

ARCHDIOCESE OF PORTLAND IN OREGON

Standards of Conduct for Ministry with Children and Youth

It is a privilege for church personnel and volunteers to assist parents in the Christian education and formation of their children.

For purposes of this policy, “church personnel” includes clergy, religious, and lay persons who work in staff positions in parishes, schools, cemeteries, or other archdiocesan or parochial agencies.

Together, we express the care and concern of the entire faith community for our young people. We recognize that in serving our children a strong bond may develop between an adult and a child. Because of this personal relationship, it is particularly important that proper boundaries be maintained and that the dignity of each child and young person be recognized and respected.

With this in mind, the following standards of conduct apply to church personnel and volunteers who work with children and youth:

- All church personnel and volunteers support the rights and roles of parents while ministering to the needs and concerns of their dependent children.
- All church personnel and volunteers engaged in ministry with children and youth are subject to background checks and regular safe environment training in abuse awareness, prevention, and reporting procedures.
- All ministry with children and youth must be sanctioned by the proper authorities and comply with archdiocesan and parish policies relating to safety, transportation, parental permission, and medical emergencies.
- Church personnel and volunteers must maintain appropriate physical and emotional boundaries with the children and young adults with whom they work. Physical contact (hugging, etc.) with children and youth can be easily misconstrued and should occur only when it is completely non-sexual and when other adults are present. Corporal punishment or demeaning language will never be used when working with children and youth.
- Overnight accommodations in a private sleeping room should never be shared between an adult and a minor on or off church property unless the adult is either a parent or a legal guardian.
- Any use of tobacco, alcohol, marijuana (in any form) or illicit drugs (or being under the influence of alcohol, marijuana or drugs) is absolutely forbidden while ministering with children and youth.

- Church personnel and volunteers must avoid developing inappropriate relationships with minors or other church personnel.
- Observation of serious misconduct, including sexual misconduct, regardless of the circumstances, should be taken seriously and should be reported to the pastor or other supervisor, and, when appropriate, civil authorities.
- When working with children and youth, church personnel and volunteers should never use their positions of authority to foster a relationship of psychological or emotional dependency.
- Personal and professional contact with children and youth should take place in a visible area or in situations that are public. Under no circumstances should minors be allowed in the living quarters of the clergy.

I acknowledge that I have read and agree to comply with these Standards of Conduct for Ministry with Children and Youth.

I understand that any action on my part inconsistent with these Standards of Conduct or failure to take action mandated by them may result in removal from my position.

I also understand that these Standards of Conduct do not abrogate or replace any other obligations that I have under any applicable law, guideline, policy or regulation.

Printed Name

Signature

Date