

Episcopal Diocese of Upper South Carolina policies:

- Church leaders must recognize the power differential that exists between them and the recipients of their pastoral ministrations. Church leaders are not to exploit the trust and dependency of persons entrusted to their care.
- All church workers must understand that while appropriate personal relationships have potential for enhancing ministry and parish life, some attractions and relationships may be hurtful to individuals and the community-at-large.
- Consent to an inappropriate sexual or romantic relationship does not make that relationship appropriate under Diocesan policies. Church workers have an independent obligation under Diocesan policies to abstain from inappropriate relationships, regardless of who consents or initiates them.
- All church workers must be aware of the need for prudence. In their relationships with others, they may be vulnerable to sexually aggressive, even predatory, persons who may seek them out in the parish, at conferences, or elsewhere.

Policies and church workers

- All church workers must also be aware that even appropriate actions may be misunderstood or misrepresented. It is therefore important that adult leaders, including clergy, ensure that they are not left alone with any child or teenager. Clergy, likewise, should avoid situations where their being alone with an adult parishioner might raise an issue of inappropriateness.
- All church workers must seek counsel from their priest or the Bishop if they are at risk of acting on sexual or romantic attraction to a parishioner, counselee, or counselor.
- All church workers have an ethical obligation to respond to the knowledge of sexually exploitative behavior of colleagues by reporting the information to the appropriate ecclesiastical authority and by seeking the counsel and pastoral guidance of a spiritual advisor.
- All clergy, counselors, and child care workers in a childcare center, are required by state law to report to local authorities any instance of child neglect or child abuse “when in the person’s professional capacity the person has received information which gives the person reason to believe that a child has been or may be abused or neglected

as defined in S.C. Code Ann. § 20-7-490.” S.C. Code Ann. § 20-7-510(A). Any other person “who has a reason to believe that a child’s physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse and neglect *may* report.” S.C. Code Ann. § 20-7-510(C) (emphasis added).

The following behaviors are prohibited:

- Any behavior defined below as “Sexual Misconduct.”
- Absent a marriage relationship, any sexual contact between a ministry-provider and the recipient of that care.
- Any sexual contact between an adult and a “minor” or a “vulnerable adult”, as they are defined by state law.
- Any behavior defined below as “Sexual Harassment,” specifically including inappropriate sexual language or behavior where an employment, mentor or colleague relationship exists.
- Physical abuse or crimes of sexual violence and non-consensual criminal sexual behavior.
- Non-physical abuse or non-violent crimes such as child pornography, voyeurism and exhibitionism.
- Participation in any ministry with children or teenagers by anyone with a history of child abuse, with a criminal record of child abuse, or with a paraphiliac diagnosis, as defined by the American Psychiatric Association. Such individuals are forbidden access to children and youth and are prohibited from engaging in any ministry with them.

These Diocesan policies apply in all activities conducted in the name of this Diocese, its parishes, missions, committees and Diocesan institutions. They are, in many cases, more rigorous than the requirements of civil and criminal law. This rigor reflects the Diocese’s commitment to limit the opportunity for sexual misconduct and to respond seriously to it when it occurs.

Additional Policies for Youth Protection

- Training for adult leaders working with children and teenagers is mandatory.
- Anyone involved in youth ministry leadership on the Diocesan level is expected to be involved in his or her local parish or mission.

- Two adults must be present for all youth events, or the events must be cancelled. If the event is overnight with youth of both sexes, at least one male and one female adult leader must be present.
- An adult youth worker, who is not a family member, may not share a room with a youth.
- All Parish or Diocesan youth events must provide eight hours of scheduled time for sleep on all overnight events.
- There will be separate facilities for male and female bathing and showers as well as separate sleeping quarters. This applies to youth and adults.
- A youth should never be left in the exclusive care of one adult. The youth must remain in a visual line of sight by other adults.
- All youth events operate under an open door policy: Clergy, staff, parents, and church members have the right to observe any event at any time, with or without advance notice.
- Youth workers should meet on a regular basis with their supervisors to openly discuss problems, accountability, and policies.
- Children, youth, parents, and leaders will be educated about issues of sexual abuse and misconduct. The 3R's (Recognize, Resist, Report) will be taught.
- At times when confidential youth and adult conferences are needed, another adult, preferably a parent of the youth, must be notified of the place and time of consultation.
- Older minor children may not be left solely responsible for the care of young children.