



Archdiocesan Requirements for a Parish Adult Small Group Ministry

Rev. Date: Feb. 27, 2020

Parishes in the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis who have an adult small group ministry where the small groups meet onsite, offsite, or in homes, should include the following in their parish procedures and small group facilitator training:

1. Archdiocesan Requirements and Forms

- a. All small group facilitators must sign a "Small Group Facilitator Form."
- b. All members of a small group that meet in a home must sign a "Small Group Member Adult Liability Waiver."
- c. The parish must keep these documents on file for two years.

2. Procedures Regarding Vulnerable Adults

- a. Background:
 - If an adult parish volunteer is interacting with vulnerable adults, the Archdiocese requires that the adult volunteer must comply with Essential 3 requirements (background check, VIRTUS® training and Code of Conduct),
 - A vulnerable adult is defined as follows: *A person with an illness or other physical, mental, or emotional condition that makes the person unable to defend or protect him or herself, or get help for him or herself if abused.*
- b. Because the small group ministry is not advertised or designed for vulnerable adults, Essential 3 requirements are not required for small group facilitators unless a specific situation involves a vulnerable adult. Small group ministry procedures should include the following:
 - Small group facilitators should be provided the definition of a vulnerable adult, and instructed to contact the parish if they suspect a small group members fits that definition.
 - Small group members who the parish identifies as a vulnerable adult must be placed in a small group which is Essential 3 compliant.

3. Procedures Regarding Minors

- a. Minors other than high school students may not be present at the parish, home or other location of a small group meeting. The only exception is for children of a small group member who is present at the meeting and responsible for the child's supervision.
- b. High school students may participate in small groups if the following two conditions are met:
 - The small group meets at the parish, and
 - The small group is Essential 3 compliant, which includes the requirement that there are two Essential 3 compliant adults at every small group meeting where a high school student is in attendance, or one of the parents is in attendance.
- c. Parishes may and are encouraged to involve their youth (non-Confirmation students) in the Synod Parish Consultation Process With Small Groups fall 2020 through their parish's youth programs. In the case of high school students, parishes may involve them in accordance with paragraph 3.b. above.

4. Other

- a. **Meeting Size:** A small group meeting should involve at least three members. If only two members can attend, facilitators must cancel and reschedule the meeting.
- b. **Transportation:** Facilitators of small groups must not provide, or arrange for, transportation for their small group members.
- c. **Alcohol:** No alcohol may be served or present at small group meetings.

- 5. **Questions:** For questions regarding Essential 3, contact Janell Rasmussen, Deputy Director of Ministerial Standards and Safe Environments, by email at rasmussenj@archspm.org, or office phone at (651) 291-4475.