

**CODE OF CONDUCT
FOR
CHURCH PERSONNEL WHEN WORKING WITH MINORS**

This Code is in compliance with all civil and canon law.

Children are gifts God has entrusted to us. As a priest, deacon, staff member or volunteer, I promise faithfully to follow the rules and guidelines in this Code of Conduct as a condition of my providing services to minors.

The Code of Conduct for Church Personnel in the Eparchy of Parma seeks to maintain the integrity of the ministry of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ especially as it relates to young people. We are all only truly safe when we are safe in the Lord. An important gift that the Church can offer its young is a ministry that is truly in the Lord. This is a ministry that respects the proper boundaries innate to the human person. At the same time however, a healthy sense of boundaries never compromises the essential effectiveness of the ministry which by its very nature must bring healing and perspective to the most personal and confidential dimensions of the human person.

I understand that the Code of Conduct is intended to provide a safe and supportive environment for minors of the Eparchy of Parma based on the Sacred Scriptures, canon law and civil law. I also understand this code protects me as a member of the clergy, staff or volunteer of the Eparchy of Parma so that I may work with minors. I also understand that the individual parents of the minors of the Eparchy of Parma are the first persons entrusted by God with the welfare, safety and education of their children. This Code in no way overrides or takes away the parents responsibility for their children.

As a priest, deacon, staff member or volunteer, I will:

- Treat minors with respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity and consideration.
- Avoid situations where I am alone with minors at Church activities, except in an environment that is both observable and interruptible.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse of minors.
- Immediately report any suspicion of abuse of a minor to my immediate supervisor, as well as-the appropriate civil authority.
- Maintain clear boundaries between a minor and myself if I discover an inappropriate attraction or attention being shown to me by a minor. I will report such circumstance to another adult and the parent of the minor.
- Schedule meetings at times and use locations that can create accountability. Limit the length and number of meetings. Make appropriate outside referrals if necessary. Advise parents and supervisors of such meetings.
- Be sure that all youth trips, especially overnight events, have a sufficient number of certified adult (over the age of 21) chaperones present and be sure that all trips conform to the prescribed rules regarding overnight trips with minors.
- Inform the parents of the minor of all discipline issues.

As a priest, deacon, staff member or volunteer, I will not:

- Accept expensive gifts from minors without prior written approval from the parents or guardian and pastor or administrator.
- Smoke or use tobacco products-in the presence of minors when working or volunteering directly with them.
- Use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol at any time while directly working or volunteering with minors.
- Use, possess, or be under the influence of illegal drugs or misuse prescribed drugs while directly working or volunteering with minors.
- Allow the use, by minors, of any alcohol, tobacco or any illegal substance.
- Knowingly pose any serious health risk to minors.
- Knowingly or deliberately humiliate, ridicule, threaten, or degrade minors.
- Touch a minor in a sexual or other inappropriate manner.
- Use any discipline that intentionally frightens or humiliates minors.
- Use profanity in the presence of minors.
- Be alone with a minor in a residence, sleeping facility, locker room, rest room, dressing facility, or any other isolated area that is inappropriate to a ministry relationship.

As a priest, deacon, staff member or volunteer, I will not:

- Sleep in the same bed with a minor who is not a member of my immediate family.
- Sleep in the same room with a minor who is not a member of my immediate family, unless in a dormitory style group setting.
- Drive a church or school vehicle transporting a minor unless I have received a prior written authorization and have the appropriate license or certification.
- Participate in the distribution or receipt of child pornography or share any sexually explicit or pornographic materials through any medium in any way with minors.

In addition, as a cleric, I will:

- Not allow any minors to reside in or to be an overnight guest in a rectory unless they are members of my immediate family, or who are part of an adequately chaperoned parish youth activity.
- Not take overnight trips alone with a minor who is not a member of my immediate family. Adult chaperones should accompany any trip involving minors who are not members of my immediate family.

With regard to minors within a cleric's extended family or in cases where the cleric may have children, clerics should follow these codes of conduct with due discretion, diligence and prudence, adapting those standards which should be adapted because of family relationships.

I understand that as a priest, deacon, staff member or volunteer working with minors, I am subject to a thorough background check, including criminal history. I understand that any action inconsistent with this Code of Conduct or failure to take action mandated by this Code of Conduct may result in an infraction to the Code of Canons of Eastern Churches which will then be met with appropriate disciplinary action.