



Protocol: Dealing with Volunteers and contractors

This protocol provides a summary of the requirements for engaging Volunteers and contractors who will or are expected to have contact with Children in the course of their activities in the relevant parish or agency. This protocol also applies to students on placement.

Key obligation

Child protection obligations at parishes and agencies apply to Volunteers and contractors as well as Employees, Clergy and Religious Appointees.

1 Engaging Volunteers

1.1 Screening

- a) All Volunteers must be screened in accordance with **Protocol: Screening of Workers**.
- b) If a Volunteer who requires a Working With Children Check to be engaged in a particular position is not cleared to work with children, they cannot be engaged in that position.

1.2 Induction and training

- a) Once they have been engaged, Volunteers must undertake the child safeguarding induction and/or training set out in the **Policy** and sign the **Code of Conduct for Working with Children**.
- b) Induction must be provided to all Volunteers who will, or are expected to, have contact with Children in the course of their activities in the relevant parish or agency, regardless of whether they are required to be screened under the **Protocol: Screening of Workers**.
- c) The **Code of Conduct for Working with Children** must be read and signed by all Volunteers who will, or are expected to, have contact with Children in the course of their activities in the relevant parish or agency, regardless of whether they are required to be screened.
- d) The induction for Volunteers should be similar to the induction for new staff. If the Volunteer will only have limited contact with Children, the induction need not be as extensive as for new staff.
- e) Volunteers should also be invited to attend staff safeguarding and Child protection refresher training at the relevant parish or agency.

1.3 Compliance with Child safeguarding requirements

- a) Volunteers are expected to comply with the Policy, in particular requirements regarding reporting Safeguarding Complaints.

Reports of inappropriate conduct by Volunteers must be reported to the Safeguarding Office which will assist in reporting to the NSW Police if required. See **Protocol: Reporting Reportable Crimes to the NSW Police**; and/or

- b) Volunteers may be considered “employees” under the *Children’s Guardian Act 2019* (NSW), if they hold or are required to hold a Working With Children Check for engagement with the Archdiocese. Accordingly, on receiving a report about inappropriate conduct by a Volunteer, the Safeguarding Office will determine whether the conduct is also reportable to the NSW Office of the Children’s Guardian under **Protocol: Reporting inappropriate conduct to the NSW Office of the Children’s Guardian**.
- c) The Safeguarding Office may also determine that it is appropriate to report the Volunteer’s conduct to the Department of Communities and Justice under **Protocol: Reporting a Child at Risk of Significant Harm to the Department of Communities and Justice**.

2 Engaging contractors

2.1 Engagement of contractors generally

- a) First and foremost, the Archdiocese’s rules and policies for engaging contractors apply before any Child safeguarding requirements are considered.
- b) The Archdiocese’s pro forma agreements contain clauses relating to child safeguarding.
- c) All contractors must sign on and sign off when attending a parish or agency to provide services.

2.2 Screening

- a) Self-employed contractors must be screened in accordance with **Protocol: Screening of Workers**.
- b) If a self-employed contractor who requires a Working With Children Check to be engaged to provide particular services is not cleared to work with Children, they cannot be engaged to provide those services.
- c) Contractor companies are responsible for screening their own workers. The Archdiocese’s relevant standard contracts require those contractors to undertake that they have complied with their screening obligations.

2.3 Induction and training

- a) Once they have been engaged, contractors must undertake the safeguarding and Child protection induction and/or training set out in the Policy and sign the **Code of Conduct for Working with Children**.
- b) Induction must be provided to all contractors who will, or are expected to, have contact with Children in the course of their activities in the relevant parish or agency, regardless of whether they are required to be screened under the **Protocol: Screening of Workers**.

- c) All contractors who will be, or who are expected to, have contact with children in the course of their activities in the relevant parish or agency must read and sign **Code of Conduct for Working with Children**, regardless of whether they are required to be screened.
- d) The induction should provide contractors with an overview of Child protection issues, with a focus on rules for appropriate contact with Children, and be provided at the same time as work health and safety induction.

2.4 Compliance with child protection requirements

- a) Contractors are expected to comply with the Policy, in particular requirements regarding reporting Safeguarding Complaints.
- b) Reports of inappropriate conduct by contractors must be reported to the:
 - i) NSW Police if they constitute Reportable Crimes – see **Protocol: Reporting Reportable Crimes to the NSW Police**. In practice, the Safeguarding Office assists with reporting to the NSW Police and will provide a copy of the report made so that the individual has evidence that his or her personal obligation to report has been fulfilled; and
 - ii) relevant Parish Priest or Agency Head, who must inform the Safeguarding Office.
- c) Contractors are considered “employees” under the *Children’s Guardian Act 2019* (NSW) if they hold or are required to hold a Working With Children Check for engagement with the Archdiocese. Accordingly, on receiving a report of inappropriate conduct by a contractor, the Safeguarding Office will determine whether the contractor’s allegedly inappropriate conduct is also be reportable to the NSW Office of the Children’s Guardian under **Protocol: Reporting inappropriate conduct to the NSW Office of the Children’s Guardian**.
- d) The Safeguarding Office may also determine that it is appropriate to report the contractor’s conduct to the Department of Communities and Justice under **Protocol: Reporting a Child at Risk of Significant Harm to the Department of Communities and Justice**.