

## Knights of Columbus OFFICE OF YOUTH PROTECTION

- Administers the Knights of Columbus Safe Environment Program.
- Addresses questions and concerns from local diocesan officials relating to the Knights of Columbus and its members.
- Upholds one consistent safe environment standard for all councils and members of the Knights of Columbus across numerous dioceses and eparchies.
- Works together with Praesidium, an internationally recognized and trusted resource on sexual abuse awareness and prevention, to maintain the most up to date training for abuse awareness and prevention.
- Coordinates member training in abuse awareness and prevention, mandatory reporting requirements, and Knights of Columbus Safe Environment best practices.
- Conducts and reviews the results of background screenings for members serving in Board-designated key leadership roles.
- Addresses abuse risks and complaints through a clearly defined reporting/notification procedure:

1. **REPORT** suspected abuse to law enforcement;
2. **NOTIFY** the local diocese of suspected abuse; and
3. **NOTIFY** Knights of Columbus of suspected abuse via its dedicated safe environment hotline  
**1-844-kofc-safe (1-844-563-2723)**



## OFFICE OF YOUTH PROTECTION

203-752-4558 • 855-845-3502 (Fax)  
oyp@kofc.org • kofc.org/seguro

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# OFFICE OF YOUTH PROTECTION



We have no higher priority than the protection of our children.

— Supreme Knight Carl Anderson

## Knights of Columbus OFFICE OF YOUTH PROTECTION

Since its founding in 1882, Knights of Columbus has been serving and protecting Catholic families. We understand that Catholics share a responsibility to protect minors and vulnerable persons served by the Church. Our Order takes this responsibility seriously and we continually encourage our members to maintain the highest standards regarding the protection of minors and other vulnerable persons.

Working together with dioceses and parishes strengthens all of our efforts to protect. Through our Office of Youth Protection, Knights of Columbus works with diocesan Offices of Child and Youth Protection to ensure that we fulfill our shared mission.

**The Knights of Columbus Office of Youth Protection works collaboratively with dioceses to fulfil our shared mission to protect minors and vulnerable persons.**

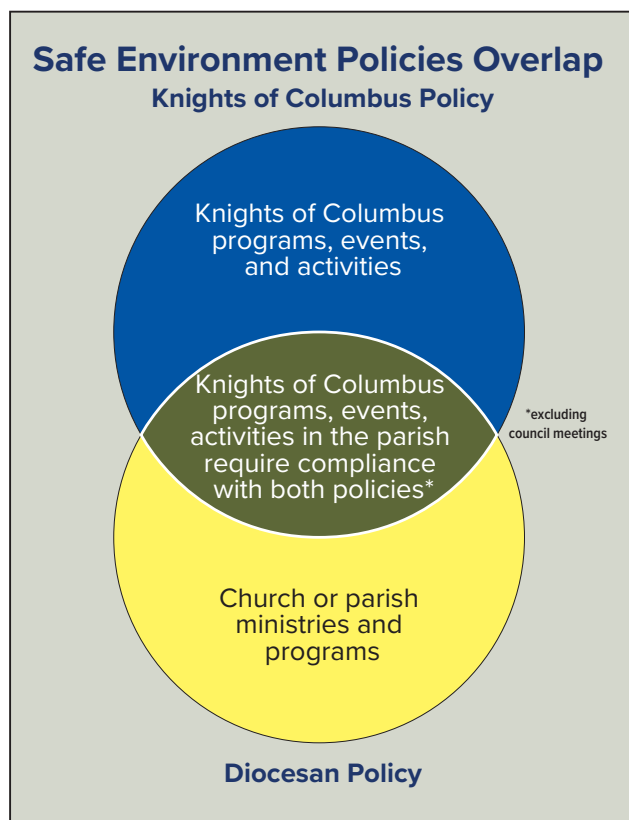
We understand that our members are parishioners first, and Knights second, and that members of the Knights of Columbus are not exempt from diocesan safe environment requirements applicable to volunteers serving in Church ministries or other volunteer activities in the parish.

Members of the Knights of Columbus volunteering in Church or parish ministries (ushering, youth ministry, etc.) serve in those ministries as parishioners, and in doing so, give witness to our Order's commitment to serving the parish. We expect and direct our members serving in these ministries to adhere to all screening, training, monitoring, and behavioral guidelines required by their diocese.

When our members volunteer for an activity sponsored by a Knights of Columbus council that takes place on parish property, we recognize that our members are not only volunteering as members of the Knight of Columbus, but also as parish volunteers.

We expect and direct our member volunteers to comply with the same diocesan safe environment requirements applicable to all parish volunteers.

In addition to compliance with diocesan safe environment requirements, we require members volunteering in key leadership roles to comply with the training and background check requirements of the Knights of Columbus Safe Environment Program, thereby providing an extra layer of protection. Our program is operated in conjunction with Praesidium, an internationally recognized and trusted resource in sexual abuse awareness and prevention.



### Knights of Columbus SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM

The foundation of the Knights of Columbus Safe Environment Program is a policy of Zero Tolerance for sexual abuse. This policy helps safeguard the young people and other vulnerable persons we

serve. When we receive credible allegations of sexual misconduct against one of our members, we report the misconduct to law enforcement, notify the local diocese, suspend his membership, and remove him from our Order.

Building on our policy of Zero Tolerance and this standard reporting protocol, our program consists of two additional substantive components: child abuse awareness and prevention training and background screening (including criminal background checks).

Our child abuse awareness and prevention training consists of three online training modules, available to all of our members, but required for members volunteering in key leadership roles: "Meet Sam" (addressing the issue of sexual abuse awareness); "Duty to Report" (covering legal reporting obligations); and "Know Your Policies." This last module is a customized training developed by Praesidium for the Knights of Columbus, summarizing the Order's safe environment policies. Together, these training modules cover best practices for child abuse prevention and detection for our members.

**We invite diocesan safe environment coordinators and victim assistance coordinators to contact us directly with all questions and concerns that relate to the Knights of Columbus.**

We invite diocesan officials and staff to review the Order's safe environment training via an online portal available at [www.kofc.org/safe](http://www.kofc.org/safe). Simply select the "Blue Button," enter the code "kofcsafe", and register. It is not necessary to be a member of the Knights of Columbus to take our training.

Members volunteering to serve in key leadership roles are also required to complete a screening process, including a robust and comprehensive background check. Our screening process is in addition to any background checks that may be required by the local diocese to be eligible to serve as a volunteer within the diocese.