



DECREE

In nomine Domini. Amen.

PROMULGATION OF THE DIOCESE OF BUFFALO ADULT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

I, the undersigned Most Reverend Michael W. Fisher, Bishop of the Diocese of Buffalo, hereby promulgate the Diocese of Buffalo Adult Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures (“Adult Policy”). The policy and procedures contained in this document and subsequent changes, additions, or amendments are considered particular law for the Diocese.

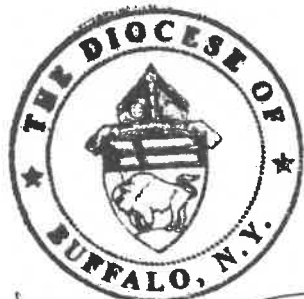
The current Adult Policy is a clarification and revision of a document by the same name which was issued on 17 September 2019. This document suffered from a certain lack of clarity and insufficient promulgation. To remedy these shortcomings, attempts had already been made to revise the 2019 document in February 2023. It was not until the Autumn of that year that serious progress was realized. A small group of Chancery personnel met to discuss the proposed revisions in October of 2023. On 1 May 2024, the Independent Review Board had the opportunity to comment and make suggestions on the revised document. That consultation led to minor changes to the draft. The draft was then presented to the Presbyteral Council on 14 May 2024. The Council did not raise any serious objections to the document but said that members would make comments as needed in the future. During the more than three months since that meeting, no comments have been received. Thus, cognizant of the need to fix the errors of the 2019 document, I have decided that the current Adult Policy is to be promulgated.

By the Adult Policy, all those who qualify as Public Ecclesial Ministers (defined in the document) in the Diocese of Buffalo are bound to these norms and procedures out of concern for the protection of adults who have been the victim of sexual misconduct. The Diocese is committed to justice for victims as well as those Public Ecclesial Ministers accused of crimes. The Lord reminds us, “If you remain in my word, you will truly be my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (Jn 8:31-32). Out of this confidence in the unburdening nature of the truth, the Diocese again commits itself to its pursuit of justice according to the norms laid out in the 1983 Code of Canon Law, other relevant of legislation, and this document.

The Adult Policy is to be published on the official website of the Diocese of Buffalo and notification of its publication provided to all Public Ecclesial Ministers and parishes located in the Diocese of Buffalo. Public Ecclesial Ministers are to review carefully the contents of the Adult Policy so that they may know what is expected of them in the course of their ministry.

The Adult Policy takes legislative effect on Tuesday 1 October 2024. As of that date, all prior procedures and norms that conflict with the contents of the Adult Policy are abrogated. Any changes, additions, or amendments will take effect on the date indicated in said policy. All universal law of the Church and particular law issued by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops remain in force. The Diocesan Bishop is the authentic interpreter of the Adult Policy.

Given at Buffalo, New York, on this 12th day of September, in the year of Our Lord 2024.



Michael W. Fisher
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Most Reverend Michael W. Fisher
Bishop of the Diocese of Buffalo

[Signature]

Ms. Melissa Potzler
Chancellor of the Diocese of Buffalo