

DIOCESE OF GAYLORD

REVIEW BOARD

MISSION STATEMENT AND PROCEDURES

Preface

The Review Board for the Diocese of Gaylord was established in January 2003, in response to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops approval of two (2) documents, the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People (June 2002, revised in 2005, 2011, and 2018) and the Essential Norms for Diocesan/Eparchial Polices Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests or Deacons (December 2002, revised in 2006). The Charter and the Essential Norms address the crisis in the Church in the United States regarding the sexual abuse of minors by some Clergy and Church Personnel.

This Mission Statement and Procedures directs the work of the board, the areas of responsibility, membership, and procedures of the Review Board. This document is part of the Diocesan Policy for the Protection of Children.

Applicability

This and other policies for the protection of children or vulnerable adults referring to Church Personnel/Personnel include but is not limited to clergy, religious men and women, employees and volunteers of the Diocese.

Mission of the Review Board

It is the mission of the Review Board to serve the people of God in the Diocese of Gaylord by assisting the Bishop in his responsibilities for the protection of minors, and vulnerable adults. The Board is charged with advising the Bishop in his assessment of the credibility of allegations and suitability for ministry, as well as annual review of Child Protection policies. Upon Bishop's request the Board may also advise the Bishop on the handling of allegations of sexual abuse, the prevention of further abuse, the healing of those who have been injured, and the restoration of a sense of trust among the faithful and the larger community.

General Responsibilities of the Review Board

The general responsibilities of the board are to:

1. Provide consultation to the Bishop in his assessment of the credibility of all allegations of sexual abuse of minors or vulnerable adults by clergy. On some occasions, allegations of ministerial conduct concerning adults may be reviewed if requested by the Bishop (See Ministerial Conduct Mission Statement and Procedures which shall be published on the diocesan website);

2. Review the policies and procedures within the Diocese that relate to the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* and the *Essential Norms to assure compliance*;
3. Provide consultation to the Bishop regarding an alleged offender's suitability for Ministry, and Safety Plan;
4. Oversee that the diocesan policies and laws on sexual abuse or other crimes are followed regarding the reporting of allegations to civil authorities;
5. Offer advice on all aspects of alleged cases of sexual abuse of minors and vulnerable adults, whether retrospectively or prospectively, upon Bishop's request.

Membership

The Review Board shall consist of no less than five (5), nor more than ten (10) members of outstanding integrity and good judgment in full communion with the Church appointed by the Bishop. The members are appointed for a term of five (5) years, which may be renewed. The majority should be lay persons, none of whom are employed by the Diocese. They should bring experience or training in ministry, law, health care, mental health treatment, law enforcement, jurisprudence, human resources, business, management, education or other relevant fields. At least one (1) member shall be a Diocesan priest who is an experienced and respected pastor. Members serve without compensation.

Support Staff

The Chancellor/Safe Environment Coordinator, Victim Assistance Coordinator, Vicar General, Vicar for Clergy, Diocesan Attorney, and Communications Director shall participate in meetings of the Review Board, to assist and advise the Board. They are not voting members of the Review Board.

Conduct of Business

The Bishop shall appoint the Review Board chairperson, who shall preside at all meetings of the Board. The Diocesan Attorney shall be responsible for the written recording of the discussion and recommendations of the Board. In consultation with the chairperson, the Chancellor/Safe Environment Coordinator prepares the meeting agendas.

Quorum

A majority of the membership of the Board shall constitute a quorum for doing business. Attendance can be via live or virtual presence through electronic conferencing or telephonic communications.

Confidentiality

All deliberations of the Review Board shall remain confidential in order to respect the dignity of the involved persons. Official disclosure of Board action shall be made periodically through formal announcements prepared by the Bishop's Communications Department.

Board Duties:

Review of Allegations

The Review Board shall receive intake reports from the Victim Assistance Coordinator and investigation reports or documents from any investigation that takes place regarding allegations of abuse of minors and vulnerable adults by clergy (or other Church Personnel or Volunteers as may be requested by the Bishop). Any contact by victims or families to the Review Board or a Board member will be directed to the Victim Assistance Coordinator and/or Bishop's delegate.

Consultation on Allegations

The Board shall provide consultation to the Bishop regarding credibility of allegations and suitability for ministry.

Policy Compliance

For all allegations presented to it, the Board shall also determine whether the Diocesan policy on sexual abuse was followed regarding the reporting to civil authorities. A written report is to be sent promptly by the Diocesan Attorney to the appropriate County Prosecuting Attorney and State Attorney General's office of allegations received by the Diocese, concerning sexual abuse of minors or vulnerable adults, even those that do not pose an immediate risk of endangerment to a minors.

Policy Review

The Board shall periodically review the Diocesan policy on sexual abuse. A report of any recommendations for changes in the policy shall be sent to the Bishop for approval.

APPROVED BY:

Date: February 12, 2021



The Most Reverend Walter A Hurley
Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Gaylord

