

## Code of conduct for ministry involving minors or vulnerable adults

In as much as [Name of the parish or the Service] is a reputable organization, this code of conduct was established for all our employees and our volunteers **including clergy members, religious or laity**. While our employees and volunteers all have unique importance and individuality, we are all, collectively, an organization committed to acting in the best interests of minors and vulnerable adults. Safety, rights and the well-being of minors and vulnerable adults we serve are central to our daily pastoral activities. Within reasonable limits, we develop constructive relationships with this group.

We will not tolerate any misconduct by an employee or volunteer, especially if it affects the welfare of the minors and vulnerable adults we serve.

**Misconduct is inappropriate behavior that can be manifested, among others, in the following ways:**

- Contact with a minor or a vulnerable adult outside the normal scope of responsibilities or tasks of an employee or volunteer, for example:
  - Sending personal letters or texts (SMS)
  - Making personal phone calls;
  - Having one-to-one personal communications over the Internet (email, instant messaging, social networking sites, chat rooms, etc.);
  - Sending personalized gifts...

**Note: Misconduct does not constitute a thank you card, a birthday card, a greeting card or a small gift, provided that this gesture is considered reasonable in the circumstances, that such actions do not amount to an excessive number and that these exchanges are made within the workplace, in the presence of others and with the knowledge of the organization.**

- Asking a minor or a vulnerable adult to accompany him without the permission of parents/guardians/caregivers.
- Spending time with a minor or a vulnerable adult out of work or planned activities (unless this is an activity resulting from parental initiative and that the organization is aware of this activity and has previously approved it).
- Showing favoritism toward a minor or a vulnerable adult.
- Telling lewd jokes to a minor or a vulnerable adult.
- Showing a minor or a vulnerable adult pornographic or sexual material (posters, cartoons, calendars, journals, photos, etc.) or displaying such material in plain view.
- Taking pictures of a minor or a vulnerable adult, except at the express request of the organization, and provided that these photos are taken with devices that belong to the organization or are its responsibility.

**Note: A staff member must never use his/her own cell phone or camera to photograph a minor or a vulnerable adult nor send or copy pictures taken by him/her of a minor or a vulnerable adult over the Internet or any personal storage device.**

**Staff and volunteers of [Name of the parish or the Service]:**

- Respect at all times the policies and procedures of the Parish when dealing with minors and vulnerable adults;
- Treat minors with respect and dignity;
- Always display a label (badge) with their name during activities and meetings;
- Take seriously any allegation or suspicion of sexual misconduct; all staff and volunteers have a duty to report such allegations or suspicions;
- Follow established procedures\* when reporting allegations of misconduct or violation of internal policies;
- Consider the final results of any behavior and the reaction of a minor or a vulnerable adult in any activity, conversation or interaction in order to avoid embarrassing him, to make him feel ashamed or humiliated;
- Respect and maintain boundaries with all minors and vulnerable adults.

**Staff and volunteers of [Name of the parish or the Service] must not:**

- Be engaged in any activity that threatens the safety of a minor or vulnerable adult or makes a minor or vulnerable adult feel uncomfortable;
- Be engaged in any activity that goes against the mandate, policies or the organization code of conduct;
- Make suggestive, obscene or sexual remarks, comments or jokes to a minor or vulnerable adult or about a minor or vulnerable adult;
- Have physical contact with a child that could make them uncomfortable or which extend beyond reasonable limits;
- Do their own investigation of allegations or suspicions of sexual misconduct; **staff and volunteers have a duty to report\*, not to investigate;**
- Place a minor or a vulnerable adult in a situation of vulnerability to anyone, both inside and outside the organization;
- Use corporal punishment such as hitting, spanking or using a belt;
- Offer a minor or a vulnerable adult "special" treatment that is not within the mandate of the organization or would place (or give the impression of placing) a minor or a vulnerable adult in a situation where he/she could be exploited.

**Staff and volunteers of [Name of the parish or the Service] must ensure that:**

- The activities in which they engage with a minor or a vulnerable adult are announced and approved by supervisors or parents; no relationship with a minor or a vulnerable adult should be kept secret; all relationships should be transparent;
- Their activities **MUST** not be considered inappropriate by a reasonable observer;
- Their activities are not likely to harm the organization's reputation;

- Their activities could not, in the eyes of a reasonable observer, be deemed dangerous to the safety or the personal integrity of a minor or a vulnerable adult;
- Their activities should not make a minor or a vulnerable adult uncomfortable;
- Their activities are not likely to be deemed inappropriate by the organization, the family of the minor or the vulnerable adult or the public at large.
- The places chosen are never those of a private home;
- An attendance list is taken at the beginning of each meeting. It must be then stored carefully in the parish or in the Service;
- It is imperative that two screened adults, unrelated to each other, are present during the activity ;
- The door of the room used is kept open throughout the activity.

For all activities involving travelling, staff and volunteers of **[Name of the parish or the Service]** must ensure that:

- The driver has an appropriate driver's license;
- That the trip is covered by adequate insurance;
- The number of people per vehicle never exceeds the number of available seats or safety belts;
- That parents or guardians are clearly informed of the place and time of the return;
- The rules governing trips outside Quebec and Canada are observed.

For all activities involving an overnight stay, staff and volunteers of **[Name of the parish or the Service]** ensure that:

- An authorization is signed by parents or legal guardians or caregivers when an activity involves travelling or an overnight stay;
- They are never alone with a minor or vulnerable adult, when they have to share a room or a dorm with them, and that they dress appropriately.
- Minors and vulnerable adults are supervised at all times;
- Two authorized adults are present (parent or guardian, or designated staff) in sanitary facilities, showers and locker rooms. If the accommodation does not have sanitary facilities, showers and separate changing rooms for girls and boys, they have to be used in turns. Authorized personnel will never use these facilities when they are in use by minors or vulnerable adults;
- The modesty and dignity of every minor or vulnerable adult should be respected, especially in showers, minors and vulnerable adults are never forced to undress.

For all sport activities, staff and volunteers of **[Name of the parish or the Service]** must ensure that:

- At least one member of the appointed or designated staff has the first aid certification level required by insurers;
- The activities are covered by adequate insurance.

Any breach of this Code of Conduct by an employee or volunteer will be investigated and will lead to disciplinary measures if required. The consequences or disciplinary measures to be imposed shall be determined by the diocesan or parish authority, depending on the nature and severity of the incident.

I agree to abide by this Code of Conduct.

Name and signature of the employee or volunteer

Date

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\* Refer to the Diocesan protocol to report cases of abuse :

<https://www.diocesemontreal.org/sites/default/files/2019-03/protocol-allegations-abuse.pdf>