



# Catholic Diocese of Sioux Falls

## Code of Conduct for Adults

### Ministering to Minors & Vulnerable Adults

**When I am working with children, youth, and vulnerable adults, I will...**

**Remember my responsibility to God:**

“You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.”  
Matthew 22:36-38

- I will faithfully represent the teachings of the Catholic Church with integrity in both word and action.
- I will use the name of God and Jesus Christ with respect, and never in a careless, abusive, or angry manner.
- I will show respect to the Creator by taking care of God’s creation.

**Remember my responsibility to self:**

“Keep on doing what you have learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me.” Philippians 4: 8-9

- I will be mindful that God created each of us in His image and likeness.
- I will be truthful, understanding, open-minded, gracious, reliable and respectful.
- I will not gossip, slander, speak with profanities, use malicious speech, or use insensitive attempts at humor.
- I will not physically discipline or use language that disrespects, degrades, threatens, ridicules, hurts, or humiliates.
- I will not consume, show, or provide any sexually explicit or sexually inappropriate material.
- I will not use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol, tobacco, and/or illegal drugs when fulfilling my ministry responsibilities.
- I will not use or hold in my possession any weapons while carrying out ministry activity.
- I will not steal, destroy, or vandalize.

**Remember my responsibility to others:**

“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Matthew 22:39-40

- I will report suspected or known harassment, abuse, and exploitation to my supervisor, law enforcement, Child Protection Services (877) 244-0864 and/or the diocese, (605) 988-3704.
- I will fully cooperate with investigations of suspected or known harassment, abuse, and/or exploitation.
- I will honor and respect the innate dignity given to others and respect their personal boundaries.
- I will not engage in behavior that may be misconstrued or misunderstood as having sexual innuendo or purpose.
- I will avoid using my personal email, phone, or social media accounts to communicate with an individual minor that I have come to know through my ministry assignment.

- When using technology to communicate with minors, the information that I choose to share will be about the ministry entrusted to me. I will be professional in the way that personal information about myself is shared. I understand that broadcast messages, that is messages sent to an entire group of youth participants, are the preferred means of communicating directly with the youth entrusted to my care.
- I will always promote an open environment, taking particular care to avoid entirely-private or otherwise unobserved situations where no other adults are present or in close proximity. I understand that sacramental confession and times of acute emotional distress may give rise for rare moments when priests, counselors, principals, or teachers may need to create a confidential environment for the benefit of the youth.
- I will not isolate, exclude, or show preferential treatment towards minors and/or adults in parish and/or school ministries.
- I will not give expensive gifts to individuals whom I have come to know through ministry in the parish and/or school.
- I will refuse to accept expensive gifts from minors or their parents without prior written approval from the pastor or administrator.
- I will use positive reinforcement rather than criticism and avoid making comparisons.
- I will not intentionally expose others to threats to their personal health (i.e. fevers or other contagious situations).
- I will not provide transportation to, or travel alone with, a minor enrolled in a ministry offered by parish or school except in emergency circumstances. In an emergency, I will notify another adult before beginning travel with the minor.
- I will not arrange or approve anyone under 21 to transport minors and/or adults to school and parish events. I understand event transportation is arranged and approved by school, parish, and/or diocesan administration.
- I will not exploit the trust of the parish, school, minors, or adults for sexual or financial gain.