



COURAGEOUSLY
Living the Gospel

Crisis Communication Protocol for Parishes and Schools

1. In the unfortunate event that an incident, accident or emergency occurs involving law enforcement, the following steps are to be taken to ensure that accurate and appropriate information is provided to stakeholders as needed. Stakeholders that typically need to be informed include parishioners, school families, Board of Directors, clergy and Pastoral Center staff, such as the Bishop's leadership team, Safe Environment, Human Resources, Stewardship and Development and Risk Management.
2. **Facts are obtained.** The Director of the entity where the incident occurred is responsible for obtaining the facts of the circumstances. Questions to be answered include:
 - a. How did you find out about the incident?
 - b. Who was involved?
 - c. Was anyone hurt or in danger of being hurt?
 - d. What are the implications of the incident to your community?
 - e. What action has been taken in response to incident?
 - f. Who has been informed?
3. **Pastoral Center leadership is informed.** Schools should contact the superintendent, who will inform the Vicar General and Executive Director of Communications. Parishes and other entities should contact the Vicar General and share the facts.
4. **Statement is written.** Should a statement be needed for families, parishioners, staff, the media or others, a first draft will be written by the Executive Director of Communications.
5. **Statement is reviewed.** The statement is reviewed for accuracy, legal concerns, responsiveness and compassion. The statement needs to be reviewed by entity Director and/or Pastor, Legal Consultant and the Bishop of the Diocese of St. Petersburg or the Bishop's designee.
6. **Statement is approved.** The statement is approved by the Bishop of the Diocese of St. Petersburg or the Bishop's designee.
7. **Statement is distributed.** The statement is distributed by entity Director and/or Pastor to stakeholders as needed. If you need help with how to distribute statement to your parish, contact the Executive Director of Communications. However, in general, pulpit announcements, parish bulletins, emails and text messages are effective ways to distribute information to parishioners.
8. **Media inquiries are managed.** Media requests should be directed to the Executive Director of Communications who will respond with the approved statement as appropriate.