

**DIOCESE OF OAKLAND  
BY-LAWS OF THE MINOR DIOCESAN REVIEW BOARD**

**PREAMBLE**

Responding to the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* (Article 2) and the *Essential Norms for Diocesan/Eparchial Policies Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests or Deacons* (Norms 4 & 5), the Bishop of the Diocese of Oakland (hereinafter referred to as "Bishop") hereby establishes a Minor Diocesan Review Board (hereinafter called the "MDRB").

**ARTICLE ONE: PURPOSE**

The MDRB is a confidential consultative body of the Bishop, the purpose of which is to assist him in addressing allegations of sexual abuse by clergy (priests and deacons) in a prompt, comprehensive, and pastoral manner with due regard for the rights of all involved. The MDRB consults on matter related to clergy sexual abuse of children and vulnerable adults only (hereinafter referred to as "minors"). This means sexual contact with and harassment of such persons, as well as the distribution or sharing of child pornography. A child is anyone under 18 years of age. A vulnerable adult is any person in a state of infirmity, physical or mental deficiency, or deprivation of personal liberty which, in fact, even occasionally limits their ability to understand or to want or otherwise resist the offense.

**ARTICLE TWO: FUNCTIONS**

The functions of the MDRB are:

- a. To assist Bishop in discharging his responsibilities for assessing and reviewing allegations of sexual abuse of minors by clergy (this includes making recommendations to Bishop on the credibility of the accusations and actions to be taken in response);
- b. To follow the procedures set forth in the Policy of the Diocese of Oakland Clergy Sexual Abuse of Children and Vulnerable Adults; and
- c. To review diocesan policies and programs for dealing with sexual abuse of minors by clergy.

**ARTICLE THREE: BISHOP**

Bishop presides over all meetings of the MDRB, either personally or through a delegate. He prepares or causes to be prepared the agenda for each meeting. Only Bishop, or his delegate, will be the public spokesperson for the MDRB.

## **ARTICLE FOUR: MEMBERSHIP**

The MDRB will be composed of the following:

- a. At least five, but not more than nine, persons of outstanding integrity and good judgment in full communion with the Church;
- b. A majority of members who are lay persons and who are not in the employ of the Diocese of Oakland;
- c. At least one priest who is a pastor or parochial administrator who is an experienced and respected member of the Diocese of Oakland; and
- d. At least one person who has particular expertise in the treatment of sexual abuse of minors.

## **ARTICLE FIVE: TERMS**

MDRB members shall be appointed by Bishop for a term of five (5) years, which may be extended for an additional five (5) years, or less, at Bishop's sole discretion.

## **ARTICLE SIX: MEETINGS**

The MDRB shall meet quarterly. Additional meetings will be held on an as needed basis should the need present. To the extent possible, the Chancellor, Promoter of Justice, and the Diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator shall participate in all MDRB meetings with the MDRB members. Communications during MDRB meetings are strictly confidential to allow for a full discussion of sensitive and private matters.