

7.0 INVESTIGATION BY ARCHDIOCESAN PERSONNEL

Upon receiving a report of Abuse, Neglect, or Misconduct with a Minor suspected to have been committed by Church Personnel, the appropriate Archdiocesan personnel are convened by the Director of the Office of Child and Youth Protection or a designee to assist in investigating and providing both immediate and on-going care and assistance to victims, their families, and members of the affected church communities. Investigations take place and pastoral care is extended whether the Abuse, Neglect, or Misconduct with a Minor was recent or occurred many years in the past. Because the Archdiocese cooperates with civil authorities, an Archdiocesan investigation of reports of suspected Abuse or Neglect by Church Personnel might be delayed pending investigation by the Department of Social Services and/or Law Enforcement.

When the Archdiocese investigates a report of possible Abuse by Church Personnel, the following guidelines apply. These guidelines may be modified as appropriate for the particular circumstances. They may also be used, with appropriate modifications, for reports of suspected Neglect or Misconduct with Minors or in instances when the accused is not Church Personnel but is associated with the Archdiocese or a Covered Entity (e.g., a student or parent of a student in a Catholic school, a parishioner, or a recipient of services).

- 7.1** The Director of the Office of Child and Youth Protection will be assisted by appropriate personnel in investigating and responding to allegations of abuse. Appropriate personnel will speak with the person(s) making the report and others who may have relevant information in order to obtain as clear and detailed information as possible.
- 7.2** After receiving the initial report, the Director of the Office of Child and Youth Protection or a designee will determine the specific steps needed to proceed, guided by the following values:
 - 7.2.1** The safety and protection of children and youth.
 - 7.2.2** A fair and honest search for the truth.
 - 7.2.3** The need to provide appropriate outreach to victims.
 - 7.2.4** The need to be in compliance with civil and canon law.
 - 7.2.5** The right of all persons to be treated fairly.
 - 7.2.6** The need to investigate and take appropriate action in all cases of alleged Abuse or Misconduct with a Minor.
 - 7.2.7** The need to make a report to the Archbishop or his designee in a timely manner.

- 7.3** Victims of Abuse, Neglect, or Misconduct with a Minor by Church Personnel are offered appropriate support.
 - 7.3.1** The Office of Child and Youth Protection will assist the person in obtaining pastoral care and counseling, if it is desired.
 - 7.3.2** The Office of Child and Youth Protection will explain, as fully as possible, the process that is being undertaken.
 - 7.3.3** The Office of Child and Youth Protection will advise the person of the reporting requirements under state law. The person will be informed of his/her right to also report to the civil authorities.
- 7.4** Archdiocesan personnel will meet with the person who is accused.
 - 7.4.1** If the accused is a religious or a cleric from another diocese, the investigation and pastoral outreach to all involved will be coordinated with the appropriate Major Superior or Bishop.
 - 7.4.2** Archdiocesan personnel will make a recommendation to the Covered Entity regarding the employment/volunteer service status of Church Personnel while the preliminary investigation is taking place and/or pending the completion of the investigation.
 - 7.4.3** Archdiocesan personnel will assist the accused in obtaining pastoral care and counseling, if it is appropriate.
 - 7.4.4** Archdiocesan personnel will remind the accused of the right to retain both civil and canonical counsel.
 - 7.4.5** Archdiocesan personnel will explain, as fully as possible, the process that is being undertaken.
 - 7.4.6** The accused will be instructed to have no contact with the person(s) making the allegation or with the victim(s).
- 7.5** The Archdiocese of Baltimore will cooperate with any investigation being conducted by the Department of Social Services and/or law enforcement.