



Harassment Policy for Non-Employment Situations in Schools/Centers, Parish Religious Education and Parish Youth Ministry Programs of the Diocese of St. Petersburg

POLICY:

The Diocese of St. Petersburg requires that each parish, Catholic school or early childhood center establish and adopt this policy that prohibits any form of harassment by any individual. The Diocese of St. Petersburg strives for the establishment of a Christian, professional and supportive educational environment for all persons engaged in or involved with religious education programs, schools and early childhood centers, and parish youth ministry programs in non-employment situations. No parish, school, or early childhood center will be responsible for off campus harassment, unless it occurs at a parish, school, or early childhood center-sponsored event.

PURPOSE OF POLICY:

This policy intends:

- That each individual is free from physical, psychological or verbal intimidation and harassment in the schools, early childhood centers, religious education and youth ministry settings;
- That each individual involved in schools, early childhood centers, religious education and youth ministry programs maintain and further develop attitudes and behaviors which express respect for others and are reflective of each person's God-given dignity;
- To encourage a heightened sensitivity toward behaviors that others may find offensive and intimidating, whether these behaviors refer to race, religion, color, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, marital status, familial status, veteran status or disability.

This policy is not intended to otherwise limit the expectation of staff, children, students, and volunteers to engage fully in the traditions of teaching, celebrating, participating in and being formed by the Catholic faith, including but not limited to curriculum, catechesis, the Sacraments, other liturgies, worship services and ministries.

EXPLANATION OF HARASSMENT:

Harassment can result from a single incident or from a pattern of behavior involving verbal, written or physical conduct or communication.

Harassment encompasses a broad range of behaviors, which could include, but are not limited to:

1. Physical, mental or verbal abuse
2. Insults, jokes, or derogatory slurs based on one or more of an individual's protected status(es)
3. Unwelcome sexual advances or touching
4. Implicit or explicit requests for sexual favors
5. Unwanted sexual comments (serious or humorous)
6. Unwanted sexually suggestive telephone calls, letters, e-mail, etc.
7. Comments or jokes based on issues of modesty and developing social awareness
8. Unwanted forced involvement in activities (e.g., physical, religious, etc.)
9. Coercion of religious styles or personal beliefs upon a participant

2. The confidentiality of each individual involved with the investigation or complaint will be observed, provided it does not interfere with the ability to investigate the allegations or take corrective action.
3. Individuals who engage in behavior which violates this policy are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion, dismissal, discharge, and any legal consequences which may result.
4. Individuals should recognize that knowingly and willfully bringing false accusations of harassment or discrimination can have serious effects on innocent individuals and may subject such individuals to expulsion, dismissal, discharge, and any legal consequences for this behavior.
5. Retaliation against individuals who in good faith file a complaint of harassment or participate in an investigation is prohibited. Any person who feels (s)he has been subjected to retaliation under this policy should report such conduct as outlined above in the "Reporting Procedures".

Boy Scout Programs and Our Lady of Good Counsel Camp

For purposes of this policy and its related procedures only, Boy Scout Programs and Our Lady of Good Counsel Camp will observe all aspects as described through parish youth ministry components. Communication and facilitation is to be arranged through the Diocesan Director of Youth Ministry.



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**For Principals, Directors of Early Childhood Centers, Parish Directors of
Youth Ministry, Parish Catechetical Leaders, Faculty, Staff and Volunteers**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I acknowledge that I have received, read, understand, and accept the Harassment Policy in Non-Employment Situations regarding the schools, early childhood centers, parish youth ministry programs, parish religious education programs, Boy Scouts and Our Lady of Good Counsel Camp of the Diocese of St. Petersburg.

(Signature)

(Name Printed)

Date _____

Name of School/Early Childhood Center/Parish/Boy Scouts/Camp

**(Please sign and return form to that School/Early Childhood Center/Parish/Boy
Scouts/Camp.)**

