

Volunteer Code of Conduct

The Archdiocese of Detroit expresses its utmost gratitude to all volunteers. “Volunteering is a grace from God,” Pope Francis stated, urging volunteers to “please accept it with strength.” The Pope further added that “volunteers are the strength of the Church” as they are “a dimension of the Church’s mission because you go there with your volunteering and maintain so many actions of the Church.” Bringing his message to a close, the Pope expressed his gratitude to the volunteers for their generosity – the generosity that every volunteer has.

1. Volunteers are expected to read, understand and comply with archdiocesan policies and procedures addressing the protection of children and youth including but not limited to those requiring the immediate reporting of all concerns about suspicious inappropriate behavior (whether physical, emotional, psychological or sexual) and boundary violations to their pastor, principal, Episcopal Vicar for Child and Youth Protection **(866) 343-8055**.
2. I will maintain a professional role and be mindful of the trust and power I possess.
3. I will not engage in any form of inappropriate conduct with a minor or a vulnerable adult, regardless of who initiates such conduct. Any violation of Code of Conduct will result in consequences up to and including dismissal or withdrawal from volunteer work.
 - a. For purposes of these Standards of Behavior, “minor” is any person under the age of 18.
 - b. “Vulnerable adult” is any adult in a state of infirmity, physical or mental deficiency, or deprivation of personal liberty which, in fact, even occasionally, limits their ability to understand or to want or otherwise resist the offense.
4. To achieve this, I WILL NOT:
 - a. Have a personal relationship with any minor or vulnerable adult with whom I also have a relationship through my volunteer service, even if the minor or vulnerable adult initiates such personal relationship.
 - b. Touch a minor or vulnerable adult in a sexual way or other inappropriate manner such as pinching, brushing the body, pushing, patting, feeling, tickling, rubbing, or massaging.
 - c. Be alone with a minor or vulnerable adult in a residence, rectory, sleeping facility, or any closed room.
 - d. Share any sleeping arrangements such as bed, sleeping bag or small tent with a minor or vulnerable adult.
 - e. Take an overnight trip alone with a minor or vulnerable adult.
 - f. Acquire, possess or distribute any form of sexual material to a minor or vulnerable adult.
 - g. Introduce sexually oriented topics, vocabulary, music, jokes, propositions, recordings, films, games, websites, computer software or entertainment to a minor or vulnerable adult unless it has been approved by the Office of Child and

Youth Protection and the agency or department responsible for developing the educational content.

- h. Provide alcohol, cigarettes, marijuana or controlled substances to a minor or vulnerable adult.
 - i. Use, possess, or be under the influence of illegal drugs, or be under the influence of prescription or over-the-counter medication due to misuse.
 - j. Use alcohol when engaged in ministering to a minor or vulnerable adult.
 - k. Engage in physical discipline for behavior management of minors or vulnerable adults.
 - l. Humiliate, ridicule, threaten, harass (verbally or physically), or degrade another person.
 - m. Use profanity or vulgarities in the presence of minors or vulnerable adults.
 - n. Be nude (partially or full) in the presence of minors or vulnerable adults.
 - o. Photograph minors or vulnerable adults without a written consent in the form of a release from a parent or legal guardian.
 - p. Communicate with a minor or vulnerable adult through the use of electronic means, except when delivering information regarding a program, event, or school function.
5. MEASURES TO AID OBSERVANCE OF THE STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR To help me keep the promises in this CODE OF CONDUCT, I WILL:
- a. Report any suspected child abuse or abuse of a vulnerable adult, including child pornography, to the proper authorities.
 - b. Avoid gratuitous physical contact with a minor or vulnerable adult. Gratuitous physical contact with minors or vulnerable adults can be misconstrued, especially in private settings.
 - c. Avoid overnight stays with a minor or vulnerable adult unless there is another adult present in a supervisory role.
 - d. Avoid providing overnight accommodations for minors or vulnerable adults in private residences or rectories.
 - e. Avoid driving alone in a vehicle with a minor or vulnerable adult.
 - f. Have more than one child and at least one other adult present when using one's own home for youth work.
 - g. Assume the full burden for setting and maintaining clear, appropriate physical and emotional boundaries in all ministerial relationships.
 - h. Refrain from giving gifts to a minor or vulnerable adult without advance knowledge and approval of the parent, guardian or caregiver.
 - i. Avoid meeting privately with minors or vulnerable adults in rooms, offices, or similar areas where there is no window or where the door does not remain open.
 - j. Ensure that all activities involving minors or vulnerable adults (extra-curricular, catechetical, youth ministry, scouting, athletics etc.) for which I am responsible have been approved in advance by my supervisor or administrator.

- k. Have an adequate number of adults present at events. A minimum of two adults in supervisory roles must always be present during activities for minors and vulnerable adults.
 - l. Ensure no minors or vulnerable adults are left unattended after program/activity concludes.
 - m. Avoid taking minors and vulnerable adults away from the parish, school, or agency for field trips, etc. without another adult present in a supervisory role. Obtain written parental/guardian permission before such activities. Permission slips must include the type, locations, dates, and times of the activity, and emergency contact numbers of minor's or vulnerable adult's parent, guardian, or caregiver.
6. **PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS** These are some practical suggestions for identifying permissible and impermissible conduct. Appropriate affection between volunteers and minors or vulnerable adults constitutes a positive part of Church life and ministry. Nonetheless, any touching can be misunderstood and must be considered with great discretion. Depending on the circumstances, the following forms of affection are customarily (but not always) regarded as appropriate and applicable when initiated by the minor or vulnerable adult:
- a. Verbal praise
 - b. Handshakes
 - c. "High-fives," hand slapping and "fist bumps"
 - d. Brief pats on the shoulder or back
 - e. Hugs (brief)
 - f. Holding hands while walking
 - g. Sitting beside
 - h. Holding hands during prayer
 - i. Pats on the head when culturally appropriate
7. In order to maintain the safest possible environment for minors and vulnerable adults, the following are examples of affection that are **NOT TO BE USED**:
- a. Inappropriate or lengthy embraces
 - b. Kisses
 - c. Holding minors over four years old on the lap
 - d. Touching buttocks, chest, knees, legs or genital areas
 - e. Being with minors or vulnerable adults in isolated areas such as bedrooms, closets, staff-only areas or other private and closed rooms
 - f. Inappropriate physical affection in all places, non-public as well as public
 - g. Being reclined with a minor or vulnerable adult
 - h. Wrestling or tickling minors or vulnerable adults
 - i. Piggyback rides
 - j. Any type of massage given by minor or vulnerable adult to adult, or by adult to minor or vulnerable adult

- k. Any form of unwanted affection
- l. Compliments that relate to physique or body development
- m. Gratuitous application of sunscreen or any other topical salves, ointments etc.