

Diocese of Scranton Code of Pastoral Conduct for all Clergy, Administrators, Staff and Volunteers

Our children are the most important gifts God has entrusted to us. As an adult member of the Diocese of Scranton, I promise to strictly follow the rules and guidelines in this Code of Conduct when providing services to or interacting via face-to-face or by telephone, cell phone or any social networking website with a child involved in any diocesan, parish or Catholic school program.

I will:

- Treat everyone with respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration.
- Avoid situations where I am alone with children and/or youth while working or volunteering at any event or function sponsored by a diocesan parish or school.
- Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition, or comparison when working with children and/or youth.
- Refuse to accept expensive gifts from children and/or youth or their parents without prior written approval from the pastor or administrator.
- Refrain from giving expensive gifts to children and/or youth without prior written approval from the parents or guardian and the pastor or administrator.
- Report suspected abuse to the pastor, administrator, or appropriate supervisor and the local Child Protection Services agency. I understand that failure to report suspected abuse to civil authorities is, according to the law, a misdemeanor.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse of children and/or youth.
- Maintain a standard of morality in public and private life which does not reject the teachings of the Catholic Church.

I will not:

- Smoke or use tobacco products in the presence of children and/or youth.
- Use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol at any time while working or volunteering.
- Use, possess, or be under the influence of illegal drugs while working or volunteering.
- Pose any health risk to children and/or youth (i.e., no fevers or other contagious situations).
- Strike, spank, shake, or slap children and/or youth.
- Humiliate, ridicule, threaten, or degrade children and/or youth.
- Touch a child and/or youth in a sexual or other inappropriate manner.
- Use any discipline that frightens or humiliates children and/or youth.
- Use profanity in the presence of children and/or youth.
- Acquire, possess or distribute sexually explicit images of children under the age of 18 including but not limited to books, photographs, films or computer-generated images.

I understand that as a volunteer, staff member or clergy, I am agreeing to a mandatory background check including criminal history and child abuse history. I understand that any action inconsistent with this Code of Conduct or failure to take action mandated by this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action up to and including removal from my position.

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____