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## **Response to media inquiries regarding minor in Commonwealth Catholic Charities care**

**RICHMOND, VA (JUNE 23, 2008)** . . . In January 2008, a minor in foster care in Richmond, procured an abortion while receiving support services from Commonwealth Catholic Charities (CCC).

An investigation of this unfortunate event revealed that some members of CCC staff assisted the minor in preparations leading up to the abortion, and that one member of staff signed the consent form necessary for the minor to have the abortion. The minor was taken to and from the abortion facility by a person associated with CCC. Neither agency nor diocesan funds were used to pay for the procedure. A subsequent investigation also revealed that about two months prior to the abortion the minor had been assisted by CCC staff with implantation of a contraceptive device.

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## RESPONSE

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Obviously, both the implantation of the contraceptive device and the abortion are contrary to basic teachings of the Catholic Church. This occurrence has also raised legal and other questions that have already been or are now being addressed. Because of the seriousness of this incident, several actions have been taken by CCC, including:

1. Ongoing education and training for all Catholic Charities employees to underscore the primacy of Catholic teachings and beliefs that impact their work and professional ethics; and
2. Disciplinary actions of the employees involved in the placement of the contraceptive device and the abortion.

Commonwealth Catholic Charities is unwavering in its mission to meet the needs of the most vulnerable in our communities and continues to provide compassionate, quality services on a daily basis to hundreds of individuals who turn to CCC for help.

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