



Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon
Українська Католицька Єпархія Саскатуну

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APPENDIX F:
COVENANT OF CARE
REFERENCE SHEET
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The Eparchy is responsible to provide a safe, respectful and secure environment for ministry. The *Covenant of Care* outlines the standards of conduct for all employees and volunteers, including clergy, religious and lay people. In providing ministry, employees and volunteers are placed in situations where they may have access to highly sensitive and confidential information. The specialized nature of church work in many cases can place providers and recipients of pastoral services in a vulnerable situation; individuals are dependent upon the honesty and integrity of all employees and volunteers associated with the Church. This calls for responsibility and places the burden of adhering to the *Covenant of Care* on each employee and volunteer.

1. Employees and volunteers assume full responsibility for establishing and maintaining clear and appropriate boundaries in all ministerial situations, especially those involving minors and vulnerable adults. Employees and volunteers are expected to provide ministry that is free of verbal, sexual and physical misconduct and abuse, harassment, grooming or exploitative behaviours as defined in the *Abuse and Misconduct Policy*.
2. All employees and volunteers in positions of trust or who are involved in ministerial relationships where ministry is conducted via any form of electronic communication will also govern themselves in compliance with the *Eparchial Electronic Communication and Technology Policy* and the *Code of Conduct* contained therein.
3. All interaction between employees or volunteers and minors or vulnerable adults must be appropriate to the ministerial relationship and absent of inappropriate, exploitative, harassing conduct and/or abusive physical or sexual contact. In situations where physical contact is necessary and proper, such as in sacramental preparation, the use of sound discretion and moderation is imperative. In a public setting, with at least one other adult present as per #5, if a minor or the minor's parents initiates innocent physical contact between the child and employee or volunteer, out of acceptable affection, an appropriate response is proper if not prolonged. Not to limit the generality of the above, some examples of appropriate physical affirmations include handshakes, side hugs, high fives or physical contact resulting from legitimate, public, and organized sporting events. Inappropriate physical contact includes prolonged front-to-front hugging, massages, wrestling or other sorts of unacceptable physical contact.
4. In compliance with both Federal and Provincial Laws employees and volunteers who learn of information indicating clear and imminent danger to a child, youth or vulnerable adult must act to protect the safety, health and well-being of the vulnerable parties by disclosing necessary information and communicating such disclosures to their immediate superior and/or other appropriate person(s), including the local police, as outlined in the *Abuse and Misconduct Policy*.
5. At least two adults are to be present for all recreational activities, catechetical programs, transport, and pastoral care outreach involving minors or vulnerable adults. Situations where a minister is alone with a vulnerable person are particularly sensitive and conducive to abuse or allegations of abuse; every effort should be made to prevent both. When one-to-one meetings are necessary, or only one catechist is teaching a class, they must be in rooms and locations that are open to public view. For example, windows in doors should never be covered, or doors should be left open, with at least one other adult present in the area. Whenever possible two adults (in addition to the person receiving ministry) should be present when providing ministry to those at home. The "two-adult rule" articulated above must be strictly adhered to regarding ministry in private homes if the recipient of the ministry is a minor, or vulnerable adult. In all cases the supervision must be reasonably adequate to ensure the safety and well-being of the vulnerable persons present.
6. Employees and volunteers shall not engage in corporal punishment of minors or vulnerable adults in their care. Discipline problems will be handled in coordination with the immediate supervisor and the parents/care providers.
7. Employees and volunteers will not dispense medications without written consent **and clear instructions** from a parent or legal guardian
8. Employees and volunteers should avoid being alone with a minor or vulnerable adult in a residence sleeping facility, locker room, rest room, dressing facility, or other closed room or area that is inappropriate to a ministerial relationship. Overnight trips, special events, and care due to illness, disability or emergency require the utmost attention and planning of leadership. Any off-site or overnight events with minors require a **Parental Consent Form** (Appendix E) or approved general registration form which incorporates those provisions.



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9. For greater clarity, but not to limit the generality of the preceding statements: (a) Employees and volunteers should not, except in exceptional circumstances or with the specific permission of the parents, help children with toileting/diapering. For younger children who cannot manage to use the toilet alone, the volunteer should escort the child to their parent/guardian for needed assistance. In the case of illness, parents should be contacted as soon as reasonably possible. (b) When events such as overnight camps or day trips to a swimming pool require adults to be with minors, every effort must be made to protect their gender appropriate privacy. Adults must change separately from the minors. (c) On overnight trips, at camps or retreats, whenever possible, adults should sleep in a separate room from minors. In cases where adults share dormitories with minors, strict adherence to the “two-adult” rule (#4) is required. Every effort shall be made to respect privacy and provide adequate supervision for the safety of all minors and vulnerable persons. (d) Special requirements must be coordinated with leaders in advance.
10. No employee or volunteer is permitted to be alone in his or her living quarters or motor vehicle with a minor or vulnerable adult whose relationship has been established through a ministerial relationship. Likewise, no employee or volunteer is permitted to take personal trips or vacations with a child, youth or vulnerable adult whose relationship has been established through a ministerial relationship.
11. Employees and volunteers are responsible to maintain their own personal, spiritual, physical, and psychological health. Employees and volunteers are responsible to recognize and act on any warning signs that indicate problems affecting their spiritual, physical, or psychological health. Abuse of alcohol and illegal, prescription or non-prescription, drugs is prohibited. Social use of alcohol, or non-prescription drugs of any sort, or use of prescription medications which impair one’s faculties, are strictly prohibited while engaged in ministry activities. One exception to this rule is found in public ministry in social situations where while there may be minors and vulnerable persons present, but the ministerial role is not specific to them (for example at weddings or other celebrations), and even in those situations the employee or volunteer who is acting in a ministerial role should only consume alcohol to a degree that is moderate and appropriate. Employees and volunteers are expected to maintain good hygiene, proper appearance and clean, modest and appropriate clothing.
12. All employees and volunteers working with minors or vulnerable persons will confirm in writing (Appendix C) that they have read and will adhere to this *Covenant of Care* and will follow Eparchial requirements concerning requisite screening processes, criminal record checks, status affirmations, training and ongoing education.

Within ministerial relationships, the Eparchy will not tolerate physical, verbal or sexual harassment or abuse among its employees and volunteers. In a spirit of common mission, all who work together on behalf of Christ’s Church must be alert to even the beginnings of abuse or misconduct and work to prevent and eliminate both.

It is expected that anyone who exercises ministry in the name of the Eparchy will always adhere to the highest moral, ethical and religious principles in caring for themselves and others. Investigations which result in the confirmation of allegations of misconduct or abuse will result in disciplinary measures against the perpetrator of abuse or harassment which may include suspension, dismissal and/or the reporting of the incident to secular authorities.

Violations of the *Covenant of Care* and the *Electronic Communication and Technology Policy* are to be dealt with according to the *Abuse and Misconduct Policy*.