

# MOVING FORWARD

## Concrete Steps to Hold Bishops Accountable

### 1. What happened in Baltimore?

The USCCB voted on several proposals to hold bishops accountable for instances of sexual abuse of children or vulnerable persons, sexual misconduct, or the intentional mishandling of such cases. We specifically committed to involving and utilizing lay professional experts. We also established a new, independent mechanism for the reporting of such cases.

### 2. Isn't the "Metropolitan Model" just bishops policing bishops?

While we have seen Metropolitan investigations achieve success in uncovering, publicizing and punishing bishop misconduct multiple times in the past year, the body of bishops agreed in Baltimore that independent lay oversight is crucial. The combination of lay involvement, Metropolitan leadership and the final judgment of the Holy See will ensure that complaints are evaluated thoroughly, and justice is achieved for victims and survivors.

### 3. How exactly will the laity be involved?

We're building upon the well-established practice of lay expertise in the Church, starting at the very beginning of this process. Laypeople will assist us in informing the public about how to utilize our new reporting mechanism. A lay person will be informed any time a complaint comes through that process. Lay investigators will be identified at the provincial level by Metropolitan Archbishops and will play an active role in investigating individual complaints against bishops.

### 4. Is this process transparent? What will the public know about credible complaints against individual bishops?

Pope Francis's *Motu Proprio* includes whistleblower protections that will allow anyone making a complaint to publicize it however they wish. The new *Directives* require those making a complaint to be given documents describing the process. As noted, the bishops are also committed to lay involvement in both the receiving of complaints against bishops and in any investigations. With these safeguards, the bishops are committed to making the process as transparent as they possibly can.

### 5. Level with me: Will the policies approved in Baltimore protect people from abuse at the hands of bishops?

We've achieved a goal stated by USCCB President Cardinal DiNardo throughout the process: We've filled the gaps in the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* and now build upon its success. The Holy Father's *Motu Proprio*, the new *Directives*, the renewed *Episcopal Commitments*, the third-party reporting system, and the heavy emphasis and reliance on lay expertise in the United States will bring unprecedented accountability throughout the hierarchy of the American Church.



General Assembly | June 2019

# BISHOP ACCOUNTABILITY & LAITY

## A T A G L A N C E

This week, the bishops of the United States of America approved *Protocol Regarding Available Non-Penal Restrictions on Bishops, Affirming Our Episcopal Commitments*, and *Directives for the Implementation of the Provisions of Vos estis lux mundi Concerning Bishops and their Equivalents*

### 1 Commit

To the involvement of lay professionals

To appoint a qualified lay person to receive reports of bishop misconduct and to publicize the means by which people can make such complaints

To appoint an investigator chosen from the list of lay experts previously prepared in consultation with bishops of his province

### Inform

# 2

The person asserting an allegation of their rights under the *Motu Proprio* and *Directives*

### 3 Establish

A notification process for conflicts of interest

### Ensure

# 4

Conflicts of interest claims won't result in prejudice, retaliation, or discrimination



# Committed to Accountability

## ONGOING STEPS

“Be diligent in these matters, be absorbed in them, so that your progress may be evident to everyone.”  
(1 Tim 4:15)



### Charter & Essential Norms

June 2002, Revised June 2011 and June 2018

- Zero Tolerance
- Required Reporting to Public Authorities
- Lay Review Boards
- Victim Assistance Coordinators
- Safe Environment Training
- Background Checks
- Two John Jay studies of abuse in the Church

### Motu Proprio

May 2019

- Reporting Systems
- Timely Investigations
- Survivor Support
- Whistleblower Protection
- Conflict of Interest Ban
- Lay Involvement
- Compliance with Civil Law
- Grounded in the Law and Life of the Local Church

### Implementation Directives

June 2019 General Assembly

- Outlines Use of Lay Experts to Investigate and Publicize Allegations
- National 3rd Party Reporting
- Strengthens Conflict of Interest Ban
- Pastoral Care for Those Harmed
- Affirms Duties of Metropolitan

### Protocol

June 2019 General Assembly

- Guidance on Bishops Who Were Removed or Who Resigned for Reasons Related to Sexual Abuse or Abuse of Power
- Guidance on Participation of Such Bishops Removed or Resigned in USCCB Meetings

### Episcopal Commitments

June 2019 General Assembly

- Bishops Included in Codes of Conduct that Must Include Prohibitions Against Sexual Misconduct and Harassment
- Bishops Renew Pledge to Be Subject to the Charter
- Commitment to Ongoing Formation for Bishops
- Commitment to Include Expertise of Lay Professionals



# Four Ways the Diocese of Oakland and You are Preventing Sexual Abuse



## *Creating safe environments*

Anyone who works in ministry with children, whether a clergy, religious, employee or volunteer, is required to attend training on safe environments (with retraining every three years) and undergo a criminal record check. This means 33,334 volunteers, employees and clergy in our Diocese know the warning signs of predatory behavior, know the Diocese's code of conduct and know how to report suspicious activity of anyone who might want to harm children. For more information on our safe environment training, please visit <https://www.oakdiocese.org/offices/safe-environment>.



## *Reporting abuse*

If you or someone you know has been abused or victimized by someone representing the Catholic Church, believe in the possibility for hope, help and healing. Anyone with information concerning an allegation of sexual misconduct by a clergy member or any diocesan employee should contact the local authority, i.e. police or sheriff department and the chancellor for the Diocese of Oakland, Mr. Stephen Wilcox, [swilcox@oakdiocese.org](mailto:swilcox@oakdiocese.org) or 510-267-8334.



## *Thoroughly investigating*

Every allegation of abuse by a member of the clergy, diocesan and parish employee, or parish volunteer is reviewed by the Diocesan Review Board, an independent group of professionals which was established in 1993. Initially the board was called the Sensitive Issues Committee; in 2003 it was renamed the Diocesan Review Board. The Board is responsible for investigating allegations of clergy sexual abuse, assessing the allegation and making recommendations to the Bishop regarding the alleged offender. It operates as a consultative body to the Bishop.



## *Improving standards for clergy*

Every candidate for the priesthood and diaconate undergoes a thorough investigation and formation. Seminarians and diaconal candidates for the Diocese of Oakland are required to undergo psychological screening, receive safe environment training and criminal record checks, and receive formation in psychosexual development. Priests from other dioceses in the United States (and many other countries) or members of religious orders undergo similar safe environment training and criminal record checks as our own clergy and laity. In addition, their superiors (either a bishop or major superior of their order) must provide written verification they are suitable for ministry in the Diocese of Oakland.

# Cuatro formas en que la diócesis de Oakland y tu estas previniendo el abuso sexual



## *Creando ambientes seguros*

Cualquier persona que trabaje en el ministerio con niños, ya sea un clero, religioso, empleado o voluntario, debe asistir a una capacitación de Entornos Seguros (debe recibir una capacitación cada tres años) y someterse a una verificación de sus antecedentes penales. Esto significa que 33,334 voluntarios, empleados y miembros del clero de nuestra Diócesis conocen los signos de advertencia de un comportamiento depredador, conocen el código de conducta de la Diócesis y saben cómo informar sobre actividades sospechosas de cualquier persona que quiera causar daño a los niños. Para obtener más información sobre nuestra capacitación sobre un entorno seguro, visite <https://www.oakdiocese.org/offices/safe-environment>.



## *Reportar abuso*

Cualquier persona que tenga información sobre una acusación de conducta sexual inapropiada por parte de un miembro del clero o cualquier empleado diocesano debe comunicarse con la autoridad local, es decir, la policía o el departamento del sheriff y con el ciller de la Diócesis de Oakland, el Sr. Stephen Wilcox, [swilcox@oakdiocese.org](mailto:swilcox@oakdiocese.org) o 510- 267-8334.



## *Investigando a fondo*

Todas las acusaciones de abuso por parte de un miembro del clero, empleados diocesanos y parroquiales, o voluntarios de la parroquia son revisadas por la Junta de Revisión Diocesana, un grupo independiente de profesionales establecido en 1993. En años anteriores, la junta se llamó Comité de Asuntos Sensitivos; en 2003 fue rebautizada como Junta de Revisión Diocesana. La Junta es responsable de investigar las denuncias de abuso sexual del clero, evaluar la denuncia y hacer recomendaciones al obispo con respecto al presunto ofensor. La junta funciona como un órgano consultivo del obispo.



## *Mejorar los estándares para el clero*

Todo candidato al sacerdocio y al diaconado se somete a una investigación y formación exhaustivas. Los seminaristas y los candidatos a diáconos de la Diócesis de Oakland deben someterse a un examen psicológico, recibir capacitación sobre Entorno Seguro y verificación de antecedentes penales, y recibir formación en desarrollo psicosexual. Los sacerdotes de otras diócesis en los Estados Unidos (y en muchos otros países) o miembros de una orden religiosa deben recibir una capacitación similar sobre Ambiente Seguro (conocida en inglés como Safe Environment) y revisión de antecedentes penales como nuestro propio clero y laicos. Además, sus superiores (ya sea un obispo o un superior mayor de su orden) deben proporcionar una verificación por escrito de que son adecuados para ejercer su ministerio en la Diócesis de Oakland.