

I. CREATING AND MAINTAINING SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

A Training and Education program for the Church in Hawaii

In partnership with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and the parishes, schools and faithful of the Catholic Church in Hawaii, the Diocese of Honolulu has developed the Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments training and educational program. This educational and training program is the result of collaboration between the Victim Assistance Coordinator, the Child Sex Abuse Treatment Program of Catholic Charities Hawaii Family Services, Vicar for Clergy, Diocesan Department of Religious Education and a national network of victim assistance coordinators.

The curriculum which follows adheres to the directives of the “Charter for the Protection of Children and Youth” and is intended to be an outline of the educational and training materials that will be presented to ordained, salaried and volunteer representatives of the Roman Catholic Church in the State of Hawaii. While there are explicit materials for specific positions, the complete packet of materials is available for review by all. We believe that the more information we all have, the safer our environments will be.

The Curriculum

1. **What is the context of this training?**

The training will review what has been happening in the U.S. Church regarding child sexual abuse and how the U.S. bishops have responded in their document, “Promise to Protect, Pledge to Heal.”

2. **What is a safe environment?**

The training and education program will address the following topics:

- a. The definition of safety for children, youth and the faithful
- b. The Code of Conduct for adults/volunteers
- c. What is abuse, and what is sexual abuse?
- d. How to best prevent all child abuse
- e. Identifying a victim of abuse
 - i. Signs to look for
 - ii. Behaviors of possible perpetrators
 - iii. Background checks
- f. How should we respond to abuse or suspicion of abuse?
- g. What does the law say? Church policy?
- h. How do we train our children to be safe?
- i. Code of Conduct for children

3. **Who will receive training?**

Members of the clergy, religious and lay adult (eighteen [18] years and older) employees and volunteers of the Roman Catholic Church in the State of Hawaii who are expected to have regular or continuing contact (contact beyond a single-day event) with youth (i.e. “child” or “minor,” under eighteen [18] years of age).

4. **What areas will the training cover?**

- a. Prevention
- b. Identification
- c. Response
- d. Reporting
- e. Support

5. **What are the conditions for certification?**

All pastors, principals and/or administrators will be responsible for ensuring that all personnel, paid or volunteer, are certified. They shall also be responsible for maintaining current records of certification. All participants will declare in writing that

- a. They have read and understand the Code of Conduct material;
- b. They have read and understand the Diocesan Guidelines for Sexual Misconduct;
- c. They agree to abide by all guidelines, principles and laws presented in the training;
- d. They have satisfactorily completed the required *Protecting God's Children* training, offered online and via in-person sessions through VIRTUS Programs (www.virtus.org).
- e. Those who will have ongoing and unsupervised contact with minors will complete a background screening through the Employment Screening Resources, Inc. (ESR) website, accessed via secure interface with the VIRTUS website. The phrase "ongoing and unsupervised contact with minors" means the opportunity to be alone with a minor more than once in any twelve-month period.
- f. Background screening should be completed within thirty (30) days from the start of service. During this period and while awaiting the results of the background screening, individuals should be supervised. New employees and independent contractors who will have ongoing and unsupervised contact with minors are to be screened using the "pre-engagement background screening process" through the Diocesan Human Resources Department.

Pastors, principals and/or administrators should be vigilant in determining that employees and volunteers do not have a history that could potentially place minors at risk. Such history should be immediate grounds for disqualification from working directly with minors.

6. **Who will provide the training?**

Training is provided through the VIRTUS Programs, an offering of National Catholic Services, LLC.

7. **How will the training be provided?**

The VIRTUS Programs' *Protecting God's Children* Safe Environment training for adults may be completed via an online module or by attending a facilitated classroom session.

8. **How long will this last?**

- a. Parish life is dynamic; training and education are continuous and ongoing.
- b. Completion of the training module is required every five (5) years.
- c. Annual reports will be made to the diocese and parishes.