Tab C

Clergy

Screening, Hiring and Training Requirements and Safe Practices/Warning Signs

Screening, Hiring and Training Requirements for Clergy

All clergy *MUST*:

1. Submit a signed job application with a listing of personal and professional references, and an authorization for background checks (the procedure for conducting background checks is set forth in **Tab B-7**).

2. Submit a signed certification that he/she never has been convicted of any crime involving child sexual abuse and/or neglect, nor had any such conviction expunged; been alleged in a civil proceeding to have sexually abused a child; committed any act of child sexual abuse; or been diagnosed with any paraphiliac psychological condition, as defined by the American Psychiatric Association, including, but not limited to, pedophilia, exhibitionism or voyeurism. (Certification form is at **Tab B-2**.)

3. Read the main text (pages 1-12) of the Episcopal Diocese of San Diego Policy Manual on Sexual Abuse and Misconduct: Prevention and Response ("Policy Manual"), plus these tabs:

> **Tab B** ("Screening, Recruiting/Hiring and Training");
>
> **Tab C (this tab);**
>
> **Tab S** ("How and Where to Report Suspected Child Sexual Abuse and Adult Sexual Misconduct");
>
> **Tab T** ("Response to Reports of Child Sexual Abuse and Adult Sexual Misconduct");
>
> **Tab U** ("Congregational Healing").
>
> Submit a signed certification that such materials have been read. (Certification form is at **Tab B-3**.)

4. Attend a full diocesan workshop on the prevention of child sexual abuse, and submit documentation to the parish and the diocese that such training has been completed. (A copy of the certificate given to participants at the end of the workshop is sufficient documentation.) A waiver of this requirement may be granted where completion of equivalent training in another diocese is documented. Clergy are responsible for maintaining documentation of workshop completion.

5. Attend a full diocesan workshop on the prevention of adult sexual misconduct, and submit documentation to the parish and the diocese that such training has been completed. (A copy of the certificate given to participants at the end of the workshop is sufficient documentation.) A waiver of this requirement may be granted where completion of equivalent training in another diocese is documented. Clergy are responsible for maintaining documentation of workshop completion.

Some Safe Practices and/or Warning Signs of Particular Significance to Clergy:

1. Remember that clergy are looked up to as moral leaders. Ordination vows include this promise "I will do my best to pattern my life in accordance with the teachings of Christ, so that I will be a wholesome example to my people." *Book of Common Prayer, p. 532*.

2. It is possible for those in unequal positions, such as clergy and parishioner or supervisor and worker, to develop feelings of attraction that are based upon their unequal relationship, rather than on a real personal connection. It is the clergy's responsibility to be alert for "red flag" situations, such as when a parishioner or worker appears emotionally needy or in awe of the clergy position, and to maintain appropriate professional boundaries regardless of his/her own feelings of attraction toward the parishioner or worker.

3. Avoid dating parishioners. Because of the potential for damage to the well being of the parish and the parishioner involved, clergy are strongly discouraged from dating parishioners. Be aware of the policy regarding clergy dating as further described in the Policy Manual, and in the handouts of **Tab B-6**.

4. Avoid situations which could encourage or suggest sexual impropriety. Where issues regarding sexual impropriety might arise, and a private meeting is necessary, keep the meeting brief, and leave the door open, if possible. If a closed door meeting is necessary, tell a third person about it and, if possible, have that third person remain on the church property during the meeting. Consider taking steps to remain in contact with others, such as bringing a cell phone to the meeting and asking a friend or family member to call after a specified time period.

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6. Avoid repeated private meetings with an individual. As a general rule, clergy should limit their pastoral counseling sessions with an individual to six meetings per life issue, unless that clergy member is conducting those sessions under the supervision of, or with, a licensed counselor.

7. Clergy must know their own weaknesses and temptations. They are obligated, morally and spiritually, to take all steps necessary to seek help from colleagues, counselors or spiritual advisors when they feel tempted to breach sexual boundaries, or when they must diffuse a potentially dangerous situation.

8. Be familiar with, and follow, safe practices and prevention strategies for adult sexual misconduct, such as those set forth in **Tab B-6**, “Handouts from Episcopal Diocese of San Diego Workshop on Prevention of Adult Sexual Misconduct.”

9. Maintain appropriate boundaries with co-workers, and be aware of actions or situations which could cause discomfort or embarrassment. Where there are concerns about an uncomfortable workplace situation, accept responsibility for sharing those concerns with at least one other person, and for ensuring that the situation is addressed. If such concerns stem from actions by a co-worker, raise the issue with a supervisor. If concerns arise from actions by a superior, call the Bishop.

10. Maintain sufficient communications with staff members to be aware of when a staff member may be engaging in prohibited sexual activity.

11. Keep in mind that even a single case of misconduct could have severe consequences. Sexual misconduct will significantly harm a career in ministry, alienate clergy from friends, and cause the affected congregation years of emotional and spiritual damage.

12. Follow all of the requirements for screening, hiring/recruiting and training employees and workers, as set forth in **Tab B**. Keep employment documents, including required certifications, on file at the church.

13. Ensure that all current employees and workers are familiar with any newly adopted policies and practices as set forth in the Policy Manual, that they have met all requirements adopted since they were hired, and that they have submitted all documentation now required.