



PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Date of first Approval:	01/02/2020
Date of effect:	1/02/2020
Date of last amendment:	01/02/2023
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First approved by:	Superior and Council
Person/section responsible	Director of Operations
Procedures and related or supporting documents that belong with this policy	SGS Code of Practice, Internal Investigations Policy, Complaint Handling Policy, Ongoing Education and Formation Policy, Record Keeping and Information Sharing Policy, Recruitment and Selection Policy, Reporting Child Abuse Policy, Responding to Historical Allegations of Abuse Policy, Supervision and Appraisal Policy Appendix 1 – Definitions Appendix 2 – Safeguarding Policy Declaration
Relevant Legislation & External Documents:	<p>Key Child Protection Legislation - Australia ACT – <i>Children and Young People Act 2008, Working with Vulnerable People (Background) Act 2011</i> NSW – <i>Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection Act) 1998, Children’s Guardian Act 2019, Children’s Guardian Amendment (Child Safe Scheme) Bill 2021, Crimes Act 1900, The Advocate for Children and Young People Act 2014, Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012</i> QLD – <i>Child Protection Act 1999, Child Protection Reform Amendment Bill 2017, Family and Child Commission Act 2014, Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000</i> SA – <i>Children’s Protection Act 1993, Child and Young People (Safety) Bill 2017, Children’s Protection (Miscellaneous) Act 2005, Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016</i> VIC – <i>Children, Youth and Families Act 2005, Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005, Commission for Children and Young People Act 2012, Working with Children Act 2005</i></p> <p>Key Child Protection Legislation - The Philippines (RA 7610) Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination, (RA 9344) <i>Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act 2006</i>, DEP-ED Order no. 40 Series 2012: Child Protection Policy, Presidential Decree No. 603: Child and Youth Welfare Code, (RA 9262) <i>Anti-Violence against Women and their children Act 2004</i>, (RA 9775) <i>Anti-Child Pornography Act 2009</i>, <i>Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003</i>, <i>Cybercrime Prevention Act of 2012</i></p> <p>Key Adult Safeguarding Legislation – Australia <i>Australian Human Rights Commission Act 196 (Cth): The Universal</i></p>

	<p><i>Aged Care Act 1997 (Cth)</i> <i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)</i> <i>National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (Cth)</i> <i>Family Law Legislation Amendment (Family Violence and Other measures) Act 2011 (Cth)</i> ACT – <i>Crimes (Offences against vulnerable people) legislation amendment Act 2020, Human Rights Act 2044, Family Violence Act 2016</i> NSW – <i>Ageing and Disability Commissioner Act 2019, Disability Services Act 1993, Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Act 2007</i> QLD – <i>Disability Services ACT 2006, Public Guardian Act 2014, Domestic and Family Violence Act 2012</i> SA – <i>Ageing and Adult Safeguarding Act 1995, Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935, Statutes Amendment (Domestic Violence) Act 2018</i> VIC – <i>Disability Act 2006, Guardian and Administration Act 2019</i></p> <p>External Documents: Integrity in the Service of the Church (Australia) Integrity in Ministry (Australia) National Response Framework – March 2022 (Australia) <i>Vos Estis Lux Mundi</i> (2019) United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) Declaration of Human Rights (Articles 1, 3, 5, 7) National Catholic Safeguarding Standards, Edition 2 (Australia) National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (Australia) Aged Care Quality Standards (Australia)</p>
<p>Policies superseded by this approval:</p>	<p>Child Safeguarding Policy</p>
<p>Publication of this Policy available to:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff/Sisters – Filemaker Pro Database <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sisters - Intranet <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Oblates - Intranet <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public – SGS Website



Purpose

The purpose of this Safeguarding Policy is to:

- Provide an informative safeguarding model which all Good Samaritans including Sisters Oblates, employees, volunteers and contractors can utilise to foster a culture of safety and care for both children and adults at risk. This is underpinned by key values from the gospel, Good Samaritan, Benedictine spirituality, the Rule of St Benedict, Catholic Social Teaching and the Good Samaritan Statement of Directions.
- Express an ongoing commitment and proactive approach to safeguarding and empowering all children and adults at risk wherever Good Samaritans live, work and minister.
- Ensure all with whom Good Samaritans collaborate are aware of their safeguarding roles and responsibilities.
- Emphasise/enshrine a Good Samaritan congregational zero-tolerance approach to abuse in all its forms and embed practices that protect children and adults from harm.

Principles and Values

- The Congregation of Sisters of the Good Samaritan (the Congregation) recognises that integrity in ministry is integral to the call to seek God who impels us to be neighbour. Good Samaritans are committed to creating and maintaining co-operative and harmonious relationships in Good Samaritan communities, with partners in ministry and where Good Samaritans are invited to participate in God's mission. The Congregation and all Good Samaritans are committed to providing safe environments for children and adults at risk and providing restorative justice through safe and respectful relationships.
- The Congregation and all Good Samaritans consider the commitment to the safeguarding of children and adults at risk to be at the forefront of their work and decision making. The highest value is placed on taking a person-centred and trauma informed approach to safeguarding, putting the wellbeing and safety of children and adults at risk above any perceived reputational risk to the Congregation. The Congregation and all Good Samaritans action their moral and legal responsibilities to maintain the high standards expected by those we serve.
- This policy is underpinned by the Sisters of the Good Samaritan (SGS) Code of Practice and is informed by the Good Samaritan commitment to safeguarding.

Statement of Commitment to Safeguarding

The Congregation of Sisters of the Good Samaritan

- is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and adults at risk.
- prioritises the principles of safeguarding at all levels of the Congregation's life and mission.
- has zero-tolerance to any attitude or action that makes children and adults less than safe.
- commits to being respectful, compassionate, and upholding the dignity of others.

Best Practice in Safeguarding

The Congregation will implement ‘best practice’ in all aspects of safeguarding in the creation and maintenance of safe environments for children and adults at risk. This is achieved by:

1. Strategies to embed an organisational culture of safeguarding, through effective leadership and governance.
2. Strategies to ensure children and adults at risk are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
3. Strategies to ensure families, carers and communities are informed and involved in promoting safeguarding.
4. Strategies to ensure equity is upheld and the diverse needs of children and adults at risk are respected.
5. Recruitment, screening, supervision, support, and other human resource practices which reduce the risk of abuse and ensure people working with children and adults at risk are suitable and supported to implement safeguarding values in practice.
6. Processes for raising concerns and complaints which are responsive, accessible, and used by children, adults at risk, families, carers and communities.
7. Training and education which equips personnel with knowledge, skills, and awareness to keep everyone safe.
8. Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks in both physical and online environments.
9. Processes for regularly reviewing and improving safeguarding systems and practices.
10. Systems for maintaining clear and accurate records
11. Policies and procedures which underpin and articulate safeguarding across the Congregation.

Scope

The Congregation recognises that Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility. This Safeguarding Policy applies to all Sisters, Oblates, employees, volunteers and contractors engaged across the Congregation.

Roles and Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibilities
Superior and Council	Superior and Council are responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading a culture of safeguarding and providing effective oversight across the Congregation and its ministries; • endeavouring to ensure that all Sisters and those with whom Good Samaritan Sisters work and engage will feel safe and supported in the Congregational life and mission, especially in relation to their safeguarding obligations; • formation of inquirers, pre novices, novices, temporary professed, perpetually professed, employees and Oblates; • implementing and monitoring compliance procedures and safeguarding culture for Sisters, Oblates, employees, volunteers and contractors to all legislation and standards especially in relation to protection of children and adults at risk.

Roles	Responsibilities
Safeguarding Advisory Group	<p>The Safeguarding Advisory Group is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing advice and support to the Superior and Council (through the Professional Standards Advisor and the Director of Operations) in the leadership and coordination of the Congregation’s policy and protocols relating to the protection of children and adults at risk in Congregational ministries and wherever Good Samaritan Sisters live and minister; • reviewing safeguarding processes, procedures and initiatives and making recommendations; • reviewing safeguarding policies following complaints, incidents and concerns.
Professional Standards Advisor	<p>The Professional Standards Advisor is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing advice to the Superior and Council on matters relating to the protection of children and adults at risk; • convening and chairing the Safeguarding Advisory Group including recommending members to be appointed; • reviewing and updating the Code of Practice; • supporting the delivery of training and formation for Sisters and Oblates regarding safeguarding policies, procedures and practice; • supporting the Congregational initiatives for the ongoing development of a culture of safeguarding in Australia, Japan, the Philippines and Kiribati.
Director of Operations	<p>The Director of Operations is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing advice to the Superior and Council on matters relating to the protection of children and adults at risk; • maintaining knowledge of relevant legislation relating to child protection and the protection of adults at risk to ensure compliance across jurisdictions in which the Sisters live and minister; • Ensuring regular review of safeguarding policies, to reflect any changes in legislation and communicate those changes to Sisters, Oblates, employees, and volunteers as is relevant; • providing and/or co-ordinating safeguarding education and formation for Sisters, Oblates, employees and volunteers • ensuring all Sisters, Oblates, staff, volunteers and contractors are aware of and embedding a culture of safety and care in line with the Good Samaritan Charism and Catholic Social Teaching; • ensuring all Sisters are aware of their responsibilities under the Church document <i>Vos Estis Lux Mundi</i> and other relevant church documents such as <i>Integrity in Ministry</i> and <i>the National Response Framework (Australia)</i> • ensuring all Oblates, employees, volunteers and contractors are aware of their responsibilities under the Church document <i>Vos Estis Lux Mundi</i>, and other relevant church documents such as <i>Integrity in the Service of the Church</i> and <i>The National Response Framework (Australia)</i>.

Roles	Responsibilities
Local Safeguarding Coordinator (Australia, Japan, Kiribati, the Philippines)	<p>The Local Safeguarding Coordinator is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordinating and monitoring the Congregation’s obligation to the safeguarding of children and adults at risk in accordance with the tradition and charism of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan and in alignment with the Catholic Safeguarding Standards and local law. • Ensuring regular review and update of policies and procedures
The Oblate Leadership Team	<p>The Oblate Leadership Team is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that Oblates have committed to the Congregations Code of Practice and Safeguarding Policy • providing and/or co-ordinating safeguarding education and formation for Oblates • ensuring all Oblates are aware of and embedding a culture of safety and care in line with the Good Samaritan Charism and Catholic Social Teaching; • Informing the Director of Operations of any safeguarding concerns.
All Sisters	<p>All Sisters are responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • formalising their commitment to safeguarding by reading and signing the Code of Practice and Safeguarding Policy; • undertaking a proactive approach to the safeguarding of children and adults at risk ; • contributing to discussion about safeguarding approaches; • maintaining an awareness of their obligations for responding to and reporting safeguarding concerns or incidents in accordance with relevant legislation and best practice. Where Sisters are unsure of their obligations, they are responsible for seeking clarification from the Director of Operations or the local Safeguarding Coordinator; • undertaking ongoing education and formation on the Code of Practice, Safeguarding Policy, relevant Child Protection and Adult Safeguarding legislation and best practices; • where it is required by legislation, maintaining a current Working with Children Check and updating the Congregation of any changes to their status; • demonstrating an ongoing commitment to their responsibilities under the Church document <i>Vos Estis Lux Mundi</i> and other relevant documents such as <i>Integrity in Ministry</i> and <i>The National Response Framework (Australia)</i> and Good Samaritan safeguarding culture. • Understanding their rights as a member of the congregation; • Maintaining an awareness of and demonstrating safe and respectful relationships.
All Oblates	<p>All Oblates of Sisters of the Good Samaritan are responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • formalising their commitment to safeguarding by reading and signing the Code of Practice and Safeguarding Policy; • undertaking a proactive approach to the safeguarding of children and adults at risk;

Roles	Responsibilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participating in appropriate induction for the ministry they provide; • endeavouring to ensure they are aware of their obligations for responding to and reporting safeguarding concerns or incidents in accordance with relevant legislation and best practice. Where they are unsure of their obligations, they are responsible for seeking clarification from the local SGS Oblate Coordinator, Oblate Leadership Team, local Safeguarding Coordinator or the Director of Operations. • undertaking education and formation on the Code of Practice, Safeguarding Policy and relevant Child Protection and Adult Safeguarding legislation; • demonstrating an ongoing commitment to their responsibilities under the Church document <i>Vos Estis Lux Mundi</i> and other relevant documents such as <i>Integrity in the Service of the Church</i> and <i>The National Response Framework (Australia)</i> and Good Samaritan safeguarding culture.
All Employees	<p>All employees of Sisters of the Good Samaritan are responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • formalising their commitment to safeguarding by reading and signing the Code of Practice and Safeguarding Policy; • participating in appropriate induction for the service they provide; • undertaking a proactive approach to the safeguarding of children and adults at risk ; • contributing to discussion about safeguarding approaches; • periodically reflecting on the Code of Practice and Safeguarding Policy; • endeavouring to ensure they are aware of their obligations of responding and reporting safeguarding concerns or incidents in accordance with relevant legislation and best practice. Where they are unsure of their obligations, they are responsible for seeking clarification from the Director of Operations or the local Safeguarding Coordinator; • undertaking the relevant criminal history checks as required in the jurisdictions in which they work; • maintaining a current Working with Children Check when an employee is in child related employment and it is required by legislation in the jurisdiction in which they work. Updating the Congregation of any changes to their status. • undertaking annual safeguarding education and formation. • where relevant, are aware of their mandatory reporting responsibilities and all relevant child protection and adult safeguarding legislation; • where relevant, work in accordance with the aged care quality standards; • demonstrating an ongoing commitment to their responsibilities under the Church document <i>Vos Estis Lux Mundi</i> and other relevant documents such as <i>Integrity in The Service of the Church</i> and <i>The National Response Framework (Australia)</i> and Good Samaritan safeguarding culture.

Roles	Responsibilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining an awareness of and demonstrating safe and respectful relationships
All Volunteers	<p>All volunteers of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan are responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compliance with the Congregation's Code of Practice; • undertaking a proactive approach to the safeguarding of children and adults at risk; • undertaking the relevant statutory criminal history checks and working with children checks where applicable to their role and as required by legislation in the jurisdictions in which they are working; • participating in appropriate induction for the service they provide; • where relevant, are aware of their mandatory reporting responsibilities and all relevant child protection and adult safeguarding legislation; • conducting him or herself in accordance with the Congregation's relevant safeguarding policies and procedures; • demonstrating an ongoing commitment to their responsibilities under Church documents such as <i>Integrity in the Service of the Church and Good Samaritan</i> safeguarding culture.
All Contractors	<p>All contractors of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan are responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complying with the Congregation's Code of Practice; • undertaking a proactive approach to the safeguarding of children and adults at risk; • in the jurisdictions where it is required undertaking the relevant statutory criminal history checks and working with children checks where applicable to their role; • participating in appropriate induction for the service they provide; • those who are contracted in a child related role are aware of their mandatory reporting responsibilities and all relevant child protection legislation; • those who are contracted in an adult at risk role are aware of adult safeguarding legislation and applicable aged care quality standards, when applicable; • conducting him or herself in accordance with the Congregation's relevant safeguarding policies and procedures; • demonstrating an ongoing commitment to their responsibilities under Church documents such as <i>Integrity in the Service of the Church and Good Samaritan</i> safeguarding culture.

Policy Review

This policy is reviewed every two years and will be updated according to any associated relevant legislation.



Appendix 1

DEFINITIONS

ADULT

Adult means an individual 18 years of age and older.

Adult at Risk

Adult at risk means any person aged 18 years and over who is at increased risk of experiencing abuse, such as people:

- Who are elderly
- With a disability
- Who suffer from mental illness
- Who have diminished capacity
- Who have cognitive impairment
- Who have suffered previous abuse
- Who are experiencing transient risks
- Who in receiving a ministry or service are subject to a power imbalance
- Who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- Who are from a culturally and linguistically diverse background
- Who are of diverse sexuality
- Who have any other impairment or adversity that makes it difficult from them to protect themselves from abuse.

Adult Abuse

Adult abuse means the improper treatment of a person that results in the actual and/or likelihood of causing physical or emotional harm. Abuse can come in many forms, such as: physical or verbal maltreatment, neglect, injury, assault, violation, rape, unjust practices, crimes, exploitation, or other types of aggression.

There are several categories of abuse of adults, such as:

- Sexual abuse
- Physical abuse
- Emotional/psychological abuse
- Neglect
- Elder abuse
- Financial abuse
- Exploitation
- Spiritual abuse

CHILD

Child means an individual under 18 years of age.

Child Abuse

Child abuse refers to any behaviour or treatment by parents, caregivers, other adults or older adolescents that result in the actual and/or likelihood of causing physical or emotional harm to a child. Such behaviours maybe intentional or unintentional and can include acts of omission (ie. neglect) and commission. Child abuse and neglect is commonly divided into five subtypes:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional/psychological abuse
- Neglect
- Sexual abuse
- Exposure to family violence



Appendix 2

SAFEGUARDING POLICY DECLARATION

I, _____,

have received and read a copy of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan Safeguarding Policy. I understand the key principles, values and best practices that are at the heart of the life and mission of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan.

I commit to honour these principles, values and best practices (applicable to my role) as outlined in this document.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

**Please remove the declaration from the Policy.
Provide the signed declaration to the Congregational Leader or Director of Operations.
Retain the copy of the Safeguarding Policy for your reflection and record**