



DIOCESE of  
PARRAMATTA

# VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK







## Welcome Letter

Dear Volunteer,

On behalf of all clergy and staff, I want to thank you for your interest and involvement with the Diocese of Parramatta.

A spirit of volunteerism has long supported and underpinned the Catholic Church in its quest to truly be the “one body of Christ”. Reaching the goal of growing and sharing our faith requires a community wide effort. In addition to the commitment of our clergy and staff we must have strong community partnerships. That is, volunteers play a critical role in this effort.

At the core of everything we believe as Catholics, we believe that God is love (1 John 4:8). God offers love to us and in turn, we are called to be agents of that love to others, to cooperate with the Holy Spirit in building up God’s kingdom. This motivation is in everything that we do. It is in the care and respect we offer others, the outreach we extend to the most marginalised in our communities and it includes providing a safe and respectful environment for all.

Our parishes have traditionally believed they offered a safe environment because we were serving God and we knew one another. However, the Royal Commission has clearly shown the importance of developing a strong explicit culture of safety, regardless of attitudes and perceived trust we have in one another.

“There is a continuing need for the culture and mission of safeguarding to be, and to be seen to be, systemically embedded into the life of the Church across the globe.” (Sean P. O’Malley after the 11th Ordinary Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors.)

The protection of all vulnerable people is not something to be added to the to-do list. All volunteers of the Church have a responsibility to ensure the safeguarding of all peoples. It is everyone’s responsibility and it must be embedded into everything that happens in our Church. This includes ensuring that roles and responsibilities are clear, policies and procedures are in place and that everyone does what they can. Not to comply for compliance sake, but because we love one another as God has loved us and we want to provide a safe and respectful environment for all who work within the Church and to all to whom the Church extends her mission.

I am happy to endorse this handbook to assist you in your very important work in serving the community. From catechist coordinators, members of Councils and Committees, church musicians to researching the history of a parish, we cannot be successful without you.

The following material is published to provide basic information as a practical resource for you on a range of issues relevant to being a volunteer in our Diocese. It is my hope that you will find it most helpful.

Thank you in advance for helping us to share the Good News of Jesus Christ in Western Sydney.

I look forward to working closely with you.

With every blessing and wish,



Bishop Vincent Long Van Nguyen  
**Bishop of Parramatta**  
June 2021

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## Purpose of the Handbook

This handbook was prepared to give you some essential information about the policies, procedures, and expectations of the Diocese of Parramatta. It contains all you need to know to get started with volunteering at the Diocese of Parramatta. Please take the time to read it and feel free to ask questions.

## Glossary of terms

<b>Adults/people at risk</b>	<p>Adults at risk are people over the age of 18 who are at increased risk of abuse, including those who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are elderly</li> <li>• have a disability</li> <li>• have a mental illness</li> <li>• have diminished capacity</li> <li>• have cognitive impairment</li> <li>• are experiencing transient risks, e.g. bereavement, relationship breakdown, domestic or family violence, homelessness</li> <li>• have any other impairment that makes it difficult for that person to protect themselves from abuse or exploitation.</li> </ul> <p>While taking care to not make assumptions or generalisations about individuals, we recognise that other aspects of a person's identity or life experiences may also increase their risk of vulnerability to abuse or harm, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander</li> <li>• being a refugee or migrant</li> <li>• diverse gender or sexuality</li> <li>• speaking a first language other than English</li> <li>• surviving sexual abuse or child abuse.</li> </ul>
<b>Allegation</b>	A complaint, still to be verified, claiming or asserting that someone has committed an act of abuse against a child. The term is used interchangeably and in combination with "complaint".
<b>Bishop</b>	A diocesan bishop in the Latin Church and an eparch in the Eastern Churches.
<b>Child/ren</b>	<p>Individuals under 18 years of age.</p> <p>Can also be a child 0-15 years under the Children and Young person (Care and Protection Act) 1998 In this Act a young person is 16 or 17 years</p>
<b>Child abuse</b>	There are different legal definitions of child abuse in Australia. Most commonly, the categories of child abuse include sexual, physical, psychological, neglect, ill-treatment, exploitation and exposure to family violence.
<b>Child Safeguarding Commitment Statement</b>	A commitment statement describing an entity's commitment to keep children safe from harm. It informs the entity's culture with respect to child safeguarding.
<b>Church Authority</b>	Those people to whom the Bishop has delegated authority for the governance, operations and administration of the Diocese. For example, the Chief of Operations and Finance, Parish Priest etc.
<b>Clergy</b>	The body of those ordained in sacred ministry in the Church. They are either deacons, priests or bishops.
<b>Complainant</b>	Any person who makes a complaint that may include any allegation, suspicion, concern, or report of a breach of the entity's code of conduct. It also includes disclosures made to an institution that may be about, or relate to, abuse in the entity's context.

<b>Conflicts of interest</b>	Situations where a conflict arises between a person's official duties and their private interests, which could influence the performance of those official duties. Such conflict generally involves opposing principles or incompatible wishes or needs.
<b>Cultural safety</b>	An environment that is safe for people of all ethnicities and cultural identities: where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their identity, of who they are and what they need. It is about shared respect, shared meaning, shared knowledge and experience, of learning, living and working together with dignity and truly listening.
<b>Diocese</b>	Ecclesiastical jurisdiction under the leadership of a bishop or an archbishop. In this document it is used as an inclusive term, including eparchies, ordinariates and personal prelature.
<b>Duty of Care</b>	It is a legal obligation that is imposed on an individual requiring an adherence to a standard of reasonable care while performing any acts that could foreseeably harm others
<b>Entity</b>	An entity that has been identified as Catholic by a competent authority within the Catholic Church.
<b>Formation/formation program</b>	A program preparing individuals for ordination or profession of vows as well as a life-long journey to the invitation of Christ to proclaim and live the Gospel message within the life of the Church.
<b>Grievance</b>	A concern or complaint raised by an employee or volunteer against a process, action, omission or decision within the responsibility and control of the Diocese which relates to employment or volunteer engagement or related internal human resources matters, which has or is likely to have an unreasonable negative impact on the ability of an employee or volunteer to undertake their duties, or similar impact on their broader role.
<b>Leaders</b>	Personnel who are responsible for important governance decisions within a Church entity and/or who lead and coordinate Church improvement initiatives.
<b>Minister</b>	A person, lay or ordained, who responds to their baptismal calling carrying out a ministry for the Church. Some do this on a limited, or temporary basis – as catechists, liturgical ministers, pastoral council members, and so on. Some serve on a more stable basis, part-time or full-time. Such roles require authorisation of local leadership, and appropriate discernment and formation.
<b>Ministry</b>	Any activity within, or delivered by, an entity that is designed to carry out the good works of the Catholic Church.
<b>Parish</b>	<i>A parish is a definite community of the Christian faithful established on a stable basis within a particular Church [diocese]; the pastoral care of the parish is entrusted to a pastor as its own shepherd under the authority of the diocesan bishop. (Canon 515).</i> <i>The Church living in the midst of the homes of her sons and daughters. (Pope John Paul II, Christifideles Laici, 26)</i> <i>The presence of the Church in a given territory, an environment for hearing God's word, for growth in the Christian life, for dialogue, proclamation, charitable outreach, worship and celebration. It is a community of communities, a sanctuary where the thirsty come to drink in the midst of their journey, and a centre of constant missionary outreach. (Pope Francis, Joy of the Gospel, 28)</i>
<b>Performance appraisal</b>	A yearly review of a volunteer's performance is a tool for supervisors to evaluate how well a volunteer is performing their role. It is also an opportunity to gather feedback from volunteers regarding their role and the Diocese.
<b>Personnel</b>	A cleric, member of a religious institute or other person who is employed by the entity or engaged on a contract, subcontract, voluntary or unpaid basis.

<b>Religious Institute</b>	An institute of consecrated life, a secular institute or society of apostolic life, and their provinces or equivalent.
<b>Safeguarding</b>	Measures to protect the safety, human rights and well-being of individuals, which allow people – in this context children – to live free from abuse, harm and neglect.
<b>Safeguarding Coordinator</b>	An individual who champions safeguarding and co-ordinates the implementation of the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards within an entity.
<b>Safeguarding Implementation Plan</b>	A documented plan which articulates actions to be taken across the entity to ensure safeguarding practices are in place. It includes actions, strategies, responsibilities and delegations and tracks review and progress. It is overseen by the Safeguarding Committee.
<b>Seminary</b>	A centre for the formation and education of students preparing for ordination.
<b>Supervision</b>	Supervision is a process by which a supervisor provides regular pastoral support, instruction and feedback to volunteers. For example, regular check-ins throughout the year to assess how the volunteer is performing their role.
<b>Supervisor</b>	A nominated person who has the responsibility to directly oversee volunteer activities. For example, a Ministry Coordinator, Ministry Leader, Catechist Coordinator etc. Supervisors may not have a formal title or role statement which says that they “supervise” volunteers, but if volunteers are involved in recruiting, training or rostering volunteers, it means that they have a supervisory role
<b>Volunteer</b>	<p>Volunteers are individuals who provide their experience, knowledge and skills to the Diocese, free of charge, with the aim of helping the Diocese to achieve its objectives and/or bringing some benefit to the local community. This includes all clergy and those in Consecrated Life who may or may not receive a stipend.</p> <p>A volunteer in the parish space, may refer to either a baptised or non-baptised member, lay or ordained, and regardless of baptismal state.</p>
<b>Volunteering</b>	<p>An activity which takes place and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is of benefit to the community and the volunteer</li> <li>• is of the volunteer’s own free will and without coercion</li> <li>• is for no financial payment</li> <li>• is in designated volunteer positions.</li> </ul> <p>“Volunteering is time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain”. (Volunteering Australia).</p>
<b>Working with children check</b>	Generic term used in the Standards to denote the statutory screening requirement for people who work or volunteer in child-related work. There is no single national framework setting out requirements for ‘working with children’ checks. Each state or territory in Australia has its own name, procedures and differences in scope regarding what this type of check entails. They are one part of a Church entity’s recruitment, selection and screening processes.



## Is this Handbook applicable to you?

Yes! All those who give their time in service of their faith and community through the Diocese's various works and ministries are classified as volunteers. The Diocese recognises that volunteering within your parish is often in response to your baptismal call and provides this handbook as well as recognising the obligations of civil society on volunteers and organisations who engage volunteers. This handbook is intended to support you in your volunteer ministry. If you are giving your time willingly for the common good and without financial gain, you are a volunteer. You are classed as a volunteer even if you are responding to your baptismal call.

## About the Diocese of Parramatta

The Diocese of Parramatta was created by Pope John Paul II on 8 April 1986 as a suffragan of the Archdiocese of Sydney. St Patrick's Cathedral, Parramatta is the seat of the Bishop of Parramatta. Bishop Vincent Long OFM Conv is the fourth Bishop of Parramatta and was appointed Bishop of Parramatta in 2016.

The Diocese of Parramatta is west of Sydney and covers 4,289 sq km, reaching from Dundas Valley in the east, west to Megalong Valley, south to Luddenham, and north to Wiseman's Ferry.

The Diocese of Parramatta proclaims the word of Jesus Christ and His message of love and salvation to the people of Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains.

To find out more, visit <https://parracatholic.org/about-us/>

## Organisational Structure

The Diocese's organisational structure can be viewed at <https://parracatholic.org/diocesan-organisational-chart/>



## Rights and Responsibilities

### As a Volunteer you have a right to:

- Be treated with respect
- Be provided with a safe, positive and healthy environment in which to perform your role
- Request an induction and any training necessary for your volunteer role
- Have a role statement and agreed working hours
- Be given a copy of all organisational policies relevant to your role as a volunteer
- Be given tasks that match the needs of the Diocese with your knowledge, interests and skills
- Be provided with tools, materials and/or resources required to complete your assigned tasks
- Receive supervision, feedback about performance, and have opportunities to ask questions
- Have clearly defined and accessible lines of communication and accountability
- Voice your concerns and/or complaints to your supervisor
- Withdraw at any stage from volunteering
- Be adequately covered by insurance for volunteer duties
- Be treated and work in an environment free from discrimination
- Have all confidential and personal information dealt with in accordance with the principles of the *Information Privacy Act 2000*.

### The Diocese has a right to:

- Expect volunteers to represent the Diocese in a positive and supportive manner at all times
- Expect volunteers to fulfil their volunteer role to the best of their ability
- Discern the gifts and talents of volunteers to match the ministry
- Offer regular feedback to volunteers
- Expect clear and open communication
- Require the volunteer to respect the privacy and confidentiality of information relating to clergy, parishioners, employees, volunteers, and the public

### As a Volunteer your Responsibilities are:

- Support the Diocese's goals and objectives
- Abide by the Diocese's Code of Conduct
- Treat others with respect
- Behave appropriately and courteously to clergy, employees, volunteers, parishioners, contractors and the public in the course of your role
- Carry out specified tasks defined in your position descriptions
- Undertake training as requested or necessary
- Follow volunteer guidelines and other organisational policy and procedures, and consult with the supervisor if you have any questions
- Work as team
- Treat as confidential any personal information learned about clergy, employees, volunteers or parishioners in the course of your duties
- Maintain professional relationships within acceptable boundaries
- Contribute to and maintain workplace health and safety
- Be aware of the duty of care to yourselves, clergy, employees and other volunteers
- Notify your supervisor or another member of staff of any hazardous situations that pose a risk to yourself or others
- Report any accidents, incidents or near misses to your supervisor
- Notify your supervisor of change of contact details
- Be reliable and, if possible, commit to regular days and hours of attendance
- Advise the supervisor if you are unable to carry out your volunteer duties as per your rostered hours.
- Be open and honest in dealings with the Diocese and provide feedback that can improve the voluntary position and the support offered.



## National Standards for Volunteer Involvement

The Diocese of Parramatta recognises the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement as best practice for organisations engaging volunteers and seeks to embed these principles in this toolkit and other tools and resources that support Volunteering in the Diocese.

There are 8 standards addressing the key areas of volunteer involvement:

1. Leadership and management
2. Commitment to volunteer involvement
3. Volunteer roles
4. Recruitment and selection
5. Support and development
6. Workplace safety and wellbeing
7. Volunteer recognition
8. Quality management and continuous improvement

You can read more about the standards for Volunteer Involvement on the Volunteering Australia website: <https://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/>



# POLICY AND PROCEDURES

POLICIES

PROCEDURE

## Accidents and Incidents

If you have an accident or are injured in the course of your voluntary service or on your way to or from your voluntary assignment irrespective of how minor it may appear, your supervisor must be notified immediately and an incident report completed. The Diocese's insurance cover protects volunteers for injury or damage that result from work related activities.

## Alcohol and Other Drugs

The Diocese expects you to be sober and not to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol whilst carrying out your voluntary work.

## Attendance

You will be advised of the time commitment required by your particular responsibilities at initial engagement. If you have difficulty working within that commitment or have extra time available, please discuss the matter with your supervisor so that alternative arrangements can be made.

## Boundaries

Personal and professional boundaries are essential in maintaining safe and appropriate relationships with clergy, employees, other volunteers, parishioners, and clients. You should ensure that you set boundaries in your relationship with clergy, employees, other volunteers, parishioners, and clients that will ensure your own comfort and privacy.

You should understand that an unsafe relationship is one that poses risk to the emotional, physical or sexual health of any of the individuals involved; and unsafe and unsupportive relationships have an extremely harmful impact on human dignity and self-esteem.

You should know, understand and respect the physical and emotional boundaries of adults, adults at risk, and children. You should:

- Work within the agreed times and days for your role;
- Do not give out your personal details including your personal phone number to parishioners, clients or public in order to protect your privacy;
- Treat everyone equally. Do not single anyone out for particular attention;
- Be conscious of and respect the physical and emotional space and privacy required by others;
- Use appropriate non-threatening language;
- Not allow personal feelings to affect your interactions with others;
- Provide pastoral support in places that offer sufficient safe, open and visible environments;
- Recognise that physical contact can be necessary and helpful in giving care, comfort or affirmation, and follow the appropriate standards for such contact;
- Work within a well-defined role statement that complies with the relevant legal obligations associated with the tasks;
- Consciously draw distinctions between the role as volunteer with the Diocese and other social interactions;
- Monitor any unavoidable dual relationships



- and evaluate their impact on those being served with the assistance of a third party if appropriate or needed;
- Recognise when service relationships are becoming unsafe and/or ineffective and be prepared to terminate those relationships with appropriate referral;
- Understand that by virtue of your position of trust, you are placed in a position of power in the relationship;
- Exercise your position of power in a caring, compassionate and non-patronising way that enriches a safe and supportive relationship; and
- Not engage in any form of physical, psychological or emotional coercion within relationships.

## Challenging Behaviours

From time to time you are going to be faced with some form of challenging behaviour.

A challenging behaviour is defined as “culturally abnormal behaviour(s) of such intensity, frequency or duration that the physical safety of the person or others is placed in serious jeopardy, or behaviour which is likely seriously to limit or deny access to the use of ordinary community facilities. Challenging behaviours can vary and examples are anger, power seeking, attention seeking, revenge behaviour and withdrawal from communication.

On occasions conduct may be perceived to amount to “challenging behaviour”. In this first instance it is important to seek the advice of your supervisor before taking any action.

There are many causes for challenging behaviours which may include:

- Biological - they may be in pain
- Social i.e. boredom, seeking social interaction, the need for an element of control, lack of knowledge of community norms, insensitivity of staff and services to the person’s wishes and needs environmental
- Psychological i.e. feeling excluded, lonely, devalued, labelled, disempowered, living up to people’s negative expectations
- A means of communication; a lot of the time, challenging behaviour is learned and brings rewards to the child and young

person. Work on your relationship with the person first

- As a result of a trauma that they have faced, and you are not aware of.

## How do you manage challenging behaviours?

### STOP:

Remove yourself from the situation as soon as possible. When working with children stop current engagement with the child and while maintaining supervision of the child seek the assistance of your supervisor.

### THINK:

Take some time to think about the situation and what might be happening for the person (please see the causes for challenging behaviour above).

### ASSESS:

Assess the situation carefully. Recognise the possibility of low self-esteem.

### RESPOND:

If you feel uncomfortable or unable to manage the situation, call your supervisor and seek their advice. You may respond by actioning one, several or all of the following:

1. Treat the person as you would treat others but do not expect them to behave the same way as someone else
2. Encourage them to reflect on their own behaviour and on that of others
3. Avoid seeing the person’s behaviour as a personal affront
4. Convey firm and honest expectations that are realistic and flexible
5. Be yourself – use natural attributes and skills
6. Give praise directly and indirectly
7. Develop a support network and take care of yourself.

**It is imperative that after an incident, you record the incident and forward on to your supervisor. Ensure that a copy of this record is secured for any future reference.**

## Child Protection/ Reportable Conduct

The safety, wellbeing and protection of our children, young people, and adults at risk is our highest priority at the Diocese of Parramatta. The Diocese's Safeguarding Policy explains the behaviour that it expects from clergy, employees and volunteers alike. You should be aware that Child Protection legislation, such as the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 and/or the Children's Guardian Act 2019, can and do to you in the course of your duties as a volunteer and a breach of the legislation may lead to criminal charges and being barred from working with children by the Office of the Children's Guardian.

## Conduct and Behaviour

The following will outline the dos and don'ts of clergy, employees, volunteers and contractors' conduct and behaviour when working with children.

### Dos

- Consider the safety and needs of children as paramount
- Treat all children with respect
- Read and abide by relevant policies and procedures for keeping children safe (Refer to Parish Office)
- Behave in a manner which is consistent with the values of the Diocese
- Enable children to participate in the decisions that affect them
- At all times, be transparent in your actions and whereabouts, and remain aware of each child and the adults who are with children
- Seek advice, support and assistance for child protection matters where needed

### Don'ts

You will not, unless formally authorised to do so by your supervisor:

- Be alone with a child
- Sleep in the same room as a child
- Do things of a personal nature that a child can do for him/herself, such as assistance with toileting or changing clothes
- Without prior parental/guardian consent, seek to make contact and spend time

alone with any child outside program times, including through personal social media networks, electronic means or face-to-face and phone contact

- Photograph or video a child without the consent of the child and his/her parents or guardians
- Disclose information unless specifically required by law or policy.

You will not under any circumstances:

- Engage in behaviour that is intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children
- Use inappropriate, offensive or discriminatory language when speaking with a child
- Hold, kiss, cuddle or touch a child in an inappropriate, unnecessary, uninvited, or culturally insensitive way in public or isolation
- Behave provocatively or inappropriately with a child and/or in a way that could be considered as 'grooming'
- Develop a sexual relationship with a child or a relationship with a child that may be deemed exploitative or abusive
- Condone or participate in behaviour of a child which is illegal, unsafe or abusive
- Act in a way that shows unfair and differential treatment of a child
- Smack, hit or physically assault a child
- Physically restrain or remove/isolate a child or children unless the child's or children's behaviours endanger themselves or others
- Have inappropriate conversations with a child either in person, through social media or in any other way
- Use diocesan electronic equipment inappropriately or for the purpose of exploiting or harassing a child
- Make a complaint that they know to be untrue, malicious or vexatious.



## DOs



## DON'Ts



## Reporting harm or risk of harm to children

Under the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)* a volunteer who suspects a child has suffered harm from abuse or neglect is a mandatory reporter. Section 27 of the Act states that person is a mandatory reporter is the “person in religious ministry, or a person providing religion-based activities to children”.

To fulfil this requirement, you must report the matter to your supervisor as soon as possible of becoming aware of the harm or risk of harm. If the supervisor is unavailable then the report must be made to the Office of Safeguarding and Professional Standards. Volunteers who have reasonable grounds for suspecting a child has suffered mistreatment or that there is risk of significant harm, can lawfully make a report without fear of legal repercussion.

Depending on the nature of the situation, the supervisor may report or identify the concern to Diocese’s Office of Safeguarding and Professional Standards who may escalate the report.

A volunteer can also report suspected child abuse directly to the Child Protection Helpline.

You are required to inform the Diocese as soon as an allegation of disqualifying offences<sup>1</sup> as outlined in the *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012* is made against you. This requirement includes any allegation made against you external to the Diocese.

## Reportable Conduct

The Children’s Guardian Act 2019 explains what reportable conduct is and what reportable allegation and reportable conviction is. As a volunteer engaged by the Diocese if you are required to hold a WWCC for the purposes of your role within the Diocese you are subject to this Act.

A reportable allegation is an allegation that an employee has engaged in conduct that may be reportable conduct. The Reportable Conduct Scheme is an allegation-based scheme.

The Act requires relevant entities to have a Code of Conduct aimed at preventing and detecting reportable conduct. They should clarify the behaviour that is and is not acceptable by employees/volunteers towards children and contain information about what will happen if an employee/volunteer breach it. They should also include information about the Reportable Conduct Scheme, including employees’ reporting obligations.

Reportable Conduct is the following conduct, whether or not a criminal proceeding in relation to the conduct has been commenced or concluded:

1. a sexual offence e.g. grooming
2. sexual misconduct which either involves a child or is in the presence of a child
3. ill-treatment of a child
4. neglect of a child
5. an assault against a child
6. an offence under section 43B or 316A of the Crimes Act 1900
7. behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child.

Additionally, you must report any concerns you have about a paid employee or another volunteer, engaging in reportable conduct or any allegation of reportable conduct, to your supervisor or the Head of Safeguarding. If you are not sure whether the conduct is reportable conduct but consider that it is inappropriate behaviour, you must still report it.

Furthermore, you must also report to your supervisor if you become aware that a paid employee or volunteer has been charged with or convicted of an offence (including a finding of guilt without the court proceeding to a conviction) involving reportable conduct. This includes information relating to yourself.

The Diocese has an obligation under the Act to investigate any of the above allegations even if the allegation relates to matter that occurred away from your role as a volunteer.

A sustained allegation under the Act may lead to criminal charges and may affect your ability to continue as a volunteer, and your ability to obtain a future WWCC.

<sup>1</sup> The following offences are specified: a) murder; b) manslaughter of a child (other than as a result of a motor vehicle accident); c) an offence involving intentional wounding of, or intentional causing of grievous bodily harm to, a child by an adult who is more than 3 years older than the victim; d) an offence under the Crimes Act 1900; e) the common law offence of rape or attempted rape. For more Disqualifying Offences, please see Schedule 2 of the Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 No 51 <https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/act/2012/51/sch2>.

The Bishop, as the 'Head of Entity' must notify the Children's Guardian if he receives a report or becomes aware of a reportable allegation or reportable conviction against any clergy, paid employees, volunteers or contractors delivering services to children who hold or are required to hold a Working with Children Check. The notification must be made within 7 business days of the Bishop being made aware of the report.

The Head of Entity must conduct an investigation or arrange for an investigation to be conducted. The entity report must be provided to the Children's Guardian within 30 days after the head of the entity receiving the reportable allegation (or conviction), unless the head of the relevant entity gives the Children's Guardian an explanation for not completing the report and the expected timeframe for completion.

For further details about identifying, responding and investigating reportable allegations, see the Reportable Conduct Procedure.

NB: For information about the handling of child protection concerns which are not considered to be 'reportable allegations,' see the Complaint Management Framework.

Please see the **Diocese's Safeguarding Policy** for more information.

## Code of Conduct

The Diocese is committed to ensuring that your involvement with the Diocese is a positive and pleasant experience. The Diocese therefore asks all volunteers to commit to a Code of Conduct that promotes a positive environment.

You are expected to read and adhere to the Diocese's or your respective parish, agency, ministry or department's Code of Conduct.

## The Diocese's Code of Conduct Policy

The Diocese of Parramatta's Code of Conduct establishes the principles, values and standards by which clergy, employees, volunteers and contractors of the Diocese should conduct themselves towards others and perform their professional duties.

The Diocese promotes the following principles:

- Uphold the beliefs, teachings and ethos of the Catholic faith
- Respect the dignity, rights and views of others
- Listen and seek to understand different points of view (this does not necessarily mean agreeing with the point of view)
- Act respectfully at all times, including respecting cultural, ethnic and religious differences
- Acknowledge the genuine contributions that others make
- Express constructive feedback considerately and in a moderate tone
- Do not harass or bully colleagues, visitors or members of the public
- Do not discriminate against or harass colleagues or members of the public on a number of grounds including: sex, marital status, pregnancy, age, race, ethnic or national origin, physical or intellectual impairment or sexual orientation or gender identity. Such harassment or discrimination may constitute an offence under the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977* (please see the Diocese's Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination Policy).
- Do not harass or discriminate on the grounds of political or religious conviction
- Be courteous, fair, sensitive and considerate to the needs of others.
- Be honest and act with integrity at all times.
- Actively assist in managing workplace conflict that personally affects them or employees under their supervision to create positive and constructive outcomes.

In the performance of your duties, volunteers are to:

- Maintain a high standard and quality of work
- Demonstrate a duty of care, responsibility and sound judgement when carrying out their duties
- Maintain and develop knowledge and understanding of their area of expertise
- Continuously seek to improve work performance and bring about improvements in the workplace
- Exercise care, responsibility and sound judgement when carrying out their duties
- Take reasonable care of their health and safety
- Take reasonable steps that their acts/omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of others
- Comply and cooperate with any reasonable instruction, policy or procedure, including with respect to work health safety matters
- Comply with legislative and industrial requirements
- Use language that is appropriate and non-threatening
- Maintain confidentiality and privacy

In the performance of your duties, volunteers must not:

- Volunteer if their ability to work safely and effectively is impaired by drugs or alcohol
- Risk their own health or safety or the safety or health of others through drugs or alcohol
- Smoke on Diocesan premises, including in stairwells, fire escapes and foyers at all times, including before and after normal office hours. Clients and other visitors to the office are also required to follow the requirements of this clause
- Take or seek to take improper advantage of any information gained in the course of employment
- Take improper advantage of their position to benefit themselves or others
- Allow personal political views/affiliations or other personal interests to influence the performance of duties or exercise of responsibilities

## Conflict of Interest

It is important for you to declare if you have self-interest, private affiliation or a likelihood of personal gain or loss in conjunction with your voluntary position. If you believe you have a conflict of interest, please contact your supervisor to advise the nature of a potential or realised conflict of interest.

## Copyright

The Church is not exempt from copyright legislation. Copyright legislation is binding on both institutions and individuals, and ignorance is not accepted as an excuse under the legislation. If a parish is not compliant, both the parish and any person involved in the breach of copyright (e.g. musicians, people preparing visual display files for liturgy) can be held to account.

## Dress Code

All volunteers are asked to dress “neatly and modestly as befits the dignity of the ministry you are about to engage in.”

## Driving

Some volunteer positions at the Diocese may involve the need for car transport. You can choose to donate the use of your private vehicle or you may seek reimbursement of travel costs pre-approved by your supervisor.

To donate the use of your private vehicle or to utilise any vehicle you must comply with the following:

- The vehicle must be roadworthy and registered
- You must have comprehensive car insurance
- You must have a current driver's licence
- You must adhere to all relevant road rules at all times, including those regarding alcohol and illegal drugs, and the use of mobile phones while driving
- You are liable for any fines or infringement notices while performing volunteer duties.



At the discretion of your supervisor and having sought pre-approval, you can claim for travel costs whilst undertaking work. If you wish to do this, you will be reimbursed on a mileage basis. Records must be kept of the data, including start and finish kilometres and purpose of travel, and provided to your supervisor within two weeks of travel. Reimbursement will be at the recommended Australian Taxation Office rate.

## Insurance

If you use your own vehicle for volunteer duties, your vehicle will not be covered under the Diocese's insurance policy.

Any damage caused by an accident, to either the volunteer's vehicle or a third party's vehicle, must be claimed through your comprehensive car insurance policy. Any excess amounts will be your responsibility.

## Electronic Devices and Systems

You are expected to use electronic devices and systems in an appropriate and responsible manner. The use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) equipment may be necessary for certain roles. The accessing, viewing, streaming and downloading of pornography, copyrighted music and videos is strictly prohibited and unlawful.

Please see the Diocese's *Acceptable Use of Electronic Devices and Systems* Policy.

## Emergency and Fire Procedure

As part of your induction, you will be briefed on the emergency procedures and assembly areas. These should be visible at every Parish site and you should become familiar with it as you may be looked upon as a leader to get people to safety.

## Equity, Diversity and Social Inclusion

The Diocese works to promote equal opportunities for all. Everyone will be treated equally regardless of gender, race, age, religion, marital/family status, sexual orientation, or disability.

## First Aid

First Aid facilities are provided at all Diocesan sites and in all Diocesan-issued vehicles, this may include but is not limited to:

- First aid kits
- Trained First Aid Officer/s

If you have an accident or are injured whilst performing duties as a volunteer, you should report it to your supervisor as soon as possible.

## Making a Complaint

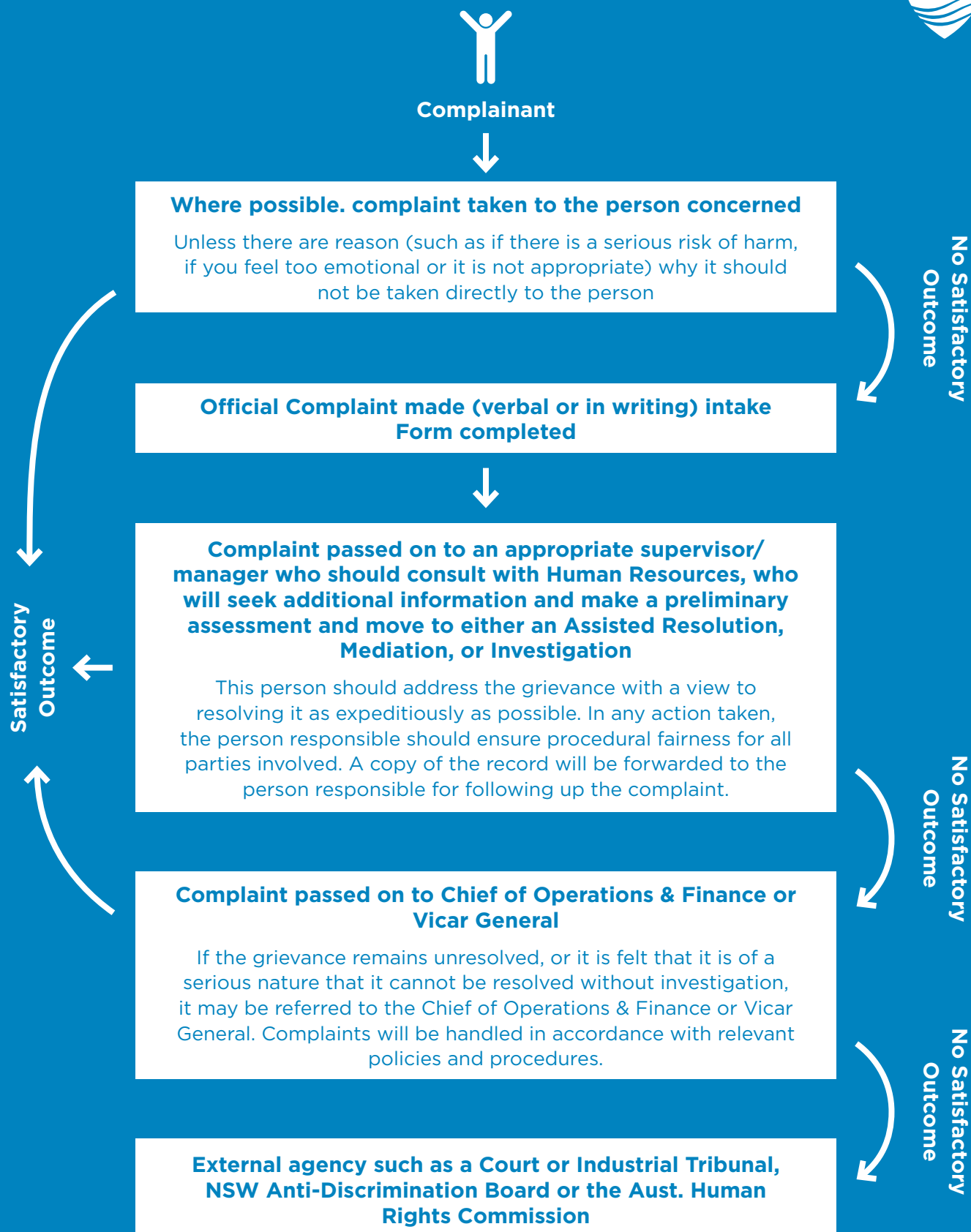
The Diocese seeks to empower people to communicate their concerns, experiences and complaints without fear of retribution. Complainants will be afforded appropriate support when they speak up as the Diocese recognises that this step requires courage and that it may have been easier to remain silent. Complaints can be verbal or in writing.

If you wish to make a complaint, follow the procedure on the next page:



**We are all in this together**

## Resolution of Complaint Process



Volunteers have the right to have any complaints or grievances heard through the *Complaints Management Framework*.

## Harassment, Discrimination and Bullying

The Diocese strives to achieve a healthy and safe workplace by addressing the issue of harassment, discrimination and workplace bullying. The Diocese will **not** tolerate any form of harassment, discrimination or bullying in the workplace including sexual harassment. Any volunteer who is found to have acted in such a manner may have their voluntary role terminated.

To ensure that every concern or complaint is addressed fairly and promptly, a complaint resolution procedure is in place to support the Diocese in not tolerating any act of discrimination, harassment and workplace bullying, victimisation or vilification. If you think bullying or harassment is happening, you can talk to:

- Your supervisor/Parish Priest;
- The Office of Safeguarding; or
- The Chancery's Human Resources department.

The Diocese has outlined in its policies and procedures, guidelines for any individual who feels that they have been harassed, discriminated against or bullied. Your supervisor will bring this document to your attention.

Please see the Diocese's Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination Policy. [Click here](#)

## Holidays/Leave

Please inform your supervisor if you have upcoming holidays or if you are unwell so that your supervisor can organise cover in your absence.

If you are unable to attend to your commitments, please notify your supervisor at your earliest convenience or follow the established procedure.

## Identification

Your supervisor may give you a name badge to wear during the course of your volunteer work in order for you to be identified.

## Induction, Training and Formation

In line with the Diocese's commitment to safety, best risk management practices, and to ensure that you are prepared to carry out your duties, you will be provided with an induction and ongoing training and formation opportunities. Some of this training is compulsory prior to commencing your role, such as induction training, manual handling, safeguarding and other training may be available according to diocesan and individual goals.

You are required to complete induction in order to develop a good understanding of the Diocese and the Parish. Your supervisor will conduct a site orientation to familiarise you with your workplace facilities and introduce your team members.

## Hygiene

Infection control is the prevention of the spread of micro-organisms from person-to-person. Infections can be spread through contact with body fluids that are airborne, ingested, on the skin or on other surfaces. To prevent infection standard precautions are required including:

- Personal hygiene practices such as a thorough hand washing procedure
- The use of protective apparel such as gloves, aprons, masks, eye protection
- The appropriate handling and disposal of sharp instruments and clinical waste
- Cleaning and disinfecting non-disposable equipment
- Environmental control e.g. maintenance of premises, cleaning and spills management.



## Illness

You should absent yourself from your voluntary activity if you are unwell with an illness (e.g. cold or flu) to ensure that the health of others is not compromised.

## Insurance

The Diocese is committed to providing adequate insurance cover for volunteers whilst carrying out their voluntary roles that have been approved and authorised by the Diocese. To ensure this insurance covers you for any accidents or incidents that occur while you are volunteering with us, you need to report the accident or incident as soon as it has occurred to your supervisor. You are covered by the following insurance policies:

- Personal Accident – for direct travel to and from the workplace and during voluntary work. Personal Accident insurance covers injury or death occurring to a volunteer during the course of their duties.
- Public Liability – Volunteers are covered for public liability insurance, which pays compensation for personal injury and/or property damage caused to third parties as a result of the volunteer's actions.

## Manual Handling

The Diocese has implemented a minimal lift policy. You should avoid manual handling whenever possible. If this is not possible, you should follow the below procedure:

1. Plan – assess the load and determine if you need assistance
2. Clear the path
3. Move in close to the load
4. Place your feet shoulder-width apart
5. Secure your grip and hold the load close to your body
6. Maintain normal curves of the spine
7. Hold your head upright
8. Power the lift with legs and body weight
9. Don't twist
10. Use smooth, controlled movements



## Performance

Your supervisor may request that you undergo a performance appraisal should they deem appropriate and should a situation arise.

## Personal Information

Keeping our records up to date is important. Please advise your supervisor of any change to your contact details. As per the Diocese's Privacy Policy and legislative obligations, we keep this information secure. For more information, please see the 'Privacy and Confidentiality' section.

You have the right to access any information held about you. Please see your supervisor should you wish to access this information.

## Personal Property

The Diocese will seek to provide a secure working environment. In your induction, your supervisor will advise you where to leave your personal belongings. However, you should exercise all reasonable caution to protect your personal property. If an item is lost or stolen notify your supervisor immediately. The Diocese does not accept any responsibility for any loss or damage to your personal belongings in situations when the advice/recommendation of the supervisor has not been followed.

## Public Comment

Only authorised workers are permitted to make public statements or give interviews on behalf of the Diocese to a media representative.

## Privacy and Confidentiality

In your role you may have access to private and confidential information about the Diocese, clergy, employees, parishioners, clients or contractors. You are expected to keep this information entirely confidential. This is a legal requirement and also applies to the use of social media and email. Discussing information, you have received during your volunteer role with staff, students, family, friends or other volunteers – inside or outside the Diocese – is not acceptable or tolerated.

Please take the time to familiarise yourself with the Diocese's Privacy Policy (Refer back to Parish office ) or the parish's or ministry's Privacy Policy.

A declaration of confidentiality must be signed by every volunteer as part of the application process (your supervisor will provide you with this form). Breaches of this agreement may result in dismissal.

From time to time, photos may be taken of you whilst you are volunteering. If you do not wish your photo to be used, please inform your supervisor. Permission from a child's parent/guardian must be sought before taking photographs of children.

## Reimbursement of Expenses

All expenses incurred are your responsibility except in cases where expenses are incurred at the request of your supervisor, or reimbursements of authorised expenses are agreed upon prior to a financial commitment being made. Upon approval of your supervisor, you must submit receipts for which you seek reimbursement.

## Resignation or Retirement

Please inform your supervisor as soon as possible if you decide to resign or retire from your volunteer role. Notification can be made either verbally or in writing.

## Role Statement

You will be provided with a clearly written role statement which outlines the role and tasks expected of that position.

## Screening and Checks

Volunteer screening and checks are in place to ensure the safety of all people within the Diocese. Your supervisor will inform you if you have to undergo screening and checks.

## Working With Children Check

Depending on your volunteer role, under the Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012, you may be required to undertake a working with children check (WWCC) with the Office of the Children's Guardian.

A WWCC is a governmental check that ensures a person is in good standing with the community for working with children. Your supervisor will advise you if you require a WWCC to undertake your voluntary position. Before you can commence any work, you need to obtain your WWCC number. The check is free for volunteers.

### If you already have a valid WWCC

1. If you already have a valid WWCC, you will need to update your WWCC information to include the Diocese as an organisation with whom you are volunteering.
2. This will then be provided to the Diocese by your supervisor in order to be verified.

## National Police Check

Some volunteer roles may require a National Police Check. Your supervisor will inform you if you need to undertake this check.

## Social Media

You must be expressly authorised by the Church Authority to use social media platforms on behalf of the Diocese. If authorisation occurs, your supervisor will oversee and approve your conduct on social media at all times.

The Diocese acknowledges that you may use social media and networking for personal use. You should not post, upload or comment on any text or images that may damage the interests of the Diocese nor be incompatible with the ethos of the Diocese or the Catholic Church.

For more information, please see the Diocese's *Social Media Policy, Acceptable Use of Electronic Systems and Devices Policy* and *Code of Conduct*.

## Smoking

All diocesan premises and vehicles are smoke-free. There are designated smoking areas outside diocesan premises.

## Trial Period

Your supervisor may request that you undergo a probation period to assess whether the engagement is suitable.

## Volunteers Under 18

If you are under the age of 18, you must seek written permission from your parent/guardian to undertake volunteer roles.

## Work Health and Safety

### Diocesan Responsibilities

The primary responsibility of the Diocese is to ensure that the Diocese provides a safe and healthy work environment for you and that it complies with *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* and *Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011*.

### Your Responsibilities

- Take reasonable care for your own health and safety and that of others
- Familiarise yourself and comply with any policy or procedure related to work health and safety
- Follow instructions and guidance provided to you
- Participate in work health and safety training and discussion
- Promptly report to your supervisor any work-related hazards, injuries and incidents, including near misses.

## Your Rights

- Have a healthy and safe workplace
- Be provided with safe equipment, protective clothing, systems of work
- Be provided with information, training and supervision to enable you to work in a safe and healthy manner
- Bring any work health and safety issues to the attention of your supervisor
- Be made aware of the risks and hazards to which you are, or may be, exposed
- Not to have to carry out (nor be instructed to carry out) unsafe work
- Not to be punished for refusing to carry out work you deem to be unsafe.

## Principles of Risk Management

Risk Management refers to the identification, analysis, evaluation and elimination or reduction of possible risks including strategies to control hazards to all diocesan clergy, employees, volunteers, parishioners, contractors and sub-contractors, visitors, and clients. The ways in which we reduce work health and safety risks are as follows:

- Health and safety education and training
- Hazard and accident or incident reporting forms
- Regular audits to check that our environment is safe and to identify hazards before an accident or incident occurs.





# FURTHER QUESTIONS

Want to know more about volunteering, your rights and responsibilities, or policies and procedures? Please feel free to contact your supervisor or the Diocese’s Human Resources department.

# CONTACTS

Chancery Office (general)	(02) 8838 3400
Child Protection Hotline	132 111 (24 hours/7 days)
Office of Safeguarding	(02) 8838 3419
Human Resources	(02) 8838 3400

# POLICIES AND RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

The following documents guide the Diocese in best practice volunteer management. Printed copies of documents listed below can be obtained from your supervisor or the Human Resources department. Please refer to page 23 for more information.

# THANK YOU

We hope this booklet has provided you with useful information to support you in your volunteering. We genuinely thank you and wish you every success in your volunteer role with the Diocese of Parramatta.

# REFERENCE LINKS

## POLICIES AND RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

Acceptable Use of Electronic Communication Systems and Devices Policy

<https://thedioceseofparramatta.sharepoint.com/forms-resources/policies/Documents/Acceptable%20Use%20of%20Electronic%20Communication%20Systems%20and%20Devices.pdf#search=Acceptable%20Use%20of%20Electronic%20Communication%20Systems%20and%20Devices%20Policy>

Anti-Discrimination Act 1977

<https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-1977-048>

Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998

<https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-1998-157>

Children's Guardian Act 2019

<https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/whole/html/inforce/current/act-2019-025>

Code of Conduct Policy

<https://thedioceseofparramatta.sharepoint.com/forms-resources/policies/Documents/Code%20of%20Conduct.pdf>

Complaint Management Framework, Policy and Procedure

<https://safeguarding.org.au/important-and-useful-links/>

Complaints Management Framework

<https://thedioceseofparramatta.sharepoint.com/forms-resources/policies/Documents/Complaint%20Management%20Framework.pdf>

Complaints Management Policy

<https://thedioceseofparramatta.sharepoint.com/forms-resources/policies/Documents/Complaint%20Management%20Policy.pdf>

Harassment, Discrimination and Bullying Policy

<https://thedioceseofparramatta.sharepoint.com/forms-resources/policies/Documents/Harassment%2C%20Bullying%20and%20Discrimination%20Policy.pdf>

Integrity in Service of the Church

<https://www.catholic.org.au/documents/1344-integrity-in-ministry-2010-1/file>

National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

[https://childsafety.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-09/national-principles-poster\\_0.pdf](https://childsafety.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-09/national-principles-poster_0.pdf)

Privacy Policy <https://parracatholic.org/resources/>

Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998

<https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-1998-133>

Safeguarding Policy

Social Media Policy

<https://thedioceseofparramatta.sharepoint.com/forms-resources/policies/Documents/Acceptable%20Use%20of%20Electronic%20Communication%20Systems%20and%20Devices.pdf>

Work Health and Safety Policy

<https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-1998-133>

Work Health and Safety Act 2011

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2018C00293>

Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2011L02664>







# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND RECEIPT FORM

I, \_\_\_\_\_, certify that I have read and reviewed the Diocese of Parramatta's Volunteer Handbook.

I understand that by signing this statement as required I am indicating that I have read and understand this Volunteer Handbook and the Code of Conduct supplied by my supervisor, and have discussed any questions I have with my supervisor.

I understand that this statement will become a permanent part of my volunteer file.

Name

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Signature

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Date

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Please return this form to your Supervisor



DIOCESE *of*  
PARRAMATTA