

Child Injury Laws *Blog*

Parish Held Responsible In Lawsuit Involving Sexual Abuse By Priest

Posted by [Jonathan Rosenfeld](#) on December 08, 2010

The New York Times recently [reported](#) on a recent trial where a Delaware man was awarded \$30 million in compensatory damages after being sexually abused by Roman Catholic Priest as a child.

In addition to the significant compensatory award (the largest award to a single victim of clergy abuse) the trial is significant because it is one of the few cases where a jury apportioned significant fault against the parish where the abuse occurred.

Most sexual abuse cases involving clergy hold the diocese responsible for the damages in the particular case as opposed to the particular parish where the abuse occurred.

According to [bishopaccountability.org](#), this case is just one of several lawsuits where the jury has apportioned fault on the part of the parish.

Delaware, is like several other states that have 'window laws' that lift the statute of limitations and allow lawsuits to be pursued even after the statute of limitations would normally have prevented them from being brought. In the case of children whom have been sexually assaulted at a young age, the window laws are particularly important because many adults repress the episodes of child abuse for many years.

In addition to the compensatory damages awarded in this case, a jury will soon hear the 'punitive damage' aspect of the case which may result in a more significant award. Unlike compensatory damages that are designed to compensate the injured party, punitive damages are designed to 'punish' the wrongdoer.

Jonathan Rosenfeld offers legal services relating to: birth injuries, medical malpractice, day care abuse, foster care abuse, swimming pool injuries, automobile accidents, school bus accidents, dog bites, food poisoning, product liability, amusement park accidents and clergy abuse. For more information please visit Child Injury Laws Blog (<http://www.childinjurylaws.com/>) or call Jonathan directly at (888) 424-5757.

In some jurisdictions, punitive damage portions of the case allow the jury to hear pertinent information the defendant's conduct as well as the financial position of the particular company involved.

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