



United in Faith, Hope and Love

Code of Conduct for Youth Employees and Youth Volunteers Who Interact with Children, Other Youth or Vulnerable Adults

You are about to begin what could become a lifelong commitment to working or volunteering in the Church. It is a privilege to help carry on the mission of Jesus – a mission that no one takes lightly. As a minor, it is important that you understand and follow certain rules and guidelines, both for your own protection and for the protection of those to whom you minister. The Church takes the issue of misconduct very seriously. Any instance of misconduct will be evaluated carefully and you are urged to report misconduct that you see to your adult supervisor. Likewise, your own conduct must be beyond question. You have been entrusted with a responsible position and are expected to “Let your light so shine before all, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven” (Matt 5:16).

To ensure the safety of children, youth, and vulnerable adults in the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis, all minors who wish to be employed or wish to volunteer to interact with children, other youth or vulnerable adults at a parish and/or school and their parent/guardian must review and sign this Code of Conduct. In addition to this *Code of Conduct (Code)*, youth will also be required to fulfill “Essential 3 Guidelines for Minor Youth” involving background evaluations (two written references) and safe environment training.

Please note that for the purposes of this *Code* the words “minor” and “youth” are used interchangeably and describe a person who has not reached the age of 18. The words “vulnerable adults” denotes persons with physical, mental, or emotional conditions that render them unable to defend or protect themselves.

This Code applies to youth conduct as it relates to their role interaction with minors or vulnerable adults on behalf of the Church.

While working as a youth employee or volunteer, **I will:**

- Protect and guide children and other youth (minors) and vulnerable adults entrusted to my care at all times.
- Treat everyone with patience, courtesy, respect, and dignity.
- Be positive, supportive, and caring in my speech and interactions with minors and vulnerable adults.
- Use positive words and encouragement to change behavior and encourage others to do likewise.
- Maintain appropriate physical and emotional boundaries with minors and vulnerable adults. Examples of permissible physical contact include:
 - Brief side hugs or an arm around the shoulder.
 - Hand-shakes or “high fives”
 - Holding hands while walking with young children or those unsteady.
 - Brief pat on the shoulder/upper back.
 - Holding hands during prayer.
 - Brief touching of hand, head, shoulder or arm.
- Always be in the presence of an adult when interacting with minors or vulnerable adult. This means that an adult should be nearby to see and hear what I am doing and help me if I need assistance.
- Promptly report to my supervisor any inappropriate or bullying behavior.
- Promptly report suspected abuse to my supervisor or if it involves my supervisor, report the incident to the next person in a supervisory role, such as a principal or pastor.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse.
- Observe confidentiality when describing my work experiences to protect the identity of those whom I serve.
- Dress appropriately, consistent with my role and assigned activities, including not wearing any clothing with offensive or profane messages or pictures.

While working as a youth volunteer or employee, **I will not:**

- Use or possess tobacco products.
- Use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs at any time.
- Be under the influence of prescribed drugs that impair judgment.
- Use or allow profanity in the presence of minors or vulnerable adults.
- Verbally or physically abuse or threaten anyone.
- Tolerate inappropriate or bullying behavior.
- Provide or allow sexually explicit, violent, disrespectful, or otherwise inappropriate communication, music, recordings, films, games, websites, computer software, mobile device application, or other content to be used.
- Touch a minor or vulnerable adult in an overly affectionate or inappropriate manner.
- Privately communicate (electronically or through any other communication form) with an unrelated minor more than two years younger than myself or an unrelated vulnerable adult whom I serve when not working or volunteering.
- Accept gifts from or give gifts to minors or vulnerable adults without approval from my supervisor.



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Acknowledgement and Consent

We, the undersigned, have read and understand the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis' *Code of Conduct for Youth Employees and Youth Volunteers Who Interact with Children, other Youth or Vulnerable Adults (Code)* and will honor these rules.

I further understand and agree that I am subject to periodic background evaluations (two written references while under 18 years of age and a background check within two weeks of turning 18) and am required to participate in periodic archdiocesan Safe Environment trainings commensurate with my role.

I also understand that I may face consequences or discipline, up to and including removal from service and/or termination of my volunteer role for violations of this *Code*. We, the undersigned, understand and agree that the parent/guardian will be notified at the time of any infraction requiring dismissal from work or a volunteer assignment at the parish or school where the undersigned youth is working or volunteering.

Name of Youth (print): _____

School/Parish and City, and Position: _____

Signature of Youth: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Supervisor: _____ Date: _____