**Model SOP for Reporting Potential Abuse**

**Mandatory Reporting**

**The laws mandating reports of suspected abuse of minors or elders remain the bedrock of the Safe Environment Program as adopted by the Parish.**

**Minors:** Any cleric, consecrated religious, employee or volunteer of the parish is expected to report reasonable suspicion of abuse of any minor, consistent with the mandated reporter law of the State of Arizona.

The dual reporting protocol is recommended, in which reports are made both to local law enforcement (by calling 9-1-1) and to Department of Child services (888-SOS-CHILD or 888-767-2445). The latter call is especially important if a parent, guardian or other family member is the suspected perpetrator of abuse.

**Elders and other Vulnerable Adults**: It is also mandatory to make a report of reasonable suspicion of abuse, exploitation or neglect of an elder or an adult considered under the law to be vulnerable. Call Adult Protective Services (877-SOS-ADULT or 877-767-2385). In case of emergency, call law enforcement (9-1-1).

**Post Report Activity**

As our parish has adopted the Safe Environment Program promulgated by the Diocese of Tucson, the Office of Child, Adolescent and Adult Protection (OCAAP, 520-838-2513/2533) of the Diocese of Tucson must be notified after a report is made.

The person making the report should write out a succinct summary of what gave rise to the concern and when/to whom the report was made.

The person making the report and the pastor or his delegate should also keep a chronological log of the report and of follow up actions taken at the direction of the governmental agencies to which reports were made.

The summary of the report and chronological log of actions taken should be shared with OCAAP for the permanent record.

**Imprudent Behavior**

Suspected abuse of a minor or vulnerable adult or any other criminal behavior is not the only situation in which action is expected. Any suspected or observed violation of the norms of appropriate or prudent conduct, with minors, vulnerable adults or any adult with whom a cleric, religious, employee or volunteer is in a ministerial relationship, as established in the Code of Conduct and/or the Guidelines for the Prevention of and Response to Sexual Misconduct, as adopted by the parish, should be reported to the Pastor and/or the Compliance Officer of the parish.

All such complaints will be investigated internally and reported to the Department of Human Resources and/or the Office of Child, Adolescent and Adult Protection of the Diocese of Tucson.

This aspect of the reporting policy includes any inappropriate behavior, dress, attitude, language, or improper use of the computer.

**Other Reports**

If an adult reports sexual misconduct when he or she was a minor at the hands of a priest, deacon, or any worker in the church, no matter how long ago it is reported to have occurred, a report must be made to OCAAP, which will make a report to the Pima County Attorney’s Office. A report may also be made directly to law enforcement.

The individual should be encouraged to make an independent report to the Pima County Attorney’s Office or to local law enforcement.

If the individual would like to have counseling assistance, he or she should be instructed to call the Victim Assistance Program (800-234-0344).

Any adult who reports prior abuse as a minor by any person should be encouraged to report it independently to the Pima County Attorney’s Office or to local law enforcement.

**Rationale and Process**

The purpose of a report is not to summarily judge the person suspected of inappropriate conduct; making a report is done to initiate an investigation that will make clear what actually happened. The results of the investigation will either clear the individual against whom the allegation has been made or lead to corrective action, by civil authorities, Diocese, parish or school, as appropriate.

Making a report, therefore, should be done with discretion, maintaining confidentiality as much as possible. Only those with a genuine “need to know” should be informed.

In the same way, the identity of the person making the initial report also should be protected; however, it is important to recognize that in the course of many investigations it is necessary to directly or indirectly reveal the identity of the person making the report to the accused in order to allow him or her to make a response.

For all these reasons, it is a difficult thing to make a report. All personnel should be clear that any person making a good faith report is protected by law and must not be subject to any adverse consequences. No retaliatory action of any kind should be tolerated.