

§200 POLICY FOR OPENNESS AND TRANSPARENCY IN COMMUNICATIONS REGARDING SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

INTRODUCTION

It is important to be open and credible with parish leadership and parish communities when a cleric serving there has been withdrawn from ministry for the safety of children as well as when a cleric is returned to ministry due to a finding that such an allegation cannot be substantiated. Therefore, Officials of the Archdiocese have developed a policy and procedure that will foster openness while still respecting the privacy and reputation of the individuals involved.

§200 COMMUNICATION WITH PARISH LEADERSHIP AND PARISH COMMUNITIES

200.1. Policy Officials of the Archdiocese of Chicago will notify parish leadership and parish communities as soon as reasonably possible when a cleric serving there has been withdrawn from ministry by the Archbishop after he has accepted the recommendation of the independent Professional Responsibility Review Board that the safety of children requires the withdrawal of the cleric from ministry. Parishes will also be notified when the Archbishop accepts the recommendation of the pertinent canonical authority in the case of the return of a cleric to ministry due to a finding that such an allegation cannot be substantiated.

Procedures

- a)** The Professional Responsibility Administrator will inform the Director of the Department of Communications and Public Relations or the Director of the Office of Communications as soon as possible when the Archbishop has approved the recommendation of the independent Professional Responsibility Review Board regarding the withdrawal from or return to ministry of any cleric.

- b)** A representative of the Office of Assistance Ministry will meet with the leadership of any parish affected by a cleric's withdrawal from ministry to review the communications materials developed by a communications team comprised of archdiocesan officials and receive input on the distribution of these materials. In the instance of a cleric returned to ministry due to a finding that such an allegation cannot be substantiated, a representative from the Vicar for Priests will meet with and provide necessary communications materials to the leadership of any parish involved.
- c)** The communications materials will then be submitted to the Episcopal Vicar and/or Episcopal Vicars of the parishes involved, the Vicar General, the Chancellor, and the Archbishop for final review and approval.
- d)** After final approval, plans will be made with the Episcopal Vicar and/or his representative to be present at any parish affected by a cleric's withdrawal from or return to ministry to convey the substance and oversee the distribution of communications material announcing the withdrawal from or return to ministry.
- e)** After final approval, communications material will first be shared with parishes involved, then with *The Catholic New World* for publication in its next edition. The same material will be posted on the Official Web Site of the Archdiocese of Chicago for 30 days.
- f)** Upon request from the public media, the Director of the Office of Communications or a designated representative will disseminate the announcement of the cleric's withdrawal from or return to ministry and provide a brief biographical sketch including the cleric's ministerial assignments.