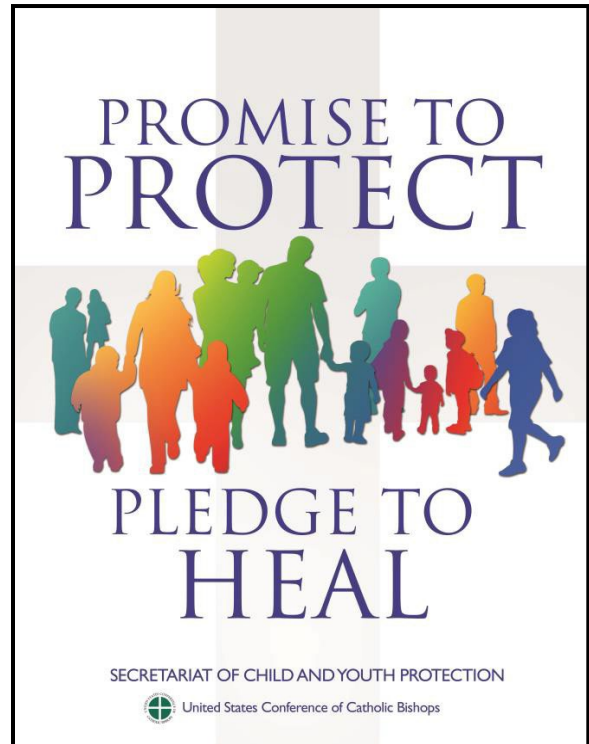


Did You Know...

1. Many of the 196 dioceses and eparchies participate in the [Child Abuse Prevention Month](#). The month of April is observed as an opportunity to highlight the many activities that dioceses/eparchies provide to prevent child sexual abuse.
2. The [Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People](#) was established by the USCCB in June 2002. It is a comprehensive set of procedures for addressing allegations of sexual abuse of minors by Catholic clergy. It is continually revised to reflect the ongoing commitment of the bishops.
3. The [Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People](#) includes guidelines for reconciliation, healing, accountability, and the prevention of future acts of abuse.



4. The [Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People \(Revised Edition 2026\)](#) begins with an apology from the bishops: *"In recent times, the Church in the United States has experienced a crisis without precedent. The sexual abuse of children and young people by some deacons, priests, bishops, and others in church service has caused enormous pain, anger, and confusion for victims/survivors, their families, and the entire Church—as have the ways in which these crimes and sins were addressed. As bishops, we have acknowledged our mistakes and our roles in that suffering, and we again apologize and take responsibility for too often failing victims/survivors and the Catholic faithful in the past. From the depths of our hearts, we bishops express great sorrow and profound regret for what the faithful and the broader community have endured."* ([Charter, Preamble](#) section)
5. The [Charter](#) directs action in all the following matters:
 - a. Healing and reconciliation of victims/survivors,
 - b. Making prompt and effective response to allegations,
 - c. Cooperating with civil authorities,
 - d. Disciplining offenders,
 - e. Creating a safe environment for children and young people,
 - f. And providing for means of accountability for the future to ensure the problem continues to be effectively dealt with through the Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection and the National Review Board.
6. The *Charter* calls for [annual audits](#) of dioceses/eparchies to ascertain compliance with the *Charter* by the bishop and his diocese/eparchy. Annual audits have been conducted since 2003. Results of the [2025 Annual Report](#) audit have been published on the USCCB website, and a copy was sent to the Holy See.
7. [Safe Environment training](#) is taking place in all audited dioceses/eparchies of the country: 2,328,545 million adults, including candidates for ordination, deacons, priests, educators, employees, and volunteers received safe environment training, and also, 2,803,545 million children received safe environment training to help them identify abuse and report abuse to trusted adults ([2025 Annual Report, pp. 18-19](#)).
8. [Background evaluations](#) have been conducted on over 2 million educators, employees, and volunteers who have contact with children: in total 2,320,143 adults received background checks ([2025 Annual Report, pp. 18-19](#)).

9. All audited dioceses/eparchies have [Codes of Conduct](#) spelling out what is acceptable behavior. These codes serve to let people know what behaviors are and are not accepted as well as what behavior can be expected.

10. All dioceses/eparchies have [Victim Assistance Coordinators](#), assuring victims that they will be heard. During the current audit period, dioceses/eparchies provided outreach and support services to 150 victims/survivors and their families who reported during this audit period. Continued support was provided to 1,331 victims/survivors and their families who reported abuse in prior audit periods ([2025 Annual Report, p. 16](#)).



11. Ten priests or deacons identified during fiscal year 2025 were permanently removed from ministry during that time (11 percent). There were no offenders that were temporarily removed from ministry pending investigation of the allegations. Nor were there any alleged offenders that remained in active ministry during that fiscal year pending the investigation ([2025 Annual Report, p. 29](#)).

12. Dioceses/eparchies require intensive background screening as well as psychological testing for those wishing to enter the seminary. [Audit figures](#) for 2025 report out of 5,503 Candidates for Ordination 5,479 have been trained (99.6%) and 5,494 (99.8%) have had a background check ([2025 Annual Report, pp. 18-19](#)).

13. The most frequent method of reporting an allegation was through an attorney which represented 727 (68%) allegations. Other methods of reporting, totaling 112 allegations were made by spouses, relatives, or other representatives. The remaining 231 allegations were made by self-disclosure.

14. The [Charter](#) requires that all dioceses/eparchies be open and transparent regarding cases of sexual abuse. Parishes affected by abuse are informed openly, honestly and compassionately of allegations.

15. There is a bishop representative from each episcopal region of the U.S. on the [Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People](#).

16. The [Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection](#) helps dioceses/eparchies to become and maintain compliance with the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* and to integrate the [Charter](#) into the diocesan way of life.

17. The [National Review Board](#) is a lay group appointed by the USCCB President to offer its advice on matters of child and youth protection to the Bishops' Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People.

18. The Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People has designed orientation sessions to address questions new bishops and eparchies may have regarding the *Charter* and the audit process. These meetings are held during the November bishops' meetings.

19. The Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection develops [resources](#) for use by dioceses/eparchies in their parishes and schools. Many are compilations of information from the audit documents.

20. Bishops and eparchies communicate with each other on a regular basis to ensure a cleric who committed an act of sexual abuse is not transferred to another diocese or eparchy. For more information, please refer to the *Charter, Essential Norms for Diocesan/Eparchial Policies Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests or Deacons, Norm 12*.

21. To ensure open communication between religious orders and bishops, two representatives from the Conference of Major Superiors of Men serves on the Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People. For more information, please refer to Article 15 of the [Charter](#).

22. Recognizing the importance of on-going formation, bishops and eparchies are committing time and resources to fostering trauma informed pastoral care training for all seminarians and promote programs of human formation for chastity and celibacy for both seminarians and priests. For more information, please refer to Article 17 of the [Charter](#).

23. Reconciliation among all people, especially those most affected by abuse is part of an on-going diocesan/eparchial outreach activities and efforts. Outreach may include counseling services, spiritual assistance, support groups, healing opportunities, and other social services agreed upon by the victim/survivor (or his or her parent or guardian) and the diocese/eparchy. For more information, please refer to Article 1 of the [Charter](#).

24. All dioceses/eparchies have written policies on the sexual abuse of minors by clerics and church personnel. Most policies are available on diocesan websites. Find your diocese [here](#).

25. The Lord is the foundation upon which we build a healthy and holy society. The findings of the annual audits and surveys, along with the 20-year analysis, are integral parts of the framework with which we build stronger, more responsive systems. This framework can become weak and unstable when implementation is inconsistent or perfunctory. History has shown repeatedly that complacency represents one of the gravest threats to safety across many disciplines and industries. Protocols that effectively protect and heal can become hollow gestures if dedication and vigilance are not maintained. For more information, please refer to *Chapter One, Safeguarding and a Commitment to Continuous Improvement* ([2025 Annual Report, p. 2](#)).

