



Acceptable Behavior Standards Policy

The Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth (“Diocese”) has established Acceptable Behavior Standards for all those who serve in or for our Church. These standards also apply for employees of Companies and other individuals who may have contact with children and/or young people in connection with the providing of goods or services to the Diocese. All such persons must:

- ❖ **Not engage in any interpersonal conduct that is prohibited by law.**
 - As a prime example, any verbal or nonverbal sexual behavior between an individual and a child or young person is inappropriate and forbidden. Further, illicit use of electronic media, whether through the internet, email, chat rooms, social networks, phone conversations, text messaging, photos, videos, or any other access, is expressly included in this prohibition.
- ❖ **Report all suspicion of sexual abuse as required by state law and diocesan policy.**
 - Any knowledge or reasonable suspicion of any person having an inappropriate relationship with a child or young person must be reported promptly to proper authorities.
- ❖ **Sustain respectful relationships with all those they serve, avoiding manipulation, sexual harassment and other abuses of the power.**
 - The dignity of each person must be recognized.
 - Actions or words that are disrespectful of anyone must be avoided.
 - Appropriate professional boundaries with colleagues must be maintained.
 - Healthy and positive behaviors towards all must be shown.
 - Procuring, providing, or using alcohol with or for persons under 21 years of age is forbidden.
 - Procuring, providing, or using controlled substances with or for anyone is forbidden.
- ❖ **Not be alone with a child or young person while providing goods and services to the Diocese.**
 - Two adults must be present at all times when children or youths are present.
 - A child or youth is never to be allowed in the vehicle used for providing goods and services.
- ❖ **Use discretion when initiating physical contact, respecting appropriate boundaries.**
 - Any display of affection should be made in a public setting in front of other group members and should respect the wishes of the other person.
- ❖ **Make a report both to their supervisors and to the Diocese regarding any incident where they became the recipient of sexual gestures or overtures by someone else.**
 - It is never appropriate to initiate or receive sexual advances during work time.
- ❖ **Report all observed violations of these Acceptable Behavior Standards to their supervisors and to the Diocese and document what is reported.**

Failure to comply with and/or violations of these Acceptable Behavior Standards are grounds for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.