

**DIOCESE OF OGDENSBURG***Chancery*

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**COMMUNICATIONS POLICY FOR CHARTER APPLICATION****PRINCIPLE:**

The Diocese of Ogdensburg's policies and procedures governing its internal and external communications should promote the development of cooperative, responsive and candid relationships. The diocese should engage the community and the media in its efforts to prevent child abuse, protect children, support families and inform the public. Within the confines of respect for privacy of the individuals involved, the Diocese will communicate as openly as possible with the members of the media, faith community and general public regarding allegations of child abuse and related issues.

**PUBLIC AWARENESS OF CHILD ABUSE ISSUES**

The Department of Communications will work with the faith community and with the general public to disseminate information in order to increase the awareness and understanding of the prevention, identification and treatment of child abuse and neglect.

**TIMELINESS OF COMMUNICATIONS**

Communications with an affected parish and/or school, the media and the broader diocesan community are to be timely, open and clear. All communications shall occur within the confines of respect for the privacy and reputation of those involved, as well as any applicable canon and civil laws

**RESPONDING TO THE MEDIA**

The director of the Department of Communications is to be responsible for coordinating all media contacts. All media inquiries made to schools, parishes, etc. should be referred to that office or responded to in consultation with that office. The director of the Department of Communications will consult with, guide and coordinate relevant persons in the handling of media inquiries.

## **COMMUNICATIONS TRAINING**

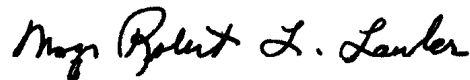
The director of the Department of Communications will provide training to pastors/parochial administrators, pastoral delegates, principals, and agency directors so that they can, when required to do so, competently respond to media inquiries, designed solely to reassure the community that abuse allegations are taken seriously and that the Diocese of Ogdensburg will cooperate fully with civil authorities.

## **COMMUNICATING WITH DIRECTLY AFFECTED COMMUNITIES**

Recognizing the importance of supporting parishes and/or schools directly affected by misconduct involving the victimization of minors, the director of the Department of Communications will coordinate with the Vicar for Clergy, Chancellor and Moderator of the Curia, relevant diocesan offices, such as the Catholic Schools Office, and school and/or parish leadership to ensure parishioners and/or school families receive timely, factual and pastorally appropriate communication from the diocese, school and/or parish.

## **COMMUNICATING WITH BROADER COMMUNITY**

The Diocese may communicate with priests at other parishes, particularly those where an accused person previously served, school principals, and/or parish staff in order to assist them in reaching out pastorally to all parishioners and school families in the Diocese.



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Reverend Monsignor Robert L. Lawler, P.A.

October 15, 2003