

Diocese of Rockford
Guidelines for Youth and Those Working with Youth

Employee, Adult Volunteer and Youth Participant
General Guidelines and Boundaries Expectations

Revised and Effective September 1, 2017

A. Introduction

These Guidelines have been developed to support the Diocese's youth, young adult ministry leaders, and employed adults and volunteering adults who work with youth. The intent of these Guidelines is for youth and adults to have a consistent set of rules to govern and guide appropriate conduct. The Supervising Adult, defined below, of an activity in which youth participate is required to verify compliance with these Guidelines.

B. Definitions

In these Guidelines, "Minors" are defined as individuals under the age of 18 years. "Youth" is defined to include both minors and young adults between the ages of 18 to 20 years.

"Supervising Adult" is defined as the person held responsible for the operation of the activity, and may include the Pastor, Principal, Youth Minister, Coordinator or Director of Religious Education, Director of a Diocesan Department, a teacher, employed coach, or other similar individual; provided that the Supervising Adult shall be employed by the Diocese, parish, school, or other Diocesan entity. A volunteer may not be a Supervising Adult. The Supervising Adult may or may not be present at the activity, but is responsible for ensuring these Guidelines are followed. If the Supervising Adult attends the actual Activity itself, the Supervising Adult may choose to appoint a co-Supervising Adult if appropriate to the circumstances.

"Adult Leader" is defined as the adult held responsible for the operation of the activity, if the Supervising Adult is not present at the activity. An activity may have more than one Adult Leader.

"Chaperone" is defined as an adult who assists the Supervising Adult or Adult Leader in maintaining order, adherence to policies, and the safety of the minors and youth participating in the activity.

"Activity" is defined as any gathering on Diocesan premises or off Diocesan premises, which is sponsored or hosted by the Diocese, a parish or school of the Diocese, or by other Diocesan entity, in which minors and/or youth participate.

C. Requirements for Employees and Volunteers working with Minors

1. All adult employees and volunteers having contact with minors are required to:
 - a. undergo a criminal background check before performing services for the Diocese. School employees undergo a fingerprint background check. All

other employees and all volunteers undergo a name background check;

- b. complete the online safe environment training, VIRTUS: *Protecting God's Children for Adults*; and
- c. read and agree to abide by:
 - the Diocese's Pastoral Code of Conduct (and sign the Receipt Acknowledgement Form),
 - the Norms for the Prohibition of Sexual Misconduct (and sign the Receipt Acknowledgement Form),
 - the Code for the Pastoral Use of Technology and Social Media (and sign the Receipt Acknowledgement Form),
 - the Mandated Reporter Form, as an Employee or Volunteer, as applicable (and sign the form), and
 - these Guidelines for Youth and Those Working with Youth (and sign the Receipt Acknowledgement Form).

All of these resources are available on the Diocese website at <http://www.rockforddiocese.org/documents>, scrolling to Safe Environment. Obtain passwords for these documents at the parish. The VIRTUS safe environment training is here: <http://www.rockforddiocese.org/protectinggodschildren>.

2. Minors who are 16 years of age or older employed by the parish or school or volunteering with children for the parish or school are required to:
 - a. complete the online safe environment training, VIRTUS: *Protecting God's Children for Adults* unless the minor's parent notifies the parish/school/diocesan entity in writing that the parent wants to opt out his or her child from this requirement (email notification is acceptable); and
 - b. read and agree to abide by:
 - the Diocese's Pastoral Code of Conduct (and sign the Receipt Acknowledgement Form),
 - the Norms for the Prohibition of Sexual Misconduct (and sign the Receipt Acknowledgement Form),
 - the Code for the Pastoral Use of Technology and Social Media (and sign the Receipt Acknowledgement Form), and
 - these Guidelines for Youth and Those Working with Youth (and sign the Receipt Acknowledgement Form).

Minors who are younger than 16 years of age are not subject to the requirements of this paragraph 2.

D. Procedures and Forms

1. Permission Slip forms are required for all off-site, and all overnight on-campus Activities, without exception. A parent/legal guardian is required to sign a permission slip that specifically identifies the particular off-site Activity or Activities. Where an Activity in which minors participate begins at the parish and then proceeds to another off-site location, the permission slip is required to state

that. Where such Activity is not sponsored by the parish, such as a group of minors who participate in the parish youth ministry group decide to attend a movie together, a permission slip is not required, because the parish is not assuming responsibility for the minors. However, in that example, if the Youth Minister is also attending the movie, the activity could be construed as parish-sponsored and therefore, a completed permission slip is required.

2. A Student or Youth Emergency Information form is to be completed and submitted for every youth participating in an Activity.
3. Permission Slip forms and Student or Youth Emergency Information forms are to remain with the Supervising Adult throughout the Activity. If the Supervising Adult is not present at the Activity, the forms are to remain with an Adult Leader. The Permission Slip form and Student or Youth Emergency Information form are attached at the end of this Policy.
4. If an Activity includes mission work or performing manual labor, minors may not operate machinery of any kind or power tools or be on scaffolding, and the Permission Slip should include a description of any known risk.
5. Passenger vans that have anywhere from 10 to 15 seats are not covered by Diocesan insurance. They are not to be used to transport individuals.
6. Drivers who are transporting minors or adults as part of an Activity are required to complete the Driver Information Sheet, regardless of whether the driver is a Diocesan employee or volunteer. All drivers must be a minimum 21 years of age or older and provide proof of a valid automobile insurance card and a valid driver's license. The Driver Information form is attached at the end of this Policy. An adult may use his or her own vehicle to transport individuals, but not if the vehicle is a passenger van that has anywhere from 10 to 15 seats.
7. When transporting individuals in a vehicle, two adults should be in the front seat and all minors shall be seated behind them. If the group in the vehicle is comprised of only one adult, the adult is to sit in the front seat of the vehicle, and all minors are to sit behind the adult in the back seats. A vehicle shall not be comprised of only one adult and one minor. There shall be no more than two adults sitting in the front seat of a vehicle, and no minor shall sit in the front seat. All individuals in a vehicle are required to wear his or her own seat belt at all times that the vehicle is being operated. The number of individuals in a vehicle may not exceed the number of seat belts in the vehicle.
8. An Incident Report shall be completed by an Adult Leader for each injury sustained by an adult or youth, and for any or other incident that occurs. That form is attached at the end of this Policy. If the person sustaining the injury is an employee of the Diocese, Parish, School, or other Diocesan entity, an *Illinois Form 45: Employer's First Report of Injury* form shall be completed by the Adult Leader. The Form 45 is here: <http://www.rockforddiocese.org/documents>, under the Section entitled Property Insurance.

E. Numbers of Adults required per Activity and Circumstance

1. Activities on the Premises.

- a. Every Activity that occurs **on the premises of** the Diocesan parish, Diocesan school or other Diocesan facility shall have at least one Supervising Adult or one Adult Leader present at the activity.
- b. If both male and female minors participate in the Activity, and the Activity entails the participants' use of locker rooms or showers, at least one male adult and one female adult (made up of a Supervising Adult or Adult Leader, plus an Adult leader or chaperone) shall be present at the Activity.
- c. A pastor and principal have the discretion to require that more than one Adult be present at a particular Activity.

2. Activities Away from the Premises.

- a. Ratio Rule of 1 Adult for every 10 or fewer minors.
 - The Ratio Rule is as follows: for every 10 or fewer minors participating in an Activity **away** from the premises, 1 Adult shall be present.
 - The Ratio Rule applies to every **away** Activity.
 - The Ratio Rule also applies to every **Overnight Activity** regardless of whether the Overnight Activity is on the premises or away from the premises.
 - Application of the Ratio Rule: Every Activity that occurs **away** from the Diocesan parish, Diocesan school, or Diocesan facility, and every **Overnight Activity**, shall have at least one Supervising Adult or Adult Leader in attendance for every ten or fewer minors; at least one Supervising Adult or Adult Leader plus at least one chaperone or additional Adult Leader in attendance for every 11-20 minors; at least one Supervising Adult or Adult Leader plus at least two other adults who shall be an Adult Leader or chaperone in attendance for every 21-30 minors; and so on.
- b. Away Activity in which **all** participating minors are of the same sex. Each activity that occurs **away** from the Diocesan parish, the Diocesan school, or the Diocesan facility, and in which all participating minors are of the same sex, in addition to complying with the Ratio Rule of Section E, paragraph 2a, above, shall have at least one adult who is the same sex as the sex of the minors participating in the activity.

Example: Marian High School girls' tennis team has 25 players. When the team travels to Chicago for a tennis competition against a Catholic high school in another diocese, Marian's Activity is away from its premises. Thus the Ratio Rule applies. Because between 21 and 30 minors are participating in the Activity, at least three adults (made up of Supervising Adult or Adult Leader and chaperones) must accompany the team on the bus and during

the entire activity. Additionally, because the minors participating in the Activity are all female and the Activity is away, at least one of the adults shall be female.

Example: St. Peter School's boys soccer team, comprised of 10 players, is coached by an adult female. When the team travels across town to play a game against St. Edward School's boys soccer team, the Ratio Rule applies to St. Peter School because the minors participating in the Activity are all boys and the Activity is away, at least one adult shall be male. Thus, in this situation, two adults must be present: the adult female coach and an adult male chaperone, even though the Ratio Rule would require only one adult.

- c. Away Activity in which both male and female minors participate. Each Activity that occurs **away** from the Diocesan parish, the Diocesan school or the Diocesan facility, and in which both male and female minors participate, in addition to complying with the Ratio Rule of Section E, paragraph 2a, above, shall have at least one adult male plus one adult female, one of whom shall be the Supervising Adult or Adult Leader and the other of whom shall be an Adult Leader or chaperone.

Example: St. Bridget School's chess club is comprised of 11 boys and 4 girls. When the club travels across town to St. Rita School for a chess competition, St. Bridget School's Activity is away from its premises. Thus the Ratio Rule applies. Because between 11 to 20 minors are participating in the Activity, at least two adults (made up of a Supervising Adult or Adult Leader and chaperone) must accompany the team on the bus and during the entire competition. Additionally, one adult must be male and one adult must be female because minors of both sexes are participating.

Example: Holy Cross Church's youth group is comprised of 20 boys and 18 girls. When the youth group travels by bus to Chicago to tour old churches, the Activity is away from the premises. Thus the Ratio Rule applies. Because between 31 to 40 minors are participating in the Activity, at least 4 adults (made up of a Supervising Adult or Adult Leader and 3 chaperones) must accompany the team on the bus and during the entire event. Additionally, at least one adult must be male and at least one adult must be female because minors of both sexes are participating.

- d. Representation of Adult Males and Females at Overnight Activity. The Ratio Rule of Section E, paragraph 2a, **AND** either the rule of Section E, paragraph 2b or of 2c, apply to Overnight Activities, regardless of whether the Activity is on the premises or away from the premises. Additionally, when both boys and girls are participating in the Activity, at least one adult male and at least one adult female must be present. Where possible, gender should be given consideration when selecting adults to attend the Activity so that the numbers of male and female adults is representative of the numbers of boys and girls participating in the Activity.

Example: St. Joseph School's choir is comprised 24 girls and 5 boys. When the choir travels out of town for an overnight stay in a hotel and competition

the next day, the Ratio Rule applies. Because between 21 and 30 minors are participating in the Activity, at least 3 adults (made up of a Supervising Adult or Adult Leader and chaperones) must accompany the choir on the bus, at the hotel, and during the entire competition. Additionally, one adult must be male and one adult must be female because the Activity participants are both boys and girls. If the School has ample male and female adults offering to chaperone the Activity, the School should consider having two female adults and one male adult chaperone the Activity.

3. **Minimum Age of Supervising Adults, Adult Leaders and Chaperones.** Youth who are age 18 to 20 years may attend youth activities but may not be considered a Supervising Adult, Adult Leader or adult chaperone in the Chaperone/Minor ratio.

F. Overnight Accommodations

1. The Ratio Rule of Section E, paragraph 2a applies because an Overnight Activity is considered an **away** Activity, regardless of whether it occurs on premises or away from the premises. Additionally, either Section E, paragraph 2b or 2c applies to an Overnight Activity.
2. The Sleeping rooms shall have doors to the room; rooms should be located in groups, where possible. Connecting doors (doors which connect one sleeping room with another) shall be locked at all times.
3. Request that the hotels/motels restrict the use of the in-room televisions and in-room phones, including blocking inappropriate cable channels. Rooms are to be programmed by the hotel/motel so that no extra television (such as HBO, Showtime, adult channels) or long distance fees can be charged to the room.
4. Supervising Adults, Adult Leaders and Chaperones shall have sleeping rooms that are separate from the sleeping rooms of minors and the sleeping rooms of youth who are age 18 to 20 years, when using hotels, motels, inns, youth hostels, retreat centers, and other facilities set up for sleeping. No Exceptions. If large spaces are used (such as gymnasiums), adult, youth, and minor spaces shall be separate.
5. Except in situations involving members of a family, minors are to room with other minors of the same gender; and youth who are age 18 to 20 years are required to room with other youth who are age 18 to 20 years and who are of the same gender.
6. Supervising Adults and Adult Leaders are to consider limiting the use by minors of cell phones and other electronic devices.

G. Medications

1. All prescription and non-prescription medication brought to an activity by a minor or minor's parent/guardian shall be in its original container.

2. A minor is permitted to self-carry an epinephrine pen as well as an asthma inhaler, and may administer it to him- or herself without having to present a permission slip or prescription.
3. An adult trained in the administration of an epi-pen injection ("Trained Adult") may carry on his or her person an epi-pen for emergency use, and that Trained Adult may administer an epi-pen injection to any minor or adult whom that Trained Adult in good faith believes is having an anaphylactic reaction.
4. Dispensing of prescription medication or non-prescription medicine (such as Tylenol) to a minor is prohibited, unless the parent completes and submits the Permission Slip attached at the end of this Policy
5. Medications (other than an epi-pen injector and asthma inhaler) brought to an activity by a minor or the minor's parent/guardian shall be left in the care of an Adult Leader. However, when the minor must have immediate access to a medication due to the nature of the minor's medical condition, the parent shall inform the Adult Leader of this fact, in which case the medication (other than an epi-pen injector and asthma inhaler) must be stored in a location where it may not be accessed by individuals other than the involved minor and Adult Leaders.
6. Prescription medications shall be administered and taken only in keeping with the minor's physician's orders. Over-the-counter medications shall be administered and taken only in keeping with the instructions provided by the manufacturer of the medication.
7. In the case of a medical emergency, an adult employee, adult volunteer, or adult chaperone shall call 911, and is permitted to provide first aid to the injured individual while awaiting the arrival of medical professionals.

H. General Guidelines for Supervising Adults, Adult Leaders and Chaperones of Youth Activities

1. Adults are to wear name badges designating "chaperone" or "volunteer" or job title such as "youth minister," as the case may be.
2. Adults should designate places and times where youth participants can locate group Adult Leaders throughout the Activity.
3. The Supervising Adults, Adult Leaders and Chaperones are expected to maintain the separation of genders in sleeping rooms of youth age 18 to 20 years and of minors at all times. They should check sleeping rooms periodically after curfew. If a Supervising Adult, Adult Leader or Chaperone must enter youth sleeping rooms, a second adult should be present if the activity has a second adult at the Activity, except in urgent cases. The adult checking a sleeping room should be the same sex as the minors or youth in the room except in urgent cases.
4. The sleeping room is to be occupied by minors of the same gender. When only two-capacity beds are available to the group, two minors of the same gender may sleep in one bed.

5. Each Supervising Adult, Adult Leader and Chaperone shall have a cell phone, and have the group's leader's cell phone number readily available. They should be familiar with and strive to achieve the objectives and guidelines of the activity.
6. Chaperones shall uphold the authority of the Adult Leaders and Supervising Adult and assist them in any way to promote learning and full participation.
7. Supervising Adults, Adult Leaders and Chaperones shall be aware of and adhere to emergency plans and evacuation routes at the facilities being used.
8. Supervising Adults, Adult Leaders and Chaperones are responsible and/or accountable for stewardship of all resources entrusted to their care.
9. Supervising Adults, Adult Leaders and Chaperones are to avoid situations where he or she is alone with a minor or minors or youth age 18 to 20 years, always following the two adult rule. Physical contact with minors and youth can be misconstrued and should occur (a) only when completely nonsexual and otherwise appropriate; and (b) never in private.
10. Use a team approach (two or more adults) to managing emergency situations. Our children are the most important gifts God has entrusted to us. Supervising Adults, Adult Leaders and Chaperones are to:
 - Treat everyone with respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration;
 - Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition, or comparison when working with children and/or youth;
 - Not solicit gifts from children and/or youth or their parents;
 - Refrain from giving gifts to children and/or youth without prior written approval from the parents or guardian;
 - Immediately report suspected sexual abuse of a minor to the Supervising Adult and/or appropriate Adult Leader, and the Diocese of Rockford hotline phone number (815-293-7540), and to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services hotline phone number (1-800-25ABUSE).
11. Supervising Adults, Adult Leaders and Chaperones are to avoid any form of excessive familiarity, inappropriate language, or any situation and conduct that exploits or could give the appearance of exploiting another.
12. Supervising Adults, Adult Leaders and Chaperones are prohibited from using illegal drugs, tobacco and/or alcohol at any time during an activity he or she is chaperoning. Additionally, they shall not purchase or distribute illegal drugs, tobacco products or alcohol to minors.
13. Supervising Adults, Adult Leaders and Chaperones shall avoid situations that would humiliate, ridicule, threaten, demean or degrade minors or other adults in the group.

14. Supervising Adults, Adult Leaders and Chaperones shall follow practice that consistently exhibits no tolerance for any form of abusive behavior.
15. Supervising Adults, Adult Leaders and Chaperones shall avoid posing any known health risk to minors (i.e. no fevers or other contagious situation).

I. General Guidelines for Youth participants

1. Youth participants will:

- Project an image of Christian consideration, sensitivity, and respect to everyone and everything
- Use Christian consideration, sensitivity, and respect when using electronic devices
- Follow Adult Leaders' rules related to electronic devices
- Project an image of Christian etiquette in their use of language, dress, and behavior
- Refrain from inappropriate touching and verbal harassment
- Respect other persons and/or property, and keep their personal belongings of value with them at all times
- Refrain from actions that could result in injury and/or damage to property
- Adhere to stated curfew
- Wear appropriate credentials in order to gain and maintain access to youth activities
- Maintain courteous and appropriate noise levels in lobbies, hallways, and sleeping areas, especially later in the evenings
- Maintain the spirit of the activity
- Report problems of any kind to a trusted adult

2. Youth participants will not:

- Possess weapons or explosive materials of any kind
- Purchase, possess, smoke or use tobacco products of any kind
- Purchase, possess, consume, or distribute alcohol or illegal drugs
- Engage in any form of sexual activity or sexual harassment
- Purchase, download, possess, distribute or view pornography
- Visit or gather in hotel rooms with the opposite gender
- Engage in any form of body piercing or tattooing

3. Youth participants are to be aware of what are and are not appropriate behaviors in terms of relationships between adults and youth, and with their peers.

a. The following are generally considered **appropriate behaviors** at youth activities:

- Side hugs
- Shoulder to shoulder or "temple" hugs
- Handshakes
- "High-fives," hand slapping, and fist bumps

- Verbal praise for a job well-done (not regarding physical attributes)
- Touching hands, faces (usually in context of a blessing), shoulders, and arms of minors
- Arms around shoulders
- Holding hands while walking with younger minors
- Sitting beside younger minors
- Holding hands during prayer
- Pats on the head when culturally appropriate.

b. The following are generally considered **inappropriate behaviors** at youth activities:

- Inappropriate or lengthy embraces and kisses on the mouth
- Touching private areas of the body
- Going to an isolated area away from the group, or being taken to an isolated area by an adult or peer
- Showing affection in isolated areas of a facility such as bedrooms, restrooms, bathrooms, closets, staff-only areas, other private rooms, or without others present
- Holding children on the lap who are capable of sitting on their own
- Wrestling or tickling with another individual
- Piggyback rides
- Any type of massage given by minor or adult to another minor or adult
- Any form of unwanted affection or peer sexual harassment
- Compliments or put downs that relate to physique or body development

4. The following personal safety measures should also be remembered and followed:

- Always carry photographic identification with you (driver's license, school ID) if you have one.
- Always travel in a group, with chaperones knowing every youth's location at all times.
- Always look for and use designated crosswalks and pedestrian bridges.
- Sleeping room doors should to be locked at all times. Youth shall not open doors unless they can verify who is knocking and what the person's credentials are.
- Sleeping room numbers and telephone numbers should not be given to strangers or distributed publicly.
- Review fire safety procedures and know where emergency exits are in all facilities being used.
- Do not make jokes or threats about weapons, bombs, terrorists, or other dangerous acts.
- Report all safety or security concerns or rumors to your Diocesan or parish/school Adult Leader.

Effective September 17, 2015
 Revised January 1, 2016
 Revised October 7, 2016
 Revised September 1, 2017

**GUIDELINES FOR YOUTH AND THOSE WORKING WITH YOUTH
RECEIPT ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

I, _____, acknowledge that I have received
the

(Name)

Diocese of Rockford's Guidelines for Youth and Those Working with Youth. I agree that
I have read and will abide by these Guidelines when working with Youth.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Parish/School/Diocesan Entity:

City: _____

Witness: _____

Return this form to the Parish/School/Diocesan entity you identified on this form.