

The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of green, ranging from light lime to dark forest green. The shapes are primarily triangles and polygons, creating a dynamic, layered effect. The text is centered on a white background within this design.

Online EIM Training

**POLICIES,  
REPORTING PROCEDURES  
AND CODE OF ETHICS**

# Policies

- ▶ The Diocese of Austin Policies on Ethics and Integrity in Ministry (EIM) were first issued in 2001. They have been revised every three years since; most recently in 2018.
- ▶ The EIM Policies provide procedures for ensuring those who work or volunteer in ministry in our diocese to minors or elders are screened and trained, guidance for appropriate behavior in ministry and requirements for reporting abuse and unethical behavior in ministry.
- ▶ EIM Policies follow all requirements set forth in the U.S. Catholic Bishop's Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, a set of national standards for the Catholic Church in the U.S., approved in 2002.

# Boundaries

- ▶ Physical Boundaries protect our bodies.
- ▶ Emotional Boundaries protect our feelings.
- ▶ Behavioral boundaries protect our actions.

# Examples of Appropriate Behavior

One of the most effective ways for the people of God to protect children from neglect and abuse and other unethical behavior is to know how to interact properly and respect the boundaries of others.

- ▶ Individuals required to be EIM compliant may only use appropriate contact with minors. Examples of such contact include but are not limited to:
  - ▶ verbal praise;
  - ▶ brief side hugs or arm around the shoulder;
  - ▶ brief pat on the shoulder or upper back;
  - ▶ hand-shakes, “high-fives”, knuckle bumps or hand slaps;
  - ▶ brief touching of hand, face, head, shoulder or arm of minor;
  - ▶ holding hands while walking with small children;
  - ▶ sitting beside small children;
  - ▶ kneeling or bending down for a brief hug with small children; and
  - ▶ holding hands during prayer.

# Examples of Boundary Violation and Inappropriate Behavior in Ministry

- ▶ Individuals required to be EIM compliant must not use inappropriate contact with minors. Examples of inappropriate contact with minors include but are not limited to:
  - ▶ long or inappropriate embraces;
  - ▶ kisses on the mouth;
  - ▶ holding minors over three years old on the lap or in one's arms, and holding younger minors should only be "as needed" (e.g. for comfort) or at the invitation of the parent;
  - ▶ touching knees, legs, buttocks, chests or genital areas;
  - ▶ being alone in isolated areas such as closets, staff-only areas or other private rooms;
  - ▶ touching or playing with hair of a minor;
  - ▶ being on a bed with a minor (unless designated as "seating space" during daytime hours);
  - ▶ wrestling with minors, tickling minors or piggyback rides;
  - ▶ any type of massage, whether given by minor to adult or adult to minor;
  - ▶ any form of unwanted affection;

# Boundary Violation and Inappropriate Behavior in Ministry, continued

- ▶ comments that relate to physique, body development, express affection or involve other boundary violations (this includes comments that are positive or negative, oral or written via any form of media);
- ▶ the use of physical force, including spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force with minor, particularly for behavior management of a minor;
- ▶ swearing at a minor, or speaking to a minor in a way that is threatening, intimidating, shaming, demeaning, or humiliating;
- ▶ abusing, exploiting, or neglecting a minor;
- ▶ encouraging a minor to violate the law;
- ▶ offering alcohol, tobacco products, illegal drugs, or pornography to a minor;
- ▶ inviting a minor to the private accommodations or a residence without the presence of parent or legal guardian, or another program minister; or

# Boundary Violation and Inappropriate Behavior in Ministry, continued

- ▶ engaging in the following in the presence of minors:
  - ▶ swearing or using vulgar language to an offensive degree;
  - ▶ being under the influence of alcohol;
  - ▶ using, possessing, or being under the influence of illegal drugs;
  - ▶ possessing or displaying sexually oriented or morally inappropriate printed or electronic materials (e.g. magazines, videos, films, clothing, or internet sites);
  - ▶ discussing sexual activities or engaging in sexually-oriented conversations with minors unless the conversation is part of a legitimate lesson and discussion for teenagers regarding human sexuality issues (on such occasions, the lessons will convey to youth the Church's teachings on these topics and unanswered or unaddressed questions will be referred to the parent or guardian for clarification or counseling.);
  - ▶ undressing or being nude;
  - ▶ taking a shower; or
  - ▶ sleeping in the same bed, sleeping bag or tent with a minor, unless the adult is an immediate family member of the minor.

# Abuse Reporting Requirements

Texas State law requires any adult citizen to report suspicions of abuse and/or neglect to the police or to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. The report should be made by the first person to be made aware of the allegation.

If church personnel are involved, persons who are required to be EIM compliant must also notify the church using the Notice of Concern or calling the EIM Office at (512)949-2447 so the appropriate steps can be taken to protect the vulnerable.

# Reporting Procedures

- ▶ **If in immediate danger, call 911**
- ▶ Report Abuse by Church Personnel
  - ▶ To DFPS/Abuse Hotline (800) 252-5400, and
  - ▶ To the diocese at (512) 949-2447 (or on a Notice of Concern form)
- ▶ Report Unethical Behavior by Church Personnel to the diocese at (512) 949-2447 (or on a Notice of Concern form)
- ▶ Report Abuse by Bishops to the Catholic Bishop Abuse Reporting Service (800) 276-1562

# Reporting Procedures

When the diocese receives a complaint or Notice of Concern alleging unethical behavior, the diocese classifies the information into one of the following categories:

- ▶ information alleging abuse of a minor;
- ▶ information alleging abuse of a minor who is now an adult;
- ▶ information alleging abuse of an elderly adult or an adult with a disability; or
- ▶ information alleging any other unethical behavior.

## Response to a Report of Abuse of a Minor, Elderly Adult, or Adult with a Disability

When the diocese receives a report of abuse of a minor, elderly adult, or adult with a disability, the diocese follows the legal requirements for reporting the information to authorities (such as local law enforcement or the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services) and cooperates with authorities in investigations.

# Response to a Report of Abuse of a Minor, Elderly Adult, or Adult with a Disability

When the diocese first receives a report of abuse, the Office of Ethics and Integrity in Ministry contacts the reporting individual to

- ▶ acknowledge receipt and explain the report will be referred to a diocesan staff member (who may be in touch for additional information as needed), and
- ▶ remind the reporting individual of the duty to report the matter to law enforcement if he or she has cause to believe a minor, elderly adult, or adult with disabilities has been or is being abused.

A representative of the appropriate office will be assigned as the contact and will direct the investigation of the report.

# Code of Ethics

This Code of Ethics is our shared commitment to uphold the EIM Policies of the diocese while serving in ministries requiring compliance.

You will indicate on the Training Verification form that you have read and agree to abide by this Code of Ethics while serving in ministry in the Diocese of Austin.

I, (name), while serving in ministry in the Diocese of Austin, and in my personal life, commit to:

- ▶ strive to exhibit ethical behavior and integrity, free from any scandal;
- ▶ conduct myself in a moral manner consistent with the discipline, norms and teachings of the Catholic Church;
- ▶ accept responsibility in the protection of minors, elderly adults and adults with disabilities from abuse;
- ▶ adhere to the applicable laws regarding the reporting of abuse;
- ▶ report concerns about unethical behavior to the diocese and my pastor, principal, or supervisor; and to
- ▶ follow the diocesan policies on Ethics and Integrity in Ministry (EIM), including remaining EIM compliant.

Please visit [www.austindiocese.org/eim-policies](http://www.austindiocese.org/eim-policies)  
to learn more about the diocesan  
Policies on Ethics and Integrity in Ministry

## Conclusion

- ▶ Thank you for participating in this EIM training and for your ministry to the church.
- ▶ Remember to submit your Training Verification form in order to receive credit for this training.

**Hail Mary**, Full of Grace, The Lord is with thee.  
Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the  
fruit of thy womb, Jesus. **Holy Mary**, Mother of God,  
pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of death.

# OFFICE OF ETHICS & INTEGRITY IN MINISTRY

[www.austindioocese.org/eim](http://www.austindioocese.org/eim)

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