



## DIOCESE OF OGDENSBURG

### *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*

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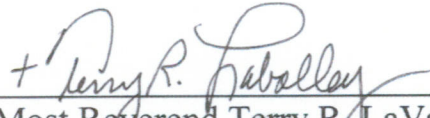
V.9A

### **Diocesan Policies to Facilitate Safe Environments for our Children and Young People**

In our continuing efforts to implement national policies and procedures for the protection and safety of our children and of all the faithful entrusted to our care, the following is a summary of diocesan policies promulgated on October 20, 2003.

1. The following individuals must have **Background Checks**:
  - All clergy, Catholic school principals and teachers, catechetical leaders, catechetical instructors, seminarians, and youth ministers
  - Those who assist in youth ministry, all volunteers in our various ministries that deal with youth
  - All paid personnel employed by the parish, Catholic school, and Church institutions
2. Pastors, school principals, catechetical leaders, and youth ministers are asked to have each person in their charge for which a background check is required sign a copy of the diocesan release form allowing the Diocese of Ogdensburg or its agent to perform this investigation.
3. Church-sponsored or church-related groups whose ministries could put them in contact with minors must have background checks. The leaders of groups which use church property for activities where they may come in contact with youth must have background checks.
4. Individuals who have undergone Background Checks by the Church, subsequently leave the Church's employ, and later seek re-employment with the Church, must undergo another Background Check before re-hire.
5. The employer must inform the Safe Environment Coordinator to discuss the hiring of anyone who has a record of a misdemeanor or felony before that individual is hired.

6. **Code of Pastoral Conduct:** (cf. *Pastoral Handbook IV.20*) All volunteers in the Diocese of Ogdensburg who are involved with minors must read and sign the *Volunteer's Code of Conduct* (p. 14 in the *Handbook*). These signed agreements are to be filed in each parish, school, or ministry where the person volunteers.
7. **"Protecting God's Children" (VIRTUS):** A three-hour training session is required of all clergy, seminarians, and religious who work in the Diocese of Ogdensburg, all paid personnel, and anyone who is in direct or limited contact with minors. Continual (monthly) training, either via internet or printed version, is required of all clergy, all youth ministry directors, paid or volunteer, all catechetical leaders, paid or volunteer, all Catholic school principals, teachers, and teacher's aides, all paid personnel who have contact with minors, and all "*Protecting God's Children*" workshop facilitators.
8. All school-aged children are to receive **CHILD LURES** training or similar training (such as the *New York State Child Health Safety* program), as part of their public or Catholic school curriculum. *New York State Child Health Safety* curriculum is mandated for all Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Ogdensburg. Special informational sessions are to be scheduled for the parents of all parochial and public school students who receive **CHILD LURES** training. Additional sessions addressing safe environment issues are encouraged in both the Catholic and public schools.
9. It is the responsibility of the pastor of every parish and Catholic school to ensure and record that the above-mentioned policies are followed. Pastors will complete the diocesan *Annual Pastor's Charter Compliance Report* attesting to compliance. All questions pertaining to diocesan efforts to provide Safe Environments for our children and youth should be directed to the diocesan Safe Environment Coordinator.

  
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 Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley  
 Bishop of Ogdensburg

[To be inserted in the ***DIOCESAN PASTORAL HANDBOOK V.9A***]

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