

Adult Safeguarding

Loreto Sisters



**Policy & Procedures for Sisters, Staff
and Volunteers**

December 2023

Foreword

“All life has inestimable value even the weakest and most vulnerable, the sick, the old, the unborn and the poor, are masterpieces of God’s creation, made in his own image, destined to live forever, and deserving of the utmost reverence and respect.”

Pope Francis 28 July 2013

As Loreto Sisters we have a special care for those who are Vulnerable among us. Care of the aged, infirm, special needs and others requiring extra attention and regular medical assistance is a priority for all of us. This Safeguarding Policy is an aid to that care and provides guidelines for sisters, staff, and volunteers to assist them in their daily interaction with adults at risk of harm or in need of protection. The aim of the guidelines is to provide a safe environment for adults at risk of harm or in need of protection and to ensure they are treated with respect and dignity and are always safe from any kind of abuse.

The guidelines must always be read and applied in the context of a human response of love and care. The guidelines must never become more important than the people they are intended to serve.

Barbara Murphy
Province Leader

December 2023

Contents

Foreword	Barbara Murphy, Province Leader	2
Section 1	Background, Aim and Scope	4
	Legal Framework	5
Section 2	Recognising Abuse	8
	Recording and Reporting	12
	Role of the Adult Safeguarding Champion	16
	Role of Designated Liaison Person	17
	Values and Principles	18
Section 3	Recruitment and Selection	21
Appendix 1	Recruitment Forms and Code of Conduct	23
Appendix 2	Reporting Form	43
Appendix 3	Access to Advice and Support	52
Appendix 4	Roles and Responsibilities	55
Appendix 5	Guidance on Intimate Care	57
Appendix 6	Whistleblowing Policy	59

Section 1: Background, Aim and Scope of the Policy.

Christian communities should be places where all people (children and adults) feel welcomed, respected and safe from abuse. The Catholic Church is particularly called by God to support those at the margins, those less powerful and those without a voice in our society.

The Loreto Sisters recognise that everyone has a fundamental right to be safe, and that there are many people with whom Catholic Church personnel have contact who require special care and attention. We believe that all Catholic Church personnel, including religious, staff and volunteers must carry out their ministry respecting the rights of the individual in line with gospel values and civil or criminal or canon law, including Human Rights legislation. The Loreto Sisters value and encourage the participation of adults in all province activities that enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual and social development.

Anyone who has suffered abuse should receive a compassionate and just response and be offered pastoral care to help rebuild their lives.

Adult Safeguarding Policy Statement

The Loreto Sisters are committed to safeguarding as an integral component of the life and ministry of the province and recognise that we have a special responsibility towards adults at risk of harm or in need of protection.

We want to reassure them, their carers and their advocates, that we are committed to zero-tolerance of harm to adults at risk of harm or in need of protection by creating a safe, caring and compassionate environment for all. This commitment is based on gospel values and teachings, and compliance with “best practice.”

Aim of the Policy

- To outline the commitment of the Loreto Sisters to adult safeguarding.
- To ensure that safeguarding arrangements for adults who are at risk of harm or in need of protection are in place.
- To ensure that all personnel working within the province understand and commit to the policy, as appropriate to their ministries.

This policy reflects the requirements of -

Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership, DHSSPSNI, 2015.

Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at risk of Abuse, National Policy & Procedures, Incorporating Services for Elder Abuse and for Persons with a Disability, Social Care Division, HSE, December 2014.

Scope of the Policy

Within this policy the term “safeguarding” is used in its widest sense, that is to encompass both activity which **prevents** harm from occurring in the first place and activity which **protects** adults at risk where harm has occurred or is likely to occur without intervention. In Northern Ireland, the language of adult safeguarding previously focused on protection and used the term “vulnerable adult”. This was widely misinterpreted and often used out of context and, for some, the term implied weakness on the part of the adult, which many found unacceptable. The policy now moves away from the concept of “vulnerability” and towards establishing the concept of ‘risk of harm’ in adulthood. The policy introduces the concept of an ‘adult at risk of harm’ and an ‘adult in need of protection’. The Republic of Ireland at present continues to use the term ‘vulnerable adult’.

All Catholic Church personnel including, but not limited to, sisters, staff and volunteers are regarded by the province as persons working in positions of trust and as such are expected to adhere to this safeguarding

policy and procedures . This policy applies to all aspects of ministry within our care homes and smaller houses. The province takes seriously all concerns, allegations, suspicions and disclosures of abuse and requires such to be reported to the statutory authorities, according to the requirements of the National Safeguarding Policy (ROI) and the Regional Safeguarding Policy (NI).

Minimum safeguarding expectations:

Adult Safeguarding - Prevention and Protection in Partnership (2015) places a requirement on any public service, voluntary, community, independent or faith organisation to meet expectations. It is expected that the province will safeguard adults who may be at risk by:

- recognising that adult harm is wrong and should not be tolerated,
- being aware of signs of harm from abuse, exploitation and neglect,
- reducing opportunities for harm from abuse, exploitation and neglect to occur and
- knowing how and when to report safeguarding concerns to the statutory authorities in both jurisdictions.

Framework - Republic of Ireland

The current definition of a vulnerable adult within the Republic of Ireland is taken from ‘Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at risk of Abuse, National Policy & Procedures, Incorporating Services for Elder Abuse and for Persons with a Disability, Social Care Division, HSE, December 2014’ (referred to henceforth as the ‘National Policy’), considers a vulnerable person as an adult who is restricted in capacity to guard himself or herself against harm or exploitation or to report such harm or exploitation.

This may arise as a result of physical or intellectual impairment and risk of abuse may be influenced by both context and individual circumstances. Because of his/her vulnerability, the individual may be in receipt of a care service in his/her own home, in the community or be resident in a residential care home, nursing home or other setting.

There should be a presumption of decision making capacity unless proven otherwise and a person has a right to make decisions which other people may consider as unwise. The autonomy of the individual must be respected as much as possible.

Some people may understand that what is occurring to them is abusive and may weigh up the risks and potential consequences of disclosing the abusive behaviour. This may occur, for example, where an older person is subjected to financial abuse by a family member and fears that confronting the issue may fundamentally alter an otherwise valued relationship. Such situations need to be considered carefully, usually at a meeting of key personnel involved with the person. Issues such as severity of risk will need to be considered as well as strategies to empower the person. It may also be advisable to consult with the Gardaí.

Safeguarding must be built on empowering: on listening to the voices of individuals who are at risk, and those who have been harmed.

Key relevant legislation within the Republic of Ireland is as follows:

National Vetting Bureau (Children & Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012.

Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children & Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012.

The Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act 2015 is soon to become practice and proposes three types of decision making support options to respond to a wide range of support needs that people may have in relation to decision making capacity.

Legal Framework - Northern Ireland

In April 2009, the Department of Health and Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS), Northern Ireland, commissioned **Volunteer Now** to develop standards and guidelines for organisations working with vulnerable adults in the voluntary, community and independent sectors. This policy document is called '**Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults, A Shared Responsibility**' and sets out the standards and guidance for good practice in working with adults as follows -

- Having an Adult Safeguarding Policy supported by robust procedures.
- Following the procedures laid down for the recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers.
- Providing effective management, support, supervision and training of personnel.
- Clear procedures for raising awareness of, responding to and reporting concerns of a safeguarding nature.
- Procedures for assessing and managing risks with regard to safeguarding adults.
- Having procedures for receiving and dealing with concerns and complaints.
- Managing records, personal information, confidentiality and information sharing.
- Having a code of behaviour which outlines the behaviour expected of all personnel.

In July 2015 the Policy document '**Adult Safeguarding, Prevention and Protection in Partnership**' was published by the DHSSPS and the Department of Justice (D.O.J). This Policy moves away from the concept of 'vulnerability' towards establishing the concept of 'risk of harm' in adulthood.

"This policy recognises that the language of adult safeguarding previously focused on protection and used the term 'vulnerable adult.' This was widely misinterpreted, often used out of context and, for some, the term implied weakness on the part of the adult, which many found unacceptable". **Adult Safeguarding, Prevention and Protection in Partnership, 2015.**

The Policy introduces the concept of an '**adult at risk of harm**' and an '**adult in need of protection**'.

An '**Adult at risk of harm**' is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their:

- a) **personal characteristics AND/OR**
- b) **life circumstances**

Personal characteristics may include, but are not limited to, age, disability, special educational needs, illness, mental or physical frailty or impairment of, or disturbance in, the functioning of the mind or brain. **Life circumstances** may include, but are not limited to, isolation, socio-economic factors and environmental living conditions.

An '**Adult in need of protection**' is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their:

- a) **personal characteristics AND/OR**
- b) **life circumstances AND**
- c) who is **unable to protect** their own well-being, property, assets, rights or other interests **AND**
- d) where the **action or inaction of another person or persons** is causing, or is likely to cause, him/her to be harmed.

In order to meet the definition of an 'adult in need of protection' either (a) or (b) must be present, in addition to both elements (c), and (d).

Northern Ireland legislation relating to adult safeguarding can be accessed through www.opsi.gov.uk

Some key relevant legislation within Northern Ireland is as follows:

- The Criminal Law Act 1967, Section 5
- The Mental Health (Northern Ireland) Order 1986
- The Police and Criminal Evidence (Northern Ireland) Order 1989
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- The Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997
- The Public Interest Disclosure (Northern Ireland) Order 1998
- The Family Homes and Domestic Violence (Northern Ireland) Order 1998
- The Northern Ireland Act 1998, Section 75
- The Criminal Evidence (Northern Ireland) Order 1999
- The Human Rights Act 1998 - enacted 2000
- Carers and Direct Payments Act 2002
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007
- The Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2008
- The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

Section 2: Recognising and Reporting

Definition of Abuse ROI

In the *'National Policy'* abuse may be defined as any act or failure to act, which results in a breach of a vulnerable person's human rights, civil liberties, physical and mental integrity, dignity or general well-being, whether intended or through negligence, including sexual relationships or financial transactions to which the person does not or cannot validly consent, or which are deliberately exploitative. Abuse may take a variety of forms. The definition excludes self-neglect which is an inability or unwillingness to provide for oneself. However, the HSE acknowledges that people may come into contact with individuals living in conditions of extreme self-neglect. To address this issue the HSE has developed a specific policy to manage such situations. This is covered in Section 3 of their policy mentioned above. Although this abuse definition focuses on acts of abuse by individuals, abuse can also arise from inappropriate or inadequacy of care or programmes of care. 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 following are the main categories or types of abuse.

Physical Abuse

- Including hitting, slapping, pushing, burning, giving a person medicine that may harm him/her, restraining or disciplining a person in an inappropriate way.
- Possible signs are fractures, bruising, burns, pain, marks, not wanting to be touched.

Psychological Abuse

- Including emotional abuse, verbal abuse, humiliation, bullying, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, controlling, isolation or withdrawal from services or support networks.
- Possible signs are being withdrawn, depression, feeling hopeless/helpless, tearfulness, excessive fears, disrupted appetite/sleeping patterns, too eager to do everything they are asked, showing compulsive behaviour, not being able to do things they used to, lack of concentration or focus.

Financial or Material Abuse

- Including misusing, inappropriate use or stealing the person's property, possessions or benefits, cheating, using a person for financial gain, pressuring a person to make or change his/her will and fraud.
- Possible signs are having unusual difficulty with finances, not having enough money, being too protective of money and things they own, not paying bills, not having normal home comforts, disparity between living conditions and assets.

Sexual Abuse

- Including direct or indirect sexual activity where the adult cannot or does not consent to it.
- Possible signs are physical symptoms including genital itching or soreness or having a sexually transmitted disease, using bad language, not wanting to be touched, behaving in a sexually inappropriate way, changes in appearance.

Neglect or Acts of Omission

- Including withdrawing or not giving the help that an adult needs, so causing them to suffer. Including failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.
- Possible signs are having pain or discomfort, being very hungry, thirsty or untidy, failing health, pressure sores, under/over medication, absence of required aids to include wheelchairs, glasses, dentures, inappropriate clothing, changes in behaviour.

Discriminatory Abuse

- Including the abuse of a person because of their ethnic origin, religion, language, age, sexuality, gender or disability.
- Possible signs are the person not receiving the care services they require, carer being overly critical or making insulting remarks about the person, going against a person's wishes in dressing.

Institutional Abuse

This can happen when an organisation, where the person is living or receiving care, fails to ensure that the necessary processes and systems are in place to safeguard adults and maintain good standards of care and service.

- Examples are lack of training of staff and volunteers, poor quality supervision and management, inadequate record keeping and liaison with other agencies, low staff morale and high staff turnover.
- Possible signs are adult has no personal clothing or possessions, there is no care plan, the person is often admitted to hospital, or there are instances of staff/ volunteers treating the person badly or unsatisfactorily or acting in a way that causes harm, lack of clear lines of accountability and consistency of management.

Definition of Abuse NI

The policy document '*Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults, A Shared Responsibility*' contained the following Definition of a Vulnerable Adult -

"A vulnerable adult is any person aged 18 years or over who is, or may be, unable to take care of him or herself or who is unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation. This may be because he or she has a mental health problem, a disability, a sensory impairment, is old and frail, or has some form of illness. Because of his or her vulnerability the individual may be in receipt of a care service in his or her home, in the community or be resident in a residential home, nursing home or other institutional setting"

Adult Abuse –Guidance for Staff (NIO, DHSSPS 2009).

Along with the main categories or types of abuse mentioned above Northern Ireland has two extra categories as follows –

Domestic Violence and Abuse

Domestic violence and abuse is threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, verbal, sexual, financial or emotional) inflicted on one person by another where they are or have been intimate partners or family members, irrespective of gender or sexual orientation. Domestic violence and abuse is essentially a pattern of behaviour which is characterised by the exercise of control and the misuse of power by one person over another. It is usually frequent and persistent. It can include violence by a son, daughter, mother, father, husband, wife, life partner or any other person who has close relationships with the victim. It occurs right across society, regardless of age, gender, race, ethnic or religious group, sexual orientation, wealth, disability or geography.

Human Trafficking

Human trafficking involves the acquisition and movement of people by improper means, such as force, threat or deception, for the purposes of exploiting them. It can take many forms, such as domestic servitude, forced criminality, forced labour, sexual exploitation and organ harvesting. Victims of human trafficking can come from all walks of life. They can be male or female, children or adult, and they may come from migrant or indigenous communities.

Exploitation

Exploitation is the deliberate maltreatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over another person, to take advantage over another person or situation usually, but not always, for personal gain from using them as a commodity. It may manifest itself in many forms including slavery, servitude, forced or compulsory labour, domestic violence and abuse or Human trafficking.

If there are concerns about an adult's well-being which are not dealt with under adult safeguarding procedures they should be reported to the local HSE Department/ HIQA or HSC Trust. A record of this referral should be retained.

Where might abuse take place?

Abuse can happen anywhere:

- In someone's own home.
- In a carer's home.
- Within day care, residential care, nursing care or other institutional settings.
- At work or in educational settings.
- In rented accommodation or commercial premises.
- In public places.

Who might abuse?

This could be anyone who has contact with the person – it could be a partner, spouse, child, relative, friend, advocate, informal carer, a member of a religious order, a healthcare, social care or other worker, a peer or, less commonly, a stranger.

Domestic/Familial Abuse

This is the abuse of an adult by a family member such as partner, son, daughter or sibling.

Professional Abuse

The misuse of power and abuse of trust by professionals, the failure of professionals to act on suspected abuse/crimes, poor care practice or neglect in services, resource shortfalls or service pressures that lead to service failure and culpability as a result of poor management systems. Possible signs of professional abuse include:

- Entering into inappropriate relationships with an adult.
- Failure to refer disclosure of abuse.
- Poor, ill- informed or outmoded care practice.
- Failure to help an adult to access health care / treatment.
- Denying an adult access to professional support and services such as advocacy.
- Inappropriate response to challenging behaviours.
- Failure to whistleblow on issues when internal procedures to highlight them are exhausted.

Peer Abuse

This is the abuse of one adult by another adult within a care setting. It can occur in group or communal settings, such as day care centres, clubs, residential care homes, nursing homes or other institutional settings.

Stranger Abuse

An adult may be abused by a stranger, a member of the public or a person who deliberately targets people. Every organisation should have procedures in place for dealing with concerns raised by staff and volunteers and for reporting those concerns. In the Republic of Ireland reports should be made to the relevant HSE

department/ HIQA and/or the Gardaí. In Northern Ireland reports should be made to the local HSC Trust or PSNI where appropriate.

What would cause concern or suspicion about abuse?

There are a number of ways in which concern /suspicion that an adult is suffering /has suffered harm may arise:

- The adult may say it.
- Someone else may tell or some incident may arouse concern.
- An adult may show some signs of physical injury for which there appears to be no credible or satisfactory explanation.
- An adult's demeanour/behaviour may cause a suspicion that something is not right, or possible abuse has taken place.
- The behaviour of another individual close to the adult engenders discomfort (this may be another staff member, volunteer, or leader of an activity or family member).
- Through general good neighbourliness and social guardianship.

Being alert to possible abuse plays a significant role in ensuring that adults are safeguarded and it is important that **all** concerns about possible abuse are reported.

What if an adult discloses abuse?

Where this happens, it is important that sister, 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 the information will be taken seriously and give information about what will happen next.
- If urgent medical/Gardaí assistance 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 the record) and report to the DLP for the Loreto Sisters
- Act without delay.

DO NOT

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

Checking Out

There may need to be some initial “checking out” with the adult who has disclosed information in order to ensure his/her safety. For example, if sisters, staff or a volunteer notices a bruise on an adult’s arm, it would be appropriate to ask “I see you have a bruise on your arm. How did that happen?” Then listen. However, be careful not to start investigating. It is important that sisters, staff and volunteers understand the clear distinction between “checking out” and an investigation. ***Do not start investigating by asking questions that relate to the detail, or circumstances of the alleged abuse, beyond initial checking out, listening and expressing your concern.***

Within Northern Ireland, there is a statutory requirement to refer those individuals to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) who have been engaged in regulated activity and have harmed an adult or placed an adult at risk of harm or where the harm test has been satisfied. If, following an internal investigation, an individual is permanently removed from regulated activity or would have been had they not left the organisation, there is a legal requirement to refer that information to the DBS for possible inclusion in the Adults’ Barred List.

Recording and Reporting

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 action. It is important for sister, 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, sister, staff and volunteers do need to pass on any concerns they have. See “*Reporting Procedure Flowchart*” below which applies to all Loreto Sisters, staff and volunteers.

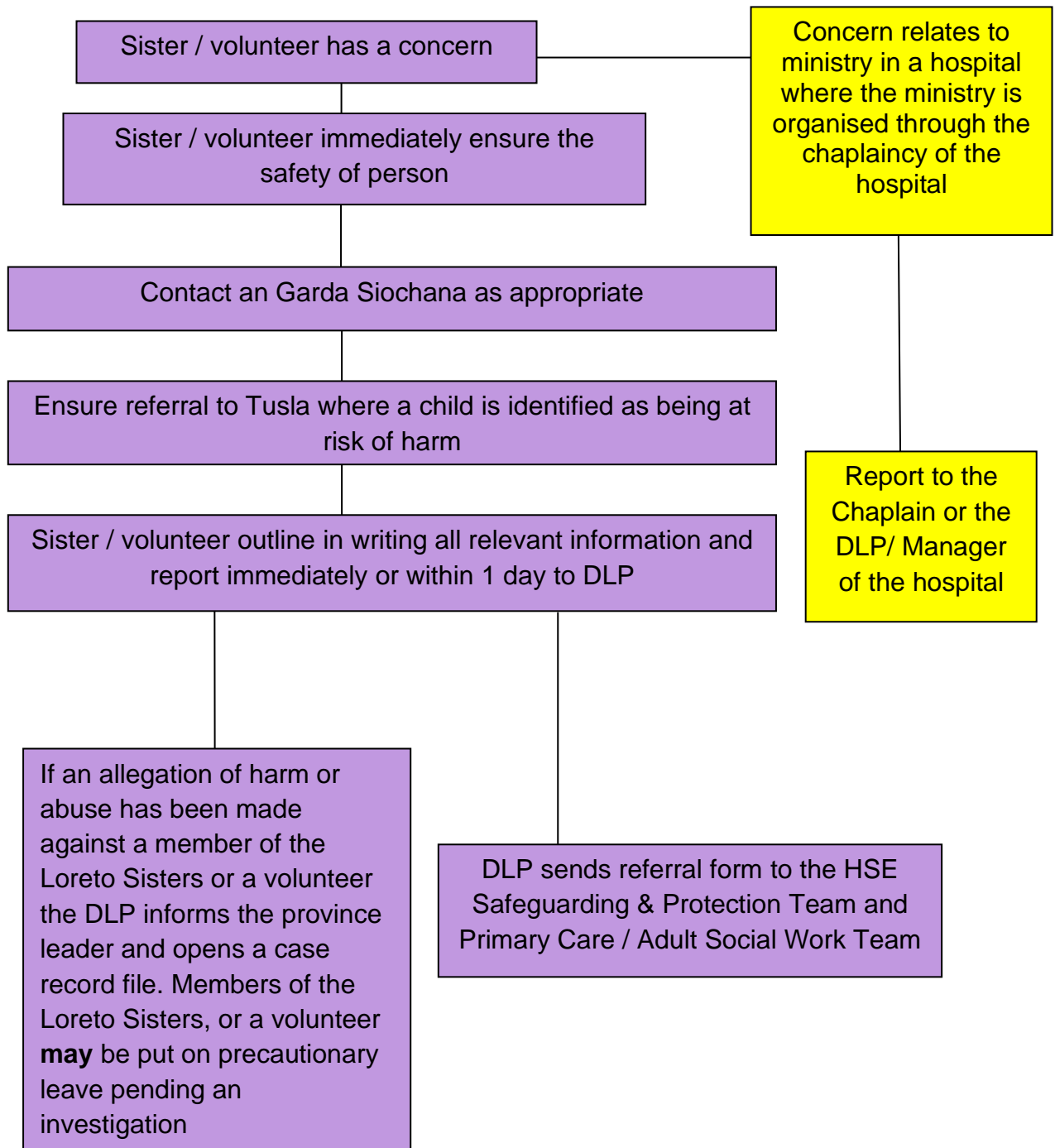
However, in NI if your ministry involves visiting adults in hospitals, residential care homes or other institutional settings, the reporting procedure is through the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) / Manager of the relevant institution.

In the ROI if your ministry involves visiting adults in hospitals where the ministry is organised through the chaplaincy of the hospital the reporting procedure is through the chaplain or the DLP / Manager of the hospital.

Reporting Procedure Flowchart ROI

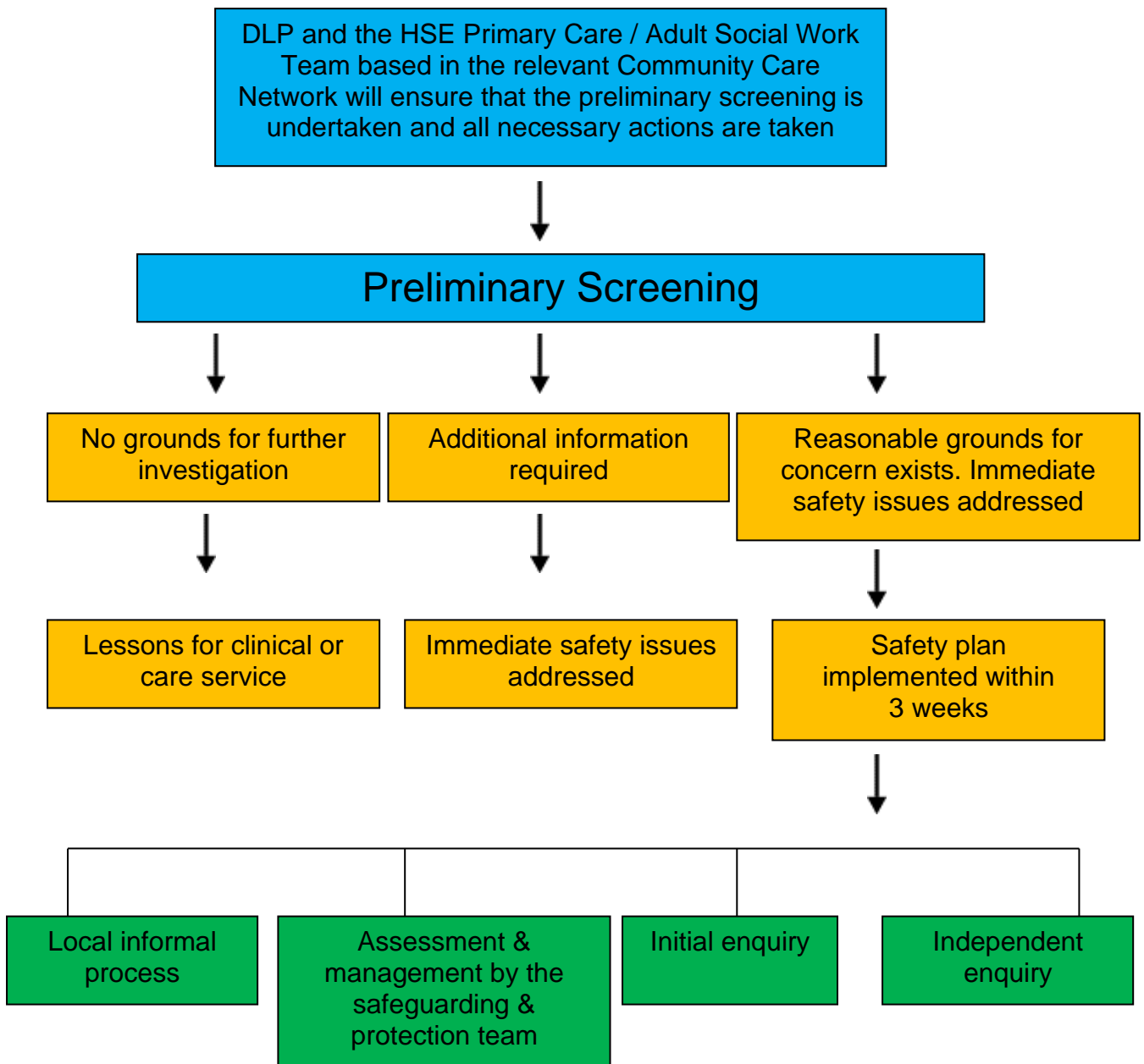
Step 1 – Concern Raising (within 1 day)

This step is initially completed by the person who has the concern and followed up by the DLP



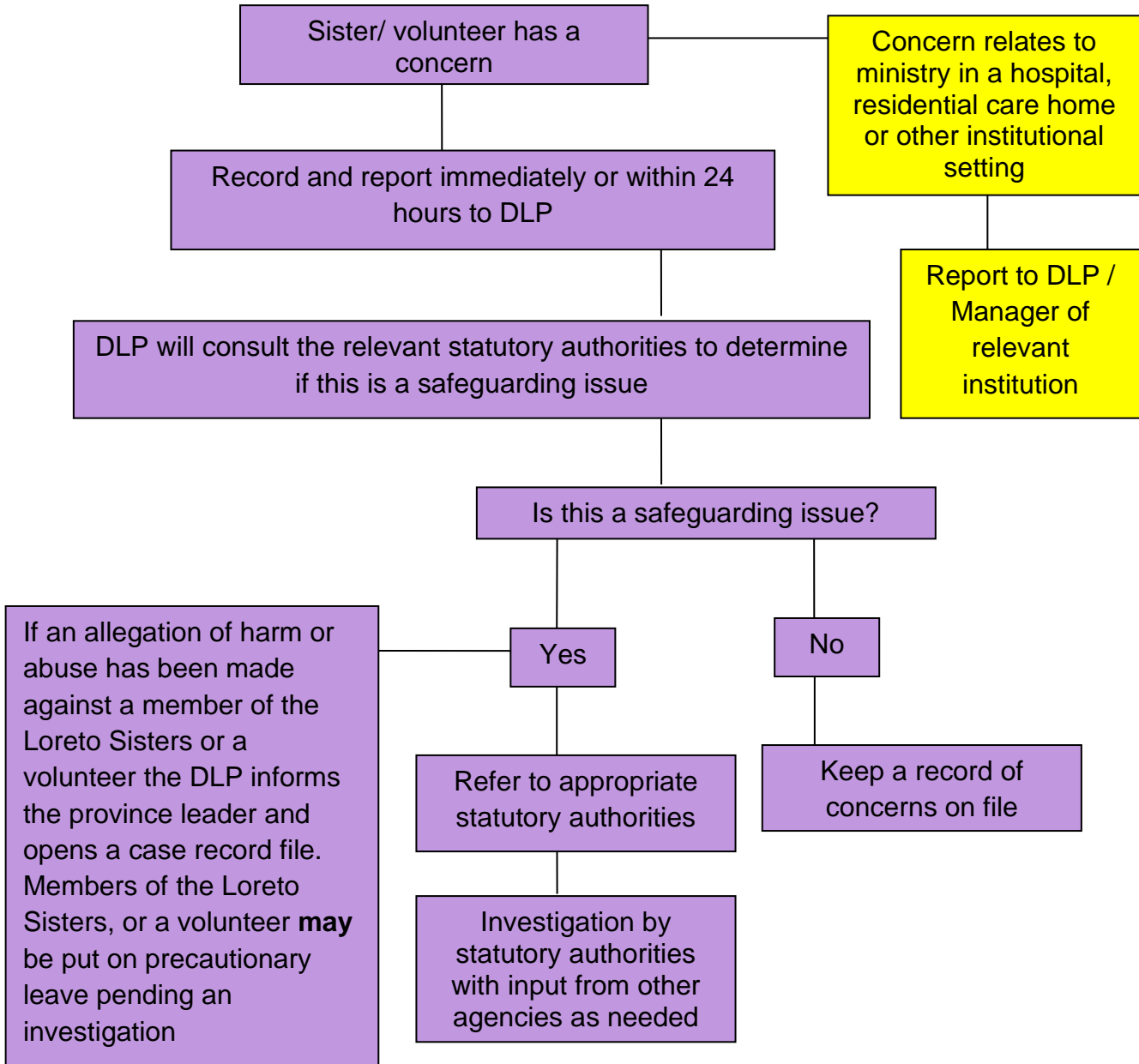
Step 2 - Preliminary Screening (within 3 working days)

This step is completed by the DLP and the HSE Primary Care / Adult Social Work Team based in the relevant Community Care Network



Preliminary Screening will take account of all relevant information which is readily available in order to establish if an abusive act could have occurred and if there are reasonable grounds for concern.

Reporting Procedure Flowchart NI



What is an Adult Safeguarding Champion ?

The Adult Safeguarding Champion (ASC) provides strategic and operational leadership and oversight in relation to adult safeguarding for an organisation and is responsible for implementing its adult safeguarding policy statement.

Rationale:

This role and its requirements are set out in ‘Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership’ (2015), the policy for Adult Safeguarding in Northern Ireland.

Do the Loreto Sisters need to have an Adult Safeguarding Champion ?

The guidance states that an organisation must have a nominated ASC if they have staff and volunteers who are subject to vetting. As Loreto Sisters have staff and volunteers who require vetting we must have an ASC.

The role of the Adult Safeguarding Champion:

1. To provide information and support for staff on adult safeguarding within the organisation.
2. To ensure that the organisation’s adult safeguarding policy is disseminated and support its implementation throughout the organisation.
3. To provide advice to staff and volunteers who have concerns about the signs of harm, and ensure reporting to the HSE / HSC Trusts where there is a safeguarding concern.
4. To support staff to ensure that any actions take account of what the adult wishes to achieve. This should not prevent information about any risk of serious harm being passed to the relevant HSE/ HSC Trust Adult Protection Gateway Service for assessment and decision-making.
5. To advise within the organisation regarding adult safeguarding training needs.
6. To establish contact with the HSE / HSC Trust Designated Adult Protection Officer (DAPO), the Gardaí / PSNI and other agencies as appropriate.
7. To compile and analyse records of reported concerns to determine whether a number of low level concerns are accumulating to become significant and make records available for inspection.
8. To ensure accurate and up to date records are maintained detailing all decisions that have been made, the reasons for those decisions and any other actions taken.

Adult Safeguarding Champion (ASC):

Suzie Duffy,
Apartment 2,
Loreto Hall,
Loreto Wood,
Cavan,
Co. Cavan.

Tel. 049 4371141
Email: suzieduffy5@gmail.com
Website: www.loreto.ie

Role of the Designated Liaison Person (DLP):

The DLP is responsible for managing all concerns, allegations and complaints regarding actual or potential harm or abuse which come to the attention of the province. Her contact details are:

Helen O’Riordan,
Abbey House,
Loreto Terrace,
Rathfarnham,
Dublin.
D14 R588.
Tel. 086 3528613
Email: hforiordan@gmail.com
Website: www.loreto.ie

The DLP is responsible for acting as a source of advice on safeguarding matters regarding adults at risk of harm or in need of protection, for co-ordinating action within the Loreto Sisters and for liaising with the relevant statutory authorities and other agencies, as appropriate, about suspected or actual cases of adult harm or abuse. When the DLP is contacted, she will undertake the following steps:

- Contact the relevant HSE / HIQA / HSC Trust and the Gardaí/ PSNI.
- Ensure that appropriate information is available at the time of the referral to the statutory agencies and that the referral is confirmed in writing, under confidential cover.
- Liaise with relevant Gardaí / PSNI service, social services and other agencies as appropriate during the investigation.
- Keep relevant people within the province informed about any action taken and any further action required.
- Ensure that an individual case record is maintained about the concerns, allegations and complaints of abuse and the action taken by the province, the liaison with other agencies and the resulting outcome.

Record Keeping

All written records relating to concerns or allegations of suspected or actual adult abuse must be maintained by the DLP, in the province office. Safeguarding case management records must be kept for 100 years. Other records such as recruitment must be kept according to appropriate policies e.g. insurance requirements.

The province is responsible for ensuring that the gathering, storage, usage and sharing of personal information is in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act, 1998 in Northern Ireland and the Data Protection Act 1988 (amended 2003) in the Republic of Ireland.

Confidentiality

It is important that sisters, staff and volunteers understand the importance of confidentiality. All information relating to concerns /suspicions /allegations about safeguarding needs to be shared with the relevant person who in turn shares it on a “need to know” basis with the relevant statutory authorities and relevant professionals.

This information should NOT be shared with anyone, inside or outside the Loreto Sisters, unless they are involved in the case. Only the relevant personnel need to be involved. The DLP will advise on “who needs to know” and who should have access to records.

No undertakings regarding secrecy can be given. Those working with adults should make this clear to all parties involved. However, it is important to respect the wishes of the adult as much as is reasonably practical.

Information may be disclosed to external agencies to ensure the care and safety of an individual or others or where a crime is suspected. Information shared is not only in relation to a suspected crime but also and more usually in parallel with a need to safeguard a person at risk of abuse.

This includes the disclosure of information to the Gardaí, HSE and relevant HSC Trust or PSNI.

The Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 came into force on 1st August, 2012. It is an offence to withhold information on certain offences against children and vulnerable persons from An Garda Síochána.

The main purpose of the Act is to create a criminal offence of withholding information relating to the commission of a serious offence, including a sexual offence, against a person who is under 18 years or an otherwise vulnerable person, with the aim of ensuring more effective protection of children and other vulnerable persons from serious crime. An offence is committed when a person who knows, or believes, that one or more offences has been committed by another person against a child or vulnerable person and the person has information which they know or believe might be of material assistance in securing apprehension, prosecution or conviction of that other person for that offence, and fails without reasonable excuse to disclose that information as soon as it is practicable to do so to a member of An Garda Síochána. The offence applies to a person acquiring information after the passing of the Act on 18th July, 2012 and it does not apply to the victim. The offence exists even if the information is about an offence which took place prior the Act being enacted and even if the child or vulnerable person is no longer a child or vulnerable person.

Sharing of Information

All adults at risk of harm or in need of protection and, where appropriate, their carers or advocates, need to be made aware that the operation of multi-disciplinary and inter-agency procedures will, on occasion, require the sharing of information in order to protect, or to investigate an alleged suspected criminal offence.

Values and Principles

The Loreto Sisters's practice in conjunction with these safeguarding guidelines should be underpinned and guided by a number of values and principles as outlined below:

Access to information and knowledge - adults will be given information that they can understand in order to make an informed choice, including access to expert knowledge and advocacy, as required.

Choice – adults will have the opportunity to select independently from a range of options based on clear and accurate information. Examples of choice are – if an adult does or does not want to participate in a Loreto based activity such as a Christmas party, a province outing or pilgrimage.

Confidentiality – adults will know that information about them is managed appropriately and that there is a clear understanding of confidentiality and its limits among staff / volunteers.

Consent – adults have the right to be supported in making their own decisions and to give or withhold their consent to an activity or service.

Dignity and Respect – adults will be accorded respect and dignity by recognising their uniqueness and personal needs.

Equality and Cultural Diversity –adults will be treated equally and their background and culture will be valued and respected.

Independence - adults will have as much control as possible over their lives while at the same time they are being safeguarded against unreasonable risks.

Privacy - 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.

Safety - adults need to feel safe, and live without fear of violence, neglect or abuse in any form.

Consent and Capacity

The Loreto Sisters seek to work in the best interest of an adult and with his/her consent. Sisters, staff and volunteers should always be mindful of the need for adults to consent to, and to be comfortable with, any proposed activity. Consent is a clear indication of a willingness to participate in an activity. The adult may signal consent verbally, by gesture, by willing participation or in writing. Decisions with more serious consequences will require more formal or professional consideration of consent and appropriate steps should always be taken to ensure that consent is valid.

Sisters, staff and volunteers should remember that no one can give, or withhold consent on behalf of another adult, unless special provision has been made for this, usually in law. In certain situations the need for consent may be overridden e.g. to meet a legal responsibility to report or prevent immediate or significant harm either to the adult or the general public. As far as possible, adults should be supported to communicate their concerns to relevant agencies.

Gaining Consent from an Adult

Consent is a process - it results from understanding through dialogue and the provision of information. It may be expressly given or, alternatively, it may be signalled by a person's conduct e.g. an individual may signal his/her consent to participate in informal situations such as staff party or party in residential home or the weekly luncheon club, or by willingly asking a volunteer to assist him/her in accessing toilet facilities.

(For further information in relation to the delivery of personal and intimate care to adults please refer to Appendix 5)

For those adults who may have difficulty in vocalising their preference and consent there are some simple steps as outlined in the UK's Mental Capacity Act Code of Practice (2005) which may be helpful. These include:

1. Using simple language and/or illustrations or photographs to help the person understand the options.
2. Asking him/her about a decision at a time and location where the person feels most relaxed and at ease.
3. Using specialist interpreters or signers to communicate with the person.

This may mean that other people are required to communicate with the person to establish his/her view e.g. a trusted relative or friend, or full time carer who may be able to help the adult express herself or himself and indicate a preference.

As a general rule, the method of gaining consent is likely to be influenced by the seriousness of what is being proposed. The type of activities offered by Loreto Sisters in the province to adults would be unlikely to require written consent. There may, however, be occasions when written consent is required and if sisters have concerns about consent, e.g. as to its validity, they should always seek advice from the province leader and /or the province adult safeguarding champion. In such circumstances, members of staff or volunteers should

always seek advice from their line manager/local community leader and/or the province adult safeguarding champion. In such cases the province adult safeguarding champion will, in turn, seek professional advice on the matter from the relevant statutory authorities.

Currently the following legal definition is used by courts both in NI and the ROI as a general rule in relation to consent. The important issue is to ensure that the consent given is valid. The consent of an adult is considered valid ONLY if:

1. He/she has the capacity to consent, i.e. he/she can understand and weigh up the information needed to make the decision.
2. Sufficient information has been given to him/her, in an appropriate way, on which to base the decision.
3. Consent has been given on a voluntary basis, that is free from coercion or negative influence.

If any of these three factors is absent, consent given is not valid.

Legal protections need to be put in place if someone such as a Loreto sister, family member, an advocate or health professional has to make decisions for an adult who has been deemed to lack capacity.

Section 3: Recruitment and Selection

The Loreto Sisters apply a thorough and clearly defined method of recruiting staff and volunteers in line with legislative requirements and best practice. It is important to have safe recruitment and selection procedures in place to minimise the opportunity for unsuitable people to work or volunteer with adults. Within the province, adult safeguarding is a primary consideration in the recruitment, selection and management of personnel.

The recruitment procedure requires that:

- There is a job description for staff and volunteers outlining the key skills and abilities required for the role.
- There is an open recruitment process.
- There is an application form that covers past experience /work /volunteering.
- There is a declaration form requesting information on previous convictions and investigations.
- There is an interview process appropriate to the role and task.
- There are written references sought from two people (not relatives, which are followed up when necessary).
- There is an identification check.
- There is a code of conduct.
- Garda eVetting / Access NI Vetting.

Effective Management

The province recognises that a thorough induction process is integral to good organisational practice. Induction should take place when personnel take up a new role and should include:

- Information on the policies, procedures, guidelines, activities and ethos of the province.
- Expectations and boundaries within which they should operate.
- Awareness-raising and training on the recognition, recording and reporting of abuse.

A timeframe should be set within which induction should be completed. New personnel should be provided with the opportunity to read the adult safeguarding policy of the province, and know where to access the document for reference purposes.

A Probationary Period

Appointments should be conditional on the completion of a satisfactory period of probation established at the time of taking up the role. A record should be kept of any matters arising and /or any training needs identified. During the probationary period, progress in the role should be reviewed at regular intervals and concerns addressed appropriately.

Structure for Line Management and Support appropriate to the Role

Good practice indicates that support and supervision are beneficial in enabling personnel to feel supported in the work, which they do, and to ensure that they are carrying out their duties to the required standard. Regular meetings between personnel and management provide the opportunity to give and receive feedback on performance and other relevant issues and to assist in the identification of areas for attention /development. Written records of line management, support and training should be retained.

Relevant Training appropriate to the Role

Personnel should receive training appropriate to the nature of their role and the profile of the adults concerned. The training should be reviewed and updated in line with changing legislation and practice. It is recommended that updated training be delivered at least every three years. A good understanding of the nature of abuse is essential to ensure that personnel remain alert to signs that an adult may have been abused. Adult safeguarding training should include a basic awareness and understanding of the factors, which contribute to an adult at risk or in need of protection, the possible signs of abuse, responding when abuse is disclosed or suspected, the meaning of confidentiality in the context of adult safeguarding, recording and reporting procedures.

Personnel must -

- take concerns around abuse seriously.
- deal with information about alleged abuse sensitively.
- know not to make promises to keep secrets.
- understand that their role is not to investigate.
- know how to report concerns.
- know the procedure to follow in relation to reporting to the DLP.

Appendix 1: Recruitment Forms and Code of Conduct

Confidential Application Form Staff and Volunteers

Surname:

Maiden Name
(if applicable):

Christian Names:

Address:
.....

Date of Birth: Tel No:

Mobile No: Email:

Which Loreto ministry are you volunteering for ?
.....

Have you previously been involved in voluntary work ?
 Yes No

If yes, please give details
.....
.....

Why do you want to get involved in this Loreto ministry ?
.....
.....

Have you previously received any training for working with adults ?
 Yes No

If yes, please give details
.....
.....

Any other relevant information ?
.....

Is there any medical or other reason why you may be deemed unsuitable to work with adults ?

Yes No

If yes, please give details

.....
.....

Please provide the names and addresses of two people whom we could contact for a reference (not relatives)

Name:

Address:

.....

.....

.....

Name:

Address:

.....

.....

.....

Tel No:

Email:

Tel No:

Email:

I declare that the above information is true and that I am fit to serve as a volunteer with this Loreto ministry. I have received and read the Loreto adult safeguarding policy and agree to abide by it. I understand that if I fail to do this my participation may be withdrawn.

Are you prepared to complete and submit a Garda Vetting / Access NI Vetting form at the start of your employment and/or as often as deemed necessary or appropriate thereafter ?

Yes No

I give consent for this form, together with the Garda Vetting/Access NI Disclosure, be held on file in accordance with the Data Protection Acts (as amended) and retained for the purpose of adult safeguarding. Data will be used for the purpose indicated on the form only. This form may be accessed by those with responsibility for managing records or group programmes.

Yes No

Signed:

Date:

Confidential Declaration Form Staff and Volunteers

Declaration form for all staff and volunteers working with adults.

Surname:

Maiden Name
(if applicable):

Christian Names:

Address:
.....

Date of Birth: Tel No:

Mobile No: Email:

Place of Birth:

Any other name previously known as:

Do you have any prosecutions pending or have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of a caution or of a bind over order ?

Yes No

If yes, please state below the nature and date(s) of the offence(s), the court responsible for dealing with the matter and the approximate date of the court hearing.

Nature of Offence: Date of Offence:
.....
.....

I give consent for this form, together with the Garda Vetting/Access NI Disclosure, be held on file in accordance with the Data Protection Acts (as amended) and retained for the purpose of adult safeguarding. Data will be used for the purpose indicated on the form only. This form may be accessed by those with responsibility for managing records or group programmes.

Yes No

Signed:

Date:

NI Declaration Form

We are very aware of the sensitive and confidential nature of the information contained in this document, and wish to assure you that it will be treated in the utmost confidence, and handled strictly according to our Policy on Secure Storage, Handling, Retention and Disposal of Disclosures Information.

It will be seen **only** by the Registered Person who applies for the Access N.I. Enhanced Disclosure.

You have applied for a role which is a Regulated Activity as defined by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (N.I.) Order 2007 and also falls within the definition of an “excepted” position as provided by the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exceptions) Order (N.I.) 1979, therefore ALL convictions including SPENT convictions MUST be disclosed.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working within the Catholic community. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offences. This information will be verified through an Access N.I. Enhanced Disclosure.

Please complete below:

1. Surname: _____
(Block Capitals)
2. All Forenames: _____
(Block Capitals)
3. Date of Birth: ____/____/____
4. Male/Female: _____
5. Place of Birth (Town/County and Country): _____
6. Present Address: _____

Post Code: _____
7. Contact Details: Tel. No: _____
Email: _____

Role applied for: _____ (please specify **exact role**, the word ‘**volunteer**’ is not acceptable)

Religious Order: Loreto Sisters

The purpose of the following questions is solely to assess whether you pose a risk to children or vulnerable adults. If, for any reason, you answer Yes to this question, it may not automatically rule you out of the selection process. You will have the opportunity to fully discuss the circumstances with us at a face to face meeting in a confidential manner.

8. Have you ever been convicted or received an official caution for a criminal offence, **other than minor road traffic offences**? Yes No (it is not acceptable to state N/A)

If Yes, please give details: (continue on a separate page if necessary)

Date of Conviction	Offence	Sentence

9. Have you ever been or are you the subject of an investigation due to concerns about treatment of children / vulnerable adults ? Yes No **If Yes, please give details:** (continue on a separate page if necessary)

10. Are you the subject of any possible pending prosecutions, **other than minor road traffic offences?** Yes No **If Yes, please give details:** (continue on a separate page if necessary)

Declaration:

Please tick the boxes below if you have read and understood these statements (if you do not tick the boxes that you have understood the declaration, your application will not progress)

I am committed to protecting and safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults from abuse.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that I will be working closely with children and or vulnerable adults and that a “Barred List Check” is required. I understand that it is a criminal offence to apply for an Enhanced Disclosure Check if I am on one of the barred lists. I give my consent to proceed with a Barred List Check.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that to knowingly give false information or to omit information will be considered as a breach of trust.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that my confidential documentation will be retained for 90 days after the certificate has been issued. After that period all documentation will be destroyed.	<input type="checkbox"/>
The information I have given on this form is correct.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Applicant’s Signature: _____ Date: _____

Applicant’s Name: _____ (please print block capitals)

Note to Applicant: Please complete this form and place in a sealed envelope. When completed attach it to the completed ID Verification Form and ID photocopies and forward to:

The Registered Person,
Catholic Church Northern Dioceses Vetting Office,
120 Cliftonville Road, Belfast BT14 6LA.
Tel: 028 9049 2783. Email: vetting@soddc.org

Data Protection: This form will be securely held by the Catholic Church Northern Diocese Vetting Office and will be treated as strictly confidential, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, the Down and Connor Privacy Notice and governed by Access NI’s Code of Practice and Privacy Notice, which can be found at:

- <http://www.downandconnorsafeguarding.com/privacy-notices/>
- <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/publications/accessni-code-practice>
- <https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/publications/ani-privacy>

NI ID Verification Form

For Official Use Only	
ID Form Received	
CDF Received	
On Database	
Submitted Online	
Tracked	
Results on Database	
FTA Letter Issued	
Access NI Case Ref No:	

This application will be processed in accordance with Access NI's Code of Practice, which can be found at: <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/publications/accessni-code-of-practice>

PART 1 - Applicant's Details (to be completed by Applicant only, it is not acceptable that someone else completes this section for you):

Please tick: Mr Mrs Ms Miss Other _____ (eg. Dr, Fr, Sr, Rev)

Forenames: _____ (block capitals)

(All Forenames must be provided. Also ensure that you include all forenames in the Access NI online Application)

Surname: _____ (block capitals)

Previous Names: _____ (block capitals)

used from Date: _____ to Date: _____

Date of Birth: ____/____/____ Please tick: Male: Female:

Address: _____

(block capitals)

Post Code: _____ Telephone Number: _____

Email address: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

PART 2 - Role Details (to be completed by Loreto Safeguarding Representative):

Role applied for: _____ (block capitals)

(an Enhanced Access NI Check can only be made if the applicant is performing one or more of these roles: teaching, training care, supervision, advice and/or guidance)

The role involves children The role involves vulnerable adults

The role is voluntary The role is paid

If you ticked 'a paid role', please send a cheque for £33.00 made payable to 'Northern Diocese Vetting'

PART 3 - Identity Verification (to be completed by Applicant):

There are 2 routes by which your identity may be verified. Please consult the attached list of Acceptable Documents and tick below which route you have chosen.

Route 1 <input type="checkbox"/> (3 documents in total)	Provide 1 document from Group 1 <u>and</u> 2 further documents from Group 1 or Group 2a or Group 2b. Please note that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● One of the documents must show your current address. ● One of the documents must have your photograph.
Route 2 <input type="checkbox"/> (4 documents in total)	Provide 4 documents in total from Group 2a and 2b of which one document <u>must be a birth certificate issued after the time of birth</u> and a second document must show your <u>current address</u> .

PART 4 – (to be completed by the Loreto Safeguarding Representative):

Please tick the box that applies to this applicant.

a	Volunteer Role - UK/Ireland applicant. I confirm that I have checked current and original documentation for the applicant named at Part 1. I am satisfied that the ID documentation complies with the Access NI acceptable documents list as indicated by me overleaf.	<input type="checkbox"/>
b	Paid Role - UK/Ireland* applicant. I confirm that I have checked current and original documentation for the applicant named at Part 1. I am satisfied that the ID documentation complies with the Access NI acceptable documents list as indicated by me overleaf. I enclose a cheque for £33.00 made payable to “Northern Diocese Vetting”. (* please refer to footnote on page 3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
c	Volunteer Role - Applicant is not from UK or Ireland. I confirm that I have checked current and original documentation for the applicant named at Part 1. I am satisfied that the ID documentation complies with the Access NI acceptable documents list as indicated by me overleaf. (acceptable documents are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Group 1: Passport. ● Group 2(a): Driving Licence photocard or Immigration document/Visa/Work permit. ● Group 2(b): Bank or Building Society statement or Letter of Sponsorship from a future employer or voluntary organisation) 	<input type="checkbox"/>
d	Paid Role - Applicant is not from UK or Ireland. I confirm that I have checked current and original documentation for the applicant named at Part 1. I am satisfied that the ID documentation complies with the Access NI acceptable documents list as indicated by me overleaf. I enclose a cheque for £33 made payable to ‘Northern Diocese Vetting’. I have confirmed that the applicant has the right to work in the UK. (NB. The Verifier is required to check that the applicant has a right to work in the UK. Official Government guidance is available at https://www.gov.uk/check-job-applicant-right-to-work . We recommend reading the following publication:- https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/right-to-work-checks-employers-guide	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signed: Catholic Church Identity Verifier	
Please print name	
Contact telephone number (in case of any issues)	
Date	

Data Protection: This form will be securely held by the Catholic Church Northern Diocese Vetting Office and will be treated as strictly confidential, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, the Down and Connor Privacy Notice and governed by Access NI’s Code of Practice and Privacy Notice, which can be found at: <http://www.downandconnorsafeguarding.com/privacy-notices/>
<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/publications/accessni-code-practice>
<https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/publications/ani-privacy>

Please post the Identity Verification Form, photocopies of the applicants Identity Documents (do not send originals) and the list of Acceptable Documents ticked page, indicating the documents the applicant has provided. Also please attach the applicant’s sealed envelope containing the Confidential Declaration Form.

To: The Registered Person, Catholic Church Northern Dioceses Vetting Office, 120 Cliftonville Road, Belfast BT14 6LA, Tel: 028 9049 2783, Email: vetting@soddc.org

Access NI List of Acceptable Documents

Verifier to tick the box beside the original documents that have been inspected and verified

Group 1: Primary identity documents	
<input type="checkbox"/> Current <u>and</u> valid passport (any nationality)	<input type="checkbox"/> Birth certificate issued within 12 months of birth. ((UK, Isle of Man or Channel Islands inc. those issued by UK authorities overseas)
<input type="checkbox"/> Biometric Residence Permit (UK)	<input type="checkbox"/> Long form Irish birth certificate – issued at time of registration of birth (Ireland)
<input type="checkbox"/> Current driving licence photocard, full or provisional (UK, Ireland, Isle of Man, Channel Island)	<input type="checkbox"/> Adoption certificate (UK, Channel Islands or Ireland)
Group 2a: Trusted government documents	
<input type="checkbox"/> Birth certificate issued after time of birth (UK, Ireland, Isle of Man or Channel Islands)	<input type="checkbox"/> Electoral ID card (NI only)
<input type="checkbox"/> Marriage/Civil Partnership Certificate (UK, Ireland, or Channel Islands)	<input type="checkbox"/> Current driving licence photocard (full or provisional) All countries outside the UK (excluding Isle of Man and Channel Islands)
<input type="checkbox"/> HM Forces ID card (UK)	<input type="checkbox"/> Current driving licence (full or provisional paper version (if issued before 1998)) (UK, Isle of Man, Channel Islands, Ireland)
<input type="checkbox"/> Firearms licence (UK, Channel Islands and Isle of Man)	<input type="checkbox"/> Immigration document, visa or work permit (issued by a country outside the UK. Valid only if the applicant is living and working outside the UK. Visa/permit must relate to the country in which the role is based.
Group 2b: Financial and social history documents MUST BE ISSUED WITHIN THE LAST 12 MONTHS (where amounts are showing - please black out)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Mortgage Statement (UK or Ireland)	<input type="checkbox"/> Land and Property Services rates demand (NI only)
<input type="checkbox"/> Financial statement, for example ISA, pension or endowment (UK or Ireland)	<input type="checkbox"/> Council tax statement (UK and Channel Islands)
<input type="checkbox"/> P45 or P60 statement (UK, Channel Islands)	
Group 2b: Financial and social history documents MUST BE ISSUED WITHIN THE LAST 3 MONTHS	
<input type="checkbox"/> Credit card statement (UK or Ireland)	<input type="checkbox"/> Bank or building society account opening confirmation letter (UK)
<input type="checkbox"/> Bank or Building society statement (UK, Channel Islands or Ireland)	<input type="checkbox"/> Utility bill (not mobile phone) (UK or Ireland) e.g. Electricity, Gas, Water & Telephone Landline bill
<input type="checkbox"/> Bank or Building society statement (Outside UK) (Branch must be in the country where the applicant lives and works)	<input type="checkbox"/> Benefit statement, for example Child Benefit, Pension etc. (UK)
<input type="checkbox"/> Central or local government, government agency, or local council document giving entitlement, for example from the Department for Work and Pensions, the Employment Service, HMRC (UK, Channel Islands)	
Group 2b: Financial and social history documents MUST STILL BE VALID	
<input type="checkbox"/> EEA National ID card	<input type="checkbox"/> Cards carrying the PASS accreditation logo (UK, Isle of Man, Channel Islands)
<input type="checkbox"/> 60+ or Senior (65+) SmartPass issued by Translink (NI)	<input type="checkbox"/> Letter from head teacher or further education college principal (UK, for 16 -19 year olds in full time education – only used in exceptional circumstances if other documents cannot be provided)
<input type="checkbox"/> yLink card issued by Translink (NI)	<input type="checkbox"/> Letter of sponsorship from future employment provider or voluntary organization (Non-UK only. Valid only for applicants residing outside UK and Ireland at time of application)
<input type="checkbox"/> Irish Passport Card. (Cannot be used with an Irish Passport)	

Footnote: Irish citizens continue to have unrestricted access to work in the UK. From 1 July 2021, they can prove their right to work using their Irish passport or Irish passport card, or their Irish birth or adoption certificate together with an official document giving the person’s permanent National Insurance number and their name issued by a government agency or a previous employer. There is no requirement for a retrospective check to be undertaken on **EEA citizens** who entered employment up to and including 30 June 2021.

Confidential Reference Form Staff and Volunteers

..... of
has applied for the position of and has given
your name as a referee.

This post may involve access to adults. We are anxious to know if you have any reason at all to be concerned about this applicant being in contact with adults.

- Yes No

If you have answered yes, we will contact you in confidence.

If you are happy to complete this reference, all information contained on the form will remain confidential in accordance with law and will only be shared with the interview panel.

How long do you know this person ?

.....

In what capacity ?

.....

What qualities and skills does this person have which you consider suitable for this post ?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Signed:

Address:
.....
.....

Phone: Day: Evening:

Date:

Loreto Use Only

Date Received:

Received By:

Signed:

Date:

ROI Valid ID Documents

Two **original** documents must be produced to the employer in the name of the applicant, which are then copied and forwarded to the AMRI vetting office (where applicable). **One from Group 1 and one from Group 2.**

Group 1

- Driving Licence.
- Passport.
- Photo signed by Gardaí.
- Validated Student Card.
- Photo signed by Gardaí & Birth Certificate.

Group 2

- Bank Account.
- Utility Bill.
- Exam Cert.
- Store Card Statement.
- Letter from Head Teacher.

Group 2 documentation must be issued within the last 6 months

Loreto Sisters Garda Vetting

Guidelines for completing Vetting Invitation Form (NVB 1)

Please read the following guidelines before completing this form.

Miscellaneous

The Form must be completed in full using **BLOCK CAPITALS** and writing must be clear and legible.

The Form should be completed in ball point pen.

Photocopies will not be accepted.

All applicants will be required to provide documents to validate their identity.

If the applicant is under 18 years of age, a completed NVB 3 - Parent\Guardian Consent Form will be required. Please note that where the applicant is under 18 years of age the electronic correspondence will issue to the Parent\Guardian. This being the case, the applicant must provide their Parent\Guardian Email address on the NVB 1 form.

Personal Details

Insert details for each field, allowing one block letter per box.

For Date of Birth field, allow one digit per box.

Please fill in your Email Address, allowing one character/symbol per box. This is required as the invitation to the e-vetting website will be sent to this address.

Please allow one digit per box for your contact number.

The Current Address means the address you are now living at.

The address fields should be completed in full, including Eircode/Postcode. No abbreviations.

Role Being Vetted For

The role being applied for must be clearly stated. **Generic terms such as "Volunteer" will not suffice.**

Declaration of Application

The applicant must confirm their understanding and acceptance of the two statements by signing the application form at Section 2 and ticking the box provided.

Proof of Identification:

The applicant must provide a COPY of two original IDs. One is to be a COPY of an original photo ID i.e. passport or driving licence. The other is a COPY of an original ID to verify your current address i.e. recent utility bill or bank statement (within the last 6 months). See list of suitable original IDs. The Vetting Bureau do not accept a Public Services Card as a form of ID. A COPY of the two original IDs are sent along with this Garda vetting invitation form to Caroline Daly (see address below).

Loreto Sisters Vetting Invitation

Please complete using **BLOCK CAPITALS** and return the form to the following address:
Caroline Daly, Loreto House, Beaufort, Rathfarnham, Dublin 14. D14 H3V2.
DO NOT send this form directly to the National Vetting Bureau or any Garda Station.

Section 1 – Personal Information

Under Sec 26(b) of the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016, it is an offence to make a false statement for the purpose of obtaining a vetting disclosure.

Forename(s):																															
Middle Name:																															
Surname:																															
Date Of Birth:	D	D	/	M	M	/	Y	Y	Y	Y																					
Email Address:																															
Contact Number:																															
Role Being Vetted For:																															
Current Address:																															
Line 1:																															
Line 2:																															
Line 3:																															
Line 4:																															
Line 5:																															
Eircode/Postcode:																															

Section 2 – Additional Information

Name Of Organisation:

I have provided documentation to validate my identity as required *and*
I consent to the making of this application and to the disclosure of information by the National Vetting Bureau to the Liaison Person pursuant to Section 13(4)(e) National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016. Please tick box

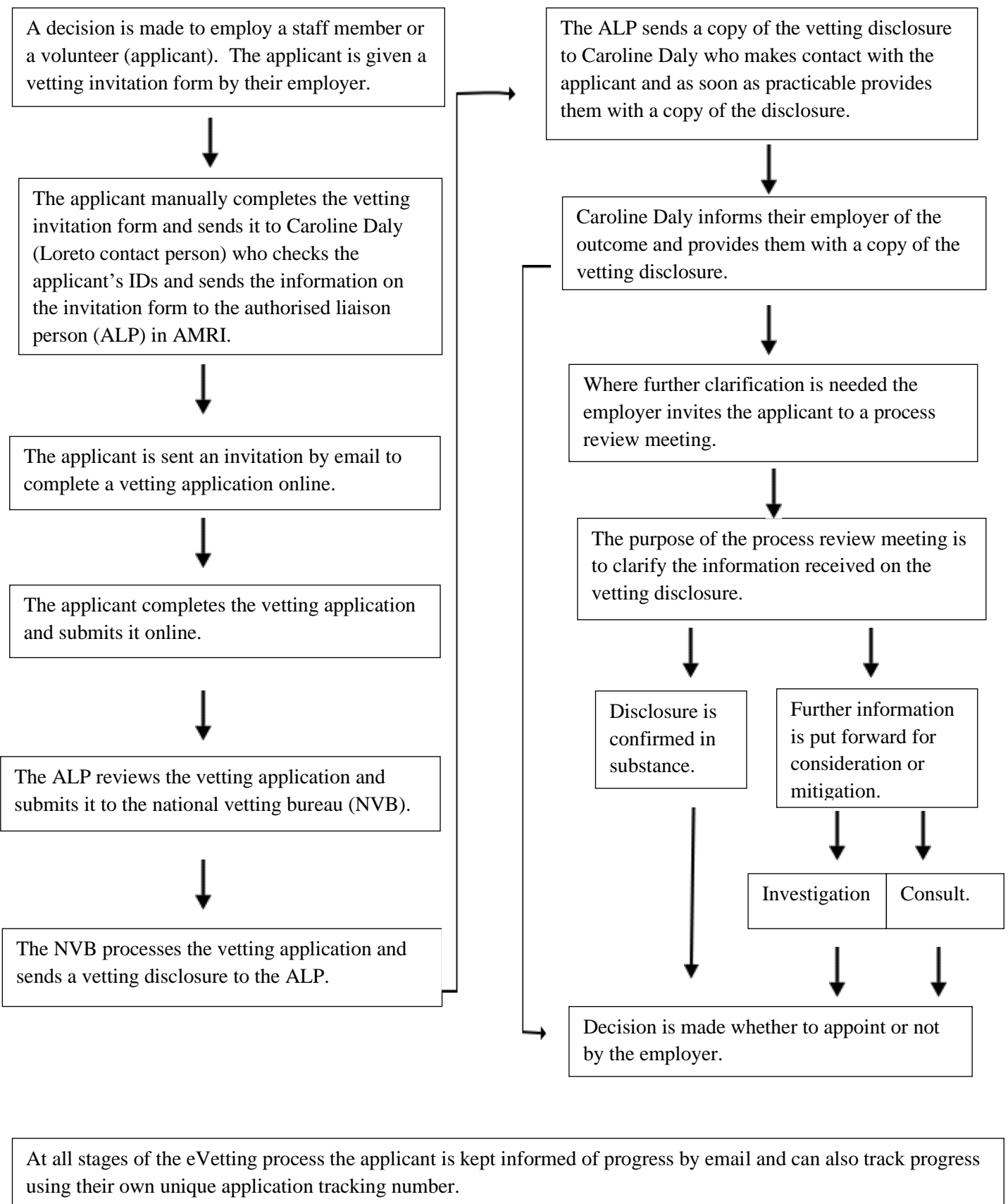
Applicant's
Signature:

Date: / /

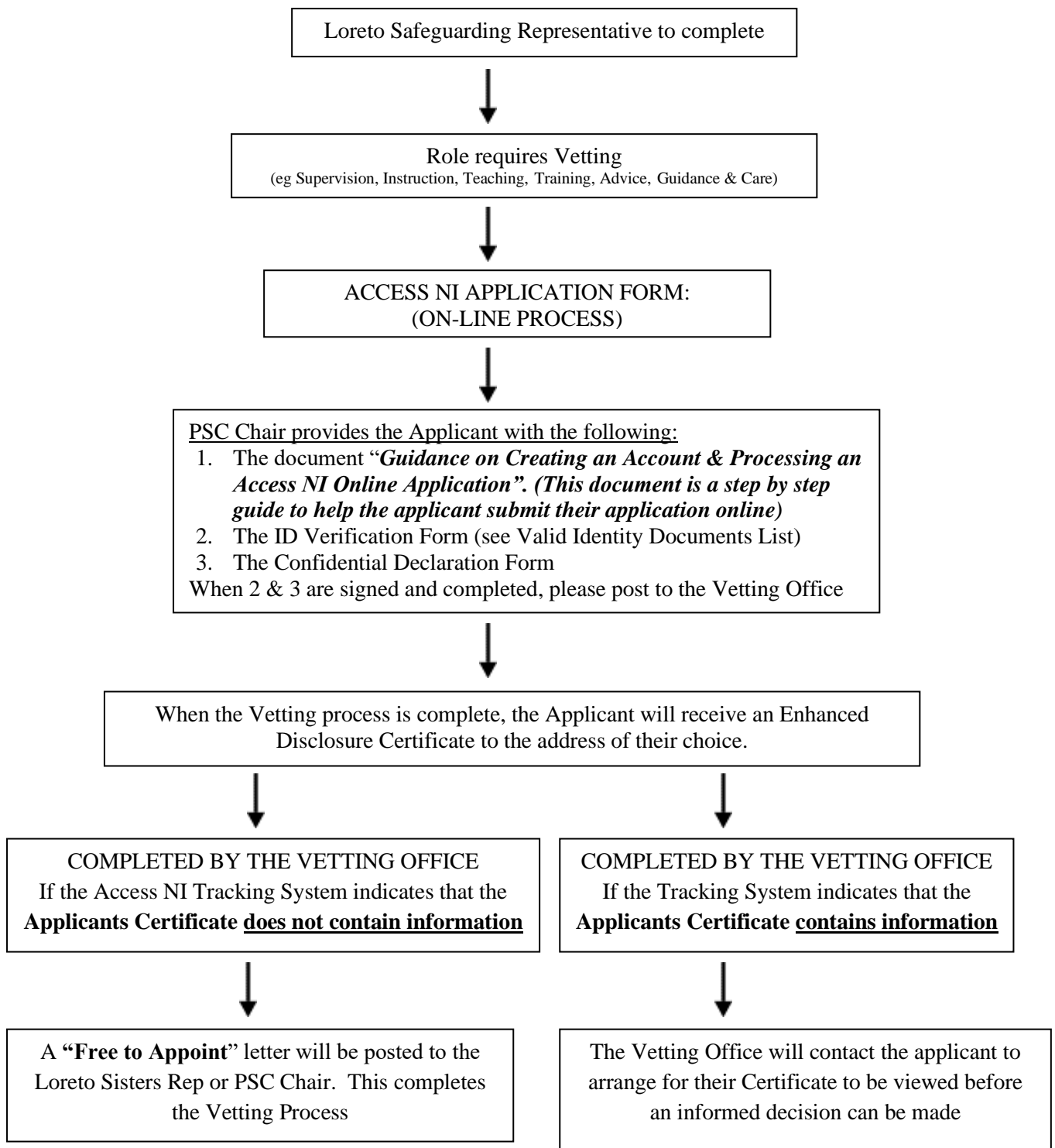
Note: Please return this form to the above named organisation, along with a copy of two original IDs. An invitation to the vetting website will then be sent to your Email address.

This form will be held in accordance with data regulations. The data will be used only for the purpose indicated on the form. It will be accessed only by those authorised to do so.

Garda eVetting Flowchart



Access NI eVetting Flowchart



The vetting process above is for a Regulated Activity ONLY

There are six categories of activity which are regulated activity with adults:

- providing health care
- providing social work
- assistance in the conduct of a person’s own affair
- providing personal care
- assistance with general household matters
- conveying

Letter of Appointment

for

..... (name)
..... (address)
..... (volunteering role)

Dear

Thank you most sincerely for applying for the above position. It is with the greatest of pleasure that I can confirm that you have been successful in your application and I am delighted that you have decided to work as a volunteer with Loreto. Please complete the enclosed letter of agreement and it return to me.

If you have any further questions about the Loreto safeguarding adults policy, code of behaviour or procedures (which you have already received) please do not hesitate to contact the Loreto recruitment committee.

May I take this opportunity to welcome you and thank you for your commitment to Loreto.

Sincerely Yours,

.....
Loreto Safeguarding Representative.

Date:

Loreto:

Letter of Agreement

for

..... (name)
..... (address)
..... (volunteering role)

Dear

Thank you for your letter of appointment. I am happy to accept the above volunteering role. I understand and accept that it is my duty to safeguard the welfare of vulnerable adults. I confirm that:

- I have been provided with a copy of the Loreto adult safeguarding policy and procedures.
- I have been given an opportunity to have any questions addressed.
- I have read and understand the Loreto adult safeguarding policy and procedures.
- I will abide by the requirements of the Loreto adult safeguarding policy and procedures.
- I will, when working in an external organisation (i.e. school) agree to abide by its safeguarding policies and procedures (if applicable).
- Will attend a safeguarding information session / full-day programme.

Sincerely Yours,

.....

Date:

ROI Application & Vetting Verification Form

Name of Applicant:

Former Name (if any):

Address of Applicant:

Phone No/s:

Application Form:

Name of job applied for:

Application checked by:

Date of check:

Identity: (original document)

Type of ID supplied – Group 1:

Type of ID supplied – Group 2:

ID checked by:

Date of check:

Checking of References (where applicable):

Name of 1st referee:

Reference checked by:

Date of check:

Name of 2nd referee:

Reference checked by:

Date of check:

Verification of Declaration Form (where applicable):

Declaration checked by:

Date of check:

Garda Vetting:

Name of job applied for:

Reference no. and date of check:

Decision to employ: Yes No

Received by: (employer)

Date received:

Date the above volunteer ceases employment:

Signed: Date:

NI Application & Vetting Verification Form

Name of Applicant:

Former Name (if any):

Address of Applicant:

Phone No/s:

Application Form:

Name of job applied for:

Application checked by:

Date of check:

Identity: (original document)

Type of ID supplied – Group 1:

Type of ID supplied – Group 2:

ID checked by:

Date of check:

Checking of References (where applicable):

Name of 1st referee:

Reference checked by:

Date of check:

Name of 2nd referee:

Reference checked by:

Date of check:

Verification of Declaration Form:

Declaration checked by:

Date of check:

ACCESS NI Vetting:

Phone no/s:

Name of job applied for:

Type of check:

Date of check:

Decision to employ: Yes No

Received by: (employer)

Date received:

Date the above volunteer ceases employment:

Signed: Date:

Role Description of Eucharistic Minister to the Housebound

Job Title:	Eucharistic Minister to the Housebound.
Responsible to:	Loreto Safeguarding Representative (Local Community Leader).
Job Purpose:	To bring the Eucharist into the residences of housebound people.

The main role of the Eucharistic Minister to the housebound is to bring the Eucharist to the people who are housebound. Eucharistic Ministers undertaking this very important role are responsible to the Loreto Safeguarding Representative. Their main responsibilities include:

- Bringing the Eucharist to people in the community and hospital who are housebound due to health problems, age or disability.
- Following the instructions given by the Loreto Safeguarding Representative for the reverent conveying of the Eucharist in line with the appropriate format for the administration of the Eucharist.
- When visiting people either in hospital or in a residential home, to respect the boundaries and regulations of the organisation, particularly by notifying someone in a supervisory position, of your presence in the home.
- Being respectful of peoples' homes in the community.
- Being willing to administer the Eucharist prayerfully.
- Being aware of difficulties for some people with swallowing the Eucharist and therefore accommodating the size of the portion of the Host to enable comfortable reception of the Sacrament. It is essential to adhere to guidance from medical staff in relation to health issues e.g. people who are peg-fed cannot receive the Eucharist.
- Being sensitive to the fact that doctors, nurses or social services may call just before or whilst the Sacrament is being administered and that medical care should take precedence.
- Being willing to talk with people to whom the Sacrament is being brought, recognising them as part of the Body of Christ.
- Ensuring that the Eucharistic Minister has an awareness of and adheres to the Loreto Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

Person Specification:

- To be a person of integrity and good character.
- To have reverence for the Eucharist.
- To have a clear understanding of the Eucharist as a Sacrament of unity, reconciliation and healing;
- To accept the Catholic Church's teaching on the Eucharist and the Mass.
- To be available to bring the Eucharist on a regular basis to those in need.
- To recognise that Jesus is present in the Eucharist and in the people who will receive it.
- To be able to maintain confidentiality in relation to people's personal details and information.

Note: We recognise in the case of close relatives who live at the same address as the housebound or close family members e.g. children/niece/nephew/grandchildren or siblings, there is an exception from the normal vetting requirements as no additional access is created in such cases.

Code of Conduct for those who Minister to Adults

Ministry with adults is a gift from God. It is critical that boundaries are respected and that thoughtful relationships are established which always place the needs and well-being of the 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 lay minister or volunteer. It is important for all sisters, staff and volunteers to:

- Adhere to the protocols and guidelines of any organisation in whose premises they are ministering.
- Treat everyone with equal respect.
- Engage and interact appropriately with 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 adults.
- Avoid situations that might compromise your relationship with 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 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 the Loreto guidelines.

The code outlines unacceptable behaviour. Sisters, staff and volunteers must **never**:

- Physically or emotionally abuse or exploit an adult.
- Become involved in either using the adult's money on his/her behalf or in giving the 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 an 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 adults.
- Gossip about personal details of adults and their families.
- Inappropriately photograph or video an adult.
- Audio or visual recordings may not be taken of 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, are expressly forbidden.

Sisters, staff and volunteers are being made aware of the code of conduct in the expectation that they will act in accordance with it when exercising ministry to adults.

Appendix 2: Adult Abuse Report Forms

**REFERRAL FORM FOR COMMUNITY BASED REFERRALS
SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE PERSONS AT RISK OF ABUSE
NATIONAL POLICY & PROCEDURES**

There is duty of care to report allegations or concerns regardless of whether client has given consent. Referrer should take any immediate actions necessary as per policy in relation to seeking An Garda Síochána or medical assistance.

Vulnerable Person's Details:

Name: _____ DOB: _____

Address: _____

Marital Status: _____ Contact Phone Number:/Mobile: _____

Does anyone live with client: Yes No If yes, who?-

Medical history and any communication support needs (as understood by referrer):

Details of the person's vulnerability (as understood by referrer):

Is client aware this referral is being made? Yes No

Has client given consent? Yes No

Is there another nominated person they want us to contact, if so please give details?

Name: _____ Contact Details: _____

Relationship to vulnerable person: _____

GP Contact Details:

Name: _____ Telephone: _____

Primary care team details i.e. social worker, PHN, etc.

Any other key services/agencies involved with client (Please include Name and Contact):

Details: _____

Details of allegation/ concern: Please tick as many as relevant:

Physical abuse

Financial/material abuse

Psychological/Emotional abuse

Neglect/acts of omission

Sexual abuse

Discriminatory abuse

Extreme Self Neglect*

Institutional abuse

(extra sheet/report can be included if you wish)

Details of concern:

(*If self neglect is being referred please complete the attached presence of indicators of extreme self-neglect)

Details of Person Allegedly Causing Concern (if applicable)

Name: _____ Relationship to vulnerable person: _____

Address: _____

Is this person aware of this referral being made: Yes No

Details of person making referral:

Name: _____ Job Title (if applicable): _____

Agency/Address: _____

Landline _____ Mobile: _____

Signature _____ Date: _____

Data Protection Advice: If the person allegedly causing concern is a staff member, please use initials & work address only

Complaints Procedure

A complaint is defined as raising concerns about issues or breaches of the Loreto code of conduct, excluding allegations or suspicions of adult abuse. **Allegations or suspicions of adult abuse should always be dealt with in accordance with the Loreto reporting procedure.**

A complaint can be made about any action or inaction that it is claimed does not accord with fair or sound practice and adversely affects the person by whom or on whose behalf the complaint is made.

Depending on the nature and seriousness of the complaint the leader of the activity will attempt to resolve the complaint locally and within the activity.

In the event that the complaint is not resolved at this stage, the Loreto general complaints form should be completed and forwarded to the LSR (community leader).

The process for other complaints:

- The LSR has eight weeks to consider the complaint.
- The LSR will send the complainant a letter of acknowledgement within seven days of receiving the complaint.
- The LSR will consider the complaint and speak with the parties involved. This may take place during a meeting or if a meeting is not possible then discussion may take place by phone.
- Within two weeks of the meeting / discussion the LSR will write to both parties to confirm what took place and what solutions were agreed.
- If the complaint is still not resolved the LSR will seek advice from Employment Resource/ Health & Safety Officer (see contact details on page 61 of this document).
- At this stage, if the complaint is still not resolved it should be referred to the Province Leader.

Should the issue or concern impact on the safeguarding adult policy – the leader must contact the Loreto designated liaison person who will deal with the matter urgently under ‘Reporting Procedures’

General Complaints Form

All complaints arising during a province related activity (with the exceptions of adult abuse complaints) should be resolved if possible by discussion between the parties involved. If this is not possible, the complainant should complete the details below and submit it to the person in charge or to the LSR.

Name: _____

Contact details including address, phone number and e-mail address:

Details of complaint: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

For Office Use Only: _____

Form received by: _____

Date: _____

Action to be taken, by whom: _____



REGIONAL ADULT PROTECTION PROCEDURES

APP1(a) REFERRAL / SCREENING INFORMATION

For completion by HSC staff and contracted providers

PLEASE ENSURE SECTIONS 1 & 2 ARE FULLY COMPLETED BEFORE REFERRAL TO TRUST DAPO

Name: <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	Date of Birth: <input type="text"/> <i>(if not known, please give approximate age)</i>	Date of Referral: <input type="text"/>
Address: <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	Gender: M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/>	Service/Client Group: <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
Postcode: <input type="text"/>	Telephone No: <input type="text"/>	Reference No: <input type="text"/>
	Is the person known to the Trust? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	

SECTION ONE

Section 1 – completed by Referrer

Source Of Referral			
<input type="checkbox"/> Carer	<input type="checkbox"/> Other Trust	<input type="checkbox"/> RQIA	<input type="checkbox"/> Regulated Care Home
<input type="checkbox"/> GP	<input type="checkbox"/> Other Health Professional	<input type="checkbox"/> Adult Mental Health Unit	<input type="checkbox"/> Other Regulated Facility <i>Specify</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Hospital Staff	<input type="checkbox"/> Anonymous	<input type="checkbox"/> Self	<input type="checkbox"/> Learning Disability Hospital
<input type="checkbox"/> PSNI	<input type="checkbox"/> Social Worker	<input type="checkbox"/> MARAC	<input type="checkbox"/> Other <i>Specify</i> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> DHSS	<input type="checkbox"/> Care Manager/Care or Homecare Worker	<input type="checkbox"/> Adult Safeguarding Champion	
<input type="checkbox"/> Vol. Organisation	<input type="checkbox"/> Housing Association	<input type="checkbox"/> Acute General Hospital	

Details Of Referrer <i>(the person who brings the concerns to the attention of your agency)</i>	
Name: <input type="text"/>	Relationship to adult at risk of harm: <input type="text"/>
Job title and agency: <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	Contact number: <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
Who Was The First Person To Note Concern	
Name: <input type="text"/>	Relationship to adult at risk of harm: <input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	Contact number: <input type="text"/>



Describe The Impact Of The Incident On the Adult At Risk of Harm

The Adult At Risk of Harm Usual Living Arrangements

Does the adult at risk of harm live alone? Yes No

Does the person who is suspected to have caused harm live with the adult at risk of harm? Yes No

Is the adult at risk of harm present location different from home address? Yes No *If Yes give present location*

Have You Taken Any Action Due To Emergency Situation To Avoid Immediate Serious Risk?

Was immediate protection needed for adult at risk of harm? Yes No

If Yes give details:

Are there any children or other adults at risk? Yes No

If Yes give details:

Was immediate protection required? Yes No

If Yes give details:

Adult At Risk of Harm's Knowledge Of Referral

Does the adult at risk of harm know that a referral may be made? Yes No

Is the adult at risk of harm able to give informed consent? Yes No N/K

Has the adult at risk of harm consented to a referral? Yes No



Details of Person/Persons Suspected of Causing Harm		
Name:	<input type="text"/>	Date of Birth: <input type="text"/> <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F
Address:		
<input type="text"/>		
<input type="text"/>		
<input type="text"/>		
Does the person/persons suspected of causing harm know that an allegation has been made against them? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/K		
Is the person/persons suspected of causing harm known to the adult at risk of harm? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/K		
<i>If yes please specify below:</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Family member	<input type="checkbox"/> Another service user	<input type="checkbox"/> Paid carer <input type="checkbox"/> Trust employee
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)		

Any Additional Information Relevant To The Referral <i>(Please note the views of others you have consulted and note any difference of opinion)</i>
<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>

Signature: <input type="text"/>	Date: <input type="text"/>
---------------------------------	----------------------------

Appendix 3: Access to Advice and Support

An Garda Síochána:

Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Investigation Unit, Garda National Protective Services Bureau,
Navan Road, Dublin 7. DO7 TW80 Telephone 01 6663903

HIQA Health Information and Quality Authority, is the Regulatory Body for nursing homes and designated centres for children and adults with disabilities. The contact details are Northern Regional Office, Social Services Inspectorate, Georges Court, Georges Lane, Smithfield, Dublin 7 Telephone 01 8147400 Fax 01 8147499.

Safe Ireland: Support services for those suffering from Domestic Violence

Cavan Tearmann:	Tel: 047 72311
Carlow Woman's Aid:	Tel: 059 917 3552
Cork Cuanlee Refuge:	Tel: 021 4277 698
Donegal Women's Domestic Violence:	Tel: 074 9126267
Dublin Aoibhneas Women's Refuge:	Tel: 01 867 0805
Kerry Women's Refuge:	Tel: 066 7129100
Kildare Teach Tearmainn:	Tel: 045 535178
Kilkenny Women's Refuge:	Tel: 056 7771404
Meath Women's Refuge:	Tel: 046 9022393
Westmeath Esker House Refuge:	Tel: 090 64 74122
Wexford Women's Refuge:	Tel: 053 9121876

The Samaritans: Tel: 1850 609090

Towards Peace: Tel: 01 5053028 Mobile: 086 7701533

"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 and to explore questions and concerns about God, and to get in touch with God's presence in their lives.

Northern Ireland

PSNI:

Tel: 0845 600 8000

This is a centralised number. Ask to be put through to the police station which serves the area where the incident/alleged incident took place.

Social Services:

The Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland have Adult Safeguarding services in all Trusts. Anyone reporting a concern or making an allegation of abuse should contact this service in the Trust which serves the area where the incident/alleged incident took place. Contact information for the service in each Trust is outlined below:

Northern Health and Social Care Trust: Tel: 028 2563 5512

Southern Health and Social Care Trust: Tel: 028 3083 2650

Western Health and Social Care Trust: Tel: 028 7134 5171

NI Trust Out of Hours Service Tel: 028 9504 9999

Northern Ireland Regional Emergency Social Work Service: Tel: 028 950 49999

This service is available outside normal office hours including weekend and public holidays i.e. 5pm to 9am Monday to Thursday and 5pm Friday to 9am Monday. There is 24 hour cover over public holidays.

Towards Peace: Tel: 00353 1 5053028 Mobile: 00353 86 7701533

“*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 and to explore questions and concerns about God, and to get in touch with God's presence in their lives.

Age NI Advice Line: Tel: 0808 808 7575

National Association for people abused in childhood:

National Support Helpline: Tel: 0800 085 3330 Website: www.napac.org.uk

NEST: Tel: (028) 79 64 29 83 Group Counselling for Adults surviving trauma, it is faith based and is open to all.

Appendix 4: Roles and Responsibilities

Roles and Responsibilities

Province Leader:	Overall responsibility for ensuring that the safeguarding systems for protecting all people and groups are firmly established and working across Loreto and that appropriate roles are filled.
Safeguarding Committee:	Established to oversee the implementation of a safeguarding strategy with accountability to the province leader.
Designated Liaison Persons:	The designated liaison persons are responsible for managing and coordinating all allegations, suspicions and concerns of adult abuse within the Loreto Order. This involves referral to the statutory services, setting up multi-disciplinary strategy meetings and the internal management of cases, including preparing information for the province leader.
Adult Safeguarding Champion:	The adult safeguarding champion provides strategic and operational leadership and oversight in relation to adult safeguarding for an organisation and is responsible for implementing its adult safeguarding policy statement.
HSE Safeguarding and Protection Team:	The safeguarding and protection team works collaboratively with services and professionals in promoting the welfare of adults, acting as a resource to personnel and services having concerns regarding adults, receiving concerns and complaints about adults, assessing concerns and complaints involving adults, advising on and in complex situations undertaking assessments regarding possible adult abuse, developing or ensuring the development of interventions and safeguarding plans and reviewing of such plans, collaborating with other agencies in addressing issues impacting on the welfare of adults, maintaining records and reporting on the service.

Appendix 5:

Guidelines on Intimate Care of Adults

Guidelines on Intimate Care of Adults

Disability is defined as a substantial restriction in the capacity of a person to participate in economic, social or cultural life on account of an enduring physical, sensory learning or emotional impairment. The types of disability include: physical disability, mental ill-health, autism, intellectual or learning disability and sensory impairment such as hearing or visual impairment. (Duty to Care: Department of Health & Children April 2002)

Assumptions should not be made about the effects of impairment on a person. These should be elicited as much as possible directly from the person even though communications may be difficult. Where there are communication difficulties, the care giver must become proficient in understanding the person.

To ensure equality of treatment and opportunity for disabled persons, reasonable adjustments should be made to the physical environment such as access to accommodate their needs, membership and activities. Prejudice or disabling attitudes of others need to be addressed through education and information.

Disabled people must be treated fairly avoiding direct discrimination on the basis of disability, victimisation and harassment. Adults at risk of harm or in need of protection have the same rights, hopes, fears and aspirations as other adults. They have additional needs that place additional responsibility on those who care and work for them.

Code of Practice for the Intimate Care of Adults.

- Adults may depend on others for their care and safety.
- Appropriate care is to be given by carers / workers / staff / volunteers always respecting an adult's dignity, privacy and choice.
- Planning and agreements with an adult in relation to supporting their inclusion in activities should be discussed when they are joining an activity, particularly around areas such as personal care and establishing communication.
- Where it is necessary to carry out tasks of a personal nature for an adult, this should be done with the full understanding and consent of the adult/ family member/ carer. In carrying out such personal care tasks, sensitivity must be shown to the adult and the tasks should be undertaken with the utmost discretion.
- Any care task of a personal nature, which an adult can do for himself/herself, should not be undertaken by the carer /worker /volunteer. In an emergency situation where this type of help is required, family /carer should be fully informed as soon as reasonably possible.
- Carers /workers /staff should be aware that adults at risk or in need of protection may be more likely than other adults to be bullied or subjected to other forms of abuse and may also be less clear about physical and emotional boundaries.

Appendix 6: Whistle Blowing Policy

Whistle Blowing Policy

Introduction:

Allegations, suspicions, knowledge and concerns about the abuse of a vulnerable adult which meet the threshold must be reported to statutory authorities and the province leader (if the allegation related to a Loreto Sister). This guidance relates to concerns about malpractice in adult safeguarding. All staff and volunteers ministering or volunteering within the Catholic Church in Ireland have an individual responsibility to bring matters of concern about any dereliction of duty to safeguard vulnerable adults, to the attention of the appropriate person within the Church or statutory authorities. This could be the province leader or relevant agency managers. Although this can be difficult to do, it is particularly important where the welfare of vulnerable adults may be at risk. You may be the first to recognise that something is wrong, but you may not feel able to express your concerns out of a feeling that this would be disloyal to colleagues, or you may fear harassment or victimisation. These feelings, however natural, must never result in a vulnerable adult continuing to be unnecessarily at risk. vulnerable adults need an advocate to safeguard their welfare.

Don't think, 'what if I'm wrong?' Think, 'what if I'm right!'

What is whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing can be defined as 'raising concerns about wrong-doing or misconduct within an organisation or within an independent structure associated with it'. It differs from raising concerns about allegations of abuse.

The concern could relate to:

- a breach of the Loreto Sister's adult safeguarding procedures.
- a breach of the law.
- failure to comply with legal obligations.
- a possible miscarriage of justice.
- a Health & Safety risk.
- misuse of public money.
- corruption or unethical conduct.
- deliberate concealment of any of these matters.

Those in ministry within the Church have certain common law confidentiality obligations to their province leader. However, in a limited set of circumstances, whistleblowing may override these obligations if a person has information which they believe will not be addressed properly within the Church.

This guidance sets out the circumstances under which these disclosures may lawfully be made.

Legislation underpinning whistleblowing:

There is legislation in both jurisdictions related to whistleblowing; and this applies to clerics, religious, and employees of Church bodies, as well as to agency workers in certain circumstances; to contractors and consultants engaged on contract by the province leader; and to trainees, temporary workers and those on work experience with the Loreto Sisters. In the Republic of Ireland this definition also includes volunteers.

Republic of Ireland:

In the Republic of Ireland the legislation is called the Protected Disclosures Act 2014, which has been amended by the Protected Disclosures Amendment Act 2022. The Protected Disclosures Act 2014 and the Amendment Act of 2022 aims to protect people who raise concerns about possible wrongdoing in the workplace. These Acts, are often called the whistleblower legislation. They provide for redress for those defined as ‘workers’ who are penalised for having reported possible wrongdoing in the workplace. ‘Worker’ means an individual working in the private or public sector who acquired information on relevant wrongdoings in a work-related context and includes

- (a) an individual who is or was an employee.
- (b) an individual who entered into or works or worked under any other contract, whether express or implied and (if it is express) whether oral or in writing, whereby the individual undertook to do or perform (whether personally or otherwise) any work or services for another party to the contract for the purposes of that party’s business.
- (c) an individual who works or worked for a person in circumstances in which
 - (i) the individual is introduced or supplied to do the work by a third person, and
 - (ii) the terms on which the individual is engaged to do the work are or were in practice substantially determined not by the individual but by the person for whom the individual works or worked, by the third person or by both of them.
- (d) an individual who is or was provided with work experience pursuant to a training course or programme or with training for employment (or with both) otherwise than under a contract of employment.
- (e) an individual who is or was a shareholder of an undertaking.
- (f) an individual who is or was a member of the administrative, management or supervisory body of an undertaking, including non-executive members.
- (g) an individual who is or was a volunteer.
- (h) an individual who acquires information on a relevant wrongdoing during a recruitment process,
- (i) an individual who acquires information on a relevant wrongdoing during pre-contractual negotiations (other than a recruitment process referred to in paragraph (h)), and
- (j) an individual who is deemed to be a worker by virtue of subsection (2)(b), and any reference to a worker being employed or to employment shall be construed accordingly.”

Under the Acts, a protected disclosure is made by church personnel (identified as worker above) who discloses relevant information in a particular way. Information is relevant if it came to the Church personnel’s attention in connection with their ministry, volunteer role, employment or recruitment process and they reasonably believe that it tends to show wrongdoing. Wrongdoing is widely defined in the Act and includes bullet points below:

- Criminal offences.
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation (other than a workers contract of employment).
- Miscarriage of justice.
- Endangerment of health and safety.
- Damage to the environment.
- Unlawful or improper use of public funds.
- Oppressive, discriminatory or negligent behaviour by a public body.
- Breaches of EU law.
- Concealing or destroying evidence of wrongdoing.

Northern Ireland:

In Northern Ireland the law that covers whistleblowing is The Public Interest Disclosure (Northern Ireland) Order 1998, (as amended in October 2017). Blowing the whistle is more formally known as ‘making a disclosure in the public interest’. The law states the importance of disclosing concerns, knowing that you are protected from losing your job and/ or being victimised as a result of what you have uncovered and made public. An easy-to-read guide to the effect of this legislation is available to download from www.economyni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/economy/public-interest-disclosure-guidance.pdf

Canon Law:

Vos estis lux mundi includes specific provisions in relation to protecting adults who report abuse under Article 4 which states:

§ 1. Making a report under Article 3 shall not constitute a breach of official secrecy.

§ 2. Except as provided in canon 1390 CIC and canons 1452 and 1454 CCEO, prejudice, retaliation, or discrimination for filing a report is prohibited and may constitute conduct under Article 1 § 1(b).

§ 3. No constraint of silence may be imposed on the person making a report, the person claiming to have been offended, and witnesses regarding the content of the report, subject to the provisions of Article 5 § 2.

Raising a concern of malpractice (In law this is called a disclosure):

For Church personnel and employees raising a concern/disclosure of malpractice, to be protected by the law, the concern/disclosure must be made to the right person and in the right way. If someone makes a qualifying disclosure in good faith to a province leader or through Church procedure which the province leader has authorised, the law protects the person.

It is important to:

- Voice any concerns, suspicions or uneasiness as soon as possible. The earlier a concern is expressed the sooner and easier action can be taken.
- Try to pinpoint exactly what practice is concerning and why.
- Approach your immediate superior/supervisor/manager.
- If your concern is about your immediate superior/supervisor/manager, please contact your DLP, the statutory services or the National Board.
- Confirm your concerns with factual information (dates, times details, history, giving names, dates, locations and any other relevant information) in writing.
- You are not expected to prove the truth of your disclosure, but you need to demonstrate sufficient grounds for concern.
- Seek a satisfactory response in writing; do not let matters rest, if you do not receive a response within a reasonable timeframe, write again seeking a written response. A failure to respond should be included in any further disclosure to the statutory authorities or the National Board.
- Follow up if the person to whom you reported has not responded within a reasonable period of time, and if that follow up is not acted upon, report the matter to the relevant statutory authorities.

Required response by relevant Church authority:

Reporting Mechanisms for Church bodies (ROI only)

All Church bodies with 250 or more employees must establish internal channels for their workers to report wrongdoing. From 17 December 2023, this requirement will apply to all Church bodies with 50 or more employees.

- The internal channel should be designed and operated in a secure, GDPR compliant, manner that ensures the confidentiality of the reporting person and any other person(s) named in the report.

- Designation of a person or function to operate the channel, who will maintain communication with the reporting person, follow-up on the report and provide feedback to the reporting person.
- This person or function should have sufficient independence and authority within the organisation to carry out the functions specified in the Act.
- Persons operating the internal channel should be adequately trained in the handling of reports.
- The Church body must promote the existence of the internal channel and ensure workers have access to the procedures under which it operates.
- Church bodies can outsource the internal channel function, if they wish.

Response by the Church authority:

- The Church person to whom the disclosure is made should acknowledge receipt in writing within 7 days of receiving it.
- Diligent follow up must then be taken by the Church body.
- Relevant information (including feedback on actions taken or planned to be taken) on the nature and progress of any enquiries resulting from the concern must be shared with the person who made the disclosure after 3 months and further feedback provided if requested every 3 months. It is acknowledged that confidential sensitive data cannot be shared so the response should include general information about internal inquiries and statutory referrals made.
- The Church person to whom the disclosure is made should keep detailed notes of the disclosure, any action taken, who was consulted and the outcome of the inquiries.

Protection of whistleblower:

- Anyone who raises a concern through these whistleblowing procedures in good faith must be protected from harassment or victimisation.
- Whilst reporting may remain confidential, in most instances this cannot be guaranteed. Everyone has the right to know who makes a complaint against them. This should not deter one from raising the concern but is a reminder of the importance of providing evidence to support the concern.
- No action will be taken against the whistleblower if the concern proves to be unfounded and was raised in good faith.
- However if the disclosure is made through malicious intent, and there is evidence to support this, this will be considered a disciplinary offence.
- Any act of penalisation that causes detriment to a reporting person is prohibited. Penalisation includes dismissal and also any other form of unfair treatment, such as suspension, reduction in wages or hours, demotion and transfer of duties as well as intimidation and harassment.
- Penalising a reporting person is a criminal offence.
- Reporting persons who suffer detriment can seek compensation at the Workplace Relations Commission (ROI) or the courts.
- Reporting persons are protected from any civil or criminal liability for reporting confidential information, provided it is done so in accordance with the law.
- Non-disclosure agreements cannot be used to prevent a person reporting a wrongdoing.
- Employers and regulators must keep the identity of the reporting person confidential.

Self-reporting:

There may be occasions when a member of staff or volunteers has a personal difficulty, perhaps a physical or mental health problem, which they know to be impinging on their professional competence. Staff and volunteers have a responsibility to discuss such a situation with their line supervisor/superior/ manager so that professional and personal support can be offered to the member concerned.

Disclosure to an external person, other than statutory bodies, government officials or the NBSCCC.

A disclosure made to an external person, for example, a journalist, may be a protected disclosure if it meets a number of conditions:

- You must reasonably believe that the information disclosed, and any allegation contained in it, are substantially true.
- You must not make the disclosure for personal gain.
- The making of the disclosure in public is in all the circumstances reasonable.

At least one of these conditions must be met.

- At the time you make the disclosure you must reasonably believe that you will be penalised if you make the disclosure to the province leader, statutory personnel or a government minister, or National Board.
- Where you reasonably believe that it is likely that the evidence will be concealed or destroyed if you make the disclosure directly to the province leader, statutory body or National Board.
- You have previously made a disclosure of substantially the same information to the province leader, statutory personnel, government minister or National Board.
- The wrongdoing is of an exceptionally serious nature.

The assessment of what is reasonable takes account of, among other things; the person the disclosure is made to, the seriousness of the wrongdoing, and whether any action was taken in cases where a previous disclosure was made. In the Republic of Ireland if a person feels that they do not want to report to their employer or reporting to their employer has not worked, they can report to a regulator, known as a “prescribed person”.

A list of prescribed persons can be found at: www.gov.ie/prescribed-persons.

They can also report to the Protected Disclosures Commissioner who will refer the report to a suitable prescribed person. See: www.opdc.ie Public disclosure.

If all other options fail, workers can make a public disclosure. Such disclosures are subject to more stringent conditions to qualify for protection however.

Whistle-Blowing Record

Section 1 – to be completed by person raising a concern of malpractice	
Name of Person raising Concern.	
Name of Person and Church body against whom the Concern is being raised.	
Brief Details (factual) of the Concern.	
Date and person to whom the concern was raised.	
Section 2 – Response by recipient of Concern	
Date Concern was reviewed and assessment of facts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern requires further inquiry • No further action (state reasons) 	
Details of action taken: Include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any referral to statutory agency • Consultation with National Board • Restrictions on ministry • Report to Holy See 	
Date and details of response given to person who raised concern:	

Loreto Designated Liaison Persons:

Helen O’Riordan, Abbey House, Loreto Terrace, Rathfarnham, Dublin. D14 R588.

Telephone: 086 3528613

Email: hforiordan@gmail.com

Website: www.loreto.ie

Adult Safeguarding Champion:

Suzie Duffy,

Apartment 2, Loreto Hall, Loreto Wood, Cavan, Co. Cavan. H12 YC64.

Telephone: 049 4371141

Email: suzieduffy5@gmail.com

Website: www.loreto.ie

Health & Safety Officer:

Jonathan Melvin,

Loreto House, Beaufort, Rathfarnham, Dublin 14. D14 H3V2.

Telephone: 01 4936133

Email: jonathan@loreto.ie

Website: www.loreto.ie

