

RESPONDING TO AN ALLEGATION OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

*Procedures for Pastoral Response and Mandated Reporting of
Any Allegation of Abuse or Neglect of a Minor.*

REMINDER: Under federal and state law, mandated reporting is required when the victim is currently a minor and/or if there is reason to suspect that the alleged abuser has access to minors. If the victim is not currently a minor but has experienced sexual abuse by clergy, employee or volunteer, get all the basic facts outlined below and call the Archdiocesan Victim Assistance Ministry Office (213) 637-7650 to make a non-mandated report and to arrange for outreach for the victim.

LISTEN: First and foremost, listen compassionately, validate the courage of the person making the report, and express regret for any pain the reporting person may be feeling.

GET BASIC FACTS: Name(s), addresses (es), phone number(s) of the victim, the alleged perpetrator, the person making the report and witnesses (if available). Refer to the “Suspected Child Abuse Report” (SCAR) form below. Compile these facts based on what is readily available.
Do not investigate incident.

IMMEDIATELY CALL: Los Angeles County Child Abuse Hot Line: (800) 540-4000
Santa Barbara County Child Abuse Hot Line: (800) 367-0166
Ventura County Child Abuse Hot Line: (800) 754-7600
Or your local police station
For Hearing Impaired: (800) 272-6699 TDD
AFTER REPORTING TO AUTHORITIES
Call Victim Assistance Ministry (213) 637-7650

When you call in the report, get the name /phone number of the person taking the Report, any case number and the address for mailing the written Report.

CONSIDER: Ask the person or persons making the allegation, to join you when you call in the Report. If the reporting person is an adult, encourage him or her to also report the allegation directly.

DOCUMENT: After making the Report by telephone, **complete either** a paper copy (SS8572) <http://oag.ca.gov/childabuse/forms> of the “Suspected Child Abuse Report” or file it electronically at <https://mandreptla.org/on-lineRep.htm> . If you use the paper copy, **mail** it to the address you receive from the person you called to make the Report. **All reports must be completed and submitted within 36 hours of receiving the information concerning the incident.** If the Hotline or the Police decline to take the Report over the phone, ask for the name and ID or badge number of the person to whom you are speaking. Write this information, along with the note “declined to take Report” and the date and time of the call, on the Report form. Ask for a supervisor if you feel the Report should not be declined. Keep a copy of the Report for your records and **SCAN or Email the electronic or paper copy of the report to the Victims Assistance Ministry Office at hbanis@la-archdiocese.org.**

OUTREACH: Call the Archdiocesan Victim Assistance Ministry Office (213) 637-7650 for information on counseling and other resources for the victim(s) and/or family, and the reporting person(s).

CONCLUDE: Offer reassurance, hope and continued support.