

Archdiocese of Anchorage-Juneau
OFFICE OF SAFE ENVIRONMENT
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***Safe Environment Guidelines for Online Ministry
With Minors and Vulnerable Populations***

Due to the World Health Organization declaring COVID-19/Coronavirus as a global pandemic and Governor Dunleavy's emergency mandates, the Archdiocese of Anchorage-Juneau Office of Safe Environment has the following guidelines for online ministry with minors and vulnerable populations. These guidelines will be updated as necessary.

Even when not in physical presence with children, youth and vulnerable adults, we want to maintain appropriate Safe Environment boundaries and ensure standards of conduct are being followed. That means when online ministry is practiced and especially when individual and group conversations occur with children, youth and vulnerable adults, the following guidelines need to be followed:

- Notify a parent or guardian of all meetings or scheduled meetings as soon as possible and prior to any meeting being held. Notification must be done in writing (i.e. email) and parents or guardians should be copied in all email correspondence with minors and/or vulnerable persons regarding online ministry.
- To maintain the minor's or vulnerable person's sense of privacy and the minister's comfort level, please ask them to remain in an acceptable open area of the home and the parents/guardians are to be informed of where these meetings will take place.*
- Any online meeting or gathering is to be conducted only during usual or standard ministry hours and solely initiated by a parish approved ministry leader who has met Safe Environment Compliance.
- If an online gathering or meeting is to be recorded the ministry leader is to obtain written acknowledgment and agreement (i.e. email response) from the parent/guardian for all minors and vulnerable adults prior to any recordings. If one or more parent or guardian objects to recording the gathering or meeting, the ministry leader is not to record the gathering or meeting. Any and all parish and/or Archdiocesan policies and standards of conduct must be strictly followed.
- Keep a written record of any and all meetings to include, date, time, attendees and purpose to ensure transparency and accountability.
- Whenever possible, such as when using Zoom or other web conferencing platforms, use appropriate levels of security, such as passwords for meeting access.
- If conduct occurs during any online meeting/communication that violates the law or safe environment policies, all Archdiocesan procedures must be strictly followed, such as reporting to Law Enforcement, followed by your supervisor and/or The Archdiocesan Office of Safe Environment at 907-297-7736 or by email jmichaelson@caa-ak.org.

Any violations, questions or concerns about these guidelines are to be referred to the Office of Safe Environment as soon as reasonably possible.

**Please be aware that when conducting online meetings in and from private homes and locations, you need to exercise good judgement. For example, ensure that what is visible and audible in the backgrounds is appropriate and all parties are comfortable.*