

GUIDELINES CONCERNING SUPERVISION OF MINORS ON PARISH & SCHOOL TRIPS & OTHER OUTINGS

Diocese of Tucson

The following guidelines are intended for the use of parishes and schools. They should be adapted to fit local circumstances and incorporated into the supervisory policies of each parish and school.

These guidelines are intended to complement the

- Guidelines for the Prevention of and Response to Sexual Misconduct,
- Insurance Advisory Guidelines of the Department of Catholic Schools;
- Guidelines offered by the insurance carrier with respect to mitigation of any risks discussed herein.

Any apparent conflict with any of these documents should be brought to the attention of the appropriate diocesan office. The conflict should be resolved in the interests of optimal mitigation of risk to those served.

These guidelines are intended to offer direction to those who are responsible for the safety of children and youth during trips or other functions conducted as part of youth ministry, religious education or other educational programs, especially when those trips or functions involve an overnight stay. Types of groups would include retreats, sports tournaments, conventions and conferences, and recreational trips.

Independently operated organizations such as the Knights of Columbus or Scouting organizations, are subject to their own policies and procedures. There is an exception to the rule when any such group operates *de facto*, in general or for a particular event, as a parish or school ministry. In the latter circumstances, the organization in question must operate according to the safe environment program policies and procedures in effect at the parish.

The general guideline is that all events and outings, whether taking place within the boundaries of the diocese or outside its boundaries, must be carefully planned. The plan (which may be described as Standing Operating Procedures, or SOPs) should be written. The creation of the plan (or SOP) includes

- Assessing the risks inherent in the particular event;
- Insuring leadership by persons who have been screened and educated in the Safe Environment Program;
- Insuring that other adult chaperones are present in adequate numbers, screened, and appropriately trained and supervised;
- Limiting opportunity for isolated activity of any type among minors or between minors and adults;

- Recognizing and responding to the risks associated with the reduced supervision possible during the night hours,
- Enhancing accountability, with clear consequences for failure to follow the plan; and,
- Creating channels for feedback and correction if high risk behaviors of any type are observed.

The Diocese of Tucson strongly encourages having youth ministers and chaperones who are 21 years of age or older. Youth 18-20 years old may be used as aides under direct supervision of leaders and chaperones. Anyone providing transportation to others as part of a diocesan or parish function must be 25 years of age or older.

I. Authorization

1. All parish trips must have the approval, both for planning and implementation, of the pastor.
2. For all overnight trips and events, the parish must submit an SOP, using the Checklist to prepare the document, for review by the Department of Pastoral Services.
3. When event leaders (clergy, consecrated religious or lay) are brought into the Diocese of Tucson from another diocese, they must be made known to the Chancellor with sufficient time for the Chancellor to determine that the individual is in good standing with his or her home diocese, religious order or parish.

II. Chaperones

1. All chaperones should be screened for criminal history and educated in the Safe Environment Program (Code of Conduct). In addition, all chaperones should be educated in the SOP for the particular event, and actively supervised during the event by peers and leaders. Each chaperone should have a copy of the SOP.
2. Following are the guidelines for the number of chaperones. As a rule of thumb, the younger the children, the greater the number of adult chaperones required. The leader of the outing should not have a group of children or youth assigned him or her. The leader should remain free to check in with all groups and problem-solve as needed.

General

There should always be at least two chaperones, one of each gender if minors of both genders are present.

Parish Guidelines

Children: 2 adults for 1 to 12 children, 1 additional adult for each additional group of 1 to 6 children

Junior High: 2 adults for 1 to 16 youth, 1 additional adult per each additional group of 1 to 8 youth

Senior High: 2 adults for 1 to 20 youth, 1 additional adult per each additional group of 1 to 10 youth

School Guidelines

Grades K-2: 2 adults for 1 to 12 children, 1 additional adult for each additional group of 1 to 6 children

Grades 3-5: 2 adults for 1 to 20 youth, 1 additional adult per each additional group of 1 to 10 youth

Grades 6-12: 2 adults for 1 to 30 youth, 1 additional adult per each additional group of 1 to 15 youth

The above are minimum guidelines. We encourage that there be consideration of additional chaperones based on the age of participants and the location/nature of activity.

III. Liability and Medical Release and Request to Participate Form

1. Signed parental permission slips are required for all field trips involving minors. Forms may be obtained from the diocesan Department of Pastoral Services.
2. It is particularly important to be sure that appropriate releases have been signed by the parents, that parents understand clearly the risks and the plans to mitigate those risks, that any medical conditions and treatments are clearly communicated, and that there are clear procedures that will be followed in case of emergency.
3. Parents should have the opportunity to easily opt out on behalf of their children if they do not approve of any aspect of the trip or event.
4. Parents should be clearly notified of any last minute changes.
5. Youth ministers, religious educators or other coordinators should keep the signed permission slips on file for one year.
6. Any particular needs or conditions affecting the health or well being of a child or youth should be clearly communicated to the coordinator of the trip or function.
 - a. Emergency treatment forms, signed by the children's parents or guardians to authorize emergency medical treatment should be carried by the trip or event leader.
 - b. Such forms should include all health insurance policy numbers, physician contact information, and persons to contact in case of emergency.
 - c. Any medication that will be taken on the trip should be carefully described, as an addendum to the permission slip, in terms of type and regimen for administration.

IV. Transportation for trips greater than 50 miles one-way

1. It is preferred that chartered transportation be commercially provided by licensed and bonded carriers.
 - a. Carriers must submit evidence of insurance.
 - b. The reputation of the company must be reviewed by the appropriate diocesan office.
 - c. For a current list of preferred vendors, contact the Department of Property and Insurance at the Bishop Moreno Pastoral Center (520-792-3410)
2. Rental vehicles are less desirable than chartered transportation but more desirable than private vehicles.
 - a. Do not rent any vehicle larger than a vehicle designed for eight passengers. Anything larger will not be covered by the insurance of the Diocese.
 - b. Purchase the additional insurance through the rental company – you will need the Collision Damage Waiver – the other 2 options (Personal Accident Insurance & Supplemental Liability Protection) can be purchased at your discretion.

- c. Any adult volunteers or employees who drive the rental vehicles must be at least 25 years of age, possess a valid driver's license, have completed an application and undergone a reference check.
 - d. The reference check should be complemented by a review of the Driver Information Form.
 - e. If the individual will have independent access to minors, a criminal history background check must also have been done.
 - f. Contact the Department of Property and Insurance at the Bishop Moreno Pastoral Center (520-792-3410) for a current list of preferred vendors.
3. Privately owned vehicles are the least preferred method of transportation for trips over 50 miles each way.
- a. Drivers must be insured at the following minimum levels:
 - i. Bodily Injury Liability/each occurrence \$100,000 per person/\$300,000 limit per accident
 - ii. Property Damage Liability/each occurrence \$50,000
 - iii. Medical Payments/each person \$10,000
 - iv. Uninsured Motorist Bodily Injury Liability/each accident \$300,000
 - v. Uninsured Motorist Property Damage/each accident \$10,000
 - b. A copy of a current driver's license and insurance card must be on file with the parish or school and in the file, with permission slips, that goes with the leader.
 - c. Any adult volunteers or employees who drive their own vehicles with minors on board must be at least 25 years of age, possess a valid driver's license, have completed an application and undergone a reference check.
 - d. The reference check should be complemented by a review of the Driver Information Form.
 - e. If the individual will have independent access to minors, a criminal history background check must also have been done.
4. The ideal situation is one in which two adults are in a car with two or more minors.
- a. If only one driver is available, then there should be a minimum of two minors in the car.
 - b. There must never be a situation in which there is only one adult and one minor.
 - c. For that reason, there must be a common pickup and drop off point for all minors to avoid any situation in which an adult is left one-on-one with a minor.
 - d. Minors should be released only to a parent/guardian or to another person who has been given explicit permission to take custody of the minors by the parent/guardian.
5. Large groups will require more than one vehicle. When vehicles are traveling in a group, there is a tendency to take risks in order to keep up with the cars ahead. Therefore, when more than one vehicle is used to transport participants, the following points must be complied with.
- a. All drivers must have written directions and should be familiar with the route and the area to which they will be traveling.
 - b. There should be a method of communication should cars become separated.
6. On long trips, a relief driver must be available at least every eight hours. All drivers should have adequate rest before and after travel.
7. Head counts are required before leaving any location.

8. Cars, mini-vans and buses must not exceed the passenger load. All passengers must have a seat; seat belt laws are to be observed at all times.
9. No weapons are to be carried in any vehicle at any time.
10. Nothing in these guidelines should be used to contradict the guidelines offered by the insurer with regard to safety and mitigation of potential liability as concerns transportation of minors.
11. For more information on any aspect of this section, call the Department of Property and Insurance at the Bishop Moreno Pastoral Center (520-792-3410).

V. General Sleeping and Bath Accommodations

1. The preferred sleeping arrangements are such that adult chaperones and minors do not share the same rooms.
2. In a large dorm-like situation, in which minors are segregated by gender, adult chaperones of the same gender as the minors may be housed in the same room with minors provided that at least two adult chaperones and at least four minors are assigned to the dorm. All adult chaperones must have undergone safe environment education and the criminal history background check.
3. In situations where males and females share a common large room (example: a parish hall), care is to be taken to segregate minors by gender. A sufficient number of chaperones should be provided on a rotating schedule to provide constant supervision and always with two or more adults awake.
4. Clear plans must be made for supervision of minors by pairs of adult chaperones during the night hours.
5. There is to be no co-ed sleeping in tents or hotel rooms.
6. Chaperones are not to use a community shower with minors, nor should a chaperone be in any state of undress except in the privacy of his or her room.
7. Clothes changing or showering by minors is not to be supervised by a lone chaperone and never by a chaperone of the opposite gender. All adults and chaperones must understand that extreme caution must be exercised at these times so that no actions, words, stares, or touches have the potential for misinterpretation.
8. When minors are using toilets, adults or chaperones should not be in the same room.
9. In the case of public restrooms, adult chaperones should be in the vicinity of the restroom to monitor the coming and going of the students and to be available in case of emergency.
10. Any necessary disciplinary actions are to be carried out after the minor has had the time to be properly dressed and must take place outside of changing, washing or toilet areas.
11. Conversations with minors must always be conducted only when the minors and adults are properly dressed.
12. For more detailed information on hotel (retreat center) and camping accommodation recommendations, see the subsequent sections

VI. Outdoor Camping

1. It is strongly recommended that tents that can accommodate large numbers be used whenever possible. This will allow for better supervision.
2. There is to be no co-ed sleeping in tents.
3. Adults or chaperones are not to sleep in a tent alone with a minor, except when the minor is the adult or chaperone's own child.

4. In the event that outdoor camping is held without tents, there must be enough chaperones available so that at least two chaperones remain awake throughout the night to ensure the safety of the group.

VII. Hotel Rooms

1. Care is to be taken when booking hotels for groups. A request must be made upon making reservations that, if possible, all of the rooms be on the same floor in the hotel, in close proximity.
2. All rooms must be checked by the trip coordinator before assigning them to groups to avoid males and females having adjoining doors. Adjoining rooms should only be shared by minors of the same gender.
3. No minor is to be allowed to leave the hotel property or go swimming in the hotel's pool or use the whirlpool or the hotel's exercise room without two adults supervising.
4. Children in the 5th grade or younger require at least two chaperones stationed in the hotel room. Older children and youth require chaperones in the hall overnight to prevent egress.
5. Minors must always be informed and reminded of safety rules and security measures.
6. Chaperones must have room keys at all times for minors' rooms and it is recommended that the chaperone monitor rooms periodically; however, chaperones must conduct such monitoring in pairs.
7. If adults and minors are housed in the same room, there should be a minimum of two adults and two minors in the room, excepting families staying together.
8. Clear plans must be made for supervision of minors by pairs of adult chaperones during the night hours.

VIII. Other Accommodations

1. No minors may spend the night with a lone adult chaperone or enter the private living quarters of an adult chaperone except when the minor and adult are part of the same immediate family.
2. No minors may enter the private living quarters of any clergy or spend the night in a rectory except when accompanied by their parents and part of the same immediate family as the priest or deacon.

IX. Miscellaneous

1. Caution must be taken when viewing any movies that may contain any violence or sexually explicit content. All movies are to be screened and approved by an adult or chaperone before minors view them.
2. All prescription medications must be in the original containers and must remain in the care of and be handed out by an adult or chaperone. Children and youth must be able to self-administer any medication. **Parental permission slips must be checked before dispensing any medication.**
3. Parents must sign a waiver allowing their child or youth to self-administer medications. Information regarding the name, type and regimen for administration must be attached to the permission form.
4. A waiver is also required before any over-the-counter medications can be offered. This will include common medication such as Tylenol, ibuprofen, Neosporin, Tums, and the like.

X. Adults and Chaperones—Education and Screening

1. All regular volunteers, all employees and all clergy will have a current criminal history background check and have received safe environment education within the last year.
2. All personnel must be educated in the “Standing Operating Procedures” in effect for the trip or event. Written materials should supplement the oral presentation. The trip leader and other supervising personnel should be clearly designated. An Attestation should be created for personnel to sign, acknowledging that this training has been received and understood.
3. On any trip that involves an overnight stay, change of clothes, showers and for any event in which strong emotional reactions on the part of the minors can be anticipated, a higher proportion of adults to minors is recommended.
4. All adults and chaperones should lead by example, following as much as possible the same rules given to minors (for example, no alcohol consumption).
5. Adults and chaperones are strongly encouraged to refrain from smoking while in the presence of minors.
6. Adults or chaperones shall not at any time purchase questionable or illegal items for a minor (examples: cigarettes, alcohol, drugs, weapons, condoms, and sexually-suggestive materials) and shall report the possession and/or attempt to sell these items to the trip or event leader.
7. The pastor or principal, or his or her delegate, must clear all chaperones of each individual event.
8. No adult who has been convicted of or is undergoing legal prosecution for any criminal act involving sexual misconduct with a minor is to be allowed to chaperone any minors or to serve or minister in any other capacity in the church or school.

XI. Behavior of Minors

1. A Code of Conduct for minors should be created or adapted for the outing or other event.
2. All minors will be clearly instructed in the Code of Conduct and other rules pertaining to their behavior during the outing or other event.
3. When traveling out of town, emergency cards must be provided for each participant with the names of leaders, hotel name (if any), and telephone numbers, including mobile phones.

XII. Notifications

1. Contact the Property & Insurance Office at least 45 days prior to a trip or event to request insurance certificates or to obtain additional coverage.
2. An approved SOP for the trip or event will be required before insurance certificates will be given.
3. A clear itinerary with contact information is to be left with the pastor or principal prior to departure.
4. Trip leaders and chaperones are encouraged to carry beepers or mobile phones on trips, in case of emergency.
5. A detailed list of all participants and chaperones, including the telephone numbers of chaperones, and a list of parents/guardians to be contacted in the case of emergency during the trip or event must be left with the school, parish, or agency sponsoring the trip or other event away from the parish or school.

6. The pastor or principal are to be notified immediately of any major accident or disciplinary issue that may arise during the trip. The pastor or principal shall immediately notify the appropriate diocesan personnel.
7. If there is an incident involving injury or an incident that required a report to law enforcement, a report must be submitted to Property & Insurance by the end of the first business day following the incident.

XIII. Reference Documents

1. *Youth Code of Conduct (Participants)*
2. *Activity Waiver and Release Form (Parent)*
3. Health Information
 - a. *Health and Emergency Information Form*
 - b. *Youth Medication Administration Form*
4. *Checklist for a Trip off Church Property (steps in creating an SOP).*
5. *Insurance Advisory Guidelines—School Handbook*
 - a. Overnight or out-of-area activities
 - b. Transportation
 - c. Supervision of activities involving persons under 18
 - d. Driver Information Form
 - e. Field Trip – Parent Request Form
6. *Driver Information Form*
7. Chaperones
 - a. *Code of Conduct*
 - b. *Adult Accident Waiver and Release of Liability Form*
8. Incident Report Form
 - a. *General Liability Incident Form (Non-Automobile)*
 - b. *Property Incident Report (Non Automobile)*
 - c. *Automobile Liability Incident Report*

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