

**STANDARDS
FOR
VOLUNTEERS
AND EMPLOYEES
IN
MINISTRY**



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NATIONAL PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMITTEE
of the New Zealand Catholic Church
2011 version**

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BISHOPS' STATEMENT

Those who do ministry, administrative and voluntary work for the Church are in fact seen as officially representing the Church. All 'workers' whether paid or unpaid – minister, volunteer, or employee – need to understand that their words and actions will always be seen as being done by people who work in the name of the Church.

It is important therefore, that all Church workers know what the Church's mission and way of life is; as a community of love, committed to the praise of God and to the healing of division of any kind. Equally important, is the understanding that any serious breach of these Standards would do harm to the people they work with, to themselves and to the Church community.

It is readily acknowledged that volunteers, ministers, and employees give their time, expertise, and skills, willingly. These services are very much appreciated and vital to the life of the Church. However, because they represent the Church, there is a need to have guidelines for the way in which they perform their services. These Standards therefore are seen as being in place for the protection of the "worker", the Church and those for whom they are providing their services.

This document has been prepared by the National Office for Professional Standards in consultation with the National Professional Standards Committee. Wider consultation has also taken place both within the Church and in the wider society. This document sets out in writing what is expected of those who work in Church ministry settings. It is based on and builds on the National Code of Ethics for Church Volunteers promulgated by the New Zealand Catholic Bishops' Conference in 2003.

Work which is substandard and inconsistent, unacceptable behaviour and unreliability all reflect badly on the Church and on specific ministry groups. It is necessary therefore that we all attempt to the best of our ability to live and work by these principles and guidelines for the good of all.

The basis of all our work is the Gospel and the living tradition (cf. Paragraph 29 *Novo Millennio Ineunte*). For us, our calling is always into relationship with God – Father, Son and Spirit – and with our neighbour. These relationships infer responsibility for the promotion of human dignity and for the pursuit of a Church that draws all humankind into the continuing work of God amongst us. It is our hope that this document, **STANDARDS FOR VOLUNTEERS AND EMPLOYEES IN MINISTRY**, is another step along the road towards supporting, informing and ensuring these relationships.

Most Reverend John A Dew DD †
Archbishop of Wellington

on behalf of Bishops' Conference and Congregational Leaders (2011)

Dear People of God,

As Bishop I am totally committed to the protection of all people in the diocese, especially our children and vulnerable adults, as well as supporting all the clergy, religious employees and volunteers who minister in the diocese of Auckland.

This document spells out best practice for protecting children and vulnerable adults from preventable harm. It incorporates the National Bishops' Conference policy document "Standards for Volunteers and employees in Ministry" (revised in 2011) and brings the diocese into line with the latest NZ legislation.

I urge all leadership groups in parishes and communities in the diocese (e.g. Parish priests, parish pastoral councils, finance committees, executive committees) to incorporate the policies and practices outlined in this document. It is your responsibility to ensure that all your people are protected. Please ensure that all those working with children and vulnerable people have been vetted and that records are kept. Regular auditing for compliance will be implemented. It is really important that we are seen to be vigilant in this matter.

The Church has always desired to ensure that all its members are safe, physically and emotionally. Since 2003 this desire has been publically stated through the National Code of Ethics for Church Volunteers (2003). This was further articulated in the 2011 Standards for Volunteers and Employees in Ministry on which this document is based. The Church does not ask that these standards be met because of her legal responsibilities but because each person is created in the image and likeness of God. Ministers employed or volunteer are called to uphold and reverence the dignity of each person.

The Church upholds human dignity while acknowledging that humanity is both blessed and broken. People are sacred beings, loved and forgiven by God (blessed) and capable of sin (broken). God wants us to always embrace good and to get better at it. God rejoices in all that is created. The repeated anthem of the creation account is...*and indeed it was very good*. That is what God says looking upon each of us in love..." Indeed, it is very good".

The following aspects of being Church inform ministry volunteer and paid,

- Ministry is on behalf of the Church community
- Ministry therefor comes under the authority of the Church. There is an expectation that ministers follow the Church's guidelines for ethical behavior
- Minister are accountable to the priest of the community they are ministering within
- Catholic ethical principles based on our understanding of what it is to be human.

I am grateful to all those who dedicate themselves to service in the church of the Auckland diocese. May God Bless you all.

Yours in the Peace of Christ
+Patrick Dunn - Bishop of Auckland

CODE OF ETHICS FOR CHURCH EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

- Volunteers and Employees are to be personally accountable for their decisions and actions in order to create a safe and supportive environment in working for the Church.
- Volunteers and Employees are to be honest and trustworthy in all matters.
- Volunteers and Employees are expected to ensure that all people understand the services offered and the nature and purposes of those services.
- The Church respects the rights of all people to privacy and confidentiality. Confidential information should be shared with others only with the informed consent of the person, unless there is clear danger to their life, to others, or to the public at large.
- Church volunteers and employees will treat all with whom they come in contact - regardless of race, gender, age, national origin, religion, political or other opinion, sexual orientation, status, health, intelligence or any other differentiating character - with respect and courtesy.
- Church volunteers and employees shall avoid all behaviour that could reasonably be interpreted as harassment. Harassment encompasses a broad range of physical or verbal behaviour, including but not limited to: physical or psychological abuse, racial insults, derogatory ethnic slurs, unwelcome touching or sexual advance, and sexual jokes or comments. Harassment can occur as a result of a single incident or a pattern of behaviour where the purpose or effect is to create a hostile, offensive or intimidating environment.
- Volunteers and Employees are not to access websites which are pornographic or to use email material which is inappropriate and inconsistent with the behaviour required of a Church worker.

- Volunteers and Employees shall not engage in any sexual activity with any person where there is a power differential or make any sexual advances verbally, physically or by innuendo. It is the volunteer's and employee's responsibility to maintain appropriate boundaries.
- Volunteers and employees have a responsibility to take all allegations of sexual abuse seriously. They should not attempt to assess or investigate any such allegations, but will document them and follow the appropriate diocesan procedures.

The Catholic Diocese of Auckland contact person to refer people to in cases of allegations is:

Bishop's Pastoral Assistant
 Sr Jane O'Carroll SM
 Bishop's Office
 Pompallier Diocesan Centre
 e-mail | janeo@cda.org.nz
 phone | 09 - 360 3003

- Volunteers and employees should avoid any activities, whether connected with their position or otherwise, which would compromise their integrity, and/or bring their message, the people they work with, their colleagues or the wider Church community into disrepute.
- At all times volunteers and employees will conduct themselves in a manner, which ensures that all people are supported, and empowered through the services they provide.
- Volunteers and employees have a responsibility to recognize their strengths and limitations.
 This ensures that they know how their decisions and actions affect the people they work with.
- Volunteers and employees will honour the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi in their work and endeavour to be culturally sensitive to all people they engage with and avoid imposing mono-cultural values.

- Volunteers and employees will offer only services that come within their competence, qualifications and mandate. They will refer matters outside of these areas to the appropriate body.
- If volunteers or employees consider that their mandate requires more expertise than they have, they will inform the appropriate body of their need for training or ask for a change in the tasks they are asked to perform.
- Volunteers and employees will seek regular supervision which will provide them with an avenue to talk through issues and seek advice.
- Volunteers and employees are accountable to the New Zealand judicial system.

GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS AND EMPLOYEES IN MINISTRY

This document relates to people involved with ministry for the Church whether in a paid or volunteer capacity. There is a particular emphasis on ministry to children, youth and vulnerable adults. These guidelines are pertinent to the Children and Vulnerable Persons Act (2014).

CHILDREN and VULNERABLE PERSONS

Every effort must be made to ensure the safety of children and vulnerable persons.

Suitable procedures must include:

- parents to be consulted regularly to ensure they feel secure in the way their children are supervised. Parents' requests should be respected, for example, as to whether they prefer to take their own children to the toilet or are they happy for a helper to assist.

- volunteers should be approved and rostered. The system should not be open to anyone else (other than parents helping with their own children) joining a supervising team without approval.

- volunteers should be well known to the parish or ministry leadership as people who are suitable to work with children or vulnerable persons.

- training should be provided (this may not always be possible prior to each new volunteer commencing in the activity, but should be available as soon as practical).

Topics to be included

- all aspects of minimising the risk of any harm to children, young adults and vulnerable persons
- alertness to the possibility of abuse
- introduction to the "code of ethics for volunteers and employees"
- not to be alone with a child/young person out of sight of another adult
- logging any incident (assistance with toileting, first aid etc)
- ensuring parents'/caregivers wishes are respected
- harmful effects of sexual, emotional or physical abuse

Follow-up training

As far as possible, some follow-up training for volunteers should be conducted to include feed-back from the volunteers and group discussion on the experience (positive and negative) of volunteering, and recommendations.

Every person who ministers with children and vulnerable persons must undergo a police check.

The following ministries require mandatory police vetting of all volunteers and employees:

- Children's Liturgy of the Word
- Parish based Religious Education classes
- Sacramental Preparation classes
- RCIA
- Extraordinary Ministers of Communion to the Sick
- Youth Ministry
- Crèche
- Parish /Regional Camps
- Drivers

Process for organising Police Vet through Catholic Diocese of Auckland

Those who are to be vetted need to complete:

- Section 2: Applicant to complete and return to approved agency – this can be photocopied from the one provided to parishes or downloaded from the police web-site.

For our purposes the approved agency is the *Roman Catholic Bishop of Auckland*.

If the applicant holds an Australian passport but no residency then they have extra paper work to complete. This can be downloaded from the police web site

<http://www.police.govt.nz/advice/businesses-and-organisations/vetting/forms>

- Accompanying each form there needs to be a coloured photocopy of the person's passport. The parish priest must sight the actual passport and then the copy signed by him.

The parish priest must also sight another form of photo ID such as a driver's licence.

The diocese is then required to complete Section 1 - in order to this accurately it is helpful if in pencil on the top of completed Section 2 the ministry the person is involved in is recorded:

- Children's ministry - Sacramental Prep, Religious Education, Children's Liturgy of the Word, crèche etc, anything that involves children.
- Youth and Young Adults
- Ministers of Eucharist to the Sick
- Pastoral Ministry
- Other...

Completed and signed forms along with the proof of Id are sent to:

Leanne Killgour Catholic Diocese of Auckland
 Private Bay 47904
 Ponsonby
 Auckland 1144

Or scanned and emailed to leannek@cda.org.nz

- Completed police checks need to be filed and a record kept of them.
- It is the responsibility of the agency that is employing or accepting a volunteer to gain police clearance. Therefore, the procedure is not transferable. This means that some people may need to be checked again for their Church role. For example, someone may be police checked to be a teacher aide by the school. They would require a separate police check for their ministry in the parish.
 - Volunteers who have a professional registration such as teachers do not have to have another police check. A copy of their current practicing certificate and photo-id must be filed in the appropriate place.
- Police checks are required every three years
- Strict confidentiality in relation to police checks must be observed by all parties.

3. ACTIVITIES WITH YOUTH

Any volunteer or employee who is planning any activity with youth and young people away from the church is required to prepare and process appropriate consent forms, medical information, risk analysis and management system (RAMS) forms as an obligation.

(For further information, consultation with the Diocesan Youth Advisor is required to obtain the necessary forms and other vital information in order to provide maximum protection for youth and young people and those who minister to them.)

4. WRITTEN EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENTS

If the role of an employee involves interaction with children, young people or vulnerable persons the applicable employment agreement contained a provision which said:

“Any offer of employment and the continuation of that employment is dependent on the following:

- a. the nomination by the Employee of two referees and the successful checking of references;
- b. the employee completing and providing to the employer a signed NZ Police Request & Consent form confirming the employee’s consent to the employer obtaining a police check on him or her; and
- c. the successful obtaining of a police “nil disclosure” vet.

THE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF VOLUNTEERS AND EMPLOYEES

Volunteers and Employees have the right to:

- receive a clear description of the role they will carry out and how the role fits into the functions of the organisation
- be informed as to whom they will report
- receive adequate training and supervision
- have opportunities to contribute to policy and decision making in areas for which they are volunteering or are employed
- support from the parish or ministry to assist them to carry out their role in a rewarding way
- be informed about the complaints resolution process – whom do they inform to resolve difficulties
- have positive and successful work experiences

Volunteers and Employees have a responsibility to:

- be committed to carry out the task agreed to
- always notify a team leader if they are unable to carry out a rostered or agreed task
- cooperate with staff and other volunteers
- maintain confidentiality
- undertake training as required
- maintain ethical standards

I _____ (name) have read and understood the *Standard for Volunteers and Employees in Ministry*. I agree to abide by these standards in my ministry at the parish of _____ (parish) of the Catholic Diocese of Auckland.

Signed:

Date:

Parish witness: