

14 Overnight Events

Overnight events are generally discouraged, because of the difficulties involved in supervising and protecting minors in such situations. No overnight activity should take place without the approval of the Safe Environment Office. For any overnight events (e.g., trips or retreats) that are approved and are carried out by any Archdiocesan institutions or programs, or are held at Archdiocesan facilities, the following rules must be followed:

14.1 Minor participants

- a. Children who have not begun 9th grade may not participate in an overnight event.
- b. All minors on overnight events must have a signed permission slip from a parent. (Note that the term "parent" as used in this policy shall include a legal guardian.)
- c. Parents and children must be permitted to contact each other at any time during the event, and parents may withdraw their children from the event at any time and for any reason.
- d. Parents are entitled to be fully informed of all activities that will take place during the overnight event.

14.2 Adult Participants and Chaperones

- a. A minimum of two adults are required on all overnight events involving minors.
- b. The minimum ratio for chaperones to minors is 1 adult per 8 minors
- c. All chaperones for overnight events must be over 21 years of age.
- d. All chaperones must be in full compliance with the Safe Environment requirements prior to the event.
- e. All priests and deacons participating in overnight events must have current valid faculties from the Archdiocese of New York.
- f. The ratio of chaperones must also reflect the sex of the participants, with a minimum of two adults of the same sex as the participants.

14.3 Conduct During Overnight Events

- a. All participants must conform to the Archdiocesan Code of Conduct and the Safe Environment Policies. This includes, but is not limited to, the following prohibited conduct:
 - i. Any kind of sexual conduct involving a minor.
 - ii. Using sexual language in the presence of minors.
 - iii. Engaging in any inappropriate physical contact with a minor, as defined by Section 13.4 of this Policy.
 - iv. Using alcohol or illegal drugs.
- b. It is absolutely forbidden to require minors to keep secrets from their parents or to make a vow of secrecy about what happens during the event. However, it is permissible to instruct minors to respect the privacy of others by not revealing personal or private information about them.
- c. Under no circumstances are minors to be physically restrained or deprived of their

- ordinary senses in any way (e.g., blindfolded, kept in darkness), subjected to any humiliating or demeaning treatment (e.g., any form of hazing), deprived of a reasonable amount of sleep, or deliberately frightened.
- d. A youth may never ride in a vehicle alone with an adult, except for their parent or guardian. In transporting minors to and from an overnight event, two adults should be present in each vehicle; if that is not possible, the minimum required is one adult and two or more minors.
 - e. One-on-one private contact between adults and minors is not permitted. If a personal meeting is required with a youth, it must be conducted in view of other adults and minors.
 - f. An adult may not engage in any private direct electronic communication with an unrelated minor (e.g., text messaging, phone calls), unless it is necessary for safety (e.g. to contact a lost child).
 - g. A lone adult may never enter a bedroom, shower, or bathroom being used by a minor, except in the case of an emergency to ensure safety or health, or to preserve order. Routine room checks may never be conducted by a lone adult.
 - h. An adult may never be in a state of undress in the presence of a minor.
 - i. Adult leaders must ensure that they are fully familiar with the safety plan for the facility (e.g., fire exits, boundaries, etc.), and must give the event participants a briefing on safety plans.
 - j. Minors are not permitted to transmit, via any form of electronic communication, any photographs, or images of other participants in any stage of undress, or in any situation that reasonably might cause embarrassment, humiliation, or distress to the person depicted.
 - k. Great care should be taken when there are minors with age differences of more than two years. Mistreatment of younger minors by older minors is a significant risk that must be prevented by close supervision.
 - l. Minors are not permitted to leave the location where the event is taking place, except as part of a group that is under the direct supervision of at least one adult.

14.4 Sleeping and Other Accommodations

- a. There must be separate bedrooms/sleeping areas, bathrooms, and showers for males and females. Minors may only use the appropriate accommodation or facility that conforms to their biological sex.
- b. Males and female participants may not sleep in connecting rooms.
- c. No minor is permitted to sleep in a bedroom with an adult, except in the case of a minor sleeping in the room of their own parent or guardian.
- d. In dormitory-style facilities, minors and adults, and males and females, must have separate areas.
- e. Minors shall not share sleeping facilities with another minor who is more than two years older (e.g., a 14-year-old may not share a bedroom with a 17-year-old).
- f. Dormitory areas must be overseen by at least two adults.
- g. Male and female adults may not share a private bedroom unless they are joined in a valid Catholic marriage, adult siblings, or a parent with an adult child.