

STANDARDS FOR VOLUNTEERS AND EMPLOYEES IN MINISTRY



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BISHOPS' STATEMENT

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

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

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

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

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

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

Most Reverend John A Dew DD †

Archbishop of Wellington on

behalf of Bishops' Conference

and Congregational Leaders

CODE OF ETHICS FOR CHURCH EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

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

- Volunteers and employees have a responsibility to take all allegations of sexual abuse seriously. They should not attempt to assess or investigate any such allegations, but will document them and follow the appropriate diocesan procedures.
- Volunteers and employees should avoid any activities, whether connected with their position or otherwise, which would compromise their integrity, and/or bring their message, the people they work with, their colleagues or the wider Church community into disrepute.
- At all times volunteers and employees will conduct themselves in a manner, which ensures that all people are supported, and empowered through the services they provide.
- Volunteers and employees have a responsibility to recognize their strengths and limitations. This ensures that they know how their decisions and actions affect the people they work with.
- Volunteers and employees will honour the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi in their work and endeavour to be culturally sensitive to all people they engage with and avoid imposing mono-cultural values.
- Volunteers and employees will offer only services that come within their competence, qualifications and mandate. They will refer matters outside of these areas to the appropriate body.
- If volunteers or employees consider that their mandate requires more expertise than they have, they will inform the appropriate body of their need for training or ask for a change in the tasks they are asked to perform.
- Volunteers and employees will seek regular supervision which will provide them with an avenue to talk through issues and seek advice.
- Volunteers and employees are accountable to the New Zealand judicial system.

GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS AND EMPLOYEES IN MINISTRY

1. This document relates to people involved with ministry for the Church with particular emphasis on ministry to children, youth and vulnerable adults.

2. CHILDREN

In all situations where volunteers or employees are involved in contact with children, there is a risk that the volunteers/employees may abuse that relationship. Therefore, the parish or ministry leader should always assess the level of potential risk of abuse or other danger. The level of risk should determine the measures to be taken to ensure the safety of children.

(a) Low level of potential risk

(for example, a crèche which is held during a church service in an open area with a number of helpers including parents and other suitable volunteers)

Suitable procedures must include:

- parents to be consulted regularly to ensure they feel secure in the way their children are supervised. Parents' requests should be respected, for example, as to whether they prefer to take their own children to the toilet or are they happy for a helper to assist.
- volunteers should all be approved and rostered. The system should not be open to anyone else (other than parents helping with their own children) joining the crèche supervising team without approval.
- volunteers should be well known to the parish or ministry leadership (either personally or by reputation) as people who are suitable to work with children.
- training should be provided (this may not always be possible prior to each new volunteer commencing in the activity, but should be available as soon as practical)

- **Topics include:**
- all aspects of minimising the risk of any harm to children
- alertness to the possibility of abuse
- introduction to the “code of ethics for volunteers and employees”

(b) High level of potential risk

(for example, counselling vulnerable children on a one-to-one basis, or overnight activity such as weekend camps, activity involving regular contact with children)

Suitable procedures must include:

- **Vetting**
 - ❖ the volunteer or person seeking employment must complete an application form including agreement to a police check.
 - ❖ two referees must be nominated.
 - ❖ the referees to be interviewed (in person or by telephone) to establish whether or not the person is suitable to work with children.
 - ❖ conduct police check by forwarding signed form to Catholic Diocese of Auckland, Private Bag 47904, Ponsonby, Auckland 1144, attention Leanne Killgour. Vetting can only be carried out with the consent of the applicant given on the correct form “NZ Police Vetting Service Request & Consent form – Section 2.” The parish must also verify the person for vetting by sighting photo ID and this must be declared to the Diocese, when forwarding the signed form.

Strict confidentiality in relation to police checks must be observed between NOPS or other approved office and the parish or ministry leaders.

- **Training**

Training to be provided as soon as possible. This creates a further opportunity to become acquainted more fully with the person.

Topics include:

- ❖ all aspects of minimising the risk of any harm to children
- ❖ alertness to the possibility of abuse
- ❖ not to be alone with a child out of sight of another adult
- ❖ not to take a child away in a vehicle or to another location except in an emergency.
- ❖ logging any incident (assistance with toileting, first aid etc)
- ❖ ensuring parents' wishes are respected
- ❖ harmful effects of sexual, emotional or physical abuse
- ❖ introduction to the "code of ethics for church volunteers and employees"

- **Follow-up training**

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

3. ACTIVITIES WITH YOUTH

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

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

4. WRITTEN EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENTS

If the role of an employee involves interaction with children or young people, it would be useful if the applicable employment agreement contained a provision which said:

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

- a. the employee completing and providing to the employer a written agreement confirming the employee’s consent to the employer obtaining a police check on him or her.
- b. the nomination by the employee of two referees and the successful checking of references.
- c. the successful obtaining of a police clearance.”

THE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF VOLUNTEERS AND EMPLOYEES

Volunteers and Employees have the right to:

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

Volunteers and Employees have a responsibility to:

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

Name of Approved Agency submitting vetting request:

ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOP OF AUCKLAND

Section 2:

Applicant to complete and return to Approved Agency

(the Approved Agency will submit the vetting request to NZ Police and receive the vetting result)

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Details (note: the name you are most commonly known by is your primary name)

*Family name:
(Primary)

First name(s):
(Primary)

*Gender: (M) (F) (Other)
☐ ☐ ☐

*Date of birth:
(dd/mm/yyyy)

*Place of birth:
(town/city/state)

*Place of birth:
(country)

NZ Driver Licence number:
(*where held - for ID verification by NZ Police)

If applicable, please include other names and mark them A, M, or P as appropriate:

(A) alias or alternate name(s)

(M) married name if not primary name

(P) previous/maiden/name changed by deed poll or statutory declaration

Family name:
(A) (M) (P)
☐ ☐ ☐

First name(s):
(A) (M) (P)
☐ ☐ ☐

Family name:
(A) (M) (P)
☐ ☐ ☐

First name(s):
(A) (M) (P)
☐ ☐ ☐

Family name:
(A) (M) (P)
☐ ☐ ☐

First name(s):
(A) (M) (P)
☐ ☐ ☐

Family name:
(A) (M) (P)
☐ ☐ ☐

First name(s):
(A) (M) (P)
☐ ☐ ☐

Permanent New Zealand Residential Address

*Number/Street:

Suburb:

Post Code:

*City/Town/
Rural District:

*Period of
Residence:

**Denotes a mandatory field*

Section 2:
continued

Applicant to complete and return to Approved Agency
(the Approved Agency will submit the vetting request to NZ Police and receive the vetting result)

CONSENT TO DISCLOSURE (for a New Zealand Police Vet)

- for further information, see <http://www.police.govt.nz/advice/businesses-and-organisations/vetting>

I acknowledge and understand as follows:

1. The information about me that NZ Police may consider relevant to my application and release in vetting comprises any conviction history and, for certain agencies, infringement/demerit reports; and it may include any other information such as active charges and warrants to arrest, any information received or obtained by NZ Police, and any interaction I have had with NZ Police in any context (including family violence), even where I have not been charged, or charges are withdrawn, or I have been acquitted (not guilty) of a charge, or I have been discharged without conviction.
2. Any conviction history will be released in accordance with the Criminal Records (Clean Slate) Act 2004; this means that, if I am 'eligible' for clean slate (e.g. no convictions for 7 years, never been to prison, no convictions for specified sexual offending, etc – see section 7 of the Act):
 - a. my criminal record of convictions will not be disclosed; but
 - b. if the role for which I have applied is an exception to the clean slate scheme (e.g. predominantly involving care and protection of a child or young person), my criminal record of convictions will be disclosed.
3. Where relevant information is subject to statutory or Court-ordered name suppression or prohibitions on disclosure, or other constraints on disclosure such as expectations of confidentiality or the protection of active criminal investigations or the safety of individuals, NZ Police may issue an alternative vetting result stating the existence of relevant non-disclosable information, without details.
4. Where new information is obtained by NZ Police after the completion of my Police vet, NZ Police may disclose this information to the Approved Agency, and where appropriate to the Vulnerable Children Act Exemptions Administrator, if the information is considered relevant to the purpose of the Police vet.
5. The personal information I provide in this form is being collected for vetting purposes, and may also be used for the purpose of updating NZ Police records.
6. I may withdraw this consent, prior to Police's disclosure of the vetting result, by notifying the Approved Agency who will immediately notify NZ Police to cease the vetting process (any fee remains payable by the Approved Agency).
7. I am entitled to access the vetting result released to the Approved Agency and seek correction of Police information about me in accordance with the Privacy Act 1993 by making a request to the 'Approved Agency' in the first instance.
8. No later than twelve months after the release of the vetting result, the Approved Agency will securely dispose of this consent form and copies of identification documents, as well as the vetting result released by NZ Police, unless a longer retention period is required by legislation applying to the Approved Agency.
9. The information I have provided in this form relates to me and is correct.

Applicant's Authorisation:

☐

I have read and understood the information above

☐

I authorise NZ Police to disclose any personal information it considers relevant to my application (as described above) to the Approved Agency making this request for the purpose of assessing my suitability.

Signed in electronic form:
[mark box]

☐

OR

Signature:

Date:

Section 3: Applicant to complete for Australian check (if required)

ADDITIONAL PERSONAL INFORMATION (for Australian National Police History Check)

Last Permanent Australian Residential Address

Number/Street:	<input type="text"/>		
Suburb:	<input type="text"/>	Post Code:	<input type="text"/>
City/Town/ Rural District:	<input type="text"/>	State or Territory:	<input type="text"/>
Period of Residence	<input type="text"/>		

If actual dates of residence are unavailable, year of residence will suffice

Australian Driver's Licence No: (if applicable)	<input type="text"/>	Issued by:	<input type="text"/>
Australian Firearms Licence No: (if applicable)	<input type="text"/>	Issued by:	<input type="text"/>

General Information for an Australian National Police History Check

GENERAL INFORMATION

CrimTrac is collecting your personal information in this form in order to conduct a National Police History Check (NPHC) on you. Approved Agencies in New Zealand, named in section one, use the personal information collected on this form and the resulting NPHC as part of the assessment process to determine suitability for the position/entitlement/benefit which you are applying for.

Unless statutory obligations require otherwise, the information provided on this form will not be used without your prior consent for any purpose other than in relation to the assessment of your suitability or to maintain the records of CrimTrac, Australian Police Agencies¹, or NZ Police.

You will be required to complete another consent form for any future NPHC checks.

NATIONAL POLICE HISTORY CHECK (NPHC)

A NPHC is an integral part of the assessment of your suitability. Information on this form will be used by CrimTrac, and Australian Police Agencies for checking action; it will also be used to update records held about you by CrimTrac, Australian Police Agencies and NZ Police.

Information released may include outstanding charges, warrant information and criminal convictions/findings/pleas of guilt recorded against you that may be disclosed according to the laws of the relevant jurisdiction and, in the absence of any laws governing the release of that information, according to the relevant jurisdiction information release policy.

LIMITATIONS ON ACCURACY AND USE OF POLICE HISTORY INFORMATION

While every care has been taken by CrimTrac to conduct a search of information held by Australian Police Agencies that relate to the applicant, the accuracy and quality of this NPHC depends on accurate identification of the Applicant (including aliases) according to the information provided in the Request and Consent Form and the comprehensiveness of police records. If the applicant does not complete the information requirements in this form the success and validity of the NPHC will be compromised.

If for any reason you do not agree with the results of your NPHC, please notify the Approved Agency that you submitted the check through in the first instance, so that the NPHC dispute process can be initiated.

The release of information by Australian Police Agencies is subject to relevant Spent Convictions, non-disclosure legislation or information release policies.

¹ Australian Federal Police, ACT Policing, The New South Wales Police Force, Queensland Police Service, South Australia Police, Victoria Police, Western Australia Police, Northern Territory Police Force, Tasmania Police Service

General Information for an Australian National Police History Check, continued

SPENT CONVICTIONS SCHEMES

The aim of Spent Convictions legislation² is to prevent discrimination on the basis of certain previous convictions. Spent Convictions legislation limits the use and disclosure of older, less serious convictions and findings of guilt. Each Australian Police Agency will apply the relevant Spent Convictions legislation/information release policy prior to disclosure.

The following links may be helpful in sourcing information on Spent Convictions in the Australian States & Territories but may not be relied upon.

If further information or clarification is required please contact the individual Australian Police Agencies directly for further information about their release policies and any legislation that affects them.

Commonwealth
www.comlaw.gov.au

New South Wales
www.legislation.nsw.gov.au

Queensland
www.legislation.qld.gov.au

South Australia
www.legislation.sa.gov.au

Victoria Police
www.police.vic.gov.au

Western Australia
www.slp.wa.gov.au

Northern Territory
www.nt.gov.au/dcm/legislation/current.html

Australian Capital Territory
www.legislation.act.gov.au

Tasmania
www.thelaw.tas.gov.au

PROVISION OF INCOMPLETE, FALSE OR MISLEADING INFORMATION

An Approved Agency or Applicant must take reasonable steps to ensure that the personal information collected, or disclosed is accurate, complete and up to date.

You are asked to certify that the personal information you have provided on this form is correct. If it is subsequently discovered, for example as a result of a check of police records, that you have provided incomplete, false or misleading information, you may be assessed as unsuitable.

It is a serious offence to provide false or misleading information in Australia.

² Applicable Spent Conviction legislation, as amended from time to time

Vetting Service Request and Consent Form

Section 3: continued**Applicant to complete for Australian check (if required)**

CONSENT TO DISCLOSURE (for Australian National Police History Check)

I acknowledge, understand and consent as follows:

1. I have read the General Information in section 3 of this form and understand that information will be disclosed in accordance with applicable legislation and information release policies (including spent convictions legislation, however described) in the Commonwealth, States and Territories;
2. I understand that the position/entitlement for which I am being considered may be in a category for which exclusions from Spent Convictions legislation may apply;
3. I have fully completed this form, and the personal information I have provided in it relates to me, contains my full name and all names previously used by me, and is correct;
4. I acknowledge that the provision of false or misleading information is a serious offence;
5. I acknowledge that the Approved Agency named in Section 1 of this form is collecting information in this Form to provide to NZ Police to provide to CrimTrac (an Agency of the Commonwealth of Australia) and the Australian Police Agencies;
6. **I consent to:**
 - a. CrimTrac using and disclosing personal information about me in this form to the Australian Police Agencies;
 - b. the Australian Police Agencies disclosing to CrimTrac, from their records, Police History information that can be disclosed in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth, States and Territories and in accordance with the relevant jurisdiction's information release policies;
 - c. CrimTrac disclosing the information disclosed by the Australian Police Agencies to NZ Police, and
 - d. NZ Police disclosing any criminal history information about me to the Approved Agency named in Section 1 of this form to assess my suitability in relation to my application;
7. I acknowledge that any information provided by me in this form relates specifically to the purpose identified in Section 1 of this form;
8. I acknowledge that any information provided by the Australian Police Agencies or CrimTrac relates specifically to the purpose identified in Section 1 above;
9. I acknowledge that personal information that I provide in this form may be disclosed to the Approved Agency named in Section 1 of this form (including contractors or related bodies corporate) located in New Zealand or overseas; and
10. I acknowledge that it is usual practice for an Applicant's personal information in this form to be disclosed to NZ Police and Australian Police Agencies for them to use for their respective law enforcement purposes including the investigation of any outstanding criminal offences.

Note: The information provided in this form will be used only for the purpose stated above unless statutory obligations require otherwise.

Applicant's Authorisation:

☐

I have read and understood the information above and consent accordingly

Signed in electronic form:
[mark box]

☐

OR

Signature:

Date:

