

# Commitment to Communicating

“Each diocese/eparchy will develop a communications policy that reflects a commitment to transparency and openness. Within the confines of respect for the privacy and the reputation of the individuals involved, dioceses/eparchies will deal as openly as possible with members of the community. This is especially so with regard to assisting and supporting parish communities directly affected by ministerial misconduct involving minors.”

– Article 7 of the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*  
Approved by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, June 2002

## Mission of Communications in Sexual Abuse Circumstances

The policies and procedures governing the internal and external communications of the Catholic Diocese of Green Bay should promote the development of trusted relationships and safe environments. The Diocese should engage the community and the media in its efforts to prevent child sexual abuse, protect children, support families and inform the public. While upholding the right to privacy of the individuals involved, the Diocese will communicate as openly as possible with the members of the faith community, the media and general public regarding allegations of child abuse and related issues.

## Public Awareness of Child Abuse Issues

The Communications Department will work with appropriate Diocesan departments, parishes, Catholic schools and the media to disseminate information about the Diocese’s efforts to increase the awareness and understanding of the prevention, identification and treatment of child sexual abuse.

## Timeliness of Communications

Communications with an affected parish and/or school, the media and the broader community are to be timely, open and clear. All communications shall occur within the confines of respect for the privacy and reputation of those involved, as well as any applicable canon and civil laws.

## Responding to the Media

The director of Communications or his/her delegate is to be responsible for coordinating all media contacts. All media inquiries made to schools, parishes, etc. will be referred to that department or responded to in consultation with that department. The director of Communications or his/her delegate will work with those persons who are responding to media inquiries about child sexual abuse.

## Communicating with Directly Affected Communities

Recognizing the importance of supporting parishes and/or schools directly affected by the misconduct, the director of Communications or his/her delegate will coordinate with the Vicar for Administration, relevant diocesan departments, and school and/or parish leadership to ensure parishioners and/or parish leadership to ensure parishioners and/or school families receive timely, factual and pastorally appropriate communication from the Diocese.

## Communicating to Broader Community

The Diocese and Communications may communicate with pastors/parish directors at other parishes, particularly those where an accused priest previously served; school principals; and/or Diocesan staff in order to assist them in informing their members about the situation and potential options.