



ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR WORKING WITH MINORS

The conduct of those working or volunteering in Archdiocesan parishes and affiliated agencies and programs must reflect the mission of the Church to teach Christ's truth and extend His love and care to all. In addition, there is a heightened concern that those working with minors recognize the importance of legal, professional, and responsible conduct.

In my work with minors in the Archdiocese of New York, I solemnly promise to:

- Engage only in positive behavior and maintain appropriate physical and emotional boundaries in my relationship with minors. This includes but is not limited to the following behaviors:
 - Not engaging in any covert or overt sexual behaviors with any minor; avoiding any sexual innuendo, sexual or indecent comments; not showing any indecent material or images to minors.
 - Being attentive to warning signs of the potential violation of sexual boundaries or the abuse of minors.
 - Not meeting alone with minors in an unsupervised or private setting.
 - Not engaging in grooming behavior (i.e., conduct intended to build trust with a child and the adults around them to create opportunities to be alone with and sexually abuse the child).
 - Not permitting any minor in my personal private space, such as sleeping quarters, living areas, and vehicles.
 - Not giving gifts to a minor that shows undue favoritism or suggests a special relationship.
 - Avoiding any inappropriate physical contact with a minor, particularly any touch of a sexual nature.
 - Not having private or inappropriate contact with a minor through electronic communication or social media.
 - Not using or being under the influence of alcohol or drugs (including cannabis) when working with minors.
 - Not possessing or distributing any indecent images of minors (including simulated or computer-generated images), particularly child sexual abuse images (so-called "child pornography").
 - Ensuring that I always interact with minors according to my position and not as if I were their peer.
- Abide by all applicable Archdiocesan policies regarding child protection and sexual misconduct.
- Report all suspected cases of abuse or neglect of minors according to civil law and Archdiocesan policy.

- Notify my supervisor of any violations of this code or of any Archdiocesan policy, any violations of appropriate boundaries, and any information necessary to prevent a minor being harmed.
- Cooperate fully with any investigation into any allegation of suspected abuse or neglect of a minor.
- Participate in training sessions required by the Archdiocese to foster a safe environment and to prevent the sexual abuse of children and young people.
- Submit to a background check, according to Archdiocesan policy.
- Work within the limits of my position, professional competence, and, if applicable, licenses, certifications, etc.; abide by the codes of conduct of these positions and professions; seek appropriate referrals and consultations when issues arise that need the assistance of other professionals; and readily seek the advice of supervisors when appropriate.

I understand that any violation of this Code may result in disciplinary action up to and including removal from my position. Such disciplinary action will be taken in accord with the personnel policies of the Archdiocese or the parish or agency where I work or serve, and any applicable collective bargaining agreements.

I understand that it is the express policy of the Archdiocese to alert appropriate civil authorities of any suspected inappropriate or criminal behavior towards minors and to cooperate fully with any investigations of such suspected behavior by any competent authority.

I understand that under Archdiocesan policy, the term "minor" means a person who has not yet attained eighteen years of age; an adult who habitually lacks the use of reason; a person of any age who lacks the capacity to give consent due to a mental or developmental condition or disability; or a person in a state of infirmity, physical or mental deficiency, or deprivation of personal liberty which, in fact, even occasionally, limits their ability to understand or to want or otherwise resist an offense.