

Diocese of Laredo
Vetting Policy and Procedures for Visiting Clergy

Purpose: Each year a growing number of clergy from outside the Diocese of Laredo visit, temporarily, to exercise in ministry or by invitation stay on church property. Because the Diocese of Laredo is committed to ensure fidelity to Church teachings and to preserve a safe environment for children and young people in all our communities, we must be diligent in obtaining what is required for any visiting cleric requested by a parish, school, or organization to exercise ministry, or a cleric who by invitation plan to stay on church property.

Scope and Objectives: This policy is valid for the Diocese of Laredo and applies to a visiting cleric requested by a parish, school, or organization to exercise ministry, or a visiting cleric who by invitation plan to stay on church property. This policy outlines the Safe Environment Program procedures that all visiting clergy must follow prior to exercising ministry or staying on church property.

This Policy is adopted in response to Article 12 and 13 of the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* developed by the Ad Hoc Committee for Sexual Abuse of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).

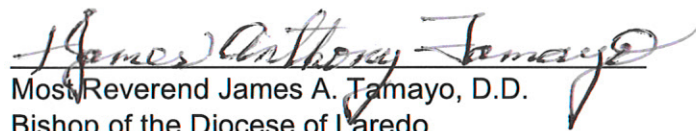
Principles: The Diocese of Laredo must be diligent in obtaining, in a timely manner, what is required of a visiting cleric. Any visiting cleric must receive prior approval from the Office of the Chancellor before exercising any form of ministry in the Diocese of Laredo or staying on church property.

Procedures: Approval for a visiting cleric to exercise ministry or stay on church property is contingent upon successful completion of the following procedures.

1. Written request must be sent to the Office of the Chancellor, four (4) to six (6) weeks in advance, by the requesting parish, school, or organization.
 - a. This written request should include the name of the visiting cleric, contact information, diocese, name of Bishop or Religious Superior, purpose and dates of planned visit, intended purpose for visit
2. The Chancellor will request a Letter of Suitability from the visiting cleric's Bishop or Religious Superior.
 - a. The Letter of Suitability should be addressed to the Chancellor.
 - b. Letter must specify cleric is in good standing with his diocese/religious order and completed the safe environment training of their diocese/religious order within the past three years.
 - c. Letter must specify that there is nothing that would render the cleric unsuitable to work with minor children.
3. The Chancellor will review all documentation to determine his decision.
4. A faculty letter or written notification will be sent to the Bishop or Religious Superior of the visiting cleric to communicate the Chancellor's decision. A copy of this letter will be sent to the visiting cleric.

Additional Procedure for International Clergy: Clergy from an Archdiocese/Diocese or Congregation outside the United States will need to read and sign the Diocese of Laredo's Code of Conduct Form.

Vetting Policy Approved By:


Most Reverend James A. Tamayo, D.D.
Bishop of the Diocese of Laredo


Promulgation Date