



The Problem of False Claims of Clergy Sexual Abuse

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The Catholic Church has experienced an epidemic of sexual misconduct allegations and lawsuits in the United States. In some cases, evidence that the church knew of sexual misconduct and had effectively concealed them has created a dire social and legal predicament. Although U.S. Catholic bishops have adopted a zero-tolerance policy for its priests and ministers, the church still faces a long and costly road of litigation that any organization in which adults supervise children—especially religious institutions—would do well to learn from.

Cases of sexual abuse against children are both tragic and inexcusable. But as with any situation in which there are numerous claims of sexual abuse against a single defendant, some of those claims will be false. With grave sensitivity, it is the risk manager's duty to evaluate claims in light of this fact.

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