



APENDIX
CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE PROTECTION OF MINORS
MINISTRY FRIENDS OF JESUS AND MARY USA (MFJM)
(June 10, 2024)

The primary objective is to ensure the safety of minors (“minors”) participating with MFJM.

The responsibility to comply with the Code of Conduct is not optional. The members of MFJM that do not comply will be subject to corrective measures established by the Board of Directors of MFJM. The infractions of these guides are considered grave and will be investigated and resolved according to these guidelines. The corrective measures may range from a verbal admonition to expulsion from the MFJM according to the nature of the violation.

I. *Appropriate Conduct*

1. Conduct with Minors:

The members of the clergy, the employees, and volunteers working with MFJM prayer groups (“the members”) which interact with minors will maintain an open, transparent, and trustworthy relationship with minors.

- 1.1 The members should be aware of the vulnerability of others when working alone, and should therefore work as a team when working with minors.
 - 1.1.1 Should establish an appropriate ratio between the number of adults and minors for all activities.
 - 1.1.2 The appropriate proportion should consider a) the age and development of minors, b) the level of risk of isolation of the activity and c) the place of the activity and the possibility that others can casually observe the activity.
- 1.2 Physical contact with a minor can be misinterpreted and should occur publicly and be appropriate (not sexual in nature). No physical contact should occur in private.
 - 1.2.1 Except in emergencies, physical contact between adults and minors should only be initiated by the minor. By rule, adults should not initiate any physical conduct except a pat on the upper back, a handshake, or a high five as positive reinforcement or a greeting.
- 1.3 Members will not possess or use illegal drugs or drink alcohol when working with minors. MAJM has a policy of zero tolerance and will employ appropriate corrective measures.

2. Sexual Conduct

- 2.1 Members of MFJM shall not establish intimate relationships with minors or others in the ministry. Members should always act in a professional manner and give example of Christian chastity in all moments.
- 2.2 Accusations of inappropriate sexual conduct with minors will be denounced to civil

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authorities and to MFJM in any circumstances. The procedures of the Archdiocese of Miami and the civil authorities will be followed to protect the rights of all involved.

- 2.3 The members should know and understand the rules of child abuse and the requirements for denouncing violations and should comply with them.

3. Electronic Communications

All information and all messages created, sent, received, and saved using the MFJM resources of communication are exclusive property of MFJM; No user may have any expectation of privacy. All communications should reflect Catholic teachings and values.

4. Electronic Communications with Minors

No member should use electronic communication with minors that participate in MFJM without written authorization from the directors of MFJM and the parents or guardian of the minor.

Electronic communication includes all aspects of social media.

- 4.1 *No member shall collect email addresses, phone numbers, nor any other means of communication with minors without the permission of parents or guardians.*
 - 4.1.1 *The parents or guardians should designate, in writing, what method of communication with minors is acceptable and they should provide the contact information.*
 - 4.1.2 *With minors in grade and junior high school, members should communicate directly with the parents or guardians.*
 - 4.1.3 *In case of any direct communication with minors, members should copy the parents or guardians.*
- 4.2 *The electronic communication should be brief and to the point using appropriate language for the minor and the parent or tutor.*
- 4.3 *The appropriate limits that should be respected when communicating in person or verbally with minors or their parents/guardian is applicable to electronic communication.*
- 4.4 *The following guides apply to the following forms of electronic communication:*
 - i. *Cell phones, text, Twitter, Instagram and other messaging services:*
Except in an emergency, members shall not call a minor directly (to their phone) and instead will call the parent's or the family phone.
 - ii. *The members will not share their phone numbers with minors unless first approved by their parents or guardians.*
- 4.4.2 *Email - Members cannot communicate with minors via email.*
- 4.4.3 *Social Media Sites*
 - i. *Members should not use social media sites to communicate with minors. MFJM can set up a site for communication with a group. The site should be approved by the MFJM Board and the parish and should have a name that reflects its official nature. More than one person should supervise the site.*
 - ii. *However, only the administrator of MFJM should have the passwords and*



administration of the site.

- iii. No personal contact information should be included in the profile nor in the accounts employed by the MAJM representative.*
- iv. Only the email addresses and telephone numbers for the offices or persons in charge can be included.*
- v. All MFJM accounts should protect privacy. The MFJM sites should not try to attract participation of minors.*
- vi. Members should ignore friend requests from minors.*
- vii. MFJM must obtain permission from parents or guardians to publish pictures of minors. Minors should not be identified in a picture.*
- viii. Members should only comment on MFJM issues on the site.*
- ix. Members should not instant message minors on the sites unless the messages are archived and reviewed by a supervisor.*
- x. The supervisors should review the sites and should immediately delete any inappropriate publications.*
- xi. MFJM should also be vigilant of sites created by third parties regarding MFJM. If inappropriate content is observed, the sites, users, or founders of the site should be denounced and forced to close the site. This includes the unauthorized use of the logo, bullying, sexual harassment, or defamatory language.*

5. Behavior Monitoring

Members should monitor their own behavior and those of others in MFJM to prevent and recognize risky, inappropriate behavior to provide the appropriate response and to reinforce appropriate behavior.

- 5.1** Members will participate in the archdiocese training (such as “Protecting the Children of God”) to learn to recognize alerting signs and risky behaviors. All members have the responsibility to maintain a “healthy suspicion” of all adults.
- 5.2** All members should understand the limits established by MAJM stipulated in the Code of Conduct and be able to identify any violations. They should pay special attention to adults that show favoritism, give gifts, organize unsupervised meetings alone with a minor, or other similar behavior.
- 5.3** Members should identify potentially dangerous situations and establish plans to avoid them.
- 5.4** Members should reinforce appropriate behavior and correct inappropriate behavior.
- 5.5** The members should report inappropriate behavior to the responsible supervisor.
- 5.6** Members should document any inappropriate behavior in writing and with evidence.
- 5.7** MFJM should develop a tracking system for credible accusations of members including reporting forms.
 - 5.7.1** Include sexual abuse of minors with serious physical injuries. The forms should be filled out by members that observe the injuries or hear about the abuse. All abuse accusations should be examined by an examiner (internal or external)



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trained to evaluate the politics and procedures of MFJM. Reports should include the results of the cases of abuse.

- i. The investigator should include recommendations on improving policies and procedures to avoid future cases.
- ii. Training or retraining to clarify procedures and to correct failure to follow adequate procedures.

5.8 Members should not investigate, but can, if necessary, ask questions to clarify information to provide an accurate suspicion or accusation to the proper authorities.

5.8.1 The name of the parts involved is important to an accusation.

5.8.2 Basic information to clarify the nature of the interaction to be sure that the complaint is necessary. (For example, to be sure what the minor meant when using certain words which may have various interpretations.)

Every member must read the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Minors and sign the General Declaration of Intention. (See below)

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II. General Declaration of Intention

I will do the following:

- Try to treat all persons with respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration.
- Avoid situations of isolation or meetings alone with minors in activities of Ministry Friends of Jesus and Mary ("MFJM").
- Provide positive reinforcement to minors instead of criticism, competition, or comparisons.
- Refuse to accept expensive gifts from minors or their parents without previous permission from the supervisor.
- Abstain from giving gifts without prior approval in writing from parents or guardians and the supervisor.
- Denounce any supposed case of abuse to the appropriate contact within MFJM and the local entity of services or protection of minors (Child Protection Services). I understand that not denouncing a supposed case of abuse to the civil authorities is a violation of the law.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of the abuse of minors.
- Comply with the norms of behavior in the *Code of Conduct* regarding electronic communications.

I will not do the following:

- Not smoke or use tobacco products in the presence of minors.
- While complying with my responsibilities in MFJM, not consume or possess alcoholic beverages nor be under their effects.
- Not use or possess illegal drugs nor be under their effects at any time.
- Not expose minors to any health risks (for example, expose them to cases of fever or other contagious diseases).
- Abstain from hitting, punishing, shaking, humiliating, threatening, and degrading a minor and taking disciplinary measures which scare or humiliate them.
- Touch any child or youth in a sexual or inappropriate way.
- Take advantage of another person in any way, particularly for sexual purposes.
- Show sexually explicit or pornographic content or images to minors; nor will that content be accessible in my possession during work with MFJM. Also, not possess any form of child pornography.
- Not use obscene language or say inappropriate jokes in the presence of minors.
- Not communicate with any minors electronically, nor through social media, without prior approval from the supervisor or the parents.
- Not take pictures of minors without parental permission.

Signature

Printed Name