



BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF SCOTLAND

SCOTTISH CATHOLIC SAFEGUARDING SERVICE

Safeguarding Code of Conduct



For Clergy & Religious:

Bishops, priests, deacons, religious sisters and brothers are called by virtue of their consecration to God to live exemplary Christian lives in all their conduct. The public and private conduct of clergy and religious can inspire and motivate people, but inappropriate conduct and language can also scandalise and undermine people's faith. Clergy and religious, at all times, should be aware of the responsibilities that accompany their work.

Bishops, Major Superiors and colleagues have a duty of care to those for whom they have a responsibility, or with whom they work. Appropriate support should be offered whenever a cleric or religious brother or sister is in some difficulty with their own spiritual, physical, or emotional health, or when attention has been drawn to such a situation by another person.

Clergy and religious must not engage in physical, psychological, written or verbal harassment of staff, volunteers, or parishioners and should not tolerate such harassment by other Church staff or volunteers.

Clergy and religious must not, for sexual gain or intimacy, exploit the trust placed in them by the faith community, particularly in relation to the young or vulnerable.

In ministering to vulnerable groups, **clergy and religious** are advised to take particular care:

- to respect the physical and emotional boundaries which are appropriate
- to provide pastoral care and the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation in an open and observable environment when outside of a Church, and never in the private accommodation of the Minister
- to avoid inappropriate language and physical contact in any context
- to avoid the sharing or viewing of any inappropriate media
- not to provide alcohol nor any illegal substance to a minor or vulnerable adult
- to respect the privacy of children and vulnerable adults in the provision of accommodation on any trip.

PLEASE NOTE: Although the above paragraphs are specific to clergy and religious much of the advice included in the paragraphs which follow also apply.



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For Church employees and volunteers:

In ensuring that they comply with the Safeguarding standards of the Catholic Church in Scotland, **Church employees and volunteers** who interact with vulnerable groups must:

- treat all people with respect
- respect and protect emotional and physical boundaries
- respect the rights of others to personal privacy
- remember that physical contact can be misunderstood
- meet with a child or vulnerable adult in an open and observable environment
- remember that words and actions might be misinterpreted
- be confident in sharing concerns appropriately
- be confident in both challenging and reporting abusive behaviour
- ensure that children and vulnerable adults know and understand what to do if they have a Safeguarding concern.

Church employees and volunteers should be aware that engagement in any of the following activities, involving children or vulnerable adults, may lead to disciplinary action and/or criminal prosecution, according to their contract of employment:

- inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children or vulnerable adults
- sexual relationships with minors and vulnerable adults
- behaviour or language which is intrusive, derogatory or disrespectful
- abusing alcohol while on duty supervising children or vulnerable adults
- ignoring Safeguarding concerns raised by others
- preventing anyone from reporting any failure to comply with Safeguarding policies
- participating in, or ignoring, behaviour that is illegal, unsafe or abusive.