

## NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC WOMEN POLICY

### PROTECTION OF CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND VULNERABLE PERSONS

The National Council of Catholic Women (NCCW), founded by the US Catholic Bishops in 1920, has as its Mission to work through its members to support, empower, and educate all Catholic women in spirituality, leadership, and service. NCCW programs respond with Gospel values to the needs of the Church and society.

As an organization of Catholic women, the safety of women, children, and vulnerable persons is an intrinsic part of our nature. Women possess a natural capacity for compassion and caring and the NCCW holds as our patroness and model Our Lady of Good Counsel who cradles her Divine Son.

The protection of children, youth, and all vulnerable persons must be embraced and upheld by every member of the NCCW. Acknowledging the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People of the USCCB, this policy has been developed to ensure that each member of the NCCW and all who are served in any way by the NCCW remain safe from all forms of harassment and harm.

This policy requires that:

1. Members must complete any arch/diocesan background checks and training that are required by the local arch/bishop and/or pastor to serve as a volunteer on parish and/or diocesan property.
2. Any member volunteering in a school or civic event sponsored or encouraged by the NCCW or participating in an NCCW program that serves children, youth, and/or vulnerable persons must complete any applicable training and/or background checks.

This policy is in effect to protect both the NCCW member(s) and the children and/or vulnerable persons involved in the activity.

It is more likely that one of our members may observe an incident or incidents of abuse than to be themselves involved in abuse relative to a Council event or program. Therefore, it is important that all members realize that it is incumbent upon them when observing or suffering any suspected abuse relative to a Council event or program that they have a responsibility to take the following steps:

1. They must report the suspected abuse to law enforcement immediately
2. They must notify the local diocese of the suspected abuse
3. They must notify the National Council of Catholic Women of the suspected abuse by calling 1-703-224-0990 or 1-800-506-9407