

DIOCESE OF SAINT JOHN

RESPONSIBLE MINISTRY PROTOCOL

GUIDELINES FOR RECRUITING, SCREENING AND EDUCATION

March 2010

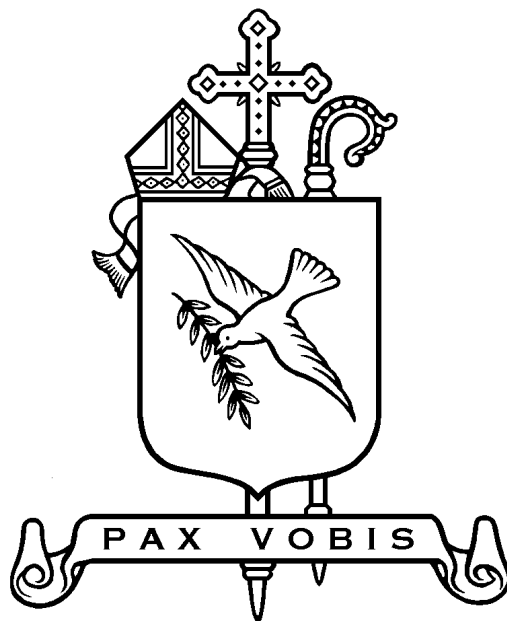


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1. Purpose of the Guidelines

To prevent abuse of children/youth/vulnerable adults. Prevention includes having good processes in place in order to prevent opportunities for abuse, neglect and harm from arising.

To protect all the vulnerable persons in our midst. The protection of all children, youth and vulnerable adults is everyone's responsibility.

To train and support our employees and volunteers.

To report all incidents of abuse, neglect and harm. Such incidents, wherever, and whenever they are encountered, will be reported immediately to the appropriate authorities.

To protect clergy, employees and volunteers against false allegations of wrongdoing.

2. Terminology

Child/youth: a person who is under 19 years of age.

Diocesan Responsible Ministry Committee: A group of persons, appointed by the bishop, responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented within the diocese.

Leader Position: a leadership role undertaken by clergy, religious or lay persons in which there is expected to be direct interaction with children, youth or vulnerable adults. Examples include: the positions of catechist, youth group leader, altar server coordinator, pastoral care worker, visitor to shut-ins. The individual could either be a paid employee or a volunteer.

Parish Responsible Ministry Committee/Coordinator: A person or group of persons responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented within the parish.

Program (ministry): a structured series of similar activities or events governed and run by the parish which spans a period of weeks or months and in which the level of risk is expected to remain constant. Example: weekly catechism classes; pastoral visitation at a hospital or nursing home, home visitation; weekly youth meetings; operation of a nursery or day care.

Risk Assessment: the process by which programs are rated according to risk factors. High risk ministries require special attention.

Volunteer: a volunteer is an individual who:

- chooses to undertake a service or activity and is not coerced or compelled to do so;
- does this activity in service to an individual or organization, or to assist the community-at-large; and
- does not receive a salary or wage

Volunteer Helper: a lay person who is involved peripherally in programs with children, youth or vulnerable adults but has not chosen to become a leader. Examples includes: someone who delivers cookies to a children's program, someone who collects and presents socks to homeless people at a shelter, or someone who collects and distributes food bank items to families.

Vulnerable Adult: a person who, because of his/her age, a disability or other circumstances, whether temporary or permanent, is in a position of dependence on others or is otherwise at a greater risk than the general population of being harmed by a person or persons in positions of authority or trust relative to him/her.

3. Preparation and Oversight

The bishop will appoint a Responsible Ministry Committee that will have overall responsibility for implementing these guidelines and for ensuring that all parishes and other entities in the diocese know about the policy and follow the implementation steps with integrity and consistency. Likewise, each parish will appoint a Responsible Ministry Committee or Coordinator to ensure the policy is properly implemented at the parish level.

4. Evaluating the Risk

The Parish Responsible Ministry Committee/Coordinator (PRMC) will evaluate the risk in each staff and volunteer position using the Risk Assessment Guide (see **Appendix 1**). For any responses on the Risk Assessment Guide checked as “Yes; true”, the parish should strive to reduce this risk so the “No; not true” column may be honestly checked off. This process is ongoing and must be revisited with each new program year, each change in adult leadership and after any change in the environment. Risk assessment for recurring programs and ministries should be done annually as responsibilities associated with positions often change over time. Should a leader decide to introduce a new element into a program, he/she must determine the risk for that specific event and submit the risk assessment in writing to the PRMC for review prior to the event. The same procedure should be followed for every special event that takes place in the parish. The completed risk assessments should be dated, signed and filed in a locked metal file cabinet.

5. Position Descriptions

Position descriptions communicate to everyone, whether paid or unpaid, what is expected of them, what skills or experience may be needed, how the parish will provide orientation and training for the task, and what support they can expect. All volunteers and employees are required to have them. If you do not have position descriptions, you need to develop them. Samples of most parish employee and volunteer positions can be found on the attached CD. They have been graciously provided by the Archdiocese of Toronto and can be adapted as necessary so they accurately reflect the positions within your own parish.

6. Recruitment

New Employees and Leaders/Volunteers

The PRMC supervises the recruiting of new leaders and volunteers but may or may not be the persons who customarily recruit in your parish. Regardless of who does the recruiting, the process must include completion of an Employee or Volunteer Information Form (sample forms attached) for all **new** employees and for all **new** volunteers.

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In addition, all **new** employees and those **new** volunteers in ministry positions having a high degree of risk (see list on back of Volunteer Information Form) must also provide two references and obtain a Police Records Check including a vulnerable sector search (PRC). A vulnerable sector search will determine, among other things, whether the individual has any pardoned sexual offences.

Existing Employees and Leaders/Volunteers

All existing employees are required to sign a Covenant of Care statement (see first page of attached Employee Information Form) and to have a PRC.

All existing volunteers will be required to complete the first page of the Volunteer Information Form including the Covenant of Care statement. All existing volunteers in high risk positions are also required to have a PRC.

7. Reference Checks

References must be checked for all **new** employees and for those **new** volunteers in ministry positions having a high degree of risk. The references must be from unrelated persons. Notes from reference check follow-up are to be forwarded to the Diocesan Responsible Ministry Committee (DRMC) where they will be permanently filed in a safe and confidential manner.

8. Police Records Check and Vulnerable Sector Search

Police Records Checks including a vulnerable sector search have become a standard and accepted part of institutional and organizational procedures for those working with children, youth, and vulnerable adults in schools, hospitals, communities, and religious groups. (See **Appendix 2** for additional information pertaining to Police Records Checks and vulnerable sector searches).

Both the process and the payment to obtain a PRC vary greatly across Canada. Parishes are encouraged to reimburse employees and volunteers for the cost of obtaining a Police Records Check.

A PRC must also be done for any individual moving from a position with a general degree of risk to a position having a high degree of risk. They are to be updated every five years.

The individual who obtains a Police Records Check forwards the original to the DRMC where it will be reviewed and held on file indefinitely. This information will be maintained in strict confidentiality. The individual should also retain a copy of the PRC for their own personal records.

9. Orientation and Training

Orientation for all members – whether new or experienced – is very important. Orientation provides general information to prepare them for their position and should be timed to coincide with the start of the majority of the parish's programs. A list of what would normally be covered

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in an orientation session can be found below:

- The requirement to have an Employee or Volunteer Information Form on file
- The importance and meaning of completing the Covenant of Care statement
- The importance of following up on references and obtaining a Police Records Check and vulnerable sector search
- A review of position descriptions to ensure everyone knows what their job entails and whether their position is one of those identified as having a high degree of risk
- An overview of what child/youth/vulnerable adult abuse is, including an explanation of types of abuse, warning signs, how to deal with suspected abuse, etc. (See **Appendices 3 & 4** for additional information pertaining to abuse)
- What to do in case of an illness of either themselves or someone in the program; instruction should be provided about who to inform and how to find a replacement
- How to access building and rooms
- How to access supplies and equipment
- Safety issues including, but not necessarily limited to, physical contact and appropriate vs. inappropriate touching, leader/participant ratios, washroom practices, fire procedures and transportation
- Attendance sheets for training sessions should be signed by the participants and retained in a locked metal cabinet

10. Supervision and Evaluation

After orientation and training, supervision and evaluation will be provided to ensure:

- A standard level of practice
- An opportunity for new leaders/volunteers to reflect on what they have learned so they can improve their skills
- Protection for all participants from unsafe practices
- Protection of leaders/volunteers against false allegations of wrongdoing

The position description is used as a reference point. For instance, in the description, a supervisor/coordinator may tell new leaders that he/she should know to expect a visit from the supervisor. The level of risk of the program or event determines the amount and frequency of supervision and evaluation. Comments and feedback from participants and their parents/caregivers are also helpful for new leaders/volunteers. Supervisors need to ask new leaders/volunteers to maintain open, frequent communication with program participants and their parents/caregivers. Supervisors may assure new leaders/volunteers that, if negative feedback is received, the supervisors will honour confidentiality but will work with the leaders/volunteers to make any necessary changes.

At least twice a year parish leadership, in collaboration with the PRMC should meet to evaluate how things are going in their parish. These key questions will guide the evaluation:

- What positive things have we noticed as a result of introducing these guidelines?
- Are there special problems that have emerged that need attention?

- Are there things that we need to plan for in the future?

It is important to do an evaluation of position descriptions and risk assessments annually. As programs change and evolve, the position descriptions and risk assessments will also change. It is also very important that the parish report any comments/suggestions emerging from these evaluations to the Diocesan Responsible Ministry Committee on an annual basis.

11. Management of Files and Confidential Information

The purpose of collecting personal information is to insure that the policy is properly administered. Records that are of a personal, confidential nature will be kept in the strictest of confidence and will be used only for the purpose for which they were collected, that is, for implementing and monitoring this policy. Information will be safely stored and only accessed by those who need to access it for the purpose of compliance with these guidelines.

Documents are to be stored in a fire proof, locked metal cabinet. The information for each individual should include:

At the Parish:

- The original Employee or Volunteer Information Form (including the signed Covenant of Care statement);
- The Position Description;
- Any written notes from reference checks; and
- Any completed incident forms.

At the Diocese:

- A copy of the Employee or Volunteer Information Form;
- A copy of any written notes from reference checks;
- The original Police Records Check including Vulnerable Sector Search; and
- A copy of any completed incident forms.

12. Guidelines for Activities and Programs

General Guidelines

- Always follow a two-person policy for any program involving children/youth and vulnerable adults, having at least two unrelated adults present
- Require two employees/volunteers to transport children/youth/vulnerable adults in a parish vehicle or in a volunteer's vehicle
- Visit frail seniors in a nursing home, hospital or personal residence with a partner
- Where the two-person policy cannot be used, require that one-to-one contacts between an employee/volunteer and child/youth/vulnerable adult take place in a public area either inside or outside the church where both people can be seen by others
- Add a window in the door of each classroom or always leave the classroom door open
- All employees/volunteers working with children/youth/vulnerable adults must wear name tags

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- Parent/guardian/caregiver contact information must be carefully maintained
- Appropriate steps must be put in place to ensure children under ten years of age are picked up by an authorized parent/caregiver
- No child should be dropped off without a leader present
- No parents or adults should enter a classroom without permission
- No in-home activities (including catechism instruction) are permitted for children/youth/vulnerable adults
- At the beginning of each youth group or catechism session, attendance should be recorded and the attendance book or sheets should be picked up and taken to a central location. Those records are to be forwarded to the diocese for permanent storage by the end of December and June of each year

Physical Contact

It is essential to be careful regarding behavior, language and physical contact when working with children/youth/vulnerable adults:

- Do not show favoritism when dealing with children/youth/vulnerable adults. Show a similar level of affection and kindness to all
- Do not engage in or allow the telling of sexual jokes or behave in a way that promotes sexual exploitation of others
- Provide clearly stated consequences for inappropriate behavior. Stop inappropriate behavior early. Be fair, consistent and reasonable, matching consequences to the age and ability of the child/youth
- Do not use corporal punishment such as hitting, spanking or strapping

Appropriate and Inappropriate Touching

A touch can convey a multitude of positive messages and communicate care, comfort and love; however, it is important to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate touching. It is also important to be aware of, and sensitive to, differences in interpretation to touching based on sex, culture or personal experience. Some examples of **appropriate touch**:

- Holding or rocking an infant who is crying
- Affirming a participant with a pat on the hand, shoulder or back
- Bending down to the child's eye level and placing a hand gently on the child's hand or forearm
- Putting your arm around the shoulder of a person who needs comfort
- Taking a child's hand and leading him/her to an activity
- Holding hands for safety when changing locations
- Shaking a person's hand in greeting
- Holding a child gently by the hand or shoulder to keep his/her attention as you redirect behavior
- Anointing a person with oil on the head
- Holding hands in a circle prayer or song
- Providing comfort with a wet, warm cloth.

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Some examples of **inappropriate touch**:

- Kissing a child/youth/vulnerable adult or coaxing them into kissing you
- Extended cuddling
- Tickling
- Piggy – back rides
- Having others sit on your lap (except for babies/young toddlers)
- Touching anyone in any area covered by a bathing suit (except changing infant's diapers)
- Hand holding, except for the examples listed above
- Stroking a child/youth's hair
- Hugging, where an adult knows or ought to have known that hugging is inappropriate.

Dealing with a Participant's Inappropriate Behavior

The best approach to dealing with inappropriate behavior is thoughtful prevention. If a teacher/leader has prepared adequately, makes clear statements about expectations and provides an engaging program, inappropriate behavior will be avoided or reduced. If, however, a child/youth/vulnerable adult's behavior is unacceptable, these practices must be followed:

- Tell or remind the child/youth/vulnerable adult what is expected
- If it is necessary to speak to a child/youth/vulnerable adult in private, move to a quiet place in view of others. Seek supervisory help if needed and if available
- Keep children/youth/vulnerable adults from harming themselves or others
- If necessary, engage another adult to help you remove the child/youth/vulnerable adult from the situation to calm down
- Discipline with children and youth must be limited to talking and time out. Correction to a vulnerable adult must be limited to talking to a vulnerable adult or his/her guardian
- Provide a 'time-out' space for younger children on one side of the room until they are ready to rejoin the group. The 'time-out' should be no longer than one minute for each year of the child's age
- Inform the parent/guardian of the problem and work co-operatively with them. They may have good ideas of how to deal with particular situations

**Do not use corporal punishment (such as hitting, spanking or strapping)
under any circumstances**

Washroom procedures

Every group providing a program/ministry for children/youth/vulnerable adults must determine the washroom procedure that will be followed in that program/ministry at the time of determining the risk. This is particularly critical with pre-school children and some vulnerable adults who must have help to use the washroom. Here are guidelines:

- Ask parents of pre-school children to take their child to the washroom before class

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- Children under 6 needing to go to the washroom should be accompanied by a teacher/leader who escorts the child to the washroom and checks the bathroom for safety. No adult or teen helper is ever to be in a closed washroom or cubicle with a child. If another adult is not available, the adult who accompanies the child should position him/her in plain view at the open door of the washroom. A volunteer or teen helper may stay behind with the remaining children
- Children 6 and over may go to the washroom with a “buddy”
- If there is an emergency bathroom situation, the parent or supervisor should be notified immediately
- Vulnerable adults may need special bathroom aids: assists bars, and so on. It may be necessary to ensure that cleanliness follows use

Health

While parishes cannot always avoid having ill children/youth/vulnerable adults in their programs, several measures can be taken to promote good health and reduce infection.

- **Allergies-** When children/youth/vulnerable adults register for a program, inquire about allergies. Post this information so that it will not be overlooked. If your program serves meals or snacks, post the menu so the parent/guardian can see it. Avoid foods identified as serious allergens such as peanut butter, chocolate and nuts of any kind. Popcorn can also be dangerous for young children.
- **Injury-** If a participant is injured while participating in a program or activity, the leader must arrange to get medical attention. If necessary, call 9-1-1. If the child/youth/vulnerable adult is bleeding, the teacher/leader should protect himself/herself and all others from the blood. For all injuries, even if the person does not need medical attention, a leader must complete a General Incident Report Form (see **Appendix 5** for sample) and report the incident to the injured person’s parent/guardian. General incident reports should be stored in a locked metal cabinet.
- **Infectious diseases-** Leaders must ask parents/guardians to not let their children and youth attend parish programs if they have symptoms and diseases which are known to be infectious, such as: diarrhea, vomiting, fever, rash, open sores, skin or eye infection, scarlet fever, measles, mumps, chicken pox, whooping cough, head lice.

Leader and Participant Ratios

The activity and age of children/youth/vulnerable adults affects the required ratio of leaders/volunteers. The management of the program as well as concern for safety, care and social interaction are some of the factors taken into account when we established the ratios set out in the sections below. If there are not enough leader and adult volunteers, the program or activity should not be held.

Two unrelated adults are required to be present for any program involving children, youth and/or vulnerable adults. While the rule of having two adults at all times in a group is encouraged, there are occasional times when only one leader is present. The orientation session held at the beginning of the year should outline steps to be taken when one adult finds himself or herself

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alone. Any leader/teacher under 18 years of age should be accompanied by a screened, trained adult.

Regular Programs

Here are the required ratios of leaders/volunteers to children/youth/vulnerable adults in a regular program:

0 – 18 months	2 adults to 6 children
19 months – 2 years	2 adults to 10 children
Ages 2 –5	2 adults to 12 children
Ages 6 – 18	2 adults to 15 children
Vulnerable adults	2 adults to 10 vulnerable adults

Off-site Activities, Overnight Events and Billeting

Special precautions must be taken for off-site activities, overnight events and billeting. The following guidelines must be observed:

Daytime Excursions

- A leader must assess the risk of the activity and submit that assessment in writing to the PRMC for approval prior to the activity
- Parents/guardians/caregivers must be notified prior to the outing
- An Activity Program Waiver and Medical Release Form (see **Appendix 6** for sample) is required for each child/youth/vulnerable adult participating in activities/events
- One leader should have a cell phone and the phone numbers of where the parents of the children/youth can be contacted during the excursion. The leader should have a copy of the completed consent forms with them
- All day excursions must be supervised by a minimum of two leaders. Additional support workers might be necessary to accompany vulnerable adults
- When transportation of children/youth/vulnerable adults is needed for an activity, all drivers must have a valid driver's license for at least five years, valid automobile insurance and must be screened volunteers or paid staff. The number of persons per vehicle must never exceed the number of seat belts or car seats
- At least one leader must have First Aid training

Overnight Activities/Events

- Follow all requirements listed in daytime excursions above plus the following:
 - Each child/youth/vulnerable adult is required to follow pre-established codes of conduct signed by the parent/guardian/caregiver and the child/youth/vulnerable adults
 - If the group is comprised of children/youth/vulnerable adults of both genders, leaders of both genders must be present
 - Each leader should have an assigned group of children/youth/vulnerable adults for whom they will be responsible during the overnight event

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- All facilities in which an overnight function is housed must be equipped with smoke detectors and inside release doors. All members of the group should be made aware of fire exits and fire procedures as required by provincial/regional standards

Day Excursions and Overnight Outings

Here are the required ratios of leaders/volunteers to children/youth/vulnerable adults for day excursions and overnight outings:

Age	Day excursions	Overnight excursions/activities
5 or under	2 adults per group of 10	Not permitted
Ages 6 – 8	2 adults per group of 12	Not permitted
Ages 9 – 10	2 adults for every 15 children	Not permitted
Ages 11 – 14	2 adults for every 15 children	2 adults for every 10 children
Ages 15 – 18	2 adults for every 15 youth	2 adults for every 10 youth
Vulnerable adults	2 adults per 10 vulnerable adults	2 adults per 10 vulnerable adults

Billeting Youth in Private Homes

Billeting reduces costs and allows youth to meet new people. Here are some things to keep in mind when billeting youth:

- Children under 14 years of age are not to be billeted
- The people offering billeting within the diocese must be known, trusted parishioners and must have a Police Records Check including a vulnerable sector search
- For billeting outside the diocese, we must ensure the receiving diocese has a policy providing the same level of protection as our own
- The contact information (telephone number, address) of the individual with whom the youth will be billeted must be obtained by the group leader

Transportation

An employee or volunteer who drives children/youth/vulnerable adults must have a valid driver’s license for at least five years and valid automobile insurance and one seatbelt and/or car seat per person in the vehicle. Regardless of whether using a parish or employee’s/volunteer’s vehicle, the two-person policy must be followed.

Facilities

A facilities checklist is provided in **Appendix 7** to assist the parish in ensuring they have a safe environment for conducting programs and ministries. This checklist should be completed once a year prior to the beginning of program start-up in the fall.

Fire Procedures

Consult with your local or regional fire department for safety standards and practices. Post a fire escape map in each room and ensure that fire extinguishers are properly placed and regularly inspected. Inform every one of escape routes. An evacuation plan should be clearly defined. Practice the escape drill once a year or as often as directed by your local fire marshal. Prepare a list of individuals who may need assistance in the event of an emergency.

Community Groups Using Parish Facilities

Hosting community groups (like Scouts, AA and so on) is part of the outreach and hospitality plan of many parishes. These groups assume the parish is a safe place to conduct their programs. As the host, your parish should ask the group to provide a Certificate of Insurance from their insurance broker confirming they have at least \$2 million of Commercial General Liability Insurance, even for one-time uses. It is prudent to draw up a facilities rental contract for any groups who use parish facilities. You will find a copy of sample wording in the Parish Administration Manual.

Appendix 1

Risk Assessment Guide

Risk Category	Risk Factor	Yes; true	No; not true
Degree of Isolation	The leader/volunteer helper may be alone with person being served.		
Degree of Supervision	The leader/volunteer helper has limited or no supervision.		
	The activities of leader/volunteer helper are in a place where activities are not observed or monitored.		
Access of Property	The leader/volunteer helper has access to personal property or money of persons served.		
	The leader/volunteer helper has access to confidential information related to the person served.		
Degree of Physical Contact	The position description includes touching persons served.		
Vulnerability of Persons Served	Persons served have language or literacy barriers.		
	Persons served are immobile.		
	Persons served have challenges that contribute to their vulnerability (e.g. physical, psychological, and situational).		
Degree of Physical Demands	The activity involves potential danger to person served (e.g. rock climbing, using a stove).		
	Activity involves potential stress (e.g. children upset by visit to nursing homes, support group activities).		
Degree of Trust	The leader/volunteer helper develops close, personal relationships with persons served.		
	The position involves transportation of persons served.		
	The leader/volunteer helper contributes to making career or other important decisions of persons served.		
Degree of Inherent Risk	The activity heightens potential for the leader/volunteer helper to be in contact with bodily fluids or disease of the person served.		
	The activity exposes the person served to operation or handling of potentially dangerous equipment (e.g. lawnmower).		
	The activity exposes the person served to handling toxic substances or results in exposure to poor air quality, noise, etc. (e.g. demolition work in an inner city mission).		

Appendix 2

Police Records Check and Vulnerable Sector Search

How is a Police Records Check carried out?

To conduct a PRC, the local police query the Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) database. CPIC was an initiative of the RCMP, who maintains the network. Individual policing regions maintain their own information within the system and have access to the entire database. From this database police can determine if a person has outstanding charges or convictions. Information collected in the CPIC database includes individuals who:

- Have a criminal record for any Criminal Code or other Federal Statute offence and/or
- Have been judged not criminally responsible for an offence because of mental disorder and/or
- Have federal and/or provincial charges pending and/or
- Are on probation or subject to a Prohibition Order

In addition, police agencies compile information, when warranted, about all complaints they receive. Examples of complaints include:

- Abuse of children
- Allegations of offences where charges were not laid

These may or may not be revealed by police in a PRC. Note that a PRC cannot be conducted without the individual's written consent. In some cases the PRC must be obtained in person.

Since 2001, as a result of amendments to the Criminal Records Act, criminal records of pardoned sex offenders can be made available to organizations that work with vulnerable people. A search of the CPIC database for pardoned sexual offences cannot be conducted without the individual's consent. This search is known as a Vulnerable Sector Search and is an option that must be requested when the Police Records Check is being applied for.

What if you have a criminal record?

If the information obtained by the police indicates that you have a criminal record, does that mean you cannot volunteer? Not necessarily. Organizations may look at the following factors when considering your application:

- The nature of the organization and its work
- The nature of the offence
- The relevance of the criminal record to the position you are applying for. Sometimes it will be deemed wise to deny the individual a leadership position with children/youth/vulnerable adults. Sometimes, it will be deemed wise to urge the person to accept a position that indirectly supports children/youth/vulnerable adults. Sometimes it will be deemed wise to always have an individual working with another adult

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Are there limits to PRCs?

There are some limits, but the fact still remains: PRCs can be a positive deterrent in discouraging nefarious individuals from applying for leadership or volunteer positions with children, youth and vulnerable adults. Here are some of the limitations of PRCs:

- They are only good up to the day of checking and based on the information provided
- A person may use a false name, driver’s license, or birth date, so there are no matches found in their record
- If a conviction occurred when the person was a youth, the information is protected under the Youth Criminal Justice Act; therefore, you will not have access to this information after a certain time period
- Some sex offenders and abusers have never been charged or convicted of a crime, so there will be no record to review

How to obtain a Police Records Check and Vulnerable Sector Search

The employee or volunteer is required to apply in person at the policing agency that has jurisdiction in the area in which they reside (see list below). Two pieces of identification will have to be provided (one of which must be a photo ID). Typically, the vulnerable sector search is an option you select when completing the application for your PRC. It would be helpful if the individual had a letter from the Parish indicating that the PRC and vulnerable sector search is required in order to comply with our Responsible Ministry Protocol.

<u>Agency/Location</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Fredericton Police Force 311 Queen Street (506) 460-2300	Fee is \$28.25 for employees, \$11.50 for volunteers; 10 day turnaround
Miramichi Police Force 1820 Water Street (506) 623-2125	Fee is \$28.25 for employees, free for volunteers (letter required); 4 – 5 business day turnaround
RCMP, all detachments (506) 452-3400	No charge; done on the spot
Rothsay Reg’l Police Force 126 Millenium Drive (506) 847-6300	Fee is \$10 cash only (letter required); 48 hour turnaround
Saint John Police Force 15 Market Square (506) 648-3200	Fee is \$10 cash only; done on the spot
Woodstock Police Force 822 Main Street (506) 325-4601	Fee is \$30 for employees, free for volunteers (letter required); 24 – 48 hour turnaround

Appendix 3

What is Abuse?

Understanding Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Abuse

The Diocese of Saint John and all of its parishes and missions has zero tolerance for abuse in any form. This includes abuse that happens to a child/youth/vulnerable adult by an employee or volunteer. There is also a need for adults in the parish to be sensitive to incidents of abuse that may be happening in the home or social life of a child/youth/vulnerable adult.

Any person who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child/youth is or may be in need of protection must report that suspicion to a protective agency or police. Clergy and other professionals have special responsibility to report allegations of abuse. A teacher/leader who hears an allegation of abuse should confide this to a leader in the organization after having notified the Police or other appropriate civil authority.

In order to understand and recognize child abuse, the following definitions and indications of emotional, physical and sexual abuse or neglect are listed. Some of the following also apply to vulnerable adults. A more complete description of abuse of vulnerable adults is found below.

What is Child/Youth Abuse?

The term “child abuse” refers to the violence, mistreatment or neglect that a child or adolescent may experience while in the care of someone they either trust or depend on, such as a parent, sibling, other relative, caregiver or guardian. Abuse may take place anywhere and may occur, for example, within the child’s home or that of someone known to the child.

There are many different forms of abuse and a child may be subjected to more than one form:

- **Physical abuse** may consist of just one incident or it may happen repeatedly. It involves a deliberately using force against a child in such a way that the child is either injured or is at risk of being injured. Physical abuse includes beating, hitting, shaking, pushing, choking, biting, burning, kicking or assaulting a child with a weapon. It also includes holding a child under water, or any other dangerous or harmful use of force or restraint. Female genital mutilation is another form of physical abuse.
- **Sexual abuse** and exploitation involves using a child for sexual purposes. Examples of child sexual abuse include fondling, inviting a child to touch or be touched sexually, intercourse, rape, incest, sodomy, exhibitionism, or involving a child in prostitution or pornography.
- **Neglect** is often chronic, and it usually involves repeated incidents. It involves failing to provide what a child needs for his or her physical, psychological or emotional development and well being. For example, neglect includes failing to provide a child with food, clothing, shelter, cleanliness, medical care or protection from harm. Emotional neglect includes failing to provide a child with love, safety, and a sense of worth.
- **Emotional abuse** involves harming a child’s sense of self. It includes acts (or omissions) that result in, or place a child at risk of, serious behaviour, cognitive, emotional, or mental

health problems. For example, emotional abuse may include aggressive verbal threats, social isolation, intimidation, exploitation, or routinely making unreasonable demands. It also includes terrorizing a child, or exposing them to family violence.

An abuser may use a number of different tactics to gain access to a child, exert power and control over them, and prevent them from telling anyone about the abuse or seeking support. A child who is being abused is usually in a position of dependence on the person who is abusing them. Abuse is a misuse of power and a violation of trust. The abuse may happen once or it may occur in a repeated and escalating pattern over a period of months or years. The abuse may change form over time.

Abuse of Vulnerable Adults

While some factors may not apply to all vulnerable adults (e.g. the developmentally challenged), most characteristics are equally applicable to all vulnerable adults. Although individuals may be abused at virtually any life stage – childhood, adolescence, young adulthood, middle age or old age – the nature and consequences of abuse may differ depending on an individual's situation. Older adults' experiences of abuse, for example, may be related to their living arrangement (they may be living alone, with family members or others, or in an institution). Their experiences may also be linked to their level of reliance on others, including family members or other care providers, for assistance and support in daily living.

Abuse of older adults is sometimes described as a misuse of power and a violation of trust. Abusers may use a number of different tactics to exert power and control over their victims. Abuse may happen once or it may occur in a repeated and escalating pattern over months or years. The abuse may take many different forms, which may change over time.

Types of Abuse

Psychological abuse includes attempts to dehumanize or intimidate older adults. Any verbal or non-verbal act that reduces their sense of self-worth or dignity and threatens their psychological and emotional integrity is abuse. This type of abuse may include, for example:

- Threatening to use violence
- Threatening to abandon them
- Intentionally frightening them
- Making them fear that they will not receive the food or care they need
- Lying to them
- Failing to check allegations of abuse against them

Financial abuse encompasses financial manipulation or exploitation including theft, fraud, forgery, or extortion. It includes using older adult's money or property in a dishonest manner, or failing to use older adult's assets for their welfare. Anytime someone acts without consent in a way that financially or personally benefits one person at the expense of another it is abuse. This type of abuse against an older adult may include, for example:

- Stealing their money, pension cheques or other possessions

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- Selling their homes or other property without their permission
- Wrongfully using a Power of Attorney
- Not allowing them to move into a long-term care facilities in order to preserve access to their pension income
- Failing to pay back borrowed money when asked.

Physical abuse includes any act of violence – whether or not it results in physical injury. Intentionally inflicting pain or injury that results in either bodily harm or mental distress is abuse. Physical abuse may include, for example:

- Beating
- Burning or scalding
- Pushing or shoving
- Hitting or slapping
- Rough handling
- Tripping
- Spitting

There may also be sexual and spiritual abuse.

What Are Some Potential Warning Signs of Abuse?

Some of the signs that may indicate an older adult is being abused include:

- Depression, fear, anxiety, passivity
- Unexplained, physical injuries
- Dehydration, malnutrition or lack of food
- Poor hygiene, rashes, pressure sores
- Over-sedation

Appendix 4

Dealing With Suspected Abuse

Dealing with Reports of Abuse

When a child, youth or vulnerable adult is upset or distressed about a situation, he/she may turn to a trusted adult for support and advice. Often, though, they may be hesitant and shy about discussing what has happened. Feelings of guilt or shame are common. The teacher/leader should help the child/youth/vulnerable adult feel safe and understand that they can talk about what happened. A vulnerable adult, disabled or confined, may not be able to tell anyone, so teachers/leaders or visitors need to be sensitive and aware of any change in appearance/emotion.

A listening adult should be supportive and pay attention to what is said. Be cautious about asking questions. Asking question can invalidate future statements to police or child welfare authorities and can cause a case to be dismissed in court. Accept the child/youth/vulnerable adult's story; do not dispute it. Investigating the incident is the responsibility of the protection agency or police. Although it is difficult, be calm, supportive and hopeful.

It is important not to make promises that you cannot keep, such as promising to stop the abuse, punish or remove the offender. Do not promise not to report the incident to the authorities. If you have inadvertently promised to keep what the child/youth/vulnerable adult says confidential, tell him/her that you must tell someone who can help you both.

Reporting to a Protection Agency

If a person has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child/youth/vulnerable adult is or may be in need of protection, the person must promptly report the suspicion and the information on which it is based to an appropriate protection agency.

Section 30(1) of the NB Family Services Act states that ***“Any person who has information causing him to suspect that a child has been abandoned, deserted, physically or sexually ill treated, or otherwise abused, shall inform the Minister of the situation without delay”***.

Failure to report suspected abuse by professional persons, including clergy, can be considered an offence under the Act. Section 30(3) states that ***“A professional person who acquires information in the discharge of the professional person's responsibilities that reasonably ought to cause the professional person to suspect that a child has been abandoned, deserted, physically or emotionally neglected, physically or sexually ill treated or otherwise abused but who does not inform the Minister of the situation without delay commits an offence”***.

The contact numbers to reach the NB Department of Social Development are 1-888-992-2873 in the daytime or 1-800-442-9799 after hours or on weekends/holidays.

A leader/volunteer who hears of an allegation of abuse should also notify the Bishop's Delegate who shall, in turn, notify our insurer.

Information Needed by a Protection Agency

When one calls a protection agency that person should prepare notes on why he/she is calling.

- Ask for an intake screener
- Give your name and location, or you may remain anonymous
- State that you are making a report of a person you believe to be in need of protection
- Give your relationship to the person and/or family
- Indicate what you heard from the child/youth/vulnerable adult or what you observed
- Offer facts such as dates, descriptions of the child/youth/vulnerable adult and identifying facts about people who were involved
- Share knowledge of other agency or community involvement if known
- Provide any relevant background information

Pastoral Response to a Report of Abuse

Disclosure of an incident of alleged abuse is an emotionally charged experience. When an individual discloses that he/she is a victim of alleged abuse, it is important to:

- Assure him/her that he/she will be listened to and be provided with support throughout the process
- Take the allegations seriously
- Keep emotions in check; when disbelief or horror is shown, it may result in the individual becoming withdrawn or unwilling to share the experience with you
- “Listen more, talk less”
- Remind him/her that he/she is in no way at fault for the abuse
- Affirm that it is always appropriate to tell someone the he/she has been abused
- Remind him/her that your first priority is his or her protection
- Ask him/her if it is okay to pray with them
- Reassure him/her that ongoing care will be provided for him/her and his/her family
- Provide pastoral support to him/her; give reassurance that he/she has done the right thing in reporting this incident.

Do not:

- Promise him/her that you will not tell anyone; some secrets should not be kept secret; assure the individual that this information is to be restricted to those who need to be advised
- Prejudge the situation
- Defend the alleged perpetrator or make comments like, “I can’t believe they did that”

Response to the Media

All contact with the media should be handled through the Office of the Bishop.

Appendix 5
General Incident Report Form (CONFIDENTIAL)

Parish Name: _____

Report date: _____ Time of report: _____

Full Name of child/youth/adult: _____ Age/Grade: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Gender: M F

Full Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Name of Parent/Guardian (for child/youth) or caregiver (for adult): _____

Notified: Y N If yes, date/time of notification: _____

Address: _____
(If different from above)

Phone number: _____
(If different from above)

Date/time and location of incident: _____

Description of incident: _____

Names/contact information of witnesses: _____

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Description of injures sustained: _____

Description of action taken: _____

Additional information you think is relevant: _____

Direct quotes from child/youth/adult: (Note: If this is an abuse allegation, do not interview the child/youth but report only the comments they share with you.)

I hereby confirm that the information provided in this report is accurate to the best of my knowledge

Name and position of person making report: _____

Phone/Address: _____

Signature of Person making report: _____ Date: _____

The person filing this report must give a copy to the Pastor and to the PRMC.

Note: If this is an allegation of abuse, it must be immediately reported to the Police or other appropriate civil authority.

Appendix 6

Activity Program Waiver and Medical Release

(Note: Before an activity, the teacher/leader stores a copy of this waiver in a safe storage area and takes another copy on the outing.)

Parish name: _____

Description and location of activity: _____

Departure date: _____ Returning date: _____

Full Name of participant: _____

First

Last

Birth date (N/A for adult): _____

Full address: _____

Parent/guardian/caregiver name(s): _____

Circle the number where parent/guardian may be reached when trip is taking place.

Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____ Work phone: _____

Please list and explain any severe allergies or other medical condition the participant has that leaders should be aware of?

All reasonable precautions for the safety and health of the participant will be taken. He/she will be properly supervised in all activities. In the event of accident or sickness, _____ Parish, its staff and volunteers are released from any liability.

In the event of injury requiring medical attention, I authorize treatment for the participant and understand that reasonable attempts will be made to contact me should such as situation occur.

In the event that travel or activities take place outside this province, I understand that any medical costs incurred involving the participant are my responsibility.

The participant must be covered by provincial health insurance or equivalent medical

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coverage. If the trip is out of province, please give insurance provider and policy number:

Participant's Health Care Provider _____

Health Card Number _____

Participant's Family Physician: _____

Phone: _____

Contact person (not parent) in case of emergency and parents/guardians/caregivers cannot be reached:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Name (PRINT): _____

Appendix 7 Facilities Checklist

	Adequate	Plan for improvement
Are railings at the right height for children?		
Are stairs/steps safe?		
Are bathrooms easily accessible?		
Are toilets accessible for children and people with disabilities?		
Are exits clearly marked?		
Are exits doors unlocked from the inside?		
Can exits, especially basements exits, be released from inside?		
Are floors, especially around entrances, resistant to slipping?		
Is the nursery cleaned and vacuumed after each use?		
Are used diapers disposed of immediately after each nursery use?		
Are there windows in doors or split doors? If this is not feasible for a nursery, are safety gates used in open doorways?		
Are nursery toys washed regularly in a solution of one tablespoon household bleach to one gallon warm water?		
Are signs posted reminding people to wash hands?		
Is there a well-stocked first aid kit? Is it easily accessible?		
Have you consulted with an appropriate health care worker about a first aid kit?		
Are fire extinguishers in proper locations?		
Are there fire/emergency escape maps in each room?		
Is there regular practice for fire/emergency escape?		
Are there smoke detectors?		
Is there a locked metal cabinet?		