

Parishes should obtain proof of insurance from user groups and confirm that they have and follow policies on working with vulnerable people, at least equivalent to our Safe Church policies.

### Safe Environments

*We must not forget that it is also very important to create safe environments - safe places and safe situations especially for children and youth.*

Consider:

- Have we properly assessed risks that affect our vulnerable people?
- Have we adequately screened our volunteers?
- Are two adults arranged to be present during any activity for young children or youth?
- Do gathering rooms and offices have windows and doors that allow an outside person to see in?
- Have arrangements been made so a leader does not meet alone with a child?
- What arrangements are made for young children needing assistance using the bathroom?
- What arrangements are made for diaper changing? Is the change table in view of the other nursery workers?

### Safe Situations

*Safety doesn't apply just to children; it's for everyone.*

- Meet in rooms with viewing access.
- Avoid being alone in a car with a minor.
- When visiting a single distressed person, go with another person.
- In an emergency, and failing all else, church visitors should tell someone else like a secretary or warden, where they are going and how long the visit is expected to take.
- If a compromising situation or crisis occurs report it as soon as possible to a supervisor.
- Consider keeping a record of visits, appointments and meetings.

### Safe Record Keeping

*The acquisition, storage and protection of personal information are key to the Safe Church process.*

Applications, resumes, interview notes, reference checks and records of current police checks should be filed in a locked cabinet or office on-site.

Money from any service or activity must be counted onsite by two or more unrelated persons.

### Safe Communication

*Interactions in the virtual world must be as transparent as they would be in the physical world.*

- Be honest about who you are.
- Clarify that your opinions are your own.
- Communicate with respect and humility.
- Share only public information.
- Be aware that what you say in a post is permanent.

*For a complete copy of the Safe Church Policy go to [www.diohuron.org/safechurch/](http://www.diohuron.org/safechurch/)*

*For guidelines specific to children and youth see Our Sacred Trust*



The Diocese of Huron  
190 Queens Ave  
London ON,  
N6A 6H7

### Safe Church Contact:

Weekdays 519-434-6893  
or 1-800-919-1115 ext. 226 or 230

### Abuse Reporting:

Weekends & Evenings 519-671-4504  
Email: [sacredtrusthuron@gmail.com](mailto:sacredtrusthuron@gmail.com)

# Safe Church

*...safeguarding the body of Christ in the Diocese of Huron*



For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ...If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

1 Corinthians 12:12, 26-27

*Within the Church, and within our lives, all of us must conduct ourselves in a manner which shows respect and honesty to those with whom we associate or who are in our care. Contained in this pamphlet is a brief summary of the Diocese of Huron's Safe Church Policy.*

#### **Canon 40 Screening in Faith – A summary**

Every parish and Diocesan and Deanery organization that runs programs or services for children, youth, or vulnerable adults shall implement a screening program.

Special consideration must be taken in high risk ministry situations where volunteers or paid staff have direct care of, or direct access to vulnerable persons or church assets.

A person can be considered vulnerable when they have difficulty protecting themselves for any number of reasons, including age, disability, or temporary personal crisis.

In the development of a screening program, the following principles shall be considered:

- 1) Determine the level of risk
- 2) Volunteer ministry description
- 3) Recruitment process

- 4) Application form
- 5) Interview
- 6) Reference checks
- 7) Police records checks
- 8) Orientation and training
- 9) Supervision and evaluation
- 10) Participant follow-up

Every parish or congregation, deanery or diocesan organization will fill out a Screening in Faith Compliance Report, in a format approved by the Diocesan Executive, submitted annually.

#### **Safe People**

***In making our churches safer places we must:***

- Safeguard preschoolers, children, youth and vulnerable people in our church from abuse.
- Protect the church staff and volunteer workers from potential allegations of abuse.
- Limit the extent of legal risk and liability due to any such abuse.
- Protect our leaders and volunteers from situations of risk

#### **Vulnerable People**

We take for granted that our children can be defenseless, yet we often don't give enough thought to reducing the opportunities which might place them at a disadvantage. We know that the elderly or the

disabled can also be vulnerable.

Less obvious types of vulnerability include the bereaved, partners in troubled marriages, those in personal crisis and the survivors of childhood abuse.

#### **High Risk Ministries**

Ministry duties and responsibilities that involve children or vulnerable adults

Ministry duties that permit access to financial resources or sensitive and confidential information

Positions of authority or the positions that allow a person to establish long-term relationships of trust: all clergy including Honorary Assistants; churchwardens; organists and music directors; parish employees; and also those involved in residential or off-site ministries with children or vulnerable adults.

#### **Diocesan Police Check Procedure**

All police checks must be done through Xpresschek

- Print and complete the consent form from the Diocesan website (under safe church)
- Submit with copies of 2 pieces of ID by email or mail to Church

House attn.: HR Officer

- Keep a record of only what members have been screened and when
- Xpresscheks are considered current for 3 years after issue.
- In between checks it is recommended that all individuals sign an Annual Declaration of Compliance, a form which can also be used for those under 18.

#### **Safe Programmes**

*When a programme is held in a Church building, there is an assumption of trust and safety, even when the programme may be offered by a group that rents or uses the building and organizes the event completely without Church input.*

When other groups, e.g. Scouting/Guiding, community groups, musicians, are using Church buildings, care must be taken to define the relationship between the church and the user group.

A written agreement should cover issues such as keys and access to the property, insurance - especially liability and the manner in which the group's staff or volunteers are screened, etc.