

Safe Environment Policy

Diocese of Fort Worth

The safe environment program is titled **Keeping Children and Youth Safe**.

All employees (priests, deacons, religious and laity) of the Diocese of Fort Worth are required to participate in the safe environment program. All volunteers (parish and school) are required to participate in the safe environment program. Ministers, employees, and volunteers are expected to complete the training between 30 days from the first day of their service in the diocese.

The safe environment program of the Diocese of Fort Worth includes:

- Participation in the safe environment session (The Diocese of Fort Worth uses the Praesidium, Inc. program titled Called To Protect)
- Reading and signing the Code of Conduct and Behavior Standards for Ministers, Employees and Volunteers
- A background evaluation.

Ministers, employees and volunteers are required to participate in safe environment retraining every three years.

Background evaluations are also required on all ministers, employees and volunteers every three years.

All programs require the presence of two adults or one adult and two older teens. This policy extends to:

- All sponsored training and events regardless of where the programs or activities are held.
- Catholic school events and activities outside of a regular classroom setting
- Religious education classes and programs
- Youth ministry programs and events
- Liturgy of the Word for children
- Rite of Christian Initiation adapted for children
- Babysitting, nursery and child care programs
- Choirs for children and youth
- Altar server training
- Vacation Bible School
- Scouting

All employees are screened during the interview and hiring process. All new volunteers are to be interviewed and screened. The interview and screening packet for volunteers is available on the diocesan website.

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