



The Diocese of Trenton and The Catholic Community of Our Lady of Good Counsel are committed to the initiatives outlined in the [U.S. Bishop's Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People](#) in regard to the reporting and investigation of sexual abuse allegations involving minors.

If you have been sexually abused as a minor by a member of the clergy or anyone representing the Catholic Church, or if you know of someone who was, you can report that abuse through the diocesan Abuse Hotline.

**To report the sexual abuse of minors call the Diocesan hotline at 1-888-296-2965 or email at [abuseline@dioceseoftrenton.org](mailto:abuseline@dioceseoftrenton.org)**

*The Diocese of Trenton reports any allegations of sexual abuse to the appropriate law enforcement agencies. Anyone with an allegation is also encouraged to provide that information to local law enforcement authorities.*

## **What Happens When Sexual Abuse of Minors is Reported?**

1. A complaint of sexual abuse against a minor by a member of the clergy or lay representative of the Church can be made to the Diocese via the Abuse Hotline at 1-888-296-2965 or via e-mail at [abuseline@dioceseoftrenton.org](mailto:abuseline@dioceseoftrenton.org).
2. Upon receiving the complaint, the Diocesan Response Officer will respond to the complainant/victim within 24 hours.
3. Law enforcement will be contacted immediately afterwards regarding all allegations of sexual abuse of minors.
4. The Diocesan Victims' Assistance Coordinator will then be contacted and, in turn, will contact the complainant/victim promptly.
5. Allegations of sexual abuse of a minor are evaluated by the Diocesan Review Board and the findings are forwarded to the Bishop.

The Diocese of Trenton has an understanding with the New Jersey Division of Criminal Justice that includes specific criteria and procedures for reporting sexual offenses to law enforcement. This Memorandum of Understanding requires that the diocese report all allegations of sexual offenses to law enforcement. The diocese has appointed a designated liaison to assist in compliance with the terms of the Memorandum. Further

details on the Diocese Child Protection Efforts can be found at <https://dioceseoftrenton.org/about-child-protection-efforts>

## **How to report a complaint of sexual abuse**

Complaints of sexual abuse may be reported in any of the following ways:

- A telephone call to the Diocesan Abuse Hotline: 1-888-296-2965.
- Email to confidential address : [abuseline@dioceseoftrenton.org](mailto:abuseline@dioceseoftrenton.org)
- Letter addressed to:

Mr. Joseph Bianchi  
Executive Director of the Office of Child and Youth Protection  
Diocese of Trenton  
701 Lawrenceville Road  
P O Box 5147  
Trenton, NJ 08638-0147

## **How are complaints handled?**

Whether the victim is an adult or a minor, all complaints of sexual abuse are to be forwarded to the Diocesan Response Officer. This contact information is shown above, published on the diocesan website, and available at every parish and school in the Diocese.

## **What happens next?**

The Diocesan Response Officer forwards all complaints to the Diocesan Liaison to the Prosecutors' Offices, the Victim Assistance Coordinators, the Review Board Coordinator and the Bishop of the Diocese of Trenton. The liaison will forward any complaint of sexual abuse to the prosecuting authorities and, where required, to New Jersey's Department of Youth and Family Services.

The Victim Assistance Coordinator, Maureen Fitzsimmons , will arrange for the immediate care of persons who claim to have been sexually abused and will maintain records and coordinate and monitor follow-up care.

The Diocesan Review Board Coordinator will schedule a meeting of the Diocesan Review Board to review the complaint and consult with the Bishop regarding the preliminary investigation of the accusation.

If the act of sexual abuse of a minor by a priest or deacon is admitted, or it is established after an appropriate process, the offender will be removed from ministry.