



## Office of Child and Youth Protection



### QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER | August 2024

*I hope that you have had a wonderful summer! As we gear up for a new school year, I want to thank you all again for your efforts to maintain safe environments for our children, our other vulnerable populations, and all who minister to and with them. As Pope Francis wrote, “Christ himself, in fact, has entrusted us with the care and protection of the weakest and defenseless: ‘whoever receives one child such as this in my name receives me’ (Mt 18:5). Therefore, we all have the duty to welcome openheartedly minors and vulnerable persons and to create a safe environment for them, with their interests as a priority.”*

*Thank you for all you do and continued prayers for all of you in your work and ministries!*

*Peace,*

*Leah Heffernan  
Director, Office of Child and Youth Protection*

### Important OCYP Updates

- Thank you to those who participated in the data collection for the 2024 USCCB Audit. We are in the process of completing the audit tool to be submitted to the USCCB.

- We have a new member to our team! Dorothy Vodicka joined OCYP in April. She is available to offer support with VIRTUS issues and/or questions. You can reach Dorothy at [dvodicka@diocesofjoliet.org](mailto:dvodicka@diocesofjoliet.org).
- The Diocese of Joliet's *Policy Regarding Sexual Abuse of Minors and Vulnerable Adults by Church Personnel* and *Standards of Behavior for Those Working with Minors and Vulnerable Adults* are now available in Spanish and Polish. You will find this information under the [Resources](#) tab on [OCYP's website](#).
- For information regarding safe environment compliance requirements based upon one's role in a parish, school, and/or diocesan office, please see the [Compliance Requirements Chart](#), which was most recently revised on May 20, 2024.

## For Pastors, Principals, and Directors

### **REMINDER: Pastors, Principals, and BCC Offices**

If you have a change in local administrator at your location, OCYP requires either an email or letter from the pastor, principal, or Blanchette Catholic Center director/office administrator to inform us of the change. You can reach us at [SafeEnvironment@dioceseofjoliet.org](mailto:SafeEnvironment@dioceseofjoliet.org).

If you are a pastor, principal, or BCC director and you do not have local administrator rights in VIRTUS and would like to have them assigned to your account, please contact us at [SafeEnvironment@dioceseofjoliet.org](mailto:SafeEnvironment@dioceseofjoliet.org).

In order for OCYP to assign local administrator rights to an individual's VIRTUS account, the individual must be compliant with diocesan safe environment requirements. When rights are assigned, OCYP will also provide information on local administrator training.

## For Local Administrators

### **REMINDER: Continuing Education**

Per diocesan policies, all church personnel (includes clergy, seminarians, diaconal candidates, religious, employees, and volunteers who minister with minors and/or vulnerable adults) are to take a VIRTUS Protecting God's Children (PGC) training prior to ministering/ working/ volunteering. Church personnel who have involvement with minors and/or vulnerable adults will also have an online Continuing Education (CE) training assigned to their VIRTUS account every three years thereafter. Once the CE is assigned to an individual's VIRTUS account, the individual has 14 days from the date the CE is assigned to complete it. Once the CE training is completed, it will be automatically recorded in their VIRTUS account.

## QUARTERLY COMPLIANCE CYCLE

- Resuming in August 2024, compliance reports will be run by OCYP on a quarterly basis and then sent to the local administrator and pastor/principal/BCC director.
- Active VIRTUS users who are not compliant will be given 2 weeks to complete any missing compliance.
- Those not compliant should be advised that they may not work or volunteer until they are compliant.

### Recent updates to the VIRTUS online platform

#### 1. Search Feature in VIRTUS:



We have **updated the search feature** within “New User Signups” and “User Search” to provide more options, such as filtering by location and/or role. When under “New User Signups” or “User Search” you will now see this screen where you can search by first name, last name, login ID, etc. The default is “all” statuses, but you can switch this to show active or inactive only. You can also update the number under “Rows” if you would prefer to display more names on the page at one time.

**User Search**

Use this page to search for users.

First Name: [First Name] Last Name: [Last Name] Email: [Email]

Login: [Login] Database ID: [Database ID] Date of Birth: [Date of Birth] (ex. 10/28/2006)

Location: [- All -] Role: [- All -] Profile: [- All -] Continuing Training Status: [- All -] Active: [- All -]

Search Reset Cancel Rows: 50

You can also search for a user by location, role, and active/inactive status.

Location: [- All -] Role: [- All -] Active: [- All -]

Search Reset Cancel

The default search is set to search for both active and inactive users. To view only active users, under “Active” select “Yes.” To view only inactive users, under “Active” select “No.”

Active: [- All -] (selected)  
Yes  
No

#### 2. Reminders!

- Run compliance reports (CR) at least monthly
  - Compare CR with lists of the following church personnel at your location: employees, independent contractors (see [compliance chart](#) for specifics), school volunteers (includes coaches), parish ministry volunteers who work with minors or vulnerable adults.
  - Every volunteer must have a Primary and Secondary role in VIRTUS. See [compliance chart](#) for more information.
  - Please remind VIRTUS users to:

- Log onto their VIRTUS account monthly and click on their Home tab to check for any missing compliance.
  - Update their contact information in their VIRTUS account by going to their Home tab and clicking on the “My Info” box.
- When you are ending the Role of an individual at your location, PLEASE be sure to end the Primary and Secondary (if applicable) Roles!
- All active user accounts are to be compliant. If there is a user not currently working/volunteering at your location, please either make the account inactive or end the Role(s).
- Review Selection.com [Fastrax](#) weekly
  - For instructions on reviewing Fastrax, please see the [power point](#) from the March 2024 local administrator training.

*If you need ANY help with safe environment compliance at your location, please contact us at [SafeEnvironment@dioceseofjoliet.org](mailto:SafeEnvironment@dioceseofjoliet.org)*

#### OCYP STAFF

Leah Heffernan  
 Director, Office of Child and Youth Protection  
[lheffernan@dioceseofjoliet.org](mailto:lheffernan@dioceseofjoliet.org)  
 (815) 221-6116

Lori Chassee  
 Victim Assistance Coordinator  
[lchassee@dioceseofjoliet.org](mailto:lchassee@dioceseofjoliet.org)  
 (815) 263-6467

Maria Turone  
 Administrative Assistant  
[mturone@dioceseofjoliet.org](mailto:mturone@dioceseofjoliet.org)

Dorothy Vodicka  
 Shared Administrative Assistant  
[dvodicka@dioceseofjoliet.org](mailto:dvodicka@dioceseofjoliet.org)

DIOCESE OF JOLIET



We serve, support, and collaborate with the clergy, religious, and lay leaders of our parishes, schools, and ministries to animate the mission of the Catholic Church through the bishop's vision of Catechesis, Evangelization, and Faith into Action.

**(815) 221-6100**  
**16555 Weber Rd**  
**Crest Hill, IL 60403**

**OFFICE HOURS**  
 Monday to Thursday  
 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
 Friday  
 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

