

Complaint Form: Sexual Abuse or Sexual Misconduct
by Clergy, Church Ministers or Volunteers
Diocese of Helena

Information about Complainant:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone(s): _____

E-mail: _____

Information about the Sexual Abuse or Misconduct:

Date of abuse/misconduct: _____

Name of victim: _____

Age of victim at time of abuse (only for sexual abuse claim): _____

Name of abuser/one accused of misconduct: _____

Description of abuse/misconduct (continue on separate sheet, as necessary):

Signature of Complainant

Date

Upon completion, this form should be sent to:
Sister Rita McGinnis, Diocesan Contact Person
Diocese of Helena

PO Box 1729; Helena, MT 59624-1729

If you have any questions or concerns about how to complete this form to present an allegation,
please contact Sister Rita McGinnis in writing at the above address, or at:

E-mail: rmcginnis@diocesehelena.org

800-584-8914, ext. 23 or 406-442-5820, ext. 23

Fax 406-442-1085

(all above numbers are private and confidential)

Go to the diocesan website at www.diocesehelena.org for policies.

Pursuant to policy, all complaints of sexual abuse involving priests, religious, employees and volunteers
serving the Diocese of Helena will be investigated by the diocesan Response Team.

For exact process, please refer to the back of this form

All information received will be treated with confidentiality.

All alleged victims are advised of their right to report the alleged abuse to public authorities.

Diocese of Helena

Procedures for Action with Regard to an Allegation of Sexual Abuse or Sexual Misconduct

The Five Step Process

- 1. The Diocesan Contact Person receives in writing an allegation of sexual abuse or misconduct involving a priest, deacon, religious order priest, religious brother or sister, employee or volunteer of the Diocese of Helena. The Diocesan Contact Person will immediately inform the Bishop that an allegation has been received.**
- 2. The Bishop or his designee then:**
 - a. Offers to meet personally with the alleged victim;**
 - b. Assigns in writing the Victim's Assistance Advocate to provide immediate care and support for the alleged victim.**
 - c. Assigns in writing the Diocesan Response Team, lead by the Diocesan Contact Person, to conduct a preliminary investigation of the allegation. *(This process is further defined in the Diocese of Helena Policy Regarding Abuse of Minors, Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment pgs. 11-12 and 18-19)***
- 3. The Response Team reports in writing to the Bishop the results of the preliminary investigation.**
 - a. If there is no evidence of wrong doing the investigation is closed. The alleged victim is notified and reminded of his/her rights to pursue legal or civil remedy. The Bishop and the Victims Assistance Advocate may continue to provide the alleged victim with care and support including psychological counseling, spiritual direction or other such support as may be deemed beneficial to the alleged victim.**
 - b. If there is evidence of wrongdoing...**
 - i. The Bishop will revoke the faculties of the alleged priest or deacon abuser, if the allegation is made against a lay employee or volunteer they will be placed on administrative leave. For religious order priests or religious brothers or sisters ministering in the diocese, the Bishop will inform the Superior of their community and suspend his permission to minister in the diocese. *(This process is further defined in the Diocese of Helena Policy Regarding Abuse of Minors, Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment pgs. 12-14 and 19-20)***
 - ii. The Bishop works with the Victims Assistance Advocate to provide for the care and support of the alleged victim. This care could encompass both pastoral and psychological dimensions but is open to the needs of the alleged victim and will involve his/her input.**
 - iii. The Bishop reviews the allegation and the results of the investigation with the Diocesan Review Board and seeks their advice on how to proceed.**
 - c. If the preliminary investigation finds the allegation "credible" the Bishop convenes a formal investigation to determine the truth of the allegation. If appropriate the Bishop will notify civil authorities.**
 - d. Should the person against whom an allegation is made admit the truth of the allegation, the Bishop will consult with the Review Board and determine appropriate sanctions.**
- 4. The Review Board will deliberate the results of all relevant investigations. They will advise the Bishop on how to proceed with regard to legal, civil and pastoral actions to be taken;**
 - a. The appropriate actions to take in dealing with the alleged perpetrator.**
 - b. The appropriate actions to take in providing care for the victim of abuse.**
- 5. The Bishop will respond in writing to the Chairperson of the Review Board that he has received their recommendations and outline what specific steps he is prepared to take.**

Note: This Five Step Process and the Diocesan Policy conform to the *Essential Norms* and the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*.