

†Every person has the right to be respected and treated with the dignity befitting a child of God.

†Every person has the right to have appropriate boundaries respected.

†Every person has the right to challenge any behavior or comment that is offensive or inappropriate.

†Every person has the responsibility to protect the safety of children, families, women and men.

†Every person has the right to receive healing with firm justice and mercy.

*"We all must take reasonable steps together to protect all of God's children. Through our faith in Christ and His Church, and with restored trust in the Church by our commitment to safe environments, we can build a future full of hope."*

-Our Promise to Protect...  
Policies on Appropriate Conduct  
May 2012

REV 1/2017

## REPORTING SEXUAL ABUSE

If you know of an incident of sexual abuse of a person **who is now under the age of 18** by a priest, deacon, employee or volunteer,

**PLEASE IMMEDIATELY CALL THE CIVIL AUTHORITIES AND THEN THE DIOCESE.**

If the person was abused as a minor and is now an adult, please contact:

Office of Safe Environment  
Diocese of Green Bay  
at 877-270-8174  
or  
920-272-8174.

**We always encourage you to report the incident to local civil authorities.**

***YOU MATTER TO US—THERE IS HOPE!***



To report **suspected** child abuse, elder abuse, or abuse of an adult at risk contact:  
Department of Human Services  
in your county.

For individual county information:  
<http://dcf.wisconsin.gov>  
<http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/aging/elderabuse>



Diocese of  
Green Bay

More information can be found at [www.gbdioc.org](http://www.gbdioc.org)

# PROMISE TO PROTECT



# PLEDGE TO HEAL

"We as the Church strive to create environments where all people treat each other with dignity, charity and respect; and the faithful are served by men and women who fully reflect the love and protection of Jesus Christ."

-Bishop David L. Ricken

**Should I report an act of sexual misconduct by Diocesan personnel to the Diocese?**

Yes. The Diocese of Green Bay takes very seriously any and all credible complaints of sexual misconduct by members of the clergy, religious and lay staff of the Diocese.

We encourage anyone with knowledge of an act of sexual misconduct to inform the Diocese immediately so that we can take appropriate action to protect others and provide support to victims of sexual abuse.

**Who can I contact to report an allegation of sexual abuse or misconduct?**

Any person who wishes to report an incident of sexual misconduct by a member of the clergy, religious or lay staff of the Diocese of Green Bay should contact the Office of Safe Environment at the Diocese as follows:

**Office of Safe Environment  
Diocese of Green Bay  
at 877-270-8174 or  
920-272-8174.**

**Write to:** Office of Safe Environment, Diocese of Green Bay, P.O. Box 23825, Green Bay, WI 54305-3825.

Letters should be marked *Personal and Confidential* and indicate when and how the person writing can be contacted for further information.

“The first obligation of the Church with regard to the victims is healing and reconciliation.”

-Charter for the Protection of Children & Young People,  
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

**Does the Diocese provide assistance to sexual abuse victims?**

Yes. The Diocese is committed to the well-being of those who have suffered abuse, and has designated a Victim Assistance Coordinator to help anyone who reports that he or she has been abused.

**Should I report the allegation to civil authorities?**

Yes, immediately if the person is now under the age of 18. If the person was abused as a minor but is now an adult, the Diocese strongly encourages that individual with the allegation to contact the civil authorities in the county where the incident(s) occurred. Even though the Diocese reports all credible abuse allegations to the civil authorities, it is important that they hear directly from the individual making the allegation.

**The Diocese Shall Take Every Complaint Seriously**

The Diocese will respond promptly and seriously to every complaint of sexual misconduct against a minor by a priest or deacon. When the Diocese receives an allegation that a priest or deacon has engaged in sexual misconduct, an investigation will immediately begin. The Diocese will offer the alleged victim pastoral assistance and counseling that may be needed. During the investigation, the rights of all those who are involved, including both the person making the allegation and the person accused of misconduct, will be protected. The person making the complaint may seek counsel to vindicate his/her rights if the person believes that the Diocese has not responded adequately to the allegation.

**What is being done to prevent sexual misconduct in the Church?**

Every effort is made to assure that all persons ministering in the Diocese are aware of and will abide by the policies prohibiting sexual harassment, exploitation or abuse, and the procedures for dealing with incidents of sexual misconduct.

All employees of the Catholic Diocese of Green Bay and its local representatives; all Priests, Deacons, and Seminarians; and any volunteers age 18 and over who have direct contact with children, youth, and individuals at risk are required to attend a VIRTUS® *Protecting God's Children*™ Adult Awareness Session, complete an approved diocesan criminal background check and acknowledge receipt of an appropriate conduct policy.

**Conclusion**

Sexual misconduct is complex as well as terribly harmful. No simple or uniform methodology can provide an effective response because each instance has unique aspects that require adaptation.

However, our experience over the past many years tells us it is possible for individuals and communities to heal from the effects of sexual misconduct. This is not easily or quickly accomplished. Effective counseling, support groups and spiritual direction are tools which are often required for this healing.

**The Diocese is committed to doing all that it can to:**

- Promote safe, healthy communities of faith.
- Intervene effectively when there is sexual misconduct.
- Respond fairly and compassionately to those harmed by sexual misconduct.