

ROADMAP FOR AUDIT SUCCESS

[Training Year 2021-2022]

Preparation for Compliance Evaluation for the Charter Report for the Protection of Minors

This document is a stepwise outline of recommendations to prepare for the mandatory Compliance Evaluation report that all parishes and organizations must submit by 15 July 2022 for the current training year (1 July 2021 through 30 June 2022).

- 1) **Read the *Policy and Procedures for the Protection of Minors (PPPM)*:** A working knowledge of *Articles 1 through 6* is necessary to understand the requirements for the management of personnel and safety of minors. (Unless otherwise stated, all references to “policy” in this instruction refers to the PPPM document.) Take careful note of appendices that are referenced in the text. *Appendix I* should be kept handy when reading the text because it contains a list of terms and their definitions that will add clarity to the reading. The appendices were designed to help in the functional application of the policy. You will find various required forms and also optional forms plus checklists to help organize the procedure.
- 2) **List your people:** Make a list of all employees and adult volunteers (including religious sisters and brothers) but not the priests or deacons since they are tracked by the Chancery. Record the names on a tracking sheet, either on computer or manually. For a good example, locate the downloadable file called the *Master Record for Tracking Requirements (Form)* on the [DioceseofGallup.org Website](http://DioceseofGallup.org). [To locate this form: Select the “Youth Protection” tab at the top of the page, then select the choice “Safe Environment” and scroll down to the section called “Program Aids” which is under the heading “Official Policies and Procedures.” You will find many other useful documents and forms in that location.] This record tracking sheet is an Microsoft Excel spreadsheet that can be easily modified to meet local needs as desired, but it displays the requirements in a way that facilitates a visual accountability. It can be managed on the computer as a regular spreadsheet, or printed as a blank form to complete by hand. There is a companion file at the same place on the Website named *Master Record for Tracking Requirements (Instructions)* which is a text explanation of how to use the Excel form.
- 3) **Decide “affected” persons:** Assess each volunteer as to which are “affected volunteers.” That means that, by the terms of the policy, they must comply with the vetting and training requirements specified due to their position or their work in the environment of minors. (The definition found in *Appendix I* of the policy should help in this decision process.) The pastor, administrator priest, or supervisor of a non-parish entity has the authority to make final decisions on the status of each volunteer.
- 4) **Create a repository for documentation:** Obtain a secure, lockable container or file cabinet, with a strict key control policy determining who has authorized access. Create a file folder for each individual employee and each “affected” adult volunteer which would include all catechists of children. Go to *Appendix XI* and print the appropriate checklists depending upon the status of the persons. Attach the printed list to the folder. Record the contents of the folder on the list and note deficiencies that need attention.

- 5) **Update tracking document:** Post the information from the folders on your tracking spreadsheet (in paragraph #2 above).
- 6) **Compare reports:** Compare the mid-year (or final) Virtus Master Report (training report) from the Safe Environment Office (SEO) to your documentation. Correct entries as required. Resolve discrepancies (see the document *Trouble Shooting the Training Report* for help.) Contact the SEO for assistance if necessary. Additional updated training reports may be requested at any time.
- 7) **Absence from ministry:** Adult volunteers and catechists who had no activity or ministry during the entire *Training Year* should not be listed on the Compliance Form regardless of their SET status. If return to ministry is anticipated, their names may remain in the Virtus system, and they should be encouraged to keep up their ongoing training. When these persons wish to return to ministry, they must be up to date with SET, otherwise they need to repeat the foundation training again
- 8) **Address deficiencies:** Initiate background checks for any that are missing or overdue (greater than 5 years). Check the documents in the folders against the lists and reports. Notify any person who is deficient in training and assist them to complete initial or ongoing training as required such as the monthly bulletins. You may want to have the individual print out their personal report from Virtus for your record or request a current printout from the SEO.
- 9) **Current Code of Ethics:** Get all employees to sign a Code of Ethics document for current training year and place it in their folder. Volunteers also need this document but only need to sign once.
- 10) **SET for Children:** Arrange sessions for age-appropriate Safe Environment Training (SET) for children in programs of catechesis and other regularly scheduled programs for children. (*See Item #10 below for special directions due to the Pandemic.) Note: SET requirements apply to the active youth leaders and altar servers, even if they are not in formal catechetical programs. Get permission forms from all the parents to allow their children to have SET training. Use the permission form (*Opt-Out – Opt-In Form*) available from the SEO. Train all the children who have permission (opt-In for the training). Remember that there are two options for this training for the younger children. The SEO can help you acquire the training materials if needed. Create a folder for each class. Print a checklist from Appendix XI to follow and make certain all the rosters of the class and the teaching sessions are placed in that file. Do not forget that parents who choose to “opt-out” for the training of their children must be offered SET materials so they may address the matter with their children themselves. Refusal or acceptance must be documented. Contact the Safe Environment Office for information or questions about the training programs.
- 11) **Special Pandemic considerations:** For this Training Year (July 1, 2021 through June 30,2022) the in-person sessions of catechesis will have different requirements than alternative modalities that are remote or on-line. The questions on the Compliance Evaluation Form will reflect these differences in education venues.

For this reporting period the following will apply:

- a. Keep a record of all children involved in catechesis of any sort.
- b. For children who participated in any formal in-person classes, the following applies
 - i. Follow all usual requirements of the PPPM, detailed in item #9 above.
 - ii. Age-appropriate Safe Environment Training (SET) is required
 - iii. Numbers will be reported on the Compliance Form in a separate section labeled “In-person activity”
- c. Children who only receive remote or on-line catechesis will not require documented SET
- d. Catechists in the teaching programs, even if the instruction is remote, must still meet all the standards of the PPPM to include proper vetting, background checks, and SET requirements

12) Document special category minors: Designated youth (Peer)leaders and altar servers have special requirements. Each must have their own folder just like adults. Print the appropriate checklist from Appendix XI. As noted above, annual age-appropriate SET is required, and documentation should be placed in their folder. Remember that these youths require permission from their parents documented on signed forms (see Appendix VII) for their special service. They also need the permission form (*Opt-Out – Opt-in Form*) prior to their annual age-appropriate SET.

13) Program Review: Do Face-to-Face interviews with a random selection of employees and volunteers. See suggestions for this process in Appendix XIV. The purpose is to solicit information from representative individuals about how they view the current network of safety for minors at your facility. This should either confirm that safe practices are being followed or identify deficiencies. Some persons may even have suspicions or concerns that they will not speak about except in private. Document these interviews and keep a record for reporting purposes. The goal is 10% of the total adult staff and adult volunteers each year. Correct problems if investigation confirms any concerns that are identified.

14) Prepare for the Report: Review the draft of the “Compliance Evaluation” questionnaire. Check each question and be sure that the questions or requested information is clearly understood. Assess whether or not your current plans will result in a success when your numbers are tallied at the end of June. If there is confusion, contact the SEO to clarify the issues. You may wish to pencil-fill the information that will not change so you have a head start when the final report is due. If you are not on track to meet the requirements, then change course with appropriate adjustments in the program or documentation.

Please do not hesitate to contact the SEO or the Chancellor’s office to clarify any questions.

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