

Missionary Society of Saint Paul

Safeguarding Policy and Standards

Creating a safe environment for
children and adults at risk

2021



Rejoice therefore and strive to respond to your vocation and your dignity. Give yourself willingly to work in the Lord's vineyard. "The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few" (Lk 10:2). Always be a good example to the people; in your thoughts, in your affectivity, in your words, in your ministry and in all your life so that it may be said of you: "Here is a servant pleasing to God."

– Joseph De Piro

(Founder of the Missionary Society of Saint Paul)

Presentation by the MSSP Superior General

These guidelines are the response of the Missionary Society of Saint Paul to the growing awareness that our ministry and presence depends on safe spaces, bearing in mind specifically the most vulnerable. Recent Church instructions, particularly the Apostolic Letter of Pope Francis *Vos estis lux mundi* (7th May, 2019), the amended Code of Canon Law (1st June, 2021) and the updating of various safeguarding laws and documents in countries where the MSSP is present, have led to the development of these General Guidelines for the whole congregation and associate entities. Our General Chapter of 2018, stated clearly that “The Society shall formulate its own MSSP Child Safety policy as guidelines for a Society-wide policy which would then be adapted to the realities of our different missions.” (Resolution #35)

Similarly, as mandated by our General Chapter of 2006 “the Society is to follow the guidelines on sexual abuse established by the Ecclesiastical Authorities in those countries where we operate and, in those countries where no Church directives on this issue are to be found, Superiors are to guide themselves by the guidelines existing in their geographical regions until the work ... is completed.” (Resolution #20)

These policies and standards are intended for Regional and Local Superiors of the Missionary Society of St. Paul, members, and Lay Associates. They explain the expectations and responsibilities placed on everyone within our Society to care and protect those who are at the greatest risk of harm.

In order to be successfully implemented, all of us need to understand the important role we play in developing and fostering a culture of safeguarding throughout our congregation.

These guidelines form the basis for the MSSP’s commitment to respond with compassion to those who have suffered abuse, and to ensure that policies and standards are in place in all MSSP entities to provide a safe and nurturing environment for all.

Blessings



Fr. Mark Grima mssp
Superior General



2nd November, 2021

Anniversary of the Birth of Joseph De Piro.

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Definition of terms

Child: A person below the age of 18 years. A person who, although not a child, has the developmental age of a child or habitually lacks the use of reason is to be safeguarded in the same manner as a child.

Child abuse: Child abuse or maltreatment is defined as an act (or series of acts) that endangers a child or young person's physical or emotional health or development and/or a failure to provide conditions to the extent that the health and development of the child or young person is significantly impaired or placed at risk. Categories of abuse and maltreatment include:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse including harassment and grooming
- emotional abuse including spiritual abuse
- family violence
- neglect
- discrimination
- bullying, including online abuse

MSSP Members: Priests and brothers, students in formation and novices of the Missionary Society of St. Paul (MSSP).

MSSP Lay Associates: Lay persons who have a formal relationship with the Missionary Society of St. Paul, including employees, volunteers, pastoral workers, and other forms of official relationships.

Vulnerable Adult: See Adult at Risk

Adult at Risk: In this policy, this term replaces the previously commonly used term, Vulnerable Adult. An adult at risk of harm is a person aged 18 or over, who may be in need of community services due to age, illness or a mental or physical disability, or who may be unable to take care of him/herself or protect him/herself against significant harm or exploitation

Mandatory Reporting: The legal requirement to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect is known as mandatory reporting. Mandated persons include all MSSP members, staff, and volunteers.

Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO): The person nominated as safeguarding officer for a Region or number of Regions of the Missionary Society of St. Paul.

General Safeguarding Officer (GSO): The person nominated by the Superior General as safeguarding officer of all matters relating to safeguarding in the Missionary Society of St. Paul.

MSSP Commitment Statement

The Missionary Society of St Paul is actively committed to offer a safe and welcoming environment to all children, youth, and adults. The Society is committed to keep developing a culture of safeguarding where children and persons at risk of harm remain at the centre of its ministry and mission, and their dignity, safety and wellbeing are given paramount importance.

We encourage open communication whereby families and communities are informed of relevant issues and participate in decisions about the safety of children. It is particularly important to us to look for avenues to empower children and adults at risk, to have a say and be listened to.

We actively seek to become and remain informed of the causes and signs of child abuse and neglect. When we receive information about concerns or witness any matter relating to abuse of a child or adult at risk of harm, we respond immediately and appropriately and report any such concerns to the appropriate authorities. This may include contacting the police immediately where there may be immediate risk of harm to any person, especially a child.

Every person within the Missionary Society of St Paul who comes into contact or works with children and adults at risk, will seek to uphold the dignity of all children and adults at risk and commits to establishing safe and supportive relationships.

The Missionary Society of St Paul has documented policies and procedures to prevent risks to children and adults at risk, and strives to build a strong culture of safeguarding. All MSSP members and Lay Associates are expected to follow these policies and procedures and contribute to the culture of care and protection of all children and adults at risk.

Anyone who brings forward a suspicion, concern, knowledge or allegation of current or past abuse of a child and adult at risk to the Missionary Society of St Paul will be responded to sensitively, respectfully, actively and in a timely manner, in full observance of the laws of the countries where the Society is present

We commit to regular internal and external auditing of our safeguarding policies and practices to make sure that they always support a culture and practice that puts the safety of children and adults at risk of harm at the centre of our thinking and action. Every MSSP member and lay associate is committed to regular updating and training on child safety and safeguarding.

We will constantly strive to remain vigilant and make improvements.

For more information or to raise a concern, please contact MSSP General Safeguarding Officer at: safeguarding@paulistmissionaries.org

Principles of MSSP Safeguarding Policy and Standards

The Missionary Society of St. Paul, its members and Lay Associates believe:

- in the primacy of a safe and nurturing environment for all children, young people and adults at risk of harm;
- that all MSSP religious, staff and volunteers have a duty of care to provide a child-safe environment in our Paulist ministries and communities;
- in thorough and rigorous formation and recruitment practices;
- that all incidents/concerns of abuse or harm, including disclosures, must be reported to relevant authorities;
- in offering just, effective and ongoing support and compassion to victims of abuse;
- in extending our duty of care to others, such as family members and other secondary victims of abuse;
- in treating accused persons or those convicted of abuse with justice and compassion;
- in the primacy of ongoing training for MSSP religious, staff and volunteers in child safety, in accordance with best practice principles;
- in truthfulness, transparency and willingness to be monitored and evaluated by external auditors;

These principles aim to provide guidance as to behaviours and practices that are beyond reproach and based on best practice. They are not intended to unnecessarily restrict the work of MSSP religious and lay people but rather to promote an open and accountable environment in which the dignity and safety of children and adults at risk of harm are enhanced.

The MSSP acknowledges that effective child safety within our congregation, parishes, and ministries cannot be undertaken without the involvement of parents (and guardians) and other stakeholders and seeks to engage them as critical partners in promoting the safety of children, young people and adults at risk.

Application of MSSP Policy and Standards

The application of this policy extends to MSSP members and Lay Associates,

- within the context of their role in the MSSP,
- within the physical boundaries of the entities of which the MSSP has pastoral responsibility,

- within the confines of any ministry in which the MSSP members and Lay Associates are involved, and
- in relation to online or digital environments.

The Missionary Society of St. Paul will ensure that the standards published in this policy document will be implemented consistently in all MSSP Regions and entities.

MSSP Regions and entities will develop their own Regional Safeguarding Policies based on this document, and the relevant local ecclesiastical and civil legislation.

Safeguarding Structures and Responsibilities

- The Superior General and General Council are responsible for the implementation of these policies and standards across the Regions of the Society.
- A General Safeguarding Officer is nominated by the Superior General and his Council to oversee and co-ordinate all matters related to safeguarding in the Missionary Society of St. Paul.
- A Designated Safeguarding Officer is nominated for each Region or group of Regions. The list of Designated Safeguarding Officers of all MSSP Regions will be kept updated regularly. The Designated Safeguarding Officer for each Region is the reference person for those who wish to present a concern or a complaint of abuse.
- Contact details on how to address concerns will be kept updated on the MSSP website <https://web.paulistmissionaries.org/>. The General Safeguarding Officer can be contacted at: safeguarding@paulistmissionaries.org.
- This policy and standards will be reviewed every three years.
- MSSP members and Lay Associates acknowledge their individual responsibility to comply with clear behavioural expectations to act in a manner that is caring, respectful and safe toward children, young people and adults at risk.
- This responsibility applies to all those involved with the MSSP including:
 - MSSP members
 - MSSP Lay Associates
 - Long term visitors to MSSP communities or entities
 - Employees (including casual employees)
 - Volunteers
 - Persons residing at properties owned or administered by MSSP
 - Contractors (where applicable)

Standard 1: A Safe and Nurturing Environment for all

1.1 Safe Environments

The MSSP is committed to creating an environment where the safety and wellbeing of all children and adults at risk is paramount. We acknowledge the particular vulnerability of children living in extreme poverty, children living in homes, children from ethnic, culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and children with disability.

We are resolutely committed to always act in the best interests of the children, and adults at risk among whom we minister. This means, acting to protect them from harm, protecting their rights and promoting their development in culturally and age-appropriate ways. Where our ministry involves children and adults at risk, we particularly recognise the importance of planning and guiding any activities in such a way as to ensure the provision of a positive environment that is caring, safe, harmonious and free from harm.

All MSSP members and Lay Associates play a key role in modelling expected behaviour to our volunteers and to the wider community. As such, we strive to treat all people, particularly children, and adults at risk, in ways that wholly respect their dignity and rights. We commit to avoiding any actions or practices that may be construed as abusive or unsafe for those among whom we minister. We pledge to:

- report all allegations or disclosures of sexual, physical and emotional abuse and neglect to the appropriate civil authorities as set out in the Commitment Statement and within the parameters of the civil law of the particular country;
- take any action deemed necessary to protect a child or adult at risk when a belief is formed that he/she is at risk of being harmed;
- assure that the ongoing safety and wellbeing of the child or adult at risk is a primary focus of our decision-making;
- assist the child or adult at risk and their family to access appropriate services in order to reduce the long-term effects of abuse or neglect; and
- ensure that all appropriate information, expertise and resources are shared with other service providers supporting the child or adult at risk and his/her family.

In practice this means that in the Missionary Society of St. Paul

- safeguarding policies and procedures are consistent with legislation, guidance from safeguarding entities and good practice in the Region they are present;

- all MSSP members and Lay Associates sign up the Declaration of Acceptance of these Standards and Policy and the Code of Conduct of the Missionary Society of St. Paul presented in this document (Appendix II);
- physical and online environments promote the safety and wellbeing of children and adults at risk;
- all MSSP entities adopt a safe IT Policy that focuses on safeguarding children and adults at risk;

Standard 2: Safe Recruitment Policies

2.1 Formation

The MSSP considers the formation of its members to be of highest priority.

The MSSP will ensure that there is good human developmental, psychological and spiritual formation in the training of future MSSP members.

We affirm the absolute necessity of rigorous and robust selection, screening and formation processes so that only people who are suitable are accepted as members. Likewise, regular oversight and adequate professional supervision and training opportunities following perpetual profession and ordination to ensure that all MSSP members are well supported in their ministry.

Specific modules in initial formation and training will include training on safeguarding, sexual abuse and its impact, ministry with people who have been abused and developing safe environments.

The MSSP formation programme recognises the importance of taking a proactive approach by conducting thorough biopsychosocial assessments on all postulants, novices and temporary professed members. Further, the General Directory of MSSP Formation stresses the importance of formation having an integrative function, acknowledging the importance of addressing and harmonising all the layers of the person: the bodily, the spiritual and the psychological. The development of an embedded and trusted child-safe culture, begins with the vigilant selection of candidates in the novitiate as well as ongoing formation programmes, to ensure that those who pose a risk to children or adults at risk, are prevented from working in MSSP ministries.

Formators and formation teams should be actively involved in promoting a safeguarding culture within the MSSP. They are to carefully assess, as accurately as they can, the human and, more specifically, the affective maturity of candidates.

2.2 Recruitment of employees and volunteers

In seeking to provide safe and enriching interactions with children and adults at risk within the context of its ministries, the MSSP sets out selection, recruitment and screening processes that consider the suitability and appropriateness of persons to work with children and adults at risk in ministry, in an employment or voluntary role, to minimise the risk of abuse occurring.

All MSSP entities consistently implement safe recruitment procedures and guidelines issued by relevant competent authorities for all members and Lay Associates, especially those who are involved in direct ministry with children, and adults at risk of harm. This will be carried out by:

- conducting thorough reference checks;
- asking direct questions about issues which may suggest unsuitability for working with children or adults at risk;
- critically examining employment history and any relevant registration. Particular care must be taken in accepting clergy or religious transferring from another country, diocese or congregation;
- safe recruitment also includes an obligation to be honest with potential employers of people who have been found unsuitable by the MSSP. The MSSP needs to ensure that they do not move into employment or voluntary work where similar issues could arise;
- maintaining accurate records of staff and volunteers in each MSSP entity;
- ensuring that each MSSP entity's recruitment policies and procedures are consistent with legislation.

2.3 Movement between MSSP Regions.

Any MSSP members or Lay Associates who are sent or who visit different Regions where the MSSP is operating, are to familiarise themselves well with the safety standards expected by this policy, and any other relevant norms, laws, and standards applicable to the country they are visiting. They are also expected to obtain the relevant documentation needed in accordance with diocesan, local and civil requirements. Where requested, international police clearances will also be obtained.

Standard 3: Responding to concerns effectively

3.1 Responding to concerns

The Missionary Society of St. Paul is committed to ensuring that all concerns, allegations, suspicions and disclosures of abuse, whether current or historical, are taken seriously and acted upon immediately. All MSSP members and Lay Associates, are required to know and comply with the requirements of protection of children and adults at risk and reporting obligations as prescribed by state, national and diocesan Church legislation and with the expectations laid out in this policy. This will include:

- informing the appropriate authorities and fully cooperating with any resulting investigations;
- protecting any child or adult at risk connected to the allegation until it is resolved and providing ongoing support to those affected;
- taking particular measures in response to an allegation that concerns a culturally diverse child or adult at risk;
- securing and retaining records of the allegation and the MSSP's handling of the complaint.

MSSP members and Lay Associates may come across possible breaches of our Code of Conduct or matters that cause concern in any number of ways. These might include:

- a disclosure made to us by a child or adult at risk;
- observing events that cause us to form an objectively reasonable belief that a child or adult at risk is being harmed or abused, or is at risk of being harmed or abused (whether by a family member or by another person); or
- being present and witnessing an event or incident.

It is a requirement of this policy that MSSP members and Lay Associates, file a report with state and Church authorities, as applicable, if they have formed a reasonable belief that a child, or adult at risk has experienced abuse, is experiencing abuse or is at risk of harm in the course of their ministry or work. Not reporting abuse of a child or adult at risk, or misconduct that places children and adults at risk, is a breach of this policy.

The MSSP will take appropriate and timely action in response to all allegations or disclosures of abuse, neglect, inappropriate behaviour or concerns about the safety of children and adults at risk

by reporting all matters to the relevant state and Church structures and authorities, including the police in countries where this is mandatory by law.

All reports and concerns should also reach the Designated Safeguarding Officer for the Region, and the MSSP Regional Superior. The DSO is obliged to keep the Regional Superior informed of all complaints and concerns.

The MSSP Regional Superior is obliged to report to the MSSP Superior General any grave cases of abuse concerning MSSP members.

The Missionary Society of St. Paul will follow up consistently and effectively on any complaint it receives, including reporting complaints to the police and other child protection and statutory bodies (such as diocesan safeguarding commissions or child protection agencies), according to the law of the respective country and diocese.

MSSP leaders will allow an independent due process in all investigations of abuse, and breaches of the Code of Conduct.

3.2 Whistleblower protection

No retaliation or punitive action will be taken against anyone who, in good faith, raises a safeguarding concern against an MSSP member or Lay Associate.

All MSSP members and Lay Associates will collaborate fully with any investigation initiated by safeguarding bodies or by statutory agencies.

Standard 4: Care and support for victims and survivors

The MSSP acknowledges that the abuse of a child or adult at risk by an MSSP member or Lay Associate, is a crime under both civil law and Canon Law. The MSSP fully and unreservedly acknowledges the devastating, deep and ongoing impact of abuse on the lives of victims and their families.

The MSSP response to complaints of abuse is based on the following guiding principles:

- truth;
- humility;
- healing for the victims;
- assistance to other persons impacted by the abuse, or secondary victims;
- an ongoing commitment to the prevention of abuse.

Recognising that open dialogue and recognition of the pain experienced by the victims of abuse and their families are critical for genuine healing to occur, the Missionary Society of St. Paul pledges to offer any victim of abuse by MSSP members or Lay Associates the opportunity to tell his or her story, personally and directly, to someone in authority in the MSSP. The MSSP commits to offering counselling, pastoral care and reparation to victims of abuse, and to ensuring that all criminal matters are referred to the police.

The MSSP is committed to do whatever it can to repair the wrongs of the past, to listen to and hear victims, to put their needs first, and to do everything it can to ensure a safer future for children and adults at risk of harm

The MSSP will assist people to access support from other organisations. It will, where appropriate, provide or fund the provision of counselling and other social support services. Each individual's circumstances are different and the response of the MSSP will reflect that.

The MSSP will offer different forms of care for victims of abuse i.e:

- **Spiritual Care:** The MSSP offers spiritual care to those who claim to be victims and survivors of abuse by MSSP members or Lay Associates;
- **Culture of Listening:** The MSSP facilitates ways for all persons, including members of the public, to express their views and raise concerns. The MSSP seeks feedback from stakeholders on a regular basis to strengthen its safeguarding culture;
- **Therapeutic Care:** The MSSP funds medical or psychological therapeutic care to those who claim to be victims and survivors of abuse by MSSP members or Lay Associates.

Standard 5: Care and Management of the offender

The MSSP approach to those accused or found guilty of abuse, is based on two principles.

- a just response to those who are accused;
- an effective response to those who are guilty of abuse.

The MSSP also acknowledges the pain, shame by association and hurt experienced by relatives of MSSP members or Lay Associates convicted of serious abuse. It recognises them as secondary victims to abuse. To them too, it extends support and care.

The MSSP recognises the human dignity of those affected by crimes, both victim and offender. A restorative approach to justice, based on our faith tradition, is one that holds people accountable and challenges them to look at ways to turn their lives around.

The MSSP is also committed to safely contain the MSSP members who have been found guilty of abuse by ensuring that they are never present in situations which are of risk to children and adults at risk.

MSSP members or Lay Associates convicted of abuse whilst in a position of trust in the MSSP or elsewhere, will not be able to take on any ministry or role in contact with children, and adults at risk. Apart from any criminal or civil action, disciplinary action for those accused of abuse is determined by the seriousness of the misconduct.

Disciplinary action in the case of Lay Associates may take various forms and consist of, counselling, training, a verbal or written warning, suspension (with or without pay) and/or dismissal.

In the case of MSSP members, disciplinary and/or administrative action will be considered in accordance with Canon Law and may include: pastoral supervision, counselling, suspension of faculties, permanent removal of faculties, recommendation to the Holy See for a penal precept or dismissal from the clerical state (laicisation), expulsion from the congregation, excommunication.

The MSSP Region and the Central Administration will keep detailed records and minutes of such procedures.

Standard 6: Ongoing professional development and evaluation

The oversight, support and professional supervision of MSSP members in ministry and Lay Associates has always been highly prioritised in the Missionary Society of St. Paul. The MSSP commits to ensuring that all members and Lay Associates are well trained and supervised in safeguarding.

6.1 Ongoing Safeguarding Training

MSSP members and Lay Associates are also provided with training on safety of children and adults at risk and related professional conduct matters.

In supporting MSSP members and Lay Associates, employees and volunteers are to keep up-to-date with safeguarding issues in order for them to promote the safety of children and adults at risk, and discharge their responsibilities in line with this policy. The MSSP expects all members and Lay Associates to undertake regular training and educational activities that equip them with the skills and knowledge to promote a safeguarding culture in the MSSP. Ongoing training is based on a clear theological framework. It includes an understanding of appropriate boundaries in pastoral relationships, the impact of abuse on individuals and families, responding to those who disclose abuse, supporting people who have been abused and creating safe environments to prevent abuse. This may include training activities provided by external organisations, including the local Church and other organisations. This training should be repeated regularly, at least every three years.

Where members and Lay Associates are working in relatively isolated settings, the MSSP ensures that effective processes are in place to provide appropriate supervision and support.

As part of their induction, all new MSSP members or Lay Associates need to become familiar with the MSSP's safeguarding policies, procedures, codes of conduct and guidance.

Children and adults at risk attending MSSP activities are aware of their rights to be safe and heard.

6.2 Supervision

It is a requirement of this policy that those whose roles involve working directly with children and adults at risk seek and are provided with supervision and support opportunities so as to

undertake their role in a manner which promotes the safety of children and adults at risk and enables detection of behaviour that may be detrimental to these persons.

6.3 Quality assurance

Quality assurance is an important method of ensuring that a process of continuous improvement takes place, and of demonstrating accountability and transparency.

- Each MSSP Region, will complete an audit of the extent that its Regional policy and relevant civil and Church safeguarding standards are being adhered to. This will be held every three years.
- A copy of the audit is sent to the relevant Regional Superior and the Superior General.
- The Missionary Society of St. Paul will actively collaborate and participate in any external audits of its safeguarding policies requested by civil or ecclesiastical authorities, with an attitude of openness and transparency.

References

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Contacts

MSSP General Safeguarding Officer (GSO):

Fr. Frankie Cini mssp

email: safeguarding@paulistmissionaries.org

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Appendix 1: Missionary Society of St Paul Code of Conduct Template

1. BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

The Missionary Society of St. Paul (MSSP) is committed to fostering a culture of safety and care for children and adults at risk who come into contact with the MSSP and its ministries. Unequivocally, the MSSP commits itself to promoting the dignity and integrity of every person. To meet this commitment, this Code of Conduct has been developed in consultation with relevant parties. The provision of a safe and supportive environment is essential to ensure that MSSP members, Lay Associates and those with whom they work are affirmed in their dignity and worth as people.

2. PURPOSE & SCOPE

This Code of Conduct applies to all MSSP members, Lay Associates, paid employees, volunteers under the auspice of the MSSP. The safety of children and adults at risk is at the core of the MSSP ministry and is reflected in this Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct should be read alongside the MSSP Safeguarding Policy and Standards and other related documents. The Code also complements other documents of the Catholic Church and relevant civil legislation, policies and procedures.

3. WHEN DOES THE CODE APPLY?

The Code of Conduct applies to all MSSP members (priests and brothers), and Lay Associates, which include, paid employees, volunteers and contractors:

- 3.1. in the performance of their duties;
- 3.2. during MSSP activities and at MSSP-related events (whether convened by the MSSP or not,);
- 3.3. when their association with the MSSP is identifiable (e.g.: while using social media from a personal computer in personal time if the MSSP is listed on social media as the employer).

Before commencing any role, personnel must sign an acknowledgement that they have reviewed the Code of Conduct, agree to comply with it, and understand the consequences of breaching the Code. Personnel will then be required to review and sign the Code of Conduct annually.

4. STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

In performing their duties, it is expected that all MSSP members and Lay Associates will support the core values of the MSSP and have a responsibility to meet the high standards of the expected professional and ethical behaviour. MSSP members and Lay Associates working under the auspice of the MSSP must comply with legislative requirements, with this Code and any policies and procedures that are issued by local Church authorities.

- 4.1. Respectfully listen to and receive information and suggestions from others in a collaborative way.
- 4.2. Make well-considered justifiable decisions, especially where they may have an adverse impact on others.
- 4.3. Report suspected unethical behaviour or wrong-doing by another to an appropriate person or in accordance with the MSSP's procedure for reportable conduct.
- 4.4. Admit and take responsibility for their mistakes and work to rectify problems as quickly as possible.
- 4.5. Engage in genuine dialogue with other personnel and stakeholders through transparent, open, honest and consistent communication and consultation.
- 4.6. Be accountable in all work that they do and act with authenticity, sincerity and integrity.
- 4.7. Perform duties diligently, ethically and conscientiously.
- 4.8. Not use their position for advantage or personal gain.
- 4.9. Avoid any conduct, including alcohol or substance abuse or misuse, which would adversely affect their work performance.
- 4.10. Act equitably, fairly and reasonably and treat others with honesty, respect, courtesy, sensitivity and compassion.
- 4.11. Take an inclusive approach that does not discriminate against or harass any person because of their gender, sex, marital status, pregnancy, age, race, ethnic or national origin, physical or intellectual impairment or sexual orientation or gender identity.
- 4.12. Behave and communicate in a manner that does not intimidate, offend, degrade or humiliate, and which does not harass, sexually harass, unlawfully discriminate or bully.
- 4.13. Maintain a respectful, co-operative and collaborative approach to all working and work-related and pastoral relationships.

5. SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND ADULTS AT RISK

The safeguarding of children and adults at risk is fundamental to the work of the MSSP. It underpins all decision making and the MSSP is committed to giving children and adults at risk a voice.

5.1. Acceptable Behaviours:

All MSSP members and Lay Associates have a responsibility to:

- 5.1.1. Use language or behaviour that is appropriate and in no way harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate;
- 5.1.2. Use computers, mobile phones, video cameras, cameras and social media appropriately and not as a means to exploit, harass or place children and adults at risk of any harm;
- 5.1.3. Obtain informed consent before photographing, filming or audio-recording others. An explanation of how the photograph, film or recording will be used must be understood by all parties involved;
- 5.1.4. Report suspected unethical behaviour or wrongdoing by another to an appropriate person or in accordance with the MSSP's procedure for reportable conduct;
- 5.1.5. Always adhere to the Society's policies, standards and protocols and uphold the MSSP Commitment Statement;
- 5.1.6. Take all reasonable steps to protect children and adults at risk from abuse and harm;
- 5.1.7. Listen and respond to the views and concerns of children and adults at risk, particularly if they are reporting that they or another child have been abused or that they are worried about their safety or the safety of another child or adult at risk;
- 5.1.8. Report any allegations of abuse or children or adults at risk to the police or to the relevant authorities;
- 5.1.9. Understand and comply with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting, by both civil and Church authorities;
- 5.1.10. Complete their duties in accordance with the directions provided by the relevant supervisor;
- 5.1.11. Consider the risks of proposed activities and tasks and develop strategies to manage these risks; and
- 5.1.12. Adhere to an appropriate standard of dress when engaged in ministry.

5.2. Unacceptable Behaviours:

All MSSP members, Lay Associates, staff, volunteers and contractors must not:

- 5.2.1. Ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed abuse of children or adults at risk;
- 5.2.2. Develop any 'special' relationships with children or adults at risk that could be seen favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children or adults at risk);
- 5.2.3. Exhibit behaviours with children or adults at risk which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (for example, inappropriate sitting on laps);
- 5.2.4. Put children or adults at risk in the risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors or being alone with a child or adult at risk with no good cause);
- 5.2.5. Initiate unnecessary physical contact with children or adults at risk, or do things of a personal nature that a child or adult at risk can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes;
- 5.2.6. Manage disruptive or unsafe behaviour by degrading or isolating a child or adult at risk; corporal punishment is never acceptable. Physical restraint should only be used as a last resort or in an emergency;
- 5.2.7. Engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children or adults at risk (for example, personal details or social activities) including using sexually suggestive or explicit language and/or engaging in conversations about sexual experiences or sharing sexual images;
- 5.2.8. Use inappropriate language in the presence of children or adults at risk;
- 5.2.9. Be alone with a child or adult at risk away from the presence of other adults, including for the purpose of transportation, without express permission;
- 5.2.10. Make or have readily available any kind of drug, alcohol or cigarettes to children or adults at risk;
- 5.2.11. Engage in private (i.e. outside of appropriate ministry) electronic or online contact with a child or adult at risk.

MSSP members and Lay Associates must:

- report to the MSSP Regional Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) concerning conduct that is brought to their attention and any circumstances where there is

suspicion that an adult at risk is currently at risk of harm;

- take reasonable steps to protect vulnerable adults from foreseeable risk of injury;
- ensure that physical contact with vulnerable adults is reasonable for the purpose of their care, and is appropriate given their age, health, disability or other characteristics. For example:
 - physical contact should be consistent with any specific management plan for the person,
 - physical intervention (including physical restraint, removals or escorts) should be avoided and used only as a last resort to ensure safety and protection of the person and others.
 - complete their duties in accordance with the directions provided by the MSSP Regional Superior;
 - consider the risks of proposed activities and tasks and develop strategies to manage these risks, and adhere to an appropriate standard of dress when engaged in ministry.

Generally, one-to-one interactions with an adult at risk should not take place unless in an open or visible space, or within the clear line of sight of another adult. This includes ministries and/or services such as counselling, one-to-one tuition, the sacrament of reconciliation, coaching, spiritual direction and mentoring. However, this will depend on the individual's circumstances, preferences and right to privacy. Prudent judgement is required on a case-by-case basis.

6. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The MSSP will comply with all requirements to report concerns about the safety of children or adults at risk to external authorities. These requirements include

- reporting criminal offences to police;
- reporting to relevant child protection agencies where there are reasonable grounds to believe that a child (or class of children) is at risk of harm;
- notifying the relevant independent safeguarding bodies of the local Church (such as Safeguarding commissions, or reportable conducts schemes);
- reporting safety concerns for an adult at risk in an aged care facility, respite and day care service or support services delivered in the home to the relevant authorities;
- reporting safety concerns that relate to the abuse, neglect or exploitation of an adult

at risk with disability or older person living in their home (conduct by a member of the person's family, other informal supports, or members known to them from the community) to the relevant body.

Any concerns about the safety of children or adults at risk is to be made as soon as practical.

Appendix II: Declaration

Declaration

I, _____, have read, understood and agree to abide by the Safeguarding Policy and Standards, and the Code of Conduct of the Missionary Society of St. Paul presented in this document and accept that complying with the contents of these documents is a condition of my membership, employment, engagement or volunteer work. Furthermore, I recognise that a breach of this Code of Conduct may constitute grounds for disciplinary action or in the case of serious misconduct, termination of employment or the cessation of engagement with the MSSP.

Signed this _____ day of _____, 20_____.
