



Policies, Procedures & Guidelines
for Maintaining
Ethical Ministry with Minors
and Vulnerable Adults

Effective September 2022

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Section I: Introduction

This manual, "Policies, Procedures and Guidelines for Maintaining Ethical Ministry with Minors and Vulnerable Adults," has been developed by Our Lady of the Angels Province to provide guidance to our Friars on the subjects of child sexual abuse prevention, protection of children and vulnerable adults, and to address the needs of all survivors of abuse.

Providing a safe, secure ministry environment involves policies and procedures specially developed to screen, educate, and monitor compliance by all. It requires all Friars of our Province, to not only be aware of the potential risks of child abuse, but to be committed to minimizing those risks. The purpose of these formal written policies, procedures and guidelines is to establish a culture of safety and accountability and provide a written record of ministry practices designed to protect children, youth, and vulnerable adults.

Section II: Definitions

A **Friar** may be a professed religious of the Province, a novice or a postulant and includes any Friar of the Province returning to the United States from abroad or a professed religious of another Province or Institute (national or international) who will be under the authority of the Our Lady of the Angel Province.

A **Minor** is anyone under the age of 18.

A **Vulnerable Adult** is any person in a state of infirmity, physical or mental deficiency, or deprivation of personal liberty which, in fact, even occasionally limits their ability to understand or to want to otherwise resist their offense.

A **Visitor** is an individual who is not a Friar of Our Lady of the Angels Province who resides in a Friary of Our Lady of the Angels Province.

Section III: Preventing Sexual Abuse

The sexual abuse of minors and vulnerable adults is contrary to the teachings of the Church and is prohibited. Friars have a responsibility to protect minors and vulnerable adults from all forms of abuse.

A. Boundaries

The following are guidelines to help direct appropriate interactions with minors. This is meant to be a non-exhaustive list of appropriate and inappropriate interactions with minors and vulnerable adults.

Expressions of affection between a Friar of the Province and a Friar of his family must also reflect these guidelines, socially appropriate norms, and family traditions.

1) Physical Interactions

Acceptable behaviors:

- Side-hugs.
- Pats on the shoulder or back.
- Handshakes.
- “High-fives” and hand slapping.
- Touching hands, faces, shoulders, and arms of minors/ vulnerable adults.
 - Holding hands while walking with small children.
 - Kneeling or bending down for hugs with small children.
 - Holding hands during prayer.
 - Pats on the head when culturally appropriate. (For example, this gesture should typically be avoided in some Asian communities).

Unacceptable behaviors:

- Engaging in sexual contact with minors. For the purposes of this policy, sexual contact is defined as vaginal intercourse, anal intercourse, oral intercourse, or the touching of another (including but not limited to the thighs, genitals, buttocks, pubic region, or chest) for the purpose of sexually arousing or gratifying either person.
- Friars are prohibited from using physical discipline in any way for behavior management of minors and vulnerable adults. No form of physical discipline is acceptable. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behaviors by minors and vulnerable adults.
- Inappropriate or lengthy embraces.
- Kissing.
- Holding minors over four years old on the lap.
- Touching buttocks, chests, or genital areas.
- Showing affection in isolated areas such as bedrooms, closets, staff-only areas, or other private rooms.
- Being in bed with a minor/vulnerable adult.
- Touching knees or legs of minors/vulnerable adults.
- Wrestling with minors/vulnerable adults.
- Tickling minors/vulnerable adults.
- Piggyback rides.
- Any type of massage given by minor/vulnerable adult to a Friar.
- Any type of massage given by a Friar to a minor/vulnerable adult.
- Any form of unwanted affection.
- Sleeping in the same bed, sleeping bag, or tents with minors/vulnerable adults.

2) Verbal Interactions

Acceptable behaviors:

- Verbal Praise.
- Positive reinforcement.
- Encouragement.
- Appropriate jokes.

Unacceptable behaviors:

- Keeping secrets.
 - Swearing in the presence of minors/vulnerable adults.
 - Speaking to minors/vulnerable adults in a way that is or could be construed by any observer as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating.
 - Engaging in any sexually oriented conversations with minors unless the conversations are part of a legitimate lesson and discussion for teenagers regarding human sexuality issues. On such occasions, the lessons will convey to youth the Church's teachings on these topics. If youth have further questions not answered or addressed by their individual teachers, they should be referred to their parents or guardians for clarification.
 - Compliments that relate to physique or body development.
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- Electronics Communications
 - Friars should not communicate with minors/vulnerable adults (other than relatives) using electronic media except as a part of their professional/ministerial responsibilities. This includes email, instant messaging, texting, or social networking sites. If a minor/vulnerable adult were to contact a Friar, a polite response is permitted, but future communications should be avoided.
 - During any usage of social media or other electronic communications with minors/vulnerable adults, Friars are not to:
 - Make comments that are, or could be construed by any observer as harsh, coercive, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating.
 - Engage in sexually oriented conversations or discussions about sexual activities unless these are part of a pastoral situation.
 - Post sexually oriented or morally inappropriate pictures, photos, or comments.
 - Post photos of minors or details of ministry/program activities involving minors on any electronic media without the explicit, written permission of a parent or legal guardian.
 - Engage in one-on-one video chatting or have one-on-one interaction in a chatroom.
 - Initiate or accept a "friend" request (or similar social media "connection" using a personal account.
 - All communication between Friars and minors/vulnerable adults must be transparent and/or include the parent whenever possible.

3) Supervision of Programs that Involve Minors and Vulnerable Adults

- The Province's programs for minors and vulnerable adults in which Friars are involved must be supervised by **at least** two adults.
- Friars in leadership roles shall be aware of all programs for minors/vulnerable adults that are sponsored by their parish, school, or agency. A list of these programs shall be maintained in the central office and include activities, purpose, sponsors or coordinators of the programs, meeting times and locations. Leaders shall examine these programs and consider whether there is adequate supervision.

4) Off-site events

- Friars are prohibited from transporting minors without written permission of their parent or guardian.
- Friars are prohibited from unnecessary and/or inappropriate physical contact with minors and vulnerable adults while in vehicles.
- Minors and vulnerable adults should be transported directly to their destination. No unplanned stops should be made along the way.
- Friars are prohibited from having minors and vulnerable adults stay at their Friary or place of residence. Requests for exceptions should be submitted to the Minister Provincial in writing two weeks prior to the visit, and such requests require the approval of the Minister Provincial.
- Changing and showering facilities or arrangements for Friars must be separate from facilities or arrangements for minors and vulnerable adults.

5) Other Prohibited Behaviors

- Being nude in the presence of minors/vulnerable adults.
- Using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol, marijuana and/or illegal drugs while supervising minors/vulnerable adults.
- Providing or allowing minors and vulnerable adults to consume alcohol, marijuana and/or illegal drugs.
- Known or suspected possession, distribution, downloading and/or intentionally viewing real or virtual images of child abuse. This is a violation of civil and canon law. Any Friar who has engaged in these behaviors must have an individualized Safety Plan.
- Possessing sexually oriented or morally inappropriate printed materials (magazines, cards, videos, films, clothing, etc.) in the presence of minors/vulnerable adults.

B. Structures of Support and accountability

Vigilance regarding the maintenance of proper boundaries must include a system of accountability based on the standards of conduct. It is essential that, in our communities and the places where we work and minister, a transparent and effective system of monitoring and reporting is in place.

1) Process for Responding to Boundary Violations by Friars

- The Province shall immediately intervene in situations where there is potential risk of harm to an identifiable minor/vulnerable adult.
- Each Friar is responsible for identifying warning signs and responding to those signs.
- Friars must report to the Minister Provincial or Local Guardian when another Friar violates the Province's policy on boundaries with minors/vulnerable adults or when another Friar exhibits warning signs of inappropriate behavior with minors/vulnerable adults.
- Friars are encouraged, if they feel comfortable, to discuss concerns with the Friar engaging in inappropriate behavior(s), after having reported the behavior(s) to the Minister Provincial or Local Guardian.
- The Minister Provincial is responsible for coordinating appropriate assistance for Friars who have violated the boundaries as established in these policies.
 - The Minister Provincial will document all reports and subsequent interventions, remedial actions taken, plans for continued observation, and conditions, if any, placed on the Friar.
 - This documentation will be included in files maintained by the Province. Access to these materials will be available on a need-to-know basis or as required by civil law. Access to these materials will be restricted as required by Canon Law.
- The Province will present any situation in which a Friar has repeated boundary violations, or when a minor/vulnerable adult is known to be in danger, to the Review Board.
 - In these cases, an intervention plan must be developed which outlines how the boundary violations with minors/vulnerable adults will be interrupted, and the Province will verify that the intervention plan has been implemented.

2) Referrals for the Evaluation of Friars who Disclose an Attraction to Minors/Vulnerable Adults

- Any Friar who is concerned about an unhealthy attraction to minors/vulnerable adults or has violated a boundary of the Province's policies, is encouraged to disclose the information to the Minister Provincial.
- Self-disclosure is strongly encouraged
- Friars who disclose an attraction to minors, vulnerable adults or past boundary violations will be offered reasonable assistance, including but not limited to, a professional evaluation.

3) Policy for Visiting Religious

The intent of this policy is to establish systems of support and accountability for visitors. For the purposes of this policy, visitors are defined as individuals who do not belong to the Province but reside in a Friary of the Province. Visitors may be on a special ministerial assignment, enrolled in an educational program, or enjoying the

benefits of a sabbatical, and may be unable to live in a house of their own Institute. In these cases, the Province will implement the following measures:

- a) Prior to acceptance of a visitor from another Province or from a different Institute altogether, Our Lady of the Angels Province must have the written permission of the visitor's Major Superior.
- b) The Major Superior of the sending Province or Institute must send a letter to the Minister Provincial of Our Lady of the Angels Province, affirming the visitor's good standing and suitability and attesting to the lack of reports of inappropriate behavior with minors.
- c) The Major Superior of the sending Institute must also provide his written opinion regarding the Visitor's moral, intellectual, physical, and psychological attributes.
- d) The Major Superior of the sending Institute must also provide a list of work/volunteer assignments and ministries in which the visitor has participated, especially those involving youth, and the name of the visitor's supervisors.
- e) Our Lady of the Angels Province will request reference letters from said supervisors in which the supervisor attests to the visitor's cooperation, collaboration, and competence during the visitor's employment.
- f) The Major Superiors of both the sending and receiving Institutes and the visitor will sign an agreement that includes:
 - The reason why the visitor will be residing in Our Lady of the Angels Province.
 - A description of the visitor's role and expectations regarding his residence at the Province's Friary.
 - Any and all work or volunteer assignments and ministries the visitor will be participating in, especially those involving youth.
 - An indication of a probationary period, if any, expectations during that period, and any violation that would merit immediate removal of the visitor from the Province Friary.
- g) Our Lady of the Angels Province will provide the receiving visitor with a copy of the Province's Policies, Procedures and Guidelines on the protection of youth and minors/vulnerable adults and will request that the visitor sign a document acknowledging its receipt and agreeing to adhere to the Policy. A copy of this signed document will be kept in the visitor's file and can be easily accessible by the Minister Provincial.
- h) Our Lady of the Angels Province will provide the visitor with an orientation program regarding the Province's Policies, Procedures and Guidelines on the protection of youth and minors/vulnerable adults and complete other requirements established by the Province for visitors, e.g., criminal background check, educational training, etc.
- i) The visitor will complete an educational training program covering basic concepts of the prevention of child sexual abuse and the state's mandatory reporting requirements before he initiates any work with minors.

- j) The Minister Provincial of Our Lady of the Angels Province will communicate with any local supervisor(s) assigned to the visitor in his work/volunteer assignments on a regular basis.
 - k) The visitor will be assigned a mentor/supervisor within the Province and will meet with said mentor/supervisor on a regular basis.
 - l) The visitor is expected to participate in the Friary's community life including:
 - Community mass/meetings
 - Prayer
 - Social gatherings
 - Trainings
- 4) Policy for Friars Returning to the Our Lady of the Angels Province after Serving Abroad and International Friars Serving in Our Lady of the Angels Province
 This educational plan is for Friars who are returning from ministry outside the U.S. and for international Friars who are coming for ministry within the U.S. and are under the authority of Our Lady of the Angels Province. To ensure that these Friars become familiar with the Province's child protection efforts and policies and become part of these efforts, they must complete the following training before they begin any public ministry:
- a) Read the Province's Child Protection Policies, Procedures and Guidelines and Code of Conduct and sign a statement agreeing to adhere to them.
 - b) Complete an educational program that includes the following topics before they begin any public ministry:
 - Information on recognizing and responding to warning signs, boundary violations, or other inappropriate behaviors with minors/vulnerable adults;
 - Information on how to make a report to the civil authorities of known or suspected sexual abuse of a victim who is currently a minor in the jurisdictions where the Friar is assigned;
 - Information about images of child abuse (child pornography), including its nature as a criminal offense and as an offense considered under the Motu Proprio, Sacramentorum Sanctitatis Tutela (SST); and
 - Information regarding abuse of vulnerable persons, including its nature as an offense the Motu Proprio, "Vos estis lux mundi."
 - c) It is well known that acceptable interpersonal behaviors and practices differ between cultures. For this reason and to help our Friars succeed and minister in a pastoral, yet safe manner within the U.S., Friars will participate in an enculturation program. Said program will help Friars become familiar with cultural values within the U.S. and therefore help them manage interactions in their ministries.
 - d) Once the Friar completes the foundational program described in number 2 above, he will continue to participate in all child protection education programs required by the Province and the Arch/diocese(s) in which he serves.

C. Education Requirements to Support a Safe Environment

Effective training on the sexual abuse of minors/vulnerable adults can empower Friars in their role as protectors. Training also communicates that the Province has shown due diligence in its attempts to prevent the sexual abuse of minors/vulnerable adults and it sends the message: “We will not tolerate any form of abuse in this Province.”

a) Requirements for Friars:

- The Province requires all Friars (including all those participating in the Province formation program) and all who serve in public ministry, even those who only occasionally serve in public ministry to complete at least one educational program that includes the following topics:
 - Information on how to report to the civil authorities of known or suspected sexual abuse of a child who is currently a minor in the jurisdiction where the Friar is assigned;
 - Information on recognizing and responding to boundary violations or other inappropriate behaviors with minors/vulnerable adults.
 - Information about images of child abuse, including its nature as a criminal offense and as a grave delict considered under the *Motu Proprio*, “*Sacramentorum Sanctitatis Tutela (SST)*,” and
 - Information regarding abuse of vulnerable persons, including its nature as an offence under the *Motu Proprio*, “*Vos estis lux mundi*.”
- The Province requires all Friars (including all those participating in the Province formation program) and all who serve in public ministry, even those who only occasionally serve in public ministry, to participate in a minimum total number of hours of education that is equal to the number of years in the Province’s Accreditation period.
 - If a Friar is required to attend an educational program in the diocese where he is ministering, and the topic of the program is consistent with this requirement, the requirement can be met by attending that program. It is the Friar’s responsibility to provide proof of his attendance to the Province, who will maintain documentation of this in the Friar’s file.
 - At the discretion of the Minister Provincial, a Friar may be excused from an educational program if that Friar has physical or medical difficulties and will not be involved in public ministry.
- The Province ensures ongoing training programs include a variety of topics approved by Praesidium that support the prevention of abuse more broadly. Examples of acceptable topics for continuing education include:
 - Appropriate boundaries in ministry with adults
 - Internet pornography and cybersex
 - Sexual Harassment
 - Development of chaste celibate relationships
 - Conflict resolution
 - Preparing religious for leadership in prevention and response to allegations of the sexual abuse of minors/vulnerable adults
 - Prevention of sexual abuse in schools, camps, churches, or social service organizations

- Child-to-child sexual abuse
- Appropriate use of electronic communications and social media
- Ongoing abuse prevention training refreshes what Friars have previously learned and provides additional knowledge and skills that enhance their ability to protect those in their care. Therefore, it is recommended that educational programs should not be repeated.

b) Educational Requirements for the Minister Provincial:

The Minister Provincial plays a significant role in the Province's abuse prevention efforts and sets the tone for the Province. As the leader of the Province, he is responsible for many of the decisions that create and maintain a safe environment for Friars and those the Province serves. Therefore, he must be prepared for his involvement in abuse-related matters through education, training, and/or experience in the impact of child sexual abuse and how to promote healing for survivors.

The following is a list of documentation that can be presented to meet the educational requirements of the position and to demonstrate that the Minister Provincial has prepared for his role in abuse prevention efforts and decisions:

- Documentation that shows the Minister Provincial has followed the Province's transition plan. (This must also be supplemented by other items included in this list.)
- Documentation of the Minister Provincial's participation in specialized training or conferences.
- Certificates for the completion of relevant courses or programs.
- A resume or documentation that shows past work with survivors of sexual abuse.
- A psychology or social work degree.

c) Educational Requirements for Supervisors of Friar's on Safety Plans :

Supervisors of Friars on Safety Plans play a significant role in the Province's abuse prevention efforts by supporting and holding accountable those who have abused. By providing ongoing support and efficient supervision, Supervisors help Friars on a Safety Plan adhere to their restrictions and find fulfillment within the boundaries of the Safety Plan. Being a Supervisor is a significant responsibility and can be challenging at times. Therefore, it is important that Supervisors receive proper preparation and clarity about the expectations of the role to be able to fulfill their responsibilities effectively.

The following is a list of documentation that can be presented by the Supervisor of Friar's on Safety plans to meet the educational requirements of the position:

- A resume that shows experience supervising men on safety plans.
- Certificates or documentation of the completion of relevant courses or programs.
- Documentation of participation in specialized training, conferences, or

workshops.

- Documentation of the completion of orientation from others who serve as supervisors.
- Documentation of the completion of an introductory meeting with leadership or another representative of the Province, which includes a review of the allegations made against the Friar on the Safety Plan, his risk reduction strategies, strengths, challenges, and consequences for violation of the Safety Plan.

d) Educational Requirements for Supervisors of Friars in Formation:

The first action a Province can take to keep its ministries safe is to ensure that any future Friars are carefully screened. The admission process and initial stages of formation are crucial in identifying individuals who may present challenges or pose a risk as it relates to the prevention of sexual abuse. For this reason, is it important that Vocation and Formation Directors, as well as other formators, are prepared through education, training, and/or experience to identify Candidates who may be at risk to sexually abuse a minor.

The following is a list of documentation that can be presented by Vocation and Formation Directors to meet the educational requirements of the position:

- A psychology or social work degree.
- A resume that shows past work in matters related to sexual abuse and/or vocation or formation work.
- Certificates for the completion of relevant courses or programs.
- Documentation of participation in specialized training or conferences.

e) Educational Requirements for Province Pastoral Advocate:

The Pastoral Advocate is an individual, appointed or hired by the Minister Provincial, whose primary role is to accompany survivors throughout the Province's response to reports and allegations of abuse. The Pastoral Advocate is qualified to work with survivors of abuse, either through their education, training, and/or experience. The following is a list of documentation that can be presented to meet the educational requirements of the position:

- Psychology, social work, or other relevant human services degree.
- A resume that shows past work with survivors of sexual abuse.
- Certificates for the completion of relevant courses or programs.
- Documentation of the person's participation in specialized training or conferences.

Section IV: Responding to Allegations

Procedures for responding to an allegation of sexual abuse, including anonymous allegations, can protect everyone's rights, ensure that the Province responds legally and effectively, and minimizes disruption. Allegations of sexual abuse may come from a variety of sources, including alleged victims or their family Friars, diocesan offices, Friars of the

community, a colleague in the workplace or from an alleged perpetrator. Because each case is distinct, the following is a general outline of the response system for allegations of abuse but is not necessarily a procedure that is to be followed in the same way for each case. The process is to be modified according to the nature of the allegation, the needs of the alleged survivor and the circumstances of the accused Friar. In every case, the Province commits itself to dealing pastorally with, and protecting the rights of, all those involved.

Vigilance regarding the prevention of sexual abuse of minors must include a system of accountability based on the standards of conduct. It is essential that, in our communities and the places where we work and minister, a transparent and effective system of reporting and responding is in place.

A. Reporting Requirements and Procedures

The following procedure should be followed when reporting known or suspected abuse of Minors/Vulnerable Adults

- Abuse When the Survivor is Currently a Minor
 - Friars must report known or suspected sexual abuse of a survivor who is currently a minor to the appropriate civil authorities of the state in which the abuse allegedly occurred within 24 hours, regardless of state mandatory reporting laws, whether alleged to have been perpetrated by a Friar or a person outside of the Province. This is the case if the accused is still living or not, or whether he is a current or former Friar of the Province. To access reporting information, see Appendix A in this manual or log on to the web at: www.childwelfare.gov.
 - Friars must report known or suspected possession, distribution, downloading and/or intentionally viewing real or virtual images of child abuse (child pornography) to the appropriate civil authorities within 24 hours regardless of the state mandatory reporting laws.
 - The Friar who has first-hand knowledge of the known or suspected sexual abuse of a minor must be the person to make the initial contact with the appropriate civil authorities. This task cannot be delegated or passed on to others.
 - If the alleged survivor is a minor at the time the allegation is received, their identity must be provided to the civil authorities.
- Abuse When the Survivor is Now an Adult
 - Friars must report known or suspected sexual abuse of a minor/vulnerable adult when the survivor is no longer a minor in accordance with the civil laws of the state in which the sexual abuse of a minor was alleged to have occurred, regardless of whether the accused is still living or not, or whether he is a current or former Friar of the Province.
 - Individuals who have approached the Province to report the sexual abuse of a minor/vulnerable adult must be advised of their right to report to civil authorities and encouraged to make a report.

- If the alleged survivor is an adult at the time the allegation is received his or her identity will be provided to the civil authorities, provided the alleged survivor consents to having their identity disclosed. If the alleged survivor does not consent, they will be informed that their identity may be disclosed if required by the civil authorities.
- In addition to reporting to civil authorities, reports of suspected or known abuse of a minor may be made confidentially (unless otherwise disclosed by canon law) to any of the following:
 - The Pastoral Advocate
 - The Local Superior
 - The Minister Provincial
 - The Minister General
 - The Chair of the Review Board

B. Initial Response Protocol to Reports and Allegations of Sexual Abuse:

When an allegation of sexual abuse is first received, the Minister Provincial (or his delegate) shall attempt to gather sufficient information to complete a written preliminary report. The report should include the following information:

- Name of the alleged survivor;
- Age of alleged survivor;
- Address and phone number of alleged survivor.
- Name of alleged perpetrator.
- Approximate dates of alleged abuse.
- Nature, type, and location of alleged abuse.
- Name of person making the report (if different from the survivor).
- Any additional relevant details.

C. Response of the Province to the Survivor

- When a person comes forward with an allegation of being sexually abused as a minor, Representative(s) of the Province will explain the procedure and provide written information explaining the procedure the Province follows in responding to allegations. (See Appendix B)
- The Minister Provincial will also assign the Pastoral Advocate to provide support for the immediate and ongoing needs of individuals who have experienced sexual abuse and their families.
- The Pastoral Advocate will offer to meet in person with an individual who reports being abused as a minor if he or she desires. The Pastoral Advocate, and any other Representative of the Province who meets with the survivor, will maintain a compassionate and pastoral manner regardless of the demeanor of alleged survivor, recognizing that the experience of sexual abuse and difficulty of coming forward may bring out strong emotions during the disclosure process.
 - In situations where the survivor has legal representation, representatives of the Province will extend an offer to meet with the individual through their legal

counsel. If this is not possible, the Province will maintain documentation of the reason(s).

- It is understood that some individuals who have alleged being sexually abused as minors may choose to not accept a meeting with the Pastoral Advocate.
- The Pastoral Advocate of the Province will document every attempt to assist in the healing of an individual who has approached the Province to report being sexually abused as a minor by a current, former, or deceased Friar.

- Guidelines for a Pastoral and Compassionate Response to the Survivor

A pastoral response is important in the healing process of survivors.

Representatives of the Province involved in responding and tending to survivors should prepare before meeting with any survivors.

The Province will have a designated Pastoral Advocate. While the Minister Provincial may participate in providing a pastoral response, he will not serve as the Pastoral Advocate.

Any representatives of the Province involved in providing a compassionate and pastoral response to a survivor should keep the following in mind:

- Take time to put yourself in the place of the survivor and understand how they have felt and continue to feel.
- If you do not feel patient and compassionate toward survivors of abuse, someone else may be better equipped to serve in the pastoral response role.
- It is important to realize that these situations are complicated, painful, and not likely to be resolved quickly. Responding to the needs of survivors of sexual abuse is often a long-term process.
- It is essential to spend time listening to a survivor's story of abuse. Be respectful and give them your undivided attention.
- Understand that certain aspects of the survivor's recollection of events may be fuzzy but that does not mean the survivor is not credible.
- Many survivors of sexual abuse show a range of strong emotions over a short period or a long period.
- Survivors of sexual abuse are often suspicious and untrusting.
- Assure the survivor the abuse was not their fault.
- Avoid questions that could make the survivor feel responsible (i.e., Why did you take so long to report?).
- Let the survivor know you believe them. Most survivors want validation that the incidents occurred.
- Do not be afraid to apologize for what happened in the past.
- It is not productive or helpful to defend, justify, excuse, or argue.
- Avoid expressing shock or outrage.
- It is not uncommon for survivors to want support, but they do not always accept it.

- Ask what would be most helpful to them and their healing process. What would they like to see happen as a result of coming forward?
- Offer resources to meet the needs of those affected (i.e., counseling, therapeutic services, pastoral assistance).
- Keep your word. Be sure to do what you say you are going to do as quickly as possible.
- Do not create false expectations. Be sure not to make promises you cannot keep and to keep the promises you make.
- Remind the survivor of their right to report to the authorities and encourage them to do so. Be clear with the survivor about your reporting requirements if they do not wish to go to the authorities directly.
- Inform the survivor that the Province will be transparent throughout the process and provide regular updates on the investigation and the next steps as much as possible.
- Provide confidence that the protection of those you serve is your highest priority and safeguards have been developed to prevent the same thing from happening to others.
- The experience of sexual abuse can have lasting effects on survivors. It may affect a person's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. It is important to recognize that these are human experiences, and that each survivor will be affected differently.
 - Thoughts: Many survivors of sexual abuse begin to think that the world is not a safe place and that no one can be trusted. They may think that they are only valuable as a sexual object or that everyone has a hidden agenda. This thinking is a result of having their trust betrayed by sexual abuse.
 - Feelings: Survivors of sexual abuse may feel ashamed and guilty about the abuse. They may feel that the abuse was their fault and that they could have stopped it if they had tried harder. They may feel confused about their feelings toward the offender if the relationship was close and caring in other ways. Many individuals feel angry with the adults who were in their lives who they feel should have protected them from the abuse. Some individuals feel angry with themselves for not telling at the time.
 - Behaviors: Some individuals who experience sexual abuse act out sexually, become depressed, even suicidal, abuse drugs or alcohol, and have difficulty establishing or maintaining relationships. Children who have been sexually abused sometimes wet the bed, engage in sexual acting out, get in fights with their peers, and have difficulty in school.
- Keep in mind how the following can affect a Survivor's Healing Process
 - Frequency: How often the abuse occurred.
 - Duration: How long the abuse took place.
 - Intensity: The nature of the sexual acts themselves.
 - Betrayal: The level of trust between the survivor and perpetrator.
 - Treatment: The extent and quality of treatment/therapy.
 - Support. The level of support from family and friends.
 - Response. How individuals respond at the first outcry.

D. Response of the Province to the Accused

- The Province will respect each Friar's rights under civil and cannon law, throughout the complete process.
- The Minister Provincial will inform the accused Friar of his right to seek canonical and civil counsel before any further conversation into the matter. The Province recognizes that the Friar may need assistance to engage such counsel.
- During investigations by civil authorities or by the Province, the Friar who is the subject of the investigation will have no unsupervised access to minors during the pendency of the process. This means that the Friar may be temporarily removed from ministry responsibilities and duties.
- The Minister Provincial may impose additional restrictions on the Friar, including changing his living situation and/or limiting his movements and interactions with certain parties. He may also provide for measures to support the Friar throughout the process, such as pastoral care.
- When he has received the completed investigation report, the Minister Provincial will present the results of the investigation to the Friar for response.
- The Minister Provincial will maintain contact with the accused Friar throughout the entire process.

1) Investigations

The Province takes every report or allegation of sexual abuse seriously, including those that are made anonymously, and is committed to investigating them to the extent possible. In cases of potential sexual abuse where the civil authorities decide to investigate, the Province will cooperate fully with them and not take any steps that may interfere with their investigation. Cooperation with the civil authorities includes, but is not limited to:

- Identifying the investigating officials and being available for meeting with them;
- Promptly acknowledging and responding to requests for information;
- Providing full, accurate, and truthful information;
- Keeping confidential information learned or transmitted during the investigation, unless otherwise directed by legal authorities;
- Preserving relevant information and documents; and
- Checking with the investigating officials before initiating any internal investigation or review.

The Province will only proceed with its full, internal investigation if the civil authorities do not proceed with an investigation, if they consent to the Province conducting a simultaneous internal investigation, or once their investigation is over. Where an internal investigation is not possible or necessary, the Province will document the reasons why.

The Province will strive to maintain the rights of all concerned in the process of an investigation of sexual abuse of a minor.

- If at the conclusion of an initial investigation, which may be performed by the Minister Provincial or his delegate, there is a "semblance of truth" to the

allegations of sexual abuse against a Friar, the Minister Provincial must ensure that the Friar against whom the allegations are made has no access to minors/vulnerable adults during the pendency of a full investigation.

- Once a “semblance of truth” has been established and the civil authorities have been consulted, the Minister Provincial will designate a trained, third-party individual to conduct a full investigation of the allegation. For purposes of this procedure, a third-party investigator is defined as someone who is not a Friar of the Province.
- The Province will collaborate with the third-party investigator to determine the scope of the internal investigation. In cases of an established or undisputed allegation, an investigation may be conducted to identify any other potential survivors and to inform the on-going supervision plans for the Friar who has abused.
- The Province will provide any and all information requested by the third-party investigator, so long as it does not violate any privacy laws. This can include survivor statements, witness statements, correspondence, the Friar’s file, other related documentation regarding additional concerns and similar behaviors, training records, disciplinary records, video footage, etc.
- When conducting the full investigation, the third-party investigator will respect the following guidelines:
 - The investigator will advise any parties that he/she represents the Province and that conversations with the Investigator are not subject to any attorney/client privilege.
 - The investigator will advise the parties that, although pastoral care is available, the investigator will not be the one to provide that care.
 - The investigator, who shall obtain statements from the parties and any witnesses, will keep the Minister Provincial informed regarding the status of the investigation.
 - The Investigator will produce a written report and submit it to the Minister Provincial.
 - The investigation report will be stored in the personnel file of the current, former, or deceased Friar who is the subject of the investigation.

2) Decision-Making

- Once the full investigation has been completed and after receiving the final report the Minister Provincial will consult with the Review Board and listen to their recommendations.
- If an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor/vulnerable adult cannot be investigated or established, the Review Board must be consulted regarding the disposition of the case. Upon the conclusion of the investigation and consulting the Review Board, the Minister Provincial will exercise his judgment in making a decision about the allegation. If the accused Friar has admitted to the substance of the allegation, or in those cases where the allegation has been established, the Minister Provincial’s response could include any of the following:

- Provide for the pastoral care and treatment of the Friar, such as psychological and medical assessment and intervention.
- Restrictions on community life and personal activities of the Friar.
- Limitations imposed on the Friar's work assignments. In cases where an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor/vulnerable adult has been established, that Friar may not return to public ministry.
- In all instances, the final disposition of the matter rests with the Minister Provincial, always recognizing:
 - The Friar's right to appeal to Minister General and/or the Holy See.
 - It is the Minister Provincial's responsibility to communicate his decision to the person who made the complaint, to the Friar involved, and to other parties, including the Minister General, as necessary and appropriate.
- When an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor/vulnerable adult cannot be established, the Minister Provincial will reinstate the Friar to ministry and will work towards the restitution of his good name.
- If sexual abuse of a minor/vulnerable adult has been established through the full investigation, civil authorities shall be re-contacted and a follow-up report will be submitted, if requested. If further investigation indicates the allegation is not established, civil authorities will be contacted to provide the additional information.
- If at any time during the course of implementing these procedures, civil or criminal proceedings are initiated against the accused Friar, these procedures may be suspended immediately, to be resumed, if deemed necessary, only after the completion of the civil or criminal proceedings. In such a case, the Minister Provincial's delegate shall recommend to the Minister Provincial a possible course of action with respect to the accused Friar, in keeping with the intention of these procedures and in the interests of justice.
- Documentation of allegations, reports, responses, and investigations are confidential and shall remain with the office of the Minister Provincial following election of a new Minister Provincial; access to these materials will be prohibited as required by canon law and will be available only as required by civil law.

3) Pastoral Care for Friars that have been Credibly Accused of Abuse of Minors/Vulnerable Adults

These procedures describe the elements of a pastoral care framework which will be developed for each Friar of the Province about whom a credible accusation of sexual abuse has been made. Most of these procedures address cases where the accusation is that of abuse of a minor or vulnerable adult.

The purpose of this framework is to:

- assure the Church and the public, especially children, minors, and vulnerable adults of all reasonable measures to prevent any future occurrence;
- provide a structure within which the Friar can continue his life in the Order as a vowed Friar of a religious community;

- provide appropriate care for the Friar and the opportunity for such personal conversion and rehabilitation as may be needed;
- guide Guardians, the Friar, and others in determining work, place of residence, and other activities;
- encourage Province communities in welcoming and supporting the Friar in his desire to continue his life as a Friar within this framework; and
- assure Province Friars of both proper care and appropriate limits with respect to their brothers in the Order.

1) Safety Plans

It is intended that all of the elements below be adapted in a Safety Plan for each Friar, depending on such factors as severity of the accusation(s), notoriety, age, health of the Friar, and the recommendations of the Province's Review Board. The framework, however, sets out the elements to be developed in writing for each Friar, reviewed by the Review Board, and shared with the Friar, his Guardian, and, as appropriate, Friars of his local Friary. The Safety Plan shall be signed by the Friar, the Guardian and the Minister Provincial and be reviewed by the Province Review Board on an annual basis.

- Brief history of the Friar.
- Summary of the problem behaviors.
- Evaluation, Treatment history and outcomes.
 - A Friar about whom a credible accusation has been made may be asked to submit to a professional evaluation as to his psychological condition and proclivity to harmful behavior in the future.
 - The Friar is free not to undergo an evaluation. If the Friar agrees to undergo an evaluation, the Minister Provincial or his delegate will arrange for the evaluation.
 - Subsequent to that evaluation, the Friar may be asked to participate in such in-patient and/or out-patient treatment as recommended by the evaluating professionals, as well as such other physical, psychological, and spiritual rehabilitation as may be recommended by such professionals or the Review Board, as well as the terms of his Safety Plan.
 - The Friar may be required to report to the Minister Provincial in writing periodically (e.g., monthly, quarterly, or annually, as appropriate to the situation), describing his progress in terms of work, therapy, spiritual direction, community life, and such other matters as may be appropriate.
 - Information resulting from such evaluation, treatment and correspondence is the property of the Friar. He may agree to make it available to the Minister Provincial or he may decline to do so.
 - A Friar may further agree to have the information available to the Review Board.
 - Any information about a Friar who has been accused of abuse shall be kept confidential by those receiving it, except as required by law to be revealed.
- Risk Reduction Strategies

- Public Ministry as a Friar
 - An ordained Friar found to have abused a minor or vulnerable person would not be allowed to function publicly as a priest or deacon, including public celebration of the sacraments, use of the title "Father" or "Reverend" in public communications, and the wearing of clerical attire. The Religious Habit may be worn within the Friary or at Province celebrations.
 - In the case of a Brother, he would not be allowed to function publicly in external ministry associated with a religious congregation (e.g., school teaching, coaching, parish staff work) or use the title "Brother" in public.
 - No clerical or distinctive religious attire would be allowed for a Priest or Brother who has abused a minor or vulnerable adult.
 - For a Friar credibly charged with sexual abuse of an adult, the Minister Provincial will consider the nature and circumstances of the allegation and the advice of the Review Board in determining removal from, suspension from, or restrictions on public ministry.
- Appropriate Work

The Essential Norms prohibit a Friar for whom an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor has been established from exercising ecclesiastical or from exercising public.

“When even a single act of sexual abuse of a minor by a priest or deacon is admitted or is established after an appropriate process in accordance with canon law, the offending priest or deacon will be removed permanently from ecclesiastical ministry, not excluding dismissal from the clerical state, if the case so warrants.” (CIC, c. 1395 §2; CCEO, c. 1453 §1), Essential Norm, 4

- Despite the limitations the Friar may have in ministerial work, the Province is committed to helping him thrive and find ways to contribute to the Province. If physically and mentally able, the Friar who has been removed from public ministry should engage in appropriate work in support of the ministries of the Province or in other service to people in need. The Major Superior may assign the Friar on a Safety Plan to work within the Province proper, in activities such as the following:
 - * Accountant in the Province’s business office or other clerical work in Province’s offices;
 - * Archives for the Province;
 - * Editor of Province’s internal newsletter;
 - * Liturgy planning for the Province or a local community (not attached to a school or parish);
 - * Translation work;

- * Care for aged and infirmed Friars, including driving to doctors and pastoral care (if “conventual faculties” have been granted by the Major Superior);
- * Housekeeping for a local community (not attached to a school or parish);
- * Cook for a local community (not attached to a school or parish); and
- * Maintenance and grounds work, such as gardening (not attached to a school or parish).

Examples of work assignments that are not appropriate for Friars on a Safety Plan include, but are not limited to:

- * Work in a parish;
- * Work in a school or other youth-serving organization;
- * Work that involves one-on-one interactions with vulnerable populations; and
- * Any ecclesiastical office, including the role of Local Guardian.

Note: The work assignment for a Friar on restriction should be determined in consultation with the Review Board and documented in the Friar’s Safety Plan. The Province will communicate with any organization in which a Friar on a Safety Plan is employed or volunteers at.

- Place of Residence
 - Any restricted Friar would be allowed to live only in a designated Province community or other appropriate supervised place of residence, as determined by the Minister Provincial.
 - No separate apartment, private home, or other domicile would be allowed as a permanent residence for the Friar.
- Travel, Vacation, Retreat
 - For a Friar credibly accused of abuse of a minor/vulnerable adult, vacations alone or with minors /vulnerable adults, even supervised, would not be permitted. Vacation should be restricted to Province communities or travel with other Friars.
 - Retreats in locations alone would not be permitted, and retreats would be restricted to Province or other Catholic retreat facilities or Province Friaries.
 - Other travel may be restricted to travel related to assigned work or family visits; if appropriate, a Friar companion for travel also may be required.
 - Additional specific permissions for travel may be required from the Minister Provincial. Doubts about specific travel should be referred by the local Guardian to the Minister Provincial. Again, similar prohibitions may be applied to a Friar credibly accused of abuse of an adult.

- Driving
 - Restrictions may be placed on driving alone or having use of a personal vehicle.
 - Some restricted Friars may be required to request specific permissions for use of house cars from the local Guardian, to keep a driving log, or to only drive with other Friars.
- Publications and Publicity
 - Restrictions on publications, letters to the editor, webpages, radio and television appearances, and email may be appropriate.
 - Sensitivity for victims would dictate caution with regard to photographs of Friars displayed in Province publications, institutions, and web sites, especially those in service to minors and vulnerable adults.
 - In some cases, a Friar's use of mail and phone may need to be regulated.
- Contact with Others
 - Under no circumstances would a Friar credibly accused of abuse of a minor or vulnerable adult be allowed to be in contact with minors/ vulnerable adults without the ongoing supervision of other adults present at the time.
 - This prohibition would include meals in restaurants, going to the movies, riding in automobiles, or private conferences in parish or community offices, community parlors, bedrooms of Friars, etc.
 - Similar prohibitions may be applied to a Friar credibly accused of abuse of an adult.
- Risk Management Strengths
- Risk Management Challenges
- Issues of Aging
- Supervision
 - In all aspects of risk reduction strategies defined on a Friar's safety plan an individual responsible for tracking compliance should be designated. In most instances this will be the local Guardian and/or the Minister Provincial.
- Current level of Risk
- Consequences for non-compliance with the plan

2) Guidelines for Supervisors

Supervisors are an integral part of a positive, informed support system for the Friar on a Safety Plan to ensure a safe environment for minors, vulnerable adults, the Province, and the Friar being supervised. By providing ongoing support and efficient supervision, Supervisors help Friars on a Safety Plan adhere to their restrictions and find fulfillment within the boundaries of their Safety Plan. Being a Supervisor is a significant responsibility and can be challenging at times. Therefore, it is important that Supervisors receive proper preparation and clarity about the expectations of the role to be able to fulfill their responsibilities effectively.

The Supervisor of a Friar is appointed by the Minister Provincial or employed by the Province. The Supervisor may be a Friar of the Province, or a third party contracted for purposes of Supervision. In most instances the Guardian of the Friary will serve as the Supervisor of Friars who have been removed from ministry who reside in that Friary.

The Province has established the following guidelines to Supervisors to help them fulfill their roles in a responsible and efficient manner.

The Supervisor will:

- Participate in training/activities to prepare himself for his role as a supervisor, if he does not already have education, training, and/or experience in the fulfillment of these roles. These activities may include:
 - Specialized training, conferences, or workshops.
 - Relevant courses or programs.
 - An orientation from others who serve as supervisors.
 - An introductory meeting with leadership or another representative of the Province, which includes a review of the allegations made against the Friar on the Safety Plan, his risk reduction strategies, strengths, challenges, and consequences for violation of the Safety Plan.
- Establish a rapport with the Friar, be respectful, and listen attentively to what the Friar has to say.
- Meet at least monthly with the Friar and at least annually for a formal review of compliance with the Safety Plan.
- Encourage the Friar to continue to participate in treatments, meetings, spiritual direction, etc.
- Inquire about and encourage activities that help the Friar feel fulfilled but that do not present a risk.
- Document and inform the Minister Provincial of any changes in the Friar's behavior that the supervisor feels presents a risk
- Maintain the following documentation related to Supervision of Friars on safety plans:
 - Written notes of non-compliance of Safety Plans verbally reported to him by others.
 - Written reports of non-compliance of Safety Plans given to him by others.
 - Written reports when "red flags" or improper behavior is observed by him personally.
 - Written notes of regular contact meetings when there is a question about compliance with Safety Plans.
- Maintain all documentation of compliance and non-compliance and report all cases of non-compliance to the Minister Provincial or his delegate immediately.
- Maintain documentation of imposing consequences for non-compliance.
- Keep track of and collect all documentation required in the Safety Plan such as daily logs, travel logs, permission requests or authorizations, etc.

- Provide written updates regarding the Friar's compliance, including boundary or policy violations, with the Safety Plan to the Minister Provincial and the Review Board at least annually.

Upon his appointment to the position, the Province will provide the Supervisor of Friars on safety plans with the following information:

- The most current version of the Friar's safety plan (reviewed in the last year).
- The Friar's history of sexual abuse of minors/vulnerable adults.
- All allegations of boundary violations and sexual misconduct, including those with adults.
- History of compliance with his Safety Plan.
- A copy of the most recent risk evaluation, as defined in the Safety Plan.
- A copy of the plan for aging or care at a community of the Province or an outside facility, if applicable.
- Current progress in treatment or information about treatment completion, if applicable.
- History of substance use and/or abuse, if applicable.

3) Guidelines for Community Support

The local community will play an important part in helping a Friar on a Safety Plan who wishes to continue his life as a Friar in the Province. After a Friar has submitted to evaluation and appropriate treatment, the community should welcome the Friar on a Safety Plan as a brother.

It may also be appropriate for a mentor or support group to be appointed for the Friar on a Safety Plan who would assist and support him in his efforts to maintain his program of care and treatment.

Upon the recommendation of the Major Superior, the local superior shall, as appropriate and with the consent of the Friar on the Safety Plan, inform all or part of the community in which such a Friar shall live of the fact that the Friar is on a Safety Plan and the appropriate specific terms of the plan, so that the community can assist him in achieving his goals.

A Friar on a Safety Plan can, within the local community, as allowed by canon law, be permitted to celebrate the Eucharist only with Friars present, lead community prayer, hear confessions of Friars only, and perform community assignments and other responsibilities. Including the Friar in these and other community activities and projects can be useful in helping him feel included, fulfilled, and supported.

A Friar on a Safety Plan would not be allowed to serve as the local superior. A Friar on a Safety Plan must have the permission of the Major Superior to serve in any other leadership role within the local community.

The Friars of the community will accompany the Friar, encourage him to adhere to his Safety Plan, and not put him in situations that may present a risk or tempt him to violate his Safety Plan. Communities may need the advice and consultation of appropriate professionals, including the Supervisor, in preparing themselves to receive a Friar on a Safety Plan and provide him with the necessary care and support.

The Friars of the community will share any concerns about the Friar on a Safety Plan with the supervisor, local superior, or Major Superior.

E. Response of the Province to its Publics

The Province is committed to demonstrating transparency in its response to allegations of sexual abuse of minors and acknowledges its importance in restoring trust in the Province. To ensure a proper and transparent response, the Province will respect the following in its communications with Dioceses, organizations, the Religious Institute, the faith community, the public, and other potential stakeholders:

- The Province will communicate verbally and in writing with the diocesan bishop and/or the organization where the alleged abuse took place, as well as with the diocesan bishop and/or the employer where the Friar is currently working or residing:
 - When a report or allegation is received;
 - When an investigation is initiated;
 - When an investigation is complete; and
 - To notify them of the results of the investigation and resolution of the case.
- The Province will communicate and/or consult with the Review Board:
 - Within 30 days of receiving the report or allegation of abuse; and
 - As soon as possible after receiving the full investigation report.
- Depending on the case and circumstances, it may also be necessary and prudent to communicate with the Religious Institute, the faith community, the public, and other potential stakeholders at different points throughout the process, but particularly when an allegation is established, or a Friar has admitted to the sexual abuse of a minor/vulnerable adult.
- In all internal and external communications, the Province will seek to be proactive, timely, transparent, accurate, consistent, and unified. It will also seek to be responsible with the information it shares and make sure it does not compromise any ongoing investigations.
- It is always best for other Friars in the Province to learn of reports or allegations of abuse from the Province itself, particularly when the allegation may be made public. The Province will inform our Friars of the allegation and let them know that the Province is taking the necessary steps to support both the Survivor and the accused Friar. Friars are asked to not answer any external inquiries about the allegation and will be directed to refer all inquiries to a designated spokesperson.
- The Province will designate a spokesperson to respond to inquiries from the faith community, the media, and other external stakeholders. As a proactive measure and in anticipation of external inquiries a short statement will be prepared.

Section V: The Review Board

a. Establishment and Purpose

The Minister Provincial will utilize a Review Board for the purpose of providing consultation on the Province's management of all cases of sexual abuse of a minor by current, former, and/or deceased Friars.

- The Province will notify the review board within 30 days of when an allegation or report of sexual abuse of a minor is received and when the investigation is complete.
- The Review Board is also responsible for providing their recommendations and input with respect to the development of new Safety Plans. The Review Board will also review all Safety Plans at least annually and provide recommendations about any modifications that should be made. The Review Board exists solely to provide such advice and has no independent power or authority.
- The Review Board will also assist in the review of situations where a Friar has engaged in repeated boundary violations or where a minor/vulnerable adult is known to be in danger. They will also provide recommendations for the development of an intervention plan to help the Friar cease the problematic behavior.
- The Minister Provincial shall appoint Members of the Review Board by letter of appointment signed by the Minister Provincial. A Member of the Review Board may be removed at the discretion of the Minister Provincial in consultation with the Chair of the Review Board. Members shall be removed by letter of removal signed by the Minister Provincial.
- The Review Board exists solely to provide advice and has no independent power or authority.

b. Operating Procedures

The Review Board shall have its own operating procedures, approved by the Minister Provincial in consultation with his Definitory.

Confidentiality

- Review Board Members shall sign a confidentiality agreement and undergo a criminal records check.
- The records and other information received by the Review Board shall be treated as confidential, subject to the requirements of law and the Policies of the Province.
- The Review Board's advice to the Minister Provincial regarding particular cases shall be confidential; provided, however, that the Minister Provincial may, at his discretion, disclose the advice he received from the Review Board. The advice or positions taken by Review Board Members shall not be disclosed and need not be recorded in the Review Board files.
- The Province recognizes that the Review Board may receive confidential and sensitive information that could be used to injure the reputations of individuals.

At the same time, the Institute recognizes that the Review Board's records may contain information relevant to civil and criminal law investigations.

- It is the policy of the Institute to cooperate fully with all legal requirements and law enforcement agencies while, at the same time, respecting any applicable civil and canon law rights and requirements of confidentiality and privacy.
- The law of certain states and of the United States prohibits the disclosure of certain information, such as mental health communications, substance abuse and alcohol treatment records and HIV testing and AIDS treatment records. The Review Board shall protect the confidentiality of such information, which it may receive by way of appropriate releases of information, to the fullest extent of the law.

Constitution of the Board

- The Review Board shall consist of not less than five (5) individuals; no more than two (2) individuals on the Review Board may be Members of the Province. Any change in the number of individuals on the Review Board shall be decided by the Minister Provincial in consultation with his Definitory.
- The Review Board shall include representation from the following groups: professionals from the social sciences, (psychologists, counselors, survivors' advocates, and/or social workers), representatives from the legal or law enforcement profession or state protective services, and laity.
- While it may occasionally be acceptable for an individual on the Review Board to also be an employee of the Province, it is preferable for the individuals on the Review Board not to be employees of the Province. At no time may the majority of Review Board Members be employed by the Province.
- Individuals shall be over the age of twenty-one (21) years.
- The Pastoral Advocate/counselor or legal representative/counsel of the Province cannot be a Members of the Review Board.
- Members of the Review Board should be mindful of not taking responsibilities for the Province that may create a dual role that also presents a conflict of interest and challenges the independent nature of the Review Board.

Terms of Membership

- Individuals shall be appointed for a term of five (5) years by the Minister Provincial in consultation with his Definitory and may be reappointed indefinitely.
- Any Member may resign at any time by giving a written notice of such resignation to the Minister Provincial or the Chair of the Review Board.
- Any vacancy on the Review Board occurring during the year, including a vacancy created by an increase in the number of individuals, may be filled by an appointment by the Minister Provincial for the unexpired portion of the term. Those appointed to fill a vacancy before the expiration of a term shall serve for the remainder of the unfinished term and may then be reappointed to a full term at the discretion of the Minister Provincial.

- In exceptional cases, an individual may request a leave of absence from the Board. Such a request is ordinarily directed to the Minister Provincial or Chair of the Review Board.
- Any individual on the Review Board who is related by blood or marriage to, in any kind of employments, financial or business relationship with, in any kind of professional or spiritual counseling relationship with, or who would have any other conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest with the alleged victim or the accused Friar, shall inform the Chairman of the conflict and recuse himself or herself from all deliberations concerning the particular matter in question. Any individual on the Review Board who determines that he or she has a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest with the Province itself or with the work of the Review Board, shall inform the Minister Provincial and the Chairperson of the conflict and shall resign from the Review Board.
- The Review Board Members may serve as volunteers or as paid professionals. The Province will reimburse individuals on the Review Board for reasonable expenses incurred in attending meetings of the Review Board or in otherwise performing their duties on the Review Board. The Province indemnifies and holds harmless all individuals on the Review Board for any and all claims, lawsuits, damages, or other actions, including but not limited to reasonable costs of defense, which may arise from their service on the Review Board. However, the Province does not indemnify individuals on the Review Board for intentional tortuous or criminal acts.

Frequency of Meeting

- Annual Meeting: There shall be an annual meeting of the Review Board to be held as designated by the Chair of the Board.
- Special Meetings: A special session of the Review Board may also be held at any time on the call of the Chair (or in the event of his/her absence or inability to act), the Vice-Chair, Secretary, or any three (3) individuals, with the concurrence of, or at the recommendation of the Minister Provincial, or as new cases and/or special need arises.
- Notice of Meeting: Notice of all meetings shall be given to the Members of the Review Board via email by either the Minister Provincial or Chair at least fourteen (14) days before the meeting. Supporting materials for meetings shall be provided at least one week prior to a scheduled meeting. The notification period may be shortened if it is deemed necessary for any urgent matters.
- Manner of Meetings: The Review Board may meet in person, by conference call, or web conferencing. The Chair shall call the meeting to order and introduce the Minister Provincial, his representative or Investigator to present the matter(s) brought before the Review Board. Regardless of the manner of the meeting, the Review Board shall discuss the matter at hand as a group before submitting any recommendations or feedback.

Media and Communication

- The Members of the Review Board shall abstain from answering any inquiries made by the media or others with respect to matters related to the Province, unless expressly authorized to do so.
- All media inquiries should be directed to the designated Province representative.

Records Retention

- The files of the Review Board are the property of the Province. The Minister Provincial and all current Review Board Members shall have access to the Review Board's files. The Review Board's files shall be stored at a place designated by the Minister Provincial.
- The Review Board shall create a file on each case or matter it considers. Each file shall contain a written description of the matter presented to the Review Board, a written summary of the advice given by the Review Board, a written summary of the action ultimately taken by the Minister Provincial in light of the Review Board's advice, and such other information as the Review Board determines to be relevant to any future consideration of the case or matter by the Review Board or the Province.

Required training for Review Board Members

- The individuals on the Review Board are provided initial formation for their unique role in providing confidential consultation to the Minister Provincial. These individuals are provided copies of and an explanation of the following documents:
 - Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People;
 - Essential Norms for Diocesan/Eparchial Policies Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests or Deacons;
 - Motu Proprio, "Sacramentorum Sanctitatis Tutela (SST)";
 - 2002 CMSM Statement of the Assembly;
 - Institute's Policies;
 - Praesidium Accreditation Standards; and
 - Motu proprio, "Vos estis lux mundi."
- The Province shall provide individuals on the Review Board with on- going formation regarding best practices in the disposition of cases of sexual abuse of minors by Friars.

How information will be disseminated to Review Board Members

- When considering the disposition of a case of sexual abuse of a minor by a Friar, the individuals of the Review Board are given the following:
 1. Initial report of allegation and documents, such as in-take forms, letters, e-mail, etc.
 2. Documentation of notice to civil authorities
 3. Written report of the Investigation
 4. Any other cases of sexual misconduct by the Friar, including with adults.
 5. Other relevant disciplinary actions against the Friar and the reasons for the actions.

- The Minister Provincial or his representative may present information in any form, oral, written, graphic or recording for the Review Board’s consideration. After the presentation, the Review Board Members may:

1. Ask questions;
2. Request additional information; and/or
3. Discuss the matter with the Major Superior or representative.

After the question-and-answer period or discussion is completed, the Members shall deliberate and formulate their advice outside the presence of the investigator. Deliberations may take place in the presence of the Minister Provincial or his representative, at the discretion of the Review Board. After the Review Board receives the presentation and information from the Minister Provincial or representative, the Board shall carefully consider and deliberate over the information.

Possible alternatives for the disposition of cases

- After carefully reviewing all the information, the Review Board makes a recommendation to the Minister Provincial regarding:
 - a) the assessment of the allegation of sexual abuse allegedly committed by a Friar and;
 - b) the suitability for ministry for the accused Friar.
- Based on the facts and circumstances, an allegation of sexual misconduct can be established only when there is objective certainty that the accusation is true and that an incident of sexual abuse of a minor has occurred.
- After hearing the Review Board, the Minister Provincial alone judges whether an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor by a Friar has (or has not) been established.
- The judgment of the Minister Provincial must be objective, i.e., based on facts and circumstances discovered in the course of the investigation. The judgment of the Minister Provincial admits to the contrary (falsity of the accusation) is indeed possible but highly unlikely or improbable, to the extent that the Minister Provincial has no fear of the contrary (falsity of the accusation) may be true.

Timeframe allotted for providing a response once an allegation has been received by the Review Board:

- Option A: The Review Board will provide a response and recommendations regarding an allegation the same day on which they meet to decide the matter.
- Option B: The Review Board will provide a response and recommendation regarding an allegation within one week after meeting and receiving all relevant information.

Section VI: Transition Plan for Changes in Leadership

The Province understands the importance of the Minister Provincial’s role in its abuse prevention efforts and in setting the tone for the rest of the Friars. For this reason, we also recognize that our leaders must be well prepared to navigate abuse-related matters in a way that will reinforce prevention efforts and help maintain a safe environment for everyone. To ensure the continuity of the Province’s commitment to

creating a safe environment and its abuse prevention efforts, the Province will follow this transition plan when a new Minister Provincial assumes responsibility of the Province.

- If the incoming Minister Provincial does not already have education, training, and/or experience in the impact of child sexual abuse and how to promote healing for survivors, he will participate in activities to become knowledgeable in these areas. These activities may include:
 - Specialized training, conferences, or workshops.
 - Relevant courses or programs.
- The Minister Provincial will review and become familiar with the Accreditation Standards and all policies and procedures related to abuse prevention.
- If the Province has designated a point person to coordinate abuse prevention and Accreditation efforts, the Minister Provincial will meet with this person.
- The incoming Minister Provincial will review all allegations of sexual abuse and boundary violations from at least the previous five years.
- The incoming Minister Provincial will review the personnel files for all Friars currently on a Safety Plan. At a minimum, he will review the Safety Plans and the risk evaluations that have been conducted since the last Accreditation.
- The incoming Minister Provincial will review and become familiar with all existing Intervention Plans for Boundary Violations.
- The Minister Provincial will meet with or establish communication with all Safety Plan Supervisors to introduce himself.
- The Minister Provincial will meet with or establish communication with the Pastoral Advocate to introduce herself/himself.
- The Minister Provincial will meet with the Review Board to introduce himself.
- The incoming Minister Provincial will learn the status of the Province in the Accreditation process as well as the expiration of the current Accreditation.
- Where possible, the outgoing and incoming Minister Provincial will meet to discuss any open cases and other information pertaining to abuse prevention that is deemed of high priority or importance.

The incoming Minister Provincial will complete all items included in this written transition plan within 60 days of assuming the role.

Appendix A: Resource to Assist Friars in Reporting Abuse

The province is required to provide child abuse hotline contact information for friars who minister in a variety of states. A Friar who is made aware of an instance of child abuse is mandated to report this abuse to the authorities.

Below is a list of states where friars minister along with the contact information of the agency to which friars would report child abuse. Some states have hotline numbers to call, and other states require friars to call a number specific to the county in which the abuse occurred. In the latter case, please use the website provided to look up the county-specific reporting number of the county in which the abuse occurred.

To reiterate, if when witnessing or hearing of a credible report of child abuse (whether perpetrated by a Friar or by someone else), the Friar, as required by state law and by the policies of the Province, is mandated to notify the appropriate state agency within 48 hours.

State/Province	Contact Information
California	Click here to access information
Connecticut	(800) 842-2288
Florida	(800) 96-ABUSE (800-962-2873)
Georgia	(404) 657-3433
Illinois	(800)252-2873
Indiana	(800) 252-2873
Maryland	Click here to access information
Massachusetts	(800) 792-5200
New Jersey	(877) 652-2873
New York	(800) 342-3720
North Carolina	https://www.ncdhhs.gov/
Ontario, Canada	Call local CAS Office (Child and Family Services)
Pennsylvania	(800) 932-0313
Texas	(800) 252-5400
Virginia	(800) 552-7096
Washington, DC	(202) 671-SAFE (202-671-7233)
Wisconsin	http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/children/CPS/cpswimap.HTM

For all States:

Information is available for all States at www.childwelfare.gov or at Childhelp® by calling (800-422-4453) for assistance.

Appendix B: Information For Individuals Who Report Abuse

Our Lady of the Angels Province recognizes that sexual abuse by Friars has devastating consequences for survivors and their families and the lay and religious communities. We have become increasingly aware of the effects of this tragic behavior and have developed a steadfast commitment to helping those affected.

This guide is intended to provide basic information about (1) how the Province defines sexual abuse (2) what its procedures are for responding to complaints of sexually inappropriate behavior and sexual abuse, and (3) to whom those subjected to sexual abuse can turn for help.

Sexual abuse of a minor is sexual contact between a religious and a minor/vulnerable adult.

Sexual exploitation or sexual abuse can include actions such as:

- Sexual touch or other physical contact that makes the person being touched feel uncomfortable;
- Giving a sexually charged gift (such as lingerie);
- A prolonged hug when a brief hug is customary behavior;
- Kissing on the lips when a kiss on the cheek would be appropriate;
- Showing sexually suggestive objects or pornography;
- Sexual intercourse, anal, or oral sex;
- Innuendo or sexual talk;
- Suggestive comments;
- Descriptions of sexual experiences, fantasies, or conflicts; and
- Sexual propositions.

**This is not an exhaustive list.*

To be clear, the Province's stance is this: **Sexual abuse of a minor/vulnerable adult** by our Friars, Province employees, and volunteers is contrary to Catholic morals, doctrine, and canon law. **It is never acceptable. It is entirely the responsibility of the Friar, Province employee, or volunteer to maintain appropriate emotional and sexual boundaries with those with whom he works and/or serves.**

The Province responds to all allegations and reports of sexual abuse with great care. To ensure that we handle each report promptly, thoroughly, and compassionately, the Province has established an Office of Pastoral Outreach. The Pastoral Advocate is a professional who will listen to, understand, and offer help, including appropriate psychological counseling for those affected by sexual abuse by a Friar, Province employee, or volunteer.

The Province, through the Pastoral Advocate and independent investigators, will respond swiftly to evaluate and investigate any accusation of sexual abuse by a Friar, Province employee, or volunteer.

The Province, consistent with the directives of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, has also established a Review Board. This interdisciplinary board of lay professionals advises the Province on all matters related to sexual misconduct.

Any Friar, who has been found to have an established allegation of sexual abuse of a minor/vulnerable adult against him will be removed from ministry and placed under restrictions to ensure he does not have unsupervised access to minors/vulnerable adults.

In addition to establishing procedures for responding to sexual abuse, the Province has undertaken a series of measures to prevent future incidents of abuse. These include extensive mandatory psychological evaluation of seminarians and novices before they enter formation and the provision of continuing education programs for our Friars about issues of sexuality and personal conduct.

It is our firm belief that Religious must maintain appropriate boundaries with minors/vulnerable adults. We call upon those with knowledge of a Friar's inappropriate behavior-whether past or present-to come forward with this information and prevent further harm. In short, we ask everyone to join with us to protect the safety of children, women, and men, and with firm determination, to promote healing where there is pain.

If you or someone you know believe that a Friar, Province employee or volunteer has violated the boundaries outlined in this document, we urge you to report such behavior immediately to the Minister Provincial, and/or the Pastoral Advocate. Your case will be handled with the strictest sensitivity and confidentiality. Please fill out a Statement Form and submit to:

Friar Michael Heine, OFM Conv.
Minister Provincial
Our Lady of the Angels Province
Office of the Minister Provincial
12300 Folly Quarter Road
Ellicott City, MD 21042
(410) 531-1400

Kristin Austin, LCSW, CSAC, ICS, CSOTP
Pastoral Advocate
Our Lady of the Angels Province
(443) 462-7787
kaustinlcswc@gmail.com

IF YOU SUSPECT THAT A MINOR IS BEING ABUSED, REPORT IT DIRECTLY TO THE CIVIL AUTHORITIES. YOU CAN FIND STATE RELATED REPORTING INFORMATION AT www.childwelfare.gov.

Appendix C: Prevention Guidelines for Vocation/Formation Ministry

1) Application Process

During the application process it is important to screen all candidates to ensure that an applicant meets the criteria for entering religious life. Proper screening is a vital component in the Province's abuse efforts. A screening requirement tracking form should be kept by the Vocation Director to confirm that all screening requirements have been met.

All candidates must complete the following requirements during the application process:

1. Background Checks

- Types of Background Checks

For purposes of the Accreditation process, the Province must complete a background check for each Candidate who has applied for membership. The background check should include:

In the United States:

- Multi-state criminal records search;
- National sex offender registry check;
- Social-security-number trace and alias search; and
- Individual county-level search in every county the Candidate has lived, worked, or attended school over the last seven years.

If the candidate has resided in another country or countries during the last 7 years before applying for membership, the Province should also conduct a background check for the Candidate in those countries. International background checks should be conducted according to what is possible in each country (background check providers should be able to help the Province ascertain what is needed/possible). Although there are few, some countries also have a national sex offender registry or its equivalent. If a background check in a country is not possible due to international limitations, the Province will document the reason.

- Elements of a background check (in the United States):

- Multi-State Criminal & Sex Offender Database w/Alias: The multi-state criminal history is a name-based search that provides criminal information from many sources around the country. The purpose of the multi-state database is to provide a wide-ranging criminal history search covering as many jurisdictions as possible. The information provided in a multi-state can vary. The best searches include a Social Security Number Trace and Alias Search so that all names associated with the SSN are run through the database. Make sure that the screening company verifies all multi-state database "hits" at the county-level to double-check that the information remains accurate and that it relates to the individual in question.
- DOJ National Sex Offender Registry Search: A DOJ National Sex Offender Registry Search is a real-time search of all offenders currently located on the National Sex Offender Public Website, encompassing records from all 50 U.S. States, the District of Columbia, U.S. Territories, and various tribal authorities.

- County Criminal Records Search: County Criminal Record Search is a search of criminal records housed at the central courthouse in a given jurisdiction. Most criminal cases in the U.S. are tried in county courts and records found here will include both felonies and misdemeanors related to violations of state laws. The cost, information available, and time required to complete the checks varies significantly by state and county.
2. Reference Checks (Three minimum: at least one personal and two professional)
Obtaining references may be one of the most labor-intensive tasks in screening and selection, but it can yield critical information. Taking the following steps will help you gain the best possible information from this important source:
- a) Review the list of references with the applicant. Make sure the applicant knows that they must inform each reference that you will be calling. Find out how the applicant knows each reference.
 - b) Inform the applicant that they are responsible for making sure that the references are willing to talk with you and provide a reference.
 - c) Give the applicant a deadline for contacting the reference.
 - d) Make sure the list contains accurate and up to date phone numbers.
 - e) Use a standard reference form for each call but be sure to modify questions so that you can learn about the specific experiences the reference has had with the applicant.
 - f) Be friendly and always treat the references with respect. They will feel more comfortable in the hands of a professional. Call James Smith “Mr. Smith” instead of “Jim.”
 - g) Take notes during the call. Write short quotes from the reference to prompt your memory.
 - h) Review and elaborate upon your notes immediately after the call.
 - i) Note areas of concern or questions to be clarified with other references or the applicant.
 - j) References should be considered in the final decision-making for selection.

Red-Flag Responses from References

- References were reluctant or refused to answer certain questions. References provided evasive responses.
- References did not know the applicant well.
 - The reference has only known the applicant for a short time, such as less than six months.
 - The reference knew the applicant some time ago but has not seen the applicant in more than a year.
 - The reference knew the applicant briefly years ago.
 - The reference knew the applicant in a capacity different than has been claimed by the applicant.
- Reference information differed from the applicant’s account.
- References described the applicant as having “high-risk” characteristics, such as:
 - Difficulty interacting with or relating to adults.

- Difficulty working as a team player.
- Having problems with authority figures.
- Having problems with persons of the opposite gender.
- Seeming immature or impulsive.
- Being excessively interested and involved with youth.
- The reference identifies hobbies, activities, or volunteer work that was not identified by the applicant.
- Hobbies and recreational activities solely involve youth.
- Letting kids get away with too much.
- Acting more like a child than an adult.
- Not closely supervising children in their care
- Relating to children on their level, just like another child.
- Them not liking being an authority figure and would rather be viewed
- as “one of the kids.”
- References described the applicant as mistreating or being high-risk to mistreat children or youth.
 - The applicant is degrading to youth.
 - The applicant humiliates youth.
 - The applicant uses inappropriate physical punishment with youth.
 - The applicant is quick-tempered.
 - The applicant is unable to handle stress.
 - The applicant uses harsh forms of discipline.
 - The applicant is impatient or easily upset.
 - The applicant becomes abrupt with children.
- References reported other specific concerns about the applicant.

3. Psychological Evaluation

Psychological testing is useful because:

It highlights psychopathology: it can show when an individual has more than the average amount of problems, is not effective in the world, or interacts inappropriately with others. It addresses strengths and weaknesses in the individual’s personality. It identifies potential high-risk issues such as a psychiatric history, suicide attempts, significant anxiety or depression, psychosis, substance use or abuse, personality disorders, mental illness, and sexual acting out behaviors.

Who should complete the psychological testing?

The psychological testing should be completed by a fully credentialed psychologist who can be sensitive to the core values, vows, and culture of religious life.

What elements should be included in the psychological testing?

A comprehensive psychological evaluation should include the following components:

- a) Intelligence testing (may be excluded for applicants with advanced education)
- b) Academic achievement testing (may be excluded for applicants with advanced education)

- c) MMPI (This is the most widely used and researched objective personality inventory in psychology. It measures both personality and psychopathology.)
- d) Projective test (e.g., Rorschach). Projective tests aim to discover information about a person which they themselves may be unaware of or unwilling to disclose. The Rorschach for example tells how a person perceives their environment, how they perceive themselves, how they organize their perceptions, how they process emotional experiences, and their tolerance for stress and capacity for control.

The final psychological evaluation should include a summary of the findings, written in a manner that is clear and understandable for a lay person, highlighting any areas of concern that should be considered in determining the person's suitability for ministry. The psychologist should also be available to meet with a representative from the institute upon request.

A psychosexual history is useful because:

It discerns an important part of a human being's development. It helps a person be aware of who they learned to be sexually. It is one way to identify where they are and what areas need to be addressed, for example any mistakes they may have made and the subsequent consequences (e.g., shame, poor self-esteem, lack of trust). Finally, a psychosexual history may reveal whether a person is at higher risk to act out sexually with a child or an adult.

Who should complete the psychosexual history?

The psychosexual history should be completed by a fully credentialed mental health professional (e.g., psychologist, psychiatrist), experienced in completing psychosexual histories who can be sensitive to the core values, vows, and culture of religious life.

What elements should be included in the psychosexual history?

A psychosexual history needs to address three fundamental questions:

- a) How do individuals see themselves as sexual persons; how do they care for and accept who they are?
- b) How have they and how are they dealing with their sexual energy?
- c) How do they relate to others; what are their capacities for intimacy, friendship, and seeking support?

The psychosexual history should cover family of origin attitudes about sexuality; an understanding of the individual's earliest (prepubescent) sexual feelings and attitudes; any sexual abuse history and its effects; an understanding of the person's sexual development during adolescence, particularly with regard to puberty and masturbation; an understanding of how the person perceives and cares for his or her body; an understanding of the person's awareness and acceptance of his or her sexual orientation; an understanding of the person's experience of dating in school and adult relationships and adult sexual activity; any history of problematic sexual behavior; and finally, current management of sexual behavior and feelings, including Internet use.

The final psychosexual history report should include a summary of the findings, written in a manner that is clear and understandable for a lay person, highlighting any areas of

concern that should be considered in determining the person's suitability for ministry. The clinician should also be available to meet with a representative from the religious institute upon request.

4. Face-to-Face Interviews

The face-to-face interview provides the most comprehensive source of information about an applicant. It provides information needed to assess individual experiences, values, attitudes, and skills that determine whether the applicant meets the criteria for entering religious life.

- Sample questions include:
 - a) Tell me about your hobbies or volunteer work with youth.
 - b) Tell me about a time when you had to stick to a rule, even though it did not seem reasonable. How did you handle that situation?
 - c) Now can you tell me about a time when you knew it was not the right thing to follow an unreasonable rule?
 - d) What are some of the ways you show affection with children or youth? How does your affection with children or youth change when you know the child well?
 - e) What type of youth do you prefer to work with? Why?
 - f) Give me an example of a time when a youth really tried your patience. Specifically, tell me what happened. How did you respond to that situation?
 - g) Describe the two most frustrating youth situations you have ever had to deal with and how you handled them.
 - h) Tell me about a time when you were able to make a difference in a youth's life. What
 - i) did you do, and how did it influence the youth? Where is the youth now?
 - j) Tell me about a time when someone commended you for your good judgment and common sense. What was the situation and how did you handle it?
 - k) Describe a time in your life when you had a great deal of stress and multiple demands on you and on your time. How did you cope with the stress? What strategies did you use to reduce stress and continue to be productive?
 - l) One of the most important concerns we have is that our youth have a safe and loving environment. Because that is so important to us, I have to ask you a difficult question. Have you ever abused or molested a child or a youth? Has anyone ever accused you of abusing or molesting a child or a youth?
- Sample red flag responses include:
 - Applicants describe themselves as a "savior" for impoverished children or youth.
 - Applicants gave responses that demonstrate a tendency to get over-involved in the lives of children or youth.
 - Applicant describes a life that centers around involvement with children or youth. Applicant gives defensive/angry responses.
 - Applicant gave evasive responses, such as, "what kind of question is that?" or "What kind of a person would do something like that?"
 - Applicant described situations in which they used poor judgment with children or youth.

- Applicant described preferences for particular children or youth with no reasonable explanation.
- Applicant described patterns or themes of problems with authority.
- Applicant described situations in which they lost patience or handled a situation immaturely.
- Applicant described a situation in which they ignored the policies of a program or the rules of parents or others in authority.
- Applicant described showing favoritism to particular youth or bending the rules for children or youth.
- Applicant described being unwilling to learn new material or ways of doing things with children or youth.
- Applicant prefers unsupervised settings with children or youth.
- Applicant prefers to work with children or youth one to one and resists the involvement of others.

5. Social Media Screening

Why should we screen our Candidates' social media presence?

- Potential negligence if not reviewing what is already “knowable” public information
- Becoming industry standard for due diligence in organizations that serve youth
- Opportunity to identify red flags that this person may be higher risk to behave inappropriately with children, youth, or vulnerable persons
- Another source of information about the individual to compare to what you have already gathered
- May provide insight into this person's maturity and readiness for religious life

What are we looking for?

- Information that suggests inappropriate boundaries with children, youth, or vulnerable persons
- Information inconsistent with what is known about the individual
- Behavior that is inconsistent with the values of the Institute
- Illegal conduct, online harassment, poor judgment

How do we do this?

- Ensure all Candidates are subject to a social media review and the review is completed consistently in both the method of the search used and the use of the information acquired.
- Consult with legal counsel prior to utilizing a third-party source, as more stringent federal and local laws may apply to professional service providers.
- Refrain from asking for social media passwords; this practice is illegal in many states.
- Document which sites you review using a social media checklist.
- If possible, include other decision makers as you review the information. It may be helpful to get perspective from different people.
- Inform the Candidate that your Province has policies for how its members use electronic communication.

What if we find something questionable?

- Discuss any questionable findings with the vocation committee.
- Consider the behavior's frequency, duration, intensity, and context.
- Consult legal counsel about any adverse action you may take because of a finding.
- Consider discussing the findings with the Candidate.

2) Red Flag Behaviors for Vocation and Formation Directors

Throughout candidacy, members of the community have an opportunity to observe candidates' behaviors, particularly regarding the appropriateness of boundaries with minors. Observation data can also be obtained when candidates describe previous interactions with children or youth. Pay attention to the following boundary violations in these observations:

- Physical boundary violations – touching too much or touching in ways most adults would not touch a child. Some examples:
 - Roughhousing, or wrestling.
 - Tickling.
 - Encouraging minors to jump on an adult.
 - Accidentally touching inappropriately.
 - Putting legs around a minor.
 - Holding or hugging when the minor resists.
 - Too many hugs or hugs with too much body contact.
- Emotional boundary violations – treating the relationship with a child as if it were a romantic or intimate adult relationship. Some examples:
 - Spending too much time with a minor.
 - Contacting a minor privately on social media.
 - Getting involved in too many of the minor's activities.
 - Acting too possessive.
- Behavioral boundary violations – involving a child in activities that his or her parents would not allow the child to do. Some examples:
 - Ridiculing the beliefs of a minor's parents.
 - Allowing a minor to do things against the wishes of parents.
 - Offering minors cigarettes, alcohol, or drugs.
 - Allowing minors to look at pornography.
 - Allowing minors to visit inappropriate Internet sites.
 - Giving a minor gifts without the parents' permission.
 - Asking a minor to keep secrets from his or her parents.

3) Formation Curricula

Research has shown that a comprehensive approach by an organization in helping new members address issues related to healthy human development and sexual integration is an important tool in the prevention of sexual abuse.

Consequently, our Province formation programs will allow new candidates to 1) develop mature, integrated sexualities as a foundation for celibate chastity and 2)

identify and address challenges in maintaining celibate chastity and healthy intimate relationships.

To ensure that the formation program is comprehensive, the Province will address these topics in every stage of initial formation by development of a written formation plan that can include the following:

- a) Assigned reading material in relevant topics.
- b) Workshops with internal and external experts in relevant topics.
- c) Formal academic courses in seminaries or higher education institutions.
- d) Group discussions with formators and peers.
- e) Individual sessions with an assigned formator.
- f) Individual and group sessions with professionals such as psychologists.

Statement of Support

I have read and understand thoroughly the information in the Policies, Procedures and Guidelines Manual for Our Lady of the Angels Province, effective: September 2022.

Furthermore, I am committed to act in compliance with all Policies contained in this manual.

Friar's Name (Printed)

Friar's Signature

Date