

**STANDARD CODE OF CONDUCT**

We acknowledge that all individuals shall be treated with respect, courtesy, dignity, patience and integrity. Our children are the most precious gifts entrusted to our care.

**All Clergy, employees and volunteers of the Albany Diocese must follow this “Code of Conduct” when they are working with minors or vulnerable adults.**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ will;

- 1) read and follow the Guidelines for Professional Conduct for All Professional and Volunteer Personnel Who Work with Minors.
- 2) assume the full burden of responsibility for setting and maintaining clear and appropriate physical and emotional boundaries with minors and vulnerable adults.
- 3) show prudent discretion in the expression of affirmation used with minors and vulnerable adults. This includes refusing expensive gifts from minors and vulnerable persons and refraining from giving expensive gifts to minors and vulnerable adults. The following are examples of **appropriate** forms of affirmation with minors and vulnerable adults:
  - Hugs
  - Hand-shakes
  - Verbal Praise
  - Arms around shoulders
  - Sitting beside small children
  - Holding hands during Prayer
  - Pats on the shoulder or back
  - “High-Fives” and hand slapping
  - Touching hands, face, shoulders and arms of minors
  - Holding hands while walking small children
  - Kneeling or bending down for hugs with small children
  - Pats on the head when culturally appropriate
- 4) refrain from forms of touch such as tickling, wrestling and massaging which could be construed as sexual with minors or vulnerable adults.
- 5) assure that a meeting space with a minor or vulnerable adult has visual access. If this is not possible, make sure that another adult is present.
- 6) avoid driving alone with minors or vulnerable adults. In an emergency, and if at all possible, request the presence of another adult.
- 7) not consume alcohol products, use tobacco or profanity, nor be under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol when engaged in working with minors and vulnerable adults.
- 8) not share a bedroom with minors or vulnerable adults when there is no other adult supervision present in the room.
- 9) never provide minors or vulnerable adults with alcohol, or with videos, reading or graphic materials that are inappropriate or sexual in nature.
- 10) never initiate sexual behavior with a minor or vulnerable adult and will refuse it when the other invites it. I will report to my supervisor any sexual behavior initiated by a minor or vulnerable adult.
- 11) immediately report suspected violations of this Code of Conduct to the Principal, Program Director, Catechetical/Youth Ministry Leader, Pastor or Parish Life Director.

If the suspected violator is the Catechetical Leader or Youth Minister, the report should be made to the Pastor or Parish Life Director. If the suspected violator is the Principal, Program Director, Pastor or Parish Life Director, the report should be made to the School Superintendent, Executive Director of Catholic Charities, or the Vicar General. These individuals may be reached at (518) 453-6600.

This Code of Conduct does not abrogate or replace any other obligations that I have under any applicable law, guideline, policy or regulation.

**I agree to follow the Code of Conduct in my relationship with minors and vulnerable adults. I understand that violation of this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action or termination.**

Name (Please Print)	Signature	____/____/____ Date
Clergy, Employee, Volunteer – Please Print	Name of School/Parish/Agency	Location