



ROMAN CATHOLIC  
**DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER**

---

## **Safe Environment Communication Policy**

---

Issued by: The Most Reverend Matthew H. Clark  
Revised by: The Most Reverend Salvatore R. Matano

Date Issued: August 12, 2004  
Last Revised: March 1, 2021

---

### **KEY POLICY STATEMENTS:**

- The Diocese of Rochester will use all forms of communication possible to proactively educate and inform its employees, volunteers, and the public about its efforts to create a safe environment.
- The Diocese will promptly report to the appropriate authorities' allegations of sexual abuse regardless of the timeframe in which the abuse occurred.
- The Diocese will disseminate publicly its policies and procedures for dealing with allegations of sexual abuse through its own communication tools and the media.
- The Diocese will also disseminate publicly its policies and procedures for dealing with cases that are acknowledged or proven.
- The Diocese prohibits the acquisition, possession, and distribution of child pornography.

**APPLIES TO:** Diocese of Rochester

### **DETAILS:**

*In full agreement with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Charter for the Protection of Young People, Bishop Salvatore R. Matano and the Diocese of Rochester pledge ongoing and proactive communication that is open and transparent, and which works to create a safe environment for children, youth, and vulnerable adults. At all times, our communications will be honest, accurate and candid, always balancing the dissemination of information with the protection of the rights and privacy of all concerned.*

**To that end, the Diocese will use all forms of communication possible to proactively educate and inform internally its employees and volunteers and externally the**

**public about its efforts to create a safe environment for all, especially children, youth, and vulnerable adults. These tools will include use of both church and secular media, training sessions, video and published training materials, parish communications and electronic forms of communication such as the World Wide Web.**

- The Diocese will employ its own communication vehicles and the news media to create an atmosphere of encouragement and welcome for all those who wish to come forward with allegations of abuse. The Diocese will publish on its web site and in press materials when applicable the contact information for appropriate diocesan officials who receive such reports.
- To report a case of possible sexual abuse and to receive help and guidance from the diocese, victims are encouraged to contact the Victims' Assistance Coordinator at (585) 328-3228 x1555 or toll-free at (800)388-7177 x1555.
- The Diocese will promptly report to the appropriate authorities' allegations of sexual abuse regardless of the timeframe in which the abuse occurred.
- The Diocese will disseminate publicly its policies and procedures for dealing with allegations of sexual abuse through its own communication tools and the media.
- The Diocese will also disseminate publicly its policies and procedures for dealing with cases that are acknowledged or proven.
- The Diocese will respond to all media inquiries concerning sexual abuse allegations with as much candor and cooperation as possible, always seeking to balance this pledge with sensitivity to the rights, reputation, and privacy of all concerned. When and if the Diocese declines to release information, it pledges to stipulate publicly why it is declining and to state its reasonable belief of when such information may become publicly available. The Diocese will decline to comment on matters of pending litigation.
- All media inquiries involving reports or allegations of sexual misconduct by clergy and others in diocesan ministries, including information regarding the actions of the Review Board established to investigate allegations, should be directed to the Diocesan Director of Communications, who will act as sole spokesperson to the media in such inquiries unless otherwise directed by the Bishop's Office.