



Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin

**Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults
Policy and Procedures**

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www.kandle.ie

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Welcoming this Safeguarding Vulnerable Adult's Policy

On behalf of the Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin, I welcome this, our third version of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adult's Policy. This Safeguarding Vulnerable Adult Policy will assist all of us in our roles and responsibilities in creating and maintaining safe environments for all who visit our parishes and to whom we minister.

Inspired by gospel values, the commitment of Pope Leo XIV and in compliance with civil and canon law, the diocese of Kildare and Leighlin will strive to ensure the participation and welfare of all in the life of the Church, including all vulnerable people in our community. Those who are vulnerable require special care and attention. We are committed to fostering a safeguarding culture characterised by empowerment, collaboration and zero tolerance of abuse.

This Policy guides all clergy, religious, staff and volunteers within our Diocese on how to prevent harm to vulnerable adults and how to minister safely. Everyone involved in ministry within the Diocese must follow this Policy and make safeguarding an integral part of the life and ministry of the Catholic Church in Ireland. It is particularly relevant for those involved in chaplaincy, those who organise pilgrimages and those who minister to the housebound.

This Policy will be reviewed and amended as required and will be supported by diocesan safeguarding training.

I want to take this opportunity to thank and acknowledge the work of all those involved in ministry with adults who may be vulnerable, their work is vital in the life of the Church.

✠Denis Nulty
Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin

Section 1

Policy for the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin, adopts a 'Zero Tolerance' approach to any form of abuse and promotes a culture within the Diocese which supports this ethos. It is important that all those involved as clergy (both Diocesan and visiting), staff, volunteers and religious are aware of this document and of their responsibilities therein.
- 1.2 This document is written mindful of the scripture guidance of John 10:10 "I have come that you may have life and have it to the full". This places a responsibility on all to create and maintain experiences within the church and church activities that are free from harm and abuse to allow for the experience of fullness of life.
- 1.3 Pope Francis in his Apostolic Letter on the Protection of Minors and Vulnerable Persons issued Moto Proprio in March 2019 wrote of the protection of minors and vulnerable persons as an integral part of the Gospel message "Christ himself, in fact, has entrusted us with the care and protection of the weakest and defenceless: "whoever receives one child such as this in my name receives me" (Mt18:5). Therefore, we all have the duty to welcome openheartedly minors and vulnerable persons and to create a safe environment for them, with their interests as a priority".
- 1.4 The rights of vulnerable adults to live a life free from neglect, exploitation and abuse are protected under the Irish Constitution and European provisions. Since 2014 the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission has overseen human rights in the Republic of Ireland. Under the European Convention of Human Rights, a vulnerable adult's right to life is protected under Article 1; their right to be protected from inhuman and degrading treatment under Article 3; and their right to liberty and security under Article 5.
- 1.5 Any person who reports a concern of abuse in good faith will be supported throughout the process and protected against victimisation or retaliation.
- 1.6 This document should be read in conjunction with the following policies which are available on the Diocesan website or from your local parish priest/centre:
 - The Diocesan Child Safeguarding Policy; A Safe and Welcoming Church: Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2024
 - The Diocesan Data Protection Policy.
 - The Diocesan Safeguarding Whistleblowing Policy.

2.0 Aim

2.1 This document aims to protect the welfare of vulnerable adults by:

2.1.1 Giving clear definitions of abuse.

2.1.2 Giving definitions of a vulnerable adult.

2.1.3 Clarifying for clergy (both Diocesan and visiting), staff, volunteers and religious involved in ministry on behalf of the Diocese the steps to be followed in the event of receiving an allegation of abuse, suspecting abuse or of witnessing abuse of a vulnerable adult.

2.1.4 Providing clear procedures for dealing with and reporting concerns in the event of a suspicion or disclosure that a vulnerable adult member of the Diocese:

- Is at risk of being abused.
- Is suspected of having been abused.
- Has been abused.

2.1.5 Highlighting the existing procedures for safe recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers to work within the Diocese.

2.1.6 Providing a Code of Conduct/on-going formation materials for diocesan personnel whose ministry brings them into contact with vulnerable adults.

2.1.7 Establishing and maintaining links with statutory and voluntary agencies/organisations to ensure “best practice” throughout the Diocese.

3.0 Scope

3.1 This document applies to:

3.1.1 All members of the Diocese who are vulnerable adults.

3.1.2 All clergy (both Diocesan and visiting), staff, volunteers, religious who are involved with the Diocese.

4.0 Responsibilities

4.1 The Diocese has a duty of care to ensure that all vulnerable adult members of the Diocese are protected from abuse when participating in church activities.

- 4.2 It is the responsibility of all those involved as clergy (both Diocesan and visiting), staff, volunteers and religious of the Diocese to ensure that any concerns or allegations of abuse are responded to promptly and in accordance with this document.
- 4.3 Clergy (both Diocesan and visiting), staff, volunteers and religious found to be in breach of this policy for the safeguarding of vulnerable adults could be subject to internal disciplinary procedures and / or investigation by statutory authorities.
- 4.4 Clergy (both Diocesan and visiting), staff, volunteers and religious working for the Diocese are to be aware that criminal prosecution may follow if an investigation substantiates a criminal act.
- 4.5 It is the responsibility of Clergy, staff, volunteers and religious of the Diocese to ensure that confidentiality is maintained throughout the course of any investigation thereby ensuring that the integrity of the process is upheld.
- 4.6 It is the responsibility of Bishop of the Diocese to ensure that all priests, religious and Diocesan staff/volunteers are made aware of this policy and procedures for the safeguarding of vulnerable adults and that staff and volunteers are made aware of their responsibilities as outlined in this document.
- 4.7 It is the responsibility of parish priests of the Diocese to ensure that all new staff and volunteers working in their parishes are made aware of this policy and procedures for the safeguarding of vulnerable adults and that staff and volunteers are made aware of their responsibilities as outlined in this document.
- 4.8 The Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act, 2012 makes it an offence to withhold information from the Gardai about certain types of offences against ‘vulnerable persons’ (as well as children). These offences include assault causing harm, sexual assault, rape, incest and trafficking.

5.0 Definitions

5.1 A vulnerable Adult:

- 5.1.1 The definition from the Motu Proprio by Pope Francis “Vos Estis Lux Mundi” 7th May 2019 defines a vulnerable person as the following:

Art. 1 – Scope of application

- b) “vulnerable person” means: any person in a state of infirmity, physical or mental deficiency, or deprivation of personal liberty which, in fact, even occasionally, limits their ability to understand or to want or otherwise resist the offence.

5.1.2 The definition of a vulnerable adult within the Republic of Ireland is taken from The National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 which states:

“Vulnerable Person” means a person, other than a child, who –

- (a) is suffering from a disorder of the mind, whether as a result of mental illness or dementia,
- (b) has an intellectual disability,
- (c) is suffering from a physical impairment, whether as a result of injury, illness or age, or
- (d) has a physical disability, which is of such a nature or degree –
 - (i) as to restrict the capacity of the person to guard himself or herself against harm by another person,
 - or
 - (ii) that results in the person requiring assistance with the activities of daily living including dressing, eating, walking, washing and bathing.

5.1.3 In addition, the Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information of Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 provides for a very similar (but not exactly the same) definition of “Vulnerable Persons” in the following terms:

“Vulnerable Person” means a person (including, insofar as the offences specified at paragraph 8 of Schedule 2 are concerned, a child aged 17 years old) -

- (a) Who is suffering from a disorder of the mind, whether as a result of mental illness or dementia, or
- (b) Has an intellectual disability which is of such a nature or degree as to severely restrict the capacity of the person to guard himself or herself against serious exploitation or abuse, whether physical or sexual, or another person, or
- (c) Who is suffering from an enduring physical impairment or injury which is of such a nature or degree as to severely restrict the capacity of the person to guard himself or herself against serious exploitation or abuse, whether physical or sexual, by another person or to report such exploitation or abuse to the Garda Síochána or both.

5.1.4 Thus for the purposes of this policy document a vulnerable adult is a person over 18 who lacks or has seriously impaired capacity either to make informed decisions or to defend him or herself from harm.

5.1.5 An adult can be vulnerable at one time in his or her life but not at another time. For example, a person who is going through an acute psychotic episode is highly likely to fit the definition of a vulnerable adult, but this will need to be reassessed once the acute phase of the illness has passed.

5.1.6 A person can find himself or herself in a situation where he / she feels vulnerable and may need pastoral care, for example, following a bereavement or an accident. However, provided that he / she retains capacity to make decisions and defend himself/herself, he / she does not fit the definition of a vulnerable adult.

5.2 What constitutes Abuse?

5.2.1 Abuse may be defined as:

“a single or repeated act, or omission, which violates a person’s human rights or causes harm or distress to a person. The main areas of abuse which cause people harm are physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect of the person and financial abuse. It is important to note that this is not an exhaustive list. (HIQA 2019).

5.2.2 This definition excludes self – neglect which is an inability or unwillingness to provide for oneself. However, the Diocese acknowledges that people may come into contact with individuals living in conditions of extreme neglect. To address this issue the HSE has developed a specific policy to manage such situations which is available on their website on <https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/socialcare/safeguardingvulnerableadults/safeguarding%20self%20neglect%20.pdf> or by typing: ‘HSE safeguarding self-neglect’ into the Google search bar.

5.2.3 There are several forms of abuse, any or all of which may be perpetrated as the result of deliberate intent, negligence or lack of insight and ignorance. A person may experience more than one form of abuse at any one time. The main categories/types of abuse are detailed in Appendix 1.

5.2.4 Abuse of a vulnerable person may be a single act or repeated over a period of time. It may comprise one form or multiple forms of abuse. The lack of appropriate action can also be a form of abuse. Abuse may occur in a relationship where there is an expectation of trust and can be perpetrated by a person who acts in breach of that trust. Abuse can also be perpetrated by people who have influence over the lives of vulnerable adults, whether they are formal or informal carers or family members or others. It may also occur outside such relationships.

5.2.5 It is critical that the rights of vulnerable adults to lead as normal a life as possible is recognised, in particular - deprivation of the following rights may constitute abuse:

- Liberty
- Privacy
- Respect and dignity
- Freedom to choose
- Opportunities to fulfil personal aspirations and realise potential in their daily lives
- Opportunity to live safely without fear of abuse in any form
- Respect for possessions

5.2.6 People with disabilities and older people may be particularly vulnerable due to:

- Diminished social skills
- Dependence on others for personal and intimate care
- Diminished capacity to report
- Sensory difficulties
- Isolation
- Power differentials.

6.0 Building Blocks for Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Vulnerable adults in the Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin

6.1 Robust Recruitment and Selection Procedures

The Diocese consistently applies a thorough and clearly defined method of recruiting staff and volunteers who are involved in any organised church activity that involves children or vulnerable adults. These are in line with legislative requirements and best practice.

6.1.1 To achieve this the following criteria is used:

- Applicants must complete an application form that includes information about their past work and volunteering experiences.
- Two written references are sought and followed up by a phone call for verification.
- There is a written role description and a code of conduct attached to the role.
- A Confidential Declaration Form requesting information on previous convictions and investigations must be completed.
- A verification of Identity Form must be completed.
- Garda Vetting is carried out.
- All staff and volunteers must complete safeguarding training.

6.1.2 See Appendix 2 for the ‘Code of Behaviour for those who minister to Vulnerable Adults’.

6.1.3 See Appendix 3 for list of all forms relating to recruitment and are available on the Diocesan Website www.kandle.ie

6.2 Promoting the Rights of Vulnerable Adults

Diocesan practices and this Safeguarding Policy and Procedures should be underpinned and guided by a number of values and principles that uphold a vulnerable adults rights as outlined below:

- 6.2.1 To be accorded the same respect and dignity as any other adult, by recognising their uniqueness and personal needs and wishes, and be given the opportunity to select independently from a range of options based on clear and accurate information e.g. the choice to participate or not to participate in a church activity such as a parish party, outing or pilgrimage.
- 6.2.2 Consent – vulnerable adults have the right to be supported in making their own decisions and to give or withhold their consent to an activity or service.
- 6.2.3 Confidentiality – vulnerable adults will know that information about them is managed appropriately and that there is a clear understanding of confidentiality and its limits among clergy/staff/volunteers.
- 6.2.4 Dignity and Respect – vulnerable adults will be accorded the same respect and dignity as any other adult, by recognising their uniqueness and personal needs.
- 6.2.5 Equality and Cultural Diversity – vulnerable adults will be treated equally and their background and culture will be valued and respected.
- 6.2.6 Independence – vulnerable adults will have as much control as possible over their lives whilst being safeguarded against unreasonable risks.
- 6.2.7 Privacy – vulnerable adults will be free from unnecessary intrusion into their affairs and there will be a balance between the individual’s own safety and the safety of others.
- 6.2.8 Safety – vulnerable adults will feel safe and live without fear of violence, neglect, or abuse in any form.
- 6.2.9 To be given access to knowledge and information in a manner which they can understand in order to help them make informed choices. See Appendix 4 for information on advocacy and support services.
- 6.2.10 To be provided with information on, and practical help in, keeping themselves safe and protecting themselves from abuse.
- 6.2.11 To live safely without fear of violence in any form.
- 6.2.12 To have their money, goods, and possessions treated with respect and to receive equal protection for themselves and their property through the law.

- 6.2.13 To be given guidance and assistance in seeking help as a consequence of abuse.
- 6.2.14 To be supported in making their own decisions about how they wish to proceed in the event of abuse and to know that their wishes will be considered paramount unless it is considered necessary for their own safety or the safety of others to take an alternate course, or if required by law to do so.
- 6.2.15 To be supported in bringing a complaint.
- 6.2.16 To have alleged, suspected or confirmed cases of abuse investigated promptly and appropriately.
- 6.2.17 To receive support, education and counselling following abuse.
- 6.2.18 To seek redress through appropriate agencies.

6.3 Communicating the Diocese’s Safeguarding Message

- 6.3.1 Each parish in the Diocese is required to display a Safeguarding Notice in prominent places in their buildings for example church porches and sacristies, parish halls, parish offices. This is a statement of the diocesan child safeguarding policy and contains contact details for:
 - The diocesan DLP and the deputy DLPs,
 - The Tusla local social work office (for child protection issues),
 - The local Garda station,
 - The Local Safeguarding Representatives.
- 6.3.2 During 2024 these notices were amended and updated to take account of the latest National Children’s Safeguarding Policy, “A Safe and Welcoming Church, 2024.”.
- 6.3.3 The Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin has a website (www.kandle.ie) with a safeguarding section that provides information on safeguarding within the Diocese.
- 6.3.4 The Safeguarding Committee produces an annual newsletter which is sent to parishes and safeguarding representatives and is also available on the website. It provides an update on the work of the Safeguarding Committee.
- 6.3.5 The Diocese celebrates Safeguarding Sunday during which parishes are encouraged to draw attention to the work that is being done at parish and Diocesan level to encourage the participation of children and vulnerable adults in Church activities by providing them and their families with the assurance that everything possible is done

to ensure their safety and to protect them from abuse. Safeguarding Sunday has now become part of the diocesan calendar and takes place annually.

6.4 External Groups

6.4.1 External / independent groups / organisations, seeking to hire or lease Diocesan / parish property to deliver their own service / activity involving vulnerable adults will be made aware of the Diocesan Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy, but will also be expected to meet certain requirements before an agreement or lease or rental of property is made.

6.4.2 See Form External Groups Using Church Property which is available to download from www.kandle.ie/safeguarding.

6.5 Inter-Agency Cooperation and Sharing of Information

6.5.1 The principles and rights, which have been identified in this document can be further strengthened through the promotion of effective inter-agency cooperation in relation to the protection and safeguarding of vulnerable adults is to ensure that by working cooperatively, a consistent response will be made when concerns are raised or allegations of abuse are made.

Section 2

Procedures for the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults

7.0 Introduction

- 7.1 The Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin has overall responsibility for ensuring that there are adequate arrangements in place to ensure that vulnerable adults who participate in the activities of the Catholic Church in the Diocese are kept safe and free from harm or abuse.
- 7.2 Vulnerable adults are protected against criminal acts in the same way as any other person. Thus, where there is reasonable suspicion that a criminal offence may have occurred, it is the responsibility of An Garda Síochána to investigate and make decisions about what action should be taken. The Gardaí should always be consulted about criminal matters.
- 7.3 In addition to the previously existing parish structures, a number of structures have been established to assist the Bishop in the task of ensuring safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. These include:

7.3.1 The Diocesan Safeguarding Committee

This committee was established in the early 1990's. It advises the Bishop on the creation and maintenance of safe environments for children and vulnerable adults in the parishes and diocesan agencies of Kildare and Leighlin Diocese. It has a particular focus on ensuring that the Diocesan Safeguarding Policy is implemented across all of the parishes in the Diocese and, to this end, it draws up a Strategic Plan which is renewed every three years. The Safeguarding Committee monitors the implementation of the strategic plan on a regular basis. The Committee comprises of lay members, clerics and religious. The Committee develops materials to assist parishes and diocesan organisations in nurturing safe environments.

The Committee carries out audits of parishes to ensure they are operating in compliance with the requirements of diocesan safeguarding policy. Some members of the Committee are trained to provide safeguarding training and advice to Diocesan and Parish personnel.

7.3.2 Garda Vetting Administrator

- All those who minister in public on behalf of the Diocese and its 56 parishes must be vetted. The National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Adult) Act, 2012 - 2016 states that all those who engage in 'relevant work or activities' with children or vulnerable persons must be vetted. In setting out what such work or activities consist of, the Act refers to: "Any work or activity as a priest or minister or any other person engaged in the advancement of any religious beliefs to children or vulnerable persons unless such work is incidental to the advancement of religious beliefs to persons who are not children or vulnerable persons" (Schedule 1, Part 1, Section 7 and Schedule 1, Part 2, Section 7).
- The Garda vetting administrator for the Diocese processes all Garda vetting applications.
- Instructions on completing a vetting application and the application form is available on the Diocesan website: www.kandle.ie

7.3.3 Director of Safeguarding

- The Director of Safeguarding is accountable to the Bishop.
- The Director works with the Safeguarding Committee to ensure the implementation of the Safeguarding Strategic Plan and Diocesan adherence to then three standards as set out by the National Board for the Safeguarding of Children in the Catholic Church of Ireland and the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults.
- The Director ensures efficient case management of child and vulnerable adult protection concerns relating to priests, staff & volunteers of the Diocese. These are concerns that abuse may have occurred, is occurring or is at risk of occurring. This involves a range of activities including:
 - meeting with those who wish to discuss such concerns,
 - notifying the relevant civil authorities, that is, An Garda Síochána and Tusla, the Child and Family Agency or the Health Service Executive (HSE) Adult Safeguarding Team.
 - meeting with the church personnel against whom an allegation is made.
 - advising the Bishop on safeguarding matters,

- implementing appropriate measures to minimise risk to children and vulnerable adults.
- The Director ensures the provision of a support service to those affected by abuse in a Church context. The service can include:
 - facilitating people to make complaints about abuse,
 - accessing counselling for those who need and want it,
 - informing them of the steps being taken to address their concerns,
 - providing ongoing support in accordance with their needs and wishes.

7.3.4 Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

- The DLP is a person who has specific responsibility for ensuring that effective procedures are followed within the Diocese when dealing with child and vulnerable adult protection concerns.
- The DLP is responsible for acting as a source of advice on vulnerable adult safeguarding matters, for co-ordinating action within the Diocese and for liaising with the relevant statutory authorities and other agencies, as appropriate, about suspected or actual cases of vulnerable adult harm or abuse.
- The DLP for Kildare and Leighlin is also the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding.
- There are two Deputy DLPs in the Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin.
- All child and vulnerable adult protection concerns that relate to Church personnel and activities in the Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin must be reported to the DLP who has the overall responsibility, entrusted to them by the bishop, to ensure that each concern is correctly managed from start to finish.

7.3.5 Parish Priests

- The Parish Priest is responsible for ensuring safeguarding policies and procedures are adhered to in the parish.
- He is assisted by the Local Safeguarding Representative in doing so.

7.3.6 Local Safeguarding Representatives

The local Safeguarding Representative is responsible to the Parish Priest or local superior to promote safeguarding by:

- Raising awareness of what safeguarding is.
- Disseminating information regarding the standards and guidance and circulating this information widely.
- Ensuring Church activities are provided in a way that ensures the safety and

well-being of the vulnerable adults involved.

- Ensuring that the contact details of the DLP, Gardaí, Tusla, HSE and “Towards Healing” are widely publicised.

8.0 Responding to a Concern for the Abuse of a Vulnerable Adult

8.1 Reporting concerns

- 8.1.1 Everyone is entitled to have their civil and human rights upheld and to live a life free from abuse and neglect. All concerns, allegations and disclosures must be taken seriously and dealt with appropriately.
- 8.1.2 When there are concerns or where a disclosure or allegation is made, people often feel anxious about passing on the information to someone else. Concerned individuals may ask themselves, “What if I am wrong?” and this may hold them back from taking any action.
- 8.1.3 It is important for clergy, staff and volunteers to know that they are not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred and neither are they responsible for conducting an investigation. This is the role of the appropriate authorities. However, clergy, staff and volunteers do need to pass on any concerns they have.

8.2 Ways you may become aware that abuse is happening

- 8.2.1 There are a number of ways in which you might become concerned or suspicious that a vulnerable adult is suffering or has suffered abuse.
- The vulnerable adult may tell you directly.
 - Someone else may tell you of their concerns.
 - You may witness an incident that causes you concern.
 - A vulnerable adult may show some signs of physical injury for which there appears to be no credible or satisfactory explanation.
 - A vulnerable adult’s demeanour/behaviour may cause you to suspect that something does not feel right, or that possible abuse has taken place.
 - The behaviour of another individual close to the vulnerable adult makes you feel uncomfortable (this may be another staff member, volunteer, or leader of an activity or family member).
 - Through general good neighbourliness and social guardianship.
- 8.2.2 Being alert to possible abuse plays a significant role in ensuring that vulnerable adults are safeguarded, and it is important that all concerns about possible abuse are reported.

8.3 What if a Vulnerable Adult discloses abuse?

8.3.1 Where this happens, it is important that clergy, staff and volunteers know how to respond and do so in accordance with the following guidelines:

Do

- Stay calm
- Listen
- Reassure the person - tell him/her they did the right thing in telling you
- Let them know that the information will be taken seriously and give them information about what will happen next
- If urgent medical/police help is needed, call the emergency services
- Ensure the safety of the person
- Be aware that forensic evidence might be needed
- Let the person know that they will be kept informed at every stage
- Record in writing (date and sign your record) and report to the Designated Liaison Person for the Diocese
- Act without delay

Do Not

- Stop someone disclosing to you
- Promise to keep secret what they tell you
- Press the person for more details or make them repeat the story
- Gossip about the disclosure or pass any information about this to anyone who does not have a legitimate need to know
- Under any circumstances, contact the alleged abuser
- Attempt to initiate an investigation yourself
- Leave details of your concern on a voicemail or e-mail
- Delay in responding

8.4 Accidents, incidents and near misses

8.4.1 Lessons can be learned from accidents, incidents and/or near misses. As a result, the Diocese has in place a procedure for reporting accidents, incidents and near misses that occur. Accidents, incidents and near misses, particularly those which are recurring, can be indicators of organisational risk, including risk to safeguarding, which needs to be managed.

8.5 Non-Engagement

8.5.1 Particular challenges arise in situations where concerns exist regarding potential abuse of a vulnerable adult and that person does not want to engage or co-operate with interventions. This can be complex particularly in domestic situations. Where an adult indicates that they do not wish to engage or cooperate with the Diocese or the civil authorities such as the HSE adult safeguarding team or the Gardai and the Diocese continues to have concerns. The Diocese will need to consider the issue of capacity and in that regard the following will be noted:

- There is a presumption that all adults have capacity.
- An adult who has capacity has the right not to engage with the Diocese or any services, if they so wish.
- If there is a concern that an adult is vulnerable and may or may not have the capacity to make decisions, the Diocese may well have obligations towards them and may engage with the HSE adult safeguarding team in relation to their concerns.
- The Diocese should consider whether the non-cooperation of the individual may be due to issues of capacity, is voluntary or if it could stem from for example some form of coercion.
- Decisions as to the appropriate steps to deal with such cases need to be made on a case-by-case basis and with appropriate professional advice. It is also important to identify the respective functions and contributions of relevant agencies which include An Garda Síochána, HSE and local authorities. Interagency collaboration is particularly important in these situations.

8.5.2 The DLP is available to offer advice and assistance to any personnel who have concerns about a vulnerable adult.

9.0 How to Report

9.1 All allegations / concerns / suspicions against Church personnel clergy, staff or volunteers must be reported without delay to the Diocesan DLP. See Appendix 5 for referral form which is available on the Diocesan website www.kandle.ie. The DLP is available to offer advice and assistance where a concern is raised.

9.2 If while ministering or visiting vulnerable adults in hospitals, residential care homes or other institutional settings you receive an allegation/ have a

concern/witness abuse you can report it directly to the Designated Officer/Manager of the relevant institution or you may consult with the Diocesan DLP. On receipt of your concern the Diocesan DLP will then assist you with notifying the Designated Officer/Manager of the relevant institution as it is their responsibility to follow this up with the statutory authorities (HSE, HIQA, Gardai).

- 9.3 For allegations / concerns / suspicions against non-Church personnel, the person who is worried about possible harm to a vulnerable adult should report the concerns directly to the civil authorities (e.g. abuse of a vulnerable person by a relative or non-Church carer and / or peer abuse). See Appendix 6 for list of HSE adult safeguarding contact numbers and Garda contact numbers.
- 9.4 When the Designated Liaison Person receives a report of a concern, he/she will undertake the following steps
- Notify the Bishop of the concern received.
 - Where there is concern that a vulnerable adult has been abused or is at risk of being abused, will notify the HSE Adult Safeguarding and Protection Team.
 - If a criminal offence is suspected, will notify the Gardai of the concern received.
 - If deemed appropriate will meet with the vulnerable adult and / or their advocate.
 - If deemed appropriate will meet with the person causing concern.
 - Will treat the information received as confidential.
 - Will liaise with the relevant statutory authorities and other agencies as appropriate
 - Keep relevant people within the Diocese informed about any action taken and any further action required.
 - Ensure that an individual case record is maintained including the action taken by the Diocese, the liaison with other agencies and the outcome.
- 9.5 It is important to note that the person raising the concern may not be entitled to the outcome of the actions of the Bishop, DLP or the outcome of statutory assessments or investigations and may only receive a reassurance that their concerns are being followed up by the relevant authorities.

10.0 What Clergy, Staff or Volunteers can expect to happen if they are named as the person causing concern.

10.1 See Flow Chart in Appendix 7.

10.2 If the alleged person causing concern is the Bishop

10.2.1 Where the DLP receives an adult safeguarding concern relating to the Bishop the DLP will report this to the Archbishop of Dublin.

10.2.2 The DLP will notify the statutory authorities (HSE Adult Safeguarding Team, Gardai) where there are grounds for concern that need to be investigated by the statutory authorities. The DLP will liaise with the statutory authorities and keep the Archbishop of Dublin informed of outcomes.

10.2.3 Having decided in consultation with the statutory authorities that it is appropriate to do so, the Archbishop will arrange a meeting with the Bishop against whom the allegation is made.

10.2.4 Where an adult safeguarding concern does not meet the threshold for reporting to the statutory authorities the Archbishop will ensure that the allegation is investigated appropriately.

10.2.5 At an appropriate stage in the process, the Archbishop of Dublin may need to decide what protective measures are necessary to ensure that no member of the community or the Bishop in question is exposed to unacceptable risk. These protective measures are not disciplinary measures and may include:

- Providing an appropriate level of supervision or
- Asking the Bishop to step aside pending the outcome of the investigation of the allegation.

10.3 If the alleged person causing concern is a priest:

10.3.1 Where the DLP receives an adult safeguarding concern relating to a Priest, the DLP will notify the Bishop.

10.3.2 The DLP will notify the statutory authorities (HSE Adult Safeguarding Team, Gardai) where there are grounds for concern that need to be investigated by the statutory authorities. The DLP will liaise with the statutory authorities and keep the bishop informed of outcomes.

10.3.3 Having decided in consultation with the statutory authorities that it is appropriate to do so, the Bishop will arrange a meeting with the cleric against whom the allegation is made.

10.3.4 Where an adult safeguarding concern does not meet the threshold for reporting to the statutory authorities the Bishop will ensure that the allegation is investigated appropriately.

10.3.5 At an appropriate stage in the process, the Bishop may need to decide what protective measures are necessary to ensure that no member of the community or the priest in question is exposed to unacceptable risk. These protective measures are not disciplinary measures and may include:

- Providing an appropriate level of supervision or
- Asking the Priest to step aside pending the outcome of the investigation of the allegation.

10.4 If the alleged person causing concern is a staff member

10.4.1 Where the DLP receives an adult safeguarding concern relating to a staff member, the DLP will report this to the Bishop and the staff members line manager/Parish Priest.

10.4.2 The DLP will notify the statutory authorities (HSE Adult Safeguarding Team, Gardai) where there are grounds for concern that need to be investigated by the statutory authorities. The DLP will liaise with the statutory authorities and keep the Bishop and Manager/Parish Priest informed of outcomes.

10.4.3 Having decided in consultation with the statutory authorities that it is appropriate to do so, the Parish Priest/Manager will arrange a meeting with the staff member against whom the allegation is made.

10.4.4 Where an adult safeguarding concern does not meet the threshold for reporting to the statutory authorities the Parish Priest/Manager will ensure that the allegation is investigated appropriately.

10.4.5 At an appropriate stage in the process, the Manager/Parish Priest may need to decide what protective measures are necessary to ensure that no member of the community or the staff in question is exposed to unacceptable risk. These protective measures are not disciplinary measures and may include:

- Providing an appropriate level of supervision or
- Suspending the staff member on pay pending the outcome of an investigation of the allegation.

10.5 If the alleged person causing concern is a volunteer

- 10.5.1 Where the DLP receives an adult safeguarding concern relating to a volunteer, the DLP will report this to the Bishop and to the volunteer's Line Manager/Parish Priest.
- 10.5.2 The DLP will notify the statutory authorities (HSE Adult Safeguarding Team, Gardai) where there are grounds for concern that need to be investigated by the statutory authorities. The DLP will liaise with the statutory authorities and keep the Bishop and Manager/Parish Priest informed of outcomes.
- 10.5.3 Having decided in consultation with the statutory authorities that it is appropriate to do so, the Parish Priest/Manager will arrange a meeting with the volunteer against whom the allegation is made.
- 10.5.4 Where an adult safeguarding concern does not meet the threshold for reporting to the statutory authorities the Parish Priest/Manager will ensure that the allegation is investigated appropriately.
- 10.5.5 At an appropriate stage in the process, the manager/Parish Priest may need to decide what protective measures are necessary to ensure that no member of the community or the volunteer in question is exposed to unacceptable risk. These protective measures are not disciplinary measures and may include:
- Providing an appropriate level of supervision or
 - Asking the volunteer to step aside pending the outcome of the investigation of the allegation.

10.6 If the alleged person causing concern is the DLP

- 10.6.1 Where the Bishop receives an adult safeguarding concern relating to the DLP, the Bishop will appoint an appropriate person to act as DLP. The DLP will be treated as per a staff member (10.4).

11.0 Role of the HSE Safeguarding and Protection Team

- 11.1 In each HSE Community Health Organisation (CHO), a Safeguarding and Protection Team (Vulnerable Persons) is in place.
- 11.2 The HSE Safeguarding and Protection Team will:
- Receive reports of concerns and complaints regarding the abuse of vulnerable adults.

- Support services and professionals to assess and investigate the concern(s)/complaint(s) and develop intervention approaches and protection plans.
- Directly assess particularly complex complaints and coordinate service responses.
- Support, through training and information, the development of a culture which promotes the welfare of vulnerable adults, and the development of practices which respond appropriately to concerns or allegation of abuse of vulnerable adults.
- Maintain appropriate records.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Categories / Types of abuse

Abuse is a single or repeated act, or omission, which violates a person's human rights or causes harm or distress to a person.

(Final Draft, HSE Adult Safeguarding Policy (2019)).

Type of Abuse	Examples of Indicators
<p>Physical The use of physical force, the threat of physical force or mistreatment of one person by another which may or may not result in actual physical harm or injury.</p>	<p>Unexplained injuries-bruises/cuts/burns; unexplained or long absences from a residential placement/home; appearing frightened/avoiding a particular person; asking not to be hurt.</p>
<p>Sexual Any behaviour (physical, psychological, verbal, virtual/ online) perceived to be of a sexual nature which is controlling, coercive, exploitative, harmful or unwanted towards another person.</p>	<p>Trauma to genitals, breast, rectum, mouth, injuries to face, neck abdomen, thighs, buttocks, STIs and human bite marks. Behaviours which are unusual for that person e.g. disturbed sleep/incontinence/aggression/changes to eating patterns/unusual sexual behaviour/anxiety attacks.</p>
<p>Emotional/Psychological (including bullying/harassment) Behaviour that is psychologically harmful to another person and which inflicts anxiety or mental distress by threat, humiliation or other verbal/ non-verbal conduct.</p>	<p>Mood swings, incontinence, obvious deterioration in health, sleeplessness, feelings of helplessness/hopelessness, extreme low self-esteem, tearfulness, self-abuse or self-destructive behaviour. Challenging or extreme behaviour.</p>
<p>Financial / Material The unauthorised and improper use of funds, property or any resources including pensions, or others' statutory entitlements or benefits. Financial abuse involves an act or acts where a person is deprived of control of their finances or personal possessions or is exploited financially by another person or persons.</p>	<p>Lack of control over personal funds or bank accounts; misappropriation of money, valuables or property; lack of records or records incomplete regarding spending; forced changes to wills; not paying bills; refusal to spend money; insufficient money for day-to-day expenses.</p>
<p>Institutional</p>	<p>Lack of or poor quality staff supervision and</p>

<p>The mistreatment of people brought about by poor or inadequate care or support or systemic poor practices that affect a whole care setting.</p>	<p>management. High staff turnover. Lack of training of staff and volunteers. Poor staff morale. Poor record keeping. Poor communication with other service providers. Lack of personal possessions and clothing, being spoken to inappropriately.</p>
<p>Neglect The withholding of or failure to provide appropriate and adequate care and support which is required by another person. It may be through a lack of knowledge or awareness, or through failure to take reasonable action given the information and facts available to them at the time.</p>	<p>Poor personal hygiene, dirty and dishevelled in appearance e.g. unkempt hair and nails. Poor state of clothing; non-attendance at routine health appointments; socially isolated.</p>
<p>Discriminatory Unequal treatment, harassment or abuse of a person based on age, disability, race, ethnic group, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, family status, or membership of the travelling community.</p>	<p>Isolation from family or social networks. Indicators of psychological abuse may also be present.</p>
<p>Online or digital abuse An abusive or exploitative interaction occurring online or in a social media context.</p>	<p>Becoming withdrawn, anxious, clingy, depressed, aggressive, changes in behaviour, problems sleeping and eating disorders.</p>
<p>Human Trafficking/ Modern Slavery The acquisition and movement of people by improper means, such as force, threat or deception, for the purposes of exploiting them. It can take the form of domestic servitude, forced criminality, forced labour, sexual exploitation and organ harvesting.</p>	<p>People believing that they must work against their will, unable to leave their work environment or showing signs that their movements are being controlled. Fear, anxiety, signs of injuries that appear to be the result of assault</p>

(Adapted from: *Final Draft, HSE Adult Safeguarding Policy (2019)*).

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR FOR THOSE WHO MINISTER TO VULNERABLE ADULTS Page 1 of 2

Ministry with vulnerable adults is a gift from God. It is critical that boundaries are respected and that relationships are established that always place the needs and well-being of the vulnerable adult as the primary concern. Those carrying out ministries should have clearly defined codes of conduct. A balance needs to be struck between the right to protection and the need to allow appropriate spiritual relationships between an individual and his/her priest, lay minister or volunteer. It is important for all clergy, staff and volunteers to:

- Adhere to the protocols and guidelines of any organisation whose premises they are ministering within;
- Treat everyone equally with respect;
- Engage and interact appropriately with vulnerable adults;
- Be aware of the difficulties posed by language barriers and other communication difficulties;
- Respect the dignity of each individual and their right to personal privacy;
- Recognise that particular care is required in moments when you may be discussing sensitive issues with vulnerable adults;
- Avoid situations that might compromise your relationship with vulnerable adults, and which are unacceptable within a relationship of trust. This rule should apply to all such behaviours including those which would constitute an illegal act;
- Respect the religious, cultural, racial and sexual orientation of the vulnerable adult and be open to and aware of diversity in their beliefs and practices and those of their families;
- Provide an example of good conduct you wish others to follow;
- Operate within Diocesan Guidelines.

The Code outlines unacceptable behaviours. Clergy, staff and volunteers must never:

- Physically or emotionally abuse or exploit a vulnerable adult;
- Become involved in either using the vulnerable adult's money on his/her behalf or in giving the vulnerable adult advice in the use of his/her money;
- Use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive;
- Do things of a personal nature for a vulnerable adult that he/she is capable of doing for his/herself or are the responsibility of their family or carer;
- Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade,
- Discriminate against the person on the basis of religion, race, culture, gender or sexual orientation;
- Form inappropriate relationships with vulnerable adults;
- Gossip about personal details of vulnerable adults and their families;
- Inappropriately photograph or video a vulnerable adult;
- Audio or visual recordings may not be taken of vulnerable adults without their permission. The use of such recordings on any website (social networking sites etc.) or any other medium, either as recorded or digitally altered, is expressly forbidden.

_____ (print name)

agree to comply with this *Code of Conduct* when ministering to Vulnerable Adults.

Signed: _____ Dated: _____

Clergy, staff and volunteers are being made aware of the Code in the expectation that they will act in accordance with it when exercising ministry to the vulnerable.

Appendix 3 All Forms required for those who provide ministry to Vulnerable Adults are available to download from www.kandle.ie/safeguarding.

Garda Vetting Form	www.kandle.ie/safeguarding
Application Form	www.kandle.ie/safeguarding
Declaration Form	www.kandle.ie/safeguarding
When an appointment is being considered the following forms may be used	
Character & Personal Reference Request Form	www.kandle.ie/safeguarding
Letter of Appointment	www.kandle.ie/safeguarding
The forms below should always be used when appointing an individual to minister to Vulnerable Adults	
Safeguarding Agreement Form	www.kandle.ie/safeguarding
Code of Conduct for Ministry with Vulnerable Adults	www.kandle.ie/safeguarding
If there are concerns, or a disclosure or allegation is made use:	
Vulnerable Adult Allegation/Concern Form	www.kandle.ie/safeguarding
Any group wishing to use Church Property for activities involving Vulnerable Adults will be required to complete the following form	
External Groups Using Church Property	www.kandle.ie/safeguarding

Having your voice heard – Independent Advocacy**Sage Advocacy**

Sage Advocacy is a national charity, which provides a support and advocacy service for older people, vulnerable adults and healthcare patients. Sage Advocacy will always stand up for the individual's rights, respect their dignity and make sure their voice is heard – it works on the individual's behalf, independent of family, to make sure that decisions are not taken without a person's agreement. Sage Advocacy can provide immediate advice on a wide range of issues from rights, to making choices, care and support. Call: (01) 536 7330 or 1850 71 94 00 8am – 10pm daily or email: 1850@sageadvocacy.ie

National Advocacy Service

The National Advocacy Service provides an independent representative advocacy service for adults with disabilities, contact 0761 07 3000.

Towards Peace

Phone: 01 5053028:

Mobile 086 7710533

“Towards Peace” offers spiritual support to victims/survivors of clerical abuse whose faith in God may have been affected by their experience. Following initial telephone contact, “Towards Peace” offers an opportunity to talk to a trained spiritual companion in a one-to-one setting, to explore questions and concerns about God, and to get in touch with God's presence in their lives

The service is available on Monday and Tuesday from 9am – 4pm and on Wednesday from 9am -12 noon.

Towards Healing

Freephone 1800 303416 (Rep of Ireland)

Freephone 0800 0963315 (Northern Ireland and UK)

Hearing impaired Text Line Number: 085-8022859

“Towards Healing” is an independent organisation providing professional counselling and support for people who have experienced institutional, clerical or religious abuse in Ireland. It is funded by the Catholic Church.

Towards Healing offers a range of counselling and support services including Face-to-Face Counselling, Friendly Call, Structured Telephone, Counselling, Family Counselling.

The operational hours of the helpline are: Monday to Friday 11.00am to 6.00pm. An answering machine service is available at all other times.

The Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA)

HIQA is an independent authority established to drive high quality and safe care for people using health and social care services in Ireland.

HIQA's Older People's inspection team are legally responsible for the monitoring, inspection and registration of designated centres for older people, such as nursing homes, in Ireland.

HIQA's Disability inspection team is legally responsible for the monitoring, inspection and registration of designated centres for adults and children with a disability.

HIQA have two public offices: their headquarters in Cork and their regional office in Dublin.

HIQA, Unit 1301, City Gate, Mahon, Cork, T12 Y2XT. (021) 240 9300

HIQA, George's Court, George's Lane, Dublin 7, D07 E98Y. (01) 814 7400

Rape Crisis Centres:

Offer a wide range of services to women and men who are affected by rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, or childhood sexual abuse.

The services include a national 24-hour helpline Phone: 1800 778 888, one to one counselling, court accompaniment, outreach services, training, awareness raising and lobbying.

Carlow and South Leinster Rape Crisis Centre (covering Carlow, Kildare and surrounding areas)

Contact phone 1800 727 737 059 913 3344

Kilkenny Rape Crisis Centre

KASA is the new name for the Kilkenny Rape Crisis Centre.

Contact our private Helpline now in complete confidence 1800 478 478

Tullamore Rape Crisis Centre (covering Laois, Offaly and surrounding areas)

Freephone helpline: 1800 32 32 32

The Samaritans

24 - hour freephone no. Tel: 1850 609090

The Samaritan helpline is available day or night, for anyone who is struggling to cope, who needs someone to listen without judgement or pressure.

Alone

ALONE provides Housing with Support, Support Coordination, Befriending, BConnect training and technology, and Campaigns for Change to hundreds of older people every week, who are homeless, socially isolated, living in deprivation or in crisis.

If you need support, or would like to make a referral, call their national phone line: 0818 222 024.

Safeguarding Ireland

Safeguarding Ireland promotes safeguarding of vulnerable adults to protect them from all forms of abuse by persons, organisations and institutions and to develop a national plan for promoting their welfare.

Safeguarding Ireland does not deal with specific cases of abuse, or alleged abuse.

Further information about Safeguarding Ireland is available on their website: www.safeguardingireland.org

Financial abuse – Banks’ Vulnerable Customer Support

The five major banks and An Post are members of the Banking & Payments Federation Ireland (BPF), which has a website www.safeguardyourmoney.ie, with tips and advice to help you keep control of your money whatever your circumstances.

Each bank has set up a telephone support service for vulnerable customers. If you have any concern regarding financial abuse, misuse of a joint bank account or agency facility, you should contact the relevant bank.

AIB: 0818 207 232

Bank of Ireland: 1800 946 146

Permanent TSB: 1800 218 000

KBC Bank: 1800 804 472

Ulster Bank DAC: 1800 656 00

If you bank with a different institution, not listed here, they may also have support available and you should contact that bank directly.

If your concern does not relate to an account and is to do with day-to-day money management, budgeting, or debt, the Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS) www.mabs.ie may be able to assist, contact 0761 07 2000.

Social welfare payments – Department of Social Protection

If you have concerns about financial abuse of your social welfare payment, or the social welfare payment of someone you know and care about, you should contact, in confidence: Safeguarding Unit, Department of Social Protection, College Road, Sligo, F91 T384 / safeguarding@welfare.ie / (071) 9193259.

Representative Organisations

There are also many national and local representative and support service organisations in the health, social, disability, financial services and aging sector.

They do not have powers to investigate safeguarding concerns such as the Gardai or the HSE National Safeguarding Office but they may be able to support you with information and advices. Suggested organisations include:

- Age Action: <https://www.ageaction.ie>
- Age Friendly Ireland: <https://agefriendlyireland.ie>
- Alzheimer Society of Ireland: <https://alzheimer.ie>
- Disability Federation of Ireland: <https://www.disability-federation.ie>
- Free Legal Advice Centres: <https://www.flac.ie>
- Inclusion Ireland: <http://www.inclusionireland.ie>

- Irish Hospice Foundation: <https://hospicefoundation.ie>
Also useful
- Commission for Regulation of Utilities: <https://www.cru.ie/need-assistance/vulnerable-customers/>
- Vulnerable customers register (Electric Ireland form): https://www.electricireland.ie/docs/roi-residential-footer—customers-with-special-needs/2615_ei_vulnerable_cust_reg_form_a4_cofovc0518_v5.pdf?sfvrsn=9e47be0d_12

Referral Form for reporting safeguarding concerns relating to vulnerable adults in the Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin to the DLP.

Name of Parish/Organisation: _____

Vulnerable Adults Details:

Name: _____ DOB/Age: _____

Gender: _____

Home Address: _____

Contact Phone Number/Mobile: _____

Does anyone live with the Vulnerable Adult: _____ If yes, who? _____

Please complete those sections below that are relevant:

1. Disclosure by a Vulnerable Adult

When was the disclosure made (Dates and times): _____

To whom did the Vulnerable Adult make the disclosure? _____

What did the Vulnerable Adult actually say? (Add a separate sheet if necessary)

2. Indicators

Describe the signs or indicators of abuse or of issues causing concern (with times and dates)

Has the Vulnerable Adult named any specific person as causing the concern or of abusing them? (If so, please record details and the relationship, if any, to the Vulnerable Adult below)

3. Concerns expressed by another person about a Vulnerable Adult

Record the concerns that were passed to you (with dates and times) and if possible ask the person who expressed the concerns to confirm that the details as written are correct.

Page 2 of 2

4. Details of any immediate action taken e.g. first aid, etc?

5. Has the Vulnerable Adult expressed any reservations about you talking to the Designated Liaison Person about the matter?

6. Does the Vulnerable Adult have any particular needs e.g. Communications etc?

Signatures

To be signed by the person reporting the concern

Name: _____ Role in Parish: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Date received and actioned by the Designated Liaison Person:

Name of DLP: _____ Date. _____

Signature: _____

Action taken by the Designated Liaison Person

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Appendix 6

Reporting a concern of abuse

The Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin encourages people to report any safeguarding concerns whether this is about yourself, or someone you know or care about.

If you have a concern about abuse, neglect or coercion there are many different ways to report it, or to receive additional information to assist you in addressing the problem.

Safeguarding concerns – HSE Safeguarding and Protection teams

The main provider of services to safeguard in Ireland is the HSE which operates an Adult Safeguarding Policy for safeguarding vulnerable adults.

The National Safeguarding Office is based in Limerick (safeguarding.socialcare@hse.ie / (061) 461 358) and there are nine regional Safeguarding and Protection Teams covering all community health regions in the country.

The teams are tasked to assess allegations of abuse or neglect and to intervene to address concerns (being mindful of the will and preferences of the adult at risk of abuse).

The local contact details for each of the nine regional teams are:

- Sligo, Leitrim, Cavan, Monaghan and Donegal: safeguarding.cho1@hse.ie / (071) 983 4660
- Roscommon, Galway and Mayo: safeguarding.cho2@hse.ie / (091) 748 432
- Clare, Limerick, North Tipperary and East Limerick: safeguarding.cho3@hse.ie / (067) 464 70
- Cork and Kerry: safeguarding.cho4@hse.ie / 021 492 7550
- South Tipperary, Carlow, Kilkenny, Waterford and Wexford: safeguarding.cho5@hse.ie / (056) 778 4325
- Wicklow, Dun Laoghaire and Dublin South East: safeguarding.cho6@hse.ie / (01) 216 4511
- Kildare, Wicklow, Dublin West, Dublin South City and Dublin South West: safeguarding.cho7@hse.ie / (045) 920 410
- Laois, Offaly, Longford, Westmeath, Louth and Meath: safeguarding.cho8@hse.ie / (01) 691 4632
- Dublin North, Dublin North Central and Dublin North West: safeguarding.cho9@hse.ie / (01) 625 0447.

Emergency Services

If you are experiencing abuse which is placing you or someone you know in immediate danger, you should contact the Gardai at 999 / 112.

If a person is being mistreated but is not in immediate danger you can report this to your local Garda station. A full list is available on www.garda.ie.

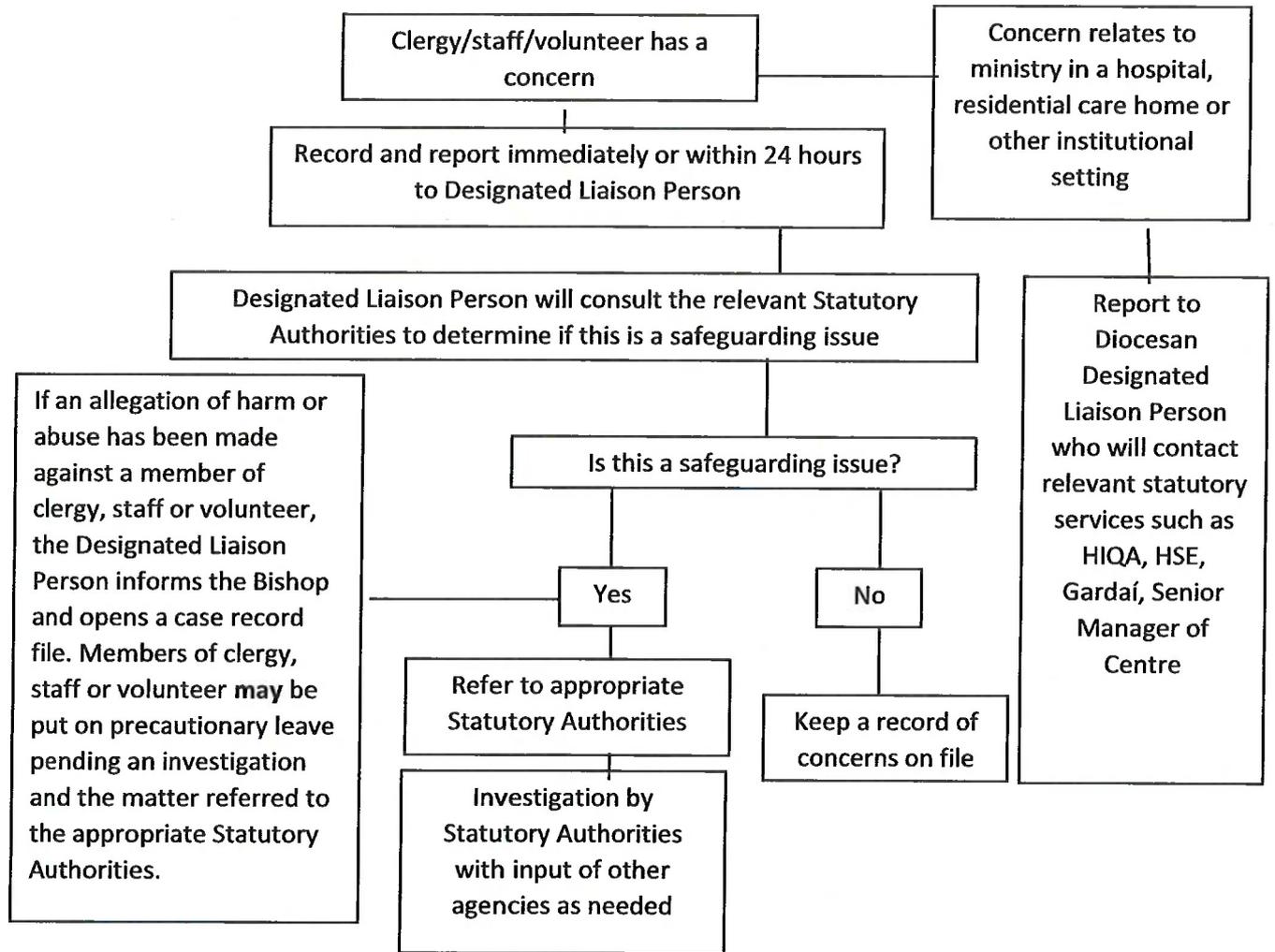
Gardaí Freephone Confidential line:

Anyone with information regarding a crime can ring the Garda Confidential Telephone Number 1800 666 111.

The Garda Confidential line allows the public to call with confidential information relating to matters of abuse, crime or other activities.

Appendix 7

Reporting Procedure Flowchart



Appendix 8

This policy takes account of:

- The Apostolic Letter issued Moto Proprio by Pope Francis on ‘The Protection of Minors and Vulnerable Persons 26th March 2019.
- Human Rights Commission Act 2000 and 2001 (this applies to both NI and ROI).
- European Convention on Human Rights Act 2003.
- Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act, 2012.
- The Apostolic Letter issued Motu Proprio by Pope Francis “Vos Estis Lux Mundi” 7th May 2019.
- The Garda Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012.
- Health Act 2007 (Care and Welfare of Residents in Designated Centres for Older People) Regulations 2009 & (Care and Support of Residents in Designated Centres for Persons (Children and Adults with Disabilities)) Regulations 2013.
- Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA). *The National Standards for Adult Safeguarding 2019*.
- HSE Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse – National Policy and Procedures (2014).
- Final Draft: HSE Adult Safeguarding Policy (2019).
- United Nations Convention of the Rights of People with Disabilities 2006.
- The Protected Disclosures Act 2014.
- The Irish Constitution Bunreacht na hÉireann 1937.
- The Mental Health Act 2001.
- The Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act, 2015.
- The National Safeguarding Committee (Safeguarding Ireland) Strategic Plan 2022-2025.
- Data Protection Act 2018.
- A Safe and Welcoming Church: Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland, 2024.

POLICY REFERENCE

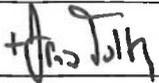
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Kildare and Leighlin Safeguarding Committee	Ailish Higgins, Diocesan Director of Safeguarding & DLP	Kildare and Leighlin Safeguarding Committee

Approved by:		Date:
Bishop Denis Nulty	+ Denis Nulty Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin	09/03/2026

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1	2015	First edition	Kildare and Leighlin Safeguarding Committee
2	2021	Whole document review	Kathleen Sherry
3	2025	Review	Ailish Higgins

