

**CHARTER MANDATE AND
GUIDELINES OF THE ALLEGATION REVIEW COMMITTEE**
Updated December 4, 2014

CHARTER MANDATE:

Dioceses/eparchies are also to have a review board that functions as a confidential consultative body to the bishop/eparch. The majority of its members are to be lay persons not in the employ of the diocese/eparchy (see Norm 5 in *Essential Norms for Diocesan/Eparchial Policies Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests or Deacons*, 2006). This board is to advise the diocesan/eparchial bishop in his assessment of allegations of sexual abuse of minors and in his determination of a cleric's suitability for ministry. It is regularly to review diocesan/eparchial policies and procedures for dealing with sexual abuse of minors. Also, the board can review these matters both retrospectively and prospectively and give advice on all aspects of responses in connection with these cases. (Article 2. *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, 2011)

GUIDELINES:

An allegation of sexual abuse of a minor may be made to the Diocese in variety of ways, directly to the Victim Assistance Advocate, to the diocesan offices, to the bishop or other diocesan official, or to a pastor or other official in a parish. Allegations can also be made directly to law enforcement or child protective agencies.

All diocesan and parish staff will be instructed to assist the victim in contacting the Victim Assistance Advocate who will help the victim to process a complaint. For an allegation against a living priest, the appropriate response is to always contact law enforcement.

If necessary, the diocese will contract with an investigator to conduct necessary investigations for the Allegation Review Committee.

Upon receipt of a complaint, the investigator will gather information appropriate to the preliminary investigation.

The investigator will promptly submit a written report to the Committee.

Where applicable, the Allegation Review Committee will make an initial recommendation to the Bishop.

The complainant will be given an opportunity to address the Committee.

The accused will be given a copy of any complaint, investigation report and other information gathered and given an opportunity to respond to the allegations and information presented to the Committee.

There will not be a joint meeting of the complainant and the accused before the committee.

In accordance with the provisions of the “Diocese of Des Moines Policy Regarding Sexual Abuse of a Minor by a Member of the Clergy,” the Committee will make a final report to the bishop.

For allegations of historical conduct the provisions of the policy for immediate notice and placing the cleric on leave are not applied unless otherwise deemed appropriate.