



**CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SAGINAW**  
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**OFFICE OF THE  
APOSTOLIC ADMINISTRATOR**

To: All Priests, Deacons, Directors of Parish Life, and Principals

From: Most Reverend Walter A. Hurley, Apostolic Administrator

Date: July 16, 2019

Re: Protecting God's Children

Acknowledging the importance of vigilance in child protection, the clergy of the Diocese recently participated in VIRTUS re-training. VIRTUS [*Protecting God's Children for Adults*] promotes awareness of the signs of child sexual abuse, the means by which offenders commit abuse, and steps one can use to prevent child abuse.

At its last meeting, the Diocesan Review Board recommended mandatory re-training every three years for all employees of the diocese and for volunteers who have regular contact with minors. **Beginning July 1, 2019, these individuals whose last training was 3 years ago or more are required to be re-trained within 18 months [by December 31, 2020]** in order to remain eligible for continued employment and/or volunteer activities that involve regular contact with minors. The retraining must occur in a live session. Dates, times and registration are on-line: <https://saginaw.org/child-and-youth-protection/virtus>. Those who have had facilitator-led training within 3 years may choose on-line or a facilitator-led training. Thereafter, every other training (within each 3-year time frame) can be completed on-line [*Keeping the Promise Alive Refresher Program*].

Schools, pre-K – 12, and day care centers are required by law to finger-print all employees, contracted vendors and contractors who have regular access to schools. In addition, I am **mandating that all volunteers who regularly or frequently serve the schools, including [but not limited to] coaches; youth ministers; child care volunteers; all priests, religious, and deacons assigned to a parish with a school; and clergy with regular or frequent contact with a school must be fingerprinted** before school begins in the fall. If involved with school summer camps or other summer activities, fingerprinting must occur sooner. Cormac Lynn, Superintendent of Catholic Schools, day-care center directors, and the schools' principals can provide guidance to you.

I ask each individual responsible for a parish, school or day-care center to be assured that the required criminal background checks and VIRTUS training are completed and that the *Standards of Ministerial Behavior for Those Working with Children and Young People* have been reviewed and agreed to by all employees and volunteers with regular contact with minors.

The Review Board has advised that criminal background checks be renewed every 6 years; I have incorporated this wise advice into the policy of the Diocese. Amy Zimmerman, Compliance Coordinator in the Office of Human Resources and Compliance, will manage updating criminal background checks.

Thank you for your cooperation in providing safe environments for our children and vulnerable adults.