

# Diocese of Brooklyn Whistleblower Policy

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The Diocese of Brooklyn (together with all affiliates) requires all employees, clergy<sup>1</sup>, and volunteers to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. As representatives of the Church, we must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling our responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

**Reporting Responsibility.** It is the responsibility of all clergy, employees, and volunteers to comply with this statement and to report violations or suspected violations of the Codes of Conduct or other Diocesan policies in accordance with this Whistleblower Policy.

**No Retaliation.** No member of the clergy, employee, or volunteer who in good faith reports any action or suspected action taken by or within the Church that is illegal, fraudulent, or in violation of the Diocese's policies or the Codes of Conduct of the Church shall suffer intimidation, harassment, discrimination or other retaliation or, in the case of an employee, adverse employment consequences. An employee who retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith is subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment. This Whistleblower Policy is intended to encourage and enable employees and others to raise serious concerns within the Diocese prior to seeking resolution outside the Church.

**Reporting Violations.** This Policy addresses the Diocese of Brooklyn's open-door policy and suggests that employees share their questions, concerns, suggestions, or complaints through the proper channels. Reports should be promptly made to the Compliance Officer, as described below. Reports of sexual abuse of a minor<sup>2</sup> or Code of Conduct violations can also be reported to the Diocese's own toll-free Reporting Line at 1-888-634-4499 or via the online form available at <https://dioceseofbrooklyn.org/protecting-children/report-sexual-abuse/>.

**Compliance Officer.** The Diocesan Compliance Officer is responsible for investigating and resolving all reported complaints and allegations concerning violations or suspected violations of this Whistleblower Policy, other Diocesan policies, and the Codes of Conduct. The Diocesan Compliance Officer shall promptly report any complaints, concerns, violations or suspected violations to the Diocesan Review Board or Adult Allegation Committee for further review and investigation. The Diocesan Compliance Officers may be contacted as follows:

By e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

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<sup>1</sup> The term "clergy," as used herein, is understood to be coextensive with bishops, deacons, Diocesan priests, and Order priests, who serve within the territory of the Diocese of Brooklyn.

<sup>2</sup> A minor is defined as any person who is not yet eighteen years of age, or one who habitually lacks the use of reason, in compliance with the *Charter for Protection of Children and Young People*.

By US mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Acting in Good Faith.** Anyone filing a complaint concerning a violation or suspected violation of this Policy, any other Diocesan policies, or the Codes of Conduct must be acting in good faith. In other words, he or she must have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates a violation of the relevant policy or Code of Conduct. Any allegations that prove not to be substantiated and which prove to have been made maliciously or knowingly to be false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense.

**Confidentiality.** Violations or suspected violations may be submitted on a confidential basis by the complainant or may be submitted anonymously. Reports of violations or suspected violations will be kept confidential, and disclosed only on an as-needed basis to those conducting the investigation and reviewing the reports.

**Handling of Reported Violations.** The Compliance Officer will notify the sender and acknowledge receipt of the reported violation or suspected violation within five business days. All reports will be promptly investigated and appropriate corrective action will be taken if warranted by the investigation.

The Whistleblower Policy will be posted prominently on the Diocese's website and in each parish and school under the Diocese's jurisdiction.