



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

DIocese OF BRIDGEPORT

238 Jewett Avenue • Bridgeport, Connecticut 06606 • 203-416-1352 • FAX: 203-371-8323

August 26, 2024

My brothers and sisters in Christ:

Together we must continue to uphold our sacred obligation to protect children, youth and vulnerable adults by reinforcing the importance of our Safe Environment programs. I am deeply grateful to you for your cooperation, especially with ongoing VIRTUS awareness training and criminal background checks. I realize that the work of prevention is not always easy, and I am grateful to our Pastors, Principals, Safe Environment Coordinators, Facilitators and the Survivors who help to bring awareness to our prevention programs. I ask that you remain steadfast in these efforts.

As we continue the renewal of our Diocese, it is critical for every adult who assists in a parish, school or diocesan program, to take the following steps

1. Review the attached fact sheet on Safe Environment updates and the Diocese of Bridgeport Safe Environment Handbook (2020), paying particular attention to the sections that apply to your work and to the sections on reporting abuse.
2. Obtain your VIRTUS credentials and visit www.virtusonline.org to complete any missing items if your training and/or background check is incomplete or has expired. Detailed instructions are on our Diocesan website www.bridgeportdiocese.org under Safe Environment. The Vulnerable Adult Training Module and Protecting God's Children (3.0 & 4.0) modules are our current re-certifications even if you do not work with this age group. This is important information for all of us to know.

Please update your VIRTUS account to reflect all current locations where you actively serve. Your Local Safe Environment coordinator is able to help you with accessing your account or you may complete re-certification in print format if you are not comfortable using technology.

The 5- Year Renewal of VIRTUS Training and Background Checks are required for all Clergy, Religious Sisters and Brothers, All Employees (Full-time, Part-Time and Per-Diem) age 18 and above and every Volunteer who is working in scheduled contact with children. Initial VIRTUS training is a 3-hour facilitator-led course (in person or by zoom). VIRTUS re-certification is a module you will access through your VIRTUS account.

The 10- Year Renewal of VIRTUS Training and Background Checks are required for Volunteers of adult-only ministries with no scheduled contact with children or vulnerable adults. Tenants, Vendors and Independent Contractors fall into this category. Your local Safe Environment Coordinator can help you determine which category applies to you.

Important Contacts: Erin Neil, LCSW Director of Safe Environment and Victim Assistance Coordinator (203) 650-3265; and Paula Orjuela, Safe Environment Training and Compliance Supervisor (203) 416-1407. The VIRTUS helpdesk 1-888-847-8870 helpdesk@virtus.org.

Thank you for helping me to ensure that our Diocese is a safe environment for all adults, children and youth.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Frank Caggiano". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Most Reverend Frank J. Caggiano
Bishop of Bridgeport