

*Policies for Maintaining Ethical
Ministry With Minors*

*Missionaries of the Precious Blood
Atlantic Province*

I. Preamble

The Missionaries of the Precious Blood, Atlantic Province, defends the sanctity of human life, seeks to protect all people from injustice, and does not hesitate to condemn all that afflicts the human person. The Missionaries are firmly committed to the care of families and their children. They consider abuse and neglect of children as contrary to Christian morality and as an offense against God and against the dignity of the human person.

The Bishops Conferences both the United States and Canada have promised to reach out to those who have been sexually abused as minors by anyone serving the Church in ministry, employment, or a volunteer position, whether the sexual abuse was recent or many years ago. In June 2002, by the approval and promulgation of the Charter for the Protection of Children and young people, the Bishops renewed the Church's commitment to the spiritual and emotional well being of sexual abuse victims and their families.

The Missionaries of the Precious Blood, Atlantic Province, pledges its support of this national effort by diligently enacting policies that safeguard minors. This policy is not a new initiative, but rather an extension and development of our previous policies. As our understanding of sexual abuse grows, this policy and its procedures will be reviewed and revised.

We, as a religious community, will work with parents, educators, civil authorities, and various community organizations to provide the safest possible environment for minors. Additionally, the Province leadership commits itself to promptly respond to any allegation of sexual abuse.

II. Policy

A. The Missionaries of the Precious Blood will have as its primary concern the alleged victim's safety and wellbeing. We will be committed to pastoral care for the alleged victim, the family, the accused, and the mission in which we are involved. The actions described below are meant to ensure the safety of children, to seek the truth, and to protect the rights of all, including the right to a good name for the wrongfully accused.

- Abusive sexual behaviour in any form is unacceptable for all Members of the Province.
- We strongly support the state as it tries to deal with this social and moral evil.
- We intend to comply with all civil law, and we expect those serving with us to do so also.

- All members and contract workers of the Community must comply with state/province and local laws as well as Community policy and guidelines about sexual child abuse.
- Community members are to be knowledgeable about these statutes regarding the sexual abuse of children in the state/province in which they are ministering.

B. With these pastoral concerns in mind, the following document will be the official policy of the Province.

III. Implementation

- A. The Missionaries of the Precious Blood will adopt practices and procedures to publicize and implement this policy.
- B. The successful implementation of this policy will require a judicious vigilance by all Community members.

Part I. Policies for Maintaining Ethical Ministry with Minors

Section 1. Standards of Conduct for Ministry with Minors

The following standards are intended to assist Members in making decisions about interactions with minors in Church sponsored and affiliated programs. They are not designed or intended to address interactions within families.

A **Member** may be a professed religious of the Province, a novice or a seminarian/student.

A **minor** is anyone under the age of 18. For the purposes of this policy, the term “minors” also includes adults who would be considered uniquely vulnerable to abuse because of physical or mental disabilities.

Abuse and neglect of minors are contrary to the teachings of the Church and are prohibited. Members have a responsibility to protect minors from all forms of abuse and neglect.

1. Prohibited Behaviours

These behaviours are specifically prohibited but the following list is not meant to be exhaustive:

- a. Using, possessing, or being under the influence of illegal drugs while in the presence of minors.
- b. Using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol while supervising minors.
- c. Providing or allowing minors to consume alcohol or illegal drugs.
- d. Speaking to minors in a way that is or could be construed by any observer as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating.
- e. Discussing sexual activities with minors unless it is a specific job requirement and the Member is trained to discuss these matters.
- f. Engaging in any sexually oriented conversations with minors unless the conversations are part of a legitimate lesson and discussion for teenagers regarding human sexuality issues. On such occasions, the lessons will convey to youth the Church’s teachings on these topics. If youth have further questions not answered or addressed by their individual teachers they should be referred to their parents or guardians for clarification or counselling.

- g. Being nude in the presence of minors.
- h. Possessing sexually oriented or morally inappropriate printed materials (magazines, cards, videos, films, clothing, etc.).
- i. Sleeping in the same beds, sleeping bags or small tents with minors.
- j. Engaging in sexual contact with minors. For the purposes of this policy, sexual contact is defined as vaginal intercourse, anal intercourse, oral intercourse or the touching of an erogenous zone of another (including but not limited to the thighs, genitals, buttocks, pubic region or chest) for the purpose of sexually arousing or gratifying either person.
- k. Inappropriate or excessive contact through email, chat rooms, letters or gifts.

2. Off-site events

- a. Members are prohibited from transporting minors without written permission of their parent or guardian.
- b. Members are prohibited from unnecessary and/or inappropriate physical contact with minors while in vehicles.
- c. Minors should be transported directly to their destination. No unplanned stops should be made.
- d. Members are prohibited from having minors stay at their residence. Requests for exceptions should be submitted to the Provincial Director in writing two weeks prior to the visit.
- e. Changing and showering facilities or arrangements for Members must be separate from facilities or arrangements for minors.

3. Physical contact

- a. Members are prohibited from using physical discipline in any way for behaviour management of minors. No form of physical discipline is acceptable. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behaviours by minors.
- b. Appropriate affection between Members and minors constitutes a positive part of Church life and ministry. The following forms of affection are regarded as some appropriate examples for Members in ministry roles with minors:
 - Hugs.
 - Pats on the shoulder or back.
 - Hand-shakes.
 - “High-fives” and hand slapping.

- Verbal praise.
 - Touching hands, faces, shoulders and arms of minors.
 - Arms around shoulders.
 - Holding hands while walking with small children.
 - Sitting beside small children.
 - Kneeling or bending down for hugs with small children.
 - Holding hands during prayer.
 - Pats on the head when culturally appropriate. (For example, this gesture should typically be avoided in some Asian communities).
- c. Some forms of physical affection have been used by adults to initiate inappropriate contact with minors. In order to maintain the safest possible environment for minors, the following are some examples of affection that are not to be used by Members in ministry roles with minors:
- Inappropriate or lengthy embraces.
 - Kissing on the mouth.
 - Holding minors over four years old on the lap.
 - Touching buttocks, chests or genital areas.
 - Showing affection in isolated areas such as bedrooms, closets, staff-only areas or other private rooms.
 - Being in bed with a minor.
 - Touching knees or legs of minors.
 - Wrestling with minors.
 - Tickling minors.
 - Piggyback rides.
 - Any type of massage given by minor to adult.
 - Any type of massage given by adult to minor.
 - Any form of unwanted affection.
 - Compliments that relate to physique or body development.

4. *Training for Members who work with minors*

- a. Members shall review the Ethics in Ministry Policies and agree in writing to comply with the province Code of Ethics.
- b. Members who work with minors must participate in training that addresses their role in protecting minors.

5. *Supervision of Programs that Involve Minors*

- a. Programs for minors in which Members are involved must be supervised by at least two adults.

- b. Members in leadership roles shall be aware of all programs for minors that are sponsored by their parish, school or agency. A list of these programs shall be maintained in the central office and include activities, purpose, sponsors or coordinators of the programs, meeting times and locations. Leaders shall examine these programs and consider whether there is adequate supervision.

Section 2. Procedures for Reporting Abuse of Minors or Vulnerable Adults

1. Any Member shall report known or suspected current abuse of minors or vulnerable adults to civil authorities within 48 hours regardless of state mandatory reporting laws.
2. In addition to reporting to the civil authorities, Members shall report any suspected or known abuse of minors or vulnerable adults that may have been perpetrated by Members directly to the Provincial Director. Reports of suspected or known abuse may be made confidentially (unless otherwise required to be disclosed by canon law) to any of the following:
 - a. The chair of the Review Board
 - b. The Local Superior;
 - c. The Major Superior;
 - d. The Moderator General
3. Anonymous letters as such, will not be accepted.
4. All new allegations of sexual abuse that may have been committed by a Member or other agent of the Province shall be promptly reported to civil authorities in the jurisdiction in which the alleged incident occurred.
 - a. Allegations of sexual abuse will be reported to civil authorities regardless of whether the person making the accusation is a minor or an adult at the time the allegation is received.
 - b. Allegations of sexual abuse will be reported to civil authorities regardless of whether the accused Member is living or dead, or whether he is a current or former Member of the Province.
 - c. Allegations of sexual abuse will be reported to civil authorities regardless of whether the alleged victim's identity is known.
 - d. Allegations of sexual abuse will be reported to civil authorities regardless of whether the allegations are believed to be credible at the time they are received.
5. If abuse of a minor is confirmed through investigation, civil authorities shall be re-contacted and a follow-up report will be submitted, if requested. If further investigation indicates the allegation is not credible, civil authorities will be contacted to provide the additional information.

6. If the alleged victim is a minor at the time the allegation is received, his or her identity will be provided to the civil authorities. If the alleged victim is an adult at the time the allegation is received and consents, his or her identity will be provided to the civil authorities. If the alleged victim is an adult at the time the allegation is received and does not consent to having his or her identity revealed, the alleged victim's identity will not be disclosed.
7. Files of allegations will be created at the time the allegation is received and will contain information about how the allegation was handled.
8. The Province will cooperate fully with investigations by civil authorities.

Section 3. Responding to Incidents and Allegations of Sexual Abuse

Allegations of sexual abuse may come from a variety of sources, including alleged victims or their family members, diocesan offices, Members of the community, a colleague in the workplace or from an alleged perpetrator. Because each case is distinct, the following is a general outline of the response system for allegations of abuse but is not a procedure that is to be followed in the same way for each unique case. The process is to be modified according to the nature of the allegation, the needs of the alleged victim and the circumstances of the accused Member. In every case, the Province commits itself to dealing pastorally with, and protecting the rights of all those involved.

A. Initial Response

1. The Provincial Director (or his delegate) shall receive allegations of sexual abuse and coordinate assistance to anyone who brings an allegation of abuse by a Member of The Province.
2. When an allegation of abuse is first received, the Provincial Director shall attempt to gather sufficient information to complete a preliminary report. The information would include the following:
 - a. Name of the alleged victim;
 - b. Age of alleged victim;
 - c. Address and phone number of alleged victim;
 - d. Name of alleged perpetrator;
 - e. Approximate dates of alleged abuse;
 - f. Nature, type and location of alleged abuse;
 - g. Any additional relevant details.
3. Upon receipt of an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor, the Provincial Director will promptly follow Province reporting procedures and report the allegation to civil authorities (see Reporting Procedures).
4. The Provincial Director will call the Initial Response Team to investigate the allegation within the first 48 hours.
5. The Provincial Director and the Province will cooperate fully with any investigation by civil authorities.

6. The Provincial Director (or his delegate) will offer to meet in person with the alleged victim if he or she so desires. The Provincial Director will maintain a compassionate and pastoral manner regardless of the demeanor of alleged victim, recognizing that the experience of abuse and difficulty of coming forward may bring out strong emotions during the disclosure process.
7. An Assistance Coordinator may be assigned to assist with the immediate and ongoing needs of individuals who have experienced abuse and their families.
8. The Provincial Director will notify the accused Member of the allegation and its substantial details. He will take steps to ensure that the accused Member receives the support and assistance he needs while the allegation is being investigated. This support may take the form of assigning a mentor for the accused.
9. The Provincial Director will inform the accused Member of his right to seek canonical and civil counsel before any further conversation into the matter. The Province recognizes that the Member may need assistance to engage such counsel.

B. Internal Investigation

1. During investigations by civil authorities or by the Province, the Member who is the subject of the investigation will be temporarily removed from ministry responsibilities and duties.
2. The Provincial Director will designate a person or persons to independently gather information regarding the allegations. In the cases of verified or undisputed allegations, an investigation will be conducted to identify any other potential victims and to obtain information to inform the on-going supervision plans for the Member who has abused.
3. In order to fulfill his responsibilities, the Provincial Director will consult with the Review Board at each juncture of the process and will convene the Board within 48 hours of receiving the final report of the investigation.
4. Should a Member be found guilty of sexual misconduct, the Province will provide for the pastoral care of the victim and the victim's family.
5. In the case of a Member found guilty of sexual misconduct, the Province will also provide for the pastoral care and treatment of the Member, offering him fraternal support in whatever penalties are imposed upon him by the legal system or restrictions imposed upon him by the Province.
6. Should an allegation be unsubstantiated, the Province will reinstate the accused Member to ministry and will work towards the restitution of his good name.

7. Province investigations will be documented. Documentation of province investigations will be stored in the office of the Provincial Director. A summary of the investigation findings will be stored in the personnel file of the Member who is the subject of the investigation.
8. Documentation of investigations are the property of the province and shall remain with the office of the Provincial Director following election of a new Provincial Director.
9. The Provincial Director will usually assign the Initial Response Team to review the allegations, question the parties involved, and act as the representative of the Province.
 - a. The Initial Response Team will advise any parties that he/she represents the Province and that conversations with the Investigator are not subject to any attorney/client privilege.
 - b. The Initial Response Team will advise the parties that, although pastoral care is available, the Investigator will not be the one to provide that care.
 - c. The Initial Response Team, who shall obtain statements from the parties and any witnesses, will keep the Provincial Director informed regarding the status of the investigation.
10. The Provincial Director will maintain contact with the accused Member throughout the entire process.
11. When he has received the completed investigation report, the Provincial Director will present the results of the investigation to the Member for response.

C. Decision-Making

1. Upon the conclusion of the investigation, the Provincial Director will exercise his judgment in delivering an appropriate response. If the accused Member has admitted to the substance of the allegation, or in those cases where the allegation continues to be deemed credible or has been substantiated, the Provincial Director's response could include any of the following:
 - psychological and medical assessment and intervention;
 - restrictions on community life and personal activities;
 - limitations imposed on ministerial activities, including total removal from public ministry.

2. In cases where the allegation has been deemed credible or has been substantiated, the Provincial Director will contact the appropriate diocesan offices to communicate the nature of the allegation and to inform the diocese of the procedure followed and the response of the Provincial Director to the allegation.
3. In cases where an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor is substantiated, the Member may not return to public ministry.
4. If an allegation is deemed to be without merit, the Provincial Director will coordinate communication with all appropriate parties so that reconciliation can take place where possible and repair of damage to reputations can be undertaken.
5. In all instances, the final disposition of the matter rests with the Provincial Director always recognizing:
 - The Member's right to appeal to the Moderator General.
 - It is the Provincial Director's responsibility to communicate his decision to the person who made the allegation, to the Member involved, and to other parties, including the Moderator General, as necessary and appropriate.
6. If at any time during the course of implementing these procedures, civil or criminal proceedings are initiated against the accused Member, these procedures may be suspended immediately, to be resumed, if deemed necessary, only after the completion of the civil or criminal proceedings. In such a case, the Provincial Director's delegate shall recommend to the Provincial Director a possible course of action with respect to the accused Member, in keeping with the intention of these procedures and in the interests of justice.

Section 4. Advisory Boards

The Missionaries of the Precious Blood, Atlantic Province, has received permission to utilize the services of the Advisory Board of the Archdiocese of Toronto. The Missionaries are headquartered in the archdiocese and has a good working relationship with the archdiocese. The Archdiocese has been most gracious in allowing the Missionaries to utilize its advisory board on an “as needed” basis.

The Missionaries will provide the Advisory Board with an initial investigation by the Response Team, whether the allegation has occurred within the archdiocese or not. In all cases involving the Missionaries, the Provincial Director or his delegate will be part of the Advisory Board.

If the allegations occurred within the archdiocese, the archdiocese may wish to keep a copy of the proceedings as well. If the allegation occurred in another diocese, a copy of the Advisory Board report will also be available to that diocese. In all cases involving the Province, any actions taken will be done through the Provincial Director of the Province, after the report of the Advisory Board has been given.

The Atlantic Province will accept the costs of the investigation as well as any costs incurred by the Advisory Board. The Advisory Board and the Initial Response Team will assist the victims, the member, and provide the Province with a final report.

The Missionaries of the Precious Blood, Atlantic Province will adopt the advisory process from the Sexual Abuse Policy approved and adopted by the archdiocese of Toronto in regards to the Province’s use of their Advisory Board.

Section 5. Supervision and Care of Members Who Have Abused Minors or Vulnerable Adults

These procedures describe the elements of a pastoral care framework, which will be developed for each Member of the Province about whom a credible accusation of sexual abuse has been made. Most of these procedures address cases where the accusation is that of abuse of a minor or vulnerable person.

The purpose of this framework is to:

- assure the Church and the public, especially children and minors, of all reasonable measures to prevent any future occurrence;
- provide a structure within which the Member can continue his life in the Congregation of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood as a definitely incorporated member of a religious community;
- provide appropriate care for the Member and the opportunity for such personal conversion and rehabilitation as may be needed;
- guide superiors, the Member, and others in determining work, place of residence, and other activities;
- encourage Member communities in welcoming and supporting the Member in his desire to continue his life as a Member within this framework; and
- assure Member's own communities of both proper care and appropriate limits with respect to their brothers in the Missionaries of the Precious Blood.

It is intended that all of the elements below be adapted in a Safety Plan for each Member, depending on such factors as severity of the accusation(s), notoriety, age and health of the Member, and the recommendations of the Province's Advisory Board. The framework, however, sets out the elements to be developed in writing for each Member, reviewed by the Advisory Board, and shared with the Member, his superiors, and, as appropriate, Members of his local Member community. The Safety Plan shall be signed by the Member and the Provincial Director.

A. Evaluation and Therapy

1. A Member about whom a credible accusation has been made may be asked to submit to a professional evaluation as to his psychological condition and proclivity to harmful behaviour in the future.
2. The Member is free not to undergo an evaluation. If the Member agrees to undergo an evaluation, the Provincial Director or his delegate will arrange for the evaluation.
3. Subsequent to that evaluation, the Member may be asked to participate in such in-patient and/or out-patient treatment as recommended by the evaluating

professionals, as well as such other physical, psychological, and spiritual rehabilitation as may be recommended by such professionals or the Advisory Board, as well as the terms of his Safety Plan.

4. The Member may be required to report to the Major Superior in writing periodically (e.g., monthly, quarterly or annually, as appropriate to the situation), describing his progress in terms of work, therapy, spiritual direction, community life, and such other matters as may be appropriate.
5. Information resulting from such evaluation, treatment and correspondence is the property of the Member. He may agree to make it available to the Major Superior or he may decline to do so.
6. A Member may further agree to have the information available to the Advisory Board.
7. Any information about a Member who has been accused of abuse shall be kept confidential by those receiving it, except as required by law to be revealed.

B. Public Ministry as a Member

1. An ordained Member found to have abused a minor or vulnerable person would not be allowed to function publicly as a priest or deacon, including public celebration of the sacraments, or use of the title "Father" or "Reverend" in public communications.
2. In the case of a Brother, he would not be allowed to function publicly in external ministry associated with a religious congregation (e.g., school teaching, coaching, parish staff work) or use of the title "Brother" in public.
3. No clerical or distinctive religious attire would be allowed for a Priest or Brother who has abused a minor.
4. For a Member credibly charged with sexual abuse of an adult, the Provincial Director will consider the nature and circumstances of the allegation and the recommendation of the Advisory Board in determining removal from, suspension from, or restrictions on public ministry.

C. Appropriate Work

1. If physically and mentally able, the Member who has been removed from public ministry should engage in appropriate work in support of the ministries of the Province or in other service to people in need. Such employment might include the following:
 - internal work in a community of the Province, such as a place of retirement;
 - administrative work for the Province;

- remunerative non-ministerial work to support the ministries of the Province;
 - service to people in need such as writing to prisoners, taping books for the sight-impaired;
 - telephone reassurance programs for shut-ins, working in a food bank or soup kitchen, or some other form of supervised social services.
2. Where appropriate, Members restricted or removed from public ministry may need vocational assessment and/or occupational counselling to assist in determining meaningful and useful work. The Provincial Director should consult with the Member involved to determine his interests and capacities and to promote his initiative in developing work opportunities, where appropriate.
 3. In all cases, the service of prayer for the Society of the Precious Blood and the Church would be a valuable contribution to the congregation.

D. Place of Residence

1. Any restricted Member would be allowed to live only in a Member community or other appropriate supervised place of residence, as determined by the Provincial Director.
2. No separate apartment, private home, or other domicile would be allowed as a permanent residence for the Member.

E. Community Support and Community Roles

1. The local community can and should play an important part in helping a Member who has been restricted and who wishes to continue his life as a Member.
2. After a Member has submitted to evaluation and appropriate treatment, Member communities should welcome the restricted Member as a brother.
3. It may also be appropriate for a mentor to be appointed for the Member who would assist and support him in his efforts to maintain his program of care and treatment.
4. A restricted Member, within the community, as allowed by Canon Law, has the right to celebrate private mass every day without a community member present, to lead community prayer, hear confessions of Members only, and perform community jobs and other responsibilities.
5. A restricted Member would not be allowed to serve as Superior. A restricted member must have the specific permission of the Provincial Director to serve as minister of the community or community consulter.

6. Upon the recommendation of the Provincial Director, the local superior shall, as appropriate, inform all or part of the community in which such a Member shall live of the fact that a Member is so restricted and the appropriate specific terms of his Safety Plan, so that the community can assist him in achieving its goals.
7. Communities may need the advice and consultation of appropriate professionals to assist the community in readying itself to receive the restricted Member and to provide him the necessary care and support.

F. Contact with Others

1. Under no circumstances would a Member credibly accused of abuse of a minor be allowed in contact with minors without the ongoing supervision of other adults present at the time.
2. This prohibition would include meals in restaurants, going to the movies, riding in automobiles, or private conferences in parish or community offices, community parlours, bedrooms of Members, etc.
3. Similar prohibitions may be applied to a Member credibly accused of abuse of an adult.

G. Travel, Vacation, Retreat

1. For a Member credibly accused of abuse of a minor, vacations alone or with minors, even supervised, would not be permitted. Vacation should be restricted to Member communities or travel with other Members.
2. A restricted Member may be allowed to go on private retreat upon deliberation by the Provincial Director. Retreats would be restricted to Member or other Catholic retreat facilities and Member communities.
3. Other travel may be restricted that relates to assigned work or family visits; if appropriate, a Member companion for travel also may be required.
4. Additional specific permissions for travel may be required from the Provincial Director.
5. Doubts about specific travel should be referred by the local superior to the Provincial Director. Again, similar prohibitions may be applied to a Member credibly accused of abuse of an adult.

H. Driving

1. Restrictions may be placed on driving alone or having use of a personal vehicle.

2. Some restricted Members may be required to request specific permissions for use of house cars from the local superior, to keep a driving log or to only drive with other Members.

I. Publications and Publicity

1. Restrictions on publications, letters to the editor, web pages, radio and television appearances, and email may be appropriate.
2. Sensitivity for victims would dictate caution with regard to photographs of Members displayed in Member publications and institutions, especially those in service to minors.
3. In some cases, a Member's use of mail and phone may need to be regulated.

J. Information for Members and Others

1. The Provincial Director, in consultation with the Advisory Board, will determine whether and/or how to inform the Province Membership—in general terms—of those Members who have been restricted.
2. The Provincial Director, in consultation with the Review Board, will determine whether and/or how to inform others who may have a need to know—in general terms—of those Members who have been restricted.