

# Religious Investigation Services

**The Child Victims Act:** *On February 14, 2019, former New York Governor Andrew Cuomo signed the Child Victims Act, allowing individuals who were sexually assaulted as minors to bring civil actions against their perpetrators at any time before turning 55 years old. In addition to extending the civil statute of limitations, the new legislation created a special one-year window, starting August 14, 2019, in which victims will be allowed to pursue a lawsuit asserting an otherwise time-barred claim for child sexual abuse. On August 8, 2020, Governor Cuomo extended that period to August 14, 2021 due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.*

## What Anchin Can Do

In many cases, religious institutions are unaware of the potential claims that could be brought against them. This is often due to the fact that a large number of personnel records would have to be reviewed to ascertain the extent of the list of possible victims and sexual abusers.

Anchin's Regulatory, Compliance and Investigations (RCI) team is experienced in assisting religious organizations and their counsel\* with the review of personnel files, and can:

- Identify all personnel files that need to be reviewed,
- Review these files to identify possible sexual abusers,
- Create a database of pertinent information for each personnel file reviewed, and
- Write a report that identifies all of the information that a religious organization and their counsel will need to make key decisions.

In many cases religious organizations plan to go public with a list of clergy members who they believe have sexually abused minors. It is important that the creation of this list be vetted by a third-party, independent investigator to ensure that the public can put trust in the information being shared. Anchin's report will identify the list of organization members that have been accused of sexual abuse and rank the probability that the accusation is credible.

## Use Case

Religious order – Anchin reviewed nearly 1,600 deceased, active and separated personnel files to identify any possible accusations or evidence of sexual abuse of a minor and/or adult. Our team:

- Created a robust database of all personnel files reviewed,
- Identified the pertinent information from each file to allow the religious order to make important decisions, and
- Produced a comprehensive report of procedures and findings.

\*Anchin is retained by counsel to protect confidentiality and privilege



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