

## ***THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF COLORADO***

### **POLICY AND DEFINITION OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT**

#### **POLICY**

The policy of the Episcopal Diocese of Colorado is that sexual misconduct involving pastoral care by any member of the clergy, staff person, or volunteer will not be tolerated. Clergy and other Christian workers need to recognize the dynamics of their relationships and the potential for harm and abuse. Vulnerabilities are exposed, and the very strengths of these relationships, i.e., the expression of care and love, can easily take on inappropriate forms.

In particular, clergy and those responsible for parish, educational, or recreational activities are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards in all their relationships with those for whom they have responsibility. The pastoral counseling and care functions create a special relationship of trust and power. Exploitation of this trust and power through sexual misconduct as defined below will not be tolerated. All clergy and other professionals in the service of the diocese are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards in all relationships in every pastoral and counseling situation. Clergy and other professionals in the employ or service of the diocese or any of its parishes or agencies are expected to exhibit unquestionable ethical behavior with their colleagues at all times. Sexual misconduct as defined below will not be tolerated.

#### **DEFINITION**

The Episcopal Diocese of Colorado defines sexual misconduct as follows:

- Abuse** Sexual abuse or sexual molestation of any person, including but not limited to, any sexual involvement or sexual contact with a person who is a minor or who is legally incompetent; or
- Harassment** Sexual harassment in a situation where there is an employment, mentor or colleague relationship between the persons involved, including but not limited to, sexually-oriented humor or language; questions or comments about sexual behavior or preference unrelated to employment qualifications; undesired physical contact; inappropriate comments about clothing or physical appearance; or repeated requests for social engagements; or
- Exploitation** Sexual exploitation, including but not limited to, the development of or the attempt to develop a sexual relationship between a cleric, employee or volunteer and a person with whom he/she has a pastoral and/or fiduciary relationship, whether or not there is apparent consent from the individual.

*Pastoral relationship* means: A relationship between a cleric, employee, or volunteer and any person to whom such cleric, employee, or volunteer provides pastoral counseling, pastoral care, spiritual direction, or spiritual guidance or from whom such cleric, employee, or volunteer has received confession or confidential or privileged information.