

§1300 CATECHISTS

"One who exercises the ministry of the word represents the Church, to which the word has been entrusted. The catechist believes in the Church and is aware that, as a pilgrim people, it is in constant need of renewal. Committed to this visible community, the catechist strives to be an instrument of the Lord's power and a sign of the Spirit's presence." (NCD, # 208)

§1301 QUALIFICATIONS OF CATECHISTS

1301.1. Policy All catechists shall be skilled, knowledgeable and faithful Roman Catholics. They shall be committed witnesses to the Gospel. They shall share actively in parish life. They serve the parish by communicating Christ's message as articulated in the magisterium of the Church.

§1302 SCREENING

1302.1. Policy The Parish Director of Religious Education shall be responsible for screening catechetical personnel for parish programs of religious education. (See Title I, §202.7 Criminal Background Check)

Procedures

- a) For parish catechists in programs of religious education for adults, screening consists of an interview to discern the faith development and commitment of the catechist and to ascertain the skills and knowledge which the person brings to the catechetical ministry. Individuals should complete the Archdiocesan Application for Employment or Volunteer Service (form 7703).
- b) For catechists in parish programs of religious education for minors (up to age 18) the screening process includes:
 - 1) the completion of the *Archdiocesan Parish Catechist Application* available from the Archdiocesan Office for Catechesis;
 - [Note: Completion of the catechist application requires the catechist to be informed of the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act. These responsibilities are presented in a brochure, *Care Enough to Call*, available from the Department of Children and Family Services]

- 2) an initial interview to review the information in the application, to discern the faith development and commitment of the catechist, and to assess the skills and knowledge which the person brings to the ministry of catechist;
 - 3) reference checks: employment and personal; and
 - 4) final approval by the DRE based on the results of the interview and the reference check.
- c) For other persons assisting in parish programs of religious education for children, the screening process includes:
- 1) the completion of the Application for Employment or Volunteer Service (form 7703);
 - 2) reference checks: employment and personal; and
 - 3) final approval based on the reference check.
- d) The DRE will not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, national origin, or physical or mental disability unrelated to the person's ability to perform the duties of the position.

§1303 PERSONNEL FILE

1303.1. Policy The DRE shall be responsible to maintain a personnel file for all catechetical personnel in parish religious education programs.

Procedures

- a) The personnel file includes:
- 1) the Archdiocesan Catechist Application Form or Reference Verification Form (where applicable),
 - 2) documentation of reference checks (where applicable),
 - 3) records of the catechist's formation and training, and
 - 4) formal and informal performance reviews
 - 5) where applicable, a record of sick/vacation days.
- b) When a parish catechist transfers to another parish, the Director of Religious Education may, upon request by that parish and with written permission of the catechist, forward copies of records of the catechist's formation and training.
- c) The personnel file of a parish catechist or other catechetical volunteer is retained in the parish for six years after the person completes his/her catechetical service.

- d) After six years following the date of termination of a catechetical volunteer, the parish keeps a simple record of:
 - 1) the starting and ending dates of service;
 - 2) the job title(s) of the volunteer during the time of service; and
- e) The file is to be destroyed only after consultation with the Archdiocese of Chicago Archives and Record Center.

§1304 CATECHIST PERFORMANCE REVIEW

1304.1. Policy The Parish Director of Religious Education shall supervise and review the catechist's development and catechetical performance annually.

Procedures

- a) The qualities of a catechist listed in the *National Catechetical Directory*, paragraphs 205-210, can provide a guideline for the criteria for performance review.
- b) An effective performance review will include an opportunity for self-assessment by the catechist, observation, and a performance review conference with a DRE or a qualified designate in order to affirm the catechist's skills and give direction for growth and development.

§1305 ALLEGATION OF CHILD ABUSE

1305.1. Policy Should there be an allegation of child abuse against a member of the catechetical staff, Archdiocesan policies and procedures shall be followed. (See Title I, §602 Sexual Misconduct with Minors)