

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS *in the Catholic Church in Aotearoa New Zealand*

October 2018

The skills and expertise that employees and volunteers bring to their role is vital to the life of the Church, and is very much appreciated. All those who undertake work for the Church, whether paid or unpaid, are representing the Church and there are expectations for the way they perform their role.

This "Code of Conduct for Employees and Volunteers" sets out these expectations of behaviour. All employees and volunteers are asked to read and sign this Code of Conduct to acknowledge they understand and accept these standards of conduct.

As a Church Employee or Volunteer I agree that:

- I will be honest and trustworthy.
- I will fulfil my role as set out in my role or job description.
- I will seek support if asked to do something beyond my experience, qualifications or comfort-zone.
- I will comply with all policies and procedures provided to me during my work.
- I will treat everyone with respect and courtesy.
- I am personally accountable for my decisions and actions in helping to create a safe and supportive environment within my Church community.
- I will avoid any activities that could bring the Church or my Church community into disrepute. I will ensure my actions are not affected by my personal interests or relationships
- I will follow safeguarding procedures when I am with a child or group of children, or providing ministry or service to any adult.
- I will respect the rights of people to privacy and confidentiality, and confidential information will only be shared with others with the informed consent of the person, unless there is clear danger to them or to others.
- I will take all allegations of harm or abuse seriously and will follow our reporting procedures. I understand that I also have the right to report any concern or allegation of abuse or harm directly to the Police or Oranga Tamariki (Ministry for Children).
- I will honour the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in my work. I will be respectful of other people's cultures.
- If my behaviour or conduct is found to be in breach of this Code of Conduct, I understand that consequences may include a requirement to apologise, training, a performance improvement strategy, warnings, or dismissal.

If I do not understand any aspect of this Code of Conduct, I will speak to my manager, supervisor, or ministry leader.

Signed as an acknowledgment that this Code of Conduct has been received by me, I have had an opportunity to read it and ask questions about it, and that I agree to be bound by its terms:

Name:

Signature: Date:.....

CORE SAFEGUARDING PRACTICES

in the Catholic Church in Aotearoa New Zealand

The following are core safeguarding practices which must be followed throughout all usual activities and special events or programmes.

1. *Two adult rule*

No fewer than two adults should be present at all times during any activity, programme or event involving children or vulnerable adults. This is important in terms of drastically reducing the risk of an incident of abuse or harm and decreasing the likelihood of adults being subject to allegations of inappropriate actions.

2. *Behaviour management*

At the outset of any activity, expectations about appropriate and socially acceptable behaviour and taking responsibility for one's own behaviour should be made clear to participating children and vulnerable adults.

Managing the behaviour of children and vulnerable adults should always take the form of positive reinforcement wherever possible - i.e. affirming them for positive actions. At all times, adults must ensure that behaviour management is at no time punitive, humiliating or aggressive.

Bullying is unacceptable and must be addressed appropriately and without delay.

3. *Physical contact*

Physical contact with children and vulnerable adults should be avoided. In instances where this is required - for example, when managing an injury - a clear explanation of what is occurring and why should occur. Consideration should be given to whether it is necessary to seek permission from a parent/caregiver in relation to the physical contact and any supervision which is required in relation to the physical contact (depending on the nature of the contact).

4. *Transport*

As a general rule, a child or vulnerable adult should only be transported with specific permission from their parent/caregiver. In the event that a child or vulnerable adult needs to be transported, the 'two adult rule' applies. Alternatively, if two adults are not available to provide transport, children may be transported in instances where there will be no fewer than two children in the vehicle at all times.

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All people travelling in a vehicle must wear seat belts, the driver should be appropriately licensed and the vehicle should be registered, warranted and safe to drive.

5. *Changing rooms/toileting*

Children and vulnerable adults should be afforded privacy when using toilets and change rooms. Supervising adults should work to maintain the privacy of the individuals e.g. announcing entry to the room. The 'two adult rule' applies.

Those working with children and vulnerable adults through a role with the church entity should not be involved in providing toileting assistance at any time unless they are officially assigned that role with appropriate safeguarding training provided. In most cases, if toileting assistance is required, the child or vulnerable adult's parent/caregiver must be available to do this.

6. *Visibility*

Wherever possible, consideration should be given to the visibility of ministry to children and/or vulnerable adults, such as: ensuring doors are left open, that there are glass panels to see into rooms where meetings may occur, that the Sacrament of Reconciliation is offered in a setting which allows visibility, etc.