

Catholic archdiocese expands morality clause for school employees after losing lawsuit

BY DUSTIN SIGGINS, Mon Mar 10, 2014

CINCINNATI, OH, March 10, 2014 (LifeSiteNews.com) – In a move designed to protect itself from lawsuits, the Catholic Archdiocese of Cincinnati has expanded its morality clause to specifically bar Catholic school employees from publicly supporting positions that clash with Catholic doctrine.

According to local news, in contracts sent to 94 principals covering over 2,000 employees, the archdiocese spelled out specific policies on public behavior and personal lifestyles. The contract prohibits the “public support of” out-of-wedlock sexual activity, “homosexual lifestyle,” abortion, surrogacy, in vitro fertilization, and – among other prohibited behaviors – “flagrant deceit or dishonesty.”

It also strictly bans employees from engaging in any of the behaviors listed above, as well as others.

The specific layout of the restrictions appear to be related to conflicts over the last five years. In 2010, the Archdiocese fired a teacher who, unmarried, was impregnated through artificial insemination. A court ruled in 2013 that the Archdiocese owed her \$171,000 for improperly firing her.

Other issues include a teacher being fired after she wrote a letter in favor of a nun suspended for supporting female priests in the public eye.

The archdiocese, which did not return a request for comment, expanded its current contract from three to six pages to accommodate the new specific restrictions.

Not everyone is happy with the new contracts. One local lay leader, Tom Miele, said the list “seems awfully intrusive and it all seems unfair.” Miele also said, “Some of the things they put on that list are not a reflection of what has happened in our society. It's more about protecting their schools from a lawsuit.”



Cincinnati Archbishop Dennis Schnurr

An archdiocese spokesperson told *Cincinnati.com*, “There aren't any new expectations of our teachers in the 2014-2015 contracts. The revised wording is just more explicit in that it lists examples of behaviors that are unacceptable as contrary to church teaching.” Dan Andriacco said the archdiocese believes “that's fairer to the teachers and a help to them.”

“Our contract for many years has reflected that by including a moral conduct clause,” said Andriacco. “Last year we made that clause more explicit by mentioning the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and this

year we've added examples of unacceptable behaviors.”