



CLERGY FILE

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FOR YOUR PERMANENT RECORDS

PROT. NO. 01/25

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PROTOCOL FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT VISITS WITH AND WITHOUT WARRANT

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To: Diocese of Columbus Clergy and Catholic School Principals

From: Office of Diocesan Legal Counsel

The Office of Diocesan Legal Counsel for the Diocese of Columbus is issuing this protocol to assist the parishes, schools, and other organizations which operate under the administrative authority of the Diocese of Columbus (collectively, “Diocesan Organizations”). The Diocese and all Diocesan Organizations remain committed to offering educational, religious, and social services in a safe and supportive environment within the confines of the law. The Diocese has been receiving inquiries regarding the possibility of immigration officials (ICE agents) coming to Diocesan Organizations on official business with a warrant. Be advised, this is a very unlikely scenario, however, if any law enforcement official seeks to make an arrest, the Diocesan Organization Representative (i.e. pastor or principal) should ask for a valid judicial warrant. A valid judicial warrant will show the name of the person that they are seeking to arrest (spelled out correctly) and must be signed by a judge as is required by Article III of the United States Constitution.

If your Diocesan Organization is presented WITH a warrant by law enforcement officers (i.e., ICE agents) and request to enter the premises, here are the steps you should take:

1. Stay calm and request identification.

- Politely ask the presenting law enforcement officers (“Officer(s)”) for their official credentials, noting names and badge numbers.
- Request a copy of the judicial warrant and any other official documentation the Officer(s) have that specifies the scope of the search.
- Inform the Officer(s) that your Diocesan Organization has legal representation, and you will follow established protocols.
- Contact your Pastor (or supervisor) and Diocesan General Counsel immediately. **Angel Fox, General Counsel for Diocese of Columbus, direct cell#: (614) 769-3528; or Shawn Kinson, Safe Environment & Security, direct cell#: (614) 779-1966.**

- If Angel Fox is not available, and a school is involved, please contact Dr. Adam Dufault, Superintendent of Catholic Schools.
 - Whether you have contact with General Counsel or the Superintendent, you must cooperate with the Officer.
2. **Escort Officer(s) to the area the warrant specifies only.**
 - Designate a senior leader and backup, this should be the principal and vice principal, to handle the escort and communication with Officer while on site.
 - Do not answer any questions until Diocesan General Counsel or alternative is contacted.
 3. **Review the warrant scope.**
 - Do not consent to any search that goes beyond the warrant's details.
 - Limit Officer(s) access to the areas or materials explicitly mentioned in the document.
 4. **Document everything.**
 - Keep a log of times, dates and Officer(s) interactions.
 - Note any items or documents seized by Officer(s).
 5. **Handle all follow-up with Officer(s) through General Counsel.**
 - Ensure all additional requests and responses are managed by General Counsel.

If law enforcement officers ("Officer(s)") request to enter the Parish/ School WITHOUT a warrant, here are the steps you should take:

1. **Stay calm and request identification and ask if there are *exigent circumstances*.**
 - a national security threat
 - imminent risk of death, violence, or physical harm
 - in hot pursuit of an individual who poses a public safety threat
 - in hot pursuit of a personally observed border crosser

If any of the above circumstances are provided, please follow the steps as outlined above as if you were presented with a judicial warrant.

If the official does not state the visit involves any of the above, politely refuse them entry to the premises and immediately contact your Pastor (or supervisor) and Diocesan General Counsel immediately. Angel Fox, General Counsel for Diocese of Columbus, direct cell#: (614) 769-3528; or Shawn Kinson, Safe Environment & Security, direct cell#: (614) 779-1966. If Angel Fox is not available and a school is involved, please contact Dr. Adam Dufault, Superintendent of Catholic Schools.