

## **USA Central and Southern Province of the Society of Jesus Guide for Individuals Who Report Sexual Abuse**

The USA Central and Southern Province of the Society of Jesus (Province) recognizes that sexual abuse of a person under the age of 18 by a member of a religious community is a profound violation of trust in human relationships. Sexual abuse can cause devastating pain for the victims and their families, the local parish and school communities of those involved, and the larger Catholic Church.

The Province is fully accredited by Praesidium, Inc., an organization that provides consultation, policy development, and training materials for use in the prevention of and response to sexual abuse.

### **How the Province Responds to Allegations of Sexual Abuse**

The Province responds to all allegations of sexual abuse with great care and sensitivity. To ensure the Province handles such allegations promptly, thoroughly, and compassionately, the Province has appointed a **Safeguarding Coordinator**, who will speak with you about the specifics of your allegation and attempt to answer any questions you might have. The Safeguarding Coordinator may offer – out of charitable concern – pastoral care and pastoral assistance to those affected by sexual abuse. This offer may include an offer of psychological counseling, if appropriate. The Safeguarding Coordinator will help you find a qualified therapist if you need assistance in identifying a therapist. The Safeguarding Coordinator will be your main contact with the Province throughout the process, though others may also contact you when necessary.

Allegations of sexual abuse of a person who is currently a minor are required by law to be reported, and the Province will immediately make a report to the appropriate state or local law enforcement agency. The Province will also report an allegation of past sexual abuse of a minor even if the alleged victim is now an adult, unless the alleged abuser is known to be deceased. Similar action will be taken if an allegation is received that a vulnerable adult was sexually abused.

An internal investigation will be conducted, which will include a review of all available and relevant province records. An independent investigation will also be done by an investigator who will conduct interviews with you, the accused Jesuit (if available), and witnesses (if any). In all cases, the Province strives to provide a prompt response to evaluate any allegation of sexual abuse by a member of the Province.

The Province has established a **Review Board** to review allegations of sexual abuse of minors. The Review Board is comprised primarily of lay men and women from various disciplines. The Board reviews the information related to allegations and the results of any investigation conducted. The Review Board then advises the Provincial on any action(s) the Review Board thinks should be taken.

After the Review Board has presented its recommendations to the Provincial, he will make final decisions about how the Province will respond to your situation in a pastoral and healing way. The Provincial will also determine whether restrictions to ministry are appropriate for the accused.

Throughout the process, the Province will strive to work with you in a compassionate and sensitive manner and in confidence, only sharing information with those in the Province who have a need to know, and/or with the appropriate state or local law enforcement agency.

Finally, the Province supports the exercise of your legal rights in all these matters.

**Contact Information:**

Safeguarding Coordinator  
4511 West Pine Boulevard  
St. Louis, MO 63108

**314-915-7168**

Confidential Email: [UCSSafeMinistry@Jesuits.org](mailto:UCSSafeMinistry@Jesuits.org)

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