

USA CAMILLIAN DELEGATION

Response to Sexual Misconduct in Ministerial Relationships

Boundaries in Ministerial Relationships

The USA Camillian Delegation recognizes that sexual abuse by Members has devastating consequences for survivors and their families and the lay and religious communities. We have become increasingly aware of the effects of this tragic behavior and have developed a steadfast commitment to helping those affected.

This guide is intended to provide basic information about (1) how the USA Camillian Delegation defines sexual abuse, (2) what its procedures are for responding to complaints of sexually inappropriate behavior and sexual abuse, and (3) to whom those subjected to sexual abuse can turn for help.

Sexual misconduct is a general term that encompasses sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, and sexual abuse. Sexual harassment is defined as unwanted sexualized conduct or language between coworkers in the church setting and workplace. It may include, but is not limited to:

- Unsolicited sexual advances and propositions
- The use of sexually degrading words to describe an individual or his/her body
- The telling of inappropriate or sexually-charged jokes
- Retaliation against a coworker who refuses sexual advances
- Offers of preferential treatment such as promotions, positive performance evaluations, or favorably assigned duties or shifts in exchange for sexual favors.

Sexual exploitation consists of sexual contact between a religious and a person receiving pastoral care from him.

Sexual abuse is sexual contact between a religious and a minor or vulnerable adult.

Sexual exploitation or sexual abuse can include physical contact or actions such as:

- Sexual touch or other physical contact that makes the person being touched feel uncomfortable
- Giving a sexually-charged gift
- A prolonged hug when a brief hug is customary behavior
- Kissing on the lips when kissing on the cheek would be appropriate
- Showing sexually suggestive objects or pornography
- Sexual intercourse, anal, or oral sex.

Sexual exploitation or sexual abuse can also include verbal behavior such as:

- Innuendo or sexual talk
- Suggestive comments
- Descriptions of sexual experiences, fantasies, or conflicts
- Sexual propositions.

To be clear, the USA Camillian Delegation's stance is this: Sexual abuse of a minor by its Members, employees, and volunteers is contrary to Catholic morals, doctrine, and canon law. It is never acceptable. It is entirely the responsibility of the Member to maintain appropriate emotional and sexual boundaries with those with whom he works and/or serves.

How the USA Camillian Delegation Responds to Complaints of Sexual Misconduct

The USA Camillian Delegation responds to all allegations and reports of sexual abuse with great care. To ensure that we handle each report promptly, thoroughly, and compassionately, the Delegation has assigned a Survivor Assistance Coordinator who will listen to, understand, and offer help, including appropriate psychological counseling for those affected by sexual abuse by a Member.

The USA Camillian Delegation, through the Survivor Assistance Coordinator and independent investigators, will respond swiftly to evaluate and investigate any accusation of sexual abuse by a Member. The USA Camillian Delegation, consistent with the directives of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, has also established a Review Board. This interdisciplinary board of lay professionals advises the Institute on all matters related to sexual misconduct.

Any Member who has been found to have an established allegation of sexual abuse of a minor against him will be removed from ministry and placed under restrictions to ensure he does not have unsupervised access to minors.

Preventing Sexual Misconduct

In addition to establishing procedures for responding to sexual abuse, the USA Camillian Delegation has undertaken a series of measures to prevent future incidents of abuse. These include extensive mandatory psychological evaluations of candidates before they enter formation and the provision of continuing education programs for Members about issues of sexuality and personal conduct.

Conclusion

It is our firm belief that the Members of the USA Camillian Delegation must maintain appropriate boundaries with minors. We call upon those with knowledge of a Member's inappropriate behavior - whether past or present - to come forward with this information and prevent further harm. In short, we ask everyone to join with us to protect the safety of children, women, and men, and with firm determination, to promote healing where there is pain.

Where to Turn for Help

If you or someone you know believe that a Member has violated the boundaries outlined in this pamphlet, we urge you to report such behavior immediately to the USA Camillian Provincial Delegate and/or the Survivor Assistance Coordinator. Your case will be handled with the strictest sensitivity and confidentiality.

USA Camillian Delegation

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Survivor Assistance Coordinator
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IF YOU SUSPECT THAT A MINOR IS BEING ABUSED, REPORT IT DIRECTLY TO THE CIVIL AUTHORITIES. YOU CAN FIND STATE RELATED REPORTING INFORMATION AT www.childwelfare.gov.