

# THE STANDARD CODE OF CONDUCT<sup>1</sup>

*Our Children are the most precious gifts entrusted to our care. We acknowledge that all individuals shall be treated with respect, courtesy, dignity, patience and integrity.*

## I will:

1. Assume the full burden of responsibility for setting and maintaining clear and appropriate physical and emotional boundaries with minors<sup>2</sup>.
2. Show prudent discretion in the expressions of affirmation used with minors. This includes refusing expensive gifts from minors and refraining from giving expensive gifts to minors. The following are examples of appropriate forms of affirmation with minors.

Hugs	Arms around the shoulders
Pats on the shoulder or back	Holding hands while walking with small
Handshakes	Sitting beside small children
“High-fives” and hand-slapping	Kneeling or bending down for hugs with small
Verbal praise	Holding hands during prayer
Touching hands, faces, shoulders and arms of minors	Pats on the head when culturally appropriate

3. Refrain from forms of touch such as tickling, wrestling or massaging, which could be construed as sexual with minors.
4. Assure that a meeting space with a minor or vulnerable adult has visual access. If this is not possible, make sure that another adult is present.
5. Avoid driving alone with minors. In an emergency, request the presence of another adult.
6. Not consume alcohol products, use tobacco products or profanity nor be under the influence of prescribed drugs that impair judgment, illegal drugs or alcohol when engaged in working with minors.
7. Not share a bedroom with minors when there is no other adult supervision present in the room.
8. Never provide minors with alcohol, drugs or with videos, reading or graphic materials that are inappropriately sexual in nature.
9. Not access or possess child pornography
10. Never initiate sexual behavior with a minor and will refuse it even when the other invites it. I will report to my supervisor any sexual behavior initiated by a minor.
11. Read and abide by the Diocesan policy for reporting allegations of sexual abuse.<sup>3</sup>

This code of conduct does not abrogate or replace any other obligations that I have under any applicable law, guideline, policy or regulation. Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Please Circle One)                      Clergy                      Employee                      Volunteer

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and location of school/parish/agency: \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>1</sup> All clergy, employees, and volunteers of the Albany Diocese are required to sign and follow this Code of Conduct when they are working with minors. The signed code of conduct will be kept on file.

<sup>2</sup> This includes children and youth under the age of 18 and adults who habitually lack the use of reason. <sup>3</sup> See “[How to Report Sexual Abuse.](#)”