

# Virtus Training Program

## Catholic Diocese of Cleveland

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Persons who serve our children as priest, deacon, seminarian, religious sister or brother, certified pastoral minister, parish life coordinator, member of a pastoral team, employee or Volunteer of the diocese or a diocesan parish, institution or organization, or in any office appointed by the Bishop, are among the faith community's most valuable assets. They contribute to the spiritual, emotional, intellectual and physical well-being of our children. Reasonable efforts should be undertaken to ensure that both applicants for employment and Volunteers (regardless of whether they are expected to have unsupervised access to children) are screened appropriately and thus deemed suitable for such work.

Prospective Volunteers will be required to submit a written application with three references, and to sign a release authorizing the communication of information received as part of the screening process to the diocese.

All training programs designed to certify clerics, employees and Volunteers of the diocese and of diocesan parishes, institutions and organization are to include segments that address child sexual abuse. The programs will specifically address the obligations for reporting suspected child sexual abuse to civil and church authorities and the consequences of the failure to report.

The VIRTUS® program help the Church to be a safe haven for children and a messenger for child sexual abuse prevention within the Church and society in general. We seek to achieve this lofty goal through our child sexual abuse prevention program: Protecting God's Children®.

Supervisors, coordinators or superiors shall require employees and Volunteers under their control to submit to a criminal records check. The diocese shall develop and publicize guidelines for the repetition of criminal records checks based upon a recommended frequency.

All volunteers must be provided with a copy of the Policy for the Safety of Children in Matters of Sexual Abuse and a copy of the Standards of Conduct in Ministry or with instructions on how to access these documents on the Diocesan website. They must submit written acknowledgement that they have read these documents.

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