



**Date** 28 December 2018  
**To** Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton Parishes  
**From** Daniel Donnini (Professional Standards and Safeguarding Manager)  
**Subject** Safeguarding Policy Amendments Notice

This communique is to provide information of some amendments made to the Diocesan Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults policy (the Safeguarding Policy). The relevance of the Safeguarding policy is constantly considered by the Diocesan Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Committee (SCVAC), to ensure it reflects best practice and best suits the needs of the Diocese in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

In light of the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (NCSS) and the formation of Catholic Professional Standards Limited (CPSL), the Diocesan Safeguarding Policy will undergo a formal review by the SCVAC, managed by the Diocesan Professional Standards and Safeguarding Manager in early 2019.

However, the committee (who provides formal advice to the Bishop on Safeguarding matters) have advised that the current policy amendments be implemented prior to the formal review; and, as such, the current policy has been amended to include these changes. The policy is now in edition 2.2: December 2018.

This communique outlines the changes made to the policy in edition 2.2: December 2018. The most up to date version of the policy will be found on the Diocesan website at: <http://rok.catholic.net.au/our-diocese/safeguarding/policy/>.

The Diocesan Safeguarding Policy revision history lists as follows:

<b>Document Revision History</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Comments</b>
June 2016	Edition 1, June 2016	New Policy
November 2017	Edition 2, November 2017	Policy review conducted by Diocesan Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Committee.
May 2018	Edition 2.1, November 2017	Amendment to fix numbering error (1.6)
December 2018	Edition 2.2, December 2018	Policy update endorsed by Diocesan Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Committee.
		Update office email address
		1.7: Update Parish Priest responsibilities
		1.8: Update Parish Safeguarding Representative responsibilities
		1.9: Diocesan Agencies (New Heading)
		1.14.2: Update Use of Presbyteries
		5.1.1: Update section to include offences prior to Church personnel status.

The policy amendments in edition 2.2 are:

**The Diocesan Professional Standards and Safeguarding Office email address has been updated** (all previous email addresses are redirected to the current email address).

- The Office email address is: [pssso@rok.catholic.net.au](mailto:pssso@rok.catholic.net.au)

Further:

- Diocesan Professional Standards and Safeguarding Manager address is: [pssomanager@rok.catholic.net.au](mailto:pssomanager@rok.catholic.net.au)
- Diocesan Pastoral and Safeguarding Support address is: [pssosupport@rok.catholic.net.au](mailto:pssosupport@rok.catholic.net.au)

### **Section 1.7: Parish Priest (Responsibilities) where updated to read:**

In conjunction with the Committee, the Parish Priest is responsible for the pastoral care of the community with special regard for those most vulnerable. In carrying out his duty to protect children and vulnerable adults from harm, the parish priest is responsible for ensuring the Diocesan Safeguarding policy and Safeguarding practices are understood and implemented within the Parish. Performing a supervisory and management role, the Parish Priest plays a key function in modelling expected behaviour and the training of Diocesan workers.

Parish Priests should seek to, or alternatively, are encouraged to minimise risks to children and vulnerable adults by:

- Adopting safe recruiting and selection practices;
- Supporting and encouraging a safe and secure environment;
- Adopting a proactive and child-safe response to inappropriate behaviour and allegations of inappropriate behaviour, by employees or volunteers;
- Monitoring and supervising subordinates' performance;
- Ensuring employees and volunteers are inducted and trained appropriately in working with children and vulnerable adults and their obligations;
- Ensuring that complaints, suspicions and/or allegations are responded to in a prompt and professional manner and in a manner that is consistent with advice from the Diocesan Professional Standards and Safeguarding Office.
- Complying with all obligations related to reporting of abuse and/or suspected abuse;
- Ensuring that victimisation is not tolerated; and
- Ensuring that employees and volunteers who undertake activities with children and vulnerable adults have clearly articulated and documented role descriptions.

The Parish Priest is assisted in this responsibility by a Parish Safeguarding Representative (who may be part of a parish safeguarding team).

- It is the responsibility of the parish priest/administrator to ensure that their parish has a Parish Safeguarding Representative.

### **Section 1.8 Parish Safeguarding Representative (Responsibilities) where updated to read:**

Each Parish is to have a Parish Safeguarding Representative (PSR). In parishes this role may be a voluntary role. A member of the parish pastoral council (or nominee) may take on this task.

The PSR has special responsibility for promoting good and safe practices in all activities involving children, young people and vulnerable adults within the parish. The parish safeguarding representative is the link between the parish and the Diocese and as such is in regular contact with the Diocesan Professional Standards and Safeguarding Office as required. The PSR attends training sessions and has a sound

knowledge of the policies and procedures and also who to contact. The PSR is involved in the recruitment of people to roles within the parish and has the responsibility for facilitating the Blue Card procedure at parish level (dependent on local processes) and ensuring that everybody who is required to go through the procedure does so. They will give reports to the parish pastoral council and assist with the local safeguarding audits.

The Parish Safeguarding Representative is responsible for:

- Making sure that the parish is aware of the importance of safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, through regular communications to staff/community members/parish members;
- Promoting safe practices including articulating for others what is appropriate and inappropriate behaviour;
- Assisting in the administration of the Diocesan Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy as appropriate to parish needs;
- Facilitating the Parish management of Covenant of Care agreements. This includes participation on the Parish Covenant of Care Management team responsible for the management of parishioners with Covenant of Care agreements in place.
- See full Parish Safeguarding Representative volunteer position description in the Annexes for further information.

**Section 1.9: Diocesan Agencies (New Heading) was created to read:**

Each Diocesan agency is to have a Safeguarding Representative responsible for raising awareness of the importance of safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, promoting safe practices, and assisting in the administration of the Diocesan Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy as appropriate to the Agency needs.

- In Diocesan agencies, an employee responsible for Work Health and Safety matters could also perform this function.

**Section 1.14.2: Use of Presbyteries updated to read:**

- The Presbytery is the home of the priest and can only be used for that purpose.
- Only the Bishop can give permission to vary a presbytery's use.

**Under 'Dealing with Incidents, Disclosures, Allegations and Concerns', Section 5.1.1 (6): was amended to read:**

'Where the harm/abuse relates to a Church employee/volunteer/priest/religious (current or former) who AT ANY TIME (including prior to their appointment as an employee/volunteer/priest/religious) has.....; and,

'When it is alleged that a priest, religious, employee or volunteer, is OR HAS AT ANY TIME BEEN the perpetrator of harm against a child, the individual may be stood aside .....

The upcoming policy review will consider developing a detailed document dealing with situations where the Towards Healing Protocol has no operation.

For more information about this communique feel free to contact the Professional Standards and Safeguarding Office on 07 4887 3080 or email [pssso@rok.catholic.net.au](mailto:pssso@rok.catholic.net.au).

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