

Safe Environment Training

safeandsacred-htdioocese.org

Your Safe Environment Certificate is valid during a three-year cycle beginning on May 1, 2018 thru June 30, 2021

Volunteer Ministry Application

- **Volunteers:** Complete the Volunteer Ministry Application (available online at safeandsacred-htdioocese.org) and turn it into the Church/School location where you would like your training to be registered.
- **Employees:** If you are a paid employee for the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux you do not have to complete the Volunteer Ministry Application (VMA) to begin your online Safe Environment training. However, if you plan to volunteer at any other location (parishes & schools) and your role involves contact with young people you will be asked to complete a VMA to be kept at that location.

Your online Safe Environment training includes:

- ▶ **Background Check & Questionnaire**
 - _ It will automatically begin after you're logged in
- ▶ **Safe Environment Training**

Steps on the website:

 - _ Current Courses
 - _ Safe & Sacred Adult Training Program
 - _ Protecting Children in the 21st Century
 - _ Click "Take Course/View Status" (The instructions are provided on the webpage.)
- ▶ **Code of Professional Conduct**
 - _ Click box to agree and submit

When your online training courses are complete and your background check is cleared, a Certificate of Completion is awarded and a link to your certificate will be emailed to you.

Note:

- *Background checks may take up to two weeks to process.*
- *Once your reference checks are complete you will see: "Volunteer Reference Check Status: Complete" on your certificate. This validates your Safe Environment Training certificate.*

Contact Information

Contact your local Safe Environment Coordinator (Church or School) regarding your Volunteer Ministry Application and Safe Environment Training.

For assistance with your online Safe Environment Training

Safe and Sacred (888) 804-9643

For assistance with your Background Check

Screening One (888) 327-6511

Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux
Office of Child and Youth Protection
Michelle Ohmer, Safe Environment
mohmer@htdiocese.org
(985)850-3140

Last Update:
01/2019

Mandated Reporting & Safe Environment Training

(May 1, 2018 - June 30, 2021)

The Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux is committed to ensuring that young people (18 and under) who participate in any activity sponsored in our Diocesan schools or parishes can do so in the safest and most secure setting possible. In an effort to fulfill this commitment, all employees and volunteers who have contact with children young people for ANY length of time are required to take the online Safe Environment Training. This includes volunteers of organizations affiliated or chartered with Diocesan churches and schools.



PROMISE to Protect Pledge to HEAL

The Church is the Body of Christ. All members of the Church are linked to one another. We all have a responsibility to ensure the safety of children in our parishes, schools, families, and local communities.

Together we can help keep children safe.



Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux
Office of Child and Youth Protection
www.htdiocese.org



Am I a Mandated Reporter?

YES! (if you are 18 & over)

- Louisiana State law requires the reporting of suspected abuse if there is reasonable cause to believe/suspect that abuse has occurred. Professions that must report in the state of Louisiana are clergy, health care professionals, mental health professionals, social work professionals, education/child care professionals.
- Teachers and/or child care providers now include anyone who “assists in teaching” of a child as well as the bus driver, coach, professor, technical or vocational instructor, school staff member, college or university administrator, and college or university staff member whether the person “in a volunteer or professional capacity.”
- In other words, all volunteers are included. Organizational or youth activity providers, which means “any person who provides organized activities for children, including administrators, employees, or volunteers of any day camp, summer camp, youth center, or youth recreation program or other organization that provides organized activities for children.
- Also law enforcement professionals and commercial film and photographic print processors.
- The obligation to report now goes beyond the work day to all times!



I Suspect Child Abuse and Neglect. What Do I Do?

The Louisiana Children’s Code (Article 610) specifies that mandated reporters shall make reports immediately upon learning of incidents of child abuse or neglect.

If abuse is within the home or by a Licensed Daycare Staff:

Call Department of Children and Family Services

LA Dept. of Children & Family Services
(24 hours a day, 7 days a week)
1-855-4LA-KIDS
(1-855-452-5437)

If abuse is outside of the home:

Call local Police or Sheriff’s Department

Lafourche Parish: (985) 446-2255
St. Mary Parish: (337) 828-1960
Terrebonne Parish: (985) 876-2500
Jefferson Parish: (504) 364-5300

Be sure that you have as much information about the victim as possible including:

- Name, address, age, sex, race of child
- Name of parent or guardian
- Telephone number
- Nature, extent or cause of child’s injuries or endangered condition
- Name, address and telephone of abuser if known.

How is Abuse Defined?

Abuse refers to an intentional act committed by a person in a position of trust which harms or threatens to harm a minor’s physical or mental welfare.

Types of Abuse

Physical Abuse occurs when an adult injures a child and it is not an accident.

Neglect is any maltreatment or negligence that harms a child’s welfare or safety.

Emotional Abuse occurs when an adult subjects a child to verbal assault or emotional cruelty.

Sexual Abuse involves sexual contact between a child and an adult or significantly older, more powerful person.

This may include direct sexual contact as well as other exploitive behaviors such as:

- inappropriate verbal stimulation;
- taking or showing sexually explicit photographs of or to a child or youth;
- Exposing a child or youth to pornography or adult sexual activity.



National Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-4-A-CHILD

If you need help or have questions about child abuse, call the Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453) then push 1 to talk to a counselor. The hotline counselors are available 365 days a year to help kids, and adults who are worried about kids they suspect are being abused.

If the accused is Clergy (Priest, Deacon, Religious Brother or Sister or Seminarian), Employee, Volunteer in a Catholic school or Church parish in the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux call the Outreach line or the Victims’ Assistance Coordinator after it has been reported to the local police or Sheriff’s Department.

Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux Outreach line

(985) 873-0026

Victims’ Assistance Coordinator

(985) 850-3172