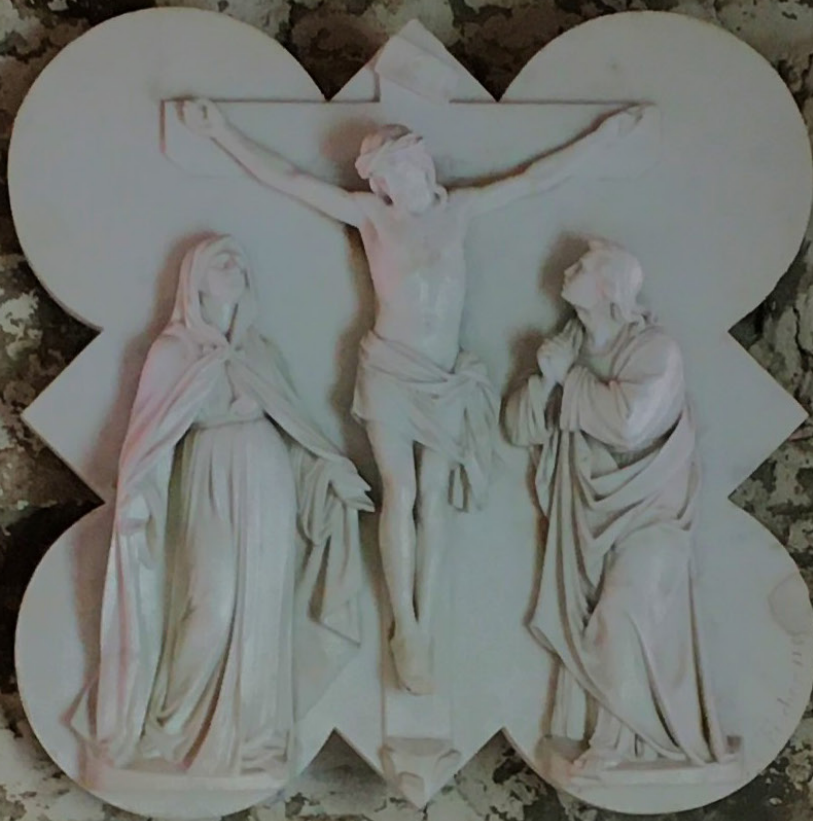




Safeguarding Framework 2024



KNOW THE PAIN OF THE VICTIM AND THE STRENGTH OF THE SURVIVOR. ST

The Archdiocese of Brisbane acknowledges the lifelong trauma of abuse victims and survivors and their families; the failure of the Catholic Church to protect, believe and respond justly to children and adults at risk; and the consequent breaches of community trust.



The Archdiocese of Brisbane acknowledges the Traditional Custodians who have walked and cared for this land for thousands of years and their descendants who maintain their spiritual connection and traditions. We thank them for their continual cultural and spiritual connection to Country as expressed through their history, music, language, songs, art and dance.

We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the Archdiocese of Brisbane, North, South, East and West and reflect on the millions of footprints that travelled the Dreaming pathways and continue to walk this land.



Archbishop's Foreword

According to the Gospel and within the Church the protection of children and adults-at-risk from abuse, exploitation and harm of any kind is of paramount importance.

Our duty to protect the vulnerable and to prevent abuse flows from the witness of Jesus Christ himself, in whose name we serve. His prime concern was for the vulnerable, and he himself became vulnerable in his passion and death. Therefore, I unreservedly support the many clergy, religious, employees and volunteers of the Archdiocese who follow in the Lord's way and show their commitment to the vulnerable from day to day.

Safeguarding lies at the heart of our duty of care in the Archdiocese, and though a great deal has already been achieved, there is much still to be done and there is no room for complacency.


We are committed to ensuring that whatever we do in safeguarding complies with the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards, satisfies statutory obligations and is moving towards best practice.

I urge all those who in various ways work for the Archdiocese, or are called in any way to serve the People of God, to commit to the implementation of the safeguarding policies, procedures and practices set out in this Framework.

I endorse the Safeguarding Framework wholeheartedly, and I commend it to you as an essential resource in your work and ministries.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mark Durston'.

Archbishop of Brisbane



The Church loves all her children like a loving mother, but cares for all and protects with a special affection those who are smallest and defenceless. This is the duty that Christ himself entrusted to the entire Christian community as a whole. Aware of this, the Church is especially vigilant in protecting children and vulnerable adults.

Apostolic letter issued 'motu proprio' by the Supreme Pontiff Francis 4 June 2016

SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding means the measures and actions taken to prevent, respond to and report abuse, exploitation and harm and, in doing so, protect the welfare and human rights of people involved in, or affected by, Archdiocesan activities, ministries and services.

PURPOSE

This document provides an overarching framework to guide and assist Archdiocesan agencies, parishes, ministries and services to implement best practice safeguarding arrangements. It also reflects the requirements of the Tutela minorum Universal Safeguarding Guidelines Framework prepared by the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors and the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards.

The ultimate purpose of this framework is to promote a culture of safeguarding within and across the Archdiocese and reduce the risks of abuse, exploitation and harm associated with Archdiocesan activities, ministries and services.

SCOPE

This framework applies to agencies, parishes, ministries and services under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Brisbane and to Associations of Christ's Faithful or Public Juridic Persons who enter into a formal agreement with the Archdiocese accordingly.

The framework applies to all Archdiocesan workers, partner organisations/entities, contractors and third-party service providers.

The framework applies whether on or off Archdiocese of Brisbane premises, including online environments.

Safeguarding Policy

The Archdiocese recognises the inherent dignity and rights of all people, regardless of their age, gender, race, religious beliefs, disability, sexual orientation, or family or social background.

Everyone involved in Archdiocesan activities, ministries and services has the right to protection from abuse, exploitation and harm. As such, safeguarding is part of the Archdiocese's primary duty of care.

National Catholic Safeguarding Standards

The Archdiocese has adopted and adheres to the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards. The Standards apply to all agencies, parishes, ministries and services under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop.

www.acsltd.org.au/services/professional-and-safeguarding-standards/national-catholic-safeguarding-standards/

SAFEGUARDING COMMITMENT

The Archdiocese has **zero tolerance** for all forms of abuse, exploitation and harm and is committed to promoting and protecting the welfare and human rights of everyone involved in, or affected by, Archdiocesan activities, ministries and services. The safety and wellbeing of children and adults-at-risk are paramount.

SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES

These Principles guide safeguarding in the Archdiocese.



CHILD

A child is any person under 18 years of age.

GOVERNANCE

Good governance helps to facilitate the implementation and continuous improvement of safeguarding within an entity and creates a culture of safeguarding. These groups contribute to the governance of safeguarding within the Archdiocese.



RESPONSIBILITIES

Safeguarding is a collective responsibility at all levels of the Archdiocese. Everyone has a role to play in safeguarding.

<p>Archbishop</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demonstrates leadership in safeguarding. - Promotes safeguarding and model behaviours that support a safe culture. - Approves the Archdiocesan Safeguarding Framework. - Monitors implementation, compliance with and continuous improvement of safeguarding standards, policies, procedures and practices across the Archdiocese.
<p>Bishops</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demonstrate leadership in safeguarding. - Promote safeguarding and model behaviours that support a safe culture. - Monitor implementation and compliance with safeguarding standards, policies, procedures and practices within their area of responsibility.
<p>Vicar for Administration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demonstrates leadership in safeguarding. - Promotes safeguarding and model behaviours that support a safe culture. - Monitors the work of the Safeguarding Committee. - Endorses safeguarding policies, procedures and practices. - Approves the appointment of the Safeguarding Director. - Approves resources for the Office for Safeguarding Services.
<p>Clergy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demonstrate leadership in safeguarding. - Promote safeguarding and model behaviours that support a safe culture. - Monitor implementation and compliance with safeguarding standards, policies, procedures and practices within their parish, ministry or service. - Appoint a Local Safeguarding Representative (where required).
<p>Executive Directors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demonstrate leadership in safeguarding. - Promote safeguarding and model behaviours that support a safe culture. - Approve Agency/Office level safeguarding policies, procedures and practices. - Provide sufficient resources to achieve implementation and ongoing compliance with safeguarding standards, policies, procedures and practices within their Agency/Office. - Monitor implementation and compliance with safeguarding standards, policies, procedures and practices within the Agency/Office. - Appoint an Agency/Office Safeguarding Lead (where required).

**Executive Director
Office of Legal,
Governance & Risk**

- Demonstrates leadership in safeguarding.
- Promotes safeguarding and models behaviours that support a safe culture.
- Reports strategic safeguarding related issues and priorities to the Archbishop, Vicar for Administration and select Archdiocesan Councils.
- Liaises with counterpart Executive Directors on strategic safeguarding related issues and priorities.
- Resources the Office for Safeguarding Services.
- Recruits an Archdiocesan Safeguarding Director.
- Monitors operation of the Office for Safeguarding Services.

**Director Office
for Safeguarding
Services**

- Demonstrates leadership in safeguarding.
- Promotes safeguarding and models behaviours that support a safe culture.
- Coordinates and supports the development, implementation, compliance with and continuous improvement of the Archdiocesan safeguarding framework, policy, procedures and practices.
- Manages the operations of the Office for Safeguarding Services.
- Supports workers in managing safeguarding concerns and abuse suspicions, disclosures, complaints and incidents.

**Employees
Volunteers**

- Promote safeguarding and model behaviours that support a safe culture.
- Support implementation and compliance with safeguarding standards, policies, procedures and practices.

**Partner
organisations/entities**

- Comply with safeguarding standards, policies, procedures and practices.
- Model behaviours that support a safe culture.

Contractors

**Third-party service
providers**

ABUSE

Any behaviour or treatment that causes, or is likely to cause, physical or emotional harm to another person. It may be intentional or unintentional and includes inaction. The most common types of abuse are:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional/psychological abuse
- neglect
- exploitation

'Spiritual abuse' may also occur in a Church or faith-based organisation.

Risk Management

Effective risk management is critical to preventing abuse, exploitation and harm.

All Archdiocesan workers share responsibility for identifying and managing risks of abuse, exploitation and harm by observing and complying with this Framework and safeguarding and risk management policies, procedures and practices.

All activities, ministries and services are to be assessed for risks of abuse, exploitation and harm, proportionate risk controls are to be implemented, and risk assessments are to be documented. Full risk management plans are to be prepared and approved for high-risk activities or special events, to minimise risks of abuse, exploitation and harm, particularly to children and adults-at-risk.

Worker Screening

Worker screening is a key measure for safeguarding people from abuse, exploitation and harm.

Legislated worker screening checks adopted by the Archdiocese include (but are not limited to):

- National criminal history checks;
- Working with children (Blue Card) checks;
- Disability worker (Yellow card) checks; and
- National Disability Insurance Scheme worker screening checks.

Other essential screening checks adopted by the Archdiocese include (but are not limited to):

- Referee checks;
- Child-safe interview questions;
- a Restricted Person declaration (Working with Children (Risk management & Screening) Act 2000);
- a Prior Conduct declaration;
- a Good Standing declaration (visiting clergy); and
- Australian Catholic Ministries Register checks (visiting clergy)

ADULT-AT-RISK

Adult-at-risk means any person over 18 years of age who is at increased risk of abuse, such as people:

- who are elderly
- with a disability
- who suffer from mental illness
- who have diminished capacity
- who have cognitive impairment
- who have suffered previous abuse

(National Catholic Safeguarding Standards ed. 2)

Commitment to Good Conduct

The Archdiocese is committed to the highest standards of integrity and ethical conduct. To this end, the Archdiocese has codes of conduct for employees, volunteers and clergy. The purpose of these documents is to link the behaviour expected of workers with the values and mission of the Archdiocese and Church. They also guide workers in decision-making. The codes of conduct also provide specific and explicit guidance to workers on appropriate and undesirable behaviours towards children and adults-at-risk.

Training

It is vital that all Archdiocesan workers understand their safeguarding responsibilities and are equipped with the knowledge and skills to safeguard others and respond to incidents. All Archdiocesan workers undertake an induction as part of the onboarding process which includes key safeguarding information. Workers are also required to complete Safeguarding Training (or Agency equivalent) on commencement, and every two (2) years thereafter (at a minimum), or in accordance with regulation, whichever is the earliest.

Responding to Incidents

The Archdiocese has a moral, ethical and legal duty to respond effectively to all incidents of abuse, exploitation and harm. A prompt and effective response may stop abuse from occurring or prevent further harm. It may also be the first important step in helping those who have suffered harm. It can also assist the Archdiocese in satisfying duty of care, protection and legal reporting obligations.

Incidents may arise in a number of ways including through direct observation, disclosure by a victim, an account from a concerned party, a formal complaint or claim, or an anonymous report. It is imperative that all incidents are taken seriously and responded to promptly and effectively.

If any person is at risk of serious and imminent harm workers should contact the police directly or call triple zero (000) in an emergency.

From the outset, trauma-informed and person-centred support and pastoral care should be afforded to any child or adult who has experienced or is alleging abuse, exploitation or harm.

All parties are to be treated with dignity and respect.

HARM

Harm is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on a person's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing.

Reporting Obligations

Workers who suspect or know that a person is being, or has been abused, exploited or harmed (including historically) are required to report the matter as soon as possible and in compliance with statutory timeframes, following relevant Archdiocesan, agency and Church reporting protocols.

Workers must comply with all statutory reporting requirements.

Investigation

All incidents of abuse, exploitation and harm are to be investigated to the fullest extent possible following relevant Archdiocesan, agency and Church complaint management policies and procedures. The principles of natural justice/procedural fairness are to be applied to all allegations or complaints of abuse, exploitation or harm. Where an incident has been reported to the police or other statutory authority, authorisation is to be obtained from the relevant authority before commencing an investigation so as to avoid interfering or hindering an investigation or other statutory processes.

Record-keeping

Complete and accurate records are to be created and kept for all safeguarding-related matters, suspicions, disclosures, allegations, complaints, incidents of abuse, exploitation and harm. Those records are to be treated as private and confidential, stored securely, and retained for a minimum of 50 years or in accordance with statutory requirements, whichever is the longer. Records are not to be amended, deleted, destroyed or otherwise disposed of without proper authorisation and where legally authorised.

Information Sharing

Information sharing is essential for effective safeguarding and to discharge related obligations.

Why and how information is shared is important. Workers are to ensure that sharing information relating to a safeguarding concern or incident of abuse, exploitation or harm is necessary for the purpose for which it is being shared, that it is shared only with those individuals with delegated authority on a 'need to know' basis, and that the information is shared securely.

Workers are to be mindful of confidentiality and privacy obligations in sharing information and are to comply with the Australian Privacy Principles as they apply to the disclosure of personal information.

All Archdiocesan workers must take responsibility for sharing information which may be critical to preventing abuse, exploitation or harm, protecting persons at risk, and satisfying duty of care and statutory obligations.

A record is to be kept of all information that has been shared, with whom and for what purpose.

Implementation & Compliance

Implementation of and compliance with this framework is mandatory. The framework is sufficiently broad to allow for its integration into the various Archdiocesan agencies, services and ministries.

Implementation and compliance with this framework is monitored regularly.

Continuous Improvement

The Archdiocese is committed to continually improving its safeguarding practices.

Implementation of the framework and the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards is monitored through an Implementation Plan overviewed by the Safeguarding Committee.

Allegations, complaints and incidents of abuse, exploitation and harm are to be systematically

reviewed and analysed to identify weaknesses or failures in safeguarding policies, procedures and practice, root causes and potential systemic failures to inform continuous improvement.

This framework is subject to review every three (3) years and improvements are made in line with best practice and the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.



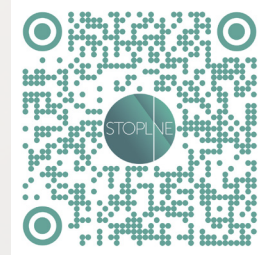


STOPLINE receives confidential information and reports about suspected abuse, serious misconduct and policy breaches and is available to all Archdiocesan personnel, volunteers and the general community.

Information can be provided anonymously.

Phone: 1300 304 550 Email: AOB@stopline.com.au

Online: bncatholic.stoplinereport.com



ARCHDIOCESE OF BRISBANE
Office for Safeguarding Services

Ph: 07 3324 3752

Email: safeguarding@bne.catholic.net.au

Web: www.brisbanecatholic.org.au/safeguarding



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