

Standards of Conduct for Personnel in Archdiocesan Entities*

I. Preamble

Those who minister or volunteer within our parishes and institutions must always seek to live by and uphold the Church's moral teaching in both their personal lives and personnel roles. Standards of Conduct do not presume to provide the answers to all the ethical questions facing personnel. Rather, they establish a set of general ethical standards for their lives and ministry. These standards will help to delineate boundaries by which ethical questions can be evaluated. These Standards do not supersede canon or civil law. These Standards will also aid in the training and education of new personnel. Lastly, they will demand accountability from personnel who may fail to live within these standards.

For purposes of these standards "personnel*" are all who are listed in Appendix A of the Archdiocesan Policy for the Protection of Minors found at the end of these Standards. The entire policy can be found at <http://www.arch.pvt.k12.ia.us/Protection/Protectionhome.html>. Responsibility for adherence to these standards rests with the personnel themselves. It is anticipated, however, that disregard of these standards by personnel will be dealt with by the appropriate employing/appointing organization's representative (e.g., the pastor/parish administrator, the religious superior, principal, DRE, the Archbishop). Remedial action may take various forms from counseling to removal from ministry.

The conduct of personnel, both public and private, has the potential to inspire and motivate people or scandalize and tear down their faith. These personnel must be aware of the responsibilities that accompany their work. They also know that God's goodness and graces support them in their ministry.

II. General Principles

Five key principles underlie the ethical stance of these standards. Ethical personnel are those who embrace the principles of ecclesial commitment, integrity, respect for others, well-being, and competence.

Ecclesial Commitment

Personnel embrace and work to promote the teachings of Jesus and his Church. They shall have an intimate knowledge of the Scriptures and Sacred Tradition so that they can apply them to the pastoral situations they encounter.

Integrity

Personnel are expected to be persons of integrity and must conduct themselves in an honest and open manner, free from deception or corruption. They shall handle the responsibilities of their office in a conscientious fashion. Personnel in a church that sets a high moral standard for its members have a responsibility to lead by example.

Respect for Others

Personnel shall respect the rights, dignity, and worth of each member of the Church community. Personnel respect each individual as a creation of God without regard to his/her economic status or degree of participation in Church life. They strive to be sensitive to cultural differences among people and appreciate the opportunities that diversity brings. Also, they should be aware that issues of aging, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, physical and mental disabilities, and culture all affect how the message of the Gospel is received and interpreted.

Well-Being

Personnel are expected to attend to their own human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral well-being.

Human Well-Being

Personnel have a duty to be attuned to their physical, mental, and emotional health. They should be aware of warning signs in their behavior and moods that can indicate conditions detrimental to their health (e.g., depression, misuse of alcohol or drugs). Personnel should determine healthy limits in their work environment and live within these limits as much as possible, making use of allotted time for vacation and days away from the work environment. Personnel should be supportive of one another in terms of both affirmation and holding one another accountable for their physical and emotional well-being.

Spiritual Well-Being

Personnel have a duty to stay attuned to their own spiritual health. They must maintain and nurture an ongoing prayer life and address their own spiritual needs in order to remain focused in the faith. Regular meetings with a spiritual director and support group are highly recommended. Personnel are encouraged to participate in retreats and days of reflection.

Intellectual Well-Being

Personnel have a responsibility to attend to their ongoing intellectual development. They should participate annually in seminars and workshops in areas that are relevant to their current ministry. Personnel should stay current through reading of both religious and secular sources. Participation in a regular process of evaluation of their effectiveness in ministry is encouraged. Archdiocesan instruments and procedures may be used where these exist. Personnel should make use of the time and funding provided for ongoing formation.

Pastoral Well-Being

Personnel are responsible for providing for and nurturing the life of the faith community. They should know and respect the people whom they serve. As appropriate to their office, they should celebrate the sacraments with decorum, in fidelity to the official rites of the Roman Catholic Church. Personnel should know and follow the policies and procedures of the Archdiocese.

Competence

Personnel maintain high levels of professional competence in their particular work. Training, education, and experience all contribute to make them competent and credible in their areas of expertise.

III. Standards of Conduct in Professional Relationships

1. ADMINISTRATION

Personnel shall exercise just treatment of employees and volunteers in the day-to-day administrative operations of their ministries.

- 1.1 Personnel shall relate to all people with respect, sensitivity, and reverence. Meetings are to be conducted with patience and courtesy toward the views of others, in an environment where it is safe for others to offer constructive criticism.
- 1.2 Personnel shall empower others, supporting each person to live the life to which God calls him/her. They are to work in ways that respect the different talents people bring to the Church.
- 1.3 Personnel shall exercise responsible stewardship of all Church resources. They are to ensure a clear accounting of all funds in their area of ministry.
- 1.4 Personnel shall ensure that systems are in place to protect both the Church and the individual from financial mismanagement. Independent audits of financial operations are to be conducted on a regular basis.
- 1.5 Personnel and other administrative decisions made by personnel shall follow Catholic social teachings as well as civil and canon law.
- 1.6 All personnel who receive financial recompense for their ministerial service under stipulated contract terms or archdiocesan scales may not receive dual reimbursement for work which falls ordinarily under the scope of their pastoral assignment or ministry (e.g.,

a pastor who teaches religious education may not receive both a pastor's salary and that of a director of religious education, etc.).

2. CONDUCT IN COUNSELING

Personnel who conduct counseling for families, individuals, or groups shall respect their rights and advance the welfare of each person.

- 2.1 Personnel shall not step beyond their competence in counseling situations. The parameters are dictated by their training or professional certification.
- 2.2 Without permission from the counselee, personnel shall not disclose information learned from counseling sessions. In beginning what is clearly a counseling relationship, personnel shall inform the counselee that confidentiality is limited when there is a clear and imminent danger to the counselee or others. In such cases, personnel shall contact the necessary authorities or other professionals.
- 2.3 Personnel ordinarily do not begin an ongoing counseling relationship with someone with whom they have a pre-existing relationship (i.e., employee, professional colleague).
- 2.4 Personnel shall not engage in sexual intimacies with those whom they counsel.
- 2.5 Physical contact with the counselee can be misconstrued and should generally be avoided.
- 2.6 It is important that counseling be conducted in an appropriate setting and at appropriate times. Counseling should not be done in private living quarters or at places or times that would be ambiguous or misleading to the counselee. Also, personnel who conduct counseling should maintain a calendar of times and places of contacts.
- 2.7 Personnel shall be cognizant at all times of the significance of boundaries in all counseling relationships. During the course of the relationship, personnel should exercise due prudence with regard to socializing with the counselee.
- 2.8 When the independent judgment of personnel is impaired (for example, by prior or concurrent personal or professional relationships where they become personally involved or where they become an advocate for one person against another), they shall advise the party/parties that they can no longer provide counseling and refer him/her/them to other counselors.
- 2.9 Personnel who leave their position while conducting counseling should help make appropriate referrals for continued care. When possible, personnel should provide those whom they are counseling thirty days written notice they are leaving their position.

3. CONDUCT WITH MINORS

Personnel working with minors shall use appropriate judgment to ensure trusting relationships marked by personal and professional integrity.

- 3.1 Personnel must be aware of their own vulnerability and that of any individual minor with whom they may be working. In every instance possible, a team approach to youth ministry activities should be considered. Personnel shall avoid establishing any exclusive relationship with a minor and exercise due caution when they become aware of a minor desiring such a relationship.
- 3.2 Physical contact with a minor should never be used to hurt or punish the minor or for self-gratification, sexual or otherwise. Physical contact with a minor can be misconstrued by minors and other adults. Physical contact with a minor should only occur under appropriate public circumstances. (Public, Appropriate, and Brief)
- 3.3 Personnel shall not use or supply alcohol and/or illegal drugs when working with minors.
- 3.4 Personnel shall not provide any sexually explicit, inappropriate, or offensive material to minors.
- 3.5 Providing overnight accommodations in rectories or other personal residences for minors with whom personnel may have other than a close familial relationship is prohibited.
- 3.6 Personnel should know and understand Archdiocesan policies and procedures concerning allegations of sexual misconduct involving minors and the developmentally disabled.

4. SEXUAL CONDUCT

Personnel are called to lead lives of chastity consistent with their state of life.

- 4.1 Personnel who have made a commitment to celibacy are called to witness this in all relationships. Likewise, those who have made a marital commitment are called to witness to this fidelity in all their relationships.
- 4.2 Personnel shall not betray the trust of those they serve by engaging in sexual misconduct or exploit persons for sexual purposes.
- 4.3 It is the personal and professional obligation of personnel to be knowledgeable about what constitutes sexual misconduct and to be familiar with the teachings of the Catholic Church and the laws of the State of Iowa regarding sexual misconduct.
- 4.4 Any allegations of sexual misconduct shall be taken seriously and reported to the Office for Protection of Children. Archdiocesan protocol and procedures will be followed to ensure the rights of all involved.
- 4.5 Personnel shall be knowledgeable of the State of Iowa child abuse regulations and know the proper reporting requirements. Personnel must comply with all mandatory reporting requirements except if the information was received under the seal of confession. In such cases, no reporting can occur.

5. HARASSMENT

Personnel shall not engage in harassment of employees, volunteers, or parishioners and shall not tolerate such harassment by other employees or volunteers.

- 5.1 Harassment encompasses a broad range of physical or verbal behavior that includes, but is not limited to:
 - Physical or mental abuse.
 - Racial insults.
 - Ethnic slurs.
 - Sexual advances or sexual touching.
 - Sexual comments or sexual jokes.
 - Requests for sexual favors used as a condition of employment or affecting any personnel decision such as hiring, promotion, or compensation.
 - Display of pornographic materials.
- 5.2 Harassment can occur as a result of a single incident or a pattern of conduct which results in the creation of a hostile, offensive, or intimidating work environment.
- 5.3 Personnel shall follow the established procedure (see below No. 8) for reporting harassment and shall ensure that no retaliation for bringing forward a claim of harassment occurs. (Note: Educational programs see also ABE 2515.11)

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

Information disclosed to personnel during the course of counseling or spiritual direction shall be held in strictest confidence.

- 6.1 Personnel are bound to safeguard the confidentiality of any notes, files, or computer records pertaining to professional contact with individuals.
- 6.2 If consultation with another professional becomes necessary, utmost care shall be taken to use non-identifying information and only that which is necessary to be shared; when this is not possible, the other professional must be bound to the same degree of confidentiality as personnel. If the other professional is not so bound, the disclosure shall not be made.
- 6.3 Knowledge that arises from professional contact may be used in teaching, writing, and preaching or other public presentations only when effective measures have been taken to absolutely safeguard individual identity and confidentiality.
- 6.4 Except as provided above with respect to consultation, confidential information can be disclosed only with the written, informed consent of the individual. In legal proceedings in which personnel are defendants and the allegations stem from a professional contact, the disclosure of confidential information gained in that contact is permitted only to the minimum necessary to achieve the purpose of defense.
- 6.5 When entering into counseling with a minor, personnel shall instruct the minor from the

outset regarding several exceptions to the ordinary rights to confidentiality: threats of self-inflicted harm, threats of harm to the minor, threats by the minor against others. Threats of self-inflicted harm and threats of harm to others include ideation and planning. In these situations, which pose a grave risk for the minor's welfare and the welfare of others, communication of information to a parent or legal guardian and/or to the civil authorities should occur expeditiously with or without the consent of the minor. Personnel must exercise great care and judgment in determining the appropriateness of this kind of disclosure and in balancing the ultimate welfare of the minor being counseled with the duty to warn.

- 6.6 These obligations are independent of and supplementary to the confidentiality of confession. Under no circumstances whatsoever can there be any disclosure, even indirect, of information received through the Sacrament of Penance.

7. RECORDS AND INFORMATION

Appropriate confidentiality shall be maintained in creating, storing, accessing, transferring, and disposing of parish or institutional records.

- 7.1 Restricted access shall be maintained for sacramental records. Such access is restricted to the pastor or pastoral administrator and his/her designate.
- 7.2 A trained staff member may be authorized to locate the requested information or supervise the use of such records.
- 7.3 The records of individual contributions to the parish or institution shall be regarded as private and shall not be published without the permission of the contributor.

8. REPORTING VIOLATIONS OF THIS CODE

Personnel have a responsibility to report ethical misconduct on the part of other Church personnel, employees, and volunteers.

- 8.1 In cases where there are clear indications of illegal actions by personnel, notification should be made immediately to the proper Church and civil authorities.
- 8.2 In cases where there are clear indicators of unethical, but not illegal, actions by personnel, notification should be made to the proper Church authorities.
- 8.3 When personnel are uncertain whether a particular situation or course of conduct would violate these Standards, they should consult with peers knowledgeable about ethical issues and this Code or the Office for Protection of Minors, or the Regional Vicar in order to determine the proper response.

Acknowledgments:

The Priestly Life and Ministry Committee gratefully acknowledges the valuable assistance provided by the Code of Ethical Standards for Church Personnel from the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.

Additional acknowledgment is given to the Archdiocesan Board of Education in its development of ABE 4111.4d, Standards of Conduct which was adopted May 3, 2003

These standards combine ABE 4111.4d which was adopted May 3, 2003 and the Code of Ethical Standards initially approved August 8, 2003.

Most Rev. Jerome Hanus, OSB
Archbishop of Dubuque