

Essential Component Number Three—Sexual Misconduct Awareness Training: VIRTUS Live Training Required Prior to Day-One of Employment or Volunteering

Dioceses/eparchies are to maintain “safe environment” programs which the diocesan/eparchial bishop deems to be in accord with Catholic moral principles. They are to be conducted cooperatively with parents, civil authorities, educators, and community organizations **to provide education and training for children, youth, parents, ministers, educators, volunteers, and others about ways to make and maintain a safe environment for children and young people.** Dioceses/eparchies are to make clear to clergy and all members of the community the standards of conduct for clergy and other persons in positions of trust with regard to children.

Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People Article 12

Article 12 clearly sets forward the requirement to “provide education and training” for various groups of individuals. Essential Component Three addresses the training for “ministers, educators, volunteers, and others about ways to make and maintain a safe environment for children and young people.” The Diocese of New Ulm requires this training for all clerics (priests and deacons), all seminarians and deaconate candidates, all diocesan, parish, and school employees, and all volunteers who have regular or unsupervised contact with minors. Employees 16 years of age and over are required to take this adult training.

Individuals being employed or volunteering for the diocese, a parish, a Catholic school, or a diocesan entity are required to attend the training regardless of any licensing, training, profession, or experiences the individual may have had. This includes but is not limited to: law enforcement, nurses, doctors, counselors, psychologists, teachers, substitute teachers, administrators, and probation officers.

Bishop John M. LeVoir has approved the VIRTUS training program to be used within the Diocese of New Ulm for adult training of pastoral leaders, employees, and volunteers. See the attached “Affirmation of the Safe Environment Program of the Diocese of New Ulm.”

Day-One Education Requirement

VIRTUS: Protecting God’s Children for Adults Awareness Session Attendance – VIRTUS live training is a three hour awareness session which better equips adults to protect children and youth in the world around them.

VIRTUS programs are designed to help educate awareness to sexual misconduct wrongdoing and promote “right-doing.” The VIRTUS programs empower organizations and people to better control risk and improve the lives of all those who interact with the Church.

Sessions are offered on a regular basis throughout the Diocese. Check the diocesan Web site www.dnu.org or online at www.virtus.org. Individuals are to register online for the training session. Instructions for registration are found in “Introduction” section of this manual and are repeated at the end of this section as well. Individuals are to go to the VIRTUS site and create login information—setting up their USER ID and PASSWORD. The site will then lead them through a series of pages. The individual is then able to use the login information to view their registration and account information at any time.

If an individual attended a live 3-hour VIRTUS session within the diocese or within another arch/diocese, it is not necessary for the individual to attend another live VIRTUS session. Attendance at the VIRTUS live training session is currently a one-time requirement and does not need to be repeated. The session must have been a VIRTUS program session—no other programs qualify for this exception. The local safe environment coordinator can email the diocesan safe environment office personnel with the name of the arch/diocese where the individual attended the VIRTUS session as well as the location and approximate date of the session. The diocesan safe environment office personnel will verify the attendance through the VIRTUS company main office. If verification is received, VIRTUS will transfer the individual's training record to the VIRTUS account to this diocese. Or, a record can be duplicated if the individual needs to remain active in the other arch/diocese.

60 Day Grace Period - VIRTUS 3 Hour Training Session

The diocese allows a grace period, in some situations, of 60 days for meeting the requirement if the person is involved with a longer-term, ongoing ministry. If there is a serious reason that prevents attendance prior to employment or volunteering, a grace period of 60 days is allowed, but this only pertains to long-term ministries lasting a school or catechetical year. All short-term ministries, such as field trip chaperones, Vacation Bible School volunteers, or specific youth ministry event volunteers, must complete VIRTUS training prior to beginning to volunteer.

Ongoing Assigned VIRTUS trainings

In addition to the Day-One Essential Three requirements, ongoing VIRTUS online training is also required.

VIRTUS Online is the Web-based platform that provides 24 hours, seven days a week access to ongoing awareness education. Employees and volunteers are assigned this online training according to a schedule:

- Volunteers: Assigned an annual module each fall
- Employees: Assigned quarterly modules
- Clergy and Safe Environment Program Administrators, Coordinators & Training Facilitators: Assigned monthly bulletins

Clergy and safe environment program administrators, coordinators and training facilitators are required to read monthly bulletins at www.virtus.org. These short bulletins are followed by a one question quiz which must be completed successfully in order for the person to be noted as having completed the training bulletin.

Employees and volunteers are not required to complete the monthly online training bulletins, they are assigned other trainings—either quarterly or annual modules. The New Ulm Diocese is one of the few dioceses throughout the country that has the varied training assignments—the annual requirement for volunteers and the quarterly for most employees. The company will not delete the monthly bulletins from appearing for just our diocese so these will also appear on these accounts and may cause confusion for some individuals.

Individuals needing to complete an assigned online training (whether it is a monthly bulletin, a quarterly online module, or the volunteer training module) will have an email from system@virtus.org sent to the email address entered when registering online.

Individuals may access the assigned online training by logging on to www.virtus.org, then clicking on the "My Training" tab at the top of the page. The current training report will appear. Please note that if an individual is not a member of the monthly bulletin group previously identified he or she does not need to read the monthly bulletins but they may appear on your report along with the modules that are required. Access each training module assigned by clicking on that title.

Anyone may read featured articles at www.virtus.org at any time. There is a new article there every 2 to 4 weeks. Individuals do not need to sign-in to read the general article. Priests, Catholic school principals, religious education directors, and youth ministers may want to highlight an article in a parish bulletin or newsletter and direct parents to the Web site articles.