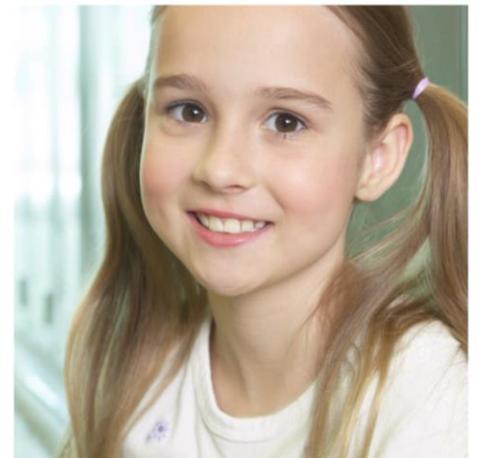




*Praesidium Accreditation for Religious*

History, Process, and Registration Information

Updated July 2012



**PRAESIDIUM**  
Our passion. Your protection.

# HISTORY

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## *Program Development*

The Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM) and the Religious Institutes and Societies of Apostolic Life it represents have long recognized and addressed the issue of protecting minors. For a number of years, CMSM has supported Religious Institutes in their efforts to prevent abuse of minors. The majority of Institutes have taken steps to carefully screen and select candidates for formation and to deal promptly and responsibly to incidents and allegations of abuse.

Therefore, Praesidium Accreditation for Religious does not represent a first step or an initial handling of abuse prevention measures, but rather an evolution in a long-standing challenge for those Institutes to clarify their responsibilities, identify best practices, evaluate the extent to which they are meeting those defined standards, and communicate to others the steps they have taken.

The development of the Standards for Accreditation and process was in direct response to the following statement of the August 2002 CMSM assembly:

*“We believe that in most instances over this last decade, as we have learned more about the tragic consequences of sexual abuse, we have acted responsibly in dealing with allegations. But, we have also heard the clear call to more accountability and transparency in how we as leaders of men religious deal with the protection of children from sexual abuse by members of our institutes and how we handle allegations of sexual abuse and follow-up outreach to victims and supervision of our members charged with sexual abuse.”*

The Standards for Accreditation, originally published in 2004, are clustered into three key areas:

- **Prevention:** Standards in this area review items such as how new members are screened, relevant educational programs for initial and ongoing formation, systems of support and accountability to ensure Members’ well-being, and how the Institute manages internal reports of concerns about boundary violations.
- **Responding:** In keeping with the USCCB *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, these Standards foremost ensure that individuals who report abuse to an Institute are received pastorally and compassionately. This set of Standards also evaluates policies and procedures in areas such as reporting requirements, investigations, and the role of external review boards.
- **Supervision:** Institutes with Members that are known to have abused a minor in the past must implement safeguards to ensure that no further abuse is perpetrated. The Standards in this section consider to what extent a Member in this category is restricted and is compliant with his restrictions and ensures on-going evaluation of overall effectiveness of the supervision.

## *2008 & 2012 Updates*

In 2008, CMSM leadership and members convened with Praesidium in a number of sessions to reflect on the Accreditation process and revisit the Standards and their appropriateness moving forward. Feedback was incorporated from a number of sources: Praesidium’s experience in auditing more than 100 Religious Institutes and in auditing secular organizations, the experiences of Major Superiors, insight from Praesidium’s Advisory Council, the viewpoint of civil and canon lawyers, and perspective from Review Board members and other interested parties. After a number of reviews, the revised Standards that were approved reflect greater clarity in the requirements, developments in Church policy, and growth seen in child-serving industry standards as a whole. This process was replicated in 2011-12 to reflect developments since the 2008 review.

# PROCESS

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The Praesidium Religious Accreditation process consists of five phases:

## PHASE ONE: REGISTRATION AND PREPARATION

During this phase, Praesidium will assist the Institute in registering for Accreditation, developing a contract, and preparing for the on-site visit.

To initiate Praesidium Accreditation process, the Institute should first submit a completed Registration Form to Praesidium (enclosed). After receiving the completed Registration Form, Praesidium will contact you to answer any questions you may have, discuss pricing for your Institute, and develop a contract for your review. Praesidium schedules a conference call to discuss any unique circumstances, select the locations to be included in the site visits, and schedule dates for Praesidium to be on site. During this phase, the Institute is provided with two documents which will assist with the overall preparation:

- A. ***Self-Audit Toolkit.*** The Self-Audit Toolkit helps the Institute assess compliance with each of the Standards and identify problem areas early in the process. The Self-Audit Tool prompts you to consider the information necessary to evaluate compliance with each Standard. Praesidium is available for technical assistance as you complete this tool. A conference call will be scheduled to review the results of the Self-Audit Toolkit with you.
- B. ***Accreditation Guidebook.*** The Accreditation Guidebook includes specific information about what to expect during the site visit and how to prepare accordingly. Specifically, it provides guidelines for what types of documentation should be available before and during the site visit and offers tips for preparing communities that will be visited.
- C. ***Online Resource Library.*** Praesidium has compiled dozens of resources – such as sample guidelines and policies, training curricula, and data tracking documents – to assist Institutes in achieving compliance with the Standards. Institutes are provided with a login and password to access these resources through the Praesidium website.

## PHASE TWO: DATA COLLECTION AND SITE VISIT

During this phase, Praesidium uses a variety of data collection methods to assess compliance with each of the Standards for Accreditation. This includes several activities:

- A. ***Policy Analysis.*** Praesidium analyzes relevant written policies to ensure they are specific, comprehensive, and in keeping with the Standards.
- B. ***Document Review.*** Praesidium reviews documentation to verify compliance with Standards in a number of areas, including: new member screening, communication with those who employ Members, verification of annual visits with the Major Superior or his delegate, and Members' participation in relevant educational programs.
- C. ***Interviews with Individuals in Specific Roles.*** Praesidium conducts interviews with the Major Superior, Victim Assistance Coordinator, Vocation Director, Formation Director, a Review Board member, Local Superiors, Members, and Members in Formation in order to verify compliance with the Standards. Some interviews may be done via telephone.

D. **Case Review.** Praesidium reviews all allegations that have been brought forward to the Institute since June of 2002 or since the date of the Institute's last Accreditation site visit. Each case will be assessed for compliance with the Standards for Responding.

E. **Safety Plan Analysis.** Praesidium evaluates each Safety Plan to assess compliance with the Standards for Supervision. This includes a review of the case history of each member on a Safety Plan, interviews with individuals who are involved in supervision, on-site visits to where Members with Safety Plans reside and/or work, and verification that on-going compliance is appropriately documented.

F. **Additional Site Visits to Local Communities.** Praesidium visits the Institute's primary office(s), and a sample of communities to ensure compliance with the Standards has been achieved across the Institute's locations. When selecting these sample sites, we consider characteristics known to affect risk, such as geographic location, type of ministry, number of Members in the community, and history of incidents at the location. For those Institutes seeking Initial Accreditation, Praesidium will visit 20% of the locations. For Re-Accreditation, Praesidium will visit 10% of the locations.

G. **Letters to Arch/dioceses.** Praesidium contacts bishops in Arch/dioceses where the Institute has members in ministry to inform them that the Institute has applied for Accreditation and invites them to provide any important information that could inform the assessment of compliance. Institutes will have an opportunity to follow up with these bishops after achieving Accreditation.

H. **Exit Interview.** Praesidium meets with the Major Superior (and anyone he would like to invite) following the site visit to discuss the next phase of the Accreditation process. At that time, Praesidium presents preliminary findings and highlights any Standards that have been identified as not in compliance.

### PHASE THREE: PRELIMINARY REPORT

Within 30 working days after the data collection is complete, Praesidium sends the Institute a confidential, comprehensive report that considers each Standard and the extent to which compliance with each Standard has been achieved. The Preliminary Report includes:

A. **Specific Findings for Each Standard.** The Institute will be able to clearly review which Standards require action to achieve Accreditation. Each Standard is color-coded: a green code indicates total compliance; a yellow code indicates partial compliance; a red code indicates non-compliance.

B. **Recommendations and Solutions.** The report includes specific recommendations for achieving compliance with each Standard where required. Praesidium will arrange a telephone conference to review the report with you, answer questions, and discuss next steps to achieve Accreditation.

After receiving the Preliminary Report, the Institute has 30 working days to respond to any non-compliance issues. Praesidium will gladly assist the Institute in identifying methods or resources to achieve compliance. Praesidium recognizes that some actions may require additional time and effort; therefore, on a case-by-case basis, Institutes may receive an extension if requested in writing within the 30-day period. Praesidium reviews the Institute's response to the Preliminary Report and determines whether the corrective action(s) sufficiently meets the Standard(s). If additional action is required to achieve compliance, Praesidium will discuss next steps with the Institute.

## PHASE FOUR: ACCREDITATION

Once all compliance issues identified in the Preliminary Report have been sufficiently resolved, the Institute is eligible for Praesidium Accreditation. Accreditation is awarded for either three years or five years. To be eligible for a five year Accreditation, Institutes must meet the following criteria:

- Successful completion of at least two three-year Accreditations. If the Institute has merged/reconfigured since its last Accreditation, each of the legacy Institutes must have been Accredited at least twice as well.
- Demonstration of ongoing compliance with all intermediate reporting requirements outlined in Phase Five

Accredited Institutes receive the following to recognize their achievement:

- Final Report.*** A Final Report will be issued to the Institute to reflect total compliance with all 25 of the Standards for Accreditation.
- Certificate and Award.*** Upon achieving Accreditation, the Institute will receive a framed Accreditation certificate and an attractive award for display.
- Announcement to Bishops.*** Accredited Institutes have the option to announce their achievement in a joint letter from Praesidium to the bishops in Arch/dioceses where its Members serve.
- Media Kit.*** Accredited Institutes will be provided with materials to announce their achievement such as a sample press release and the Praesidium logo for use on the Institute's web site.

## PHASE FIVE: ONGOING COMPLIANCE

The purpose of this phase is to minimize drift from Standards during the Accreditation period. Drift can occur in almost any organization, and Religious Institutes face particular challenges in the context of regular leadership changes, the current trend toward mergers and reconfiguration, and overall competing demands.

- Annual Compliance Summary.*** Accredited Institutes are required to submit an annual summary of compliance with the Standards that most directly impact child safety and/or have an explicit annual component. Praesidium will provide a template for this summary and will be available for technical support to assist Institutes in completing this requirement.
- Trigger Events.*** Accredited Institutes must contact Praesidium during the Institute's Accreditation period under the following circumstances:
  - A current Member is accused of abusing someone who is still a minor
  - Election of a new Major Superior
  - Merger/reconfiguration with another Institute
  - Development or Modification of a Safety Plan to "High Risk"
  - Significant modification of a Safety Plan

C. ***Suspension and/or Revocation.*** An Institute's Accreditation may be suspended or even revoked under the following circumstances:

- Discovery that the Institute deliberately withheld information relevant to the audit from Praesidium auditors
- Failure to implement corrective action(s) identified in the Preliminary Report or the Annual Compliance Summary within a reasonable timetable
- The Institute exhibits conduct or actions that are inconsistent with the spirit of the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* and its *Essential Norms* or contrary to child welfare in general

## BENEFITS & PRICING INFORMATION

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Praesidium-Accredited Institutes enjoy the following benefits:

- The ability to publicly demonstrate the Institute's compliance with the *Essential Norms* of the USCCB *Charter for the Protection for Children and Young People* and its overall commitment to the highest child safety standards
- Confirmation that the Institute has been audited by an independent team of specialists from Praesidium and meets or exceeds all Standards for Accreditation
- Access to a library of risk management resources that will enable the Institute to remain current on the most recent abuse prevention research and best practices
- Ongoing awareness among its Members of the risk of abuse and the development of skills needed to take preventive action
- Favorable positioning when negotiating insurance coverage
- Preferred pricing for other Praesidium products and services

Fees for Accreditation are determined by a Principal Package, the number of locations to be included in the sample site visits, the review of Safety Plans, and reasonable and customary travel expenses. A description of these components follows:

### **Component One - Principal Package**

A set of foundation activities must be undertaken for each Accreditation. Praesidium has learned from time-tracking data on audits of over 120 Institutes that the minimum amount of time for our graduate-degreed consultants to complete these activities is conservatively 4.5 person-days. Of course, this can vary based on the number of Members, the number of cases, and the overall preparedness of the Institute at the time of the site visit(s). Though the need for consultation time may vary, feedback from Praesidium's recent Consumer Satisfaction Survey strongly indicated a desire for more consultation and communication with Praesidium staff. Current pricing accurately reflects the reality of Praesidium's operating costs and enables us to continue to provide ample consultation time for each Institute.

Pricing for the Principal Package is based on two factors:

- A. ***Size of the Institute.*** Rates are scaled based on the number of Members.
- B. ***Type of Accreditation.*** There are three types of Accreditation:
  - *Initial* – The first audit of an Institute, which reviews all relevant data dating back to June of 2002.
  - *Three Year Re-Accreditation* – A second audit, which reviews all relevant data since the Institute’s Initial audit.
  - *Five Year Re-Accreditation* – The third audit, which reviews all data since the Institute’s second audit. Institutes must meet eligibility criteria described above in Phase Four to register for Five Year Re-Accreditation.

### **Component Two - Sample Site Visits**

To verify that all Standards have been implemented across the Institute, a sample of the Institute’s locations must be visited. These site visits will involve travel to the site and interviews with community Members and the Local Superior. Some of the most critical information for the audits has been obtained during these visits, and Praesidium frequently receives positive feedback from Members about having the opportunity to participate. Major Superiors have noted that the on-site visits to local communities have been instrumental in bolstering overall Member commitment to the Accreditation process.

Institutes will be charged a flat rate which is based on a minimum estimate of travel time to the site, interviews during the visit, and data analysis for each additional site visit. The number of additional site visits is limited to a sample of 20% of locations for Initial Accreditation and 10% of locations for Re-Accreditation. When selecting these sample sites, Praesidium considers characteristics known to affect risk, such as geographic location, type of ministry, number of Members in the community, and history of incidents at the location.

Praesidium fully recognizes the complexity of defining the number of “locations” for each Institute. This can be done by the number of houses, friaries, priories, ministerial sites, etc. Praesidium works closely with each Institute to define this in a manner that is culturally appropriate for the Institute while maintaining the integrity of the sample.

### **Component Three - Safety Plans**

Safety Plans are perhaps the most complicated aspect of Accreditation and historically have required a great deal of consultation time. Institutes will be charged a flat fee for each Safety Plan based on a minimum estimate of time needed for interviews, file review, analysis, and consultation. Safety Plans for “high risk” Members are charged at a different rate due to their more complex nature and the requirement, Per Standard 25, for an annual onsite visitation.

Please see the “2012 Schedule of Fees” for specific rates for each component.

## 2012 SCHEDULE OF FEES

<i>Component</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Initial Accreditation</i>	<i>Re- Accreditation 3-Year</i>	<i>Re- Accreditation 5-Year</i>
<b>Principal Package</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial Planning and Consultation</li> <li>• Policy Analysis</li> <li>• Document Review</li> <li>• In-person Interviews with Members</li> <li>• Interviews with Individuals in Specific Roles</li> <li>• Case Reviews</li> <li>• Exit Interview</li> <li>• Data Analysis and Preliminary Report</li> <li>• Ongoing Support and Consultation</li> <li>• Final Report</li> <li>• Review of Annual Compliance Summary</li> </ul>	1-25 Members <b>\$5,000</b>	1-25 Members <b>\$4,000</b>	1-25 Members <b>\$6,000</b>
		26-50 Members <b>\$6,500</b>	26-50 Members <b>\$5,500</b>	26-50 Members <b>\$8,000</b>
		51-100 Members <b>\$9,000</b>	51-100 Members <b>\$7,500</b>	51-100 Members <b>\$11,250</b>
		101+ Members <b>\$10,000</b>	101+ Members <b>\$9,000</b>	101+ Members <b>\$13,750</b>
<b>Sample Site Visit(s)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview with Local Superior</li> <li>• Interviews with Members</li> </ul>	20% sample size <b>\$2,000</b> per site	10% sample size <b>\$2,000</b> per site	10% sample size <b>\$2,000</b> per site
<b>Safety Plans</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case Review</li> <li>• Onsite visit to assess environment</li> <li>• Review of documentation verifying compliance</li> <li>• Interview with Member on Safety Plan</li> <li>• Interview with Supervisor(s)</li> <li>• Consultation</li> <li>• Annual visit to review high-risk plans</li> </ul>	<b>\$1,500</b> per non-high risk plan  <b>\$3,500</b> per high risk plan (includes initial review at time of audit plus two annual/interim visits)	<b>\$1,500</b> per non-high risk plan  <b>\$3,500</b> per high risk plan (includes initial review at time of audit plus two annual/interim visits)	<b>\$1,500</b> per non-high risk plan  <b>\$5,000</b> per high risk plan (includes initial review at time of audit plus four annual/interim visits)
<b>Travel</b>		<i>Reasonable and customary travel expenses</i>		

# REGISTRATION

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Initial Accreditation       Three Year Re- Accreditation       Five Year Re- Accreditation

Name of Order or Congregation _____
Name of Institute _____
Name of Primary Contact _____
Mailing Address _____
Mailing Address _____
Telephone (Primary) _____
Telephone (Secondary) _____
Fax _____
Email Address _____

Approximate dates you would prefer for the site visit: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Number of Members: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Locations (Houses, Communities): \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\* Please include the following with your completed registration form:

- A. **List of all current Members.** This will assist auditors in their need to cross-reference requirements for all Members under certain Standards.
- B. **List of all community locations.** This will assist in the determination of the scope of and selection for the site visit(s).
- C. **List of Arch/dioceses where your Members serve.** This is necessary as part of the feedback solicitation process.

## REGISTRATION – p. 2

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*In order to plan for the Accreditation process of your Institute, Praesidium will also need to know about allegations that have come forward since June 2002 (or since the date of your last site visit) and about members under supervision. Please be assured that your information will be kept in the strictest of confidence as stated in your contract, which requires confidentiality for all information provided during the Accreditation process. **We will contact you by telephone to discuss this sensitive information.***

**---This section to be completed by Praesidium staff---**

<p>Number of allegations since June 2002 or since the last Accreditation site visit (Include allegations involving current, former, or deceased Members and any allegations reported anonymously): _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Number of Members under supervision for offenses with minors _____</p> <p>Locations of Members under supervision for offenses with minors _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>How many are considered to be “high-risk”? _____</p> <p>Locations of “high-risk” Members _____</p> <p>_____</p>
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Please submit this form to Praesidium at:

***Via Regular Mail:***

Praesidium, Inc. – Accreditation for Religious  
624 Six Flags Drive, Suite 110  
Arlington, TX 76011

***Via Fax:***

(817) 261-7864

***Via E-mail:***

[AccreditationforReligious@Praesidiuminc.com](mailto:AccreditationforReligious@Praesidiuminc.com)

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