

## Covenant of Care: CODE OF CONDUCT

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon is responsible for providing a safe, respectful and secure environment for ministry. In providing ministry, employees and volunteers are placed in situations where they may have access to highly sensitive and confidential information. The specialized nature of church work in many cases can place providers and recipients of pastoral services in a vulnerable situation; individuals are dependent upon the honesty and integrity of all employees and volunteers associated with the Church. This calls for responsibility and places the burden of adhering to the *Covenant of Care* on each member of the clergy, employee and volunteer.

1. Employees and volunteers assume full responsibility for establishing and maintaining clear, appropriate boundaries in all ministerial situations, especially those involving children and vulnerable adults. Employees and volunteers are expected to provide ministry that is free of verbal and physical abuse, grooming, child pornography or exploitative behaviours.
2. All physical contact between employees or volunteers and children or vulnerable adults must be appropriate to the ministerial relationship, and free of inappropriate, exploitative, harassing and/or sexual contact.
3. Employees and volunteers who learn of information indicating clear and imminent danger to a child or vulnerable adult must act immediately to protect the safety, health and well-being of the vulnerable parties by disclosing necessary information and communicating such disclosures to their immediate superior and/or other appropriate person(s), including the police, as outlined in the *Allegation of Serious Misconduct Protocol*.
4. *Group settings*: At least two employees or volunteers, one with a criminal record check, should be present for all recreational activities, catechetical programs and pastoral care outreach to children and/or vulnerable adults.
5. *One to one settings*: Situations where an individual is alone with a child or vulnerable adult are particularly sensitive and may be conducive to misconduct or allegations of serious misconduct; every effort must be made to prevent both.
  - 5.1 When one-to-one meetings are necessary, they must take place in rooms and locations that are open to public view. For example, windows in doors should never be covered.
  - 5.2 When one to one meetings are necessary in an individual's home (e.g. a person receiving communion), two employees/volunteers one with a criminal record check will be present.
  - 5.3 For staff governed by a regulatory body, the Covenant of Care may be interpreted and applied in consideration of the staff person's regulatory/licensing requirements.



6. Employees and volunteers shall not engage in corporal punishment of children or vulnerable adults in their care. Discipline problems will be handled in coordination with the immediate supervisor and the parents/care providers.
7. Employees and volunteers will not dispense medications without written consent from a parent or legal guardian.
8. Employees and volunteers will never be alone with a child or vulnerable adult in a residence, sleeping facility, locker room, rest room, dressing facility, or other closed room or area that is inappropriate to a ministerial relationship. Overnight trips, special events, and care due to illness, disability or emergency require the utmost attention and planning of leadership. Any off-site or overnight events with children require a **Parental Consent Form** (Appendix E).
9. No diocesan employee or volunteer is permitted to be alone in his or her living quarters or motor vehicle with a child or vulnerable adult whose relationship has been established through a ministerial relationship.
10. No employee or volunteer is permitted to take personal trips or vacations with a child, or vulnerable adult whose relationship has been established through a ministerial relationship.
11. All employees and volunteers working with children and/or vulnerable adults will sign that they have read and will adhere to this *Covenant of Care* and will follow diocesan requisite screening processes, criminal record checks and ongoing education. All criminal record checks must include the vulnerable sector search and must be valid (dated) within the past six (6) months.

Within ministerial relationships, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon will not tolerate physical, verbal or sexual harassment or abuse among its employees and volunteers. In a spirit of common mission, all who work together on behalf of Christ's Church must be alert to abuse or misconduct and work to prevent and eliminate both. Investigations which result in the confirmation of allegations of misconduct or abuse will result in disciplinary measures against the perpetrator of abuse or harassment which may include suspension, dismissal and/or the reporting of the incident to secular authorities.

Violations of the *Covenant of Care* are dealt with according to the *Allegations of Serious Misconduct Protocol* of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_