

## **POLICY 5.1.1 Responsible Ministry Policy**

### **Preamble**

In the last forty years, the Church in Canada and around the world has been rocked by accusations and convictions of clergy for criminal abuse and exploitation of vulnerable people, especially children. The legal proceedings have also exposed unexpected levels of personal and institutional failings by clergy and laity to act on and address complaints made to them, by victims and witnesses.

This painful period has shown us how important transparency and accountability are to protect people and to safeguard temporal goods. We believe that having good policies, what we call “responsible ministry” and “safe environment”, will effectively contribute to preventing abuse of any kind and, most importantly, protect children, adolescents, and vulnerable adults when they are being ministered to in the Church.

The Responsible Ministry Policy of the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan provides for the collection of personal and background information (a screening process) from all who minister in the Archdiocese and its parishes, quasi-parishes and missions. The process is mandatory for the specified ministries (*cf.* Appendix 1), and anyone who refuses to comply will not be able to serve in the Church.

The Safe Environment Policy (*cf.* Policy 5.1.2) provides for the prevention of abuse by establishing an archdiocesan-wide understanding of what constitute unacceptable behaviours and establishing operational and other approaches to best protect vulnerable people from anyone who would exploit them.

The Archdiocese also has a Misconduct Policy (*cf.* Policy 5.2.1 and Policy 5.2.2) which has procedures to respond to complaints of abuse and harm by clergy, employees and volunteers in the Archdiocese and its parishes, quasi-parishes and missions.

The four policies, together, are to be considered the Archdiocese’s Physical and Sexual Abuse Protocol.

### **Responsible Ministry Policy - the screening process**

The screening process is the principal component of the responsible ministry policy. It requires that the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan:

- identify the ministries of the Church here;
- determine who is carrying out the ministries;
- assess the level of risk attached to each ministry;
- determine the personal and background information necessary to mitigate the risks; and,
- describe the coordinator roles in the Archdiocese and parishes, for review and safeguarding of the information provided by clergy, employees and volunteers.

### **❖ The ministries**

The Archbishop and Curia have identified three categories of ministry: liturgical, pastoral and administrative.

### **Liturgical ministries**

The liturgical ministries are those ministries performed at Mass, including: presider or celebrant, concelebrant, homilist, sacristan, Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, gift bearer, music ministry, commentator, and lector.

### **Pastoral ministries**

Pastoral ministries are those ministries which “build the parish as a living Christian community.” (*The Parish Pastoral Council: Guidelines for the Development of Constitutions*. CCCB. Conacan, Inc., 1984.) The most common in the parishes, quasi-parishes and missions of the Archdiocese are: taking Holy Communion to the sick, altar server trainer, liturgy of the word with children, hospital ministry, sacramental preparation, adult faith formation and RCIA, youth ministry, and prayer groups.

### **Administrative ministries**

Administrative ministries are those ministries concerned with the stewardship of the temporal goods of the Church. The most common are: collection counter, usher, key holder, maintenance and facilities management.

In addition to the above-named ministries, the Archdiocese also included common Catholic organizations when identifying ministries, in particular, the Knights of Columbus and the Catholic Women’s League.

#### **❖ The people**

These ministries are all and each fulfilled by one or more of the clergy, consecrated religious and laity in the Archdiocese. Clergy and employees, of the Archdiocese and parishes, including consecrated religious, often perform more than one ministry. They are also the most visible and public face of the Church.

#### **❖ The level of risk**

In making assessments of risk level of ministries, the Archbishop and Curia identified three levels: high risk, medium risk and low or no risk. (See Appendix 1 for a complete list.)

### **High risk ministries**

High risk ministries are those where any potential for harm to an individual being ministered to is present. In particular, high risk ministries are those which:

- minister directly to children, adolescents, and/or vulnerable adults\*;
- have opportunities for developing relationships of trust that can be carried over to other locations or interactions; and/or,
- have an inherent power imbalance, whether real or perceived, between the minister and the person ministered to.

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\***vulnerable adult**: a person 18 years of age or older who, because of a disability or other circumstances, whether temporary or permanent, is in a position of dependence on others or is otherwise at a greater risk than the general population of being harmed by a person or persons in positions of authority or trust relative to him/her.

### Medium risk ministries

Medium risk ministries are those with any potential for financial loss or other mishandling of temporal goods. In addition to screening of ministers, parishes must also ensure that they are in compliance with the policies in Section 3 of the *Policy Manual*, especially Policy 3.1.1.

### Low or no-risk ministries

Low risk ministries are those with minimal potential for harm to individuals or for mishandling of temporal goods.

#### ❖ **Mitigating the risks**

The Archbishop and Curia have determined that a certain amount of personal information has to be collected from all clergy, all employees, and volunteers in high and medium risk ministries, for review by delegated people in the parish and the chancery. The purpose is **not** to exclude people from ministry. It is to ensure that any risk of harm to people and goods is minimal.

The principal documents that will be required from people seeking to or agreeing to minister in the Church are:

- a personal information form (Form 5.1.a), or a curriculum vitae that provides at least the same data;
- a Covenant of Care form or a Code of Conduct Acknowledgement form (Form 5.1.b or Form 5.1.c), as required by the risk level;
- a Criminal Record Check or a Vulnerable Sector Check, as required by the risk level; and,
- a Child Welfare Intervention Record Check, for high risk ministries involving children and youth.

	Form 5.1.a	Form 5.1.b	Form 5.1.c	Criminal Record Check	Vulnerable Sector Check	Child Welfare IRC	Form 5.1.d (by Parish Priest)
Clergy	•	•			•	•	
Employees	•	•			•	•	•
High risk	•	•			•	•	•
Medium risk	•		•	•			
Low and no-risk	•		•				

### Clergy

All members of the clergy ministering in the Archdiocese are required to provide a criminal record check (including a vulnerable sector check) before they begin their ministry. If they are from outside of Canada, they must provide copies of the criminal record certificates submitted in support of their application to Immigration Canada for a visitor visa. If they do not provide such information in the visa

application, they must submit to the Archdiocese, before entry to Canada, criminal record certificates from every country they have resided in since their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

*[For more information about the process of selecting clergy to serve in the Archdiocese, contact the Vicar General.]*

### **Employees**

At the time of accepting employment at the Archdiocese or a parish, employees are required to provide:

- a completed personal information form (Form 5.1.a)
- a completed Covenant of Care form (Form 5.1.b)

Within three months of commencing employment at the Archdiocese or a parish, employees are required to provide:

- a criminal record check (including a vulnerable sector check) from every country of residence since their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday; and,
- a Child Welfare Intervention Record Check from Alberta and any other province or country of residence since their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday where such a check is available.

Should these certificates not be provided within three months of beginning employment, the employment will have to be terminated.

### **Volunteers**

Before commencing their ministry, **all volunteers** in high risk and medium risk ministries must provide:

- a completed personal information form (Form 5.1.a)

All volunteers in **high risk ministries** must also provide:

- a completed Covenant of Care form (Form 5.1.b);
- a criminal record check (including a vulnerable sector check) from every country of residence since their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday; and,
- for those serving children and adolescents, a Child Welfare Intervention Record Check from Alberta and any other province or country of residence since their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday where such a check is available.

All volunteers in **medium risk ministries** must also provide:

- a completed Code of Conduct Acknowledgement form (Form 5.1.c); and,
- a criminal record check from every country of residence since their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**All of the above-named documents must be submitted and reviewed by the appropriate delegate (see below) before the person begins to serve in ministry. Provision of all of the above-named documents is mandatory.** Nobody in the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan has the authority to waive any of these requirements for any clergyman, employee or ministry volunteer.

**NOTE:** All clergy, employees, and volunteers in high risk ministries are required to provide a vulnerable sector check **every five years**. In addition, all clergy and employees, and all volunteers working directly with children and adolescents are required to provide a child welfare intervention record check **every three years**.

## **Reference checks**

For parish employees and volunteers, the parish priest is responsible for completing checks with the three references provided by the applicant (Form 5.1.d).

For the Archdiocese, the person responsible for the hiring process is also responsible for completing checks with the three references provided by the applicant.

**NOTE:** The Archdiocese recognizes that the majority of its clergy, employees, and volunteers have been serving the Church already for many years without benefit of these checks and without incident. However, everyone in ministry is requested to provide the appropriate and relevant documents, in accordance with this policy.

### **❖ Coordinators of Responsible Ministry**

The delegated people for administration of this policy in the Archdiocese and its parishes are the Archdiocesan Coordinator of Responsible Ministry and each Parish Coordinator of Responsible Ministry (this includes all parishes, quasi-parishes, and missions). The coordinator ensures that the information requirements are met, that the documents are reviewed, that any issues or concerns that arise are addressed by the person with the appropriate authority, and that the records are complete and meet the requirements of the *Personal Information Protection Act of Alberta*.

#### **Parish Coordinator of Responsible Ministry**

The parish coordinator will:

- compile a record of ministries and the volunteers in the parish and update it annually (Form 5.1.e).
- provide the appropriate forms to volunteers to complete.
- provide volunteers with the letter to the local RCMP detachment to do either a criminal record check or a vulnerable sector check.
- provide the address of the appropriate office of Child and Family Services to volunteers who need a Child Welfare Intervention Record Check.
- collect the original police and CWIR checks. Make copies, date and sign them, and return the originals when requested to do so.
- provide the parish priest with Form 5.1.d, which lists the names of the three references provided on Form 5.1.a. [To comply with the PIPA, Form 5.1.a must be seen only by the Parish Coordinator and the Archdiocesan Coordinator.]
- maintain a simple record of the names of volunteers and which forms have been completed for each. (No other information is to be kept at the parish.)
- forward completed documents to the Archdiocesan Coordinator of Responsible Ministry as soon as they are received. Completed documents, whether original or copies, are **not** to be kept in parishes.

#### **Archdiocesan Coordinator of Responsible Ministry**

The archdiocesan coordinator will:

- ensure all members of clergy in the Archdiocese are properly screened, pursuant to this policy;
- ensure all archdiocesan and parish employees have provided the required forms and screening information;
- ensure that the reference checks have been completed for parish and archdiocesan employees and volunteers;
- provide information and support for parish training and orientation sessions related to this policy;
- ensure the safekeeping of the forms and documents forwarded by the Parish Coordinator in every parish;
- review all screening documents for parish and archdiocesan employees;
- ensure parish compliance with these policies and related requirements;
- keep informed on developments and changes to policies and practices related to Responsible Ministry-type programs in dioceses across Canada and make recommendations to the Archbishop and the College of Consultors on the basis of these;
- ensure adoption of and compliance with any changes required for complete coverage by liability insurers;
- ensure those named on parish lists of volunteers have been properly screened for the ministry they are doing.

Approved and promulgated by the College of Consultors on 25 October 2016

**Appendix 1**

**List of Ministries and Risk Level**

<b>High risk ministries</b>	
<b>Ministry</b>	<b>Risk level - reason</b>
Member of the clergy	Minister to children, vulnerable adults; opportunity to build relationships of trust; inherent power imbalance in relationships
Employee of the Archdiocese or a parish	Opportunity to build relationships of trust
Taking Holy Communion to the sick	Minister to vulnerable adults
Altar server trainer or coordinator	Minister to children
Liturgy of the Word with Children leader	Minister to children
Hospital ministry/pastoral visitor	Minister to vulnerable adults
Sacramental preparation leader or presenter	Minister to children
Youth ministry	Minister to children
Children’s choir leader	Minister to children
Bereavement team member	Opportunity to build relationships of trust
Spiritual director, retreat leader/facilitator	Opportunity to build relationships of trust; inherent power imbalance in relationships
<b>Medium risk ministries</b>	
Collection counter	Opportunity to mishandle temporal goods
Usher	Opportunity to mishandle temporal goods
Key holder	Opportunity to mishandle temporal goods
Maintenance and facilities management	Opportunity to mishandle temporal goods
Bookkeeper	Opportunity to mishandle temporal goods
CWL Officer (President, Treasurer)	Opportunity to mishandle temporal goods
Knights of Columbus Officer (equivalent of President, Treasurer)	Opportunity to mishandle temporal goods
<b>Low or no-risk ministries</b>	
Sacristan	No apparent risk related to this ministry
Extraordinary minister of Holy Communion (at Mass)	No apparent risk related to this ministry
Lector, commentator	No apparent risk related to this ministry
Music ministry	No apparent risk related to this ministry
Adult faith formation and RCIA	No apparent risk related to this ministry
Prayer groups	No apparent risk related to this ministry

## Personal Information Form for Employees and Volunteers for Ministry

Name	
Address	
Phone	
Email	
Date & Place of Birth	
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
Marital Status	

Position	
Risk level	<input type="checkbox"/> High risk <input type="checkbox"/> Medium risk <input type="checkbox"/> Low or no- risk

**For high risk and medium risk positions:** Please provide the names of three unrelated persons whom we can contact as personal references:

- 1) Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

I affirm that the above information is true and correct. I permit the collection of this personal information, including that provided by the reference checks solely for use in managing ministry in the parish and the Archdiocese.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

Amended by the College of Consultors on 28 September, 2011

Amended by the College of Consultors on 25 October 2016

## Ministry Suitability Form and Covenant of Care

*This form is to be filled out by anyone employed by the Archdiocese or a parish, or as a volunteer in a high risk ministry (as defined in Policy 5.1.1 of the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan's Policy Manual).*

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

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town/City: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been **accused** of abuse or inappropriate behaviour with children, adolescents or vulnerable adults?

No

Yes

Have you ever been **charged** with abuse or inappropriate behaviour with children, adolescents or vulnerable adults or with any other crime?

No

Yes

I agree to abide by the Code of Conduct of the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan (see attached or Policy 5.1.2) as my commitment to serve and to be seen to serve all persons with purity and unselfish love in a Covenant of Care that honors the intrinsic worth of each person, and I acknowledge that any breach of the Code of Conduct on my part will result in appropriate disciplinary action.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Code of Conduct Acknowledgement

*This form is to be filled out by volunteers of the Archdiocese or a parish, to a ministry that is **not** considered to be a high risk ministry (as defined in Policy 5.1.1 of the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan's Policy Manual).*

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

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town/City: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

I have read and agree to abide by the Code of Conduct of the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan (see attached) as my commitment to serve and to be seen to serve all persons with purity and unselfish love in a Covenant of Care that honors the intrinsic worth of each person, and I acknowledge that any breach of the Code of Conduct on my part will result in appropriate disciplinary action.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Standard Form for Confidential Character &/or Performance References

(Interview to be carried out by phone or in person and this form completed by the interviewer)

Volunteer or Applicant	
Name:	Position:

Reference	
Name:	Relationship:
Phone:	Other contact information:

Where possible, the reference should be interviewed by telephone. Begin the interview by introducing yourself and explaining the purpose of the call. You should say something like:

**[Name of Volunteer/Applicant]** has supplied your name as a reference. This position involves interaction with children, adolescents and/or vulnerable persons. Your frank confidential assessment of his/her suitability in the following categories is appreciated.

How well do you know the candidate?:    well ( )    somewhat ( )    very little ( )
How would you describe his/her moral character?
Would you describe her/him as reliable?
How would you describe his/her ability to work with others?
Would you recommend this person for this position?

*(Please use other side if you need more space)*

Name of interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of interview: \_\_\_\_\_





[PARISH LETTERHEAD HERE]

Royal Canadian Mounted Police

[address of local detachment]

Date:

**Re: Request for a Criminal Record Check and Vulnerable Sector Check**

As **pastor/volunteer screening coordinator** of the above-named Catholic parish, I am requesting a

Police Information Check                       Vulnerable Sector check

for \_\_\_\_\_,

as a condition of employment with the parish as \_\_\_\_\_.

OR

who is applying to volunteer with the parish as \_\_\_\_\_.

This position will require working, either directly or indirectly, with:

- children
- adolescents
- vulnerable adults.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

[Name of Priest/Screening coordinator]

Pastor of [Name of Parish]

**RCMP Detachments in the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan**

<b>Beaverlodge</b> 402 - 10 Street Beaverlodge	<b>Fox Lake</b>	<b>McLennan</b> 404 – 3 Avenue NE McLennan
<b>Chateh (Assumption)</b> ATCO Rd & Commercial Dr Chateh	<b>Grande Prairie</b> 10202 99 Street Grande Prairie	<b>Peace River</b> 9200 99 Street Peace River
<b>Desmarais</b> 861 Mistassiny Road Desmarais	<b>Grimshaw</b> 5002 50 Avenue Wilcox Road Grimshaw	<b>Red Earth Creek</b> 153 – Highway 88 Red Earth Creek
<b>Fairview</b> 10104 113 Street Fairview	<b>High Level</b> 10203 100 Avenue High Level	<b>Slave Lake</b> 1005 – 6 Avenue SE Slave Lake
<b>Faust</b> 13A 4th Street West Faust	<b>High Prairie</b> 5400 53 Avenue High Prairie	<b>Spirit River</b> 4501 50 Street Spirit River
<b>Fort Vermilion</b> 4302 45 <sup>th</sup> Street Fort Vermilion	<b>Manning</b> 304 – 6 Avenue NE Manning	<b>Valleyview</b> 4945 - 49 Avenue Valleyview

**Alberta Child and Family Services Offices in the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan**

<b>Fairview</b> 10209-109 Street Fairview	<b>Peace River</b> 9715-100 Street Peace River
<b>Grande Prairie Services for Children and Youth</b> 214 Place South, Suite 200, 10130-99 Avenue Grande Prairie	<b>Slave Lake</b> 108, 101-3rd Street SW Slave Lake
<b>High Level</b> 9814-101 Street High Level	<b>Valleyview Community Resource Centre</b> 5112-50 Avenue Valleyview
<b>High Prairie</b> 5226-53 Avenue High Prairie	

## **POLICY 5.1.2 Safe Environment Policy**

### **General Overview**

In the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan, we are committed to ensuring that our parishes, ministries and programs are places filled with the peace and joy that come with loving our Lord God and serving one another in charity and humility. Events of the recent past have shown us that a combination of prudent measures to prevent and properly respond to claims of harm will best ensure that no one, and most especially no child, youth or vulnerable adult, is subjected to exploitation, abuse, bullying, or any other form of physical, emotional, sexual or spiritual violence. These prudent measures are what make up our “Safe Environment Policy”.

The principal elements of the Safe Environment Policy are the Code of Conduct and the parish training sessions. We believe that education on and enforcement of these elements will make our faith communities attractive and nurturing places to be for everyone.

### ***Code of Conduct***

The Code of Conduct of the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan sets out the responsibilities and expectations for clergy, staff and volunteers who serve in the parishes and offices of the Archdiocese.

Everyone to whom it applies must understand it and abide by it, for the good of the Archdiocese, the faithful, and him or herself. The Code of Conduct describes attitudes and behaviours that are considered essential elements of any ministry in the Archdiocese. Before beginning to serve as clergy, staff or a volunteer in a high risk ministry, every candidate must read and sign Form 5.1.b, *Ministry Suitability Form and Covenant of Care*, indicating acceptance of this Code. All other volunteers must read and sign Form 5.1.c, *Code of Conduct Acknowledgement*.

Violations of the Code will be handled pursuant to Policy 5.2.1 *Misconduct Policy of the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan*.

### **Creating a Safe Environment**

In the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan, the principal features of a safe environment include:

- Procedures are in place to ensure that risks of harm to children, adolescents and vulnerable adults, in particular, are minimal and/or inadvertent.
- The physical environment for ministry and activities, especially as it relates to children, adolescents, and vulnerable adults, is designed to eliminate “private spaces” and to enhance visibility of all activities and interactions between individuals.
- Clergy, staff and volunteers are trained to respond immediately and effectively to incidents of harassment, bullying, and other threatening or harmful conduct.
- Confidential processes for reporting misconduct are in place.
- A published Misconduct Policy provides a transparent and accountable procedure for handling allegations of misconduct, exploitation, and abuse.
- Nobody and nothing is excluded from complying with the Code of Conduct and the Misconduct Policy.

## Training

All clergy, employees, and high risk ministry volunteers of the Archdiocese and its parishes are required to attend an orientation session on the policies of the Archdiocese, covering the *Code of Conduct*, creating a safe environment, and the *Misconduct Policy* of the Archdiocese. This session will normally be conducted in each deanery, once a year, by the Archdiocesan Coordinator of Responsible Ministry. All clergy, employees and high risk ministry volunteers in parishes of a deanery will be required to attend the session made available in their first year of service, and then at least every three years.

## Definitions

- **Abuse:** Regular and/or repeated cruel and violent treatment of a person. It may be physical, verbal, emotional or sexual. It may or may not be criminal in nature.
- **Bullying:** Unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance.
- **Exploitation of a ministerial relationship:** Using another person for selfish purposes and/or using a position of authority or trust to gain a personal advantage or benefit.
- **Harassment:** Aggressive pressure or intimidation that may create a hostile or offensive environment for the victim.
- **Ministerial relationship:** A relationship involving trust and confidence that is based primarily upon the ministry offered by a priest or deacon or other minister to another person. Examples of ministry include counselling, spiritual guidance and the celebration of the sacraments.

## Responding to Misconduct

- **Responsibilities to report under the laws of Canada and Alberta**

There is no positive duty under the Criminal Code of Canada to report criminal acts, e.g. assaults (harassment, bullying, physical and sexual assault) or theft, to police or other authority.

Under the *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act* of Alberta anyone who witnesses or suspects that a child has been or may be abused or neglected by a parent or guardian is obliged to report that information to a caseworker at the local Child and Family Services offices.

- **Duty to report misconduct under the policies of the Archdiocese of Groaurd-McLennan**

The organizational nature of the Archdiocese means that the parish priest will most often be the person who receives the initial report of a violation of the Code of Conduct.

It is widely understood that the physical or sexual abuse of a child, youth or vulnerable adult requires immediate involvement of, and investigation by, the police, other government services, and the Misconduct Policy Administrator of the Archdiocese.

However, other violations of the Code of Conduct may be more difficult to identify and respond to. People, especially volunteers, may find themselves questioning whether what they have witnessed or been told about warrants the intrusion of an investigation. We ask all our clergy, employees and volunteers to resist making this decision on their own. Please tell your parish priest, the Misconduct Policy Administrator, an officer of the Chancery, or the Archbishop about any behavior by a clergyman, employee or volunteer which appears to be a violation of the Code of Conduct. By discussing it, those involved should be able to clarify the need for any further steps to be taken. It will

also allow for a record of the incident or incidents to be made. Do **not** ignore any situation that gives you pause.

All members of clergy and all employees of the Archdiocese and its parishes have a positive duty to report **immediately** any claims of incidents of misconduct by clergy, employees and/or volunteers. These may be incidents they personally witnessed, incidents they have been told about, and incidents of which they become aware and have a well-founded reason to believe occurred. The report may be made to a supervisor or to the Misconduct Policy Administrator (see Policy 5.2.1 Misconduct Policy).

Approved and promulgated by the College of Consultors on 25 October 2016

# Code of Conduct of the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan

## Scope

The *Code of Conduct of the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan* applies to all members of the clergy, all paid employees of the Archdiocese and its parishes, and all volunteers in ministries of the Archdiocese and its parishes.

## Our Values

As a local faith community of the Catholic Church, the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan upholds and promotes the values expressed in the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the teachings and laws of the Catholic Church. These include, but are not limited to:

- Serving others in love, humility and sacrifice
- Respecting the dignity and well-being of every person
- Acting in justice and charity in every situation and relationship

## Our Code

The principal elements of the *Code of Conduct of the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan* are: Accountability, Confidentiality, Respectful Attitudes, and Protection of Vulnerable People.

- **Accountability**
  - Adhere to the published policies of the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan and, if applicable, the parish where you serve.
  - Comply with the elements of orientation and training provided to you for carrying out your ministry.
  - Act always with integrity and take responsibility for your actions and words.
  - Respect the hierarchy of the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan.
  - Follow the chain of reporting for your position.
  - Do not exceed the authority of your position.
- **Confidentiality**
  - Respect and maintain the confidentiality of any personal information you gain through your position.
  - Respect and maintain the confidentiality of information related to the business and operation decisions of the parish and/or the Archdiocese gained through your position.
- **Respectful Attitudes and Behaviours**
  - Abuse of any kind is strictly prohibited.
  - Harassment of any kind, including personal (physical and verbal), sexual, and cyber, is strictly prohibited.
    - Personal harassment means any kind of discriminatory conduct, whether physical or verbal, directed at an individual and causes that individual substantial distress.

- Sexual harassment means any conduct, comment, gesture or contact of a sexual nature directed at an individual and is unwanted and/or unwelcome.
  - Cyber harassment is using technological means of communication to direct sexual or discriminatory words, gestures, or images at an individual that causes that individual substantial distress.
- Bullying of any kind, including verbal, physical and cyber, is strictly prohibited. Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance.
  - Verbal bullying is the use of words and language to intimidate an individual in order to force him or her to do what you want.
  - Physical bullying is the use of physical force or coercion against an individual in order to force him or her to do what you want.
  - Cyber bullying is the use of technological means of communication in a threatening or an exploitative way against an individual in order to force him or her to do what you want.
- Mishandling and/or misappropriation of temporal goods (i.e. money and property) of the Church is strictly prohibited.

- **Protection of Vulnerable People**

- **One-on-one meetings (e.g. counselling, reconciliation, education activities, home visits)**

- **Children and adolescents**

It is prohibited for one, unrelated, adult to be alone with a child or an adolescent when serving in or at an activity of a parish or the Archdiocese. There must always be two, unrelated adults present for any ministry to a single child or adolescent.

- **Vulnerable adults**

It is recommended that there always be two adults, preferably unrelated, present for any ministry that involves a single, vulnerable adult.

- **If ministry requires one-on-one for effectiveness or confidentiality reasons**

If it is essential to serve a child, adolescent, or vulnerable adult one-on-one, then it must be done in a location that is entirely visible to other people. For example, in an open space but off to one corner; in a room with glass doors and/or window; if for the purposes of confession, a traditional confessional may be used, as long as the priest and penitent are entirely separated by a physical barrier.

- **Group activities and events**

- **Children and adolescents**

In activities that involve groups of children and/or adolescents, there should always be two adults present, preferably unrelated, to offer instruction or supervision. These two adults must always be visible to one another during the activity or event. See **Section 8**

of the *Policy Manual* for Codes of Conduct that are specific to youth activities and events.

- **Vulnerable adults**

In ministry activities involving groups of vulnerable adults, there should be two adults present, preferably unrelated.

- **Sacramental Preparation**

The preparation of children for the celebration of the Sacraments of first Reconciliation, first Communion, and Confirmation is to be done in a group format, with at least two unrelated adults present. One-on-one instruction for children and adolescents is never permitted. The two adults must always be visible to one another.

- **Liturgy of the Word with Children (“Sunday School”)**

The Liturgy of the Word with Children during Sunday Mass is always to be conducted by at least two adults. It is preferred that the adults be unrelated to each other, but that may not always be possible in smaller communities. The two adults must always be visible to one another.

- **Other catechetical and recreational programs for children and adolescents**

Two unrelated adults are to be present for all recreational and catechetical programs.

### **\*Specifically for Clergy**

The indefensible conduct of clergy across Canada and around the world that has been made public in recent decades makes it imperative that the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan spells out the prohibited behaviours for its priests and deacons.

- **Sacrament of Reconciliation**

The celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation is always to be done in (a) a room which is open to the view of others, through a window or glass-paneled door; or, (b) in a traditional confessional where the priest and penitent are completely separated by a physical barrier.

The location of Reconciliation rooms and confessionals is to be in a high traffic area of the church building. Any new construction or renovation of Reconciliation rooms is to provide for clear glass openings, either as windows or in doors.

- **Prohibition on guests in living quarters**

Under no circumstances is a priest or deacon to use his living space, whether attached to or separate from the parish office or church, to host a child, adolescent or vulnerable adult, whether individually or in groups.

- **Prohibition on travelling**

Under no circumstances is a priest or deacon to travel with a child, children, an adolescent or adolescents or a vulnerable adult or adults, without the parent or legal guardian present.

- **Prohibition on gifts**

Under no circumstances is a priest or deacon to give expensive gifts to or accept expensive gifts from children, adolescents or vulnerable adults.

- **Displays of affection**

Priests and deacons are strongly discouraged from engaging in physical displays of affection with children, adolescents and vulnerable adults.

## **POLICY 5.2.1 Misconduct Policy**

The Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan is committed to its Code of Conduct for Clergy, Employees and Volunteers (see Policy 5.1.2). This Misconduct Policy has been established to ensure that violations of that Code are addressed in an effective, consistent, and respectful manner. Creating and publishing this policy is intended to assure those who have been affected by such violations that there is a straightforward, confidential, and supportive process that they can easily access. It is also intended to hold the leadership of the Archdiocese accountable to the faithful for the conduct of its ministers, whether clergy or lay, staff or volunteer. It is also intended to assure those who minister in its parishes and offices that there is an effective and transparent process for responding to complaints made about their conduct.

As stated above, this policy applies to violations of the Archdiocese's Code of Conduct. Some of these violations may also be of a criminal or quasi-criminal nature. In those circumstances, the person making the complaint will be encouraged to also bring the matter to the police, in addition to the Archdiocese. Even if the complainant chooses not to do so, the person receiving the complaint may, in some cases, be legally, ethically and/or morally bound to do so. [**N.B.: This policy cannot and does not apply to the absolute confidentiality of the confessional.**]

**For allegations of sexual misconduct and abuse, see Policy 5.2.2 Protocol for Allegations of Sexual Misconduct and Abuse by Clergy, Staff or Volunteers.**

### **Part 1. Definitions**

**Misconduct** as used in this policy, refers to:

- **abuse/assault (physical, sexual, verbal or cyber)**
- **harassment**
- **exploitation of a ministerial relationship**
- **mishandling and/or misappropriation of temporal goods of the Church.**

**Abuse:** Regular and/or repeated cruel and violent treatment of a person. It may be physical, verbal, emotional or sexual. It may or may not be criminal in nature.

**Harassment:** Aggressive pressure or intimidation that may create a hostile or offensive environment for the victim.

**Exploitation of a ministerial relationship:** Using another person for selfish purposes and/or using a position of authority or trust to gain a personal advantage or benefit.

**Ministerial relationship:** A relationship involving trust and confidence that is based primarily upon the ministry offered by a priest or deacon or other minister to another person. Examples of ministry include counselling, spiritual guidance and the celebration of the sacraments.

### **Part 2. Roles**

#### **1. Misconduct Policy Administrator**

##### **a. Appointment**

The Archbishop appoints the Misconduct Policy Administrator (MPA) for a 3-year term, renewable indefinitely. The MPA appointment may be terminated at any time in the term, by mutual agreement of the MPA and the Archbishop.

The person may be a member of the clergy but need not be. The criteria for the appointment are:

- the person is a practicing Catholic, i.e. a registered parishioner in one of the parishes of the Archdiocese and attending Sunday Mass at least once a month; and,
- the person has experience or education related to human resources management, conflict resolution or mediation, or the practice of law.

#### **b. Responsibilities**

The MPA administers this policy and operates entirely independently of the Archbishop.

The MPA is responsible for:

- reviewing and assessing all complaints made under this policy;
- determining the approach for gathering information and the method for doing so; and,
- submitting a written report, including recommendations, to the Archbishop at the conclusion of any assessment or investigation.

### **2. Alternate Misconduct Policy Administrator**

In cases where there is a conflict of interest, actual or perceived, or other compelling reasons, the Archbishop will, on his own initiative or at the request of the MPA, complainant or accused, appoint an Alternate MPA. The Alternate shall, as directed by the Archbishop, either:

- a) act as a consultant to the MPA; or,
- b) act in place of or on behalf of the MPA.

The above-listed criteria for MPA will apply to the appointment of the Alternate MPA. The term of service of the Alternate MPA ends when the particular case for which she or he was appointed has been concluded.

### **3. Misconduct Policy Advisory Committee**

The Archbishop appoints a Misconduct Policy Advisory Committee (MPAC) of at least three members.

The MPAC is responsible for:

- advising the Archbishop on developments in safe environment practices, bullying, harassment and abuse prevention, etc. that should or could impact the operation of this policy (on an annual or semi-annual basis);
- reviewing and updating, as required, archdiocesan policies 5.2.1 and 5.2.2 (or their equivalents); and
- advising the Archbishop on his response to the report from the MPA.

The MPAC will meet at least once a year and may meet more often, at the members' discretion. Please refer to **Appendix A Terms of Reference - Misconduct Policy Advisory Committee** for full details.

### **4. The Archbishop**

Under this policy, the Archbishop is responsible for:

- appointing a Misconduct Policy Administrator (MPA)

- appointing an alternate Misconduct Policy Administrator, as required
- appointing a Misconduct Policy Advisory Committee (MPAC)
- the final adjudication of any complaint submitted pursuant to this policy
- determining what action is to be taken in response to the report of the MPA on a complaint submitted pursuant to this policy
- ensuring the action is taken by those required to carry it out

If the Archbishop is himself accused of misconduct, the archdiocesan Vicar General will assume the Archbishop's role in this policy, inform the Apostolic Nuncio to Canada and implement any instructions from the Nuncio on how to proceed.

## **5. Resource and Support Persons**

Resource and Support Persons (RSP) are appointed to ensure that complainants and those accused of misconduct are supported throughout the process of assessing, investigating, and adjudicating claims of misconduct.

The complainant and the accused are entitled to respectful and sensitive treatment during the process. The RSP will do such things as: explain the process of the misconduct policy; act as point of contact for the complainant or accused and the MPA; and, assist the complainant or accused to access community resources and services that could aid in working through the impact and consequences of any misconduct.

In addition, the RSP assigned to/selected by the complainant or the accused will take responsibility for providing information about the status of the MPA's review and assessment of the complaint; the status of any investigation undertaken by the MPA; the submission of the MPA's report to the Archbishop; and the decision and action of the Archbishop as a result of the report.

The Archdiocese will put out a call for applications to fill positions of RSP. The call for applications will be issued as RSP positions need to be filled.

The Archbishop appoints five RSP from across the Archdiocese. Each RSP will serve a term of three years, renewable indefinitely.

Those appointed as RSP will receive training in this policy from the Archdiocesan Screening Coordinator. They will also receive information, updated as required, on additional community services that could be of benefit to the complainant and/or the accused.

## **6. Policy 5.1.1 Responsible Ministry and Policy 5.1.2 Safe Environment**

The screening procedure for high risk ministry, described in Policy 5.1.1 of this manual, applies to the MPA, members of the MPAC and to all RSP. The screening process must be done before the Archbishop's appointments can be finalized.

The MPA, members of the MPAC and all RSP must submit a signed Form 5.1.b Ministry Suitability and Covenant of Care before the Archbishop's appointments can be finalized.

## **Part 3. Reporting misconduct**

**For complaints related to sexual misconduct towards children, adolescents and vulnerable adults, please see Policy 5.2.2 Part 2.**

If you become aware of misconduct (acts that violate the Code of Conduct), whether as the person subject to the act, as a witness, as something you hear about, or as a suspicion you hold, you are strongly encouraged to report the misconduct to the Misconduct Policy Administrator (MPA). You may make your report:

- by telephoning 780-532-9766 and leaving a message for the MPA;
- by completing Form 5.2.1.a *Incident Report* and faxing it to 780-532-9706, to the attention of the MPA; or emailing it to [mpa.agm@outlook.com](mailto:mpa.agm@outlook.com);
- sending a fax or email reporting the incident(s) of misconduct, without using the form;
- by reporting the incident(s) to your pastor, parish staff, or archdiocesan staff, who are mandated to bring the report to the MPA.

**NOTE: All clergy and archdiocesan and parish employees have a positive duty to report immediately any claims of incidents of misconduct by clergy, employees and/or volunteers. These may be incidents they personally witnessed, incidents they have been told about, and incidents they have any other well-founded reason to believe occurred.**

**NOTE: The *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act* of Alberta requires anyone that has reasonable and probable grounds to believe that a child (i.e anyone under the age of 18) is in need of intervention report that information to a director of Child and Family Services.**

#### **Part 4. Procedure for assessing and investigating complaints of misconduct**

##### **Step 1. Notify the accused**

The MPA will first assess the report to determine who will bring the report to the attention of the accused: the MPA or another appropriate person.

##### **Step 2. Notify the insurer**

Once the accused person has been informed of the complaint, the MPA will notify the liability insurer/insurance broker for the Archdiocese of the complaint and follow any instructions provided by them.

##### **Step 3. Investigate the complaint**

At the instruction or the permission of the insurer, the MPA may take one, some or all of the following steps:

- collect details about the alleged misconduct, completing Form 5.2.1.a if necessary, if the insurer has no objections or directly requests it;
- gather initial information, using Form 5.2.1.b to record the information;
- assess the degree of seriousness of the complained misconduct and recommend any immediate action to be taken by the pastor, supervisor or Archbishop;
- contact the complainant and explain the procedure that will be followed;

- tell the complainant about the availability of a Resource and Support Person (RSP) and give that person's contact details. If there is any appearance that civil or criminal laws were contravened, suggest to the complainant that it may be wise to consult with legal counsel;
- conduct an investigation or appoint an investigator to conduct an investigation, if the insurer has no objections and the MPA determines that one is warranted;
- do anything else necessary to ensure a full understanding of the incident(s) complained of;
- keep the Archbishop, complainant and accused informed of all decisions that are made, as well as the status or progress of any investigation;
- prepare a report for the Archbishop, describing the incident, the investigation and all other pertinent acts and observations, and include any recommendations;
- prepare any additional information and reports requested by the insurer;
- act as mediator or facilitator if the complainant and accused agree to attempt a resolution at any point before the report is submitted to the Archbishop (see last bullet in this list);
- provide a draft copy of the final report to the insurer for review; and,
- submit the report to the Archbishop and provide copies to the insurer, the accused and the complainant.

## **Part 5. What the complainant can expect during the process**

### **Step 1. Making the complaint**

The Archdiocese is committed to ensuring our parishes, events, and activities are safe environments for everyone, most especially for children, youth and vulnerable adults. We strongly encourage anyone who experiences, witnesses, or has knowledge of misconduct by a priest, employee or volunteer to contact the MPA about the incident(s).

### **Step 2. Investigation and follow up**

Once a complaint and/or a Form 5.2.1.a *Incident Report* have been received by the MPA, the complainant can expect:

- to be contacted by the MPA and advised of the procedure that will take place and given the contact information for a RSP. The MPA may also advise the complainant to consult with legal counsel;
- to be contacted by the MPA and advised if an investigation will be conducted;
- to be kept informed of decisions as they are made, by the MPA;
- to be kept informed of the status and/or progress of an investigation, if one was considered necessary;
- to be included in an investigation, if one was considered necessary;
- to be supported and assisted with any requests the complainant makes to resolve the matter before a report is submitted to the Archbishop;
- to receive a copy of the MPA's report when it is submitted to the Archbishop.

## **Part 6. What the accused can expect during the process**

The Archdiocese is committed to the process undertaken by the MPA when a Form 5.2.1.a *Incident Report* is received. The accused is considered innocent until proven otherwise and can expect:

- to be contacted by the MPA immediately after a Form 5.2.1.a has been received and informed of the contents of the complaint;
- to be removed from ministry or office, without prejudice and with pay (if a priest or employee) until the matter is resolved, if the Archbishop so decides;
- to be advised of the procedure that will be followed and given the contact information for a RSP. The MPA may also advise the accused to consult with legal counsel;
- to be contacted by the MPA and advised if an investigation will be conducted
- to be kept informed of decisions as they are made, by the MPA;
- to be kept informed of the status and/or progress of an investigation, if one was considered necessary;
- to be included in an investigation, if one was considered necessary;
- to be informed of any requests the complainant makes to resolve the matter before a report is submitted to the Archbishop;
- to receive a copy of the MPA's report when it is submitted to the Archbishop.

The accused may or may not be told the identity of the complainant. The MPA will make the decision to disclose the complainant's identity, in consultation with the insurer and after weighing factors such as impact on the complainant of having her or his identity disclosed; impact on the accused of knowing or not knowing the identity of the complainant; the good of the affected parish community; and the seriousness of the alleged misconduct. Before disclosing the complainant's identity to the accused, the MPA will first notify the complainant.

### **Part 7. Archbishop's adjudication**

Upon receipt of the MPA's written report, the Archbishop shall:

- give the complainant and the accused person a reasonable opportunity to consult with legal counsel and to respond to the report in writing to the Archbishop. Where the Archbishop considers it desirable, he may also choose to meet with the parties;
- consult with the insurer about the contents and recommendations of the MPA's report;
- if he considers it desirable, consult with legal counsel for the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan, the MPAC, or any other appropriate professionals; and
- make a final determination regarding the complaint and any action to be taken. This determination shall be made on the balance of probabilities, with the safety of children, adolescents and vulnerable adults as a primary guiding principle. The determination shall be documented in writing and provided to the complainant and the accused person. Where practical, the accused and complainant shall be informed in person of the decision by the Archbishop.

### **Part 8. Confidentiality**

To the extent possible, everyone involved in the processes under this policy on behalf of the Archdiocese will maintain the confidentiality of the complainant and accused person at all times during the process. When the process is complete and the Archbishop has adjudicated the matter, canonical and civil law provisions will be applied to the continuation or not of that confidentiality.

In addition, should the identities of the people involved in and/or circumstances of the complaint become public knowledge, the MPA may, after consultation with the MPAC and on approval from the

Archbishop, act as, or appoint, a media spokesperson to represent and speak on behalf of the Archdiocese in public communications. The intent is to protect the interests of the parties involved, including the Archdiocese.

### **Part 9. Public communication**

As noted above, the MPA or an appointee will act as a media spokesperson for the Archdiocese. The media spokesperson is to be guided by the following principles:

- Acknowledging the possibility of misconduct among our own clergy, staff and volunteers, the Archdiocese has put in place a comprehensive set of policies and procedures that assist us in responding to misconduct, including harassment, exploitation, bullying and all forms of abuse, with charity, justice and fairness;
- The Archdiocese has a particular responsibility to protect and a deep concern for the health and well-being of children, adolescents and vulnerable adults in our parishes and receiving our ministry; and,
- The procedure that follows a report of misconduct is intended to provide a fair, thorough, objective, accountable, transparent, supportive and compassionate response to all who are involved in an allegation and investigation of misconduct.

### **Part 10. Impact on cases in process in the event of retirement or death of the Archbishop**

In order to protect the integrity of the process, the MPA will ensure that all the information on any cases in process that was available to and within the knowledge of the now retired or deceased Archbishop is provided to the administrator or successor Archbishop as soon as possible after his taking office.

Promulgated by the College of Consultors on 25 September 2010

Amended by the College of Consultors on 15 January 2013

Amended by the College of Consultors on 23 January 2018

## Incident Report – Code of Conduct Violations

**Use this form to submit a complaint about violations of the Code of Conduct of the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan.** The Code of Conduct may be found in Policy 5.1.2 Safe Environment.

The Code of Conduct applies to all clergy, employees and volunteers of the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan.

This form may be submitted to the Misconduct Policy Administrator by:

- emailing it to [mpa.agm@outlook.com](mailto:mpa.agm@outlook.com);
- sending a fax to (780) 532-9706;
- mailing it to:  
Misconduct Policy Administrator  
10301 102 Street  
Grande Prairie AB T8V2W2

You may also report the incident:

- by telephoning 780-532-9766 and leaving a message for the MPA;
- by reporting the incident(s) of misconduct in writing, without using the form, by email, fax or mail, as above;
- by reporting the incident(s) to your pastor, parish staff, or archdiocesan staff, who are mandated to bring the report to the MPA.

Please provide as much detail as possible about the incident or incidents being reported.

You are encouraged to provide your name and contact details but this is not required. **No steps will be taken to identify complainants** if they choose to report anonymously.

Thank you for helping to keep the parishes and activities of the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan safe environments for everyone!



**Description of incident continued:**

Report submitted by	
Name	
Signature	
Date	
Report received by	
Name	
Signature	
Date	

Report received by Misconduct Policy Administrator	
Date: _____ Signature of MPA: _____	

### Follow up Record by MPA

The MPA attaches this form to the Incident Report – Form 5.2.1.a. This becomes the record of pre-investigation work by the MPA.

Incident Report #		Date file created	
Claimant			
Name			
Date of 1 <sup>st</sup> interview			
Dates of subsequent communication			
Alleged Offender (please use additional sheets if more than one)			
Name			
Date of 1 <sup>st</sup> interview			
Dates of subsequent communication			
Witness/Other involved people (please use additional sheets if more than one)			
Name			
Date of 1 <sup>st</sup> interview			
Dates of subsequent communication			
Notes			

## **Misconduct Policy Advisory Committee**

### **Terms of Reference**

The Misconduct Policy Advisory Team (MPAC) is an integral part of the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan's commitment to have current, responsive and effective policies for addressing misconduct by clergy, employees, or volunteers. The team members bring knowledge, experience and expertise to developing issues and questions. The team members do not participate in specific investigations of claims of misconduct.

### **Membership**

The Archbishop appoints a Misconduct Policy Advisory Committee (MPAC) of at least three members. Ideally, the MPAC will at all times include at least one woman and one clergyman.

Everyone appointed to the MPAC **must**:

- have experience or education related to counselling, psychology, child development, criminal justice, child welfare/health, education, and/or other similar career or study fields;
- be of good moral character and professional standing;
- know the social and moral teachings of the Catholic Church.

### **Term of Office**

Each member is appointed for a 3-year term, renewable indefinitely. The MPAC appointment may be terminated at any time in the term, by mutual agreement of the member and the Archbishop.

### **Role and responsibilities**

The MPAC is responsible for:

- advising the Archbishop on developments in safe environment practices, bullying, harassment and abuse prevention, etc. that should or could impact the operation of this policy (on an annual or semi-annual basis);
- reviewing and updating, as required, archdiocesan policies 5.2.1 and 5.2.2 (or their equivalents); and
- advising the Archbishop on his response to the report from the MPA.

### **Meetings**

The MPAC will meet at least once a year and may meet more often, at the members' discretion.

## **POLICY 5.2.2 Policy and Protocols for Allegations of Sexual Misconduct and Abuse by Clergy, Staff or Volunteers**

The Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan is committed to protecting children, adolescents, and vulnerable adults from any kind of harassment, exploitation and abuse. However, we recognize that sexual abuse by clergy is an especially damaging and destructive conduct that requires a very concrete, transparent and, above all, victim-sensitive response from the Church. While elements of Policy 5.2.1 are included in this protocol, this protocol has to take into account:

- the overriding importance of protecting the victim or victims, and
- the absolute necessity of cooperating fully with the police and other civil agencies that will be included in the response to allegations of sexual abuse.

This protocol also includes the possibility of a canonical process to address any such allegations, in addition to any possible criminal law proceedings.

### **Part 1. Roles**

#### **1. Misconduct Policy Administrator**

As provided in Policy 5.2.1, the Archbishop appoints the Misconduct Policy Administrator (MPA).

The MPA is responsible for:

- initiating the requirements of this protocol;
- in consultation with the Archdiocese's liability insurer, determining if an internal investigation is required and appointing an investigator or doing the investigation himself/herself;
- sending draft of the final report to the insurer for review; and
- submitting a written report, including recommendations, to the Archbishop, with a copy to the insurer, at the conclusion of any assessment or investigation.

#### **2. Alternate Misconduct Policy Administrator**

As described in Policy 5.2.1.

#### **3. Misconduct Policy Advisory Committee**

As described in Policy 5.2.1.

#### **4. The Archbishop**

In addition to his responsibilities under Policy 5.2.1, when sexual misconduct or abuse is alleged, the Archbishop is responsible for:

- initiating canonical proceedings if the accused is a member of the clergy;
- appointing a person to be responsible for media communications;
- consulting with the MPA pursuant to 5.2.1.

If the Archbishop is himself accused of sexual misconduct and/or abuse, the archdiocesan Vicar General will assume the Archbishop's role in this policy, inform the Apostolic Nuncio to Canada and implement any instructions from the Nuncio on how to proceed..

## 5. Resource and Support Persons

**Resource and Support Persons (RSP)** are described in Policy 5.2.1. They are available to claimants and accused to provide guidance through the process under this policy.

## 6. Professional Counselling and Other Support and Assistance

The Archdiocese would like to do everything in its power to support and aid complainants of sexual misconduct and abuse by its priests, deacons, staff or volunteers. This includes a commitment to provide pastoral counselling and other services to complainants and their families.

The Archdiocese will also provide similar assistance to any priest, deacon, staff or volunteer who is accused of sexual misconduct or abuse.

Complainants and accused may apply to the MPA for additional support and assistance, including, but is not necessarily limited to:

- assistance with fees for therapy for the complainant. Such assistance is provided for pastoral reasons and does not and cannot be considered to constitute an admission of responsibility or an admission that the facts as alleged occurred. The complainant will be asked to acknowledge this in writing at the time of seeking this assistance.
- assistance with fees for therapy or legal counsel for the accused person. Such assistance is provided for pastoral reasons and does not and cannot be considered to constitute an admission of responsibility or an admission that the facts as alleged occurred.

## **Part 2. Reporting Sexual Misconduct and Abuse**

**NOTE: All clergy and archdiocesan and parish employees have a positive duty to report immediately any claims of incidents of misconduct by clergy, employees and/or volunteers. These may be incidents they personally witnessed, incidents they have been told about, and incidents they have any other well-founded reason to believe occurred.**

**NOTE: The *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act* of Alberta requires anyone that has reasonable and probable grounds to believe that a child (i.e anyone under the age of 18) is in need of intervention report that information to a director of Child and Family Services.**

If you become aware of sexual misconduct or abuse by a member of clergy or staff, or by a volunteer, especially if it involves children, adolescents, or vulnerable adults, whether as a witness, something you hear about, or a suspicion you hold, you are strongly encouraged to report it to the Misconduct Policy Administrator (MPA). You may make your report:

- by telephoning 780-532-9766 and leaving a message for the MPA;
- by completing Form 5.2.1.a *Incident Report* and faxing it to 780-532-9706, to the attention of the MPA; or emailing it to [mpa.agm@outlook.com](mailto:mpa.agm@outlook.com);
- by sending a fax or email reporting the incident(s) of misconduct, without using the form;
- by reporting the incident(s) to your pastor, parish staff, or archdiocesan staff, who are mandated to bring the report to the MPA.

You are also strongly encouraged to report it to the local police service, either before or after reporting it to the MPA.

The MPA must and will report the allegations of sexual misconduct or abuse to the local police, if not yet done, and, then, to the Archbishop (or the Vicar General in the absence of the Archbishop.) The MPA will also immediately report any such allegation to the Archdiocese's liability insurer. Where advisable, following the counsel of police and/or the insurer, the person accused of sexual misconduct or abuse will be informed by the Archbishop (or the Vicar General in his absence). The following protocol must then be implemented.

### **Part 3. Protocol for Responding to an Allegation of Sexual Misconduct or Abuse**

There are two principles that are the foundation of this protocol:

- all sexual assault and misconduct allegations will be reported to local police and the police investigations and any subsequent court proceedings will take precedence over action taken in the Archdiocese; and,
- possible victims of sexual assault or misconduct, allegedly perpetrated by trusted members of the Church, must receive the unconditional pastoral care and support of the Archdiocese.

#### **1. Allegation against a priest or permanent deacon**

##### **a. Responding to the allegation**

###### **▪ Archbishop's role**

After an allegation of sexual assault or misconduct by a priest or deacon has been received by the Archdiocese and reported to police, the Archbishop:

- will remove the priest or deacon from all active ministry and this will remain in place until the allegation has been resolved. In most cases, the priest or deacon will continue to receive his monthly living allowance; there may be some changes in the amount in order to best reflect the needs of the priest.
- in consultation with the Curia, will determine where the accused priest will reside until all the criminal, civil and/or canonical processes are resolved. All related expenses for the housing of the accused priest will be borne by the Archdiocese;
- where the accused is a deacon, in consultation with the Curia and informed by the family life of the accused, will determine whether the Archdiocese bears any responsibility for changes to where the accused resides until the criminal, civil and/or canonical processes are resolved;
- will communicate as openly as possible with the chairperson of the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) of the impacted parish(es). The Archbishop or Vicar General will, as far as possible, preside at the next Sunday Eucharist of the impacted parish(es), and there advise the parishioners about actions taken and any other relevant information regarding the arrest and status of the clergyman. Where there is no possibility for either the Archbishop or the Vicar General to be present in the parish(es), the Archbishop will prepare a message to be delivered on his behalf, by the chairperson of the PPC, at the next Sunday Eucharist.

- will have the Archdiocese take sole responsibility for continuing the living allowance of the accused priest or contracted compensation of a deacon while he is not actively serving a parish. The impacted parish(es) will be responsible for paying for any pastoral assistance provided during the period they are without a parish priest.
- in consultation with the Vicar General and a canonist, will consider whether to undertake a preliminary canonical inquiry and, if necessary, refer the case to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF), according to the Roman norms.

- **Role of the MPA**

After an allegation of sexual assault or misconduct by a priest or deacon has been received by the Archdiocese and reported to police, the MPA:

- will connect the priest or deacon with a RSP to assist him in arranging for appropriate legal counsel, as well as help him, as needed, e.g. to get settled in his new living quarters, to accompany him to court appearances, to help with arranging counselling for him, etc.
- will connect the complainant, if advisable and possible, with a RSP to provide guidance as needed.
- will help the complainant, if advisable and possible, to find professional counselling services.

**b. In the event of criminal proceedings**

- **Archbishop's role**

If a priest or deacon is criminally charged for sexual assault, the Archbishop will:

- ensure that the media spokesperson has an appropriate written statement prepared for release to the media when the charges are made known by the police (either through their own media release or as a result of court proceedings).
- send a notice to all clergy, outlining the status of the charges, the likely or known progression of the case against the priest or deacon, and any relevant public information. The priest or other presider at Sunday liturgies in the parishes of the Archdiocese will read aloud the notice at the first Sunday following receipt of it.
- guarantee all reasonable legal fees, including bail, in the defence of the priest or deacon.
- if possible, express in writing to the complainant his concern for the complainant's well-being. This will be the sole purpose of the communication and NO other communication will take place with the complainant, by the Archbishop or any representative of the Archdiocese, during the proceedings.
- to the extent possible, attend the priest or deacon's court appearances, for preliminary hearings and/or trial. The Archbishop's presence at such is intended to be supportive of both the accused and the complainant.

- **Role of the MPA**

If a priest or deacon is criminally charged with sexual assault, the MPA will

- postpone any internal investigation and/or reporting until the criminal proceedings have concluded.

- ensure the RSPs have what they need to continue to assist the accused and the complainant.

**c. When criminal proceedings have concluded**

▪ **Archbishop's role**

If the priest or deacon is convicted or acquitted of sexual assault, the Archbishop will:

- revive or initiate the canonical inquiry and proceedings against the priest or deacon.
- request the MPA to revive or initiate an internal investigation and inquiries and submit a report on the results.
- make all subsequent decisions concerning ministry assignment, living allowance, and all related concerns based on canon law requirements and instructions from the CDF.

▪ **Role of the MPA**

If the priest or deacon is convicted or acquitted of sexual assault, the MPA will

- at the request of the Archbishop, revive or initiate an internal investigation and inquiries and submit a report on the results.

**d. When there are no criminal proceedings**

The provisions of Policy 5.2.1 will be revived or initiated immediately upon receiving the decision of the relevant civil authorities not to undertake criminal proceedings against an accused priest or deacon.

**2. Allegation against employee or volunteer**

**a. Responding to the allegation**

▪ **Archbishop's role**

After an allegation of sexual assault or misconduct by an employee or volunteer has been received by the Archdiocese and reported to police, the Archbishop will:

- ensure that the employee or volunteer has been removed from all active ministry by the parish priest and/or supervisor.
- in the case of an employee, determine if salary will continue to be paid.

▪ **Role of the MPA**

After an allegation of sexual assault by an employee or volunteer has been received by the Archdiocese and reported to police, the MPA will:

- connect the employee or volunteer with a RSP to provide a point of contact in the Archdiocese for the employee or volunteer.
- connect the complainant, if advisable and possible, with a RSP to provide guidance, as needed.
- help the complainant, if advisable and possible, to find professional counselling services.

**b. In the event of criminal proceedings**

▪ **Archbishop's role**

If an employee or volunteer is criminally charged with sexual assault, the Archbishop will:

- ensure that the media spokesperson has an appropriate written statement prepared for release to the media when the charges are made known by the police (either through their own media release or as a result of court proceedings).
- if possible, express in writing to the complainant his concern for the complainant's well-being. This will be the sole purpose of the communication and NO other communication will take place with the complainant, by the Archbishop or any representative of the Archdiocese, during the proceedings.

- **Role of the MPA**

If an employee or volunteer is criminally charged with sexual assault, the MPA will

- postpone any internal investigation and/or reporting until the criminal proceedings have concluded.
- assist the parish priest and the impacted parish with communication and otherwise responding to the needs of the community in the situation.
- ensure the RSPs have what they need to continue to assist the accused and the complainant.

**c. When criminal proceedings have concluded**

If the employee or volunteer is convicted of sexual assault, the policies of the Archdiocese regarding screening of employees and volunteers (Policy 5.1.1 and Policy 5.1.2) will apply to the question of how best to reintegrate the person into the parish.

If the employee or volunteer is acquitted of sexual assault, the parish priest, in consultation with the Archbishop and anyone else of the Archbishop's choosing, will determine how best to reintegrate the person into the parish.

- **Role of the MPA**

If the employee or volunteer is convicted or acquitted of sexual assault, the MPA will:

- at the request of the Archbishop, revive or initiate an internal investigation and inquiries and submit a report on the results.

**d. When there are no criminal proceedings**

The provisions of Policy 5.2.1 will be revived or initiated immediately upon receiving the decision of the relevant civil authorities not to undertake criminal proceedings against an accused employee or volunteer.

## **Part 4. Confidentiality**

To the extent possible, everyone involved in the processes under this policy on behalf of the Archdiocese will maintain the confidentiality of the complainant and accused person at all times during the process. When the process is complete and the Archbishop has adjudicated the matter, canonical and civil law provisions will be applied to the continuation or not of that confidentiality.

In addition, should the identities of the people involved in and/or circumstances of the complaint become public knowledge, the MPA may, after consultation with the MPAC and on approval from the

Archbishop, act as, or appoint, a media spokesperson to represent and speak on behalf of the Archdiocese in public communications. The intent is to protect the interests of the parties involved, including the Archdiocese.

### **Part 5. Public communication**

As noted above, the MPA or an appointee will act as a media spokesperson for the Archdiocese. The media spokesperson is to be guided by the following principles:

- Acknowledging the possibility of misconduct among our own clergy, staff and volunteers, the Archdiocese has put in place a comprehensive set of policies and procedures that assist us in responding to misconduct, including harassment, exploitation, bullying and all forms of abuse, with charity, justice and fairness;
- The Archdiocese has a particular responsibility to protect and a deep concern for the health and well-being of children, adolescents and vulnerable adults in our parishes and receiving our ministry; and,
- The procedure that follows a report of misconduct is intended to provide a fair, thorough, objective, accountable, transparent, supportive and compassionate response to all who are involved in an allegation and investigation of misconduct.

Promulgated by the College of Consultors on 25 September 2010  
Amended by the College of Consultors on 15 January 2013  
Amended by the College of Consultors on 23 January 2018

## **POLICY 5.3      Compassionate Leave**

[\(top\)](#)

### **Death of a Parent**

In the event of the death of a parent of a priest, a two week leave of absence shall be awarded to the priest for his attendance at the funeral and for compassionate leave.

In this instance, the Diocese will reimburse the priest for his flight expenses.

### **Death of a Sibling**

In the event of the death of a sibling of a priest, a two week leave of absence shall be awarded to the priest for his attendance at the funeral and for compassionate leave. In this instance, the Diocese, at the written request of the priest, may provide interim funding to cover his travel expenses. This funding shall be repaid to the Diocese on a pre-determined term.

### **Illness of a Parent or Sibling**

During a period of the severe illness of a parent or sibling, a priest, upon written request, may be awarded a compassionate leave for a maximum of two weeks. In this instance, the Diocese, at the written request of the priest, may provide interim funding to cover his travel expenses. This funding shall be repaid to the Diocese on a pre-determined term.

## **POLICY 5.4**

(see Policy 3.6.6)

## **POLICY 5.5      Hiring and Dismissal of Lay Staff**

[\(top\)](#)

Being the legal entity that incorporates the chancery offices as well as all of the parishes in the archdiocese, the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan in the person of the Archbishop alone is legally responsible for the lawful hiring and dismissal of all administrative and pastoral staff. Any lawsuit resulting from the wrongful dismissal of any employee will be delivered to the Archbishop.

With this awareness, it is evident that the Archbishop, through the Financial Administrator of the Archdiocese, must be fully aware of and in agreement with the hiring, continued engagement and dismissal of all employees.

Therefore, all actions relating to employees must be undertaken with the knowledge and written approval of the Archbishop, through the Archdiocesan Financial Administrator.

Accepted by the College of Consultors 28 September 2011