

To Promote  
Healing and Reconciliation with  
Victims/Survivors of Sexual Abuse of  
Minors

ARTICLE 1. Dioceses will reach out to victims/survivors and their families and demonstrate a sincere commitment to their spiritual and emotional well-being.

ARTICLE 2. Dioceses will have mechanisms in place to respond promptly to any allegation where there is reason to believe that sexual abuse of a minor has occurred.

ARTICLE 3. Dioceses will not enter into confidentiality agreements except for grave and substantial reasons brought forward by the victim/survivor and noted in the text of the agreement.

To Guarantee An Effective Response to  
Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors

ARTICLE 4. Dioceses will report an allegation of sexual abuse of a person who is a minor to the public authorities.

ARTICLE 5. We repeat the words of our Holy Father in his Address to the Cardinals of the United States and Conference Officers: “There is no place in the priesthood or religious life for those who would harm the young.”

ARTICLE 6. While the priestly commitment to the virtue of chastity and

the gift of celibacy is well known, there will be clear and well-publicized diocesan standards of ministerial behavior and appropriate boundaries for clergy and for other church personnel in positions of trust who have regular contact with children and young people.

ARTICLE 7. Each diocese will develop a communications policy that reflects a commitment to transparency and openness.

To Ensure the Accountability of Our  
Procedures

ARTICLE 8. To assist in the consistent application of these principles and to provide a vehicle of accountability and assistance to dioceses in this matter, we authorize the establishment of an Office for Child and Youth Protection at our national headquarters.

ARTICLE 9. The work of the Office for Child and Youth Protection will be assisted and monitored by a Review Board, including parents, appointed by the Conference President and reporting directly to him.

ARTICLE 10. The membership of the Ad Hoc Committee on Sexual Abuse will be reconstituted to include representation from all the episcopal regions of the country.

ARTICLE 11. The President of the Conference will inform the Holy See of this Charter to indicate the manner in which we, the Catholic bishops, together

with the entire Church in the United States, intend to address this present crisis.

To Protect The Faithful in the Future

ARTICLE 12. Dioceses will establish “safe environment” programs. They will cooperate with parents, civil authorities, educators, and community organizations to provide education and training for children, youth, parents, ministers, educators, and others about ways to make and maintain a safe environment for children.

ARTICLE 13. Dioceses will evaluate the background of all diocesan and parish personnel who have regular contact with minors.

ARTICLE 14. No priest or deacon who has committed an act of sexual abuse of a minor may be transferred for ministerial assignment to another diocese or religious province.

ARTICLE 15. The Ad Hoc Committee on Sexual Abuse and the Officers of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men will meet to determine how this charter will be conveyed and established in the communities of religious men in the United States.

ARTICLE 16. Given the extent of the problem of the sexual abuse of minors in our society, we are willing to cooperate

with other churches and ecclesial communities, other religious bodies, institutions of learning, and other interested organizations in conducting research in this area.

ARTICLE 17. We pledge our complete cooperation with the Apostolic Visitation of our diocesan seminaries and religious houses of formation recommended in the Interdicasterial Meeting with the Cardinals of the United States and the Conference Officers in April 2002.

To order the complete Charter text, call toll-free 800-235-8722, USCCB Publishing, Publication #5-540, ISBN 1-57455-540-5. For further online information at the national level contact: USCCB.org, or at the local level: Stocktondiocese.org

complaints of sexual abuse seriously and deals with such allegations in a confidential, prompt, and thorough manner with compassion and consideration for all those involved.

To make a complaint of sexual abuse against anyone acting in the name of the Catholic Church, you may do so in writing or by telephone. Whether the abuse was recent or occurred many years in the past, contact the Victim Assistance Coordinator at (209) 466-0636 ext. 602, or in writing to 1105 N. Lincoln St. Stockton, CA. 95203, marked "Confidential" and directed to the attention of the Victim Assistance Coordinator.



Diocese of Stockton  
Office of the Training Coordinator  
for Safe Environments  
1105 N. Lincoln St. Stockton, CA 95203  
Phone (209) 466-0636 Fax (209) 941-9722

charter for the protection of children and young people (Excerpts)

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### Reporting allegations of sexual abuse of a minor

~~Promise to Protect~~ Pledge to Heal



“Let there now be no doubt or confusion on anyone’s part: For us, your bishops, our obligation to protect children and young people and to prevent sexual abuse flows from the mission and example given to us by Jesus Christ himself, in whose name we serve.”

(USCCB: Charter, p.4)