

Diocese of Tyler  
Chancery Office

## **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

### *Charter Article 7 – Communications Policy*

The Diocese of Tyler Communications Plan reflects a commitment to disseminate timely and forthright information while respecting the dignity and rights of all. It provides avenues to publicize the *Charter* and the *Policy* in a proactive stance.

This structure is in place to openly address the issues of prevention of child abuse, protection of children and vulnerable persons, procedures for allegations, response to victims, and safe environment programs. These communications efforts extend to clergy, alleged victims and families, law enforcement, the Catholic community, general public, and the media when cases of alleged sexual abuse by clergy or church personnel have been received.

#### Promoting the *Charter* and *Policy*

1. Promote the existence of the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* and the *Diocese of Tyler Ethics and Integrity for Church Personnel* through diocesan media, including print, radio, and television when appropriate.
2. Use the diocesan website to provide instant information regarding the *Charter* and *Policy* and the *Diocese of Tyler Ethics and Integrity for Church Personnel* including contacting the Promoter of Justice.
3. Promote the *Charter* and *Policy* through secular press via news releases, interviews, press conferences and Q & A when appropriate.
4. Use diocesan media and secular press as avenues of reaching out to victims and to encourage those who have been abused to come forward.
5. Meet with editorial staffs of newspapers and broadcast outlets to familiarize each with the *Charter* and *Policy* and the *Diocese of Tyler Ethics and Integrity for Church Personnel* to answer questions when appropriate.
6. Provide the proper spokesperson for media interviews regarding this issue.

## Notification of Allegations

1. All communications regarding allegations of child abuse will follow the laws of the State of Texas while protecting the identity of the alleged victim and reflecting the confidential nature of the investigation.
2. Care will be taken to insure that the rights of the alleged abuser are not violated.
3. The Promoter of Justice and the victims assistance coordinator will be notified.

## Internal Communications

1. Notification to parishes, schools, priests, religious, lay employees and volunteers will be made through statements provided by the Chancery Office and approved by the bishop or his delegate.
2. All efforts will be made that the diocese “break” the story, allowing accurate and timely information communicated to our clergy, parishioners and communities.

## External Communications

1. All media inquiries will be directed to the proper spokesperson. No other diocesan employee will respond to media inquiries without prior approval of the bishop.
2. Every effort will be made to insure that all information is disseminated in a timely and appropriate manner to the secular press.
3. Respond to media inquiries with openness without jeopardizing aspects of the legal investigation/litigation or breaching elements of confidentiality for either the alleged victim or abuser.
4. Information regarding safe environment programs will be publicized to parishioners, parents and children, the general public and the media.

signed by Bishop Corrada, August 23, 2004

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The Most Reverend Alvaro Corrada del Rio, S.J.  
Bishop of Tyler

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Notary