

2025 CHILD PROTECTION REPORTS APRIL 2026

To: All Interested Parties
From: The Archdiocese of Baltimore Independent Review Board and
The Archdiocese of Baltimore, Office of Child and Youth Protection
Re: 2025 Child Protection Reports

Attached are the 2025 Annual Child Protection Reports of the Archdiocese of Baltimore Independent Review Board (IRB) and the Archdiocese of Baltimore, Office of Child and Youth Protection (OCYP). These reports summarize the efforts of the IRB and the OCYP during reporting year 2025 (July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025).

The IRB was established in 1993 as a group of diverse, independent, interfaith, and primarily lay leaders to review actions taken by the Archdiocese in connection with allegations of child sexual abuse and provide counsel to the Archdiocese relating to its actions and policies for protecting children. The creation of the IRB was the direct result of the Archdiocese's own efforts to address the disturbing legacy of child sexual abuse in the Church, and to ensure the ongoing monitoring of decisions and initiatives designed to deal decisively with the scourge of child sexual abuse. The Office of Child and Youth Protection, established in accordance with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' 2002 Charter for the Protection of Children and Youth, is the office within the Archdiocese of Baltimore charged with implementing and coordinating efforts aimed at protecting children through screening and education and at providing pastoral outreach to victims of child sexual abuse. For over twenty years, the OCYP has continued to value the oversight and recommendations of the IRB, which has remained active and engaged in promoting healing, restoring the trust of the faithful, and maintaining the highest standards to protect the children entrusted to the care of the Church.

In the preamble to his Apostolic Letter issued *motu proprio*, *Vos estis lux mundi*, Pope Francis stated: "The crimes of sexual abuse offend Our Lord, cause physical, psychological and spiritual damage to the victims and harm the community of the faithful. In order that these phenomena, in all their forms, never happen again, a continuous and profound conversion of hearts is needed, attested by concrete and effective actions that involve everyone in the Church." We endorse this call for conversion, action, and involvement, and we see the action and involvement of the Independent Review Board as critical to the work of protecting children. We believe these reports reflect needed transparency and are a helpful tool to educate all about the ways to best protect the children entrusted to our care.

The Archdiocese of Baltimore Independent Review Board:

Dr. Jay Perman, M.D., Chair
Frederick H. Bealefeld, III
Alicia Belmas
Beverly A. Cooper

Hon. Alexander Wright, Jr.
Mary Page Michel
Kim Morrill LCSW-C
Rev. Msgr. Robert J. Jaskot

The Archdiocese of Baltimore, Office of Child and Youth Protection

Most Rev. William E. Lori, Archbishop of Baltimore
Most Rev. Adam J. Parker, Vicar General
Jerri Burkhardt, Director

THE ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE OFFICE OF CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION 2025 ANNUAL CHILD PROTECTION REPORT

The Archdiocese of Baltimore is committed to providing safe and healthy environments for children and youth, promoting the healing of victims of child sexual abuse, and restoring and maintaining the trust of the faithful. This commitment is expressed in the Archdiocese of Baltimore's child and youth protection policies. These policies have been in place since the 1980s, and have been evaluated, strengthened, and disseminated broadly through the years. In 1993, the Archdiocese published written child protection policies and established an Independent Review Board. In 2002, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) adopted the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People and Essential Norms which established a comprehensive set of procedures for addressing allegations of sexual abuse of minors by Catholic priests and deacons in every Catholic diocese in the United States. When the Charter and Norms were adopted, the Archdiocese added to its existing child protection policies by implementing mandatory screening and training of employees and volunteers, as well as mandatory safe environment education for children. The Archdiocese has updated its child protection policies periodically, after input from the Independent Review Board and others. These policies, along with other important child protection information, can be found at www.archbalt.org.

Accountability is an essential component in restoring and maintaining the trust of the faithful. To that end, the Archdiocese of Baltimore (and its parishes and schools) submits to annual audits conducted by outside auditors selected by the USCCB to ensure compliance with the Charter. The outside auditors are changed periodically. Stone Bridge Business Partners conducted the most recent audit covering reporting year July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025. The Archdiocese of Baltimore has been found to be in full compliance with the Charter every year an audit has been conducted.

In order to promote accountability and compliance with the USCCB Charter as well as with Archdiocesan policy, the Office of Child and Youth Protection reports to the Independent Review Board at regularly scheduled meetings throughout the year. In addition to these regular meetings, the Archbishop has directed the Office of Child and Youth Protection to create this annual report and requested that the draft report be shared with the Independent Review Board for its review. This document is the annual report for Reporting Year 2025, which primarily covers the information contained in the annual audit conducted by the USCCB for that time period regarding the Archdiocese's compliance with the USCCB Charter.

EDUCATION

The Archdiocese of Baltimore's safe environment training program (available online at www.virtusonline.org) educates Church personnel on preventing, recognizing, and reporting child abuse and neglect. All clergy, including bishops, all employees, and all volunteers having substantial contact with children at any covered entity of the Archdiocese of Baltimore are required to receive this training.

- As of the end of Reporting Year 2025, 40,095 adults have received safe environment training, and are approved for ministry, employment or volunteer service with substantial contact with children.

The Archdiocese of Baltimore's Office of Child and Youth Protection also conducts some in-person training for personnel in parishes and schools, as well as in youth-serving organizations outside of the Archdiocese. This training is designed to supplement the required online training.

- o During Reporting Year 2025, this supplemental training was conducted for all new pastors, principals, teachers and youth ministers in the Archdiocese of Baltimore; deacon candidates and their wives; and seminarians beginning pastoral assignments.

Family Life Catechesis, which includes safe environment education, is required for children in grades K-12 in Archdiocesan schools and parish religious education programs. The Archdiocese's Department of Evangelization assists schools and parishes in reviewing materials pertinent to safe environment education and child abuse prevention education. The resources are also made available to parents and primary caregivers, in both English and Spanish.

- During Reporting Year 2025, 26,431 children and youth received safe environment education.

In 2020, the Office of Child and Youth Protection, in collaboration with the Archdiocese's Office of Marriage and Family Life and the Division of Catholic Schools, created additional online materials to be used by schools and parishes to support parents in imparting child abuse prevention education to children. These materials were used by Archdiocesan Catholic schools in April 2025, to supplement the safe environment curriculum taught in Religion classes, as part of Child Abuse Awareness Month.

SCREENING OF APPLICANTS

The Archdiocese of Baltimore is committed to healthy ministry and seeks to engage competent, qualified individuals to work with children. To protect children and youth, Church personnel are screened for their fitness to work with minors. This process requires obtaining references for all employees and for volunteers who work with children, as well as the completion of criminal history screening for clergy, employees, and volunteers who have substantial contact with children.

- As of the end of Reporting Year 2025, 4,243 clergy, religious, seminarians and employees had been cleared to work with children after submitting to a criminal history screening.

- As of the end of the Reporting Year 2025, 35,852 volunteers working with children had been cleared to work with children after submitting to a criminal history screening.

- During the 2025 Reporting Year, the Archdiocese excluded from ministry, employment or volunteer service:

- o All candidates against whom there was a credible allegation of sexual abuse, physical abuse, or neglect of a minor; and
- o All candidates against whom there was a credible allegation related to child pornography.

Other candidates determined by the Archdiocese's screening process to be unfit for service for other reasons were also excluded from employment and volunteer ministry.

REPORTING OF ALLEGATIONS

The Archdiocese of Baltimore strictly complies with Maryland laws requiring the reporting of suspected child abuse to civil authorities. Under Maryland law, any person who has reason to believe a child has been subjected to abuse must report the suspected abuse to civil authorities, even if the potential victim is now an adult and even if the alleged perpetrator is deceased. If someone associated with the Church, including clergy, employees, or volunteers in the Archdiocese of Baltimore, is suspected of committing abuse, Archdiocesan policy requires that the suspected abuse also be reported to the Archdiocese of Baltimore's Office of Child and Youth Protection at 410-547-5348 or to the Archdiocese of Baltimore's Victims' Assistance Line at 866-417-7469. The Archdiocese makes reports to the local office of Child Protective Services, the local office of the State's Attorney, local police, and the Maryland Attorney General.

Allegations of child sexual abuse are reported to law enforcement by the Archdiocese regardless of credibility. Allegations of child sexual abuse against Church Personnel are also reported to the Independent Review Board by the Archdiocese regardless of credibility. Anyone credibly accused of child sexual abuse, as determined by the Archdiocese and the Independent Review Board, regardless of whether the person has been convicted of a crime, is permanently excluded from ministry, employment, and volunteer service in the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

- During Reporting Year 2025, the Archdiocese of Baltimore received 3 allegations of child sexual abuse against clergy, involving victims who are currently children. All three allegations were made by a third party (i.e. not the alleged victim). One of the allegations was made against a retired deacon. The other two allegations were against priests in active ministry. These two allegations were reported anonymously to the Vatican, and the Vatican forwarded them to the Archdiocese of Baltimore. The Archdiocese reported the allegations to law enforcement, cooperated with civil authorities, conducted its own investigation into these three allegations, and reported the matters to the Independent Review Board.
- During Reporting Year 2025, the Archdiocese of Baltimore also received 17 allegations of possible child sexual abuse against priests, which involved alleged incidents from many years ago, deceased priests, priests previously removed from ministry, and/or clergy who were not identified by the reporter. The 17 priests included priests of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, priests of other dioceses, and members of religious orders. Some allegations were reports from third parties (i.e. not the alleged victim). All allegations were reported to law enforcement, and the Archdiocese cooperated with civil authorities. Allegations against priests of another diocese or religious order were also reported to the respective diocese or religious order. (We have not included in this report any allegations received through claims submitted in the Archdiocese's bankruptcy process.)

OUTREACH TO VICTIMS

The Archdiocese of Baltimore remains committed to promoting the healing of survivors of abuse. The current practices of the Archdiocese include the following: The Archdiocese of Baltimore reaches out to those who have been harmed by Church personnel; the Archbishop, Vicar Bishops, and other Church leaders meet with and listen to survivors of abuse; the Archdiocese recognizes the importance of not only offering support to those who are abuse survivors, but to their family members as well; the Office of Child and Youth Protection offers survivors counseling and pastoral services with the therapist of the victim/survivor's choice, and has coordinated a financial mediation program for survivors upon their request for monetary compensation in lieu of counseling. Mediations, which have been paused during the bankruptcy process, occur with a retired, non-Catholic judge in a non-adversarial forum where the survivor is represented by legal counsel and the Archdiocese apologizes for the abuse and offers survivors a personal meeting with the Archbishop if such a meeting would be helpful. Counseling assistance and mediated settlements are provided without regard to legal liability and regardless of how long ago the events occurred. Counseling assistance, mediated settlements, and related legal costs are paid through the Archdiocese's insurance programs.

- During Reporting Year 2025, the Archdiocese of Baltimore paid \$192,534.38 to provide counseling, therapy and other necessary medical costs for 27 survivors of child sexual abuse or their family members, including 1 survivor who came forward during the reporting year.
- During Reporting Year 2025, the Archdiocese of Baltimore did not reach any settlements with survivors of child sexual abuse.

COMMUNICATIONS

In 2002, the Archdiocese of Baltimore voluntarily published a list of every priest or brother who had served in the Archdiocese and was known by the central offices of the Archdiocese to have been credibly accused during his lifetime of child sexual abuse, dating back to the 1940s. The list has been updated and includes the names of others credibly accused since 2002 and is accompanied by an explanation of how the list is compiled. The updated list is available on the Archdiocese of Baltimore's website, <https://www.archbalt.org/child-and-youth-protection/priests-accused-of-abuse/>. The website also includes the Archdiocesan Statement of Policy for the Protection of Children and Youth in the Archdiocese of Baltimore, its Code of Conduct for Church Personnel of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, and other relevant child protection documents, <https://www.archbalt.org/child-and-youth-protection/>. Contact information for reporting allegations of suspected child abuse to civil authorities and to the Archdiocese of Baltimore's Office of Child and Youth Protection is also included on the Archdiocese's website.

The Archdiocese of Baltimore's Office of Child and Youth Protection communicates policies during in-person presentations to new principals, teachers, catechetical leaders and youth ministers. The Office of Child and Youth Protection also provides training to faculty and staff at Archdiocesan parishes and schools as discussed more fully above.

COMPLIANCE

Since 2003, Archdiocesan policy has designated the pastor at each parish and the principal at each Archdiocesan school as the “Responsible Administrator,” responsible for ensuring that all individuals serving in the parish or school are in compliance with the requirements of the Archdiocese of Baltimore’s Child and Youth Protection Policies and Procedures, and ensuring that all required documentation is maintained.

Since 2003, Archdiocesan policy has required that each Responsible Administrator designate at least one Screening Coordinator to assist in ensuring that the parish or school is in full compliance with the requirements of the Archdiocese of Baltimore’s Child and Youth Protection Policies and Procedures. The Screening Coordinator is required to maintain compliance records for the parish or school so that it can be verified that only those who have been screened and trained may work or volunteer with children.

- During Reporting Year 2025, 31 employees participated in individual training, regarding the responsibilities of Screening Coordinators.

On-site visits of parishes and Archdiocesan schools by outside auditors and by Archdiocesan staff are conducted regularly to make sure that parishes and Archdiocesan schools comply with the Archdiocese of Baltimore’s Child and Youth Protection Policies and Procedures.

In 2024, the Archdiocese of Baltimore submitted to an in-person audit conducted by Stonebridge Business Partners, retained by the USCCB to review compliance with the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. In addition to reviewing documents, the auditor interviewed pastors and staff of parishes and schools, the rectors of both seminaries located in the Archdiocese, the Archbishop and other leaders heading Archdiocesan offices, and members of the Independent Review Board of the Archdiocese of Baltimore. The audit period covered Reporting Years 2024, 2023, and 2022, and the Archdiocese of Baltimore was again found to be in compliance with the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People.

In 2025, the Archdiocese submitted to a data collection audit conducted by Stonebridge Business Partners. In 2027, those auditors will visit the Archdiocese to conduct an in-person audit covering Reporting Years 2025, 2026 and 2027. The external auditors have found the Archdiocese to be in compliance for all years they have conducted audits, which are required pursuant to the USCCB Charter enacted in 2002.

OTHER FINANCIAL RESOURCES DEDICATED TO CHILD PROTECTION EFFORTS

- During Reporting Year 2025, the Archdiocese of Baltimore paid \$488,031 for its centralized child protection efforts, including salaries and expenses, training programs, and background checks that serve the Archdiocese’s parishes, schools, clergy, employees, and volunteers. Salaries, expenses, and training programs of the Archdiocese’s Office of Child and Youth Protection are part of the central budget of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, which is supported by the cathedraticum paid by Archdiocesan parishes. Background checks are paid through the Archdiocese’s insurance program.

SUBMITTED TO THE INDEPENDENT REVIEW BOARD BY THE ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE OFFICE OF CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION AND APPROVED BY THE INDEPENDENT REVIEW BOARD AS OF APRIL 17, 2026.

INDEPENDENT REVIEW BOARD OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE 2025 ANNUAL CHILD PROTECTION REPORT

The Archdiocese of Baltimore established this Independent Review Board (IRB) in 1993 to review reports of child sexual abuse by church personnel and all actions taken by the Archdiocese to ensure the integrity of the Archdiocesan process for responding to reports of child sexual abuse. The Independent Review Board advises the Archbishop of Baltimore in his assessment of allegations of child sexual abuse and in his determination of a clergy member's suitability for ministry, and generally serves as a confidential consultative body to the Archbishop of Baltimore. Our role is described more fully in the policies of the Archdiocese (<https://www.archbalt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/FINAL-STATEMENT-OF-POLICY-JULY-2025.pdf>, at section 11) as well as in the USCCB Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People and Essential Norms (<http://www.usccb.org/issuesand-action/child-and-youth-protection/upload/Charter-for-the-Protection-of-Children-and-Young-People-2018-final.pdf>, at Norms 4 and 5).

The IRB is a group of diverse, independent, interfaith leaders. Our diversity provides wisdom and perspective to the Archdiocese as it responds to these important issues. In 2025, our 8 members are diverse in religion (5 Catholics and 3 non-Catholics), in gender (4 women and 4 men), in race (2 African-Americans and 6 Caucasians), in religious state of life (7 lay professionals and 1 archdiocesan priest who is a pastor), in professional backgrounds (including members with experience in the medical, law enforcement, legal, pastoral, and social work fields), and other life perspectives (including individuals without children and parents of various-aged children who are attending or have attended public, private, and Catholic schools).

Ever mindful of the importance of transparency, the Independent Review Board (IRB) has undertaken to issue this 2025 Annual Child Protection Report describing our activities during this reporting period (July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025) so that the public might know of our continuing, vigilant work to promote the safety of children within the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

Meetings of the IRB are generally scheduled quarterly and last approximately 2-3 hours each. Meetings are attended by members of the IRB, as well as representatives of the Archdiocese. When appropriate, at the discretion of the IRB, we also meet in "executive session" without the presence of the Archbishop or Archdiocesan staff. During the 2025 Reporting Year, the IRB met four times (in September and November of 2024 and in March and May of 2025).

The Archdiocese has committed to report to the IRB all allegations of child sexual abuse involving church personnel of the Archdiocese regardless of the age, details, or credibility of the allegation. Over the course of the four meetings held during the 2025 Reporting Year, the IRB reviewed 24 individual matters.

- Two of the matters reported to the IRB in Reporting Year 2025 involved alleged perpetrators who served as lay volunteers.
- Three of the matters reported to the IRB in Reporting Year 2025 involved alleged perpetrators whose names were unknown to the Archdiocese, because the perpetrators were not named by the people who reported abuse.
- Seven of the matters reported in Reporting Year 2025 were updates involving individuals who previously had been reported to the IRB.

The Independent Review Board provided advice to the Archdiocese regarding continuation of ministry, additional reporting or pastoral outreach, additional screening or training, investigation efforts, and further communications. The IRB reviewed and discussed the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors' Universal Guidelines Framework for the Protection of Minors. Multiple meetings, the Independent Review Board discussed the Archdiocese's Chapter 11 proceedings.

Archbishop Lori personally attended each of the meetings of the IRB during the reporting year. Minutes of the IRB's discussion were kept and approved by the IRB at a subsequent meeting.

INDEPENDENT REVIEW BOARD MEMBERS:

Dr. Jay Perman, M.D., Chair
--Chancellor of the University System of Maryland

Frederick H. Bealefeld, III
--Former Police Commissioner of Baltimore City

*Alicia Belmas
--Board Member, Center for Hope, Federal Employee, Former U.S. Coast Guard

Beverly A. Cooper
--Vice President, The Reginald F. Lewis Foundation, Inc.

Rev. Msgr. Robert J. Jaskot
--Pastor, Our Lady of the Fields, Millersville

Mary Page Michel
--Community Volunteer

*Kim Morrill LCSW-C
--Chief Executive Officer, Aspire Wellness Center

Hon. Alexander Wright, Jr.
--Senior Judge, Appellate Court of Maryland

Affiliations listed for identification and background purposes only.

**These two IRB members were not asked to vote to approve the 2025 annual report, since their tenure on the board did not begin until October 21, 2025.*



ARCHDIOCESE
of BALTIMORE