

700.5.1 FORMATION FOR THE PERMANENT DIACONATE

POLICY:

The promotion and recruitment of candidates for the permanent diaconate is the primary responsibility of the Director of the Office for Deacons, in collaboration with the Vocations Office, the clergy and parish leaders of the Diocese and the Vicar for Deacons.

IMPLEMENTATION:

1. A prospective candidate or inquirer needs to enter into dialogue with the Director of the Office for Deacons and with his Pastor*.
2. It is his Pastor who is required to present him for diaconate formation, through a letter of recommendation and completion of the Inquirer Recommendation Form to the Director of the Office for Deacons.
3. It is the Bishop who decides whether to admit an applicant to formation, after reviewing the recommendations from the Director of the Office for Deacons.

***Throughout these policies,**

the term “Pastor” refers to the immediate ministerial supervisor with whom the deacon enters into a Ministry Covenant, such as Pastor, Parochial Administrator, Ministry Supervisor, etc.

the term “a close relative” refers to: wife, child, parent, grandchild, sibling, niece, nephew, cousin, godchild and parent of godchild.

700.5.2 FIRST FACULTIES AND FIRST ASSIGNMENT

POLICY:

By virtue of his ordination and at the discretion of the Bishop, a permanent deacon will be granted the following faculties, in whole or in part: to administer the sacraments of baptism and marriage; to preach the Gospel, distribute viaticum to the dying, and officiate at public prayers; to officiate at wakes, funerals and graveside services; to counsel, evangelize and serve where called by the Bishop and according to the needs of the church.

IMPLEMENTATION:

1. Three (3) months prior to ordination, the candidate will provide the following documentation to the Director of the Office for Deacons:
 - a. A personal letter from the candidate to the Bishop requesting admission to the Order of Deacons, attesting that he requests this freely and that the candidate will devote himself permanently to the ecclesiastical ministry (Canon 1036);
 - b. A second personal letter requesting faculties and a first assignment within the Diocese of San Bernardino.
2. After consultation with the Vicar for Deacons, the Director of the Office for Deacons will forward the above documentation along with their written recommendation to the Bishop. If in agreement, the Bishop will grant faculties and determine the first assignment in writing. While the first assignment is customarily to the parish that sponsored the individual during diaconate formation, the Bishop, at his discretion, may choose a different assignment.
3. The Bishop will meet with the deacon candidate and his wife to discern the first assignment. Normally, the needs of the parish that has promoted and supported the candidate will be given special consideration for the first assignment. This, however, will be examined in the light of the broader needs of the diocese and the gifts the deacon himself brings to this ministry. Due consideration will also be given to such factors as family concerns, the geographical location of his home, his employment, etc.

To avoid the possibility of conflict, the Bishop will not assign a deacon to the parish where he is employed. For the same reason, a deacon must not be hired to work in the parish to which the Bishop assigned him. In addition to potential conflicts of interest, deacons, priests, parish staff and parishioners often have difficulty in understanding what activities are work for which the deacon is paid, and what activities are ministry, for which the deacon cannot accept compensation.

Also, to avoid potential conflicts, a deacon will not be assigned to a parish where a close relative* of his is employed. If the close relative of a deacon is hired to work in the parish where the Bishop assigned him, the Pastor must be informed immediately of this restriction. Should the Pastor decide to keep the close relative of the deacon as an employee, the deacon will be reassigned to another parish expeditiously. Experience has shown that diaconate couples in those circumstances are often exposed to a number of difficulties, including accusations of "conflict of interest".

4. At a suitable time three months after ordination, the deacon and pastor should meet to work out the details of the Ministry Covenant for the balance of the assignment period. It is recommended that the Vicar for Deacons or his representative be present at this meeting to assist in the process and to ensure that all parties have copies of the Diocesan Policies for Permanent Deacons, the Annual Deacon File Update form, the Ministry Review by Pastor/Supervisor form, the Diocesan Assignment letter determined by the Bishop, the requirements for the Five-Year Post Ordination Formation Program and other documents relevant to the deacon's ministry.

A copy of the Ministry Covenant is to be sent to the Vicar for Deacons no later than six months after the first assignment and it must be duly signed by the deacon, his spouse, the Pastor and the Chairperson of the Pastoral Council (when there is an active council).

5. First faculties are granted for a period of three (3) years.

700.5.3 RENEWAL OF FACULTIES

POLICY:

Faculties to minister as a deacon in the Diocese of San Bernardino need to be renewed periodically.

IMPLEMENTATION:

1. Schedule of Renewal of Faculties:
 - after the 3rd year of ordination for a period of three years
 - after the 9th year of ordination, every five years
2. Three (3) months prior to renewal of faculties, the deacon will present the following documentation to the Vicar for Deacons:
 - a. A personal letter to the Bishop requesting renewal of faculties;
 - b. A copy of a new Ministry Covenant;
 - c. Copies of his Annual Deacon File Update forms with reports on continuing formation and education.
 - d. A copy of the current Ministry Review by Pastor/Supervisor completed and signed by the Pastor
3. After consultation with the deacon's Pastor, the Vicar for Deacons will forward this documentation to the Bishop, along with a written recommendation.
4. The Bishop will indicate his renewal of faculties in writing to the deacon, a copy of which is also to be sent to his pastor, the Vicar Forane, the Episcopal Vicar and the Vicar for Deacons for the deacon's file.
5. In general faculties and term of assignment will coincide.

700.5.4 TRANSFER AND CHANGE OF ASSIGNMENT

POLICY:

The request for a transfer or change of assignment may be made by the permanent deacon, the Pastor of his current assignment or the Bishop. The following procedures are to be adjusted to the appropriate case. These policies regarding appointments and transfers of Permanent Deacons are based on the theological and canonical principle that all diocesan clergy are ordained for the diocese, not for a particular parish, nor for a specific clerical ministry.

IMPLEMENTATION:

1. If, after consultation with all concerned, a transfer is deemed appropriate, the deacon is to submit a formal request to the Bishop, giving the principal reasons for the requested change of assignment. A copy of this request is to be sent to the Vicar for Deacons. A request for a transfer or a new assignment may be made by the deacon himself, by the current or prospective Pastor, or by the Bishop. An important criterion for a transfer will be the needs of the diocese, as determined by the Bishop in consultation with all parties concerned. If the request for a transfer comes from someone other than the deacon, all aspects of due process will be honored.
2. After examination of the required documents, the Vicar for Deacons will consult with the respective pastors to determine if they agree with the change of assignment prior to presenting the petition for reassignment to the Ministerial Personnel Placement Board (MPPB) so they may present their recommendation to the Bishop.
3. If the Bishop agrees with the request and recommendation from the MPPB, he will issue letters of assignment to the deacon and to the new Pastor with a copy to the Vicar Forane, the Episcopal Vicar, and the Vicar for Deacons for the deacon's file.

To avoid the possibility of conflict, the Bishop will not assign a deacon to the parish where he is employed. For the same reason, a deacon must not be hired to work in the parish to which the Bishop assigned him. In addition to potential conflicts of interest, deacons, priests, parish staff and parishioners often have difficulty in understanding what activities are work for which the deacon is paid, and what activities are ministry, for which the deacon cannot accept compensation.

Also, to avoid potential conflicts, a deacon will not be assigned to a parish where a close relative of his is employed. If a close relative of a deacon is hired to work in the parish where the Bishop assigned him, the Pastor must be informed immediately of this restriction. Should the Pastor decide to keep the close relative of the deacon as an employee, the deacon will be reassigned to another parish expeditiously. Experience has shown that diaconate couples in those

circumstances are often exposed to a number of difficulties, including accusations of "conflict of interest".

4. The deacon will work out a Ministry Covenant with the new Pastor and forward a copy to the Vicar for Deacons. The deacon or the pastor may request that the Vicar for Deacons or his representative be present at a meeting where the details of the Ministry Covenant are determined.
5. Generally, after three months from a change of pastor or a deacon's parish reassignment, the deacon and the new pastor should meet to work out the details of a new Ministry Covenant. It is recommended that the Vicar for Deacons or his representative be present at this meeting to assist in the process and to ensure that all parties have copies of the Diocesan Policies for Permanent Deacons, the Annual Deacon File Update form, the Ministry Review by Pastor/Supervisor form, the Diocesan Assignment determined by the Bishop, the requirements for the Ongoing Formation of Deacons and other documents relevant to the deacon's ministry. The Deacon and/or the Pastor may request assistance from the Vicar for Deacons in the discussion and preparation of the Diaconal Ministry Covenant. *A copy of the Ministry Covenant is to be sent to the Vicar for Deacons no later than six months after any change of pastor or a deacon's parish reassignment and it must be duly signed by the deacon, his spouse, the Pastor and the Chairperson of the Pastoral Council (when there is an active council)*
6. All assignments are to be made by letter, which will also include the date the assignment is effective and the date it terminates.

700.5.5 DEACONS INCARDINATED INTO OTHER DIOCESES - Granting of Faculties

POLICY:

A deacon incardinated into another diocese needs faculties from the Bishop of San Bernardino to minister as a deacon in this diocese.

IMPLEMENTATION:

1. To obtain faculties, the following documentation is to be sent to the Vicar for Deacons:
 - a. a certificate of ordination;
 - b. a personal letter addressed to the Bishop requesting faculties, stating the reason for moving into this Diocese and giving an estimate of the time he expects to remain in the Diocese;
 - c. letters of recommendation and evaluation from the Bishop, the Vicar for Deacons and the most recent Pastor or ministerial supervisor of the diocese of incardination;
 - d. a personal resume or history, including academic and professional background;
 - e. affidavits of responsibility both from the deacon and from his ecclesial superior regarding accusations of or conviction for sexual, violent or felony drug crimes;
 - f. depending on circumstances, confidential reports from a physician or a psychologist may also be requested.
 - g. evidence that the deacon has completed the Diocesan Safe Environment & Code of Pastoral Conduct Training as well as the Sexual Harassment Training for Managers & Supervisors. Both trainings may be completed online by logging on to the Catholic Mutual Group website at www.cmgconnect.org Deacons must print two copies of the Certificates of Completion, send one copy of each certificate to the Vicar for Deacons and retain the other copies for his own records.
 - h. Deacons are also required to complete a background check by being fingerprinted at an approved location from the list of locations available from the diocesan Director of Human Resources.
2. This documentation will to be sent to the Bishop by the Vicar for Deacons, along with his written recommendation. If in agreement, the Bishop grants the faculties in writing, normally for a period of three (3) years. After that period these faculties need to be renewed for a period deemed suitable by the circumstances of each particular case.

700.5.6 DEACONS INCARDINATED INTO OTHER DIOCESES - Incardination into the Diocese of San Bernardino

POLICY:

A petition by a deacon incardinated in another diocese for incardination into the Diocese of San Bernardino may be submitted for consideration after five years of ministry here.

IMPLEMENTATION

1. The petition must be directed to the Bishop and be supported by letters of recommendation and evaluation from the Pastors, parish staff and persons where the deacon has ministered within this Diocese.
2. A review board, composed of the Vicar General, the Vicar for Deacons and a representative from the Diaconate Council, will review the application and make its recommendation to the Bishop.
3. If a written request for incardination is not acted upon per the norms of Canon 268.1 the petitioner is ipso iure incardinated into the diocese.

700.5.7 SABBATICAL PERIOD

POLICY:

Any deacon incardinated in the Diocese or with a Ministry Covenant in the Diocese may request a three-month sabbatical leave after every seven years of service as a deacon in the Diocese. This sabbatical period is to be calculated from 1992 and is not cumulative.

IMPLEMENTATION

1. The primary purpose of this sabbatical period is rest (physical, psychological and spiritual) from the demands of ministry.
2. A written request for sabbatical leave is to be submitted to the Vicar for Deacons at least six (6) months prior to the requested sabbatical period. A letter from the deacon's Pastor should accompany the request, giving both the views of the Pastor and determinations regarding the use of faculties during the sabbatical period.
3. After consultation with and approval from the Bishop and the deacon's Vicar Forane, the Vicar for Deacons grants the sabbatical in writing.
4. According to particular circumstances or personal needs, such as family concerns or personal health, a longer sabbatical leave may be requested.
5. A sabbatical period of more than three (3) months should normally (taking into consideration such factors as health and age, etc.) include elements of a renewal program, that is, measures that seek to improve and enhance the personal, spiritual and ministerial life of the deacon. It is advisable that the deacon seek the collaboration of his Pastor and the Vicar for Deacons in drawing up such a program. The details of this sabbatical program should be submitted along with a request mentioned above.
6. Any mandated retreats or on-going formation programs during a sabbatical period will normally be funded by the parish of the current or most recent Ministry Covenant.
7. At the end of any sabbatical period that is longer than three months and taken for health reasons, the deacon may find it necessary to establish a new Ministry Covenant with reduced ministerial commitments.

700.5.8 ON-GOING FORMATION AND EDUCATION

POLICY:

Permanent deacons who have been granted full or partial faculties and have been officially assigned by the Bishop of the Diocese of San Bernardino are expected to maintain a level of education and formation.

IMPLEMENTATION – The following constitute requirements each year:

1. Completion of no less than twenty hours of continuing education (courses, seminars, workshops, conferences, books, etc.);
2. Attendance at the annual Diaconate Retreat and the annual Diaconate Convocation; as well as attendance at any and all workshops, study days and other events mandated by the bishop. When a deacon is unable to attend any of the foregoing because of illness, work or family commitments he is to notify the Vicar for Deacons before the event. Some workshops are repeated during evening or weekend hours to help alleviate conflicts in individual schedules.
3. Participation in the various gatherings and meetings of the diaconate community (vicariate meetings, Clergy Days, Ecclesial Days, special events, etc.)
4. Submission of an annual information update: Each year the Vicar for Deacons will send out an "Annual Deacon File Update" form on which each deacon will indicate how he fulfilled the foregoing requirements. The completed form will be returned to the Vicar for Deacons and is one of the documents required for his request for renewal of faculties.
5. The fulfilment of these requirements will be carefully considered in determining the issuance of a *Letter of Good Standing*.
6. Expenses for on-going formation programs required by the Diocese will be covered by the Diocesan approved annual contribution from the Parish.

700.5.9 RETIREMENT

POLICY:

All Deacons must request Retirement from Ministry status at age 75. The Bishop of the Diocese has the right to accept or not accept a request for retirement, keeping in mind the good of the broader ecclesial community.

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Conditions for Retirement from Ministry:

- a. At any time a deacon may request retirement from active ministry for any serious reason, such as health, family concerns, etc.
- b. The Bishop may enforce retirement for any serious reason that would render the deacon incapable of fulfilling his office, thereby removing all ministerial faculties.
- c. Upon reaching the age 75 every deacon shall write to the Bishop to request Retired Deacon status and to express his desire for future ministry. The Diocesan Bishop may elect to confer Retired Deacon status or make such assignment as he deems appropriate. If the Diocesan Bishop confers Retired Deacon status, the deacon will no longer be assigned to a particular parish or entity. His Ministry Covenant, if any, will cease to be effective on the date of his 75th birthday and he is not to enter into any new Ministry Covenant after that date without consulting with the Vicar for Deacons, and only with the approval of the Bishop
- d. The Bishop, at his discretion may continue to grant faculties to Retired Deacons on an individual basis and for such periods of time as he deems appropriate. A Retired Deacon who has faculties and is in good standing in the Diocese of San Bernardino may choose to serve from time to time in a parish or other entity but only with the express written permission of the Pastor or Administrator of such parish or other entity.
- e. In situations where a deacon with retired status is approached with a request to preside at a Vigil, a Liturgy of the Word, or a permitted liturgical activity outside the church, he may only do it with the consent of a Pastor or the Office for Deacons. These services must be arranged through a parish or the Office for Deacons. Any monetary compensation for these services belongs to the parish on whose behalf the service is provided or to the Office for Deacons if the service was arranged by such office.

2. Status of a Retired Deacon:

(The title of Senior Deacon is no longer in use in the Diocese of San Bernardino)

- a. Upon receiving an official letter of retirement from the Bishop, the Retired Deacon may retain his diaconate faculties in the Diocese of San Bernardino, should the Bishop grant the faculties. He may volunteer, or be requested by

- a Pastor, to perform on an “ad hoc” basis ministries appropriate to his Office as a deacon. See Paragraph 700.5.9 1.d. above
- b. Six (6) months prior to renewal of faculties, a Retired Deacon who wishes to continue to serve in the Diocese of San Bernardino will present the following documentation to the Vicar for Deacons:
- (1) A personal letter to the Bishop requesting renewal of faculties;
 - (2) Certificates of compliance with Safe Environment and Sexual Harassment Prevention training
 - (3) After consultation with the deacon's Vicar Forane, the Vicar for Deacons will forward all documentation to the Bishop, along with a written recommendation.
 - (4) The Bishop will indicate his renewal of faculties in writing to the deacon, a copy of which is also to be sent to the Vicar for Deacons for the deacon's file.
- c. If ministry is requested or volunteered for, on an ongoing basis, the Office for Deacons needs to be notified in order to determine the need for a Ministry Covenant.
- d. Retired Deacons are not required to have a Ministry Covenant nor are they required to fulfill continuing education requirements.
- e. Retired Deacons and their spouses retain a special bond with the Bishop and are encouraged to remain involved in the diaconate community. They will remain on the mailing list and are invited to all diaconate events.
- f. If possible, the parish of his last Ministry Covenant will provide sufficient resources so the Retired Deacon and his spouse can attend the annual diaconate community retreat provided by the Diocese.

700.5.10 **DIACONAL STATUS IN THE DIOCESE**

POLICY:

The following categories define the various ministerial or canonical situations of deacons in the Diocese of San Bernardino:

ACTIVE: a deacon has been granted faculties, who has a current Ministry Covenant and a letter of appointment from the Bishop.

INACTIVE: a deacon who has no Ministry Covenant within the Diocese and no assignment from the Bishop.

SABBATICAL LEAVE: a deacon granted permission from the Bishop to withdraw temporarily from full-time ministry for various reasons, such as health, educational or professional pursuits, or family concerns. He may minister as circumstances permit.

ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE: a deacon who, at the request of the deacon himself or of the Bishop, is temporarily relieved of all diaconate responsibilities. He may not function or represent himself as an active deacon while this status is in effect.

RETIRED: a deacon who, because of age or infirmity, has withdrawn from active ministry and no longer has a Ministry Covenant. Provided he still has valid faculties he may still minister in whatever way is agreeable to him and his Pastor.

SUSPENDED: a deacon whose faculties have been suspended by the Bishop, as a canonical penalty; he has no jurisdiction, therefore, to function in any way as an ordained minister.

LAICIZED: a deacon who has been removed from the clerical state and returned to the lay state, either by his request, by decree of competent authorities, or ipso iure.

700.5.11 SEPARATED AND DIVORCED DEACONS

POLICY:

Every effort will be made to minister in a compassionate way to diaconate couples who find themselves in marital difficulties.

IMPLEMENTATION

1. When requested, the Vicar for Deacons will meet with the deacon and his wife, as a couple or individually, to see if there are any ways he can be of assistance. At any point in this difficulty, the deacon may request a sabbatical leave for personal reasons.
2. If the difficulty is public and causing concern in the community, or if a legal separation takes place, an administrative leave may be requested by the deacon or by the Vicar for Deacons, in consultation with the Pastor.
3. If a civil divorce is initiated, the Vicar for Deacons may request an administrative leave for the deacon, depending on the circumstances.
4. If at any point, scandal is being caused in the community, administrative leave is to be imposed immediately.
5. If remarriage is attempted without an annulment, suspension is ipso iure (Canon 1044 §1, 3°).
6. If a decree of annulment has been granted by the diocesan Tribunal, the deacon still requires an indult from the Holy See before any steps are taken for a sacramental marriage, dispensing him from the celibacy obligation assumed at diaconate ordination (Canon 1047).

700.5.12 POLICIES REGARDING FINANCES

POLICY:

These financial policies and their implementation presume that all permanent deacons with faculties in the Diocese of San Bernardino are now exercising or have exercised a civil profession by which they provide for their own support and that of their families. (Canon 281,§3)

IMPLEMENTATION

A - The remuneration for permanent deacons who are **employed full time** in church-related positions is determined by general diocesan policies in the matter of employment.

1. Deacons, who desire employment in church-related positions such as Pastoral Coordinator, Administrator, Coordinator of Hispanic Ministry, Director of Religious Education, Pastoral Associate, Business Manager, Youth Minister, etc., may apply for and hold said positions.
 - a. The deacon must complete the application and hiring process in the same way as with any other potential employee.
 - b. If hired, the deacon's paid position will be subject to all of the policies of the "Lay Personnel Policy Manual" for the Diocese of San Bernardino, such as:
 - (1) Employment practices
 - (2) Employee benefits
 - (3) Salary/wage requirements
 - (4) Submission of time sheets (if non-exempt)
 - (5) Evaluation process
 - c. The holding of such a position will be presumed to not conflict with their diaconal ministry as described in their Ministry Covenant.
 - d. All policies and procedures governing lay employees will apply to those deacons who hold church-related positions for which they receive compensation.
2. The description of the role and the responsibilities are to be contained in a job description for the deacon who is employed. Sample job descriptions are available from the Human Resources Office.
3. All compensation is negotiated according to the same norms and procedures used for lay persons holding an equivalent position. The policies governing benefits, vacations, sick leave, time sheets, etc. apply to the deacon who is employed by the Diocese of San Bernardino.

4. Non-exempt employees (whether hourly or salaried) are required to formally record their time worked online via the ADP website. Their time sheets must be signed off by their immediate supervisor. Those time sheets will remain on file in the ADP website.
5. Deacons who have a Ministry Covenant and are employed in a church-related position may be entitled to claim parsonage allowance for income tax purposes. They should consult with a tax consultant and the Vicar for Deacons for more information and clarification.
6. Please see the “Lay Personnel Policy Manual” under the Ministry of Administrative Services section for further details. (see Series 500.1)
7. Section 700.5.4.3 of these policies states in reference to deacons employed at a parish: To avoid the possibility of conflict, the Bishop will not assign a deacon to the parish where he is employed. For the same reason, a deacon must not be hired to work in the parish to which the Bishop assigned him.

B - The ministry of deacons who are not employed by the church is to be considered of a part-time nature for which no financial compensation is to be expected.

1. The cost for the annual retreat for the deacon and his wife and continuing education programs provided by the Diocese is to be covered each year by the Parish or institution with which the deacon has a Ministry Covenant. These amounts are to be included in the parish budget and indicated in the Ministry Covenant.
2. The Ministry Covenant also stipulates that a deacon be reimbursed for “expenses he incurs in the actual performance of his diaconal ministry to the Parish”. For example:
 - a. Mileage – to be reimbursed at the diocesan approved rate per mile using a mileage form provided by the entity.
 - b. Telephone expenses, stationery, postage and other administrative costs as are required.
3. Expenses incurred by a deacon for which he expects reimbursement should be part of the church’s annual operating budget and approved by the Pastor before the expenses are incurred. Original receipts must be presented when requesting reimbursement.
4. Educational materials, liturgical vestments, etc., paid by the Parish to assist the deacon in his ministry, are considered belonging to the Parish. Cleaning and upkeep of personally owned materials, vestments, etc. will be considered personal expenses and will not be reimbursed by the Parish.
5. All stole fees for baptisms, weddings, funerals, and other services belong to the Parish where each ceremony takes place. This ministry also includes

vigils, burials, convalidations, etc. Anything intended by the donors to be a personal donation to the deacon should be clearly indicated as such.

6. Deacons are sometimes asked to present workshops for different Diocesan Pastoral Center Offices, to direct retreats or staff days for parishes and other diocesan entities, or to assist by preaching for specific appeals at parishes other than their assigned parish, such as Mission appeals. Deacons are encouraged to provide such services without charge. However, before accepting any compensation for such activities deacons must first seek the approval of the Vicar for Deacons. They are to provide all relevant details including the dates of the planned activity, the entity for which they will be working and the compensation offered. The Vicar for Deacons may consult with the Director of Human Resources before submitting such requests to the Bishop for approval.
7. Deacons are sometimes asked to present workshops, to direct retreats or staff days, to direct missions, renewal or other weekends for parishes and other entities outside of the Diocese of San Bernardino. This may be the primary source of income for some deacons and their families, however, before accepting or entering into any agreement for compensation for such activities deacons must first seek the approval of the Vicar for Deacons. They are to provide all relevant details including the dates of the planned activity, the entity for which they will be working and the compensation offered. The Vicar for Deacons may consult with the Director of Human Resources before submitting such requests to the Bishop for approval.

700.5.13 THE VICAR FOR DEACONS

POLICY:

The Vicar for Deacons is the Bishop's representative and liaison to the permanent diaconate community of the Diocese of San Bernardino. The diaconate community encompasses the ordained deacons of the diocese, deacons incardinated in other dioceses but ministering officially within this Diocese, their wives or widows, and families.

IMPLEMENTATION

1. The Vicar for Deacons is appointed by the Bishop. A priest or the Director of the Office for Deacons may be appointed to this position.
2. The Vicar for Deacons is directly responsible to the Bishop. If the Director of the Office for Deacons is appointed as the Vicar for Deacons, his term will be for the duration of his employment in that office. If a priest is appointed as Vicar for Deacons, his term will be for three (3) years, which may be renewed once for up to an additional three (3) years.
3. Although there are various organizational and administrative configurations possible for the Office of the Vicar for Deacons, the primary responsibilities of the Office are the following:
 - a. In the diaconate community:
 - (1) to promote the spiritual and ministerial good of the diaconate community,
 - (2) to assess and meet the ongoing formation and educational needs of the diaconate ministry,
 - (3) to assure the necessary documentation for appointments, the granting and renewal of faculties, the drawing up of Ministry Covenants, and incardination for deacons of the Diocese,
 - (4) to assist deacons in requesting transfers, sabbaticals, and retirement,
 - (5) to provide, in the name of the Bishop, pastoral care and concern in moments of difficulty for members of the diaconate community,
 - (6) to draw up and administer whatever budgets and funds are necessary for the operation of his office,
 - (7) to consult with those involved in the Diaconate Formation Program to assure a quality program for the permanent diaconate.
 - b. In the larger diocesan community:
 - (1) to act as liaison for special concerns between the deacon and his Pastor or ministerial supervisor,

- (2) to provide crisis intervention when requested by appropriate persons or faith communities,
 - (3) to promote awareness of the nature and ministry of the diaconate vocation at every level within the diocesan community,
 - (4) to represent the diaconate community to all other offices, departments and organizations of the Diocese;
 - (5) to promote understanding and collaboration between deacons and priests and other ministers in the faith community.
4. The Vicar for Deacons will be assisted in his tasks by an advisory board or Diaconate Council, composed of representatives from each Vicariate, appointed by the Bishop, and operating according to its own by-laws.

700.5.14 CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

POLICY:

While extending pastoral care to all its members, the Diocese must be concerned for the common good of the Christian community, especially in circumstances that could affect its mission and ministry in various ways.

IMPLEMENTATION

1. The Vicar for Deacons will seek in any way suitable to assure compassionate pastoral ministry to a deacon accused of criminal activity of any kind, as well as to his wife and family.
2. Public accusations of criminal activity of any kind, such as a child or spousal abuse, sexual harassment or similar grave matters will be the cause of imposition of administrative leave, or in special circumstances of suspension, until the case has been adjudicated. Diocesan policies apply regarding administrative procedures.
3. Please see “Diocesan Policy on Sexual Abuse by Clergy” for specific information on the procedures to be followed in cases of allegations of sexual abuse. (see Policy 700.1.32)