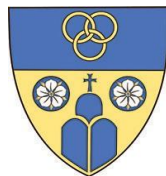




REVIEW
COMMITTEE
POLICY
For a Safe Environment

Mandated on December 20, 2023



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1. Establishment and Purpose

- 1.1. The Review Committee is intended as a consultative body to the Abbot and has no independent power or authority. Its primary purpose is to provide advice and direction to the Abbey on its management of all cases of sexual misconduct, which for this policy includes sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, and sexual harassment.
- 1.2. The Review Committee will review all allegations, as set out under 1.1 and 1.6 of this policy, against Monks of Westminster Abbey.
- 1.3. The Abbey shall notify the Review Committee as soon as possible after receiving an allegation.
- 1.4. The Review Committee will report its conclusions and recommendations to the Abbot with respect to matters such as:
 - 1.4.1. the disposition of the case;
 - 1.4.2. whether there exists sufficient credible evidence of sexual misconduct by the Respondent;
 - 1.4.3. on the available evidence, if any limitations or conditions on a return to ministry may be in the best interest of the Respondent or other parties concerned or may be otherwise appropriate;
 - 1.4.4. how best to assist the Respondent in any return to ministry including the restoration of reputation if falsely accused; and
 - 1.4.5. the appropriate pastoral response to the Reporter, and others who have experienced harm.
- 1.5. The Review Committee is also responsible for providing its recommendations with respect to the development of new Safety Plans.¹ Any existing Safety Plans will also be reviewed by the Review Committee on an annual basis to determine if and what modifications are needed.
- 1.6. The Review Committee's purpose further extends to reviewing situations where a Respondent has engaged in boundary violations or where the boundary violation is considered to be egregious.² Following deliberation as described in Section 7 below, the Review Committee will also provide recommendations for the development of an Intervention Plan to help the Respondent cease the problematic behavior.
- 1.7. In collaboration with the Review Committee, the Delegate, the Deputy Delegate and anyone else he considers prudent, the Abbot will review this policy on a regular basis. Any person or group involved in the investigation of sexual abuse may suggest

¹ A Safety Plan is a plan with restrictions that is developed for a Monk of the Abbey who has been found to have committed sexual abuse of a minor, but has not been dismissed from the order.

² Anything that would go against the established Safeguarding policies and Code of Conduct would be a boundary violation, as would behaviors that are imprudent or inappropriate.

amendments to this policy, which the Delegate can consider and draft for consideration. Amendments take effect only after their approval by the Abbot.

- 1.8. Should the allegation in question be against the Abbot, the Abbot President will be the person responsible for making necessary decisions.

2. Membership of the Committee

- 2.1. The Review Committee shall consist of at least 5 members, with no more than one Member of the Abbey. Any change in the number of individuals on the Review Committee shall be decided by the Abbot, in consultation with his council.
- 2.2. The Review Committee may include representation from the following groups: religious (from outside the Abbey), professionals from the social sciences (psychologists, counselors, victims' advocates and/or social workers), representatives from the legal or law enforcement profession or provincial protective services, and laity, including parents and educators.
- 2.3. The Abbot shall appoint members of the Review Committee by letter of appointment signed by him. A member of the Review Committee may be removed at the discretion of the Abbot in consultation with the Chair of the Review Committee. Members shall be removed by letter of removal signed by the Abbot.
- 2.4. The Abbot will appoint the Chair of the Review Committee in consultation with his Council, Safeguarding Delegate, Deputy Delegate and anyone else he considers prudent. The Review Committee's Vice-Chair and Secretary will be elected by the members of the Review Committee by a majority vote. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Review Committee must be lay persons.
- 2.5. Employees of Westminster Abbey cannot be members of the Review Committee.
- 2.6. Neither the Abbey's Survivor Assistance Coordinator nor the Abbey's legal representative/counsel can be members of the Review Committee. Moreover, members of the Review Committee should be mindful of not taking responsibilities for the Abbey that may create a dual role that also presents a conflict of interest and challenges the independent nature of the Review Committee.
- 2.7. Members of the Review Committee shall be over the age of twenty-one (21) years.

3. Terms of Membership

- 3.1. Individuals shall be appointed for a term of five (5) years, by the Abbot in consultation with his council and the term may be renewed once.
- 3.2. Any vacancy on the Review Committee occurring during the year, including a vacancy created by an increase in the number of individuals, may be filled by an appointment by the Abbot for a term of five (5) years.

- 3.3. Any member may resign at any time, and in exceptional circumstances, may request a leave of absence, by giving a written notice of such resignation to the Abbot or the Chair of the Review Committee.
- 3.4. Any individual on the Review Committee who is related by blood or marriage to, in any kind of employments, financial or business relationship with, in any kind of professional or spiritual counseling relationship with, or who would have any other conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest with the Reporter or the Respondent, shall inform the Chair of the conflict and recuse himself or herself from all deliberations concerning the particular matter in question. Any individual on the Review Committee who determines that he or she has a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest with the Abbey itself or with the work of the Review Committee, shall inform the Abbot and the Chair of the conflict and shall resign from the Review Committee.
- 3.5. The Review Committee members will serve as volunteers. The Abbey shall reimburse individuals on the Review Committee for reasonable expenses incurred in attending meetings of the Review Committee or in otherwise performing their duties on the Review Committee. The Abbey indemnifies and holds harmless all individuals on the Review Committee for all claims, lawsuits, damages or other actions, including but not limited to reasonable costs of defense, which may arise from their service on the Review Committee. However, the Abbey does not indemnify individuals on the Review Committee for intentional tortious or criminal acts.
- 3.6. The Review Committee members in their capacity as volunteers are considered additional protected persons under the Abbey's general liability coverage. In addition, protection is extended to employees and volunteers for any acts or omissions by these individuals during the course of their assignment. The insurer will provide written confirmation of the latter point.

4. Frequency of Meeting

- 4.1. Annual Meeting: The Review Committee must meet at least once a year; the meeting is to be held as designated by the Abbot or Chair of the Committee.
- 4.2. Special and Additional Meetings: Additional meetings may be called when necessary and always in the case of any new allegations. Moreover, special sessions of the Review Committee may also be held at any time on the call of the Chair (or in the event of his/her absence or inability to act), the Vice-Chair, Secretary, or any three (3) individuals, with the concurrence of, or at the recommendation of the Abbot, or as new cases and/or special need arises.
- 4.3. Notice of Meeting: Notice of all meetings shall be given by email by either the Delegate, Abbot or Chair at least fourteen (14) days before the meeting. Supporting

materials for meetings shall be provided at least one week prior to a scheduled meeting.

- 4.4. Manner of Meetings: Review Committee meetings may be conducted in person, by conference call, or web-conferencing. The Chair shall call the meeting to order and introduce the Abbot, his representative or the Investigator to present the matter(s) brought before the Review Committee.

5. Required Training for Review Committee Members

- 5.1. The Abbey shall provide a training (or orientation) for all Review Committee members about their unique role in providing confidential consultation to the Abbot when they join. The members are provided copies and an explanation of the following documents:
 - 5.1.1. Westminster Abbey's Safeguarding Policies and Codes of Conduct
 - 5.1.2. Westminster Abbey's Response Protocols
 - 5.1.3. Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops national guidelines on the Protection of Minors
 - 5.1.4. Motu Proprio, "*Sacramentorum Sanctitatis Tutela*" (SST)
 - 5.1.5. Motu proprio, "*Vos estis lux mundi*"
- 5.2. The Abbey shall provide individuals on the Review Committee with on-going formation regarding best practices in the disposition of cases of sexual abuse and other types of sexual misconduct and in matters related to abuse prevention and child protection.

6. Dissemination of Information

- 6.1. When considering the disposition of a case of sexual misconduct, the members of the Review Committee are each given the following in writing:
 - 6.1.1. Initial report of allegation, such as in-take forms, letters, e-mail, etc.³
 - 6.1.2. Documentation of notice to civil authorities
 - 6.1.3. Documentation of notice to appropriate church authorities
 - 6.1.4. Report of the Investigation
 - 6.1.5. Any other cases of sexual misconduct by the Respondent, including with adults

³ Any information from the Reporter that is presented to the Review Committee would be via the investigation or the Survivor Assistance Coordinator.

6.1.6. Other relevant disciplinary action

6.1.7. If any member of the Review Committee would like to see the entire case file, the Delegate will accommodate that request.

6.2. The Abbot or his representative may present information in written, graphic, or recorded form for the Review Committee's consideration. If written information is presented during the meeting, it will be collected that same day at the end of the meeting. When records must be shared electronically, every effort shall be made to use effective security methods to prevent their access by unauthorized parties.

6.3. After the presentation, the Review Committee members may ask questions, request additional information, or discuss the matter with the Abbot or representative during the meeting. The Delegate will provide access to Abbey resources where needed.

7. Deliberation by the Committee

7.1. After the question-and-answer period or discussion is completed, the Committee shall carefully consider and deliberate on their own.

7.2. After carefully reviewing all the information, the Review Committee makes a recommendation to the Abbot regarding:

7.2.1. the assessment of the allegation;

7.2.2. the suitability for ministry/work for the accused person;

7.2.3. any other recommendations the Review Committee deems appropriate.

7.3. The Review Committee secretary will take meeting minutes as well as put the Review Committee's recommendations in writing. The Review Committee Chair will provide a response and recommendations to the Delegate regarding allegations of abuse on the same day on which they meet to review the matter.

7.4. Based on the facts and circumstances, an allegation of sexual misconduct can be established only when there is reasonable certainty that the accusation is true and that an incident of sexual misconduct has occurred.

8. Responsibilities of the Abbot

8.1. The Abbot shall appoint a spokesperson⁴ who is responsible for relations with the media for all questions concerning allegations of sexual abuse and misconduct.

⁴ Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB). *Protecting Minors from Sexual Abuse: A Call to the Catholic Faithful in Canada for Healing, Reconciliation, and Transformation* (Ottawa: St Joseph Communications, 2018). Part II, Section Four, §4.4, p. 96.

- 8.2. The Abbot will take a collaborative approach to fostering a safe environment, working toward a culture of dialogue and institutional practices that promote accountability, transparency, and responsibility.⁵
- 8.3. The Abbot will take the Review Committee's recommendation into account and will make the final decision as to whether an allegation of sexual misconduct has (or has not) been established.
- 8.4. If the Abbot were not to follow a recommendation or go against the determination or recommendation of the Review Committee, that must be clearly documented in writing and presented to the Review Committee.
- 8.5. If law enforcement initiates an investigation, then the Abbey must put its investigation on hold and should consult with law enforcement before moving forward. Once the authorities have completed their process, the Abbot would consider all available information in making his decision, including anything that law enforcement shares. The Review Committee would then follow the process as outlined in this policy and make its recommendation to the Abbot.
- 8.6. The judgment of the Abbot must be objective, i.e., based on facts and circumstances discovered in the course of the investigation, not on simple opinion. A founded or established allegation would be in line with the canonical standard of "moral certitude" which states that the Abbot recognizes that the contrary (that the allegation is false) is indeed possible, but is highly unlikely or so improbable that the Abbot has no substantive fear that the allegation is false.

9. Confidentiality

- 9.1. The Abbey recognizes that the Review Committee may receive confidential and sensitive information that could be used to injure the reputations of individuals. Review Committee members shall sign a confidentiality agreement and undergo a criminal records check.
- 9.2. The records and other information received by the Review Committee shall be treated as confidential, subject to the requirements of law and the Policies of the Abbey.
- 9.3. The Review Committee's advice to the Abbot regarding particular cases shall be confidential; notwithstanding, however, that the Abbot may, at his discretion, disclose the advice he received from the Review Committee.
- 9.4. The Abbey recognizes that the Review Committee's records may contain information relevant to civil and criminal law investigations. It is the policy of the Abbey to cooperate fully with all legal requirements and law enforcement agencies

⁵ Cf. *Protecting Minors*, Appendix 3, nn. 62, 63.

while, at the same time, respecting any applicable civil rights and requirements of confidentiality and privacy.

- 9.5. Certain Canadian laws prohibit the disclosure of certain information, such as mental health communications, substance abuse and alcohol treatment records and HIV testing and AIDS treatment records. The Review Committee shall protect the confidentiality of such information, which it may receive by way of appropriate releases of information, to the fullest extent of the law.

10. Media and Communication

- 10.1. Members of the Review Committee should abstain from commenting on matters related to allegations or incidents of sexual misconduct. If a member of the Review Committee is approached by the media, he or she is to respectfully redirect the media to the Abbot's appointed spokesperson.

11. Records Retention

- 11.1. The files of the Review Committee are the property of the Abbey and shall be stored at a place designated by the Abbot.
- 11.2. The Delegate shall create a file on each case or matter it considers.⁶ In addition to all other documentation related to the allegation, each file shall also contain the written description of the matter presented to the Review Committee; a written summary of the advice given by the Review Committee; a written summary of the action ultimately taken by the Abbot and such other information as the Delegate or Review Committee determines to be relevant to any future consideration of the case.
- 11.3. The Delegate is responsible for overseeing the management of Abbey records regarding sexual misconduct, in collaboration with the Abbot. It is the Delegate's responsibility to make sure the allegation files are complete.

⁶ The files will be digitized and kept in perpetuity.