



NEWS RELEASE

DIocese OF ERIE

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## **Diocese announces completion of Independent Survivors' Reparation Program**

The Diocese of Erie has announced that the administrators hired to oversee its Independent Survivors' Reparation Program have completed their work on the fund established to provide compensation to victims of sexual abuse committed by clergy and lay people affiliated with the diocese.

The fund was managed by Kenneth Feinberg and Camille Biros, mediation experts with a national reputation for handling claims. Their team conducted independent assessments of each claim and made compensation offers in a victim-centered and transparent distribution process designed for prompt payouts without the need for costly private lawyers.

Here are the figures provided by the independent investigators as the program comes to a close:

181 applications were received.

134 applicants received and accepted offers.

\$16.6 million in compensation was paid to claimants.

The independent administrators deemed 10 claimants ineligible for the program.

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The independent administrators declined to make offers to 30 claimants.

Seven claimants chose not to accept the fund's offers.

The fund was widely publicized and launched February 15, 2019. At that time, survivors of sexual abuse committed by men and women affiliated with the diocese had a six-month window during which they had the opportunity to make a claim, regardless of when the abuse took place.

The Most Rev. Lawrence Persico, bishop of Erie, announced the figures along with a letter to pastors on May 17, 2021. It will be shared with parishioners beginning the weekend of May 22.

The fund was financed through a line of credit obtained by the Diocese of Erie and secured by the diocese's own historic investments. No money donated by the faithful to the diocese's annual Catholic Services Appeal or to the Catholic Foundation of Northwest Pennsylvania was used for the fund. The operating budgets of parishes and schools also were not used to support the effort. No company that had insured the diocese for this purpose over several decades agreed to make any payments.