



Facts about *The Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*

1. 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 and has been updated periodically – most recently in 2018.
2. The Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People includes guidelines for reconciliation, healing, accountability, and prevention of future acts of abuse.
3. The Charter directs action in all the following matters:
 - Healing and reconciliation of victims and survivors;
 - Making prompt and effective response to allegations;
 - Cooperating with civil authorities;
 - Disciplining offenders;
 - Creating a safe environment for children and young people;
 - Providing for means of accountability for the future to ensure the problem continues to be effectively dealt with through a national Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection and a National Review Board.
4. 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. Of the 195 dioceses/eparchies 188 participated in the 2010 audit. Results of the audits are published and a copy is sent to the Holy See.
5. Safe Environment training is taking place in all audited dioceses/eparchies of the country. Over 2 million employees and volunteers have been trained to recognize the behavior of offenders and what to do about it.
6. Safe Environment training was provided to 162,026 educators; 38,053 priests, 14,783 deacons and 6,007 candidates for ordination to recognize the behaviors of offenders and what to do about it.
7. Background evaluations have been conducted on over 2 million volunteers and Church personnel who have contact with children.
8. In 2010, 162,753 educators, 37,891 priests, 14,790 deacons and 6,028 candidates for ordination have had their backgrounds evaluated.
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. In 2010 dioceses/eparchies provided outreach to 2,346 victim/survivors.
11. Regardless of when the abuse occurred, a cleric against whom there is an established or admitted act of child sexual abuse is permanently removed from the priesthood. There is no statute of limitations for removing a cleric who has sexual abused a minor from public ministry in the Catholic Church.
12. Dioceses/eparchies require intensive background screening as well as psychological testing for those wishing to enter the seminary. Audit figures for 2010 report out of 6,078 Candidates for Ordination 6,007 have been trained and 6,028 have had a background check.
13. Over 5,341,000 children were given the skills to recognize both a grooming process and to tell parents and other trusted adults about such behavior.
14. Again in 2010, no diocese or eparchy entered into confidentiality settlements unless the victim/survivors/survivor requested it and it was specifically noted in the agreement.

15. Dioceses/eparchies report allegations of sexual abuse of a minor to the civil authorities.
16. The Charter requires that all dioceses/eparchies be open and transparent regarding any and all cases of sexual abuse. Parishes affected by abuse are informed openly, honestly and compassionately of allegations.
17. There is a bishop representative from each episcopal region of the U.S. on the Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People.
18. The Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection helps dioceses/eparchies/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.
19. 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. You can see who all the current members are on: <http://www.usccb.org/ocyp/nrb.shtml>
20. The Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People has designed orientation sessions to address questions new bishops and eparches may have regarding the Charter and the audit process.
21. The Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection develops resources for use by dioceses/eparchies. Many are compilations of information from the audit documents. Resources can be found on their website. <http://www.usccb.org/ocyp/resources.shtml>
22. The National Review Board is overseeing the completion of the Causes and Context of the Sexual Abuse Scandal Study by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice. The final report was released in May, 2011.
23. Bishops and eparches 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.
24. To ensure open communication between religious orders and bishops, a representative from the Conference of Major Superiors of Men serves on the Committee for the Protection of Children and Young People.
25. Recognizing the importance of on-going formation, bishops and eparches are committing time and resources to continued formation programs of chastity, celibacy and human formation for clerics.
26. Reconciliation among all people, especially those most affected by abuse is an on-going part of diocesan/eparchial outreach activities and efforts. Masses, retreats, prayer groups, healing gardens, evenings with the Bishop are a few examples of outreach efforts.
27. All dioceses/eparchies have written policies on the sexual abuse of minors by clerics and church personnel.
28. There are 52,910 clerics in the United States that are dedicated, holy men of integrity who work tirelessly to bring Christ to the faithful.

