

## Changes to the Gulf Atlantic Diocesan Sexual Misconduct Policy for Prevention and Reporting

Pg	TOPIC	CHANGES	OLD WORDING	NEW WORDING
5	Training	Clarified individual church's policy training	All employees, vestry, clergy, and those in leadership of children/youth must complete the diocesan training on this policy within six months of leadership and renew every two years; . . . Documentation is to be completed, submitted, and filed no later than Aug 31 <sup>st</sup> each year (see Appendix A).	All employees, vestry, clergy, and those in leadership of children/youth must complete the diocesan training on this policy, <b>as well as their individual church's policy</b> , within six months of accepting a leadership role and renew every two years. . . . Documentation is to be completed, submitted, and filed no later than <b>Jan 31<sup>st</sup></b> each year (see Appendix A).
6	Approval of SMPPR	Adjusted timeline	The Joint Leadership (JL) of the Diocese is comprised of the Standing Committee and the Diocesan Council. This Joint Leadership will review this manual during the first meeting of each calendar year and will provide any recommendations for possible revision of the document to the Bishop for approval. This review will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting as proof of the policies' amendment and annual approval by the Joint Leadership. All of the members of the Standing Committee and Diocesan Council will be expected to sign the Policy Acknowledgment (see Appendix B) during the February meeting and it will be submitted to the Diocesan Administrator for filing along with the minutes of that meeting.	The Joint Leadership (JL) of the Diocese is comprised of the Standing Committee and the Diocesan Council. This Joint Leadership will review this manual <b>prior to July 1<sup>st</sup></b> of each calendar year and will provide any recommendations for possible revision of the document to the Bishop for approval. This review will be recorded as proof of the policies' amendment and annual approval by the Joint Leadership. All of the members of the Standing Committee and Diocesan Council will be expected to sign the Policy Acknowledgment (see Appendix B) <b>before August 31<sup>st</sup></b> and it will be submitted to the Diocesan Administrator for filing and <b>distributed to each Rector. The signed policy will take effect the following year; congregations are expected to complete compliance by the first vestry meeting of the following calendar year. Signed forms for the leadership of the congregation are due to the diocese by January 31<sup>st</sup> of the following year.</b>
7	Investigations	Addition of third-party investigators	The Bishop may refer cases for further investigation under relevant canonical procedures when deemed appropriate. It is permissible, and sometimes advisable to use a third party to complete a further investigation.	Investigations will be conducted by a third party for further investigation under relevant canonical procedures at the direction of the Bishop.
12	Pornography	Addition	n/a	Pornography: all clergy are required to avoid viewing pornography at all times, not just while working or in church facilities. Any clergy struggling in this area should reach out to the Rev. Sam Pascoe (904-553-0017) for an assessment and help with recovery. This is offered without the involvement of the bishop.

14	Training	Clarified individual church's policy training	Employees/Vestry/Leaders of Children/Youth: All employees of diocesan congregations, all vestry members, and all leaders of children and youth need to complete diocesan approved training on issues of sexual misconduct.	Employees/Vestry/Leaders of Children/Youth: All employees of diocesan congregations, all vestry members, and all leaders of children and youth need to complete diocesan approved training, and <b>training for their individual church's policy</b> , on issues of sexual misconduct.
18	Investigations	Addition of third-party investigators	2. Any member of the clergy who believes himself or herself to be under imputation of sexual misconduct may request the Bishop to begin an investigation. The Bishop will determine if such an investigation is warranted. It is permissible, and sometimes advisable to use a third party to complete a further investigation.	2. Any member of the clergy who believes himself or herself to be under imputation of sexual misconduct may request the Bishop to begin a third-party investigation.
19 and 36	Compliance	Timeline for compliance	It will be the responsibility of the rector of each parish or clergy in charge of a congregation to ensure all clergy, vestry, employees (full or part-time), and leaders who regularly supervise children/youth activities, are made aware of the parish or congregation's policies and that those who are required to complete approved training do so. Appendix B may be used as an example of acknowledgment of receipt of parish policies and procedures. . . This documentation (Appendix A, B, and E) must be completed, submitted, and filed prior to Aug 31 <sup>st</sup> of every year.	<b>This copy will be distributed to each congregation in the fall of the calendar year with the understanding that the congregation has the rest of the calendar year to come into compliance with any changes.</b> It will be the responsibility of the rector of each parish or clergy in charge of a congregation to ensure all clergy, vestry, employees (full or part-time), and leaders who regularly supervise children/youth activities, are made aware of the parish or congregation's policies and that those who are required to complete approved training do so. Appendix B may be used as an example of acknowledgment of receipt of parish policies and procedures. . . This documentation (Appendix A, B, and E) must be completed, submitted, and filed <b>prior to Jan 31<sup>st</sup> of every year. The policy will be in effect through that calendar year. The expected timeline is:</b> <b>* July 1: Joint Leadership will review the policy and make recommended changes.</b> <b>* August 31: All changes have been accepted, Joint Leadership submits signed acknowledgement and approval (App B); new policy is sent to Rectors.</b> <b>* Fall semester: Any changes to be implemented the following year are introduced, training is updated accordingly, staff/employees/volunteers/vestry sign acknowledgement forms (App B).</b> <b>* January: New vestry members are trained and sign acknowledgement form. January 31<sup>st</sup>: all forms (App A, B, E) are submitted to the Diocesan Administrator for filing.</b>

24	Addictive Substances	Additions and clarifications	Clergy, staff members, volunteers, and participants in youth and children's ministries should refrain from the use, possession, or being under the influence of tobacco products, alcohol, or any illegal drugs while in church facilities, while traveling with or in the presence of children or their parents, during church-sponsored activities, or while working with or supervising children.	While in church facilities, while traveling with or in the presence of children or their parents, during church-sponsored activities, or while working with or supervising children: clergy, staff members, volunteers, and participants in youth and children's ministries should not use tobacco products, possess or use any illegal drugs, be under the influence of alcohol, and/or share or view pornographic material.
24	Social Media Policy	Moderate additions	<p>Social media avenues are important ways for youth ministry staff and volunteer leaders to connect with students. Their world is often constructed around social media, for better or worse. Having personal interactions in this venue allows adults to model appropriate behavior in social media, and it forms valuable connections with students.</p> <p>The Diocese strongly recommends that each church have a proactive policy for social media and other forms of electronic communication in the context of children's and youth ministry. Clergy, staff members, and volunteers shall refrain from connecting with students on social media when students are younger than the minimum age as established by each social media outlet.</p>	<p>Social media avenues are important ways for youth ministry staff and volunteer leaders to connect with students. Their world is often constructed around social media, for better or worse. Having personal interactions in this venue allows adults to model appropriate behavior in social media, and it forms valuable connections with students.</p> <p>The Diocese strongly recommends that each church have a proactive policy for social media and other forms of electronic communication in the context of children's and youth ministry. Clergy, staff members, and volunteers shall refrain from connecting with students on social media when students are younger than the minimum age as established by each social media outlet (usually 13).</p> <p>Sending sexually explicit or offensive communications (e.g., text messages, emails, social media messages or posts) is included in the definition of sexual harassment and will not be tolerated.</p> <p>Virtual spaces are to be treated the same as in-person spaces. This means two adults must be online with one youth (known as the two-adult rule), participants must be appropriately clothed, and conversation must be within 'public' view. For online conference calls, this means calls are not completed in the bedroom, and the parents are aware that the student is in conversation with the leaders. Use group apps rather than private messages. If a situation arises where only one adult is present, a minimum of two students must also be present.</p> <p>For those students under 13 (this is the usual minimum age for social media platforms by the platforms themselves), get parent permission for any communication and welcome the parents into that environment.</p> <p>Background checks and Ministry Safe</p>

				<p>training should still be completed and up-to-date for all online volunteers.</p> <p>Use personal interactions on social media avenues to model appropriate behavior and language, both on and off social media. Church leaders should be aware that their behavior reflects Christ and the Church.</p>
34	Investigations	Addition of third-party investigators	A. If the complaint is against a member of the clergy, the Bishop will appoint an impartial investigator to look into the complaint and report back to the Bishop. Upon completion of the investigation, the investigator will report his/her findings and conclusions to the Bishop so that the Bishop can take whatever action he and the chancellor deem appropriate.	A. If the complaint is against a member of the clergy, the Bishop will appoint an impartial third-party investigator. Upon completion of the investigation, the investigator will report his/her findings and conclusions to the Bishop so that the Bishop can take whatever action he and the chancellor deem appropriate.
35	Investigations	Addition of third-party investigators	2. Any member of the clergy who believes himself or herself to be under imputation of sexual misconduct may request the Bishop to begin an investigation. The Bishop will determine if such an investigation is warranted. It is permissible, and sometimes advisable to use a third party to complete a further investigation.	2. Any member of the clergy who believes himself or herself to be under imputation of sexual misconduct may request the Bishop to begin a third-party investigation.
37	Training	Clarified individual church's policy training	We further certify that all clergy; employees (full or part-time); leaders of children/youth; and vestry members will complete Ministry Safe prior to service/employment and the diocesan approved training within six months of service.	We further certify that all clergy, employees (full or part-time), and leaders of children/youth will complete Ministry Safe Awareness prior to service/employment. We certify that all clergy, employees (full or part-time), leaders of children/youth, and vestry will complete the diocesan approved training, and individual church training, within six months of service.
39	Appendix A	Deadline change	Return this signed form to the Gulf Atlantic Diocesan Office not later than August 31 <sup>st</sup> of every year.	Return this signed form to the Gulf Atlantic Diocesan Office not later than <b>January 31<sup>st</sup></b> of every year.
40	Appendix B	Date of recent revision	and that it was adopted by the Bishop and Joint Leadership, May 9 <sup>th</sup> , 2013, revised and updated September, 2018.	. . . and that it was adopted by the Bishop and Joint Leadership, May 9 <sup>th</sup> , 2013, revised and updated <b>July, 2020</b> .
42-43	Reporting	Updated	Kept previous reporting information	Added prompts for reporting

Note: there were grammatical changes throughout; no change to content unless specifically listed above. Formatting changes were also made, including consistency with capitalization, lists, and Oxford commas.