

REQUIREMENT TO REPORT

Anyone who observes another person behaving in a manner which may pose a potential risk to a child or vulnerable adult, or who witnesses an act of child or vulnerable adult sexual or non-sexual abuse perpetrated by a cleric, religious, seminarian, person in formation, employee, volunteer, or any other person, or suspects that such an act has occurred, or receives a report of such an act, or has been the victim of such an act, must report the incident immediately to civil authorities and diocesan officials.

Additionally, the Ohio Revised Code 2151.421 requires that any individual, acting in an official or professional capacity, shall report immediately any suspected or actual act of child/vulnerable adult abuse to the local public children services agency.

Priests who learn the information through the Seal of Confession are exempt from this reporting requirement according to Canon 983.1 of the Code of Canon Law and according to civil law.

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" He called a child, whom he put among them, and said, "Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me. If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe to the world because of stumbling blocks! Occasions for stumbling are bound to come, but woe to the one by whom the stumbling block comes!"

(Matt. 18:1-2, 5-7)

Our Lord admonishes us to never harm a child. The Church is committed to doing everything possible to protect the children and vulnerable adults that are entrusted to her care. Through education, screening, and clear procedures for reporting allegations of abuse we will continue to maintain a safe environment. Please find and review our *Safe Environment Policy* on the diocesan webpage at doy.org. All of us must work together to create a safe environment where the love of Jesus reigns in our thoughts, words, and actions.



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF
YOUNGSTOWN

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS
AND PROCEDURES

FROM THE

SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY
FOR
THE PROTECTION OF
CHILDREN
AND
VULNERABLE ADULTS

Promulgated December 1, 2020

REPORT TO CIVIL AUTHORITIES

To report the abuse or suspected abuse of an adult, call your local police agency.

To report the abuse or suspected abuse of a child or vulnerable adult, call your local Children Services Board and your local police agency.

Children Services Boards

Ashtabula	440-998-1811
Columbiana	330-424-7781
Mahoning	330-941-8888
Portage	330-296-2273
Stark	330-455-5437
Trumbull	330-372-2010

If a person's safety or life is in immediate danger report this to the police by calling 911.

REPORT TO DIOCESAN OFFICIALS

To report abuse or suspected abuse by a priest, deacon, seminarian, religious, person in formation, employee, or volunteer of the Diocese of Youngstown contact the Victim Assistance Coordinator.

Victim Assistance Coordinator

Diocesan Response Line:
330-718-1388

By mail at:
Catholic Diocese of Youngstown
Attn: Victim Assistance Coordinator
144 West Wood Street
Youngstown, OH 44503

To report violations of the *Safe Environment Policy* that do not constitute abuse or suspected abuse contact the Safe Environment Coordinator.

Safe Environment Coordinator

Office Number:
330-744-8451 x293

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Am I liable for making a report that turns out to be wrong?

Anyone making a report in good faith is immune from civil or criminal liability. However, failure to report, when required to do so, can result in a misdemeanor charge.

What happens after a report is made to the diocese?

The allegation is reported to the diocesan attorneys, who in turn report to Children Services. The diocese initiates its own investigation and may initiate an investigation using the services of an independent professional investigator. The allegation may also be brought to the Review Board. If the allegation is found to be credible, the accused is removed from ministerial duties.

What is the Review Board?

The Review Board is a confidential, consultative body that advises the bishop in his assessment of allegations of abuse and his determination of suitability for ministry. The board consists of persons from various faiths and the majority of the board members are lay men and women with professional expertise in law, medicine, psychiatry, etc.