



Victim's Assistance Coordinator

- Contact the Victim's Assistance Coordinator:

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PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ABUSE BY A CLERIC

The Archdiocese of New York is committed to providing victims of sexual abuse by a cleric (i.e. bishop, priest, deacon) with appropriate professional and spiritual assistance to address the consequences of the abuse. All allegations of sexual abuse are forwarded to the appropriate Archdiocesan official and to the proper district attorney and / or law enforcement authorities.

Procedures:

The Victim's Assistance Coordinator* will respond promptly to persons who contact the Archdiocese concerning an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor by a cleric and will offer to meet with them. The purpose of the meeting is to acknowledge the allegation, empathetically listen to the alleged victim, and inform the person of the help which is available and the procedures of the investigation.

The person making the allegation is also asked to put his or her allegation in a signed writing. A simple form is available from the Archdiocese to allow the person to submit the allegation. As an alternative, the person making the allegation may be interviewed by two Archdiocesan officials and the interview will be transcribed.

Whenever a complaint is received by an Archdiocesan official that a cleric has sexually abused a minor, the individual, or, if the individual is a child, the individual's parents or guardians, will be strongly urged to report the allegation immediately and directly to the appropriate District Attorney's Office. The Archdiocese will also immediately refer the matter to the appropriate District Attorney's Office and will cooperate with any criminal investigation by District Attorney's Office, as well as take appropriate action concerning the cleric as warranted, including removing the cleric from his assignment, to ensure the safety of minors.

The Victim's Assistance Coordinator will notify the Archdiocesan Attorney, the Promoter of

Justice and appropriate Archdiocesan officials of the allegation.

Allegations cannot be received under condition of anonymity given the Archdiocese's policy to report this information to the appropriate District Attorney's Office. Aware of the sensitive nature of a complaint of sexual abuse for both the person bringing the complaint and for the accused cleric, the Archdiocese does strive to keep the process confidential. There are no confidentiality restrictions on the individual making the complaint. In addition, the person bringing the complaint is advised that in keeping with Archdiocesan policy, the District Attorney, the cleric, and the Advisory Review Board will all be informed of the particulars of the complaint. In addition, a canon law proceeding may be initiated.

The civil and canonical rights of all involved will be respected while the Archdiocese seeks to offer assistance.

The Victim's Assistance Coordinator works with each person to determine the assistance that is necessary and appropriate. This may include counseling, spiritual assistance, and referrals to support groups.

As appropriate, and if requested, the Victim's Assistance Coordinator will assist the individual in obtaining outpatient counseling, or recommending licensed and qualified counselors or mental health providers for spiritual and mental health support. For eligible individuals, the Archdiocese will pay for counseling, as necessary. Any person requesting counseling understands and agrees that in order to receive counseling, he or she will be required to acknowledge in writing that the payment of counseling is not an acknowledgement or admission of the need for counseling or an acknowledgement or admission of legal liability for the alleged abuse (attached). For eligible individuals, counseling will be provided for one year. Periodic general progress reports, not to include HIPAA protected information, will be required. At the end of one year, and based on the general progress reports from the therapist, counseling may continue for up to one additional year on a case by case basis. A person who has commenced litigation against the Archdiocese is not eligible for counseling. (Note: Participants in the Independent Reconciliation and Compensation Program continue to be eligible for counseling.)

The Victim's Assistance Coordinator works closely with all persons who claim abuse to monitor their changing needs over time.

The Victim's Assistance Coordinator will keep in contact with the individual and his or her family, if appropriate.

The Victim's Assistance Coordinator also keeps the person making the allegation informed of the progress of the review.

*Victim's Assistance Coordinator is an individual designated by the Archbishop to receive and coordinate the handling of allegations of child abuse by Archdiocesan personnel.

COUNSELING
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I, _____, residing at _____
have requested that the Archdiocese provide counseling. I acknowledge, understand
and agree that the provision and payment of counseling by the Archdiocese is not an
acknowledgment or admission by the Archdiocese of the need for counseling or an
acknowledgment or admission of legal liability for the alleged abuse.

Date

Signature