

To: All Pastors and Administrators of Diocesan Facilities

From: Very Rev. Piotr Calik, VG and Rev. Fr. Jeffrey Ballou, Chairman of the Diocesan Facilities and Maintenance Commission

RE: Fire Detection Requirements:

This is to inform all pastors and administrators of the requirements for fire alarms and related monitoring systems in places of assembly that are defined as having 50 or greater occupants in a group setting (i.e., auditoriums, churches, theaters, social centers, etc.) as found within the MA State Building Codes and Massachusetts General Laws. We are asking that all pastors and administrators review the requirements below as these requirements apply to the respective parish gathering spaces and other specialized spaces as defined within the Building Codes and Massachusetts General Laws.

- Fire alarms are required for assembly occupancies.
- The type and specifics required for the fire alarm system are tailored and based on the type of assembly, number of occupants (occupant load), and hazard classification (different assembly use groups).
- The specific fire alarm system can vary from a simple alarm that notifies the occupants to a complex fire detection (i.e. smoke and/or heat detectors), which then notifies both the occupants of the facility and the fire department.

Please note that many of the specific requirements are triggered with occupancies greater than 300; but, the respective City/Town Fire Chief, in conjunction with the Building Commissioner makes (make) the final determinations as to the specific requirements for the parish facilities.

Therefore, the Bishop is requiring all parishes to have a licensed fire alarm company and registered design professional (architect) review each site and coordinate with the City/Town Fire Department officials on the specifics required for an alarm system for each parish facility.

Mr. Russell Sprague can provide a list of vendors that can assist with this review.

JAB-V3-20240228