



## **Employee Pledge to Promote a Safe Environment**

As a member of the clergy, an employee or independent contractor of the Archdiocese of Miami serving in a professional role, I am committed to being a person of good moral character and to being conscious of the unique authority and responsibility that I hold due to the trust placed in me by way of service to minors and/or vulnerable adults. I am expected to uphold the following Pledge to Promote a Safe Environment which covers activities in which I may be working with minors or vulnerable persons. The pledge supports the Archdiocesan policy outlined in “Creating and Maintaining a Safe Environment for Children and Vulnerable Adults,” and is also supported by the Archdiocese of Miami Employee Manual (references cited in footnotes below). I also declare that I have read the following and have been given a copy for reference. Based on the following I pledge to:

1. Treat everyone with respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity and consideration, regardless of the circumstances of the encounter.<sup>1</sup>
2. Assume the full burden of responsibility for setting and maintaining clear and appropriate physical and emotional boundaries with minors or vulnerable adults.
3. Be proactive in identifying minors and/or vulnerable adults who may be at risk of unhealthy relationships and to assist them in developing their sense of self-worth and avoiding emotional manipulation.<sup>2</sup>
4. Avoid any covert or overt sexual behavior with minors or vulnerable adults even if they initiate such behavior. This includes seductive speech or gestures as well as physical contact that sexually abuses, exploits, or harasses a person.<sup>3</sup>
5. Never initiate sexual behavior with a minor or vulnerable adult. Such behavior, if witnessed, must be reported to a supervisor immediately.<sup>4</sup>
6. Understand and comply with mandatory Florida law for all persons who know or have reasonable cause to suspect that a child or vulnerable adult has been a victim of abuse to immediately report to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) by calling the toll-free statewide abuse or neglect registry at 1-800-96ABUSE and to notify my supervisor of the report, including the case number, as soon as possible.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Archdiocese of Miami Employee Handbook for Parishes, Schools and Pastoral Center: VI. Employee Conduct, A. Standards of Conduct.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, VI. Employee Conduct, E. Ethical / Legal Compliance and Reporting; N. Requirement for Reporting Child or Vulnerable Adult Abuse.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, II. Employee Policies, B. Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy; VI. Employee Conduct, A. Standards of Conduct; N. Requirement for Reporting Child or Vulnerable Adult Abuse.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, II. Employee Policies, B. Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy; VI. Employee Conduct, A. Standards of Conduct; VI. Employee Conduct, E. Ethical / Legal Compliance and Reporting; N. Requirement for Reporting Child or Vulnerable Adult Abuse.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, VI. Employee Conduct, N. Requirement for Reporting Child or Vulnerable Adult Abuse.

7. Show prudent discretion in the expression of affections used with minors or vulnerable adults and to adhere to the PAN principle -- keeping all touch Public, Appropriate and Nonsexual. Discretion should include refraining from giving or receiving gifts from minors or vulnerable adults, and/or their parents, except small tokens of appreciation on occasions such as Christmas or birthdays.<sup>6</sup>
8. Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition, or comparison when working with others, especially minors or vulnerable adults.
9. Never strike, spank, shake anyone; and to avoid forms of touch with those in your ministry which could be construed as sexual especially with minors or vulnerable adults.<sup>7</sup>
10. Assure that a meeting space with a minor or vulnerable adult is accessible and visible to others.
11. Never lock the room when only one adult is present with minors or vulnerable adults except for reasons of safety, such as a “lock-down” scenario.
12. Never allow a situation where a child or vulnerable adult is alone in a car with an adult if that adult is neither the parent nor guardian.
13. Never share a bedroom with anyone with whom I am in ministry, especially minors or vulnerable adults.
14. Never use profanity in the presence of anyone. <sup>8</sup>
15. Never provide anyone, especially minors or vulnerable adults, with videos, readings or graphic materials which are inappropriately sexual in nature. Creating, distributing, or maintaining child pornography in any form is a crime in the State of Florida and is immediately reported to law enforcement officials.<sup>9</sup>
16. Never possess, consume, or offer alcohol products, tobacco products, or illegal drugs, nor be under the influence of alcohol products or illegal drugs when engaged in ministry to anyone, especially minors or vulnerable adults. <sup>10</sup>
17. Never engage in sexual behavior over the internet with anyone when engaged in ministry, especially minors or vulnerable adults. <sup>11</sup>
18. Comply with the ratio of adults to minors required by the institution or department of the Archdiocese under which my ministry program operates.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, II. Employee Policies, B. Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy; VI. Employee Conduct, A. Standards of Conduct; VI. Employee Conduct, G. Acceptance of Gifts.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, II. Employee Policies, B. Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy; VI. Employee Conduct, T. Termination of Employment: Reasons for Termination, items 11, 13.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, II. Employee Policies, B. Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy; VI. Employee Conduct, A. Standards of Conduct.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, VI. Employee Conduct, A. Standards of Conduct; Q. Use of Electronic Media Provided by Archdiocese; T. Termination of Employment: Reasons for Termination.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, VI. Employee Conduct, A. Standards of Conduct; I. Drug-Free Workplace; K. Prohibited Materials on Archdiocesan Premises; O. Smoking in the Workplace; T. Termination of Employment: Reasons for Termination.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, II. Employee Policies, B. Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy; VI. Employee Conduct, Q. Use of Electronic Media Provided by Archdiocese; VII. General Information, A. Internet/e-mail.

19. Never communicate electronically, including social networking sites and text messaging, with minors or vulnerable adults, except as specifically authorized by school policy. Parents/guardians should always be the primary contact source and all communication must be copied to the supervisor. <sup>12</sup>

20. Immediately report suspected violations of this Pledge to the Principal, Program Director or Clergy. If the suspected violator is the Principal, Program Director or Clergy the report should be made to the Vicar General (305-762-1220). <sup>13</sup>

I pledge to follow these guidelines in my relationships with all persons with whom I have contact in my ministry, especially minors or vulnerable adults.

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\* See additional reporting requirements contained in the Archdiocese Policy entitled "Creating and Maintaining a Safe Environment for Children and Vulnerable Adults"

Initial:

Current: June, 2016

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, VI. Employee Conduct, Q. Use of Electronic Media Provided by Archdiocese.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, VI. Employee Conduct, E. Ethical / Legal Compliance Reporting.