

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

FOR

DIOCESAN / PARISH PILGRIMAGES



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Contents

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Purpose of the Policy
3.0	Principles
4.0	Scope of the Policy
5.0	Prior to Travel
5.1	Risk Analysis
5.2	Safeguarding Officer
5.3	Recruitment and Selection Procedures
5.4	Youth Section
5.5	Assisted Pilgrims
5.6	Safeguarding Training
5.7	Code of Conduct
5.8	Dress Code
5.9	Youth Section
5.10	Group Identity
6.0	During Pilgrimage
6.1	Photographs
6.2	Social Media
6.3	Reporting of Concerns
7.0	Post Pilgrimage

1.0 Introduction

The Dioceses of the Province of Cashel are committed to safeguarding as an integral component of the life and ministry of the Catholic Church and recognise a particular responsibility for the protection from harm of children, young people and adults who may be at risk of abuse due to their vulnerability.

The Dioceses are aware of their duty of care to all young people and adults who might be vulnerable who travel to pilgrimages under their auspices, and this includes ensuring that they have a spiritual, positive, and safe experience during their pilgrimage. Ensuring that all involved in the pilgrimage are aware of best practice guidelines in relation to safeguarding children, young people, and adults who might be vulnerable.

All Clergy, Religious, Staff, Volunteers, Leaders and Young People must adhere to the Policies and Procedures in place for all pilgrimage activities and should always act to create safe environments for Assisted Pilgrims and ensure that all concerns are responded to appropriately.

This Document is based on the Standards and Guidance of the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland 'A Safe and Welcoming Church 2024' and is compliant with Children's First Act 2015: Children First National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, and the Adult Safeguarding Policy of the Dioceses of the Province of Cashel.

2.0 Purpose of the Policy

- To create and maintain safe environments for Diocesan / Parish Pilgrimages.
- Inform leaders/ volunteers, clerics, religious, assisted pilgrims, and their families of the Safeguarding Principles for Pilgrimages
- Outline procedures for reporting, investigating, and dealing with any safeguarding concern raised during the pilgrimage

3.0 Principles

The following Principles underlie this policy:

- A duty of care to pilgrims, staff, volunteers, leaders, clerics and religious and in particular to assisted pilgrims.
- The welfare of assisted pilgrims and youth is paramount
- All personnel will be informed of this policy, the vetting requirements, and the safeguarding training to ensure best practice and safe care.
- All personnel will be treated with respect

4.0 Scope of the Policy

This policy is addressed to all Church personnel / volunteers in the Dioceses who are involved with Diocesan / Parish Pilgrimages which involve overnight stays and or travel abroad when such pilgrimages are orientated towards youth or assisted pilgrims.

If any pilgrimage has their own safeguarding procedures, these must be signed off by the Director of Safeguarding beforehand.

*Day Pilgrimages should follow the broad Principles of this policy and have safeguarding arrangements that are proportionate to the risk identified. If the Diocesan / Parish pilgrimage has no youth group or unaccompanied person under 18 years old or has no responsibility for taking vulnerable persons, best practice should be followed in line with Diocesan guidance and procedures.

5.0 Prior to Travel

5.1. Risk Analysis

The leaders of a pilgrimage must, prior to the pilgrimage, undertake a risk assessment process which identifies any potential risks, details the actions to mitigate such risks and identify who is responsible for each action.

If a person wishes to raise a safeguarding concern prior to travel, then this should be made either to the Director of the Pilgrimage, or the Diocesan Designated Liaison Person.

5.2 Safeguarding Officer

Each Pilgrimage must have a trained Safeguarding Officer appointed by the Bishop and who is part of, and travels with, the pilgrimage. This person should ideally be someone who is in a safeguarding role in the diocese (Director of Safeguarding / Safeguarding Co-Ordinator / Diocesan Designated Liaison Person/ Trainer, Member of the safeguarding Committee etc). The Safeguarding Officer will act as a link person with the Director of the Pilgrimage and the Diocesan Designated Liaison Person. Safeguarding Officers must be identified for the area of youths and adults who might be vulnerable. If one Safeguarding Officer is covering both areas this must be clarified before the trip. Contact details for the Safeguarding Officer must be included in the information booklet.

Their main role is:

- To be the main point of contact for any safeguarding concerns raised during the pilgrimage.
- Liaise with the Pilgrimage Director / Director for Youth and share any safeguarding concerns.
- Seek advice from and report to the Diocesan Designated Liaison Person.
- Support and assist the pilgrimage in all matters relating to safeguarding pre, during and post-pilgrimage.
- Establish arrangements for contacting the police and reporting any incidents in destination countries with different legal contexts.
- To ensure that an identified person, such as the Diocesan Secretary, in the Dioceses has the names and contacts details of the volunteers / staff, youth groups and assisted pilgrims and those responsible for their welfare / care in cases of extreme emergencies. This is the responsibility of the Pilgrimage Director or person appointment by him / her.
- At the end of the Pilgrimage a safeguarding report will be written for the Bishop.

5.3 Recruitment and Selection

The Director of the Pilgrimage or their delegate must approve the participation of any person involved as a volunteer and or staff and such approval can only be given when the approved procedures have been followed.

Each role should have a role description.

- a) Basic requirements for all staff and volunteers
 - Complete application form with references and agreement to comply with Diocesan Adult Safeguarding Policy and related Code of Conduct and Diocesan Safeguarding Children Policy
 - Garda Vetting
 - Attendance at Safeguarding Information Session
 - Any other training that may be prescribed
- b) Additional requirements for other roles i.e.
 - Medical/Nursing proof of current medical registration
 - Manual Handling training for Brancardier, Handmaids, medical / nursing

*If retired Medical / Nursing professionals do not have valid registration, then they cannot volunteer in that role.

5.4 Youth Section

The involvement of people under the age of 18 years will need to be the subject of separate procedures to those of adults.

Such procedures must comply with the procedures outlined in the Policy & Guidance of the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland.

*In the unlikely event that a child needs to be sent home, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to travel out to collect their child. Therefore, the parents need to be informed prior to the pilgrimage that they must have a valid passport and this information must be relayed to the young people and their parent/s at the initial youth meeting.

5.5 Assisted Pilgrims

Every participating assisted pilgrim will need to have a completed registration form which must include written confirmation from a qualified medical practitioner which will confirm their suitability for travel, participation and identify any particular needs which may arise during the pilgrimage.

Any concerns re behaviour which might compromise another person's well being also needs to be identified and managed.

5.6 Safeguarding Training

Ensure a minimum standard of mandatory training for those in supervisory roles. A range of training opportunities is likely to be required to meet different needs. For example, when caring for assisted

pilgrims - training should include, lifting and manual handling and safe use of equipment, wheelchair management: confidentiality, how to respond if approached individually for assistance to ensure the safety of all, accident/incident reporting, whistleblowing policy, and complaints procedure. Records of training undertaken including its content, should be kept in accordance with diocesan retention policy.

Manual Handling training will be undertaken by qualified professionals and will be mandatory for those volunteering or in a role with assisted pilgrims.

The same 2-hour Safeguarding Training will be offered by the Munster Safeguarding Personnel across the Munster Metropolitan Area.

It is important to note that failure to attend the mandatory safeguarding and manual handling training will result in individuals not being able to participate as helpers /volunteers.

5.7 Codes of Conduct for leaders, helpers/ volunteers

The code of conduct for Safeguarding Children and Adult Safeguarding are to be followed according to the focus of the pilgrimage.

Any breach in the code of conduct will be reported to the Pilgrimage Director and Safeguarding Officer who will follow the guidance procedure for dealing with misconduct arising before and during the pilgrimage.

Where there is a question about a person being fit for duty the person in charge on the shift and or the Pilgrimage Director liaise with the person in making the decision.

Helpers / volunteers need to be mindful not to compromise their ability to provide safe care, e.g. by being under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances.

* In relation to Lourdes, there are strict guidelines in relation to the above, which are in the Code of Contact for that pilgrimage.

5.8 Dress Code

On pilgrimage to a sacred place of worship, pilgrims are requested to dress in an appropriate and respectful way. Pants, dresses, shorts, and skirts should be to the knee or longer, a scarf can be used to cover bare shoulders, tight pants/leggings are not appropriate dress.

It is expected that the guidance on dress code in the volunteer's packs be followed always respecting the need for appropriate attire especially in the areas of sacred places.

5.9 Youth Section

If the role of the youth section is to help with assisted pilgrims, then Garda Vetting is required, therefore the age of those who can travel as part of the youth section is 16-18 years old.

The involvement of the youth section will need to be the subject of separate procedures to those of adults. Each Pilgrimage with youth and adult pilgrims shall have a youth section handbook and information for the youths and their parents.

A strict dress code will be observed. (as in handbook)

Such procedures must comply with the procedures outlined in the Policy & Guidance of the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland.

Identified and trained leaders will need to have specific responsibility for all young people participating in pilgrimages.

5.10 Group Identity

Decide how group identity will be established, suggested forms of identity include wristbands, name badges, tabards, names on clothing, lanyards/medic badges (with images, if possible, to prevent a third party passing themselves off as a member of the pilgrimage or for ID purposes if someone should go missing or in the case of an emergency incident).

6.0 During the Pilgrimage

6.1 Photographs

The taking of photographs is a very sensitive area and to comply with GDPR legislation as well as safeguarding, written consent by the assisted pilgrim or their family (where the pilgrim cannot make this decision) should be sought for the taking and use of digital images in advance of the Pilgrimage. A written agreement between the Pilgrim organisers with the professional photographers about ownership of images and approval of images before publication and display by the appointed photographer should be in place prior to the event where possible.

An assisted pilgrim can ask a volunteer to take their photos on their own camera / phone.

At no time should any volunteer take pictures of the assisted pilgrims or the youth group on their own devices.

Communication should be set out prior to the pilgrimage regarding those area that are within the control and those things that are not e.g., peer/nonofficial photography. Pilgrims should be informed that the Diocese cannot be held accountable for the taking and publication of non-official photography / social media on the pilgrimage. See the Diocesan Policies on Photography and Social Media for further information.

* Photographs in the Accueil (hospital) in Lourdes are not permitted, unless in exceptional circumstances and with the agreement of the Director of Nursing and the assisted pilgrims.

6.2 Social Media Policy

It is prohibited to post any photos or videos onto personal social media accounts of assisted pilgrims or the youth group.

Any official Diocesan Social media forums must have the written consent of each person in the post prior to posting.

Please refer to the social media and photography guidance / policies in the individual Diocese.

Use link to Diocesan Social Media Policy, which also includes use of photographs by mobile phones.

6.3 Reporting of Concerns on the Pilgrimage

The Safeguarding Policy for Children and Adults at Risk must be followed and can be found at;

www.corkandross.org

Who to report to on the pilgrimage:

- Safeguarding officer for the pilgrimage.

How to report:

- The contact details for the safeguarding officer will be given out prior to travel.

7.0 Post Pilgrimage

An annual review meeting to be held as soon as possible after the pilgrimage. Learnings from this will influence policy and procedure in preparation for the next pilgrimage. The following will form part of the review:

- Provide feedback forms to leaders, helpers, and assisted pilgrims.
- The review feedback meeting/s to be attended by pilgrimage organisers of various aspect of the pilgrimage, e.g. liturgy, clinical, formation (including training), leadership, safeguarding, health & safety, etc.
- Review of any accident incident forms.
- Pilgrim Director will prepare an evaluation report and submit it to the Bishop after the Pilgrimage.

*to be filed securely in line with the Diocesan retention policy.