



Archdiocese of Vancouver  
*Protecting God's Children*

## Code of Conduct for Employees and Volunteers

Those who act in the name of the Church have special influence in the lives of the people to whom they minister. Employees/volunteers in the Archdiocese are called to treat others with respect and care whether on or off the parish grounds. Employees/volunteers must sign and agree to the Code of Conduct prior to service.

### General

Employees/Volunteers are required to:

- act at all times in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church;
- be competent, reliable and ethical;
- avoid being alone with minors and vulnerable adults;
- ensure that minors are properly supervised;
- take immediate action in situations where others are placing minors/vulnerable adults in danger;
- report inappropriate conduct and suspected abuse to the pastor, parish screening coordinator or ministry supervisor;
- directly report suspected abuse of minors to designated civil authorities;
- refrain from drinking or being under the influence of alcohol while supervising minors; and
- wear appropriate and modest attire at all times.

### Boundaries

Employees/Volunteers are required to:

- maintain appropriate boundaries in ministerial relationships and work within the limits of their position;
- refrain from relating to minors as their 'friends' or 'parents';
- ensure visibility by others if it is necessary to be alone with a minor, eg. open doors, visibility through windows;
- obtain the approval of the pastor and the permission of the parents when hosting an off-site event involving minors.

### Communications

Communications including verbal, handwritten, and electronic means will only be for reasons pertaining to the employee's/volunteer's role.

### Physical Contact

Physical contact shall be appropriate to the situation and age of the participant and only permissible if:

- i) it does not cause disproportionate or unnecessary stress or anxiety to the participant; and
- ii) it is entirely and unambiguously non-sexual.

Some examples of appropriate touch:



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- Shaking a participant's hand in greeting
- Holding hands in a prayer or song
- Short hugs
- High five

Corporal punishment is not acceptable at any time.

Additional examples of inappropriate touch:

- Kissing a participant or coaxing him or her into kissing you
- Lengthy hugs or forceful frontal hugs
- Cuddling
- Tickling
- Piggy-back rides
- Lap-sitting
- Wrestling
- Stroking a participant's hair
- Touching buttocks or genital area

Assistance with Toileting/Dressing

Minors should not be assisted with toileting and/or dressing. If a situation arises (ie. accident or emergency) and assistance is required, another person should be present. The situation should then be reported to the parent and/or coordinator.

Transportation

Employee/volunteer drivers should:

- be a minimum of 19 years of age
- receive permission of the minor or vulnerable adult's parent/guardian,
- ensure that the coordinator has knowledge of the driving arrangement, and
- ensure that there is a third person in the vehicle.

If required to drive minors and vulnerable adults on a periodic basis, employees/volunteers should submit a suitable Drivers' Abstract and Volunteer Driver form to the Parish Screening Coordinator.

Overnight Events/trips

In parish or diocesan activities involving overnight stays, a minimum of two screened adults must be present. All overnight trips must have specific approval from the pastor.

Harassment

Every individual has the right to be free from harassment. Harassment is defined as objectionable conduct or comment, directed toward a specific person(s), which serves no legitimate work purpose, and has the effect of creating a humiliating, hostile or offensive environment.



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Confidentiality

Confidentiality must be respected at all times unless disclosure is required for reasons of:

- i) participant safety;
- ii) parental or professional intervention and guidance; and/or
- iii) legal obligations.

Review and Disclosure

If incidents of concern arise, employees/volunteers should review the situation with the pastor or ministry coordinator. Dealings between employees/volunteers and participants must be open and transparent. If an unduly close relationship develops between an employee/volunteer and participant, the situation must be disclosed to the pastor or ministry coordinator.

Gifts

Expensive gifts from participants are inappropriate and should not be accepted. In some situations, it is appropriate to accept tokens of appreciation. The receipt of gifts from participants should be disclosed to ministry coordinators.

Use of Parish Name & Property

Speaking in the name of the parish shall be avoided unless specifically authorized by the pastor to do so. Parish resources (for example, keys/computers, etc.) are only to be used for their authorized/ intended purposes. These resources must be adequately safeguarded and must not be shared without authorization.

I understand that a breach of any of the above may lead to disciplinary action.

I acknowledge that I may be subject to a screening interview, reference checking, a police record check and vulnerable sector search if I am working with minors/vulnerable adults.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee/Volunteer's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Screening Coordinator's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

