



DIOCESE OF CROOKSTON SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY: *Handling Evidence*

ISSUED: January 1, 2021; Updated February 17, 2022

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this component of the Diocese of Crookston Safe Environment Policy is to establish a uniform and consistent process for collection, handling, and storage of evidence and to insure appropriate methods of chain of custody for the preservation of evidence, including computers or electronic devices, that relates to any internal Diocese of Crookston Safe Environment investigation.

II. DEFINITIONS

“Chancellor” means the appointed Chancellor (chief archivist) of the Diocese of Crookston.

“Evidence” is an item obtained as part of an investigation and which may be used for the purposes of an administrative or legal proceeding.

“Bishop’s Delegate (Delegate)” means the employee responsible for managing diocesan processes for handling allegations of clergy misconduct and overseeing the work of the Ministerial Review Board and the Office of Safe Environment.

III. POLICY

Proper procedures for seizing, handling and storing evidence can help ensure that it is not tampered with or lost and therefore preserved so as to be of value in resolving investigations. Evidence should be seized, handled and stored in a manner so as to not interfere with a law enforcement investigation.

The following procedure is how evidence will be documented and protected:

1. The existence of evidence shall be reported to the Delegate.
2. Efforts should be made to seize evidence in a timely manner.
3. Seized evidence shall be described and documented in writing.
4. Evidence should be seized and stored in a manner so as to preserve its integrity and usefulness.
5. Custody and storage of evidence shall be the responsibility of the Chancellor.
6. Written records of the handling and movement of evidence shall be kept, including identifying persons who have had access to it.