



## Archdiocesan Safe Environment Policy and Requirements

(For Those Pastorally Ministering to Vulnerable Adults)

### **Essential 3: Adult Requirements\*:**

#### **1. Background Checks**

- Background checks are mandatory for **all clergy, religious, seminarians and candidates for the permanent diaconate as well as for chancery corporation, parish and Catholic school employees.**
- Background checks are mandatory for **all volunteers having either regular or unsupervised interaction with vulnerable adults.**
- Initial background checks should be submitted and cleared prior to beginning employment or volunteer duties.

#### **2. Attendance at a Training Session (supportive of the type of pastoral ministry being done)**

**(Please Note: All priests, deacons and candidates for ordination as well as all chancery, parish and school employees are required to attend a VIRTUS: *Protecting God's Children for Adults* Awareness Session. VIRTUS is a foundational awareness program within the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis and it is highly recommended that all parishioners and parish volunteers be invited to attend.)**

- For Eucharistic Ministers to the Homebound, parish-generated orientation/training sessions may be used, as approved by the Pastor or Canonically-approved Administrator.
- For Pastoral Ministers (employees or volunteers) who are more actively involved in ministries to vulnerable adults, it is highly recommended that each parish or combination of parishes arrange for a person in their region to become a trainer using the Association of Pastoral Ministers' *Ministry to Vulnerable Adults*, and subsequently offer this training as an orientation to their pastoral ministry ministers. (More information is available at <http://www.apmspm.org/>)
- Other formal training programs that support the ministry may be used with approval of the Pastor or Canonically-approved Administrator.
- VIRTUS: *Protecting God's Children for Adults* Awareness Session should be attended by all pastoral ministers visiting homes where minors will be present. VIRTUS may also be used with all volunteers having either regular or unsupervised contact with vulnerable adults. VIRTUS has a number of resources available on their website that specifically address challenges related to the pastoral ministry with vulnerable adults. (Please see <http://www.virtus.org> for more information.)
- Clergy and employees must complete training within **30 days of beginning ministry/employment** unless chaperoning off-site which, **requires training prior to service.**
- Volunteers or chaperones must **complete training prior to volunteer service.**

#### **3. Codes of Conduct**

- All clergy must view the Code of Conduct Training, read and sign the *Code of Conduct for Clergy*. Seminarians and chancery corporation, parish and Catholic school employees, as well as volunteers in positions of leadership (i.e. trustees, parish and finance council members, school board, school advisory council, etc.) must view the Code of Conduct Training, read and sign the *Code of Conduct for Church Personnel prior to service.* (December 2016)
- All adult volunteers having either regular or unsupervised interaction with children, youth or vulnerable adults must view the Code of Conduct Training, read and sign the *Code of Conduct for Adult Volunteers Who Interact with Minors or Vulnerable Adults prior to volunteer service.* (December 2016)
- Religious order brothers and sisters, as well as candidates for the permanent diaconate must view the Code of Conduct Training, read and sign the Code of Conduct commensurate with their role prior to service.

\*Essential 3 record-keeping for clergy, seminarians and candidates for the permanent diaconate, as well as chancery corporation employees, is the responsibility of archdiocesan staff. Record-keeping for parish and Catholic school employees and volunteers is the responsibility of every local parish and school. OPCY staff members monitor background check implementation and VIRTUS attendance, as needed, for audit purposes.

#### **Other Essential Considerations:**

- Effective 9/1/2014, the Archdiocese began periodic **rechecking and retraining of all mandated persons** described above. This will be phased in over a three-year period culminating in **rechecks and retraining being routinely performed every three (3) years beginning July 1, 2017.**
- Each vulnerable adult and their involved family members need to become familiar with two ministers from the parish. One may be the primary visitor; however, a second person needs to be familiar to the person and his/her family by phone, email and/or by partnering with the primary visitor.
- A procedure needs to be established whereby the pastoral minister visiting on behalf of the parish, has a system for leaving a card/written note with the visitor's contact information and date of visit, along with the parish's bulletin in order for family members to know when their vulnerable family member was visited.
- **Mandatory Reporting Training must be completed prior to service.**

## Definitions of Vulnerable Adults

### 1. VIRTUS.

The term “vulnerable adult” can apply to a person with a physical, mental, or emotional condition or an illness that renders them unable to defend themselves, protect themselves, or get help for themselves when injured or emotionally abused. Depending on individual circumstances, the term can also apply to the general elderly population. It is important to remember, however, that at times we can all be considered vulnerable and it is thereby important to treat all individuals with respect and dignity.

### 2. Minnesota Department of Human Services: Adult Protection Program: Vulnerable Adult

Any person 18 years of age or older who:

1. Is a resident or inpatient of a facility;
2. Receives services at or from a facility required to be licensed to serve adults under sections 245A.01 to 245A.15, except that a person receiving outpatient services for treatment of chemical dependency or mental illness, or one who is served in the Minnesota sex offender program on a court-hold order for commitment, or is committed as a sexual psychopathic personality or as a sexually dangerous person under chapter 253B, is not considered a vulnerable adult unless the person meets the requirements of clause 4;
3. Receives services from a home care provider required to be licensed under section 144A.46; or from a person or organization that exclusively offers, provides, or arranges for personal care assistant services under the medical assistance program as authorized under sections 256B.04, subdivision 16, 256B.0625, subdivision 19a, 256B.0651, 256B.0653 to 256B.0656, and 256B.0659; or

Regardless of residence or whether any type of service is received, possesses a physical or mental infirmity or other physical, mental, or emotional dysfunction:

- That impairs the individual's ability to provide adequately for the individual's own care without assistance, including the provision of food, shelter, clothing, health care, or supervision; and
- Because of the dysfunction or infirmity and the needs for care or services, the individual has an impaired ability to protect the individual's self from maltreatment (MN Statute 626.5572, subd. 21)

### 3. On USCCB website: “Prevention and Mitigation of Abuse of Vulnerable Adults” (pdf)

Vulnerable adults can apply to people with physical, mental, or emotional conditions or an illness that renders them unable to defend themselves, protect themselves, or get help for themselves when injured or emotionally abused. The term applies as well to the elderly whose various circumstances make them vulnerable to those who might cause them harm.

#### [Please Note]

The *Charter* includes one group of vulnerable adults within the *Charter*, itself. “For purposes of the *Charter*, the offense of sexual abuse of a minor will be understood in accord with the provisions of *Sacramentorum sanctitatis tutela* (SST), article 6, which reads:

- §1. The more grave delicts against morals which are reserved to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith are: the delict against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue committed by a cleric with a minor below the age of eighteen years; in this case, a person who habitually lacks the use of reason is to be considered equivalent to a minor.