



## DIOCESE OF SACRAMENTO

### Office of Family and Faith Formation

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2110 Broadway • Sacramento, CA 95818-2541 • (916) 733-0177 • Fax (916) 733-0195

To: **PASTOR / PASTORAL STAFF**  
From: Chris Owens, Director  
Re: Basic Catechist / Ministry Certification and Safe Environments  
Date: **April 9, 2019**

In order to most effectively ensure the safety of those entrusted to our care, and in consultation with the Bishop's office, the Office of Safe Environment, the Diocesan Presbyteral and Pastoral Councils, and with close collaborators from those involved in parish faith formation,

**EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY**, the Office of Family and Faith Formation will no longer be issuing Catechist and Ministerial certifications extending longer than the applicant's safe environment clearance. Practically, this means that if an applicant for basic ministry or catechist certification has a current safe environment clearance of less than three years' time, they will only receive certification from our office for a period extending up to the date that their safe environment clearance expires. If an applicant has an expired safe environment clearance, a certification will not be issued until that clearance is gained.

- All new applications submitted for processing must have completed the following through Safe Environment:
  - Background Check
  - Safe Environment Training Course with expiration date.
- If all course requirements have been fulfilled for basic catechist/ministry certification and/or renewal, but Safe Environment requirements are set to expire prematurely, you have the option to renew your training early. Please notify the Office within 90 days of receipt of your certificate, and provide evidence of updated Safe Environment clearance, and we will be glad to update your certificate.

This change has come about after long discussions resulting from some refinements in the language of the Dallas Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People when it was updated in the summer of 2018. The updated charter can be found at this link: <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/child-and-youth-protection/upload/Charter-for-the-Protection-of-Children-and-Young-People-2018-final.pdf>

Thank you for your patience as we make these adjustments. Our goal is to ensure that all people involved in ministry are not only properly formed and cleared to minister to the people of the diocese, but also to provide the safest environment possible for those children and vulnerable adults entrusted to our care.