

Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux  
Office of Child and Youth Protection

## Safe Environment Training Instructions

If your role involves contact with children or if you are paid personnel for the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux, you are required to take the online Safe and Sacred, Safe Environment training before starting your new role or volunteering at a diocesan parish or Catholic school.

Go to your computer, tablet or smartphone and visit our website to begin your training

[www.htdiocese.org/se-training](http://www.htdiocese.org/se-training)

Follow the steps listed on the website:

1. Complete the Volunteer Ministry Application and turn it into the Church/School location you'd like your training to be registered.
2. Once Step One is complete and your church/school Safe Environment Coordinator has contacted you to begin the training, go online to acknowledge that you have completed step one and a link will appear for you to begin. The online training includes the following parts:
  - ▶ Background Check
  - ▶ Safe and Sacred Training
  - ▶ Code of Professional Conduct
3. When steps one and two are completed and your background check is cleared a certificate of Completion is awarded. An email is automatically sent to the registered email address, parish/school safe environment coordinator and the diocesan safe environment office. *Note: Background checks may take up to two weeks to process.*

All paid personnel must upload a copy of their certificate to the diocesan personnel system.

Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux  
Office of Child and Youth Protection  
Michelle Ohmer, Safe Environment  
[mohmer@htdiocese.org](mailto:mohmer@htdiocese.org)  
(985)850-3140

## Mandated Reporting & Safe Environment Training



# PROMISE to Protect Pledge to HEAL

The Church is the Body of Christ. All members of the Church are linked to one another. We all have a responsibility to ensure the safety of children in our parishes, schools, families, and local communities.

**Together we can help  
keep children safe.**



Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux  
Office of Child and Youth Protection



# Am I a Mandated Reporter?

**YES!** *(if your over age 18)*

- Louisiana State law requires the reporting of suspected abuse if there is reasonable cause to believe/suspect that abuse has occurred. Professions that must report in the state of Louisiana are clergy, health care professionals, mental health professionals, social work professionals, education/child care professionals.
- Teachers and/or child care providers, now includes anyone who “assists in teaching” of a child as well as the bus driver, coach, professor, technical or vocational instructor, school staff member, college or university administrator, and college or university staff member whether the person in “in a volunteer or professional capacity.”
- In other words, all volunteers are included. Organizational or youth activity providers which means “any person who provides organized activities for children, including administrators, employees, or volunteers of any day camp, summer camp, youth center, or youth recreation program or other organization that provides organized activities for children.
- Also law enforcement professionals and commercial film and photographic print processors.
- The obligation to report now goes beyond the work day to all times!



## I Suspect Child Abuse and Neglect. Who do I call?

The Louisiana Children’s Code (Article 610) specifies that mandated reporters shall make reports immediately upon learning of incidents of child abuse or neglect.

### If abuse is within the home or by a Licensed Daycare Staff:

*Call Department of Children and Family Services*

**LA Dept. of Children & Family Services**  
**(24 hours a day, 7 days a week)**  
**1-855-4LA-KIDS**  
**(1-855-452-5437)**

### If abuse is outside of the home:

*Call local Police or Sheriffs Department*

**Lafourche Parish Sheriff Office:** (985)446-2255  
**St. Mary Parish:** (337)828-1960  
**Terrebonne Parish:** (985)876-2500  
**Jefferson Parish:** (504)364-5300

**Be sure that you have as much information about the victim as possible including:**

- Name, address, age, sex, race of child
- Name of parent or guardian
- Telephone number
- Nature, extent or cause of child’s injuries or endangered condition
- Name, address and telephone of abuser if known.

## How is Abuse Defined?

Abuse refers to an intentional act committed by a person in a position of trust which harms or threatens to harm a minor’s physical or mental welfare.

### Types of Abuse

**Physical Abuse** occurs when an adult injures a child and it is not an accident.

**Neglect** is any maltreatment or negligence that harms a child’s welfare or safety.

**Emotional Abuse** occurs when an adult subjects a child to verbal assault or emotional cruelty.

**Sexual Abuse** involves sexual contact between a child and an adult or significantly older, more powerful person.

This may include direct sexual contact as well as other exploitive behaviors such as:

- inappropriate verbal stimulation;
- taking or showing sexually explicit photographs of or to a child or youth;
- Exposing a child or youth to pornography or adult sexual activity.



## If you need help or have questions about child abuse,

call the Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453) then push 1 to talk to a counselor. The hotline counselors are available 365 days a year to help kids, and adults who are worried about kids they suspect are being abused.

If the accused is Clergy (Priest, Deacon, Religious Brother or Sister or Seminarian), Employee of the Diocese or Volunteer in a Catholic school or Church parish call the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux Outreach line or the Victim Assistance Coordinator after it has been reported to the local police or Sheriffs Department.

**Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux Outreach line**

**(985) 873-0026**

**Victim Assistance Coordinator**

**(985) 850-3172**