



ARCHDIOCESE OF BRISBANE
Office for Safeguarding Services

Local Safeguarding Representative

Welcome

Congratulations on your appointment as Local Safeguarding Representative and welcome to the safeguarding ministry.

Protecting, valuing, and cherishing children and the vulnerable is at the heart of Christian faith. It is a service and ministry to the “*smallest and defenceless*” and a “*duty that Christ himself entrusted to the entire Christian community.*” (Apostolic Letter issued ‘*motu proprio*’ by the Supreme Pontiff Francis 4 June 2016)

Local Safeguarding Representatives play a crucial role in creating and maintaining safe environments and activities for parishes, ministries and faith communities and are an important part of the wider safeguarding team for the Archdiocese.

Safeguarding Commitment

THE ARCHDIOCESE HAS **ZERO TOLERANCE** FOR ALL FORMS OF ABUSE AND IS COMMITTED TO SAFEGUARDING EVERYONE INVOLVED IN ITS ACTIVITIES, MINISTRIES AND SERVICES.

THE SAFETY AND WELL-BEING OF CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS-AT-RISK IS PARAMOUNT.

No excuse for Abuse

Recruitment & Appointment

The Local Safeguarding Representative is usually nominated by the Parish Priest (or equivalent), preferably with the support and endorsement of the Parish Council (or equivalent).

Local Safeguarding Representatives serve a two year term with the possibility of a one year extension so that no one is asked to carry out the role for more than three years.

As a new appointee, you should have participated in a safe recruitment process including:

- Being provided with a position description.
- Referee checks.
- A criminal history screening check.
- Obtaining a Working with Children Blue Card.
- Signing/acknowledging a Prior Conduct Declaration.
- Completing the Archdiocese's Safeguarding Induction.

These steps are important in ensuring that the most suitable people are appointed to this ministry and that Local Safeguarding Representatives are supported and prepared to undertake the role. If any of these steps have not been completed, please speak with your parish, ministry or community or contact the Archdiocesan Volunteer Coordinator.

It is very important that Local Safeguarding Representatives are known, visible and able to be contacted readily. Your parish, ministry or community should publicly announce your appointment to the role in the bulletin or newsletter, on the public website, on social media platforms and during public forums for example, at mass and during community gatherings.

Working with Children Blue Cards

YOU MUST OBTAIN A WORKING WITH CHILDREN BLUE CARD BEFORE COMMENCING THE LOCAL SAFEGUARDING REPRESENTATIVE ROLE AND THE CARD MUST BE LINKED TO THE ARCHDIOCESE.

THESE ARE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS.

Being Visible

PARISHES AND MINISTRIES ARE EXPECTED TO PUBLICALLY DISPLAY A PHOTOGRAPH AND THE CONTACT DETAILS OF THEIR LOCAL SAFEGUARDING REPRESENTATIVE IN HIGH VISIBILITY LOCATIONS. THIS INCLUDES PHYSICAL LOCATIONS (E.G. CHURCH, PARISH OFFICE, PARISH HALL), IN HARDCOPY AND ELECTRONICALLY (E.G. BULLETINS, NEWSLETTERS, WEBSITE, FACEBOOK).

Safe People + Places + Practices

Induction

A proper induction is essential for preparing you for success in this role. It should include:

- A discussion of the Local Safeguarding Representative position description.
- A discussion of the Archdiocesan Safeguarding Policy and Implementation Guides.
- Providing you with access to local information systems (e.g. safeguarding folder on a secure hard drive).
- Providing you with a Local Safeguarding Representative email account.
- Showing you the safeguarding pages and resources on the Archdiocese's public website.
- Providing you with key contacts for your parish, ministry or faith community.
- Providing you with key Archdiocesan contacts.

Handover

A GOOD INDUCTION SHOULD INCLUDE A HANDOVER FROM THE OUTGOING LOCAL SAFEGUARDING REPRESENTATIVE AND/OR A DISCUSSION OF SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS AND NEEDS WITH THE PARISH PRIEST (OR EQUIVALENT).

Role

The main purpose of the Local Safeguarding Representative is to assist parishes, ministries and faith communities to create safe environments and activities by implementing safeguarding measures and practices. The functions of the role include:

- Promoting safeguarding measures and practices.
- Assessing environments and activities for safeguarding risk.
- Providing advice on the safeguarding policy, procedures and practices.
- Coordinating and/or delivering safeguarding training (where appropriately trained).
- Maintaining safeguarding compliance.
- Conducting safeguarding compliance audits.
- Addressing safeguarding breaches or non-compliance.
- Responding promptly and effectively to abuse concerns, suspicions, disclosures, reports and incidents (as appropriate).

As Local Safeguarding Representative you should focus mainly on the preventative aspects of the role such as raising awareness of safeguarding practices and assisting with risk assessments. Wherever possible, the parish, ministry or community should take responsibility for the administrative functions. You should confirm what tasks your parish, ministry or community wants you to undertake before commencing the role.

Challenges

Some of the challenges you may encounter as Local Safeguarding Representative include:

- Being exposed to abuse, child abuse and harm related content/information.
- Resistance to safeguarding measures, practices and compliance requirements.
- Being involved in complaints against church workers and community members.
- Being involved in incidents involving potential criminal offending (including child abuse).
- Being involved with criminal offenders and other persons of concern.
- Reporting and escalating complaints and incidents.

Reporting Arrangements

The Local Safeguarding Representative usually reports directly to the Parish Priest (or equivalent).

You should also provide regular (e.g. quarterly) reports on the status of safeguarding within your parish, ministry or faith community to the Parish Council (or equivalent). Safeguarding should be a standing item on the Parish Council (or equivalent) meeting agenda.

Training

As Local Safeguarding Representative you are required to complete the following training:

- Safeguarding Induction (prior to appointment)
- Applied Safeguarding Training (within 3 months of appointment)

Refresher training will need to be completed every 2 years.

Training

TRAINING PROVIDES WORKERS WITH THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS TO PERFORM THEIR ROLE EFFECTIVELY.

UNDERTAKING REGULAR SAFEGUARDING TRAINING ALSO DEMONSTRATES A COMMITMENT TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT IN SAFEGUARDING PRACTICE.

Resources

As Local Safeguarding Representative you should be appropriately resourced to undertake your role. The resources required will depend on the size of your parish, ministry or faith community and the number and nature of activities that are undertaken.

Some Local Safeguarding Representatives are equipped with mobile telephones and computer equipment while others share parish equipment or use personal equipment. Caution should be taken if using personal equipment particularly if it is used to access, download and store personal and sensitive information (including images). Creating safe environments involves displaying and making available hardcopy materials such as flyers and posters. Access to a printer will be necessary.

The Archdiocesan Safeguarding policy, Implementation Guides and supporting information, awareness raising resources and tools are available on the Archdiocese's public website. The link to the safeguarding pages is in the menu on the front page of the website.

A link to the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards can also be found on the safeguarding pages.

The Office for Safeguarding Services can also assist with advice, resources and training.

The People & Culture Office can assist with Working with Children blue cards, criminal history checks, training records and other compliance data.

Safeguarding Monitoring & Compliance

The Archdiocese conducts internal and external audits annually to monitor compliance with the safeguarding policy and procedures. Your parish, ministry or community will be subject to an internal audit each year either conducted as a self-assessment or by the Office for Safeguarding Services. It may also be part of an audit conducted by an external auditor.

An audit against the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards is conducted every 3 years. Your parish, ministry or community may be selected to participate in that audit.

As Local Safeguarding Representative it is likely that you will be asked to undertake, or assist in undertaking a safeguarding audit of your parish, ministry or community.

Respond > Record > Report

Compliance Statement

NON-COMPLIANCE WITH THE SAFEGUARDING POLICY OR PROCEDURES WHICH SERIOUSLY JEOPARDISES THE SAFETY AND WELLBEING OF OTHERS MUST BE REPORTED TO THE VICAR GENERAL AND MAY BE GROUNDS FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION RESULTING IN DISMISSAL OR TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT, AND REPORTING TO STATUTORY AUTHORITIES.

Privacy & Confidentiality

Privacy and confidentiality are core principles of the safeguarding ministry.

All safeguarding related information, whether verbal, written or electronic should only be shared on a 'need to know' basis with designated responsible personnel. Any personal or sensitive information about people must be stored in a secure place and not disclosed unless authorized under the Australian Privacy Principles or otherwise legally authorized or required.

If in doubt, it is best to seek appropriate advice before sharing or disclosing information unless doing so is necessary to prevent serious harm to another person (e.g. a person is in immediate danger or at serious risk of abuse or harm).

Information Sharing

SHARING INFORMATION WITH OTHERS WITH DESIGNATED RESPONSIBILITY IS NOT A BREACH OF CONFIDENTIALITY.

DO NOT PROMISE ABSOLUTE CONFIDENTIALITY OR TO KEEP AN ABUSE INCIDENT SECRET.

Safeguarding Prayer

Lord Jesus

May we welcome the kingdom of God anew into our hearts and lives, embracing discipleship and openness to others.

You call us to walk with integrity in the service of others. May our service be filled with kindness, and respect for all God's people, giving special protection to children and the vulnerable.

May we seek the truth, listen to those wounded by abuse, and choose to act with compassion and justice.

Give us the strength, to serve humbly and faithfully, and to love one another as we are so loved by You.

Amen.

Key Contacts

Office for Safeguarding Services

Phone: (07) 3324 3752
Email: safeguarding@bne.catholic.net.au

People & Culture Office (HR)

Phone: (07) 3324 3146
Email: hroffice@bne.catholic.net.au

Volunteer Coordinator

Phone: (07) 3324 3106
Email: volunteers@bne.catholic.net.au

STOPline Service

Phone: 1300 304 550
Email: AOB@stoline.com.au
Online: www.bnecatholic.stoplinereport.com

Queensland Police Service

Phone: 131 444 (Policelink)
Dial triple zero '000' in an emergency.

Child Safety Services

Phone: 1300 682 254 (Brisbane)
Phone: 1800 316 855 (Ipswich)
Phone: 1300 703 921 (North Coast)
Phone: 1300 679 849 (South East)
After Hours: 1800 177 135

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.