



DIOCESE OF SPRINGFIELD - CAPE GIRARDEAU CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MINORS IN GRADES SEVEN THROUGH TWELVE

You are about to begin what could be a lifelong commitment to working or volunteering for the Catholic Church. It is a privilege to help carry on the mission of Jesus Christ, one that no one takes lightly. Moreover, as a minor yourself, it is important you follow certain rules and guidelines, both for your protection and for the protection of those with whom you work. The church takes the issue of misconduct very seriously. Certainly any instance of your misconduct will be evaluated carefully, and you are urged to report any instances of misconduct that you see to the adult in charge of your area of service.

GENERAL CONDUCT FOR VOLUNTEERS OR WORKERS WHO ARE MINORS

1. You must always be aware of your own personal safety and well-being and the safety and well-being of those with whom you are working.
2. You may not be alone with a younger child in your care.
3. You must never transport a younger child in your care in a motor vehicle.
4. When you are on an outing with younger children in your care there must be two adults present at all times.
5. You are not to access locker rooms, shower rooms and dressing rooms where younger children in your care are present unless an adult is present.
6. You are not to accompany a younger child in your care into a restroom without an adult present, unless it is an emergency.
7. You must never have physical contact with younger children in your care, except as appropriate in connection with your duties, such as changing a diaper.
8. You must never use indecent, obscene, or offensive language when working with children.
9. You must not verbally threaten or physically strike, spank, shake, or slap other children.
10. You must not possess weapons of any sort while working with children.
11. You must never be involved with the illegal possession and/or illegal use of drugs and/or alcohol in the presence of younger children in your care. All tobacco products are prohibited while working with younger children in your care.
12. You must never use physical force or demeaning language in disciplining younger children in your care.
13. You must be aware that diocesan safe environment guidelines are to be followed without exception whenever someone works or volunteers with a younger child to protect rights of all involved. We also want you to work in a safe environment. Report any concerns or questions immediately to your parent, guardian or supervisor.
14. Electronic devices (including cell and smart phones, tablets, or computers) may not be used for personal use while working with younger children, except in a health or life threatening emergency. This includes taking a photo or showing a photo to other minors.
15. You must not access, possess or show indecent, obscene or sexually explicit materials or images to others.
16. You have a responsible position and you should live up to the expectations of trust that have been placed in you.
17. You understand that violations of this Code of Conduct, State Laws and Federal Regulations that protect the safety of minors will result in immediate action that may include notifying parents, Child Abuse and Neglect, and/or Law Enforcement Officials, and subsequently result in legal action.

The Diocese of Springfield – Cape Girardeau is grateful for the service you provide. Whenever you have questions or whenever you are uncertain about what is required, ask the adults with whom you work.

Please complete the form on the back of this page. After your parent or guardian has discussed this information with you, and has signed the form, please return to your supervisor. The supervisor is to give you a copy of this Code of Conduct to keep for future reference.

**Any known or suspected child abuse and neglect should be immediately reported to the
Missouri Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline 800-392-3738 or 844-CAN-TELL.**

Commitment to Ethical Conduct for Minors Volunteering or Working with Younger Children

I promise to follow faithfully the rules and guidelines in the *Diocese of Springfield – Cape Girardeau Code of Conduct for Minors* as a condition of my providing services to the children and youth of our diocese.

I understand that any action inconsistent with the *Diocese of Springfield – Cape Girardeau Code of Conduct for Minors* or any failure to take action mandated by the Code may result in my removal from my position of working with minors, and that any violations of laws and regulations regarding the proper care and protection of minor children, may result in legal action.

I further understand that I may, as a condition of continuing in my position, be required to participate in training provided by the diocese.

PRINTED Name of Minor Volunteer or Worker: _____

Address: _____ City/State _____ Zip _____

Phone #: _____ Minor's Date of Birth _____

(High School Students Only) Expected High School Graduation Month _____ Year _____

Signature of Minor Volunteer or Worker

Date

I am the parent/legal guardian of _____ ("Minor"). I have received and support the *Diocese of Springfield – Cape Girardeau Code of Conduct for Minors*, and I have reviewed it with the Minor. I understand the diocese has a responsibility to provide a safe environment for all young people and I know of nothing in the Minor's background that would make him/her unsuitable to work with other Minors.

PRINTED Name of Parent/Legal Guardian: _____

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian

Date

A copy of this document is to be kept at the Parish, School, or Diocesan Office of Youth Ministries.