

ARTICLE 12
USCCB CHARTER FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

ARCHDIOCESE OF LOS ANGELES
GENERAL POLICIES
ADULT SAFE ENVIRONMENT TRAINING

Revised and Effective July 1, 2016

In 2002, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops adopted its *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*. Since then, the Archdiocese of Los Angeles has been adopting policies concerning these commitments and assisting parishes and schools in establishing Safeguard the Children Committees and Safe Environment programs. Following are the **General Policies on Adult Safe Environment Training**.

Safe Environment Training for Clergy

All clergy who are active in any ministry in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles are required to complete the VIRTUS® “Protecting All God’s Children” Adult Awareness Training or an equivalent child sexual abuse prevention training approved by the Offices of the Vicar for Clergy and Safeguard the Children. This requirement applies to the Archbishop, Cardinal, Bishops, all priests and deacons (whether an Archdiocesan priest or members of a Religious Order) with faculties in the Archdiocese, as well as seminarians, deacon candidates and any clergy member who wishes to have a short-term assignment in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.

Safe Environment Training for Adults

Concurrent with beginning any program or activity in a parish or school, **all parish and school volunteers, teachers, staff or other paid personnel who work in any capacity with or around minors, vulnerable adults or special needs persons** will be required to participate in the VIRTUS® “Protecting All God’s Children” Adult Awareness Training. This includes all lay parish/school staff and volunteers, including principals, teachers, Directors of Religious Education, secretaries, catechists, parent helpers, ushers, Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist, lectors, Boy Scout and Girl Scout Troup Leaders and Volunteers, Coaches, etc. The goal is to have all adults learn how to help prevent child sexual abuse before it happens. Most parishes have a person who has been trained as a VIRTUS® Facilitator, but if a parish does not have a VIRTUS® Facilitator, it should contact the Archdiocesan Office of Safeguard the Children for information on training.

VIRTUS® training was introduced by the Archdiocese in 2004. Parishes are encouraged to invite public school, law enforcement, social service and other religious groups in their communities to participate in the local parish or Catholic school training programs in order to share fully in the Archdiocese’s commitment to providing safe environments for all children.

Participants must keep the original of all VIRTUS® Certificates for their own record and give a copy of their certificate(s) to the parish/school where they work or volunteer. Parishes/schools must have a file or VPIN record of the VIRTUS® Certificates for all active clergy, staff or volunteers as proof of compliance for the annual USCCB Safe Environment Audit. Questions concerning the VIRTUS® programs can be addressed to Joan Vienna, Coordinator, Office of Safeguard the Children, at (213) 637-7227.

