

POLICY
PREVENTION AND CONDUCT AT WORK
PASTORAL CARE WITH MINORS
IN THE DIOCESE (EPARCHY) OF OLSZTYN – GDAŃSK OF THE GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH IN POLAND

I. GENERAL STANDARDS

1. The good of the person, especially the minor, is a matter of particular concern for the Church.
2. This concern is expressed in the following Principles of Prevention and Conduct in Pastoral Work with Children and Youth in the Eparchy of Olsztyn-Gdańsk, intended to be applied in all parishes, communities, works and institutions in the Eparchy of Olsztyn-Gdańsk.
3. The bodily integrity of minors is inviolable. The use of corporal punishment is also unacceptable.
4. Any form of exploitation, especially sexual exploitation, is a particular violation of the principle of protection of the welfare of minors.
5. The Church also protects adults with various forms of disability, especially intellectual disabilities.
6. It is unacceptable, especially on the part of the clergy, to tolerate any kind of behavior that bears the hallmarks of abuse of minors, especially sexual abuse.
7. Knowledge of actual or probable cases of sexual abuse always requires appropriate action, in accordance with Church and Polish law.

II. SPECIFIC STANDARDS

8. Minors should not stay in the homes of clergy and religious, especially alone. If their well-being requires an individual meeting, it cannot take place in isolated conditions, and the person conducting such a meeting should ensure its transparency. Individual meetings with minors must not be unwisely multiplied or prolonged. Both the timing and the number of such events should take into account the best interests of minors.
9. Parent representatives or other adults are encouraged to participate in the meetings organized for minors (altar servers, choirs, children's prayer groups, etc.).
10. It is forbidden for a clergyman to travel individually with a minor.
11. It is forbidden to transport minors under 15 years of age unaccompanied, except in situations that threaten the safety and health of the child.

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12. Particular attention should be paid to cases of verbal violation of the dignity of minors, which is expressed in the eroticisation of language.
13. It is forbidden to offer alcohol, cigarettes, drugs and other intoxicants to a minor.
14. In contact with minors, it is unacceptable for clergy, staff caring for children and other persons to remain under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
15. Any behavior that constitutes a violation of the boundaries of minors' intimacy is not allowed. This rule should apply especially in places such as changing rooms, swimming pools, toilets, etc. In particular, it is forbidden to record or take photos in the indicated places. Nor should the clergy relieve minors of personal activities.
16. In the case of organising trips with the participation of persons under 18 years of age, the rules for organising leisure and other trips specified in the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 30 March 2016 (Journal of Laws of 5 April 2016, item 452) should be applied.
17. All types of one- and multi-day trips should be carefully planned and formally documented, with particular attention to the type of transport, accommodation, schedule and safety. It is also necessary to take care of appropriate insurance, in accordance with the requirements of Polish law or the countries on the territory of which the pupils and their guardians will stay during the trip.
18. A clergyman organizing the trip referred to in point 16 is obliged to verify the persons acting as a guardian in the register kept by the Ministry of Justice on the basis of the Act of 13 May 2016 on counteracting threats of sexual offences (Journal of Laws of 16 June 2016, item 862); should also obtain a certificate of no criminal record from the guardian in accordance with the current status of the National Criminal Register.
19. Church institutions which provide minors with access to the Internet are obliged to take all measures to prevent access to content that poses a threat to their proper development (erotic, pornographic, violent content, etc.). Ensure that all Internet-enabled computers, Internet filtering software, Internet monitoring software, anti-virus, anti-spam, and firewall software are installed and updated. This section does not apply to situations in which pupils use the Internet through their own devices enabling direct access to the network.
20. Each person should be assigned an individual login and password to use the Internet in the parish and informed about the need to keep the login and password secret
21. A caregiver authorised to supervise is obliged to inform the wards about the rules of safe use of the Internet.
22. Church entities are required to provide ongoing access to educational materials on safe use of the Internet.
23. The person responsible for accessing the Internet should periodically check the computers for the dangerous content referred to in paragraph 19. If you find them, you need to determine who was using the computer at the time you entered them.
24. The standards come into force on March 18, 2024. All clergy are obliged to familiarize themselves with the changes, which will be published on the diocesan website each time.

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ANNEX

INTERVENTION PROCEDURE FOR OBTAINING INFORMATION ABOUT THE LIKELIHOOD OF HARM TO A MINOR

1. The obligation to report to the law enforcement authorities rests with anyone who has credible knowledge of the criminal preparation or attempt or commission of a prohibited act referred to in Article 197(3) and (4) of the Penal Code (rape or forcing to undergo another sexual act), Article 198 of the Penal Code (sexual exploitation of the helplessness or insanity of another person) and Article 200 of the Penal Code (sexual intercourse with a minor or causing him to undergo sexual acts). If the alleged perpetrator of such an act is a clergyman, the notification to the competent state authorities must be made in the manner described in the Guidelines of the Polish Episcopal Conference concerning the preliminary canonical investigation in the case of accusations of clergy for acts against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue with a minor under eighteen years of age (Annex 2. Procedure).
2. Regardless of whether the fact of being harmed is revealed by the wronged person himself; a third party who knows from the victim that physical and psychological violence is being used against him/her; A specific person who shows symptoms of being harmed, but does not want to or is unable to talk about it due to their limitations, or who knows about the harm comes from the media, a competent person is obliged to take appropriate actions provided for by law.
3. Competent persons to whom one should turn in the case of probable sexual abuse of minors committed by clergy, religious or employees of ecclesiastical institutions of the Eparchy of Olsztyn - Gdańsk are:
 - a) parish priest in the case of a parish,
 - b) the head in the case of a church school and education institution, care and education institution, etc.,
 - c) President in the case of a foundation or association.
 - d) tour leader in case of any departure.
4. The persons referred to in point 3, after informing the parents or legal guardians of the minor, are obliged to report the matter to the Delegate of the Bishop of the Eparchy of Olsztyn-Gdańsk for the Protection of Children and Youth (hereinafter referred to as the Delegate), whose contact details can be found on the website of the Eparchy of Olsztyn-Gdańsk. This obligation also applies to cases of alleged abuse of a minor committed by clergy, religious and lay workers who are not directly under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of the Eparchy of Olsztyn-Gdańsk.
5. If the alleged perpetrator is a person referred to in point 3, the report shall be forwarded directly to the Delegate.
6. The report referred to in point 4 should be in writing and include the personal data of the reporting party, the alleged victim, the alleged perpetrator and a general description of the circumstances of the incident.
7. A delegate receiving a report to ascertain whether the alleged abuse of a minor referred to in Article 240 of the Penal Code, in conjunction with Article 197(3) and (4) of the Penal Code, Article 198 of the

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Penal Code and Article 200 of the Penal Code, has been reported to the competent law enforcement authorities. If it has not been submitted, this obligation rests with the Delegate.

8. The obligation to immediately notify the authorities appointed to prosecute crimes, described in point 6, does not arise if the relevant notification has already been submitted.

9. If the suspicion concerns a priest incardinated in the Eparchy of Olsztyn-Gdańsk, he should be removed from the duties resulting from his office, in accordance with the provisions of the Code of Canon Law and the Guidelines of the Polish Episcopal Conference regarding the preliminary canonical investigation in the case of accusations of clergy for acts against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue with a minor under eighteen years of age of October 8, 2014 (amendment of June 6, 2017).

10. If the suspicion concerns a lay person employed in diocesan institutions on the basis of a contract of employment or other legal relationship, such a person should be immediately removed from the performance of his official duties.

11. In the event that harm is revealed during the Sacrament of Penance, the penitent should be strongly encouraged to report the case to the competent person referred to in point 3 or to the Bishop's Delegate.

12. In the event of receiving information about the possibility of committing abuse against minors, which, in accordance with Polish law, and in particular with the Penal Code, may meet the characteristics of the criminal act described therein, and the alleged perpetrator is the so-called third party, not a clergyman incardinated in the Eparchy of Olsztyn-Gdańsk, neither another clergyman nor a collaborating layperson should act in accordance with the norms of state law, including the provisions on the obligation to report a crime. However, the best interests of the victim should always be taken into account and acted in such a way as to prevent further harm to the victim.

13. The person receiving the report is not allowed to disclose the information contained therein to third parties. The applicant should be informed that in the event that there is a likelihood of abuse of a minor which constitutes a crime under the law of the Church, the information obtained will be the basis for procedural actions, the scope of which will be determined by the Eparchial Bishop in his decree.

14. The person receiving the report is obliged to inform the reporting person about the course of the ecclesiastical procedure, as well as about the possibility of reporting the case to the state judiciary, also in the case of crimes not covered by the reporting obligation referred to in point 1.

It shall enter into force on the date of approval ...12.03.2024



Bishop Arkadiusz Trochanowski
Bishop of Olsztyn-Gdańsk