

Policies and Procedures

The Archdiocese of Los Angeles has implemented rigorous policies and procedures in order to provide a safe environment for children at parishes and parish schools:

- A mandatory “zero tolerance” policy means that any person — clergy or lay — found to be engaging in inappropriate sexual misconduct with a minor is reported to the authorities and can never work or volunteer for the archdiocese again.
- A man considering the priesthood must undergo a thorough screening process before he can enter St. John’s Seminary.
- Prior to ordination, a candidate for priesthood goes through a lengthy evaluation. No one is ordained unless the staff of St. John’s Seminary, including the lay faculty and formation advisors, concludes that the candidate has attained an emotional, psychological and sexual maturity appropriate for his age and for the celibate life of a priest.
- The Clergy Misconduct Oversight Board, comprised of clergy and lay persons, monitors all archdiocesan policies and procedures related to sexual abuse by clergy. All cases of alleged sexual misconduct by a priest or deacon are presented to the Board, which reviews all relevant information and makes a written recommendation to the archbishop.
- Every parish is mandated to have a Safeguard the Children Parish Committee to ensure the safe environ-

ment of our parishes and schools.

- The archdiocese requires all employees and volunteers who work with children to be fingerprinted and to have their backgrounds checked. Adults as well as teenagers working with children are required to sign a code of conduct. These guidelines delineate appropriate boundaries.
- VIRTUS® awareness and abuse prevention sessions are required for any adult working in any capacity with or around children. Participants learn to recognize warning signs that indicate an adult is engaged in an inappropriate relationship with a child.
- A self-protection program for all children and youth must be provided at the parish level.
- All teachers and catechists working with young people are trained to report to Child Protective Services or the local police department if they suspect a child or youth is being abused.
- The archdiocese informs and communicates with parishes and schools directly affected by ministerial misconduct involving minors.

(These policies comply with Articles 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 13 and 17 of the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*.)

Information on archdiocesan policies and procedures can be seen at <http://www.archdiocese.la/protecting/index.php>