regarding the acknowledgment of receipt of the church's policies and procedures or the screening or training requirements set by the insurance carrier.

All churches will update their rosters of clergy, employees, vestry, and Child and Youth Workers in August of each year. Signed documents are due to the Director of Safeguarding by the end of September each year.

Anyone considered a leader in the Diocese or any of the Diocesan churches (including fellowships, church plants, congregations, or missions) is required to sign the [Individual Acknowledgement of Policy Receipt](#) form each year. This includes all Diocesan staff and clergy, vestry, and any Child and Youth Workers involved in Diocesan programs.

Every church affiliated with the Diocese must complete a compliance certification by the start of synod each year.

This document is provided to churches and congregations within the Diocese of Quincy as a set of minimum expectations.

Revised versions of this policy will be made publicly available before the start of synod, with the understanding that churches have until the next synod to comply with any changes. The Rector of each church will be responsible for ensuring that all clergy, employees, vestry members, and Child and Youth Workers are aware of the church's policies and that those required to complete approved training do so.

See "Resources" for more information on risk management and compliance for children's and youth ministries.

RESOURCES

RESOURCES

The following resources are provided to assist churches, clergy, employees, vestries, and child and youth workers in protecting the individual members of each congregation.

[Sample Child Abuse Responding and Reporting Procedures](#)

[Screening and Training Resources](#)

[Sample Supervisory Plan](#)

[Additional Sample Supervisory Plans \(Gulf Atlantic Diocese\)](#)

[Sample Individual Receipt of Policies Acknowledgement Form](#)

[Risk Management and Compliance Resources for Children's and Youth Ministries](#)

[Caring for the Community Resources](#)

[Safeguarding Resources \(Gulf Atlantic Diocese\)](#)

[Sample Policy Regarding Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment \(Diocese of the Mid-Atlantic\)](#)

[Sample Policy on Registered Sex Offenders \(Diocese of Pittsburgh\)](#)

O merciful Creator, your loving hand is open wide to satisfy the needs of every living creature: Make us always thankful for your loving providence, and give us grace to honor you with all that you have entrusted to us; that we, remembering the account we must one day give, may be faithful stewards of your good gifts; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

©Book of Common Prayer, 2019, Prayer 22

POLICY ON HUMAN SEXUALITY

“You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.”
(1 Cor 6:19–20, ESV)

I. Introduction

The Diocese of Quincy, as a member of the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA), affirms the biblical and historic teaching of the Church regarding human sexuality. This policy aims to outline the theological foundation, ethical limits, and pastoral duties related to sexuality, gender, marriage, and Christian discipleship.

This policy applies to all clergy, lay employees, vestry members, volunteers, and ministry leaders acting under the authority of this Diocese.

II. Theological Foundation

We affirm that all people are created in the image of God (Gen 1:26–27) and that human sexuality is a gift from God meant to be expressed within the covenant of marriage between one man and one woman (Gen 2:24; Matt 19:4–6; Eph 5:31–32). We believe that sexual intimacy outside of this covenant—whether heterosexual or homosexual—does not reflect God’s design and goes against the teaching of Holy Scripture.

We affirm the ACNA’s “Theological Statement on Marriage, Sexuality, and Identity” (2021), which highlights that:

- Marriage is a lifelong union between a man and a woman.
- Sexual orientation does not determine a Christian’s identity; instead, our true identity is rooted in Christ.
- Pastoral care must embody both theological conviction and compassionate engagement.

III. Definitions and Ethical Standards

1. Marriage and Sexuality

- a. The Diocese recognizes only marriages between one man and one woman as valid and eligible for blessing within the Church.
- b. Clergy of this Diocese shall not solemnize, bless, or officiate any marriage or union outside this definition.

2. Celibacy and Singleness

- a. Those who are not called to marriage are called to chastity, which is a holy vocation of self-giving and spiritual fruitfulness.

- b. The Church values and encourages celibate vocations, aiming to provide proper community and pastoral support.
- 3. Same-Sex Attraction
 - a. Experiencing same-sex attraction is not sinful by itself, but participating in same-sex sexual behavior goes against Scripture and is not allowed among leaders or members involved in public ministry.
 - b. Christians experiencing same-sex attraction are encouraged to pursue holiness, discipleship, and accountability within a community with support from a local church's or diocesan pastoral care.
- 4. Gender Identity
 - a. We affirm that God created humanity as male and female. Gender is not fluid or self-determined, but a gift to be received and embraced (Gen 1:27; Deut 22:5).
 - b. The Diocese does not support transgender ideology, gender reassignment procedures, or involvement in liturgical services that affirm gender identities inconsistent with biological sex.

IV. Conduct and Accountability

- Clergy and lay leaders should exemplify Christian holiness in all aspects of sexual conduct.
- Misconduct, such as adultery, fornication, same-sex sexual activity, or any form of sexual harassment or abuse, is grounds for disciplinary action in accordance with the Constitution and Canons of the ACNA and the Diocese of Quincy.
- Counseling, repentance, and restoration will be offered wherever appropriate, consistent with the Church's call to truth and grace.

V. Pastoral Care and Discipleship

- The Diocese is dedicated to welcoming everyone into the Church's life, calling them to repentance, faith, and holiness in Christ.
- We will walk alongside individuals struggling with sexual sin, gender confusion, or same-sex attraction, offering the transforming love of Christ without compromising the truth of God's Word.
- Pastoral care teams should be trained to provide compassionate and theologically sound support, especially to youth and families navigating cultural confusion about sexuality.

VI. Educational and Safeguarding Implications

- All clergy, vestry members, and volunteers involved in youth or pastoral ministries are required to complete diocesan-approved safeguarding training, which includes instruction on biblical sexuality and ethical conduct.
- Children and youth shall be taught a biblical perspective on human identity and sexuality in age-appropriate ways, preparing them to live faithfully in a confusing world.

VII. Institutional Integrity

- No ministry, publication, retreat, or educational material endorsed by the Diocese may promote or endorse sexual relationships outside of biblical marriage or any ideologies that contradict this policy.
- All diocesan institutions (churches, schools, camps, etc.) must follow this policy in their governance, hiring, and ministry practices.

VIII. Conclusion

This policy is not meant to be punitive but pastoral. It is grounded in the belief that God's plan for human sexuality promotes human flourishing and that His grace, which empowers, is always with His call to holiness. We invite everyone to receive Christ's mercy, live in the freedom of the gospel, and seek lives of integrity, chastity, and love.

PROPERTY USE POLICY

I. Purpose and Scope

This Property Use Policy details the expectations, boundaries, and responsibilities for using all property owned, leased, or managed by the Diocese of Quincy and its churches. It affirms the Diocese's commitment to managing its property in a manner that aligns with the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA), particularly in relation to Christian witness, moral conduct, and human sexuality.

II. Doctrinal Alignment and Restrictions

All property and facilities of the Diocese of Quincy, including parish-owned buildings, may only be used for activities consistent with the doctrine and moral teaching of the ACNA. This includes, but is not limited to:

- The affirmation that marriage is a lifelong covenant between one man and one woman.
- The understanding that sexual intimacy is reserved exclusively for marriage, as defined above.
- The rejection of same-sex marriage or unions, gender transitions, and any celebration or affirmation of ideologies contrary to biblical anthropology.

Therefore, no diocesan or parish property may be used to host, officiate, witness, celebrate, or support any event, ceremony, or gathering that contravenes this doctrinal teaching. This includes weddings, civil unions, receptions, educational events, or community partnerships inconsistent with the Diocese's Policy on Human Sexuality.

III. Use Requests and Approval Process

Any individual or group seeking to use diocesan or parish property must submit a written request to the appropriate authority (e.g., rector, vestry, diocesan office). All requests will be evaluated based on:

- Doctrinal alignment with the ACNA and the Diocese of Quincy.
- Nature and purpose of the proposed event.
- Insurance and liability coverage (where applicable).
- Facility availability and scheduling conflicts.

The rector or wardens may approve routine requests for parish property. Requests of a diocesan nature must be reviewed and approved by the Bishop or his appointed delegate.

IV. Prohibited Uses

The following uses are explicitly prohibited on all diocesan or parish property:

- Same-sex marriage ceremonies or blessings.
- Events promoting ideologies that conflict with biblical views of gender, sexuality, or marriage.
- Activities involving illegal substances or that promote violence, hatred, or discrimination.
- Any event where the primary purpose is incompatible with the worship and witness of the Church.

The Diocese reserves the right to deny or revoke use of facilities at any time if, in the judgment of the ecclesiastical authority, the use is or will be inconsistent with the doctrine or discipline of the Church.

V. Facility Use Agreements and Liability

All approved external groups must sign a Facility Use Agreement that includes:

- Acknowledgment of this policy.
- Assumption of liability for injury or damage.
- Proof of appropriate insurance coverage.
- Agreement to abide by all rules and guidelines set forth by the parish or diocese.

Failure to comply with the terms of the agreement will result in the immediate termination of your use privileges and may lead to legal action.

VI. Oversight and Revisions

The responsibility for enforcing this policy lies with the Bishop, clergy, vestries, and diocesan officers. Any exceptions must be explicitly authorized in writing by the Bishop. This policy may be revised or updated at the discretion of the Diocese to incorporate canonical changes, legal requirements, or pastoral considerations.

VII. Conclusion

The buildings and property of the Diocese of Quincy are consecrated to the glory of God and should be used in a way that upholds the gospel of Jesus Christ. By protecting the integrity of our facilities, we witness to the truth of God's Word and the beauty of holiness in all aspects of Church life.