



ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE

DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT SERVICES
OFFICE OF RISK MANAGEMENT

Memorandum

TO: Parish and Ministry Administrators
FROM: Tom Alban, Director of Risk Management
DATE: July 2, 2020
SUBJECT: Use of Waiver Forms

Last week the Office of Risk Management provided two waiver forms, one to be completed on behalf of minors and the other to be completed by adults. Historically, the Office of Risk Management, along with other offices in the Catholic Center, has actively promoted the use of waiver forms involving youth activities.

The current COVID-19 pandemic and the associated risks have created the need for all parishes and ministries to re-evaluate how liturgies, sacraments, ministries and other activities are conducted. Given this changing and relatively untested risk of COVID-19, just as we have guided all locations on steps to protect the health and wellbeing of your community against the virus, we must all take steps to protect each parish, school, program and the Archdiocese against possible future liability for coronavirus exposure claims. This is an issue of concern not only for the Archdiocese, but for many other entities as well.

Given the many questions and feedback we received to our request, we fully acknowledge the fact that the introduction of such forms into our operations has raised a number of concerns both for those being asked to complete the form, as well as for those requesting others to complete the forms. We recognize at the same time, however, that we as parish and ministry administrators have a duty to take steps to be responsible stewards of our parish resources. Failure to take appropriate steps to safeguard those resources would jeopardize our obligation to those who have made donations to our parishes and programs.

Your feedback and concern has been heard and is being taken into account. If your location has not yet distributed any of the forms, please do not do so. If your parish has distributed the forms, please advise those with the forms there is no need to complete them as the forms are being re-evaluated. By no later than July 15, 2020, an updated and comprehensive packet of information on waivers and intended use will be provided. In the meantime, please let me know of any questions.

We apologize that these documents were initially released without more information and guidance, and assure you that we will devote greater consideration to the pastoral and logistical impact of this issue going forward. _Thank you for your input, and for your continued patience and understanding as we make our way through these challenging circumstances.