

# A. Reporting

Anyone who knows of, or has reasonable cause to suspect, an adult who has been abused, neglected, or exploited in violation of the law should immediately contact the appropriate state abuse hotline (see diocesan website resources and Appendix D). All reports are confidential and access to these reports is limited by specific criteria described in the appropriate state's statute(s).

In the case of clergy misconduct complaints, the Bishop should be contacted immediately to describe the situation. If it is a reportable incident, the state would then be informed by that person, not by the Bishop. This allows the Bishop the opportunity to put into motion the internal procedures described below at the same time as the legal requirements are being initiated.

## **Allegations involving lay persons:**

1. All reports of abuse of children or vulnerable adults must be reported to state authorities immediately. It is not the listener's job to investigate or verify. Report to authorities to investigate.
2. Complaints of sexual misconduct by a **lay employee or volunteer of a church**, congregation, or fellowship will be reported immediately to the rector, vicar, or priest-in-charge of the congregation. The head of any diocesan agency or institution or the rector of a parish or clergy in charge of a congregation who receives a complaint about a lay employee or volunteer will notify the Bishop, Wardens, and/or lay leadership boards immediately.
3. The complainant will be assured that the church is concerned and that the complaint will be investigated promptly and thoroughly. The initial, verbal response should not convey doubt.
4. Complaints of sexual misconduct by a **lay employee or volunteer of the Diocese** will also be reported immediately to the Bishop by the rector, vicar, or priest-in-charge.