



ARCHDIOCESE  
of BALTIMORE

## **Frequently Asked Questions about the Report of the Maryland Office of the Attorney General on the historical handling of allegations of Child Sexual Abuse by the Archdiocese of Baltimore**

### **Why did the Attorney General initiate an investigation into the Archdiocese?**

*Following a similar investigation of the Catholic Church by the Pennsylvania Attorney General in 2018, the Maryland Office of the Attorney General began an investigation into sexual abuse and the Archdiocese of Baltimore's response to allegations of child sexual abuse over its history.*

### **How did the Archdiocese cooperate with the investigation?**

*During the four-year investigation, the Archdiocese cooperated fully, including by providing hundreds of thousands of pages of requested documents and responding to numerous requests for information in conversations with investigators.*

### **Will the Archdiocese continue to cooperate with the ensuing legal process?**

*The Archdiocese understands that the Maryland Attorney General is seeking court authorization to release a report relating to its investigation. The Archdiocese will continue to cooperate with any legal processes relating to the Attorney General's investigation. The Archdiocese is participating in the court process, and understands that the courts rightly expect the law on grand jury materials to be followed and due process to be respected.*

*The Archdiocese does not object to the release of a report which accurately details the heinous crime and sin of child sexual abuse perpetrated by members of the clearly and also fairly and accurately details how the Archdiocese responded to such allegations, even when the response fell far short of how such allegations are handled today. The motion filed by the Maryland Attorney General does not reflect the Archdiocese's current and decades-long strong pastoral response and handling of allegations of child sexual abuse.*

### **Did the Archdiocese withhold requested information from the Attorney General's office?**

*No, the Archdiocese cooperated fully with all requests for documents and information.*

**Has the Archdiocese publicly disclosed the names of priests and others working for the Church who have been credibly accused of child sexual abuse?**

*Yes, in 2002, the Archdiocese of Baltimore became one of the first dioceses in the United States and the world to voluntarily publicly disclose the names of all clergy who had been credibly accused of abuse, dating back to the 1930s. It did so in a letter mailed to all registered households and publication in the diocesan newspaper and website. The Attorney General's motion references the 43 individuals accused of abuse but not disclosed by the Archdiocese. It is believed that that number includes individuals who were deceased at the time the allegation was reported, individuals who were never assigned to ministry within the Archdiocese, and laity (who are not part of the Archdiocese's list of accused priests). The Archdiocese's policy for determining whether to include a deceased priest on its list requires a third-party to corroborate a single allegation made against a deceased cleric or a second allegation of abuse to be received against him.*

**Is there anyone working in the Church today, including members of the clergy, who is credibly accused of sexual abuse of a child?**

*No, in accordance with diocesan policy and with the Charter for the Protection of Children & Young People, there is no one in ministry today—whether clergy or laity, employee or volunteer, who has been credibly accused of child abuse. Any such individuals are removed and permanently barred from ministry and reported to law enforcement, including the Maryland Attorney General. This has been the practice of the Archdiocese for more than two decades.*

**Are the failures cited in the Attorney General's motion still occurring today?**

*The past failures to appropriately respond to allegations of abuse do not reflect the Church's current and decades-long strong pastoral response and handling of allegations. Information on how the Archdiocese has been responding for the last 3 decades to stop the abuse of our most vulnerable can be found at <https://www.archbalt.org/promise-protect-promote-healing/>*

**What measures are in place to ensure those serving in the Church are safe for ministry?**

*The Archdiocese has a zero-tolerance policy in place for anyone credibly accused of abuse, meaning he/she is immediately and permanently barred from all ministry. In addition, all employees, volunteers and youth are trained to detect and report suspected abuse. In addition, all employees and volunteers undergo mandatory background checks and safe environment training. An independent review board, which includes diverse and non-Catholic professionals, reviews the Church's handling of all allegations of abuse and audits are conducted to ensure compliance with all laws and policies governing the protection of children.*

**What steps does the Archdiocese take when someone is accused of abuse?**

*The allegation is immediately reported to law enforcement and the alleged perpetrator is temporarily removed from ministry. Outreach is also extended to the victim and an investigation of the allegation is conducted, with care taken not to interfere with any parallel investigation by law enforcement. Once a determination of credibility has been made the perpetrator's removal is made permanent and information is shared with the public about the abuse.*

## **How does the Church notify the public when a minister of the Church, either clergy or laity, has been accused of abusing a child?**

*The Archdiocese utilizes a number of methods to inform the public about an allegation of abuse, including by including the individual's name on its list of credibly accused clergy on the Archdiocesan website, notices in *The Catholic Review*, parish bulletins, direct emails, news media and in-person meetings.*

## **How has the Archdiocese tried to assist those who have been abused by a minister of the Church?**

*The Archdiocese offers counseling assistance to victims and their families as well as direct financial assistance, including mediated financial settlements for those survivors who no longer want the Church to be directly involved for payment of their counseling. Victims are also offered a personal meeting with the Archbishop or other church leader if the victim believes it would be helpful. The Archdiocese has also sought to acknowledge and honor the victims of sexual abuse and to validate their claims by posting the names of credibly accused priests on the Archdiocesan website at <https://www.archbalt.org/child-and-youth-protection/priests-and-brothers-accused-of-abuse/>.*

## **Does anyone oversee the Church's handling of allegations of child sexual abuse?**

*An independent review board, including diverse and non-Catholic professionals with experience in related fields such as law enforcement, social work, education, and medicine, meet regularly throughout the year to review the Church's handling of all allegations of abuse by Church personnel.*

## **If I want to report a suspected case of abuse, how can I do that?**

*Anyone who has reason to believe a child has been abused should report that to Child Protective Services and law enforcement. Reports of suspected cases of abuse can also be made, including anonymously, through calling the Archdiocesan victim assistance line (866-417-7469). Additional reporting options may be found at <https://www.archbalt.org/child-and-youth-protection/make-a-report/>*

## **If I was abused and want to receive assistance from the Archdiocese, how can I?**

*Survivors of abuse committed by a minister of the Church in the Archdiocese wishing to receive assistance can do so by calling the Archdiocesan victim assistance line at (866-417-7469).*