

The Diocese of Peoria is dedicated to protecting children and to helping victim-survivors of sexual abuse. As an initial step, all allegations of sexual abuse received by the Diocese are reported to the appropriate civil authorities. Individuals may also contact the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-25.ABUSE. The Diocese offers victim-survivors the help of our Victim Assistance Coordinator, available via the Diocesan Victim Assistance Hotline at (309) 677-7082. The Victim Assistance Coordinator promptly contacts any individual reporting sexual abuse as a minor by any personnel of the Diocese for purposes of offering pastoral outreach and assistance.

Per diocesan policy, upon receipt of an allegation of the sexual abuse of a minor by a cleric, the bishop is informed, and the diocesan investigation begins. The same investigative process is followed whether the accused is alive, deceased, resigned, or laicized. If the cleric is in active ministry, the Bishop may remove the cleric from ministry while the investigation is ongoing. If civil authorities conduct a criminal investigation against the cleric, the Diocese will cooperate with civil authorities and defer its own investigation until any public inquiry is concluded.

All allegations of sexual abuse of minors are submitted to the Sexual Misconduct Review Board except where the cleric already appears on the Diocese's list of credibly accused clerics. If, after appropriate investigation, allegations of sexual abuse of a minor against a deceased, laicized or resigned cleric are presented to and substantiated by the Sexual Misconduct Review Board, and the determination accepted by the Bishop, the Diocese will add the cleric's name to the list of clerics with credible allegations of sexual abuse of a minor. In the case of active clerics, following a substantiated allegation the Diocese will permanently remove the cleric from ministry and add the cleric's name to the list of clerics with credible allegations of sexual abuse of a minor. When an allegation is found to be unsubstantiated, the cleric is returned to active ministry.

Additionally, the Catholic Bishop Reporting Service has been established to receive reports of sexual abuse and related misconduct by bishops, and to relay those reports to proper church authorities for investigation. Where a report includes a crime, such as the sexual abuse of a minor, it is also reported to civil authorities. Reports may be filed at ReportBishopAbuse.org or by calling (800) 276-1562 to file a report.