

Ministry Vetting Process—Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Why is there a “ministry vetting process”?

The Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth has a vetting process to determine if ministries we would like to collaborate with are in line with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.

Why do we have to be vetted by the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth, even if we are not Catholic?

Non-Catholic ministries are required to go through the vetting process so that their Statement of Faith/Principle is evaluated before the ministry can be supported by the Knights of Columbus or any individual parishes.

What issues are you looking for during this process? Specifically, regarding pro-life ministries, we are looking for the following:

1. The ministry must be pro-life and always encourage their clients to choose life for their unborn children.
2. No matter what the reasons may be, the ministry must never encourage a client to get an abortion, nor refer her for an abortion.
3. The ministry must agree not to encourage, provide, or refer clients for contraception.
4. Ministries must not encourage or refer clients for sterilization.
5. The non-Catholic ministries that the Diocese collaborates with in our pro-life efforts must encourage clients in their faith background and not proselytize the clients in the faith background of the Center’s volunteers or employees.

If you recommend that we make certain changes to some of our policies or procedures, but we choose not to do so, can we still be approved as a ministry in collaboration with the Diocese of Fort Worth?

If you choose not to make the recommended changes, the vetting process will end. The ministry will not be approved by the Diocese unless the changes are made.

Why would being a ministry approved by the Diocese be beneficial for our ministry?

We are interested in collaborating with different pro-life ministries within the Diocese of Fort Worth to help more moms, babies, and families in need. Such a collaboration would benefit those in need in our community, especially those who are Catholic and need help and live within the area closest to your ministry. All vetted pro-life ministries are listed on our diocesan website here: <https://fwdioc.org/crisis-pregnancy>. Those who visit the site know they can trust these referrals and recommendations. Parishes and the Knights of Columbus throughout the Diocese of Fort Worth often contact us to find out what ministries have been vetted and are approved. Those parishes and the Knights of Columbus are interested in raising needed funds for the ministries, however they won't unless they know the ministry has been approved. Parishes and the Knights of Columbus cannot move forward with a fundraiser unless they have received an approval from the Diocese.

How long does the vetting process take?

The length of the process depends on several factors. It can take from only a few to several months. Here is a general summary of the process: Once the Respect Life Coordinator has received the requested materials from the ministry, the vetting of the documents will begin. The material is reviewed, and any concerns are brought to the attention of the Department Director of Evangelization and Catechesis. He then reviews the material, and suggested changes are shared with the ministry. Often, the ministry then consults their Board of Directors for the purpose of receiving approval to move forward. Any changes that are requested should be made and submitted to the Respect Life Coordinator for review. Once the Respect Life Coordinator and the Department Director of Evangelization and Catechesis approve the updated paperwork, a recommendation is sent to the Chancery of the Diocese of Fort Worth for final approval. Please note, approval in the early stages of the process is not a guarantee of the final approval of the ministry. That only happens through the Chancery (Vicar General, Chancellor, and Bishop).

What are the requested materials a ministry must submit for review?

1. Certificate of 501(c)(3) status
2. Statement of Faith and/or Principle
3. Documents or agreements volunteers and staff are required to sign
4. Website for volunteers/donors/staff
5. Website for clients

Are you trying to make our ministry Catholic?

No, we are not attempting to make non-Catholic pro-life ministries Catholic. We respect your ministry and your faith background.

Isn't the Diocese judging our ministry by requesting we make these updates or changes, especially to our Statement of Faith?

We are not placing judgment on your ministry, or the lifesaving work you do in your community. In most cases, we simply ask that the ministry offer an "alternate Statement of Faith" in addition to the existing Statement of Faith. Doing so respects the conscience rights of the Catholics who adhere to their faith background.