

# Darryl Doland letter to WA, N ID, AK workers elders and friends – April 2023

Dear WA/N ID/AK workers, elders & friends.

During these difficult weeks I've been keenly aware of your prayers & support. Words cannot express how meaningful your help has been during this time. Thanks so much!

First, I want to personally apologize for the times I have 'tuned out' the muted cry of a wounded, frightened person and left their plea for help unheeded. I am saddened and deeply sorry to know that my responses (or lack thereof) have hindered justice and/or healing in some way. I hope you will forgive me for this.

Along with our collective staff, I understand that many things must be different going forward. Even though many steps are still not defined, the following are a few of the things we are committed to:

1) We are going to ask everyone on our staff and the elders to take training courses regarding CSA (Child Sexual Abuse). We will not become investigators, counselors, etc., but we will educate ourselves, which is crucial for raising our awareness and safety levels. One of the courses we will take is called Ministry Safe ( <https://ministrysafe.com/the-safety-system/awareness-training/> ). There is also a robust and free course (both General and Clergy segments) available from California ( <https://mandatedreporterca.com> ). We also encourage each of you to sign up for one of these programs.

2) We are preparing a website to share important resources and guidelines regarding CSA. The site will contain information for workers, elders, parents, and children. Our goal is for all of us to do our part to keep each other safe. The information will be updated as new resources become available. We will also list several options for people who wish to report an incident of CSA or other types of abuse. I will send you a link to the site when it becomes active in the next little while.

3) Going forward, we will have a zero-tolerance policy regarding CSA. If we are made aware of CSA violations involving a victim who is presently a minor, we will report it to authorities immediately, in compliance with the law. If an adult confides in us about a personal CSA incident that occurred in their youth, we will urge them to consult professionals who can help them proceed in an advisable manner. We will support all who need support, and if the abuser is a present danger, will report this to authorities as mandated by the law.

Trust doesn't come from demanding it, but by earning it. We've broken trust and we realize rebuilding that trust will be a process. We know you need more than a list of promises from us. You need to see proof that we care deeply for the most vulnerable people among us and that we will do all we can to protect them. You need to be assured that we will not shame or condemn victims...ever. You need evidence that we are being motivated and kept by divine love. These things are not too much to ask. This is what we want as well.

Likely there is a lot that this letter doesn't say that it should say. Hopefully you will feel free to contact me or any of the other workers with your concerns. Undoubtedly, part of our present trouble is the result of us not listening enough, or not listening with a full understanding. We want to hear from you and NEED to hear from you.

We have a great opportunity ahead of us, but it won't come from quickly dismissing the reality of where we are today. We are at an important crossroads and only through genuine confession, humility and repentance will we make the right turn. We've got a lot of work in front of us, but I'm convinced by God's grace our best days are ahead.

With care and appreciation in Christ,

Darryl