



September 28, 2015

*Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?
I will, with God's help.*

Dear people of God,

I am pleased to put into your hands our new diocesan policy regarding sexual misconduct. This policy reflects our fervent desire, shaped by our baptismal covenant, to seek and serve Christ in all persons, and to love our neighbor as ourselves. At a minimum, we need to ensure that they are safe when they come into our churches.

You will find, as you read this policy that it requires those of us who do ministry in this diocese to think about the implications for safety in the actions we take. It is in thoughtful, prayerful, careful application that this policy will come alive in each of our parishes and diocesan entities.

I commend this policy to you, the leaders of our diocese, knowing that you, along with your Bishop, wish to do all that you can to keep God's people safe as they share in the Body of Christ with us.

May God's love be with you as you implement this policy in your own parish communities – with God's help.

Faithfully,

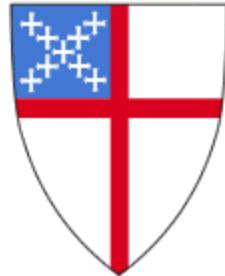
The Rt. Rev. Steven A. Miller

Bishop of Milwaukee

SAM/bjk



THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF MILWAUKEE



Introduction to Healthy Church Practices in the Diocese of Milwaukee

Statement of Intent

The Diocese of Milwaukee strives to make the Episcopal Church in our diocese a healthy and safe place for all to worship, work and serve our Lord. Faith flourishes when all people know that church leaders, ordained and lay, can be trusted. This document sets forth programs and practices in the diocese that offer support to ordained ministers and lay leaders in earning, maintaining and nurturing this trust.

Overview

The goal is to make the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Milwaukee a healthy and safe place for everyone to worship, work and serve our Lord is ambitious. It requires a comprehensive and balanced approach. This approach recognizes that all aspects may not be feasible to fully implement in specific congregations. **When leadership determines a need to step outside of best practices outlined in this policy, then there is a need to think about compensating strategies to reduce risks.** Therefore each congregation must identify those areas they can strengthen to compensate for another area where it is not feasible to fully implement. The Diocese of Milwaukee gives attention and resources to the areas set out below in the Table of Contents.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Bishop's Letter

Introduction

| | |
|--|---------------|
| <i>1. Calling, interviewing, and placing gifted ordained ministers to serve in this diocese.....</i> | <i>pg. 4</i> |
| <i>2. Supporting ordained ministers and lay employees with programs to promote personal wellness and self-care</i> | <i>pg. 5</i> |
| <i>3. Offering Safe Church Training for ordained and lay ministers</i> | <i>pg. 6</i> |
| <i>4. Offering guidelines for ordained ministry and lay ministry that are clear, compassionate, and fair</i> | |
| <i> Guidelines for ordained ministry.....</i> | <i>pg. 7</i> |
| <i> Guidelines for lay ministry</i> | <i>pg. 11</i> |
| <i>5. Responding to all allegations regarding misconduct by ordained clergy with sensitivity and compassion toward all involved.....</i> | <i>pg. 12</i> |
| <i>6. Responding to all allegations regarding misconduct by parish employees, lay leaders and parishioners.....</i> | <i>pg.13</i> |
| <i>7. The prevention of misconduct with children and youth.....</i> | <i>pg. 14</i> |
| <i>8. The prevention of misconduct with adults'</i> | <i>pg. 17</i> |
| <i>Appendix A: Computer Use Policy and Guidelines Using Social Media.....</i> | <i>pg. 21</i> |
| <i>Appendix B: Screening Interview and Background Check Process</i> | <i>pg. 26</i> |
| <i>Appendix C: Authorization to Conduct Record Check.....</i> | <i>pg. 36</i> |
| <i>Appendix D: Using CCAP and Milwaukee Municipal Court Internet Search Engines</i> | <i>pg. 38</i> |
| <i>Appendix E: Deviation from Best Practices.....</i> | <i>pg. 40</i> |
| <i>Appendix F: Sample Safe Church Survey.....</i> | <i>pg. 41</i> |
| <i>Appendix G: Safe Church Ministers.....</i> | <i>pg. 45</i> |
| <i>Appendix H: Resources on Mandated Reporting</i> | <i>pg. 46</i> |

Thank you to the following dioceses for sharing their information.

Diocese of Connecticut

Diocese of New Hampshire

Diocese of Chicago

Diocese of Rhode Island

1. Calling, interviewing, and placing gifted ordained ministers to serve in this diocese

The Bishop seeks to identify and recruit gifted ordained ministers to serve in this diocese. The goal is to match gifts, talents, and experience of the ordained minister with the needs, opportunities, and challenges of the parish.

The first step in prevention of misconduct is looking for qualities and characteristics that lead to healthy ministry. Future behavior is best predicted by looking at past behavior. Consequently, thorough background and reference checks are an essential part of the process. Therefore, calls are not extended until background and reference checks have been completed and reviewed by the Office of the Bishop.

The Office of the Bishop works with priests, parish search committees, vestries and congregations. Referrals and recommendations for new ordained leadership come to the Office of the Bishop from a variety of sources including the Episcopal Office of Deployment, a network of deployment officers in other dioceses, clergy self-referrals, and referrals from members of the congregation seeking a new clergy person.

Deacons are appointed by the Bishop to serve in a parish. The Bishop makes the appointment after consulting with the supervising priest as well as the deacon.

The Diocese seeks the following qualities in candidates for placement in positions within the diocese:

Holiness – Is there a lively sense of Christ’s presence in the life of this person? Do others join in recognizing what we see? What are the gifts that this person might bring to a new ministry? How does the person understand and practice healthy boundaries? What strategies does the person have in their life to help them maintain healthy boundaries and relationships; for example, a colleague group or spiritual direction?

Competence – Ministry requires a variety of talents and skills. Does this person demonstrate the gifts and skills for ministry that the parish or position requires? Does this person’s leadership style meet the needs of the parish? Will this person be able to build up the ministry? Will this person be able to strengthen and encourage God’s people in ministry? Can these skills and talents be further developed through training and formation?

Stability of Life – Extending a call is an investment of hope and trust by the Church in a person. Does this person demonstrate personal maturity and stability that point toward fruitful future ministry?

2. Supporting ordained ministers and lay employees with programs to promote personal wellness and self-care.

Wellness and self-care are personal responsibilities for all who serve in the Church. The Diocese encourages all clergy and lay employees to observe generally recognized wellness practices (emotionally, spiritually and physically). These include such things as:

- a) Weekly days off, sabbatical time, and vacations as specified in letters of agreement.
- b) Participation in colleague, mentoring, and/or professional groups.
- c) Participation in some form of ongoing supervision if providing spiritual direction.
- d) Participation in some form of mutual ministry review and/or performance review.
- e) Spiritual direction.
- f) Retreats.
- g) Individual counseling.
- h) Regular medical exams.
- i) Regular physical exercise.
- j) Nurturing relationships with other clergy and colleagues in the diocese or the larger church.
- k) Attending to financial wellness.

Diocesan Offerings to Support Clergy and Lay Employee Wellness: The Diocese of Milwaukee offers a variety of services and resources to support and encourage wellness and self-care for ordained ministers and their families. The following is a partial list of some of these offerings:

- a) *Pastoral Situations and Emergencies* – The Bishop and diocesan staff want to be in pastoral contact with all clergy and lay employees who serve in the diocese in times of pastoral need, as well as in times of emergency. This is a top priority. When pastoral situations arise, the Bishop and diocesan staff are ready to assist. Please contact the Office of the Bishop any time pastoral needs arise.
- b) *Safe Church training* – This is required for all individuals prior to ordination.
- c) *The Fresh Start Program* – All priests beginning new ministries in the Dioceses of Milwaukee are expected to participate in Fresh Start. This program provides support and information for priests during the first year of a new ministry.
- d) *Deacons' Conferences and Retreats* – The Diocese of Milwaukee sponsors retreats for deacons which specifically address diaconal ministry. Typically, events are scheduled on weekends to accommodate the usual workweek of most deacons.
- e) *Continuing Education* – Time and funding for continuing education are written into the letters of agreement defining ministries in the diocese. The diocese provides offerings of continuing education on an ongoing basis. In addition, the Office of the Canon to the Ordinary can assist in the planning of continuing education and may be able to provide some assistance if funds are available.
- f) *Clergy Development* – Opportunities for clergy development are regularly offered by the diocese in the form of clergy days and clergy retreats. Please contact the Office of the Canon to the Ordinary for additional information.
- g) *Professionally-Led Clergy Supervision Groups* – These groups provide an on-going opportunity for members to address a wide range of professional and personal issues. The Diocese of Milwaukee is enrolled in the Church Pension Group supplement that will partially fund the cost of a facilitator for these kinds of groups. For information contact the Canon to the Ordinary at Nicholson House.

- h) *Sabbaticals (Professional Development Leave)* – Time and funding for Sabbaticals are written into the letters of agreement defining ministries in the diocese. Parochial priests are strongly encouraged to participate in a sabbatical program.
- i) *Employee Assistance Program* – Offered through the Church Insurance Corporation, EAP provides confidential services to clergy, their families, lay employees of the diocese, and their families. These services include mental health and substance abuse evaluation, referral, and treatment. It is available 24 hours a day. Personal financial management consultation is also available. For more information call (800) 223-6602 or go to the Church Pension Group website, <http://www.cpg.org>, for the most current number.

3. Offering Safe Church Training for ordained ministers and lay ministers

In an effort to increase the physical, emotional and spiritual safety of our parishes and ministries, the Diocese offers safe church training for all members of the Church - laypersons, bishops, priests and deacons.

Training Certification: Training must be provided by someone certified by the Diocese to be a Safe Church Trainer. Responsibility for certification resides within the Office of the Bishop's Assistant for Christian Formation. At a minimum those certified must take the Diocesan Train the Trainer Course or another approved Train the Trainer Course. Clergy will not normally conduct trainings in their own parish even if a certified trainer because of the obvious power imbalances.

Safeguarding God's Children is offered for ordained and lay ministers. This training provides information to increase awareness of healthy practices and boundaries to enhance the safety of our parishes and ministries for children. This training is offered on an ongoing basis at locations across the diocese. All first time attendees are required to attend a training led by our certified diocesan trainers. Those who are renewing their training may take the On-Line SGC through the Office of the Bishop's Assistant for Christian Formation.

Adult Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training is offered for ordained and lay ministers. This training provides information to increase awareness of healthy practices and boundaries to enhance the safety of our parishes and ministries for adults. This training is offered through the Office of the Bishop's Assistant for Christian Formation.

Training Requirements: see Appendix I, *Background Checks and Training Requirements* The Diocese of Milwaukee requires Safeguarding God's Children training and Adult Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training for a number of members, lay and ordained, and recommends it for others. Each parish has the discretion to go beyond the recommendations listed in the Diocesan guidelines.

Both training sessions are required for clergy within six months of establishing canonical residence or engaging in ministry within the Diocese of Milwaukee.

AND

Clergy Recertification Workshops every five years. These workshops are open only to clergy and are designed to bring clergy up to date on issues and trends related to safety in our parishes and ministries. These workshops will be offered every five years. (If an ordained minister is unable to attend a Clergy Recertification Workshop, he or she can fulfill this training requirement by attending Safeguarding God's Children and Adult Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training in Milwaukee, or if residing in another diocese, by attending the training offered in that diocese.) *Documentation of attendance at both trainings and Clergy Recertification Workshop by ordained ministers will be kept at Nicholson House. Attendees are encouraged to keep their own copies*

Recommended Training for Laity: The diocese requires and strongly encourages training on the prevention of abuse and exploitation of both children and adults for certain lay ministers in positions of parish leadership, whether paid or volunteer. *See Appendix I for requirements.*

These educational offerings are strongly encouraged for church school teachers, anyone who sees people in their homes on behalf of the church, e.g. Eucharistic Visitors or parish visitors, and anyone who works with children and youth. All lay persons are welcome and invited to attend these trainings. Each parish has the discretion to go beyond the requirements regarding required training of laity. **Each parish should maintain documentation of attendance of trainings by laity, whether parishioners, parish volunteers or employees.**

Training for Diocesan Employees: All diocesan employees are required to attend both trainings within six months of commencement of employment, or provide a current certificate of completion of training. Documentation of attendance of training will be maintained by the diocese.

4. Offering guidelines for ordained ministry and lay ministry that are clear, compassionate, and fair.

Guidelines for Ordained Ministry

The relationship of clergy and parishioner can be a powerful relationship in the lives of both, and can be integral to a parishioner's faith journey. A parishioner puts his or her trust in a cleric. In this relationship of trust, the cleric has a professional and moral responsibility to put the interest of the other person above his or her own needs. This relationship can become complex, and in some cases seriously impaired. It is the cleric's responsibility to maintain the integrity of this relationship as it not only affects the individual but the larger community of faith.

The diocese offers the following Guidelines for Ministry to assist and support ordained ministers in maintaining the integrity of relationships in which they offer ministry. It is expected that all ordained clergy and lay leaders in the diocese will be familiar with and will seek to follow these guidelines. These guidelines do not include all diocesan policies

or contingencies. An attempt has been made to refer to additional diocesan policies where appropriate.

Clergy are welcome to contact the Bishop or the Canon to the Ordinary as they seek to follow these guidelines, particularly if they are encountering struggles in so doing.

Clergy in the diocese of Milwaukee are expected to:

1. Treat themselves with dignity and respect by taking good care of self.

This includes:

Regular and consistent incorporation of wellness and self-care practices in their life. (See the section above on Wellness Practices and resources listed there.)

Setting appropriate limits with parishioners as to when they are available. Clergy also need to maintain appropriate boundaries in the relationship. If a parishioner violates boundaries by going beyond what is appropriate in the clergy parishioner relationship (e.g. seeking to romanticize the relationship, demanding inordinate amounts of attention, seeking to meet with you alone, sending you too many and/or inappropriate e-mail messages, or does anything that makes you feel uncomfortable or unsafe), firmly and clearly communicate what behavior is acceptable and what is not. Some parishioners do not change their behavior in spite of a cleric's efforts to explain why change is needed. In such cases, clergy are expected to seek consultation by contacting the Canon to the Ordinary or the Bishop. You might also consider taking the issue to your colleague group, if you are part of one.

Addressing conflicts that may arise between them and a parishioner, group of parishioners or lay leaders, in healthy ways. This includes seeking to maintain appropriate boundaries in relationships, communicating clearly and directly to those with whom you are in conflict, seeking nurture and support for yourself outside the parish, and possibly seeking assistance from someone trained in conflict resolution. If you are struggling with conflict in your parish it is important to be in close contact with the Office of the Bishop.

2. Comply with diocesan policy regarding ministry with children and youth.

Our policy sets forth behavioral standards for all adults engaged in ministries with children or youth throughout the diocese. This policy also sets standards for screening and selection of staff and volunteers who work with children and youth, the monitoring of programs for children and youth, and responding to concerns. Ultimately, ordained leadership in each parish is responsible for compliance with this policy within the parish.

3. Comply with the following behavioral standards for ministry with children or youth.

All Adults, whether ordained or lay, shall not:

1. Provide children or youth with non-sacramental alcohol, illegal drugs or pornography.
2. Consume non-sacramental alcohol or illegal drugs or misuse legal drugs at any children's or youth event.

3. Be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or the misuse of legal drugs at any children's or youth event.
4. Engage in illegal behavior or permit other adults or children or youth to engage in illegal behavior.
5. Engage in any sexual, romantic, illicit or secretive relationship or conduct with any child or youth.
6. Discuss their own sexual activities or fantasies with children or youth.

In addition, whenever an adult is offering any type of ministry or engaged in any type of church related activity with a child or youth, ideally there shall be at least two, unrelated adults present. **As said in the overview, if this is not possible, then intentional steps should be taken to mitigate the risk of stepping outside of good practice.** These behavioral standards for ministry with children or youth are to be found on page 15.

4. Refrain from dual relationships. Dual relationships in a church setting occur when clergy attempt to relate to a person on two levels at the same time. This can happen when clergy attempt to relate to an individual both personally and professionally (i.e., as cleric and parishioner, and at the same time in some other role such as supervisor and parish employee). Dual relationships diminish the effectiveness of ministry. To avoid dual relationships:

1. Do not hire parishioners to serve in paid staff positions.
2. Do not allow a clergy spouse, partner or family member to serve on parish staff as an employee, or as a parish officer or vestry member in the parish where the related clergy person serves.
3. Avoid intimate personal relationships with parishioners and others to whom you minister.
4. Do not sexualize any relationship with parishioners or others to whom you minister.
5. Develop personal relationships with people outside of the parish to whom you offer formal or professional ministry, e.g., spiritual direction, pastoral counseling.

It needs to be remembered that when offering professional ministry, there is always a relational power differential that must be taken into account. For example one may choose to do the wedding for a family member. And even here a power differential exists.

It is understood that there will be times that a parish may need or choose to step out of best practices in relationship to dual relationships. When that is the case, then thought must be given to how to address lines of authority, conflict resolution, and other potential conflicts of interest. These situations, if they are to be implemented, should be discussed with the Canon to the Ordinary or the Bishop.

5. Accept only token gifts from parishioners and others to whom you minister. Be cautious of the ramifications of accepting major gifts. If clarification is needed about a specific gift, contact the Canon to the Ordinary or the Bishop.

- 6. Refuse to accept loans** of any kind from parishioners and others to whom you minister.
- 7. Refuse to agree to be named as a beneficiary** or to act as an administrator or personal representative (executor) in a parishioner's will or that of anyone to whom you minister.
- 8. Maintain confidentiality** of information shared in the pastoral/professional relationship. This means that clergy will not divulge to other people personal information a parishioner shares, unless that parishioner gives permission. However, the legal obligation of **mandated reporting** requires clergy to disclose information to the appropriate state agency in specific situations, except when the cleric learns the information within the bounds of the sacrament of confession. Contact the Canon to the Ordinary if you are unclear about your responsibilities
- 9. Comply with legally mandated reporting requirements** regarding the suspected abuse and/or neglect of children, the elderly and vulnerable adults. In the State of Wisconsin, Wisconsin Criminal Code 940.22, clergy are mandated reporters of suspected abuse and/or neglect of children, elderly and vulnerable adults. *Appendix H* contains resource information on mandated reporting. If you have any questions about mandated reporting, please contact the Canon to the Ordinary.
- 10. Refrain from treating mental health or substance abuse issues** unless you are licensed or certified, and separately insured to do so. Even if you are licensed or certified and separately insured, you are not to treat anyone who is a member or attends a parish in which you are serving.

Basic pastoral counseling or support to address issues presented by a parishioner is, of course, acceptable. If you have a problem in discerning the difference between treating a parishioner versus providing basic pastoral counseling or support, please contact the Canon to the Ordinary or the Bishop. If you are providing pastoral counseling, you are limited to six sessions on any one issue before you must refer the person to someone else.
- 11. Restrict involvement in the evaluation of serious mental health or substance abuse issues** to no more than three sessions. By the third session, and preferably earlier, referral if necessary should be made to other service providers for further evaluation and/or treatment. The staff of Cigna Behavioral Health (the Episcopal Church Medical Trust's National Employee Assistance Program) is available for consultation. They can be contacted at www.cignabehavioral.com or 1-866-395-7794. The limit of three sessions does not apply to premarital conversations.
- 12. Comply with the responsibilities of being an employer** if you are the cleric in charge with paid staff. This includes making decisions regarding hiring, supervision, record keeping, and termination, either for cause or due to financial restrictions. It also includes responding to any and all allegations of misconduct by employees in a timely and appropriate manner. If you need information about the role of employer, please refer to

the *Guide to Human Resources Practices* from The Church Insurance Companies. This book provides general guidance on human resources and personnel issues for congregations and those who advise them regarding, primarily, lay employees (those who are not ordained clergy). This book is available through Church Publishing Incorporated at <http://www.churchpublishing.org>.

13. Comply with financial practices as set forth by The Diocese of Milwaukee and Episcopal Church. This includes conducting an annual audit of all accounts, including clergy discretionary and special ministry funds, and ensuring that the financial systems within your parish, such as money counters and those authorized to sign checks, are in accordance with the internal practices recommended by the Diocese and the Episcopal Church. (For further information call the Financial Reviewers or the Bishop's Assistant for Finance in the office of the Bishop.)

14. Bring resolution to relationships with parishioners when ordained ministry at a parish ends. When it comes time to leave a parish, it is expected that clergy will bring resolution to relationships with all parishioners in a manner that is healthy for you and your family, as well as the parish. It is expected that once your service at a parish ends, you will no longer perform any clergy functions for any members of that parish or others affiliated with the parish, and will not worship at that parish. In addition, it is expected that you will not communicate with former parishioners about matters involving the parish, and will not meet with any members of the parish for any reason during the interim period and until new ordained leadership is fully integrated into the life of the parish. An exception to this expectation is if the current clergy in charge of the parish requests your participation in some parish event.

15. Participate in Diocesan Events – It is the Bishop's expectation that clergy attend diocesan convention and other regular diocesan events such as Clergy Days and Clergy Conferences. Participation in ordinations and celebrations of new ministry are strongly encouraged especially within your convocation.

Guidelines for Lay Ministry

Lay ministers may be engaged in ministry by serving: as elected parish leaders; in leadership roles in worship (chalice bearer, lecturer); or in other ministries offered through the church. All lay ministers are expected to respect the dignity of others when offering ministry. Many of the guidelines offered above for ordained ministry apply to lay ministry as well. For example, lay ministers are expected to maintain appropriate confidentiality, as well as accept only token gifts, and refuse to accept loans from those to whom ministry is offered. Many of the guidelines for lay ministry are further discussed in Safe Church Training.

Note: Lay people are not allowed to work with children or youth for at least six months of being known to the parish. In addition, they are not allowed to serve as pastoral care visitors for at least six months unless they visit along with a member of the clergy staff.

All adults offering ministry to children or youth are expected to comply with the Behavioral Standards for Ministry with Children or Youth.

5. Responding to all allegations regarding misconduct by ordained clergy with sensitivity and compassion toward all involved

The Episcopal Diocese of Milwaukee seeks to respond to all allegations of clergy misconduct in an appropriate, sensitive and timely manner. This includes allegations of sexual misconduct, as well as other forms of professional boundary violations.

The fidelity of pastoral trust is essential to nurturing spiritual growth. Pastoral trust is broken when a person offering ministry engages in misconduct by acting in ways to meet his or her own needs, including sexualizing the relationship with the person to whom ministry is offered, instead of acting to meet the appropriate needs of the person receiving ministry.

Definitions:

Clergy Sexual Misconduct is defined by the Diocese of Milwaukee to include any kind of sexual interaction in a pastoral or professional relationship. The sexual interaction may range from covert and subtle exploitation to the overt use of physical force. It includes sexual abuse, sexual harassment and sexual exploitation. Clergy sexual misconduct includes inappropriate sexual relationships with other clergy as well as lay persons. Clergy sexual misconduct is wrong.

The Diocese of Milwaukee adopts the 70th General Convention of the Episcopal Church definitions on sexual misconduct as follows:

Sexual Abuse: Sexual involvement or conduct by a cleric or other church employee or volunteer with a person who is a minor or is legally incompetent.

Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome or unwanted sexually oriented humor or language, questions or comments about sexual behavior or preference, physical contact, inappropriate comments about clothing or physical appearance, or repeated requests for social engagements, in a situation where there is an employment, mentor or colleague relationship between persons involved.

Sexual Exploitation: A betrayal or trust in a pastoral/professional relationship by the development, or the attempted development, of a sexual or romantic relationship between the cleric or other church worker and a person with whom she or he has a pastoral or fiduciary relationship, whether or not there is apparent consent from the individual.

Raising Allegations of Clergy Misconduct:

There are two ways to raise allegations of clergy misconduct. One is to bring the allegations to the bishop or his designee either in writing or through a personal meeting. In some situations, the bishop may refer the matter to the Diocesan Standing Committee, which may then refer the matter to the Ecclesiastical Trial Court. The second way to raise

allegations of clergy misconduct is to bring them directly to the Diocesan Standing Committee by providing the President of the Standing Committee with a verified written statement of the allegations as specified under the provisions of Title IV of the *Constitution and Canons of the Protestant Episcopal Church*. For more information or to raise an allegation of clergy misconduct, contact the Office of the Bishop.

When applicable, the response to resolve allegations of misconduct will be made in accordance with the provisions of Title IV.

The diocese will seek to provide pastoral support to both the person raising allegations of misconduct and the clergy person. When appropriate, pastoral assistance to families, the congregation and church leaders will also be offered.

6. Responding to all allegations regarding misconduct by parish employees, lay leaders/ministers and parishioners

Just as ordained ministers can violate pastoral trust, parish employees, lay leaders, and other lay ministers can also act in ways that violate trust which is essential to effective ministry. The use of the terms “lay leader” and “lay minister” are used interchangeably in this policy.

A parish employee or lay leader can betray their position of trust by acting in ways to meet their own needs rather than to further the ministry with which they are entrusted. For example, a person could learn confidential financial information about a parishioner in the context of offering ministry and then use that information to his or her own personal advantage. Or, a lay leader might learn of another parishioner’s personal crisis in the context of offering ministry and seek to sexualize the relationship with the parishioner while the parishioner is in a vulnerable state. It is important recognize that lay leaders who hold formal decision-making positions within the parish or diocese also likely to be perceived as having more power than others in the parish.

A parishioner who is not currently serving as a lay leader can violate the trust and safety of other parishioners or parish employees by acting inappropriately such as by sexually harassing a parish employee or, by sexually harassing or emotionally or physically intimidating a parishioner at worship services or other church related functions.

The definition of sexual misconduct, which includes sexual abuse, sexual harassment and sexual exploitation (as defined in the preceding section) applies to lay ministers as well as ordained ministers.

A betrayal of trust or inappropriate conduct by lay leaders needs an appropriate and timely response. The authority to respond to these situations lies with the ordained minister of the parish. The diocese is available for consultation on processes that may be followed to assist in the resolution of allegations as well as practices that may assist the parish in healing from a betrayal of trust by a lay minister. For more information, please contact the Canon to the Ordinary or the Bishop.

7. THE PREVENTION OF MISCONDUCT WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

PREAMBLE

This policy is adopted in compliance with 2003 General Convention resolution BOO8. The aim of this policy is to make our Church a safe place, safe for those who worship, safe for those who minister, safe for those who come in need, safe for children and safe for all who seek or serve Christ. We believe that this policy helps us live out our baptismal covenant to respect the dignity of every human being.

SCREENING AND SELECTION FOR MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

The Diocese will do background checks on all clergy who are deployed or licensed to officiate within the Diocese. The Diocese will also do background checks on any diocesan employees or diocesan volunteers who regularly work with children or youth.

Parishes are referred to *Appendix I*, Background Checks and Training Requirements, to determine requirements for their lay employees and volunteers.

For all NEW employees and volunteers who begin to regularly work with children or youth after November 1, 2008, parishes are required to conduct the following components of a background check in addition to the public records check:

A written application

An interview

Reference checks, Background Checks, Criminal Records Check, Driver's License Check

Samples of each are in *Appendix B*, Screening, Interviews and Background Checks. (These same forms can also be used for those applying to work with adults).

Volunteers should not be permitted to work with children or youth until they have been known to the clergy or congregation for at least six months.

BEHAVIORAL STANDARDS FOR MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN OR YOUTH

Adults shall not:

Provide children or youth with non-sacramental alcohol, illegal drugs or pornography. Consume non-sacramental alcohol or illegal drugs or misuse of legal drugs at any children's or youth event.

Be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or the misuse of legal drugs at any children's or youth event.

Engage in illegal behavior or permit other adults or children or youth to engage in illegal behavior.

Engage in any sexual, romantic, illicit or secretive relationship or conduct with any child or youth.

Discuss their own sexual activities or fantasies with children or youth.

Firearms and concealed weapons are prohibited at any church activity. Rectors may grant exceptions for off-duty police officers or others required to carry firearms.

MONITORING PROGRAMS AND INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

At all events and ministries for children and youth there shall be at least two, unrelated adults present. If unanticipated circumstances result in an adult being alone with children or youths, that adult shall immediately report those circumstances to the Rector or senior warden. It may be appropriate for a Sunday school class to have only one teacher so long as at least one other adult can maintain visual contact with the teacher.

Any new programs, trips or events that involve children or youth should be given prior approval by the Rector.

No event for children or youth shall take place in a private residence without prior approval by the Rector. If the Rector's home is being considered, Vestry approval is required.

Adults who work with children or youth within a congregation should be discouraged from having a separate and private relationship with any unrelated child from the church away from sanctioned church youth activities.

Each parish is encouraged to conduct a "safe church audit" annually to review practices and policies within the congregation. See *Appendix F, Sample Safe Church Survey*

Parishes should adopt safe church policies, consistent with the requirements in this policy. Parish policies should be clear, should be posted in areas where activities for children and youth take place and should be given to all adults who regularly work with children or youth and to parents. Parish policies should include the names and phone numbers of the Rector or priest, senior warden, and contact person in the Bishop's office.

Parish computers should have adequate password protection, shared appropriately with parish leadership.

Parishes should have clear guidelines and adequate supervision (by parish staff or authorized persons) of anyone using a parish computer to access the Internet. Be advised that any activity on a parish computer is not considered private and may be accessed by authorized persons.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Diocesan policy requires that parish employees and volunteers receive training on how to prevent child abuse and promote healthy boundaries in church settings. *See Appendix I for requirements.* The diocese and each parish should maintain a record of those who have attended such training.

The Diocese requires all clergy and employees and volunteers who work with children or youth at diocesan events to attend training on how to prevent child abuse and promote

healthy boundaries in church settings. The Diocese and each parish will maintain records of those who have attended the training.

The Diocese will offer the requisite training. Individuals should be re-trained every five years. The Bishop's office will approve curriculum and trainers for the requisite training. Retraining may be in a class or through the Diocesan SGC online training. Contact the Bishop's Assistant for Christian Formation to re-train online.

RESPONDING TO CONCERNS

Anyone who knows of a violation of these policies shall immediately report the violation to the Rector and senior warden. Anyone who knows of a violation of these policies by a clergy person shall immediately report the violation to the Bishop's office.

Anyone who has reason to suspect that child abuse has taken place at church or in another Church related setting such as a youth trip, must report this to their parish priest, another member of ordained clergy or the Canon to the Ordinary. Any mandated reporter who has reason to suspect that child abuse has taken place shall report it to the appropriate civil authority. *See Appendix H for Resources on Mandated Reporting*

Rectors receiving reports of violations of this policy involving their employees or volunteers shall be responsible, along with the Office of the Bishop, for providing appropriate pastoral care to all those affected. In addition, they are also responsible for appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or volunteer ministry.

The Bishop or Canon to the Ordinary, hearing reports of violations by clergy, or by adults at diocesan events, shall be responsible for ensuring the provision of appropriate pastoral care to all those affected. They are responsible for ensuring remedial and /or disciplinary action, up to and including disciplinary action.

CONTACT INFORMATION

The Office of the Bishop can be reached at 414-272-3028 ext 154 or, outside the Milwaukee area, 800-236-3028 ext 154.

8. THE PREVENTION OF MISCONDUCT WITH ADULTS

Introduction

"Have always printed in your remembrance, how great a treasure is committed to your charge. For they are the sheep of Christ, which he bought with his death, and for whom he shed his blood. The Church and the Congregation whom you serve, is his Spouse and his Body. And if it shall happen, the same Church, of any Member thereof, to take any hurt or hindrance by reason of the fault, and also the horrible punishment that will ensue."

--The 1551 Ordinal

The church has always recognized that those who are set apart for ordained ministry bear a particular responsibility to pattern their lives according to Jesus' example. Not only are bishops, priests, and deacons regarded by the faithful and the world as examples of what a Christian life should be but any moral offense by clerics is especially hurtful because it betrays the trust committed to them by the Church to nurture and care for every member. Cranmer's words, which used to be in the Anglican ordination service, are a forcible reminder of how serious is this responsibility.

Responsibility for patterning one's life after the example of Jesus Christ is not limited, of course, to ordained persons: in the Baptismal Covenant all baptized persons vow to accept Jesus Christ as Savior and, among other things, to respect the dignity of every human being. In more concrete terms, we wish to ensure that the Church is maintained as a safe, secure place where care givers, teachers and leaders, both paid and volunteer and both ordained and lay persons, minister appropriately to the manifold needs and concerns in the world about us.

In recent years it has become increasingly clear that some clergy, lay employees and church volunteers have engaged in inappropriate sexual behavior which has hurt the very persons entrusted to their care. Unfortunately, in the past, instances of such behavior were sometimes denied by church authorities or dealt with secretly. Clergy offenders were sent on to another congregation or diocese. Lay employees and church volunteers were permitted to stay in positions of trust or quietly moved to other congregations while victims were neglected or even blamed, and congregations ignored. Such responses, however, fail to implement the standards of justice and Christian love that God requires of the Church.

For some years now the Church has been in the process of confronting the fact of inappropriate sexual conduct by clergy, lay employees and volunteers and to institute policies and procedures for response. In part, the change in the Church's attitude has been the result of greater awareness in American society of the problems of sexual abuse and harassment. Many states have now enacted legislation that makes Sexual Misconduct by certain professionals, including clergy, grounds for criminal or civil action. The growth in tort litigation has had a significant effect and some actions against churches, including within the Episcopal Church, have succeeded in obtaining large amounts of damages.

Many denominations are now responding to the issue of sexual misconduct within the Church. In the Episcopal Church, the Office of Pastoral Development as part of the Presiding Bishop's office, offers advice on general policies as well as help in specific situations. In the Diocese of Milwaukee, a group of lay and clergy leaders have been trained to assist the Office of the Bishop in responding to specific incidents when they arise and in working with parishes in the aftermath of misconduct situations.

These specific policies have been developed to provide some overall guidance to members of the diocese in relationship to issues of Sexual Misconduct. The primary intent of these policies is not to protect the diocese or its clergy from litigation. Rather, it is an attempt to prevent the occurrences of Sexual Misconduct in the first place and to insure that, where allegations of Sexual Misconduct are made, the response to any allegation or instance of misconduct will be just and compassionate, and so may allow God's grace to work.

All persons involved in incidents of sexual Misconduct are in need of healing. Although the Bishop's role as overseer of the Diocese may prevent him from personally providing pastoral care to all parties in situations where there has been an allegation of Sexual Misconduct, the Bishop will act to ensure that all persons are afforded the opportunity for pastoral care.

These policies are intended to establish clear standards concerning Sexual Misconduct. In addition, they are intended to make clear that the Diocese will adhere procedurally to whatever is the current iteration of the disciplinary Canons (laws) of the Episcopal Church as found in Title IV of the Canons of the Church established by General Convention.

It should be clear that consistent with principles of fairness, a person accused of Sexual Misconduct shall be presumed to be innocent until the occurrence of misconduct has been established.

Important definitions:

For the purposes of these policies the terms Sexual Misconduct and Pastoral/Professional Relationship, when capitalized, shall have the following meanings:

Sexual Misconduct, as used in these policies, refers to:

Sexual abuse or molestation of any person, including but not limited to, any sexual contact or involvement with a person who is a minor or who is legally incompetent. Sexual harassment in a situation where there is an employment, mentor or colleague relationship between the persons involved, including but not limited to, sexually oriented humor or language; questions or comments about sexual behavior or preference; undesired physical contact; inappropriate comments about clothing or physical appearance; or repeated unwanted requests for social engagements.

Sexual exploitation, including but not limited to, the development of or the attempt to develop a sexual or romantic interest between a cleric, employee or volunteer and a person with whom he/she has a pastoral/professional relationship, whether or not there is apparent consent from the individual.

Pastoral/Professional Relationship, as used in these policies, refers to:

A Pastoral/Professional Relationship is a relationship between any ordained Clergy person and:
Any person who attends a Church/Agency or other ministry setting in which the Clergy person or Lay minister person serves; or
Any person who seeks ministry from the Clergy person.

A Pastoral/Professional Relationship is a relationship between persons seeking or receiving ministry and the following ministers licensed under Canon III.4 of the Episcopal Church:

Catechists
Eucharistic Visitors
Lay Preachers
Pastoral Leaders
Worship Leaders

In the course of a Pastoral/Professional Relationship, an ordained Clergy person or duly-appointed minister may provide these ministries:

Counseling
Life/leadership/peer coaching
Spiritual direction/guidance
Pastoral care
The receipt of confidential or privileged information (for example, in the context of confession)

BEHAVIORAL STANDARDS TO PROTECT ADULTS FROM SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND EXPLOITATION

Introduction: When clergy interact with their colleagues and parishioners, and when parishioners interact with each other and with clergy, touch is often an important part of the pastoral/professional relationship. It is therefore crucial that touch be handled in a manner consonant with its importance to the pastoral/professional relationship. And, we all agree that parishes and church entities should not be sexualized environments.

Therefore, in the Episcopal Diocese of Milwaukee, we expect:

In our settings, there is never any need for adults to touch each other in the areas of the body that would normally be covered by a modest one piece bathing suit. The same is also true for massages, back rubs, any form of groping, caress of the legs, thighs or breasts. These forms of touch are unacceptable in pastoral care situations, at a parish, or diocesan gatherings.

Hugs should not be imposed on people. If someone extends their hand to you in greeting or at the piece, do not brush it away and envelop them in a hug. Hugs that include running hands up and down the back, or grinding pelvises together are never acceptable. People's cultural, personal, psychological or medical experiences may make hugs uncomfortable, threatening or physically painful. Most often, one cannot discern this from a person's appearance. It is very important to find out which forms of greeting are comfortable, and which are not comfortable for the other person. Watch the other person for cues.

Kisses should not be imposed on people. Further, kisses on the mouth are inappropriate behavior for all people other than members of one's own family. At parish or diocesan gatherings, family members who choose to kiss on the mouth should do so discretely and not in a manner more appropriate to the bedroom.

Romantic and/or sexual relationships are not normally developed across pastoral lines. Clergy and their parishioners or counselees should not form romantic or sexual relationships. Clergy and parishioners must recognize that there is a power inequity between them.

On very rare occasions, it may be the case that an ordained member and a lay member of the same parish wish to begin dating or find that they have fallen in love. In such instances, contact must be made with the office of the Bishop to discuss how to handle this situation.

Romantic and/or sexual relationships should not be developed across oversight, supervisory, or employment lines. Dates, romance, sexual activity may not be a condition of employment. For example, a parish Warden should not seek to establish a romantic or sexual relationship with the curate.

Any confusion or uncertainty regarding the application of this policy should be discussed with the Rector/Vicar of the congregation, or with the Canon to the Ordinary.

It is not appropriate to create a sexualized environment through comments, conversation, or non-verbal actions.

Unacceptable behavior includes comments about physical or sexual attributes, sexual innuendo, suggestive nicknames (hunk, babe, etc.) and/or the spreading of sexual rumors. Sexual humor is inappropriate for church gatherings, as is self-sharing one's sexual interests, experiences, or fantasies.

Leering, staring for an extended period of time, and/or making sexually suggestive gestures is unacceptable behavior.

Displaying sexually suggestive or pornographic material is also a violation of this policy.

Please see *Appendix A* for inappropriate computer use.

Appendix A

COMPUTER USE POLICY AND GUIDELINES USING SOCIAL MEDIA

COMPUTER USE POLICY

Computers and Internet access must be used in ways which support and enhance the ministries of the Episcopal Diocese of Milwaukee and its congregations. Because we cannot control the content of the information found on other computer systems accessed via the Internet, it is crucial that we use our Internet connections and our computers in ways that are responsible, efficient, ethical, legal, and in support of our shared mission and ministry. The use of computers is a significant benefit to the life of congregations of the Episcopal Diocese of Milwaukee. With these benefits come important responsibilities.

This policy seeks to ensure that the use of computers and Internet access on the properties of the Episcopal Diocese of Milwaukee and its congregations, shall be in support of our mission and ministry and reflective of our shared values. This policy applies to all on-site users (lay or ordained, paid or volunteer) of computers and all users of Internet access at our parishes and diocesan offices regardless of the owner of the computer or the holder of the Internet Service Provider (ISP) account (such as AOL, Prodigy, and the like).

Thus, for example, a parish secretary using the office computer to access the Internet via the parish's ISP account must comply with this policy. Similarly, the volunteer who is in a parish classroom using his or her own laptop computer and ISP account must also comply with this policy.

Further, this policy governs off-site use of computers owned by the Diocese or its parishes, as well as off-site access to ISP accounts held by the Diocese or its parishes.

All users shall comply with the following general standards when using computers and when connecting with the internet:

1. Behave responsibly when using computers and when connected to the Internet;
2. Comply with all applicable laws, rules and regulations, and with all other (non-computer-specific) policies of the Diocese. Respect the rights and property of others, including copyrights and other intellectual property rights.
3. As a further illustration of these general principles, the following are examples of unacceptable uses of computers and the internet under this policy:
4. Intentionally accessing, viewing, storing, or displaying any site or material that is pornographic, racist, sexist, homophobic, or otherwise offensive, including verbal descriptions, audio files, photography, drawings or paintings, and cartoons;
5. Soliciting sex or purchasing pornographic materials;
6. Creating, transmitting or reproducing language inappropriate to the Christian context, including language which is: profane, abusive, defamatory, degrading, harassing, threatening, or which breaches obligations of confidentiality;

7. Committing forgery, blackmail, identity theft, libel, selling or purchasing illegal substances, or gaining unauthorized access to other computer systems for any purpose (a.k.a. “hacking”);
8. Disguising one’s identity, impersonating other users, or sending anonymous email messages;
9. Copying or distributing material obtained from the Internet if doing so violates a copyright or other intellectual property right;
10. Copying, deleting or modifying another’s files or data without permission;
11. Intentionally accessing, distributing, copying, deleting or modifying another’s email without permission;
12. Intentionally damaging computer equipment, files, data, or networks;
13. Intentionally accessing or transmitting computer viruses or other harmful files, or otherwise intentionally damaging computer equipment, files, data, or networks;
14. Commercial uses (including selling or buying anything for personal financial gain and conducting personal for-profit business activities)

GUIDELINES USING SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media now accounts for the largest share of internet usage, surpassing even email. It is essential that the church be present in this mission field, as it has changed the internet from a place where people go to find information, to a place where people meet in virtual community, expecting to share their lives, thoughts, and their beliefs with others.

In churches, social media and email can promote nearly viral outreach, deepen the real life sense of community at a church, and build a feeling of week-long togetherness. But just like real-life relationships and interactions, digital communications need to be lived into with the appropriate boundaries to protect yourself and others.

The following recommendations and guidelines for web and social media use are in alignment with the Diocese of Milwaukee’s accepted principles of healthy boundaries and safe church practices.

Commonly Accepted Principles of Healthy Boundaries and Safe Church

1. Adults have more power than children and youth
2. Clergy have more power than people with whom they have a pastoral relationship.
3. The mutuality of friendship cannot exist when there is a disparity of power.
4. Two unrelated adults must be able to maintain visual contact with each other any time they engage in ministry with children or youth.
5. Windows in doors allow transparency of interactions with children, youth and adults who may be vulnerable.

General Information about Digital Communications

1. All communications sent digitally (email, social networking sites, notes or posts, etc.) are NOT CONFIDENTIAL and may be shared or reposted to others.
2. Interactions in the virtual world need to be transparent, as a window in the door provides transparency in the physical world.

3. In the virtual world healthy boundaries and safe church practices must be adhered to as they are in the physical world.
4. In the virtual world, "friend" can mean anyone with whom you are willing to communicate through that medium. In the physical world, friend can mean much more in terms of intimacy, self- disclosure, mutuality and expectations for relationship.
5. Laws regarding mandated reporting of suspected abuse/neglect/exploitation of children, youth, elders and vulnerable adults apply in the virtual world as they do in the physical world.

**Recommended Practices and Guidelines for Interactions with Children and Youth:
Social Networking Sites-Relationships**

1. Adults who minister to children and youth are strongly encouraged to set very stringent privacy settings on any social networking profile.
2. Individual personal profiles are to be used to interact with real friends, family and peers. Adults should not submit "friend" requests to minors or youth. Youth may not be able to decline such requests due to the disparity of power between youth and adults. Youth may ask to be "friends", and adults should discern the level of contact they want to maintain with youth prior to responding to these requests.
3. If an adult chooses to accept friend requests from minors or youth who are associated with their community of faith, other adult leaders must have full access to all aspects of that adult's profile and correspondence.
4. Adults who want to connect via a social networking website with youth to whom they minister are strongly encouraged to set up a closed group page or official organization page that youth may join. Youth requesting to "friend" an adult can then be invited to join this closed group or organization page rather than be accepted as a friend on an adult's personal profile account. The purpose of these two separate accounts/profiles is to create a line of privacy and maintain healthy boundaries with youth and real family, friends and colleagues.
5. Any material on any site (whether affiliated with the church or not) that raises suspicion that a child has been or will be abused/neglected/exploited should be immediately reported to the clergy and to the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF). If the material is on a church affiliated site, that material should be documented for church records and then removed from the site after consultation with authorities.

**Recommended Practices and Guidelines for Interactions with Children and Youth:
Groups/Organization Pages on Social Networking Sites**

1. Clergy and Lay leaders should carefully discuss whether a closed group page or an official organization page would better serve their Social Networking purposes. Consideration of the specific purpose of the group should be given (ex. Confirmation, pilgrimage, mission trips etc.). Privacy and publicity settings are very different depending which you choose.
2. Groups/Organization pages should have at least two unrelated adult administrators as well as at least two youth. Closed groups, but not "hidden" groups, should be used for youth groups (J2A, Rite 13, administrators).

3. Invitations to youth to join a group should be made by youth administrators, unless a youth previously asked an adult administrator to invite him/her to join the group. This is not an issue with official organization pages, as all invites appear from the organization itself rather than an individual.
4. Behavioral covenants should be created to govern what content is appropriate and inappropriate for an online youth group of either type.
5. Any material on any site (whether affiliated with the church or not) that raises suspicion that a child has been or will be abused/neglected/exploited should be immediately reported to the clergy and/or Office of the Bishop. If the material is on a church affiliated site, that material should be documented for church records and then removed from the site after consultation with the Office of the Bishop and/or police.
6. Inappropriate material that does not raise suspicion that a child has been or will be abused/neglected/exploited should immediately be removed from the site.
7. Any content that details inappropriate behavior (outside of the bounds of the established behavioral covenant) during a church sponsored event or activity should be addressed by adult youth leaders and parents.
8. Social networking groups for youth should be open to parents of current members.
9. Parents should be informed that the content of youth organization pages or groups that are not sponsored by the church are NOT within the purview of adult youth leaders.
10. Adult leaders of youth groups and former youth members who, due to departure, removal from position, or are no longer eligible because they "aged-out" of a program should be immediately removed from digital communication with youth groups via social networking sites, list serves, etc.

Recommended Practices and Guidelines for Interactions with Adults: Social Networking Sites-Relationship

1. Clergy are strongly encouraged to set very stringent privacy settings on any social networking profile to shield both adult and youth members from viewing personal content that may be inappropriate.
2. Individual personal profiles of clergy are to be used to interact with real friends, family and peers. Clergy should not submit "friend" requests to parishioners and others to whom they minister. The disparity of power may not give the other person the ability to decline such request.
3. Clergy who want to connect via a social networking website with parishioners are strongly encouraged to set up an official Organization Page that all parishioners may join. The purpose of having a personal profile and an Official Organization page is to create a line of privacy and maintain healthy boundaries with parishioners and real family, friends and colleagues.
4. The Diocese of Milwaukee recommends official organization pages for parishes rather than group pages, which are unofficial and have limited tools for both privacy/security and outreach.
5. Clergy should consider the impact of declining a "friend" request from parishioners. These encounters may create a tension in "real world" relationships.

- Clergy can direct "friend" requests from parishioners to the parish's official organization page.
6. Clergy who work directly with youth are encouraged to establish separate church sponsored digital communications groups/pages for youth, to maintain contact with youth members.
 7. When a cleric's ministry at a parish or other ministry setting ends, the cleric should remove parishioners as "friends" or contacts in all forms of digital communications.

Recommendations for digital communications and content Behavioral Covenants

1. Covenants should acknowledge that materials posted on Church Sponsored sites (and/or group pages) are NOT CONFIDENTIAL.
2. Covenants should acknowledge that content deemed inappropriate will be removed from the site or group page.
3. Covenants for communities of faith should address the following issues:
 - a. Appropriate language
 - b. Eligibility of membership to join a closed social networking group
 - c. Things to consider include whether to allow those who are not yet members of a parish or youth group to join, and whether there are age requirements/restrictions for participation for youth groups
 - d. Loss of eligibility of membership and removal from the social networking group
 - e. Consider how and when members will be removed from the group due to moving away, leaving the faith community, becoming too old for youth group, clergy leaving to minister to another parish or exclusion from ministry positions for other reasons
 - f. Who, how and when may photos be "tagged" (identified by name)? For example: individuals may tag themselves in photos but should not tag others. No one under the age of eighteen should be tagged by an unrelated adult.
 - g. Appropriate and inappropriate behavior of members (bullying, pictures that depict abuse, violence, sexual acts, etc.) and the consequence for inappropriate behavior
 - h. Compliance with mandated reporting laws regarding suspected abuse

Recommendations for Video Chats, Blogs or Video Blogs

1. Adults should refrain from initiating video chats with youth
2. Participants in a video chat or blog should consider what will be shown in the video such as their surroundings, their clothing/state of dress, etc.
3. All transcripts of on-line text chats, video chats, blogs or video blogs should be saved when possible.
4. All clergy and adults engaged in ministry with youth should consider the content and nature of any post that will be read by or visible to youth.
5. Your voice is often considered the voice of the church.

Recommendations for Publishing/Posting Content Online

1. Congregations must inform participants when they are being videoed because church buildings are not considered public space.

2. Any faith community that distributes video of its worship services or activities on the web or via other broadcast media MUST post signs that indicate the service will be broadcast.
 3. All communities of faith should take care to secure signed Media Release forms from adults and guardians of minor children who will or may participate in activities that may be photographed or videoed for distribution.
 4. Photos that are published on church sponsored sites should not include name or contact information for minor children or youth.
- 5. Recommendations for Use of Email or Texting (Includes Twitter)**
6. Email can be an appropriate and effective means of communicating basic factual information such as the time of an event, agenda for a meeting, text of a document, etc.
 7. Email is not an appropriate communication method for matters that are pastorally or legally sensitive, emotionally charged or require extensive conversation.
 8. If an email message is longer than a couple of sentences, then the matter might more properly be addressed via live conversation.
 9. Humor and sarcasm can be easily misinterpreted in an email.
 10. All email users should take a moment to consider the ramifications of their message before clicking on the "send" or "reply to all" button.

Appendix B

SCREENING INTERVIEW AND BACKGROUND CHECK PROCEDURE

The Episcopal Diocese of Milwaukee requires Screening Interviews and Background Checks of all clergy and paid employees. Volunteers who work with children and youth and those who perform pastoral ministries must also consent to Screening Interviews and Background Checks.

Abusive perpetrators, especially preferential perpetrators, are drawn to environments that enable them to carry out selection, grooming, and abuse. Responding to a steadily growing awareness of the link between past behavior and present actions, in 1998 President Clinton signed into law the Volunteers for Children Act, giving organizations that deal with children, elderly and the disabled, access to national criminal history records. When we take diligent advantage of this legislation, abusive perpetrators are made clearly aware that the Episcopal Diocese of Milwaukee insists on an environment that is not conducive for abuse.

The Screening Interview and Background Check conducted for clergy (priests and deacons), while equally thorough, is of a more specialized nature and involves the Bishop. Those procedures are not outlined in this manual. The following description applies to Screenings and Checks conducted for lay employees and volunteers.

THE SCREENING INTERVIEW

1. A Screening Interview is conducted before the Background Check. During the interview the applicant should be asked:
2. The task or type of task that interests the applicant and why he or she is interested in this task.
3. A description of previous experiences, both generally and those that relate to the desired task what are his/her expectations of the church/agency, as related to this task.
4. Has he/she been charged with or convicted of any felonious or criminal offense, especially one of a sexual nature

To complete the standard application form (see below).

During the Screening Interview, the applicant should be provided with a copy of the Diocese of Milwaukee policies found in the *Appendices*.

THE SCREENING APPLICATION

For Background Checks and Screenings for Lay Employees and Volunteers, parishes may use IntelliCorp to assist in doing all of the background checks required at a minimal fee (\$9.95) and (\$8.00 for Motor Vehicles Check). IntelliCorp does a complete check for our parishes and the cost is more affordable than Oxford Document. However, Oxford Document is still available to our parishes if chosen and the forms below are from the Oxford Document Company.

A Background Check is initiated by the completion of a standard application form. The work provided by a volunteer is as valued as the work provided by a paid staff member. For this reason, both paid staffers and volunteers are expected to complete the same application.

GATHERING BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The success of the Screening and Check procedure depends on following up and conducting the reference checks listed on the application. The easiest way of conducting the check is to engage the services of a professional investigation firm. However, that route can be costly. With the assistance of the internet, it is possible to conduct the investigation for a very low cost, using present office staff or recruiting a knowledgeable volunteer. Of key importance is to be aware that the records produced as a result of the check are to remain confidential. The Screening application, and the replies resulting from the reference checks and reports, must be kept in a locked cabinet. Records stored electronically, on a computer or similar data storage system must be protected by a password.

The first step is to send out the reference letters. As a precaution, though, make a copy of the original, to be stored in the applicant's confidential file.

Next, check the State of Wisconsin Sexual Offender Registry (<http://offender.doc.state.wi.us/public/>). You can search by last name or by location. You will need to search by all names the person has used. **This should be done for all states where the applicant has lived in the past 10 years.** To find websites for other

states go to the FBI website (<http://www.fbi.gov/hq/cid/cac/registry.htm>). The Sexual Offender Registry only lists individuals convicted of sexual offenses.

To check for other court proceedings, you can go to Wisconsin Simple Case Search (<http://wcca.wicourts.gov/simpleCaseSearch.xls>). You can also type Wisconsin Simple Case Search into your search engine to get to this site. You must search by last name or at least the first three letters of the last name.

To access, please see *Appendix D*, Using CCAP and Milwaukee Municipal Court Internet Search Engines. If you live in the Milwaukee metro area, you will need to use their municipal court internet search engine. See *Appendix D* for details.

Note: It is important that you are not confused by the possibility of a duplicate name when doing a background. There can be more than one person with the same name in the country.

SPECIALIZED CHECKS

DRIVING RECORDS: indicated if the applicant will include driving, especially transporting others from one place to another.

To obtain the Wisconsin driving records for a person you will complete an information request for which is available at www.dot.wisconsin.gov/drivers/forms/mv2896.pdf. You must attach their consent in writing. See Appendix C for a sample consent form. If the person has had a driver's license from another state in the past 10 years, you will need to obtain that state's report as well.

CREDIT REPORTS: indicated if the applicant will be handling or overseeing significant amounts of money. A merchant member of your congregation or agency might be your best source for advice on the simplest, yet most productive way of researching an applicant's credit history.

YOUNG ADULT AND TEEN APPLICANTS: it is very likely that a young adult or teen may not have a list of previous employers and volunteer activities. School references are an acceptable substitute.

OF SPECIAL NOTE

The Episcopal Diocese of Milwaukee does not wish to entirely preclude those who may have criminal records from participating in a congregation's or agency's community. At the same time, it is imperative to be cautious. If the returning Background information raises questions of the applicant's appropriateness, the issues should be discussed with the Canon to the Ordinary.

APPLICATION FORM

Diocesan Policy requires that church personnel (paid and volunteer, clergy and laity) cooperate with a background check. Please, accurately and completely, provide the information requested on this form. Additional sheets may be attached, if needed. Thank you for your cooperation.

(PLEASE PRINT)
PARISH OR ENTITY NAME

ADDRESS

VICAR/RECTOR/LEADER

PHONE NUMBER

YOUR NAME

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP CODE

How long at this address?

TELEPHONE

Home

Work

Cell

E-MAIL ADDRESS

Best time-of-day/day-of-week to contact you?

How long have you been a member of this congregation?

How long have you had a DRIVER LICENCE?

DRIV
State

Number

Expiros

Are you legally eligible to work in this country? Yes _____ No _____

Are you legally eligible to work in this country? _____ Yes _____ No
Note: If chosen for a paid position, you will be required to show documents verifying your employment eligibility and identity to complete the INS Form I-9 as required by the Immigration Reform and Control Act.

If the answer to any the following questions' is yes, please explain on a separate sheet of paper.

Have you ever been accused of physically, sexually, or emotionally abusing a child or an adult?

Have you ever been accused or convicted of driving under the influence of alcohol or other impairing substance?

Have you ever been accused or convicted of a misappropriation of funds?

Have you ever been accused or convicted of a felonious offense?

Application Form, page 2

Please list all of your addresses during the past five years, including county name:

| Address | City | State & Zip | County |
|---------|------|-------------|--------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

FOR WHAT POSITION ARE YOU APPLYING?

WHAT INTERESTS YOU ABOUT THE POSITION FOR WHICH YOU ARE CURRENTLY APPLYING? _____

WHAT HAS PREPARED YOU FOR THE POSITION FOR WHICH YOU ARE CURRENTLY APPLYING? _____

You will be asked to sign letters addressed to each of the following references and contacts, permitting the individual to reply to our request for information. Your cooperation is appreciated. Thank you.

Application Form, page 3

REFERENCES

Please provide the names, addresses, and phone numbers of three references. Please submit the name of only one family member as reference.

| Name & How Known | Address | City State & Zip | Telephone Number |
|------------------|---------|------------------|------------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCES

Please list all the organizations for which you have volunteered during the previous five years, describing the nature of your volunteer activity. Provide, also, the name of a contact person with each organization, including that person's address and phone number. Additional sheets may be attached, if needed.

| Organization & Activities | Contact Person Address Telephone Number | Dates of Volunteer Work | Are you still active with this organization? If no, please indicate the reason for leaving. |
|---------------------------|---|-------------------------|---|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | | | |
| | | | |

Application Form, page 4

EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCES

Please list all your places of employment for the previous five years, describing the nature of your job and the reason you left that employer. Provide, also, the name of a contact person with each organization, including that person's address and phone number. Additional sheets may be attached, if needed.

| Employer & Description of Work | Contact Person Address Telephone Number | Dates of Employment | Reason for Leaving |
|--------------------------------|---|---------------------|--------------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

REFERENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

NAME

ADDRESS

CI TY-STATE-ZIP

PHONE

I have submitted an application for a position as employee or volunteer (please circle) with _____
_____ (Church/Agency) and gave your name as a reference. I hope to work as
a _____. This letter, bearing my signature, indicates that I give you my
consent to answer the following questions, and to provide information to the above-named
Church or Agency and to the Episcopal Diocese of Milwaukee. This consent is valid for one from
the date signed.

Sincerely,

Signature

Date

The churches and agencies within the Episcopal Diocese of Milwaukee are strongly committed
to reducing the risk of sexual misconduct. In support of that commitment, clergy, employees,
and volunteers agree to participate in Background Checks and to seek references from
individuals such as you. PLEASE NOTE: This form is used for both volunteers and paid staff;
receipt of this form does not necessarily imply that the applicant is contemplating a change in
his/her present employment.

Please complete the following questionnaire at your earliest convenience and return it in the
provided envelope. The information gathered from this questionnaire is held in confidence, as
the law provides. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this application please contact
me at _____.

Thank you,

Rector/Vicar, Program Director, Volunteer Coordinator

Date

REFERENCE QUESTIONNAIRE, page 2

| | |
|---|----------|
| Applicant | Position |
| Address | Phone |
| Church/Agency | Address |
| Contact Person | Phone |
| How long have you known the applicant? | |
| In what capacity do you know the applicant? | |
| Are you aware of any problems that might limit the applicant's suitability or ability to fulfill the requirements of the above job? (If yes, please explain; use additional sheets, if needed.) | |
| <p>This is the Policy of the Episcopal Diocese of Milwaukee:</p> <p>Sexual Misconduct is prohibited in the congregations, agencies, schools, and programs of the Episcopal Diocese of Milwaukee. This includes, but is not limited to, sexual abuse, sexual contact, sexual involvement, sexual exploitation, and sexual harassment.</p> <p>In reference to this policy, please check one of the following:</p> | |
| | |

I do not know, nor do I have reason to know, that this applicant has ever engaged in sexual misconduct

I have the following information regarding the possibility that the applicant has engaged in sexual misconduct. (If checked, please provide details; use additional sheets, if needed)

Would you recommend the applicant for work in a setting such as ours? If so, why? (Please use additional sheets, if needed)

Appendix C

Authorization to Conduct Criminal Records Check

(Please Read Carefully Before Completing and Signing)

The items of personal information requested below are needed to process your background investigation. This information is intended solely for that purpose and will not be used in a discriminatory manner by the parties noted below in the making of appropriate business decisions.

Printed Full Name of Applicant:

Last First Middle

Other names you have used, including maiden name and the date(s) your name(s) changed:

Race: _____ Gender: _____ Male _____ Female

Social Security #: _____ - _____ - _____ Your Date of Birth: _____

(Month/Day/Year)

List all your residential addresses for the past seven (7) years, starting with your present address:

| <i>Street</i> | <i>Zip</i> | <i>From</i> | <i>To</i> | | |
|----------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| <i>Address</i> | <i>City</i> | <i>County</i> | <i>Code</i> | <i>Mo. /Yr.</i> | <i>Mo. /Yr.</i> |

Have you ever been convicted of a crime (Other than minor traffic offenses)? Yes__ No__

If Yes, Please Explain Charges: (Use an additional sheet of paper if necessary) _____

What State, What County and What Year did these convictions occur?

I authorize _____ and/or Oxford Document Management and their agents to investigate my background as part of my application for employment, appointment or a volunteer position. This may include information contained in public records which could include credit history, criminal files at the county, state and federal jurisdiction levels, motor vehicle records and investigations of employment history and performance and educational credentials. I hereby release all persons, companies or corporations furnishing such information from liability and responsibility. A photo static copy of this document can be substituted for the original. This document shall be valid for a period of 1 (one) year from the date of my signature.

Signature of Applicant _____ Date: ____/____/____

Appendix D

Using CCAP and Milwaukee Municipal Court Internet Search Engines

The individual for whom the search is being conducted must complete an Authorization to Conduct Criminal Record Check - see *Appendix C*.

It is possible to check the Wisconsin records of an individual's criminal and civil cases from at least the mid 1990's for most counties (except Portage, which is still not online) using the Circuit Court Access Program (CCAP) maintained under the supervision of the Wisconsin Supreme Court, but actually recorded by the Clerks of Court in the 71 of the 72 counties in Wisconsin.

Mental commitments, guardianship proceedings and Children's Court proceedings are not included.

CCAP is a valuable starting point for conducting background checks, but is really just a starting point. Going to the actual court record is often the only way to determine the ultimate outcome of a case or the seriousness of the initial charge. For instance, one count of a non-support case involving no abuse of a child is listed as a "crimes against children" in CCAP nomenclature. On the other hand, an innocuous "disorderly conduct" case may really involve serious domestic violence.

Dismissals or reductions in charges are often confusing, and many clerks in very busy courts compress their CCAP entries so that what went on is not at all easy to discern. These records are essentially for court record keeping, and were opened to the public after the fact.

Further, there are numerous warnings in the CCAP materials themselves about not misusing the record of a charged, but dismissed case, or a case where the charge has no relevance to employment being sought, even if there is a conviction.

That said CCAP is an invaluable **starting point** for research into an individual's history of contact with the Wisconsin State Court system.

How to Search CCAP

Go to www.wicourts.gov. You will see the Wisconsin Supreme Court's home page, with picture of Chief Justice Abrahamson and many other interesting links. Look above Justice Abrahamson's picture; you will see a bar with several choices going across the top. Click "case search" and when the drop down menu appears, click "Circuit Court". You are now "in" CCAP. But before clicking "I agree", please do read the material; it's useful. Then go ahead and click "I agree" and the screen pops up that allows you to put in a person's name and date of birth, and ask for a search of Wisconsin circuit court records - criminal and civil.

The rest of the website is pretty straight forward, at least to people familiar with legal records.

Using the CCAP is just a beginning. If you aren't a lawyer, you may need some help understanding what you are seeing, and, even if you are a lawyer, going to the actual record is often essential.

How to Search Milwaukee Municipal Court

This web site, maintained by the City of Milwaukee, will enable you to check whether a person has cases in the Milwaukee Municipal ("muni") court system. Many cases which might have been charged as state criminal charges instead resolved by disorderly conduct tickets in municipal court.

Most of what you will find in "muni court" records will be parking or other traffic violations, but occasionally, conduct which could be of real concern to a church accepting volunteer services or hiring a person who will be in the building and around children will show up in municipal court records.

Go to www.city.milwaukee.gov, then put in "municipal court" where it says "site search". That gets you where you want to go. Then, click on 'Case Search' and choose to search by name. The rest is pretty clear. You will probably turn up parking tickets or driving problems, but if you turn up "disorderly conduct", it is probably worth a trip to the court to examine the file.

In sum, public access to computerized court records is a tremendously helpful starting point for individuals and institutions who want accurate information about an individual who is presenting himself or herself to you for whatever reason. But the information really is just a beginning and should not be taken for more than it is - a clerk's shorthand for what happened in an individual case.

For records outside of Wisconsin, you will need to learn how to access other states' versions of CCAP or employ a search firm with the capability to do that.

Lucy Cooper
Attorney at Law
1/29/08

Appendix E

Deviation from Best Practices

When it is determined that it is absolutely necessary to deviate from best practices the following types of questions should be considered in order to minimize risk.

1. Why must I deviate from best practices in this specific instance?
2. Must I deviate from best practice or is this merely convenient?
3. If convenience is the issue, what is the magnitude of the inconvenience?
4. If you make the decision to deviate, have you considered ways in which to make it transparent?
 - a) Who needs to know?
 - b) What documentation do you need?
 - c) Who should be involved in making the decision?
 - d) Who is ultimately responsible for the best practice?
5. Is there a way that training could be helpful in this situation?
6. How often have we shifted out of best practices recently? *It is important to watch for and be aware of patterns.*
7. With what must I be concerned to ensure the safety of God's people?
8. If thrust into a non-best practice situation, what do I need to do? Who needs to be immediately informed of what I am doing?

Appendix F

SAMPLE SAFE-CHURCH SURVEY

By Paula A Bibber

CHURCH

Because the church remains darkened through most of the week, the only time that doors from either the outside or the narthex should be unlocked is when someone—either staff or authorized volunteers—is present in the church. The doors should never be left unlocked when the lights are off and all people have left the space.

QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT YOUR FACILITIES

Architecturally, where are the highest risk areas in your facilities?

What makes these areas high risk?

How can you minimize the risk in each area?

Do you really want to step outside best practices in high risk areas? *Stepping outside of best practices except in dire emergency is rarely a good idea in areas that you have determined as high risk.*

CHOIR ROOM

The unsecured access doorway to the church and its emergency exits must remain unlocked at all times. This requires that there be two adults trained in safe-church policy be present in the choir room whenever children or youth gather in that space. The door to the narthex must remain locked at all times unless authorized people—staff or volunteer—are present.

HANDICAPPED BATH

This room presents a particular exposure to allow for abuse to occur. Adults present must monitor closely the use of this room.

QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT EACH ROOM OR AREA IN YOUR FACILITIES

Does the room have locking doors?

NARTHEX

Use of this entryway by groups using the parish house is to be discouraged. Sight lines do not readily allow for supervised use of this hall and stairway. Therefore, the exterior door should remain locked, even when the Great Hall or downstairs classrooms are in use by parish or outside groups.

BASEMENT HALLWAY

This area presents a particular exposure to allow for abuse to occur, especially in the area of the wide storage shelf under the stairway.

Short of securing this area with an additional doorway, the storage shelf should be utilized for storage of boxes or other items, effectively reducing its exposure to abuse of children and youths in that area.

What area needs to be off limits to children? To teens? To people you don't know?

BASEMENT

This area presents a high degree of exposure for abuse to occur. Therefore, the doors to the basement storage area and archive room should remain locked at all times. This is especially important when the exterior doors to the Church, the Narthex and Parish House are left unlocked.

How do you know when, where, and how many children or teens are in the building?

CELLAR

This area also presents a high degree of exposure for abuse to occur. Therefore, the door to the cellar should remain locked unless one of the sextons is present in the cellar itself. This is especially important when the exterior doors to the Narthex or Parish House are left unlocked.

When children or teens are present, what precautions must be taken?

CLASSROOMS

The doors to the three classrooms must remain unlocked at all times. This requires that there be two adults trained in safe-church policy present in the classroom area whenever children or youth gather in that space. The doors to the classrooms must remain open at all times unless authorized people—staff or volunteer—are present.

How do you ensure that only authorized people are transporting or pick-up children or teens?

CONTROLLING ACCESS TO YOUR FACILITIES

How do you control access to your facilities including keys, passwords or other entry systems?

Do you know who has the ability to enter your church independently?

NURSERY

The door to the nursery must remain locked at all times. When a child is delivered to the nursery, the parents must register them with the nursery caregiver, and sign the child out when they return to pick up their child. A list of persons authorized to deliver or retrieve each child must be on file with the nursery caregiver. When children are present, two adults trained in safe-church policy must be present in the nursery regardless whenever one or more children are placed in the care of the nursery staff.

GREAT HALL

The doors to the Great Hall must remain unlocked at all times. This requires that there be two adults trained in safe-church policy present in the classroom area whenever children or youth gather in that space.

STORAGE CLOSET ABOVE THE GREAT HALL

This area presents a high degree of exposure for abuse to occur. Therefore, the doors to the closet should remain locked at all times.

THE KITCHEN

This area also presents a high degree of exposure for abuse to occur. Therefore the door to the kitchen should remain unlocked and open as much as possible. Two adults trained in safe-church policy must be present in the kitchen whenever children or youth gather in that space.

LIBRARY

When left unlocked, this area also presents a high degree of exposure for abuse to occur. Therefore the door to the library should be locked at all times, remaining unlocked only when staff or authorized volunteers are present in the room itself. Two adults trained in safe-church policy must be present in the library whenever children or youth gather in that space.

PARISH HALL STAIRWAY

All groups using the parish house are required to use this entryway. Even so, sight lines do not readily allow for supervised use of this hall and stairway. Therefore, the exterior door should remain locked as much as is possible, even when the Great Hall or downstairs classrooms are in use by parish or outside groups.

COMMUNICATING YOUR FINDINGS

Who needs to receive copies of the audit or be made aware of specific concerns?

What will you and how will you communicate audit findings to your congregation?

PARISH OFFICE

When left unlocked, this area also presents a high degree of exposure for abuse to occur. This room may remain unlocked only when staff members or authorized volunteers are present in the office. Otherwise, the room should be locked.

OTHER OFFICES

When left unlocked, these areas also present a high degree of exposure for abuse to occur. These rooms may remain unlocked only when staff members or authorized volunteers are present in the office. Otherwise, the rooms should be locked.

PARISH HOUSE BATHROOMS

These rooms present a particular exposure to allow for abuse to occur. Because they cannot be locked, thereby preventing legitimate use of the rooms, adults present must monitor closely the use of these rooms by children or youth.

THE STORAGE CLOSET UNDER THE PARISH HOUSE STAIRWAY

This area presents a high degree of exposure for abuse to occur. Therefore, the door to the closet should remain locked at all times.

CHURCH HOUSE CLASSROOMS

This area presents an extremely high degree of exposure for abuse to occur. The door to these rooms may remain unlocked only when staff members or authorized volunteers are present. Otherwise, the space should be locked. This requires that there be two adults trained in safe-church policy present in the classroom area whenever children or youth gather in that space.

© Copyright 2005 by nhepiscopal.org.

Used and modified with permission.

Appendix G

Ministry Description for the Position of Safe Church Minister

A Safe Church Minister is someone appointed by the Vestry to oversee the implementation and monitoring of safe church policies within that parish. The leadership board of entities appoints safe church ministers for that entity.

Objective:

The objective of the Safe Church Minister is to ensure that Safe Church practices and policies are clearly communicated for every parishioner and faithfully followed in the life and practices of the congregation.

Responsibilities:

1. Be informed and remain current on the Safe Church policy as established by the Bishop's office.
2. See to it that the parish or entity adopts a Safe Church policy that at minimum meets the Diocesan standard. (This policy should be ratified by the vestry/Bishop's committee of the local parish or by the leadership board of the entity.)
3. Be responsible for the clear display of the parish's policy so that all members might have ample opportunity to be informed of this policy.
4. Serve as consultant to the clergy person and vestry/Bishop's committee or leadership board regarding Safe Church practices.
5. Serve as overseer of these practices, reporting all questionable or non-standard practices to the clergy person or warden or leadership board.
6. Ensure that all required screening has occurred for those mandated by the Safe Church Policy. (This does not mean that the Safe Church Minister should have access to the screening results rather they are to ensure the process is completed.)
7. Ensure that those mandated by the Safe Church policy have attended the necessary Diocesan trainings.
8. Ensure that the annual Safe Church audit is completed as required.
9. Cooperate with convocation peers when appropriate, including assisting nearby congregations in the completion of their own annual audit.
10. Communicate with the Office of the Bishop when necessary.

Qualifications:

- Completion of Safe Church Training
- Active Lay member of the parish or entity
- Successful completion of mandated background checks

Appendix H

Resources on Mandated Reporting

Reporting suspected abuse or neglect of a child: Under Wisconsin Statutes, clergy are mandated reporters of suspected abuse or neglect of children. Wisconsin Criminal Code 940.22

As mandated reporters clergy are required to:

Mandated reporters are required to report known or suspected abuse or neglect of a child under the age of 18 immediately to either child protection services or law enforcement. Law enforcement is required to report abuse or neglect to child protective services within 12 hours. Immediately notify the county department of social services or human services; if in Milwaukee County, notify the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare.

For more information, see Chapter 48.981(2) of the Wisconsin State Statutes. Adults who were abused under the age of 18 and wish to report their abuse may file a report with law enforcement. There are criminal statutes of limitations specific to abuse and neglect of children and these time frames and limitations differ depending upon the type of crime committed. For more information see Chapter 939.74(2) (c) and (cm) of the Wisconsin state statutes.

Reporting suspected abuse or neglect of elderly or adults at risk:

Adult at Risk: An adult who has a physical or mental condition that substantially impairs his or her ability to care for his or her needs who has experienced, is currently experiencing, or is at risk of experiencing abuse, neglect, or financial exploitation.

Elder Adult at Risk: An individual age 60 or older who has experienced, is currently experiencing, or is at risk of experiencing abuse, neglect, self-neglect, or financial exploitation.

Although reporting of elder abuse is voluntary, Sec. 46.90, Wis. Stats., mandates counties to establish an elder abuse reporting system and publish a phone number for the county agency that is designated to receive reports. Confidentiality and immunity are granted to reporters.

If a professional suspects abuse, neglect (which includes self-neglect) or exploitation to an adult in their care, they should call their county Elder Adults/Adults at Risk Agency. The law provides immunity to all reporters who file a report in good faith.

Each county's contact information for Elder Adults/Adults-at-Risk agency will be listed in the telephone book. You may also get more information by calling:

Bureau of Aging and Disability Resources 608-261-5990 or, on the web at
StopAbuse@dhfs.wisconsin.gov.

“How to” information for conducting background checks

Oxford Document Management has been the vendor of choice for religious organizations seeking comprehensive background checks of their clergy, church employees, and volunteers. More information can be found at <http://www.oxforddoc.com> or contact the Office of the Bishop at the Nicholson House. Please note that for some of the positions listed in this table, other methods of background check may be available. (See notations below).