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# REPORTING ABUSE

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This policy is meant to comply with and serve the Anglican Diocese of the Rocky Mountains Policy for Safe Church and Protection of Children. This applies to all persons, especially children and vulnerable adults.

Abuse refers to an action or failure to act by a parent, caregiver, or person in a position of trust which is not accidental and which harms or threatens to harm a person's physical or mental health or welfare.

We use the term "abuse" as a broad term that covers all the following:

**Physical abuse:** intentional use of physical force against a person that results in – or has a high likelihood of resulting in – harm for a person's health, survival, development, or dignity.

**Sexual abuse:** any form of sexual contact or exploitation in which anyone is being used for the pleasure of the abuser. Acts of sexual abuse include contact-based abuse (such – but not limited to - penetrative intercourse, sexual kissing, sexualized touching or forcing a child to kiss or sexually touch someone else) and non-contact based abuse (such as – but not limited to – asking sexual questions, exposing children to pornography or adult sexual behavior, making sexual or lewd comments toward the child or taking photographs or film of a child for the purposes of sexual gratification by him/herself or others).

**Emotional abuse:** Any nonphysical behavior or attitude that controls, intimidates, subjugates, demeans, punishes, or isolates another person by using degradation, humiliation, or fear.

**Exploitation:** The act of using a minor child or vulnerable adult for profit, labor, sexual gratification, or some other personal or financial advantage.

**Neglect:** the failure of a caregiver to provide basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, medical care, education, or supervision.

## **Reasonable suspicion of abuse rises to the level of making a report.**

### **Reporting to legal authorities**

Our stance is that appropriate legal authorities should be notified first, *especially if suspicions involve church staff or clergy.*

A report can be made to the DCS Statewide Toll-Free Child Abuse Hotline at [1-888-767-2445](tel:1-888-767-2445), (1-888-SOS-CHILD) or law enforcement office. When reporting, the following information if known will be requested:

- name, age, and gender of child and other family members
- address, phone numbers, and/or directions to child's home
- parents' place of employment
- description of suspected abuse or neglect
- current condition of the child

### **Reporting to Church Authorities**

Immediately notify the Rector and the Pastoral Liaison. If the allegation involves the Pastoral Liaison, notify the Rector and the Corporate Vice President. If the allegation involves the Rector notify the Bishop.