

Handling cases of suspected sexual abuse



FOR THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF OSLO
AND FOR THE ROMAN CATHOLIC PRELATURE OF TRONDHEIM

*Procedures when ecclesiastical employees
are suspected of or are guilty of sexual conduct
that is inappropriate and/or deviant*



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20 FEBRUARY, 2020



About the guidelines

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Oslo and the Roman Catholic Prelature of Trondheim are hereby given binding guidelines aimed at ensuring that cases of sexual abuse or violations involving a priest, deacon, member of the order, or employee or volunteer in the service of the Church, are handled consistently and competently. The guidelines are primarily designed to cover cases involving children and young people (those under the age of 18 according to Canon Law), and vulnerable adults. These groups deserve particular protection, according to Canon Law and Norwegian criminal law. However, the guidelines must be followed in the event of any kind of sexual conduct by an ecclesiastical employee that is inappropriate and/or deviant. The mandate of the Professional Ethics Council covers any kind of cases.

The Church has prepared a pamphlet providing concise information about the guidelines, as well as the details of the people who may be contacted by anyone learning of or suspecting that abuse has taken place. This pamphlet will also be available in all the Catholic parishes in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Oslo (the RCDO) and the Roman Catholic Prelature of Trondheim.



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Background

The Emergency Response Plan for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Oslo, which established procedures for when ecclesiastical employees are suspected of, or are guilty of sexual abuse or sexual conduct that are inappropriate and/or deviant, was promulgated by Bishop Gerhard Schwenzer SS. CC. on 17 February 2003. The plan thereby came into effect and has been used since that date.

The Emergency Response Plan aimed at ensuring that the Diocese/the Prelature have proper procedures in place on how to handle cases, and clear information guidelines in the event of an ecclesiastical employee being suspected of sexual abuse or sexual conduct that are inappropriate and/or deviant.

In 2010, when it became known that the former Bishop of the Roman Catholic Prelature of Trondheim had been removed from his post because he had committed sexual abuse, this received widespread coverage by all the media. As a result, the RCDO and the Professional Ethics Council were contacted by numerous people reporting sexual abuse or violations, or who suspected that such conduct had taken place. The incidents they reported dated as far back as 60 years. The reports were handled by the Bishop and the Professional Ethics Council on the basis of the Emergency Response Plan in effect at the time. The experiences from these cases showed that there were areas in which the plan could be improved. These were taken into consideration in the current revision.

The Emergency Response Plan, which was adopted by the RCDO, was also ratified on 29 March 2010 by Bishop Bernt Eidsvig, as the Apostolic Administrator of the Roman Catholic Prelature of Trondheim, for use by the Roman Catholic Prelature of Trondheim. The North Norway Prelature has later established their own guidelines, on how to handle cases of sexual abuse committed by ecclesiastical employees (General Decree promulgated by Bishop Berislav Grgić on 20 June 2011).

On 3 May 2011, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith published a circular letter intended to guide the Bishops' Conferences in their work with guidelines on how to handle cases of sexual abuse of minors. Because the Nordic Bishops' Conference covers five countries, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith was asked whether each of the conference's dioceses could prepare their own plan. Permission to do this was granted.

In the previous revision, one of the goals was to abbreviate and simplify the plan, which is very extensive, detailed and partly difficult to read. Experience also shows that few of the Church's members are familiar with it. One of the main steps was to remove the appendices on expert literature and Norwegian legislation. Both are out of date, and not in fact necessary. The appendix on current provisions under Canon Law has been updated.

The paragraph on preventing abuse is no longer included. This is a vast and difficult subject that the Church continues to discuss. It was also the subject of the summit meeting held by the Pope at the end of February 2019. The subject is so important that it deserves its own booklet. An expert group has therefore been appointed and tasked with preparing such a guideline booklet for our diocese.

Now that the paragraph on prevention has been taken out for separate consideration, it is no longer pertinent to call the prevention booklet an “Emergency Response Plan”. It contains concise and helpful guidelines on how to handle cases of suspected sexual conduct by an ecclesiastical employee that is inappropriate and/or deviant.

1. The Church's responsibility to protect the integrity of the person

“The sexual abuse of minors by persons of the clergy is seriously incompatible with the *Evangelium Vitae*”, said Pope Benedict XVI in his meeting with the American bishops in 2008. We could use even stronger wording – such abuse is destructive, and cannot be tolerated. In the worst cases, the sufferings inflicted on young people may stay with them for the rest of their life. Furthermore, abuse perpetrated by clerical or ecclesiastical figures of trust always represents a gross breach of trust. Priests, catechists and members of the order have an unambiguous mandate: To live and teach in accordance with the Gospel. It is difficult to imagine anything more incompatible with Christ's message than sexual abuse, particularly against minors, but also against vulnerable adults.

We are all created in God's image, and thereby have an inviolate value. An abuse is an action that is inappropriate or deviant, threatens a person's integrity and inflicts physical, mental, and spiritual injury. It is about so much more than a breach of the sixth commandment. The words of the Gospel, “Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me” (Matthew 25:40b), are clear and cannot be interpreted away.

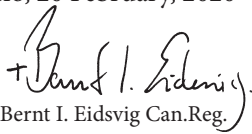
Anyone who finds out that a sexual violation has taken place in an ecclesiastical context has a moral duty to report this. The Church instructs its clergy to do this. If anyone – priest or bishop – conceals such an abuse, that person also becomes partly guilty.

A circular letter dated 3 May, 2011 from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith made it clear that the Bishop's guidelines for handling the sexual abuse of minors were also intended to cover what can and should be done to prevent and preclude abuse and violation. This preventive work is an absolutely key pastoral task of the Church. However, we know that such abuse can occur, despite our efforts. It then becomes the Church's task to lessen the damage to the victim and ensure that the abuser does not commit any further offences. “We must all make a clear and bold commitment to ensuring that all people, particularly children, who are among the most vulnerable groups, are defended and protected at all times”, said Pope Francis in the Angelus Prayer of 5 May 2019.

It is painful for us to be confronted with abuse, even in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Oslo and the Roman Catholic Prelature of Trondheim. We want to do our utmost to prevent such things from happening again. However, should they occur, despite our efforts, we must do everything in our power to alleviate the pain and repair the damage inflicted on the victim. Victims shall be offered all the professional and spiritual help that it is possible to give them.

The Church shall be a safe place for everyone. Any sexual conduct that is inappropriate and/or deviant is unacceptable. Preventing and alleviating pain inflicted by such conduct is a continuous process. We will never stop adapting and improving our procedures and will offer as much help as possible to anyone who may come into contact with such cases. These guidelines on how to process cases are an attempt to ensure this and are effective from today's date for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Oslo and the Roman Catholic Prelature of Trondheim.

Oslo, 20 February, 2020


+ Bernt I. Eidsvig Can.Reg.
Bishop

2. Terminology used in these guidelines

2.1 What do we mean by “sexual violation” or “sexual abuse”?

The definition of the terms “sexual violation” or “sexual abuse” and how we use these terms can vary in different contexts.

In our ecclesiastical context, it is enough to define sexual violation or sexual abuse as an infringement of another person’s intimacy boundary, whether this is through exploiting a position of power or through threatening or violent behaviour.

Anything to do with child pornography is also considered to constitute the sexual abuse of minors.

2.2 Other terms used in the plan

The term “victim” is used in the plan to mean anyone who says they have been subject to a sexual violation or abuse. “The violator” or “abuser” is then the person who has committed or is suspected of having committed such violation or abuse.

“Children” is used to describe people under the age of 18. This is in accordance with Canon Law’s term “minors”, which describes persons under the age of 18.

A “vulnerable person” means a person over the age of 18 who, temporarily or permanently, has insufficient ability or judgement to take care of themselves. We must emphasise here that if the sexual violation occurred in conjunction with threatening or violent behaviour, the victim may naturally be a person of normal judgement and maturity.

“Ecclesiastical context” essentially means all bodies and services associated with the Church: Diocese/prelature, parish, religious community and Catholic organisations.

Separate rules apply to Catholic schools, and these are enshrined in the Independent Schools Act and each school’s regulations. All the schools shall have emergency response plans in place, that are aimed at detecting any potential abuse of children. The head teacher is responsible for ensuring that the plans are complied with.

“Cleric” means bishop, priest, deacon or ordinary members of the religious community. Note that separate rules apply to the handling of cases involving bishops. These cases must go through the Nunciature.

“Lay person” means anyone who is not a cleric. Members of female religious communities and unordained members of male religious communities are also classed as lay persons.

“Contact person” means a person appointed to receive reports of sexual violation which may have taken place in an ecclesiastical context, and who is responsible for bringing information about these to the bodies that will then deal with the cases.

“Support person” means a person appointed to support, respectively, the suspected violator and the victim. Support will take various forms, depending on the needs of the affected party.

3. The Church's principles and obligations

The RCDO and the Roman Catholic Prelature of Trondheim are bound by the following principles:

1. The Church shall be a safe place for everyone. We shall actively prevent abuse in any ecclesiastical context and create a culture in which it is safe and easy to report abuse.

Anyone with responsibility, or in a position of leadership or other ecclesiastical role, shall act and express themselves clearly and unambiguously, in order to ensure that possible victims of sexual abuse have the courage to come forward with their stories.

2. We shall differentiate between forgiveness and consequences. Any forgiveness granted will not affect the consequences of abuse. If any abuse has taken place, the Church will do everything in its power to ensure that the abuser is met with sanctions that are appropriate to the case, in accordance with Canon Law and/or criminal law, and that ensure that the abuse will not be repeated, and that the victim receives any necessary help and reparation.

3. We shall take care of the parties involved and ensure that the case is handled professionally. Even if no decision has been made on the question of guilt, and no matter what the case, the Bishop may limit the suspected violator's ecclesiastical service until the matter has been clarified, if necessary, with a sentence.

4. If there is any suspicion of a criminal offence, it is a clear and general rule that this shall be reported to the police or prosecuting authority as soon as possible, and if necessary, these will initiate ordinary criminal proceedings. Even if it is deemed that a case's legal limitation period has expired, the mat-

ter shall still be reported. When we handle a case, we shall ensure that we do this with humanity and care, and we shall take into account the fact that the suspected violator and the victim are both in an extremely vulnerable situation.¹

5. We will take any necessary steps to fully restore the good name and reputation of the suspect, if he or she has been wrongly accused of committing sexual abuse.²

6. We shall offer help and care to the person who believes that they have been violated, and their family, even beyond the initial period of the case being reported. If anyone experiences difficulties with their faith as a result of this, we will treat them with humility, sensitivity and respect.

7. We shall also help the suspected violator on a spiritual and emotional level. This applies irrespective of the outcome of the case. The Church's message of love and forgiveness also applies to people who have committed sexual violations. This means that they can be helped to work towards resolution and renewal in their life – which will be impossible unless they take full responsibility for their actions. However, it does not mean that they will be able to continue in their ecclesiastical position. This depends primarily on the severity of the case.

1 Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith circular letter dated 3 May, 2011, l, d), 3.

2 Cf. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith circular letter dated 3 May, 2011, l, d), 3.

4. Procedures and bodies involved in handling a case

The following section provides guidelines on how a reported case is to be handled, and which bodies will be involved.

4.1 The Bishop's duty to initiate investigations in accordance with the procedures for handling cases of abuse in the Church.

In his diocese, the Bishop has what Canon Law calls the "governing authority". On the basis of his governing prerogative, the Bishop shall intervene in cases of sexual abuse and suspected sexual abuse.

If the Bishop receives information that abuse may have taken place, Canon Law requires that he personally, or through another person, discreetly investigates the factual circumstances about which he has been informed. In our Church, the Bishop will be assisted in this by the Professional Ethics Council (cf. 4.3).

The Bishop and the Professional Ethics Council shall jointly appoint a case manager for each case. This may, but does not have to be, one of the members of the Professional Ethics Council. The case manager shall assist the Professional Ethics Council with the practical aspects of handling the case.

4.1.1. Suspicion of offences deemed criminal by Norwegian legislation.

If the Bishop's investigations, assisted by the Professional Ethics Council if necessary, lead to a suspicion that an ecclesiastical employee may have been guilty of criminal abuse, it is a clear general rule that the police must be informed of this as soon as possible. This applies even if the legal limita-

tion period of the offence may have expired. Such abuse means criminal offences that are subject to unconditional public prosecution. This means that the opinion of the victim or their relatives does not have a bearing on whether the prosecuting authority will decide to investigate the case. It also means that any person who becomes aware that an offence has been committed by an ecclesiastical employee may report this to the police. However, it would normally be appropriate to consult the Bishop or the Professional Ethics Council before taking such a step.

If, after conferring with the Professional Ethics Council, the Bishop wishes to report a possible criminal offence, it may be appropriate to talk to the victim or their relatives first. If these persons refuse to support reporting the matter, perhaps because they are worried about publicity, they should be informed that a criminal investigation, and court proceedings if necessary, will provide the best guarantee that all the aspects of the case will be brought to light. The interests of the victim will largely be safeguarded in such a process, and he or she will be assisted by lawyers. Anonymity will be guaranteed throughout the process. It must be explained to the victim that a legal process that also safeguards the rights of the accused is the only approach that can give the secular community full confidence that there will be appropriate and fair closure to the case. In the long term, this will also be in the interests of the victim.

When the police have been given a case to investigate against an ecclesiastical employee, regardless of whether the matter was reported to them or not, it is important for the ecclesiastical bodies and personnel to cooperate with the police in order to clear up the matter. This is important both in or-

der to have sentence passed if the person is guilty, but also to ensure that the person is acquitted if they are innocent. In order to ensure that this cooperation is effective, the Church must give the police access to any internal documents that may shed light on the case. For example, this may involve any disciplinary proceedings against the suspect under Canon Law, or simply documents in a case in which there have been notifications of concern of inappropriate conduct by an ecclesiastical employee. It may also involve documentation showing that the person reporting the matter has previously submitted false reports. Good cooperation with the police also requires witnesses to be willing to make statements, and for their statements to be as complete and truthful as possible. It goes without saying that under no circumstances shall information imparted in confession or other spiritual discussions be passed on to the police.

Even if a case has been reported to the police, and the prosecuting authority has launched an investigation, this does not prevent proceedings under Canon Law that will investigate the same matter. However, the proceedings under Canon Law will not normally conclude before the ordinary legal proceedings have come to an end, with a legally enforceable judgement if necessary.

4.1.2 Proceedings under Canon Law for different categories of suspects:

4.1.2.1. The suspect is a cleric (ecclesiastical)

The Church has deemed it necessary to give the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith authority in all abuse cases involving young people under the age of 18 or particularly vulnerable adults, in which the suspect is a cleric. The Bishop undertakes the initial investigation. If this shows that abuse may have taken place, he shall forward the case

to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

Once the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has received the case, it decides how this should be further dealt with: by the Bishop or by the Congregation. If the Congregation decides that the case should be dealt with locally, the Bishop will receive instructions on the procedure and how the case is to be handled.

Canon Law recognises two possible ways in which a case may be handled: legal (where an ecclesiastical tribunal rules on the case), or administrative, where the Bishop, as the superior of the priest according to Canon Law, makes a decision on the case. The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith decides whether a case will be handled legally or administratively. If the suspect is an ordained priest or deacon, in some cases the head of their order will have the necessary authority to initiate the initial investigation. However, the responsibilities and authority of the Bishop continue to apply in all cases concerning the parishes and the pastoral life of the diocese.

Please refer to Appendix I regarding Canon Law, which shows the provisions that regulate these aspects of Canon Law.

If the suspicion involves a member of the order, and if the head of the order so desires, the Bishop may consent to allow the Professional Ethics Council and the RC-DO's information department to assist the order wherever this is deemed necessary or appropriate.

4.1.2.2. The suspect is a lay person

The Bishop will have no powers of sanction when the suspect is a lay person outside the service of the Church. If the lay person has a function in the Church (but is not an employee), naturally they may be removed from this service. If the suspicion proves to be credible, the suspect shall be removed

from all their positions of office or functions in the Church. If the suspect is an employee, the employer will be responsible within the framework stipulated by the Working Environment Act and Canon Law. If the suspect is a member of the order (not a cleric), the Bishop and the suspect's superior shall jointly handle the case.

Irrespective of whether the suspect is an ecclesiastical or a lay person, the victim may use the Church's support apparatus, as outlined in this plan.

4.2 Contact persons and the Professional Ethics Council

4.2.1 Contact persons

The Bishop shall appoint at least two separate, suitable contact persons in each of the dioceses. There shall be at least one male and one female contact person in each diocese, and one of the contact persons may be a priest if desired. The contact persons are appointed for a term of four years and may be reappointed.

The contact persons shall be easily accessible, by phone and/or email, and the necessary information about how to contact them shall be published on katolsk.no. A special pamphlet has also been prepared: *"What should I do if I suspect that sexual abuse has been committed by an ecclesiastical employee?"* The dioceses, parishes, orders, and ecclesiastical institutions all share the responsibility of displaying this information and ensuring that it is available.

The contact persons are there to listen to anyone who contacts them, and are responsible for passing on the information they receive to the bodies that will then deal with the case.

Anyone who finds out that a sexual violation may have taken place in an ecclesiastical context has a moral duty to report this. If this

knowledge is obtained by a priest or deacon, he must report the matter. Notifications of concern or suspicion shall be reported via a contact person or directly to the Bishop. If the contact person is the first person to be contacted, he or she shall inform the Bishop and the Professional Ethics Council.

If the Bishop is the first person to be contacted, he shall convene the Professional Ethics Council, so that they may jointly decide on how to deal with the case.

The contact persons shall be present when cases are discussed by the Professional Ethics Council in order to pass on the information they have received, or whenever it is deemed advisable.

Please refer also to the separate instructions for contact persons in Appendix II.

4.2.2. Professional Ethics Council

The Bishop appoints a Professional Ethics Council whose members shall include a minimum of one psychologist/psychiatrist, one priest or deacon and one lawyer. The Council shall also obtain external assistance when necessary. At least one of the members shall be a woman.

The Professional Ethics Council shall have a term of office of four years, and the members may be reappointed. Every effort should be made to avoid replacing all the members of the Council at the same time. It is important for the Council to retain continuity of experience and knowledge.

Even if there are no specific cases, the Council shall meet at least twice a year. The purpose of this is to ensure that the members keep themselves up-to-date about this field and discuss national and international developments.

New members shall be informed of the status of any ongoing cases and shall receive any other information that is relevant to the

performance of the Council's assignments, for example information about how previous cases were handled.

When a complaint has been received, the Professional Ethics Council evaluates it and ensures that the guidelines are complied with when the case is dealt with. The Professional Ethics Council shall receive all the information about a case. The Bishop and the Professional Ethics Council are jointly responsible for ensuring that a case is handled in accordance with the guidelines.

If the suspect is a cleric (ecclesiastical), it is possible that the case may also fall within the jurisdiction of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, even if the victim is over the age of 18, cf. Section 4.1.2 above. This applies if the victim falls under the category of "particularly vulnerable adult". The responsibility for evaluating whether this applies to a particular case rests locally with the diocese/the prelatore. In such cases, the Professional Ethics Council and Bishop shall jointly obtain the expert assistance they deem necessary. Even if the case may fall under the jurisdiction of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, there is nothing to prevent the case being reported to the police or prosecuting authority when this is so dictated by these guidelines.

The Professional Ethics Council shall also have an advisory role in the diocese/the prelatore with regard to psychological, legal, social, moral and theological questions relating to sexual abuse. Members of the members of the Professional Ethics Council shall assist with expert knowledge in the training and continuing education of priests, deacons and ecclesiastical employees.

4.3. Support persons for the victim, suspect and affected parish/workplace

If necessary, the Bishop and the Professional Ethics Council shall jointly appoint support

persons for the parties involved. A support person shall be a person suited to the task, i.e., they shall have the necessary professional and personal skills. The same person cannot act as a support person for both parties. The support person shall be someone that the party concerned can trust.

The support person shall be attentive to the needs of the party concerned and shall pass on that party's wishes and needs to the Professional Ethics Council. Family members or contact persons should not normally be support persons.

One of the roles of the Professional Ethics Council is to guide support persons.

4.4 Therapeutic assistance / spiritual guidance

The Church has a responsibility to look after those involved as well as possible, even while the matter is the subject of a police or canonical investigation.

It is the responsibility of the Professional Ethics Council to ensure that the victim and the abuser are both offered adequate professional assistance. If the costs of such assistance are not covered by the state, it is possible to apply to the diocese/the prelatore for financial assistance.

In an abuse case, the parish or the workplace may feel that they have been betrayed. Other than the factual information, there may be a need for special diaconal care in the wake of this kind of case. The Bishop, in consultation with the Professional Ethics Council and parish, shall assess what can be done to address such a need.

4.5 Reparation

If it has been sufficiently proven that abuse has taken place, various forms of reparation may be considered. They may be in the form of an *ex gratia* payment and a formal apology from the ecclesiastical authorities. After

consulting the Professional Ethics Council, and on a case-by-case basis, the Bishop shall decide whether reparation shall be offered. If the case goes through the legal system and ends in the conviction of the abuser, then depending on the circumstances, the victim will also be awarded compensation (reparation) by the court. Special government compensation schemes may also apply. The victim shall be informed about these.

4.6 Duty of confidentiality

Everyone who, in an ecclesiastical context, participates in handling a case concerning sexual abuse has a duty of confidentiality about everything that they may learn in connection with this.

Depending on the circumstances, the duty of confidentiality may be abrogated if consent has been obtained from the owner of the information, which as a rule means the victim or other persons reporting the matter.

4.7 Conclusion of cases, filing and destruction of material

Every case must be dealt with in writing, and every one must be formally concluded; this also includes simple enquiries. All written, confidential material in cases concerning sexual abuse shall be filed in the Bishop's archive, and stored and handled in accordance with the provisions of Canon Law. This also applies to the destruction of case material.

5. Information and communication

5.1 Good-quality, factual information can help to prevent the spread of rumours, unnecessary uncertainty and speculation.

Data protection considerations must always be weighed up against any need for information. Consent must be obtained if confidential information is to be divulged.

It is vital to clarify who needs information about what and differentiated information may be divulged. On the basis of their role or connection to a case, some people need more information than others.

Mainly, those who may need information are the victim, possibly their families, and the suspect.

If the case involves a possible criminal offence which means that the matter has been reported to the police, it is important to allow the police to control the information that is given to the parties involved. This is dictated by considerations of the investigation, which means that the ecclesiastical bodies, including the Professional Ethics Council, should adopt a passive attitude and consult with the police before allowing any enquiries from the parties involved in the case to lead to further contact and conversations.

If the matter is not investigated by the police, the ecclesiastical bodies are free to control the information divulged while the case is being handled. The parties involved in the case, who will usually be invited to talk to the Bishop and/or the Professional Ethics Council, will naturally be informed of the case procedure, the Church's stance on sexual abuse, their rights, their options for spiritual guidance and the appointment of

a support person, or persons to whom they may talk in the continuing process.

5.2 Information shared between the diocese/the prelatute and religious communities

If a member of a religious community is suspected of abuse, that member's local and regional superiors shall be informed about the matter immediately. Wherever possible, the superiors shall participate in clarifying what lies behind the suspicion, and in monitoring any further developments.

5.3 Information shared with other dioceses

If the suspect is a secular priest who has been in the service of other dioceses, the bishop shall inform these dioceses.

If the suspect is a member of the order and has been in the service of other dioceses, this information shall be shared in consultation with the superior(s) of the order.

If there should be a notification of concern or complaint against a priest in a different diocese, whether in Norway or abroad, that priest's ordinary or superior shall be informed. A copy of the letter sent to the ordinary or superior shall also be sent to the Nunciature of the relevant country via the Nunciature in Stockholm.

5.4 Information shared with the affected parish/workplace

If the suspect is not a pastor, the Bishop shall investigate him. If the suspect is a pastor, the Bishop, in consultation with the Professional Ethics Council, shall assess which infor-

mation the various parties in the parish shall be given.

In other cases, the Bishop and the Professional Ethics Council assess whether the parish or workplace shall be given information, and what information they shall be given.

The guardians of children and young people who have participated in situations in which it is feared that abuse may have occurred, or did occur, will need and will be entitled to different information than other members of the parish. In cases that are so serious that the matter has been reported to the police, these parties should, in consultation with the police, be invited to discuss the matter. In particular, it may be necessary to talk about what the parents' and other guardians' conduct should be towards the accused and the victim in the situation that has arisen.

5.5 Information shared with the media

Media attention in a case of abuse can be particularly stressful for the victim and their family, for the suspect and the people close to them, and for the parish. It is therefore important to have professionals to deal with the media if a case should become public.

The Church generally wishes to strive for openness, but the nature of each case must be considered carefully in terms of how much information is given to the public.

Protecting the victim or the person who has reported the case, the risk that the suspect may be pre-judged, and the suspect's need for due process are matters that must be addressed in every case. Considerations of data protection must be prioritised, but the Church should still strive to aim for the ideal of openness.

Worries about how the Church may appear must never determine whether a case is made public or whether the Church should

comment on it. In cases where, out of pastoral concerns and after consulting the victim, the decision is made not to make a case public, staff must nevertheless prepare for the eventuality that the matter could become publicly known.

The RCDO's press contact shall be informed about a case in the diocese as soon as possible, and shall work with the Bishop and the Professional Ethics Council to prepare a media management strategy. The press contact shall be kept up to date about the case, and shall both guide and be guided by the Bishop and the Professional Ethics Council.

Depending on the circumstances, the RCDO's press contact may also assist other dioceses in cases of abuse. The RCDO's press contact is generally available to provide local guidance wherever this may be required.

In exceptional cases, if the Church considers it appropriate to make a case public, every effort should be made to inform all the parties involved beforehand.

APPENDIX I – BISHOP’S DECREE

Decree

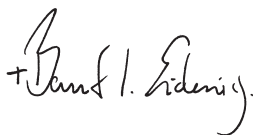
Ratification of the arrangement with the Professional Ethics Council in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Oslo and the Roman Catholic Prelature of Trondheim

I undertake as the Bishop, personally or through another suitable person, to discreetly investigate notifications of concern and complaints of sexual violation (cf. canon 1717 § 1 of the CIC (Code of Canon Law)). Since 17 February, 2003, it has been the task of the Professional Ethics Council in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Oslo to provide the Bishop with assistance in handling such cases and taking care of the parties involved. The Council has also assisted the Roman Catholic Prelature of Trondheim since 29 March 2010.

By virtue of its professional expertise, since the Professional Ethics Council has shown its ability to ensure that such cases are handled thoroughly and appropriately, I have decided to ratify the function of the Professional Ethics Council, and hereby give the Council the following mandate:

1. In accordance with canon 1717 § 1 of the CIC, the Professional Ethics Council shall assist the Roman Catholic Diocese of Oslo and the Roman Catholic Prelature of Trondheim with the handling of cases in which an ecclesiastical employee is suspected of or is guilty of sexual violations, pursuant to the definition of such violations in the guidelines applicable at any given time to the handling of cases of abuse.
2. The Professional Ethics Council shall work in accordance with the ratified guidelines for the handling of cases of abuse and shall ensure that the procedures are followed.
3. The mandate of the Professional Ethics Council primarily encompasses cases involving minors and vulnerable adults, but also any sexual conduct by an ecclesiastical employee that is inappropriate and/or deviant, whether this employee is part of the clergy or is a lay person performing services for the Church.
4. For details about the role of the Council in the various types of cases, please refer to the applicable guidelines.

Oslo, 20 February, 2020



+ Bernt I. Eidsvig Can.Reg.
Bishop

APPENDIX II – CODE OF CANON LAW

The Church's internal handling of cases of abuse is regulated by the Code of Canon Law. In addition to the *Codex Iuris Canonici* code of laws (promulgated by Pope Johannes Paul II on 25 January, 1983), the regulations to the Code of Canon Law given in the Apostolic Letter M.P. *Sacramentorum sanctitatis tutela* (30 April, 2001) and in the updated *Normae de gravioribus delictis* to the same letter (21 May, 2010) also apply. Please refer also to the circular letter from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith of 3 May, 2011, which assisted the Bishops' Conference with the preparation of the guidelines for handling sexual abuse of minors by clerics ("sexual abuse" is the term commonly used in papal and other key ecclesiastical documents. This is considered to correspond to what in the Norwegian context are referred to as sexual violations ("seksuelle krenkelser") or abuse ("overgrep").

III.1. General points

III.1.1 Sexual abuse

The Church's Code of Canon Law (canon 1395, § 2) states that clerics (meaning bishops, priests and deacons) may be punished if they have "...committed an offence against the sixth of the Ten Commandments, and if the delict was committed by force or threats or publicly or with a minor below the age of 16..." This age limit was raised to the age of 18 in the *Sacramentorum sanctitatis tutela*.

III.1.2 Child pornography

In *Normae de gravioribus delictis* (art. 6, § 1, no 2), the purchase, possession and dissemination of child pornography is defined under the above penal provision as abuse of a minor. Child pornography is defined as material involving children under the age of 14. Cf. Section III.1.8. below.

III.1.3 Age and limitation period

The provisions of the Code of Canon Law describe everyone under the age of 18 as "minors".

The limitation period in cases of abuse is 20 years, and this period begins on the 18th birthday of the alleged victim. The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has the

authority to waive the limitation period in individual cases (cf. *Normae de gravioribus delictis*, art. 7, § 1).

III.1.4 Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith

The Church has deemed it necessary to give the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith authority in all abuse cases involving young people under the age of 18, or particularly vulnerable adults. This means that after performing what is known as a "preliminary" investigation, the bishops (vicars general or bishops' deputies) shall notify the Congregation of any such case, and the Congregation will decide how this is to be handled by the Bishop (or his tribunal) or the Congregation. If the Congregation decides that the case should be dealt with locally, the Bishop will receive instructions on the procedure and on how the case is to be handled. Cf. *Normae de gravioribus delictis* (art. 16: "Whenever the Ordinary or Hierarch receives a report of a more grave delict, which has at least the semblance of truth, once the preliminary investigation has been completed, he is to communicate the matter to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith which, unless it calls the case to itself due to particular circumstances, will direct the Ordinary or Hierarch how to proceed further, with due regard, however, for the right to appeal, if the case warrants, against

a sentence of the first instance only to the Supreme Tribunal of this same Congregation.” With regard to the term “preliminary investigation”, see Section III.5.1 below.

III.1.5 The Bishop’s authority

In and on behalf of his diocese, the Bishop has what Canon Law calls the “governing authority”, a designation that includes executive, judicial and legislative authority.

Pursuant to this governing authority, the Bishop shall intervene in cases of sexual abuse and suspected sexual abuse. It also falls to the Bishop to ensure that the pastoral work of the diocese, particularly any work aimed at children and young people, is organised and performed in such a way that, as far as possible, abuse is prevented from happening. This may necessitate close cooperation with the secular authorities.

III.1.6 Archiving and destroying confidential cases

The rules of Canon Law regarding the handling, storage and eventual destruction of documents in the diocesan archive and Bishop’s personal archive (canons 486–490) also apply to cases concerning abuse.

The documents of a case shall be stored in the Bishop’s secret archive and destroyed after the accused party has died or after 10 years have elapsed. However, a brief summary, along with the text of the definitive sentence, shall also be retained after the death of the accused party. This allows for the subsequent evaluation of cases (cf. canon 489, § 2).

III.1.7 Sexual crimes other than abuse of minors

Canon Law also contains provisions about sexual crimes committed by clerics not involving the abuse of minors, which means abuse committed using violence or threats. The difficulty is that under Canon Law, the

limitation period (prescription) here is set at only five years (cf. canon 1362, § 1, no 2). Furthermore, the abuse of a position of power or relationship of trust in order to obtain sexual relations is not directly covered by these provisions. The Bishop of the RCDO has therefore, through the General Decree of 12 December, 2018, used his local ecclesiastical legislative authority to provide the RCDO with a separate penal code that includes “sin against the seventh of the Ten Commandments if this was committed through force, threats or manipulation or through abuse of position, relationship of dependence or trust” (art. 1, § 1). The provisions here apply not only to clerics, but to anyone in an ecclesiastical function or in the ecclesiastical education system, and, in reality, involve the prolonged or lifelong deprivation of all positions or tasks in the Church. The sanctions may also be imposed for transgressions through negligence, not only for deliberate transgressions (cf. art. 3). However, the most important item is that the limitation period has been extended to match that of Norwegian law for the same matters (cf. art. 5, § 1), and that the limitation period for particularly serious cases may be extended, even after it has expired (cf. art. 5, § 2).

III.1.8 Papal extension of criminal liability

In the Apostolic Letter *MP Vos estis lux mundi* (7 May, 2019), Pope Francis extended criminal liability, so that it also applies to “the production, exhibition, possession or distribution, including by electronic means, of child pornography, as well as by the recruitment of or inducement of a minor or a vulnerable person to participate in pornographic exhibitions” (art. 1, § 1, a), iii). Child pornography is defined as “any representation of a minor, regardless of the means used, involved in explicit sexual activities, whether real or simulated, and any representation of sexual organs of minors for primarily sexual purposes” (art. 1, § 2, c)). However, his main action was to make it

compulsory to report matters to the senior ecclesiastical authorities and to urge cooperation with the civil authorities. The Pope also made it criminal for anyone to remain passive or not to act quickly enough when they learn of the above-mentioned crime. The provision is particularly aimed at encompassing the higher strata in the Church (cardinals, patriarchs, bishops or legates of the Roman Pontiff cf. § 6, *a*). A challenge for the Nordic region is that this responsibility is tied to the metropolitan bishops (archbishops who each lead their own ecclesiastical province), an organisational structure that no longer exists in the Nordic region.

III.2. Relationship between civil and Canon Law sanctions in cases of abuse

Sanctions from civil authorities have no immediate ecclesiastical consequences, in the same way as sanctions imposed by the Church have no consequences under civil law.

However, as stated above, the Church emphasises the necessity of cooperating rationally and purposefully with the civil authorities in order to avert abuse (Circular letter, I, e).

Ecclesiastical handling of cases and sanctions is governed solely by ecclesiastical legislation, and every case must be considered in terms of how much emphasis shall be placed on civil criminal prosecution such as arrest, charges, remand in custody, indictment, fines, conviction or penalty.

Civil sanctions may also limit the need for ecclesiastical sanctions, cf. canon 1344 no 2: “the [ecclesiastical] judge can, according to his own conscience and prudence, abstain from imposing a penalty, impose a lighter penalty, or employ a penance if the offender [...] has been or, it is foreseen, will be punished sufficiently by civil authority.”

III.3 Abuse and confession

If sexual abuse is committed in conjunction with confession, this makes the matter particularly aggravated (cf. canons 1378, 1387 and 1388, *Normae de gravioribus delictis*, art. 4), and renders it necessary to impose more severe penalties.

If a priest learns through confession that an abuse has been committed, he may never pass on this suspicion or knowledge to a third party, including parents, police, ecclesiastical superiors, etc. A confessor may not use or pass on this knowledge, either directly or indirectly. Cf. canon 983 § 1: “The sacramental seal is inviolable; therefore, it is absolutely forbidden for a confessor to betray in any way a penitent in words or in any manner and for any reason.” § 2: “The interpreter, if there is one, and all others who in any way have knowledge of sins from confession are also obliged to observe secrecy.”

Cf. also canon 984, § 1: “A confessor is prohibited completely from using knowledge acquired from confession to the detriment of the penitent even when any danger of revelation is excluded.” § 2: “A person who has been placed in authority cannot use in any manner for external governance the knowledge about sins which he has received in confession at any time.”

The conclusion must be this: The Church’s rules on confession can only be understood on the basis that it is a sacrament. Absolution may be given for serious sins, even deadly sins, in confession. Making sure that the faithful feel able to make use of confession therefore becomes a question of the highest of all blessings: eternal life. The faithful must therefore be as certain as it is possible to be that the secrets of the confessional will not be revealed, thereby ensuring that fear of this does not act as a barrier against going to confession. It is the Church’s duty to ensure that this is respected. For the Roman Catholic Church, this involves a principal that cannot be compromised.

So how should a priest act when he hears in confession about abuse? In such a situation, the priest should scrupulously consider whether he should urge the person to report themselves to the ecclesiastical person responsible and/or the police or prosecuting authorities and admit their guilt. The priest should provide clear advice about this, and about what can be done and how.

III.4. Sanctioning authority

Sanctioning authority in a specific case of abuse depends on the accused's position and calling in the Church, as follows:

III.4.1 Against bishops

In a case of abuse against a bishop, only the Holy See (the Vatican) may impose sanctions. However, cf. III.1.8 above.

III.4.2 Against priests and deacons reporting to the Bishop

In cases of abuse in which the victim is a minor (i.e., under the age of 18), or a particularly vulnerable adult, a case in accordance with III.1.4 shall be passed on to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

In cases of abuse in which the victim is not a child or a particularly vulnerable adult, it is the Bishop who has the full sanctioning authority. Cf. III.1.7 above.

III.4.3 Against ordained priests and deacons

Certain heads of orders (cf. canons 620, 134, § 1, 1717) will only be able to initiate immediate investigations (cf. II.5.1) for the order or members of the congregation if accusations of abuse are submitted, before passing the case on to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. The authority of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in these cases remains the same. However, irrespective of this, the Bishop has the duty and right to carry out investigations against

members of the order if the accusation applies to a case within the diocese.

III.4.4 Against employees or contracted lay persons in ecclesiastical organisations

When there is a suspicion of sexual abuse committed by employees or persons contracted by ecclesiastical organisations, the authority to intervene is assumed to lie with the organisation's senior management, whether that be the manager, board or national board, in accordance with the organisation's Articles of Association. Cf. also III.1.7 above.

If the conduct was perpetrated by anyone associated with the management in a public ecclesiastical organisation, the manager in question may be removed or replaced in accordance with the rules of Canon Law applicable to public organisations (cf. canon 318). For a private ecclesiastical organisation (cf. canons 323–324), ecclesiastical authorities have a certain, but more limited and unclear, authority to intervene.

III.5. Preliminary (immediate) and temporary measures if applicable

III.5.1. Preliminary handling of the case itself

If accusations of suspected sexual abuse of children or young people are made against a person, the accusation must be immediately and thoroughly evaluated, in accordance with the provisions of Canon Law. What is known as a "preliminary investigation" (*praevia investigatio*) is to be initiated, i.e., an investigation to see whether there may be any validity to the case, and also to clarify how the case will be handled from then on, not unlike the first phase of what happens when the police have been notified of a possible crime. This investigation must not be prolonged. Among other things, it shall clarify whether it is possible that there may be circumstances that either weaken or

strengthen the suspect's moral responsibility for any abuse.

If the accused is a priest, the case's notary shall, from the outset, also be a priest (cf. canon 483, § 2).

After the preliminary investigation, it is incumbent on the Bishop to pass the case on to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, in accordance with III.1.4.

III.5.2 *Temporary preventive measures*

While a case is ongoing – but before it has been finally concluded – the ordinary (Bishop, vicar general or bishop's deputy) has the option to initiate temporary measures such as excluding the accused from ecclesiastical service and forbidding residence in certain places, or even imposing residence in a particular place, cf. canon 1722. However, since a suspicion is not a judgement, canon 1717, § 2 emphasises that: "Care must be taken so that the good name of anyone is not endangered from this investigation."

III.6 **The next phases**

III.6.1 *General*

If the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith concludes that the case shall be dealt with at local level, the Congregation will also inform the Bishop of the procedures to be followed.

As mentioned earlier, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has two possible ways of conducting a criminal case. It may be conducted as a trial, in which the case is judged by an ecclesiastical court, or administratively, in which the case is decided by the Bishop.

If an ecclesiastical criminal case is to be conducted as a trial, the case is handed over to the tribunal's "promoter of justice" (*promotor iustitiae*), who takes out a "criminal action" (*actio criminalis*) against the accused at

the tribunal. The court (tribunal) then holds legal proceedings, usually in writing, with oral interviews of the parties and witnesses involved, before pronouncing judgement. The promoter of justice acts as the "prosecutor". Appeals go directly to the court of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

For administrative cases, cf. canon 1720. The Bishop or another ordinary must inform the accused of the accusation, and what it is based on, so that the accused may prepare his defence. The ordinary must also, with two assessors, carefully evaluate all the evidence and arguments. If he finds that abuse has been committed, and the limitation period has not expired, he must, as a minimum, provide brief grounds for his final decision on the question of guilt and imposition of sanctions, cf. canons 1342–1350, and issue a decree. The effect of this decree corresponds to the effect of a sentence. Appeals against the decree go directly to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

III.6.2 *The rights of the accused*

Anyone accused in an ecclesiastical trial shall be informed of their rights. In a civil criminal case, the accused will be informed of their right to legal assistance and other rights by the prosecuting authority. In an ecclesiastical case against a priest, it is the Church's responsibility to inform the accused of their rights. The most relevant rights under Canon Law are:

- Right to the assistance of an advocate (canon 1723, § 1): In an ecclesiastical criminal case, the accused must have an ecclesiastical advocate. If he does not engage an advocate, the judge shall appoint one.
- Right to refuse the trial to be renounced (canon 1724, § 2): The accused may demand that their case be conducted to its conclusion, even if the Bishop or ecclesiastical promoter of justice wish to renounce it.

- Right to have the final word (canon 1725): In the written or oral form of the case, the accused or his advocate has the right to make the final spoken or written statement.
- Right to be absolved (canon 1726): If the accused's innocence is established during the trial, he has the right to be formally absolved, and in his sentence, the judge must absolve him of the accusation.
- Right to appeal (canon 1727): Irrespective of the circumstances, anyone found guilty may appeal, provided that an enforceable ruling has not been made on the case.
- Right to fair process (canons 221, § 3, and 1728, § 1): All relevant laws and standards applying to criminal cases must be complied with.
- Right to an open defence (canon 1728, § 2): The accused is not bound to confess a transgression, nor can he be sworn to tell the truth.
- Right to have the documents of the case stored securely (canons 489, § 2 and 1719).

With the exception of the latter, these rights apply when a case is held in an ecclesiastical court.

In administrative cases, less extensive rights apply, but there is also more limited opportunity to impose sanctions.

- In an administrative case, the accused has the right to be informed of the accusation and the proofs, and naturally has the right to defend himself (canon 1720, § 1).
- Before a religious community or congregation decides to exclude a member, further rights apply (canons 695–700).

If these rights are infringed, this will have the immediate effect of harming the case against the accused, but in the longer term will also affect the Church and its legal system. The worst imaginable result is that an innocent person is found guilty. However, there is also a risk that the guilty will go free or will receive a reduced punishment if the case is not conducted properly. Breaches of rules and principles of law will also weaken confidence in, and the legitimacy of, the ecclesiastical legal system.

III.7. Decision that concludes the case – “final decision”

III.7.1 Baseless accusations

If the conclusion of the investigation is that the accusations against a person are baseless or cannot be proved, any suspension must be repealed and, if necessary, the person who has suffered must be given compensation/reparation, cf. canon 128: “Whoever illegitimately inflicts damage upon someone by a juridic act or by any other act placed with malice or negligence is obliged to repair the damage inflicted.”

III.7.2 Acquittal / no penalty, but protective measures

In cases when the accused is acquitted or no penalty is imposed, it may nevertheless be appropriate to issue warnings or other remedies, for which Canon Law allows in canon 1348. Extraordinary pastoral solicitude may be necessary, or also warnings and admonitions to ensure that the person who cannot be punished gains the strength to change behaviour which is risky or censurable. It is possible to envisage a number of cases in which such follow-up measures are appropriate, such as:

- The background to the warnings is a dissolute lifestyle and habitual suggestions of a sexual nature that have given grounds for suspicion; this is a particular problem

if the person has previously committed or been suspected of transgressions.

- If there are mental problems or alcoholism that require professional treatment.
- If the accused in any way, before during the case, has acted in a way that weakens confidence in him, or her, or in the Church.

III.7.3 *Corrective measures*

Corrective measures may be:

- In some cases, a “rebuke”, “warning” or “fraternal correction” may be sufficient, cf. canons 1339 and 1341.
- The removal of the member of an order from their position as, for example, parish priest. This decision may be made by the Bishop in consultation with the head of the order, cf. canon 682, § 2.
- Dismissal and removal of an ordinary pastor is considerably more complicated. Sexual abuse will most often provide material cause for dismissal, cf. canon 1741.
- If there is “grave cause”, a priest may have his faculty to hear confessions revoked, cf. canon 974, § 1.
- A priest may be prohibited from preaching, particularly if an abuse case will mean that his preaching will weaken his own credibility and that of the Church. Cf. canon 764. Because preaching is a central part of a cleric’s work, and the life of the Church, grave cause is required to limit or revoke a priest’s right to preach, and the decision should be justified in writing.

III.7.4 *Criminal sanctions*

Canon Law operates with a range of penalties.

Examples of such penalties (cf. canon 1336, § 1) are:

- prohibition or order concerning residence in a certain place or territory,
- privation of power, office, function, title,
- transfer to another office, and
- “dismissal from the clerical state” (the same as “defrocking”), which is the strictest single punishment for clerics. It may be applied in only a very few situations (cf. canon 1395, § 2).

The main provisions concerning sexual offences committed by clerics in canon 1395, §§ 1 and 2, state two primary penalties for sexual abuse: suspension and dismissal from the clerical state. (cf. *Normae de gravioribus delictis*, art. 6, § 2).

For a member of a religious community or congregation, sexual abuse also constitutes grounds for exclusion from any service for the community, cf. canon 695, § 1.

III.7.5 *Compensation/reparation*

An abuse case can constitute legitimate grounds for claims of compensation or reparation, which may be in the form of compensation for financial losses and compensation (reparation) for non-financial losses.

This may be considered in the following cases:

- from the perpetrator to the victim for harm inflicted,
- from the perpetrator to the ecclesiastical department for the indirect harm that the Church has suffered,
- from the ecclesiastical department to the victim for the harm for which the Church has some indirect liability, though not having acted with sufficient foresight,

- from the ecclesiastical department to the wrongly accused person, if the Church has inflicted harm through the way it reacted,
- from the accuser to the wrongly accused person for harm inflicted, and
- from the perpetrator to the ecclesiastical department after a recourse claim as a result of compensation paid by the ecclesiastical department.

APPENDIX III – INSTRUCTIONS FOR CONTACT PERSONS

Contact persons for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Oslo and the Roman Catholic Prelature of Trondheim are appointed by the Bishop for a term of four years and may be reappointed.

The contact persons shall be easily accessible, by phone and/or email. The contact information for these persons shall be easy to find, both on www.katolsk.no and in a special pamphlet which shall be on display and available in the dioceses, parishes, orders, and ecclesiastical institutions.

The contact persons are there to listen to what anyone who contacts them has to say, and are responsible for passing on the information they receive to the bodies that will then deal with the case.

When a contact person is contacted about abuse or conduct that are inappropriate and/or deviant, they shall make a note of all the relevant information about the nature of the incident(s).

They shall ask for the names of the parties involved and the date(s)/time(s) of the incident(s).

They shall also note down the name of the person who contacted them, and the date/time of this. As soon as possible after they were contacted, they shall prepare a written report about the case that is as objective and complete as possible. This report shall be presented to the person who came forward, for approval.

The contact person shall inform the person who came forward of the rules and procedures involved in the next phases of the case, as they are described in these guidelines. If it is a minor who comes forward, the con-

tact person shall also inform them that their parents or guardians will be informed of the accusation.

In cases where a person comes forward and wishes to remain anonymous, or where they do not provide information about the identity of the accused or accuser, the contact person shall make a note of all the other information provided, inform the person who came forward of the next phases of the case and submit their report to the Professional Ethics Council and the Bishop.

When the contact person has been contacted, he or she shall submit the case to the Bishop and the Professional Ethics Council.

The contact persons shall be present when cases are discussed by the Professional Ethics Council when they need to pass on essential information about the notifications that they have received, or whenever it is deemed advisable.



The Roman Catholic Diocese of Oslo and the Roman Catholic Prelature of Trondheim are hereby given binding guidelines aimed at ensuring that cases of sexual abuse or violations involving a priest, deacon, member of the order, or employee or volunteer in the service of the Church, are handled consistently and competently.

The guidelines are primarily designed to cover cases involving children and young people (those under the age of 18 according to Canon Law), and vulnerable adults. These groups deserve particular protection, according to Canon Law and Norwegian criminal law. However, the guidelines must be followed in the event of any kind of sexual conduct by an ecclesiastical employee that is inappropriate and/or deviant. The mandate of the Professional Ethics Council covers any kind of cases.

The Church has prepared a pamphlet providing concise information about the guidelines, as well as the details of the people who may be contacted by anyone learning of or suspecting that abuse has taken place. This pamphlet will also be available in all the Catholic parishes in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Oslo (the RCDO) and the Roman Catholic Prelature of Trondheim.

