

DIOCESAN REVIEW BOARD

of The Diocese of Beaumont

(Rev. 3 / 2015)

RESPONSIBILITIES:

In accord with the USCCB Norms, #4 and #5, the Bishop has established a Diocesan Review Board (hereinafter, DRB) which functions as a confidential consultative body to assist the him in discharging his responsibilities of assessing allegations of sexual abuse of a minor by church personnel and determining suitability for ministry or service.

Composition and Functions:

The DRB shall be composed of persons with outstanding integrity, good judgment, and in full communion with the Church. It shall consist of the Vicar General and the Chancellor as ex officio members, and no less than five (5) lay members, men and women, who are not in the employment of the diocese. The majority of the members are to be competent in fields such as, but not limited to, law, law enforcement, psychiatry, psychology, counseling, or social work.

Of the total membership, at least one member should be a priest who is an experienced and respected pastor of this diocese, one member a canonist, and at least one member must have particular expertise in the treatment of sexual abuse of minors. The DRB may utilize consultants in a particular case as the need arises.

Members of the DRB shall be appointed by the Bishop for a term of five (5) years, which can be renewed. Initial appointments are arranged so that terms will be staggered.

The functions of the DRB shall be:

- 1) to review and assess allegations of sexual abuse of minors (those currently minors or adults who allege they were abused as a minor) by church personnel thoroughly and expeditiously and to submit a written statement of findings and specific recommendations to the Bishop;

<p>In the case of a cleric, the findings are to indicate whether there is a strong probability that a canonical offense has been committed and, thus, probable cause to proceed with a canonical penal procedure. The determination of the existence of a delict with moral certitude and the infliction of any penalty are the tasks of a subsequent canonical penal process.</p>
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- 2) to make recommendations concerning withdrawal (administrative leave) of the alleged offender from ministerial duties, employment responsibilities, or volunteer service while the investigation continues;

In instances where the accused is a cleric or religious, all recommendations of the DRB shall be in accordance with applicable norms of canon law.

- 3) to determine whether further action is warranted and suggestions as to such action if the conduct of the accused does not constitute sexual abuse but is otherwise inappropriate;
- 4) to make recommendations, if the accused has been withdrawn from ministry, employment or service pending investigation, concerning return to ministry in particular cases or continuation of employment or volunteer service once the investigation is completed and a determination is made and what restrictions, if any, should be imposed if the individual is reinstated;
- 5) to offer advice on all aspects of these cases, whether retrospectively or prospectively;
- 6) to review diocesan policies and related procedures for dealing with allegations of sexual abuse of minors in order to recommend any modifications, where appropriate; to review its own internal rules and procedures and modify as needed.

The DRB shall meet at least semi-annually and as often as it deems necessary to carry out its responsibilities. *Ad hoc* consultants may attend the meetings upon invitation by the chairperson. The meetings shall reflect the pastoral character of this process which is consultative and advisory, not adversarial and adjudicative.