

St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Hopkinton, Massachusetts Policy on Sexual Misconduct, Harassment, and Exploitation

St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Hopkinton, Massachusetts is committed to providing a church and work environment free of sexual misconduct, or any type of bullying or harassment, or any threat thereof.

Sexual misconduct in any program or activity—officially sanctioned or informal— is wrong and is not to be engaged in by any St. Paul's lay or professional church worker, volunteer, visitor or member. It is a violation of trust, an inappropriate use of power, and is in all cases a breach of professional ethics.

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

As defined by the 70th General Convention of the Episcopal Church. The following definitions and regulations developed by the Episcopal Church are authoritative and binding upon St. Paul's Episcopal Church of Hopkinton, Massachusetts.

- **Sexual Abuse** Sexual involvement or conduct by a cleric or other church employee or volunteer with a person who is a minor or is legally incompetent.
- **Sexual Harassment** Unwelcome or undesired sexually oriented humor or language, questions or comments about sexual behavior or preference, physical contact, inappropriate comments about clothing or physical appearance, or repeated requests for social engagements, in a situation where there is an employment, mentor, or colleague relationship between persons involved.
- **Sexual Exploitation** A betrayal of trust in a pastoral relationship by the development or the attempted development, of a sexual or romantic relationship between the cleric or other church worker and a person with whom she or he has a pastoral or fiduciary relationship, whether or not there is apparent consent.

PASTORAL RELATIONSHIP

A relationship between a cleric, employee or volunteer and any person to whom such cleric, employee or volunteer provides counseling, pastoral care, spiritual direction or guidance or from whom such cleric, employee or volunteer has received confession or confidential or privileged information. (The above definition applies to such lay pastoral care giving as Stephen Ministers, Lay Eucharistic Ministers and Lay Eucharistic Visitors, Lay Pastoral visitors or similar pastoral care programs.)

CHURCH WORKER

A church worker is defined as any member of the clergy, either paid or volunteer, or any member of the laity working on behalf of the Church who is engaging in pastoral relationships.

CHILD ABUSE

Child abuse refers to harm or threatened harm to a child's health or welfare, which can occur

through non-accidental physical or mental injury, sexual abuse or attempted sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or attempted sexual exploitation.

POLICIES REGARDING SEXUAL RESPONSIBILITY

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT PROHIBITED

The Diocese of Massachusetts strictly prohibits sexual misconduct by any ordained person, aspirant, Postulant, or seminarian sponsored by or working in this diocese, and by any lay employee or volunteer serving in any capacity for the Diocese of Massachusetts, any diocesan-related institution or any parish or mission congregation of the Diocese of Massachusetts.

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

The Diocese of Massachusetts strictly prohibits interaction with children and youth by any one with a civil or criminal record of child sexual or physical abuse or who has admitted prior abuse or anyone known to have a paraphiliac diagnosis (including pedophilia, exhibitionism, voyeurism) as defined by the American Psychiatric Association.

Only after a person has attended a church for six months should they be permitted to work with youth or children. This "waiting period" will give the church an additional opportunity to evaluate applicants and volunteers, and will help to repel persons seeking immediate access to children. Two adult supervisors must be present during any church activity with youth or children. One of these adults must be over the age of 21. This policy will reduce the risk of false accusations. All employees or volunteers that are involved with overnight activities or formal counseling of children must submit to a criminal background check prior to undertaking those activities. No corporal punishment shall be used to discipline children in any parish, institution or program sponsored by institutions of the Diocese of Massachusetts.

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING

All incidents of sexual abuse shall be reported to the relevant law enforcement authorities in conformity with applicable law.

PERSONNEL AND HIRING PROCEDURES

Prior to ordination, employment or acceptance into the diocese (either through initial licensing or acceptance of a letter dimissory), thorough background checks shall be made of all clergy coming into the Diocese of Massachusetts, aspirants, postulants and candidates, as well as volunteers who regularly supervise youth activities (excluding unpaid Sunday School teachers), and employees. Background checks shall include, at a minimum, inquiries of all bishops having past or present canonical authority over the individual, all schools attended by the individual during the past 10 years, and all employers during the past 10 years. If there has been more than one employer during the previous 10 years, then inquiries will be made of the two most recent employers. A written record of background and reference checks shall be made and kept indefinitely on file.

PASTORAL COUNSELING AND SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

The diocese requires that clergy and other pastoral care providers have ongoing professional supervision or refer an individual to professional counseling after six sessions have been held. Fees or donations for pastoral care are prohibited; any person charging fees for counseling outside the scope of church employment must possess appropriate professional credentials and proof of separate professional liability insurance, including coverage for Sexual Misconduct, in force at all times. Persons practicing formal spiritual direction shall submit that ministry to peer or supervisory review with a spiritual advisor approved by the bishop.