

Archdiocese of Dublin

CHILD SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTION SERVICE



PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS  
OF CHILD ABUSE AGAINST PRIESTS OF  
THE DIOCESE

# INTRODUCTION

The Archdiocese of Dublin treats as paramount the safety and protection of children when dealing with any situation where there is a real or apparent conflict of interest between the interests of children and other considerations. These other considerations, such as, the rights of those who are accused of abusing children, are important and are given due weight once the safety and protection of children has been assured. This procedural guide sets out the steps to be taken in the Diocese when there is an allegation of abuse made against a priest.

The objectives of this procedure are to ensure:

1. that children are protected from all forms of abuse
2. that those who wish to disclose abuse ('the complainants') are heard in a spirit of acceptance and trust
3. that appropriate assistance is provided to those who have been abused and, as required, to their families
4. that the rights of those against whom allegations of abuse are made ('the respondents') are recognised and respected
5. that adequate personal and professional support is made available to respondents
6. that, as far as possible, the truth of the allegations is discovered in order to ensure a just outcome for all concerned.

This is not a policy document. Rather, it sets out how the Archdiocese implements national guidelines (*Children First, National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2011)*) and Church policy, when dealing with allegations of abuse against priests. Specifically, it describes aspects of the Diocese's implementation of *Standard 2 of Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland*, with specific reference to *Resource 2: Procedures - How to manage concerns, suspicions, allegations and disclosures of abuse involving Church staff and volunteers* and the policy document *Leave from Sacred Ministry and Apostolate for Clergy and Religious*.

This procedure has been written with the assistance of a number of external agencies (National Board for the Safeguarding of Children in the Catholic Church, An Garda Síochána, Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs) and internal stakeholders (Chancellery, Diocesan Advisory Panel on Child Protection, Vicar General, Judicial Vicar, Diocesan Agencies, Department of Human Resources) and with advice from colleagues in other dioceses.

This document is intended to provide guidance to those charged with the management of child protection concerns within the Archdiocese of Dublin. It is also available to those who wish to have an understanding of how the Archdiocese deals with these matters. It will be updated and amended to take account of any changes in National and Church policy and guidelines.

# CHILD SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTION IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF DUBLIN

The policy document: *Archdiocese of Dublin, Child Safeguarding and Protection Policy and Procedures* was launched in April 2011. It sets out the Diocese's commitment to ensuring the safety of children involved in Church activities and the structures that have been put in place to give effect to this commitment. For the purposes of this procedure, two of these structures are of particular significance. They are:

## 1. **The Diocesan Advisory Panel on Child Protection**

The Panel was established in 1996 to provide independent, expert advice to the Archbishop on all aspects of the management of cases of alleged or confirmed child sexual abuse. Its remit was later extended to deal with all forms of child abuse. It is composed of clerical and lay people with a range of expertise in areas relevant to the management of child protection concerns. A majority of the members are lay people and the chairperson is a lay person. It meets on a regular (usually monthly) basis.

## 2. **The Child Safeguarding and Protection Service**

The Child Safeguarding and Protection Service (CSPS) of the Archdiocese of Dublin was formally established in 2003 following recommendations from the Advisory Panel for a cohesive and effective support service for those who have experienced abuse by clerics and for their families, and for a proper system for the monitoring, supervision and support of those priests against whom allegations of child sexual abuse have been made and who are out of ministry as a consequence. The CSPS took over from the Chancery the responsibility for the initial investigation of cases of alleged child sexual abuse by priests of the Diocese. The Director and Child Protection Officer of the CSPS attend Advisory Panel meetings and the service supports the work of the Panel by providing it with reports and secretarial backup.

The primary objective of the CSPS is the safeguarding and protection from abuse of children and young people who are involved in the life and work of the Catholic Church in the Diocese.

Under the direction of, and reporting to, the Archbishop, the service is currently made up of a team of eight people.



The team consists of:

- Director (fulfils the role of the Designated Officer referred to in *Safeguarding Children*, 2008: 55)
- Child Protection Officer (fulfils the role of the of the Deputy Designated Officer in *Safeguarding Children*)
- Support Coordinator (coordinates the provision of support to victims of abuse)
- Training and Development Coordinator (trains Church personnel in the Diocese and parishes, and provides advice and support on all aspects of safeguarding)
- Priest Delegate (coordinates the relationship between the Diocese and a priest against whom an allegation of abuse has been made)
- Priest Support Coordinator (supervises, supports and monitors priests out of ministry due to child protection concerns)
- Two administrators.

The service has three functions. These are:

- Creating and maintaining safe environments for children who are involved in Church activities. This is done through:
  - providing training and advice to Diocesan personnel in child safeguarding and protection
  - developing materials to assist parishes and Diocesan agencies and organisations in creating safe environments for children

- carrying out audits of these agencies, organisations and parishes to ensure they are operating in compliance with the requirements set out in *Safeguarding Children*.
- Providing pastoral outreach to those affected by abuse. This is a service provided to those who have experienced abuse and to members of their family. The service provided consists of:
  - facilitating people to make complaints about child abuse
  - accessing counselling for those who need and want it
  - informing them of the steps being taken to address their concerns.
- Dealing with child protection concerns.
  - The management of child protection concerns relating to priests of the Diocese. This involves a range of activities, collectively referred to as 'case management' and includes:
    - meeting with those who wish to discuss such concerns,
    - meeting with the respondent,
    - notifying the civil authorities (An Garda Siochana and HSE),
    - advising the Archbishop on protective measures,
    - assisting in the preparation of a case for submission to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) in Rome and
    - ensuring that appropriate measures are taken which seek

to prevent any person who has offended against children from doing so again.

- The provision of advice and assistance to parishes and Diocesan agencies in their management of child protection concerns
- Oversight of child protection practices in parishes and Diocesan agencies in order to ensure they are fully compliant with Children First and Safeguarding Children.

### **The Designated Officer**

The Designated Officer is a person who has specific responsibility for ensuring that effective child protection procedures are followed within the Diocese (*Safeguarding Children, 2008: 94*). The Designated Officer for the Archdiocese of Dublin is the Director of the CSPS. All child protection concerns that relate to Church personnel and activities in the Archdiocese of Dublin must be reported to the Director who has the overall responsibility, entrusted to him or her by the Archbishop, to ensure that each concern is correctly managed from start to finish, though specific tasks may be delegated to other members of the team.

The Designated Officer has certain responsibilities under Canon Law (*Safeguarding Children, 2008: 87 – 88*) in relation to clerical child sexual abuse. The sexual abuse of a minor is a crime under canon law in the case of clerics and members of religious institutes. Once there is a

semblance of truth to an allegation of child sexual abuse, the Designated Officer is mandated by decree of the Archbishop to carry out a Preliminary Investigation into the facts and circumstances of the complaint. When these have been gathered the Preliminary Investigation is closed by decree of the Archbishop and the case is referred to the CDF for decision as to further action.

The civil process takes precedence over the Canonical one. As described in further detail later, the CSPS liaises closely with An Garda Síochána in conducting its enquiries and agrees with them the timing and conduct of any Church investigations.



# THE PROCEDURE

Each child protection concern arises within a particular and unique set of circumstances. Professional judgement and discretion are required to determine the most appropriate course of action. The duty to care for, and to protect, children overrides any requirement to operate in strict accordance with this or any other procedure. Thus, while the CSPS will endeavour to operate in accordance with this procedure, situations may arise in which the steps taken do not follow the sequence set out below or there is some other variation or departure from the procedure. The CSPS will give a clear account of any such decisions taken.

The procedure consists of seven stages:

1. Receipt of information
2. Information sharing
3. Meeting with the respondent
4. Interim protective measures
5. Formal notification to the civil authorities (Garda and HSE)
6. Secondary prevention (prevention of further abuse where it has been established that abuse has occurred) or return to ministry
7. Review

## 1. Receipt of information

Any person wishing to make an allegation of child abuse by a priest is invited to meet with the CSPS at the earliest available opportunity. He or she is advised of the option of making a statement of complaint

to An Garda Síochána and informed that it may be preferable to do so before giving an account of the allegation to CSPS. The complainant is given the contact details of the Sexual Crime Management Unit of An Garda Síochána (Appendix 1) and the CSPS makes arrangements to facilitate the making of a formal complaint to An Garda Síochána, where the complainant is happy to proceed in this manner.

The Archbishop is informed that a complaint has been received.

When a person comes to CSPS to discuss an allegation of child abuse, the procedures to be followed are explained to him or her, in particular, the requirement on the CSPS to inform the civil authorities and to put the concern to the respondent. This is done before the complainant shares any information and is reiterated at the end of the conversation. Those who disclose abuse can be in a distressed and emotional state and this may impair their capacity to hear and process information. Therefore, a careful explanation is required. In some cases it may be appropriate to contact the complainant a day or so after the initial conversation to reiterate the reporting requirements.

Disclosing abuse is rarely easy but it can be a significant milestone on the road to healing for the person who has been hurt by abuse, especially when disclosed to the institution of which the respondent was a part and when heard by representatives of

that institution in an atmosphere of acceptance and trust. People who disclose abuse to the CSPS are facilitated to tell their story in a number of ways by:

- ensuring that the environment in which the account is given is as comfortable as possible
- travelling to meet those who wish to disclose abuse when the complainant is unable or unwilling to come to the offices of CSPS
- facilitating those living abroad to travel home to Ireland to meet with the CSPS and make a statement to An Garda Síochana, or
- seeking the assistance of the local Diocese in situations where those living overseas wish to disclose abuse to a person or persons in their Diocese of residence
- allowing sufficient time to give a complete account. This can take a number of meetings. A record of what the complainant has said is written up, sent to him or her for amendment and correction and he or she is asked to sign the final version.

The complainant's permission is sought, in line with data protection legislation, to share the information he or she provides with those who need to know it in order to protect children. The person is asked to sign a data protection consent form (Appendix 2).

Any information that is received by CSPS that relates to the safety and welfare of children is taken seriously. It sometimes happens that people contact CSPS to make anonymous complaints. Where personal contact can be established, it is explained that such anonymity limits the action that can be taken to put protective measures in place and the complainant is given time and encouragement to reconsider the position. Where such complaints are made in writing and there is no opportunity to discuss them with the complainant, they may contain too little information to act upon. However, the information is retained, checks made to ascertain whether other similar reports have been received, and it is shared, when appropriate, with the civil authorities.

## 2. Information sharing

The CSPS shares the information obtained with An Garda Síochana, if the person raising the concern has not already made a formal statement to them. If such a statement has been made, the CSPS informs An Garda Síochana that the complainant has been in contact with the service. In either case, the written approval of An Garda Síochana is sought for putting the information to the respondent. This is done to ensure that information is not shared with the respondent in a manner that would prejudice a Garda investigation.<sup>1</sup>

The local HSE child protection service is also informed.

The CSPS conducts enquiries to begin the process of establishing whether there are reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been abused, or is being abused, or is at risk of abuse (*Children First, 2011: Chapter 3*). Such enquiries involve a range of activities, such as, checking Diocesan records.

The advice of the Advisory Panel may be sought at this point or later, when the allegation has been put to the respondent.

Reasonable grounds are deemed established when:

- The allegation has a semblance of truth
- The alleged incident/s come within the definition of child abuse (see Appendix 3)
- The identity of the respondent can be established.

### 3. Meeting with the respondent

The information is shared with the respondent at an appropriate time, taking account of any Garda investigation (as above).

The information is shared with the respondent as part of the process of establishing whether there are reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been abused, is being abused or is at risk of abuse. His response is sought and is shared with the HSE and An Garda Síochana.

The respondent is informed of the allegation made against him at a meeting in Archbishop's House, convened at the first available opportunity. The Archbishop informs him that a complaint has been made about him, but not the details of it. Once he has seen the Archbishop, the respondent meets with the Director or Child Protection Officer of the CSPS who explains accurately and substantially the nature of the concern, including the name of the person who has provided the information. This meeting is attended by the Priest Delegate, who ensures that the respondent is made aware of his rights.

The Priest Delegate has available another priest who will act as a Priest Advisor to the respondent, if the respondent so wishes. The role of a Priest Advisor is to provide support to the respondent by:

- Accompanying him to the meeting at which the details of the concern are outlined
- Ensuring he is aware of his right to obtain civil and canon law advice
- Assisting in the identification of any therapeutic or other needs of the respondent and suggesting how these might be met
- Considering his wishes in relation to a pastoral response by the Diocese to his family
- Being available to him throughout the process of inquiry and later, as required and agreed
- Ensuring he understands the civil and

canonical processes and is kept informed of their progress

- Representing the needs of the respondent to the Diocesan authorities.

The Priest Advisor is not informed of the identity of the respondent unless, and until, the respondent indicates his desire to have a Priest Advisor assigned to him. This is done to preserve confidentiality. The respondent is advised of his rights, including his right not to say anything in response to the allegation and his right to seek canonical and civil legal advice. He is invited to respond to the complaint made about him and, if he chooses to do so, his response is carefully recorded. The response forms part of the information that is sent to An Garda Síochána and the HSE. He may opt to give his response at a later date or, alternatively, not to respond at all.

Those who meet with the respondent provide him with the opportunity to give his response as fully as possible. The response, if any, is then reported by the Director to the Archbishop who decides what immediate protective measures are to be taken, taking account of all of the available information, including the response of the respondent. The Archbishop's decision is then conveyed to the respondent.

An account of the respondent's response is written up and sent to him for amendment, if necessary, and signature.

The respondent is informed that he must not, under any circumstances, attempt to make contact, directly or through a third party, with the complainant.

The respondent is asked to sign a data protection consent form.

#### 4. **Interim protective measures**

If, following the meeting with the respondent and taking account of all of the other information available at this point, it is established that there are reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been abused, is being abused or is at risk of abuse, the respondent will be asked to step aside from ministry pending a full investigation. Asking a priest to step aside from ministry at this point is a precautionary measure that carries no imputation of guilt. It facilitates the progress of the enquiries and reduces possible risks to children while these are being conducted. The respondent is entitled to the presumption of innocence and to his good name and this must be reflected in any public announcement made in his parish. In addition, he will not be penalised financially and every effort will be made to bring the matter to an early conclusion.

If the respondent is asked to step aside from ministry, he is entitled to:

- Be informed of the reasons for being asked to step aside,
- Be informed of the enquiries

undertaken to date, and their outcome

- Be advised of his entitlement to canonical and civil legal representation
- Details of any information that will be put in the public domain
- Confirmation that temporary withdrawal from ministry does not constitute removal from his appointment
- Information regarding his remuneration and residence during the period of temporary withdrawal from ministry.

If the respondent denies the allegation, and there are doubts as to whether the threshold of 'reasonable grounds' has been reached, appropriate protective measures, proportionate to the level of risk to children, will be put in place, pending further investigation. Such a situation could arise, for example, where there is reason to believe that the complainant is mistaken about the identity of the alleged perpetrator. A proportionate response could involve the respondent refraining from contact with children while further enquiries are carried out. The information is likely to be shared with key people (Parish Priest, Chair of Parish Pastoral Council, School Principal) in confidence, but with no public announcement. The Archbishop will seek the advice of the Advisory Panel on such matters and the CSPS will consult with the HSE on the proposed measures.

## 5. **Formal notification to the civil authorities**

Once the complaint has been put to the respondent and his response has been obtained, this information is formally notified to the civil authorities. The information shared at this point includes:

- The respondent's response to the complaint
- The measures put in place to manage any risk to children.

Once the matter has been formally notified, the role of the CSPS is to:

- Ensure support is provided to complainants, victims of abuse and, as appropriate, their families
- Liaise with, and support the work of, the HSE and An Garda Síochána
- Monitor the activities of, and provide support to, the respondent
- Report back to the Archbishop and the Advisory Panel on the outcome of the HSE assessment or criminal investigation.

The Support Coordinator assists victims and their families in a number of ways:

- ensuring that victims of abuse and, as appropriate, members of their families are offered counselling
- keeping them informed of the progress of the steps being taken to address their concerns and prevent further abuse

- arranging a pastoral meeting with the Archbishop. This is often a key event on the road to healing for those affected by abuse. The purpose of these meetings needs to be clear, and the timing carefully judged, so that pastoral integrity is ensured.

## 6. **Secondary Prevention or Return to Ministry**

The steps taken at this point depend on:

- The outcome of the HSE assessment
- The outcome of any Garda investigation
- The outcome of any civil case or criminal prosecution
- The decision of the CDF.

The CDF will make a determination on the priest's status based on the facts presented. A priest who has received a conviction for an offence against a child may be requested to seek laicisation. If he refuses a process of dismissal, in accordance with the norms of canon law, may be initiated. Once it has been established, by whatever means, that child sexual abuse has occurred, the respondent is not permitted to return to ministry.

Those who remain as priests are made subject to a Precept. A Precept typically requires, among other things, that the respondent refrains from having any unsupervised contact with children, does not wear clerical garb and does not exercise priestly ministry. Specific

measures are determined by the Archbishop, with advice from the Advisory Panel. Compliance is monitored by the Priest Support Coordinator. He supervises and monitors the activities of those out of ministry.

Those out of ministry are provided with support and encouraged to rebuild their lives in a spirit of repentance. Any new concerns are reported to An Garda Síochana and the HSE, in accordance with this procedure. In certain circumstances, such concerns are also notified to the CDF.

The CSPS informs the civil authorities of the measures taken.

Where it can be established that an allegation of abuse by a priest is without foundation, he will be returned to full ministry. Every effort will be made to undo whatever damage has been done to his reputation, including communication with relevant parties. He will be offered counselling and other appropriate support to help him deal with the trauma of false or mistaken accusation.



## 7. **Review**

The CSPS carries out internal reviews of active cases at a weekly or fortnightly case management meeting.

The Priest Support Committee meets on a monthly basis and reviews the arrangements for the monitoring and supervision of those priests out of ministry.

The Advisory Panel meets regularly to consider any newly notified cases and cases still requiring advice as to fitness for ministry issues.

The CSPS will cooperate fully with any independent reviews of the manner in which cases are processed by CSPS, provided for in Safeguarding Children.

Ongoing feedback on the operation of the CSPS, plus the outcome of any independent reviews and the results of audits carried out by the National Office will be used to inform the maintenance of high standards in the service.



# APPENDIX 1

## Contact Details of Sexual Crime Management Unit

Any person who comes to CSPS to make a disclosure of child abuse is advised of the option of making a statement of complaint to An Garda Siochana and informed that it may be preferable to do so before giving an account of the allegation to CSPS. The complainant is given the contact details of the Sexual Crime Management Unit of An Garda Siochana, as follows:

Sexual Crime Management Unit,  
Domestic Violence Sexual Assault  
Investigation Unit,  
National Bureau of Criminal Investigation,  
Harcourt Square  
Harcourt Street,  
Dublin 2  
Phone: 01 666 3474/ 3475/ 3445/ 3438  
Fax: 01 6663439  
Email: NBCI\_SCMU@GARDA.IE

Where information about alleged abuse is received through a solicitor’s letter, the CSPA writes to the solicitor concerned requested that the solicitor’s client is:

- Given a leaflet outlining the service offered by CSPA to those who have experienced clerical child abuse
- Informed of the requirement to inform the civil authorities of all allegations of child abuse
- Given the contact details for An Garda Siochana (as above) so that s/he can make direct contact with the Gardai.

# APPENDIX 2

## Data Protection Consent Form

In February 2009, the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland launched its guidance for best practice. The document was endorsed and adopted by all the constituent parts of the Church. It set down standards against which safeguarding could be assessed. Standard 2.4 of that guidance states: - “there is a process for recording incidents, allegations and suspicions and referrals. These will be stored securely, so that confidential information is protected and complies with relevant legislation”.

In accordance with this Standard, we undertake to create a record which is accurate and fair, in respect of any such incident, allegation, or suspicion. This record will be stored securely for whatever period it is thought necessary, updated regularly and accessed only by those who need to view it to secure the safety of a child, or to provide a service in line with those described within the guidance *SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN*. As the subject of the file you may correct inaccuracies and review the content upon request.

Having had this policy explained to you, your agreement is sought to the creation of a case record on the grounds outlined.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Witness: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# APPENDIX 3

## Definitions of Abuse

(Taken from *Safeguarding Children, Resource 10*)

The abuse of children generally involves one or more of four main forms of abuse:

- physical abuse
- emotional abuse
- sexual abuse
- neglect

### Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Physical abuse, as well as being a result of an act of commission can also be caused through omission or the failure to act to protect.

### Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve causing

children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

### Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts (oral sex). They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Boys and girls can be sexually abused by males and/ or females, by adults and by other young people. This includes people from all different walks of life.

### Neglect

Neglect can be defined in terms of an omission, where the child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, and failure to access appropriate medical care or treatment.

Neglect generally becomes apparent in different ways over a period of time rather than at one specific point. It is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/ or psychological needs, such as the neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may also occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

# APPENDIX 4

## Summary Guide:

### Civil and canonical (in italics) procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse by priests of the Diocese

#### 1. Receipt of Information

Allegation of child abuse by priest reported to Director of CSPS.

Archbishop informed.

Meeting with person raising concern:

- advised to give statement to An Garda Síochana
- told of procedure, including reporting requirements .

*Preliminary Canon Law Investigation opens (Sexual abuse of minor by priest).*

#### 2. Information sharing

Information shared with civil authorities and approval sought for meeting with respondent.

Diocesan files checked for background and corroborative information.

Referral to Advisory Panel now or after meeting with respondent.

#### 3. Meeting with respondent

*Meeting in Archbishop's House*

- *Priest Advisor on standby*
- *Respondent meets Archbishop, told of concern but not details*
- *Meets Priest Advisor, if agreed by respondent*

- *Informed of detail of concern by Director or Child Protection Officer of CSPS in presence of Priest Delegate*
- *Informed of rights*
- *Given list of civil and canon lawyers*
- *Response recorded, where given.*

#### 4. Interim Protective measures

*Report to Archbishop on outcome of meeting, consideration of*

- *Protective measures, as required*
- *Announcement in parish, if appropriate.*

*Priest Advisor maintains constant contact with respondent during initial period and considers need for, and advises on, additional support for respondent.*

#### 5. Formal notification to civil authorities

An Garda Síochana and HSE informed of:

- Respondent's response to complaint
- Protective measures taken

CSPS:

- Provides support to victims and families
- Liaises with HSE and An Garda Síochana
- Monitors activities of respondent
- Reports to Archbishop and Advisory Panel on outcome of Garda investigation and HSE assessment

#### 6. Secondary Prevention or Return to Ministry

Steps taken depend on:

- Outcome of HSE assessment
- Outcome of Garda investigation
- Outcome of any civil case or criminal prosecution
- The decision of the CDF

Where child sexual abuse has occurred, the respondent cannot return to ministry.

*CDF determines whether respondent is:*

- *Asked to apply for laicisation*
- *Dismissed from clerical state*
- *Remains as a priest, but under precept*
  - o *No unsupervised contact with children*
  - o *No priestly ministry*
  - o *Other restrictions, as appropriate.*

The continuing support of the Diocese depends on cooperation with whatever restrictions the Archbishop imposes, and compliance is monitored by the Priest Support Coordinator.

*Where no reasonable grounds to believe abuse has occurred, the respondent:*

- *Returns to ministry*
- *Steps taken to restore his good name*
- *Offered appropriate counselling and support.*

## 7. **Review**

The CSPS participates in HSE reviews of child protection cases under Children First when invited to do so.

The Diocese reviews its own child protection processes through:

- Weekly review of all active cases within CSPS
- Monthly review of priests under supervision of Priest Support Coordinator.



# CONTACT

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