



THE DIOCESE OF YAKIMA • PASTORAL OFFICE LA DIÓCESIS DE YAKIMA • CENTRO PASTORAL

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING THE DISCLOSURE OF NAMES OF CLERGY FOR WHOM ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL ABUSE OF A MINOR HAVE BEEN SUBSTANTIATED

1. Why are you publishing this list?

This disclosure is being made in the interest of further transparency and accountability, and to continue to encourage those who have suffered sexual abuse by those working on behalf of the Church to come forward.

2. Who made the decision to publish the list?

The decision was made by Bishop Joseph J. Tyson after consultation with and recommendation by the Diocesan Lay Advisory Board.

3. How was the list developed?

Some names were already known due to past administrative and legal actions. After the implementation of the Dallas Charter and the Essential Norms in 2002-2003, diocesan staff performed a comprehensive review of clergy personnel files. A few more names surfaced during legal proceedings from interviews with clergy involved in diocesan administration over the past 40 years. All of the names were then compiled for this review and were provided to the Diocesan Lay Advisory Board and to Bishop Tyson, who approved the publication of the names set forth in this disclosure.

4. Does the published list contain all of the names of clergy that the Bishop and Diocesan Lay Advisory Board (DLAB) determined were substantiated?

Yes. The list also contains the names of some clergy who may have been mistakenly or falsely reported as abusers, but were publicly named in litigation. Their names will remain on the list unless the DLAB recommends they be removed. In five other cases, reports of abuse could not be substantiated. Four of the men are deceased; one is no longer serving as a priest. Their names are not on the list. Nonetheless, in some instances the Diocese has provided pastoral support to those making the report. If more information is received to help substantiate a report, the names of the accused may be added to the list.

5. How does the Diocese respond to those persons making allegations of child sexual abuse by Church personnel?

The Diocese's Victim Assistance Coordinator is often the first person to receive a report of abuse, and offers ongoing assurance and support. In every case, the Diocese offers to pay for counseling for the person making the allegation, as well as for family members, if it is desired. In addition, in every case, the Bishop offers a pastoral meeting to apologize on behalf of the church and to assist in the healing process. We also ask the person's cooperation in investigating the abuse, either by law enforcement, or by the diocese if law enforcement is unable to do so.

6. What does the term "substantiated" mean?

When an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor by Church personnel is received, the first step is to determine whether the incident(s) could have taken place as described. For example, if an allegation is received that a priest abused a minor in Yakima in 1960, but that priest never served in Yakima and was not ordained until 1970, this particular allegation could not be accurate, and it is therefore unsubstantiated. If, on the other

hand, the incident(s) could have taken place as described, and thus has a semblance of truth, then an investigation takes place to determine whether the allegation is substantiated, through an admission of guilt, a judgment of guilt in criminal proceedings, or through a finding that an allegation is substantiated by a judgment that it is more likely true than not, or that such a finding is supported by a preponderance of the evidence.

7. In addition to offering pastoral care and payment for counseling, what other steps does the Diocese take when an allegation of abuse of a minor is received?

If the allegation has a semblance of truth, law enforcement is notified and the accused is placed on administrative leave. The Diocese cooperates fully with any law enforcement investigation. At the conclusion of any law enforcement investigation, the Diocese may also hire an independent investigator to conduct a separate investigation (unless the allegation has already been established by law enforcement or admitted by the accused). The results of the investigation(s) are presented to the Diocesan Lay Advisory Board for a determination of whether the allegation is substantiated and to make a recommendation to the Bishop. The Bishop arrives at a decision after reviewing the results of the investigation(s) and the Board's recommendation. If the allegation is determined to be substantiated, the accused is removed permanently from ministry. If the accused is a priest, in most instances he is laicized in a process through the Vatican.

8. What does permanent removal from ministry mean?

This status applies to a priest permanently removed from all public ministry while still remaining a priest. He is not permitted to administer sacraments, wear clerical attire, or present himself publicly as a priest. He is asked to pray for healing and to do penance on behalf of those who have been abused. A priest in this category stays in regular contact with another priest of the Diocese to be reminded of his obligations.

9. What does "laicized" mean?

A "laicized" priest or deacon has been removed from the clerical state and returned to the status of a lay person. He is no longer considered to be a priest or deacon. "Laicization" is a canonical process through the Vatican. Once laicized, the Diocese of Yakima has no further authority over the man, other than to notify the bishop of the diocese in which he is living of his presence there.

10. What is the definition of a minor for the purposes of this list?

Anyone under the age of 18. Anyone 18 or older still in high school is considered a vulnerable adult. The Lay Advisory Board also advises the bishop if abuse or misconduct is reported in such cases.

11. Do individuals on this list receive financial support?

Yes. One man is receiving supplemental health insurance coverage from the Diocese. Another is receiving money for living expenses while undergoing the laicization process. Assuming the Vatican approves the laicization request, that support will cease.

13. What steps has the Diocese taken to prevent sexual abuse of minors by church personnel?

The Diocese of Yakima has a Safe Environment Program with policies and procedures designed to prevent and recognize signs of sexual abuse of minors. The Diocese has been conducting criminal background checks of clergy, religious, seminarians and lay employees and volunteers who have ongoing unsupervised access to minors through church activities since 1989. Since 2002, these individuals have also been required to undergo training to recognize and respond to potential signs of sexual abuse of minors. Seminarians receive additional education through their schools. The hotline number to report allegations of abuse of a minor is 1-888-276-4490.