



DAUGHTERS OF
OUR LADY OF THE SACRED HEART
AUSTRALIAN PROVINCE

CODE OF CONDUCT

2023

Our Commitment

Dear Sisters, Employees, Volunteers and Contractors

The Australian Province of the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart acknowledges with conviction that children, young people and adults at risk have a fundamental right to be respected, nurtured and safeguarded by all people.

The Province understands that the safeguarding of children and adults at risk is a shared responsibility among all those in the Province.

As part of our ongoing commitment, I ask each Sister, employee, volunteer or contractor to read our Code of Conduct and confirm your acceptance and understanding by signing and returning the Acknowledgement and Acceptance form at the back of this booklet.

Full copies of all OLSH policies are available from Community Leaders and can also be found on our website: www.olshaustralia.org.au/safeguarding

With many blessings

Sr Philippa Murphy
Provincial Leader

1. Introduction

Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Australia upholds that Sisters, Employees, Volunteers and Contractors will maintain the highest standards of professional and ethical conduct. This includes conduct that upholds the human rights, dignity and well-being of all people, and safeguards children and adults at risk from abuse and harm.

This document informs best practice and is supported by the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Safeguarding Policy.

2. Purpose

The Code of Conduct establishes principles for ethical conduct and provides clear information about conduct by all towards children and adults at risk that is not acceptable.

Sisters, Employees, Volunteers and Contractors are responsible for promoting the standards embodied in the Code in addition to the teachings and values of the Catholic Church and more broadly, the charism of the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart.

In addition to the above, the Code is supported by internal Church documents such as, The National Response Framework and Protocol (Australia), Vos Estis Lux Mundi, The National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (Australia), Integrity in Ministry (Australia) and Integrity in the Service of the Church (Australia).

3. Scope

The Code of Conduct applies to Sisters, Employees, Volunteers and Contractors. It is the expectation of Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart that before undertaking any role or ministry, Sisters, Employees, Volunteers and Contractors 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. Sisters, Employees, Volunteers and Contractors will then be required to review and sign the Code of Conduct every year. The Provincial Leader or her delegate is responsible for ensuring that this occurs and for the maintaining of appropriate records.



4. Professional & Ethical Conduct

Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Australia promotes the following principles:

- a. Upholding the beliefs, teachings and ethos of the Catholic faith and charism of the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart
- b. Respecting the dignity, rights and views of others
- c. Acting honestly and with integrity at all times
- d. Being courteous, fair, sensitive and considerate to the needs of others
- e. Acting respectfully at all times, including respecting cultural, ethnic, political and religious differences
- f. Taking 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, sexual orientation or gender identity. Such harassment or discrimination may constitute an offence under the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 Cth.



5. Professional and Personal Behaviour and Development

- 5.1 In performing their duties Sisters, Employees, Volunteers and Contractors are required to:
- a. maintain a high standard and quality of work
 - b. demonstrate a duty of care
 - c. maintain and develop knowledge and understanding of their area of expertise
 - d. continuously seek to improve work performance and bring about improvements in the workplace
 - e. exercise care, responsibility and sound judgement when carrying out their duties
 - f. take reasonable care of their health and safety
 - g. comply and cooperate with legislative and industrial requirements and any reasonable instruction, policy or procedure
 - h. use appropriate language
 - i. maintain adequate records to support any decisions made
 - j. maintain confidentiality and privacy.
- 5.2 In performing their duties Sisters, Employees, Volunteers and Contractors must not:
- a. act in ways that adversely affect the health and safety of others
 - b. consume any substance during working hours which would impair their ability to work safely and effectively and would be a risk to the safety of others
 - c. take or seek to take improper advantage of any information gained in the course of employment
 - d. take improper advantage of their position to benefit themselves or others
 - e. allow personal political views/affiliations or other personal interests to influence the performance of duties or exercise of responsibilities
 - f. use information and communication technologies, such as email, mobile phones, text or instant messaging and websites to engage in behaviour that could reasonably be considered to have a negative impact on another person, cause them harm, or make them feel unsafe
 - g. make unfounded complaints with malicious, frivolous or vexatious intent against Sisters, Employees, Volunteers or Contractors.

6. Conduct Towards Children

6.1 For the purpose of the Code a 'Child' is defined as any individual under the age of 18 years.

6.2 Sisters, Employees, Volunteers and Contractors must not engage in the following conduct:

- a. any form of physical or sexual abuse
 - b. grooming of a child for sexual abuse
 - c. using sexually suggestive or explicit language
 - d. engaging in conversations about sexual experiences or sharing sexual images
 - e. physically disciplining a child or young person
 - f. making excessive and/or degrading demands of a child or young person
 - g. making any kind of drug, alcohol or cigarettes available to children or young people
 - h. engaging in private electronic or online contact with a child or young person
 - i. engaging with a child or young person in a way that is overly intimate or could be seen as involving favouritism or any form of special treatment,
- and

6.3 Sisters, Employees, Volunteers and Contractors are required to:

- a. report to the Provincial Leader or Safeguarding Coordinator any concerning conduct that is brought to their attention and any circumstances where they suspect that a child or young person is currently at risk of harm.
- b. take reasonable steps to protect children, young people from foreseeable risk of injury
- c. complete their duties in accordance with the directions provided by the relevant supervisor
- d. consider the risks of proposed activities and tasks and develop strategies to manage these risks

7. Conduct Towards Adults at Risk

7.1 For the purpose of the Code an 'Adult at risk' is defined as any individual over the age of 18 years at increased risk of abuse, including but not limited to those who:

- a. are elderly
- b. have a disability
- c. have a mental illness
- d. have diminished capacity
- e. have a cognitive impairment
- f. are experiencing any form of transient risks, e.g. bereavement, relationship breakdown, domestic or family violence, homelessness
- g. have any other impairment that makes it difficult for that person to protect themselves from abuse or exploitation

7.2 Whilst taking care to not make assumptions or generalisations about individuals, Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Australia recognises that other aspects of a person's identity or life experiences may also increase their risk of vulnerability to abuse or harm, e.g.:

- a. being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- b. being a refugee or migrant
- c. being of diverse gender or sexuality
- d. speaking a first language other than English
- e. surviving sexual abuse or child abuse

7.3 Sisters, Employees, Volunteers and Contractors must not engage in the following conduct:

- a. any form of physical or sexual abuse
- b. making excessive and/or degrading demands
- c. exploiting an individual's vulnerability to form an intimate relationship
- d. any misuse of authority or power that exploits, manipulates or coerces a person to engage in any activity, which disrespects their human rights and dignity
- e. not respecting a person's privacy
- f. any form of financial abuse or exploitation

7.4 Sisters, Employees, Volunteers and Contractors must:

- a. report to the Provincial Leader or Safeguarding Coordinator any concerning conduct that is brought to their attention and any circumstances where they suspect that an adult at risk is currently at risk of harm
- b. take reasonable steps to protect adults at risk of harm from foreseeable risk of injury
- c. ensure that physical contact with adults at risk 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
- d. Duties should be completed in accordance with the directions provided by Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Australia
- e. consider the risks of proposed activities and tasks and develop strategies to manage these risks, and
- f. adhere to an appropriate standard of dress when engaged in ministry.

8. Reporting Requirements

Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Australia will comply with all requirements to report concerns about the safety of children and adults at risk to external authorities. These requirements are outlined in the Safeguarding Policy and include: All relevant overseeing Church and Government bodies in Australia and the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Australia's overseas ministries. All Criminal Offences are to be reported to the Police.

- a. Reporting to the relevant Child Protection Authority where there are reasonable grounds to believe that a child (or class of children) is at risk of harm. Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Australia works across a number of different jurisdictions. Relevant child protection authorities for each jurisdiction can be found in the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Safeguarding Policy.

- b. Notifying the independent oversight body of reportable allegations under the Reportable Conduct Scheme which exists in each State and Territory
- c. Reporting safety concerns for an adult in an aged care facility, respite and day care service or support services delivered in the home to the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (Australia)
- d. Reporting safety concerns that relate to the provision of a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) service to the NDIS Quality & Safeguards Commission (Australia)
- e. Reporting safety concerns that relate to the abuse, neglect or exploitation of an adult 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.

To ensure Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Australia can fulfil these reporting requirements, Sisters, Employees, Volunteers and Contractors must report any concerns about the safety of children or adults at risk to the Provincial Leader or the Safeguarding Coordinator as soon as practicable.

9. Equity and Inclusion

Sisters, Employees, Volunteers and Contractors are expected to create a fair, inclusive and safe working environment, where diversity is valued and where unlawful discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation in any form are considered unacceptable. Sisters, Employees, Volunteers and Contractors must not discriminate against any person on the basis of cultural or linguistic diversity, disability, gender identity or sexuality, or any other aspect of their identity.



10. Gifts, Benefits & Hospitality

Sisters, Employees, Volunteers and Contractors have a responsibility to behave with integrity and impartiality. Sisters Employees, Volunteers and Contractors must not solicit gifts, benefits or hospitality that might in any way compromise or influence them directly or indirectly in their capacity as Sisters, Employees, Volunteers and Contractors when engaged by OLSH. Sisters, Employees, Volunteers and Contractors must declare any gifts, benefits or hospitality valued over \$50 when received in the context of their work.

11. Conflicts of Interest

11.1 Sisters, Employees, Volunteers and Contractors have an obligation to ensure that conflicts of interest (whether financial or otherwise) are managed in a fair, ethical and transparent manner. The potential for a conflict of interest arises Sisters, Employees, Volunteers and Contractors have private interests that could influence or appear to influence judgements made during the course of their professional duties. They also arise when there is a reasonable expectation of a personal benefit, direct or indirect, that could influence the performance of Sisters, Employees, Volunteers and Contractors duties. This benefit may be financial or non-financial.

11.2 Sisters, Employees, Volunteers and Contractors are required to:

- a. Conduct themselves in a manner which is consistent with Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Australia's values
- b. Be objective, open and honest, making recommendations or decisions with integrity and accountability and in a way that best serves the interests of the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Australia
- c. Use their own judgement in determining the appropriateness of non-cash gifts and hospitality
- d. Ensure all decisions are free of bias or apparent bias
- e. Behave with integrity and impartiality
- f. Ensure all processes are transparent and documented

It is recognised that the giving and receiving of gifts and hospitality has an important role to play in the Church context. However, it is important to ensure that these practices do not give rise to conflicts of interest, the misallocation of resources or impact on the reputation or work of the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart.

12. Management of Resources

Sisters, Employees, Volunteers and Contractors must be careful, ethical, efficient and economical in their use and management of the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Australia's resources, including work time. Resources include (but are not limited to) money, facilities, equipment, vehicles, services (e.g. internet). Resources should be used only for their intended purpose, be well maintained and secured against theft or misuse.

Sisters, Employees, Volunteers and Contractors are accountable for the appropriate use of working hours and resources. Employees should not use Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart working hours or resources for an outside interest, secondary employment or personal gain.

13. Social Media

Sisters, Employees, Volunteers and Contractors must exercise caution when using social media platforms for personal purposes outside their work hours. Employees are expected not to make disparaging or offensive comments on social media about the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, the Catholic Church, clients, colleagues or any other person.

14. Confidentiality

Sisters, Employees, Volunteers and Contractors must not divulge, either during employment or after, the confidential information of the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart.

Sisters, Employees, Volunteers and Contractors must respect the privacy and confidentiality of any person who reports safety concerns about a child or adult at risk except where legislative or statutory requirements over-ride this as outlined in the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Safeguarding Policy.

15. Protected Disclosures

In reporting any alleged improper use, fraud, waste or abuse of resources, misconduct, inadequate administration or accountability, Sisters, Employees, Volunteers and Contractors will be protected as far as reasonably practicable against victimisation and retaliation as result of a disclosure. Sisters, Employees, Volunteers and Contractors are not entitled to protection for disclosures which, on investigation, are found to be vexatious or malicious allegations, and may be liable for disciplinary action as a result.

16. Consequences of Breaching the Code

Breaching the Code of Conduct may constitute an allegation of misconduct and result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal (with or without notice) and potential criminal proceedings. In relation to Sisters, breaching the Code of Conduct may lead to the matter being referred to the Provincial Leader. This may impact on their ability to work with children and/or adults at risk in the future.

17. Reviewing the Code

The Code of Conduct will be reviewed whenever a breach is identified and at least every three years. The Provincial Leader is responsible for ensuring the review is completed.

Code of Conduct approved	P. Murphy fdnsc	21-12-21
Code of Conduct reviewed		

18. Related Documents

- a. OLSH Safeguarding Policy
- b. OLSH Complaints Handling Policy
- c. OLSH Responding to Historic Allegations Policy
- d. OLSH Conducting Internal Investigations Policy
- e. OLSH Privacy Policy

Copies of all policies can be found on www.olshaustralia.org.au or can be requested by contacting Provincial House on 02 9663 3599



The Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Australian Province is committed to an ongoing and proactive approach to safeguarding and professional standards



To confirm your reading, understanding and acceptance of the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Code of Conduct, please complete the form opposite and return either via email to: safeguarding@olshaustralia.org.au

or via mail to:

Provincial House
Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart
2 Kensington Road
Kensington NSW 2033

Acknowledgement & Acceptance

<p>I will:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. promote the human rights, safety and wellbeing of all people b. demonstrate appropriate personal and professional boundaries c. listen and respond to the views and concerns expressed by children and adults at risk, particularly if they communicate (verbally or non-verbally) that they do not feel safe d. create an environment that is welcoming, culturally safe and free from discrimination against a child or adult at risk on the basis of cultural or linguistic diversity, disability, gender identity or sexuality, or any other aspect of their identity e. contribute, where appropriate, to the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Australia's safeguarding policies and practices f. identify and mitigate risks to children and adults at risk of harm as required by the Risk Management Strategy g. respond to any concerns or complaints of harm or abuse promptly and as required by the Safeguarding Policy h. comply with the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Australia's policies and procedures on record keeping and information sharing
<p>I will NOT engage in the following conduct towards children:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. any form of physical or sexual abuse b. grooming of a child for sexual abuse c. using sexually suggestive or explicit language d. engaging in conversations about sexual experiences or sharing sexual images e. being alone with a child or young person away from the presence of other adults, including for the purpose of transportation, without express permission f. physically disciplining a child or young person g. making excessive and/or degrading demands of a child or young person h. making any kind of drug, alcohol or cigarettes available to children or young people i. engaging in private electronic or online contact with a child or young person j. engaging with a child or young person in a way that is overly intimate or could be seen as involving favouritism or any form of special treatment

I will NOT engage in the following conduct towards adults at risk:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. any form of physical or sexual abuse b. making excessive and/or degrading demands c. exploiting an individual’s vulnerability to form an intimate relationship d. any misuse of authority or power that exploits, manipulates or coerces a person to engage in any activity, or which disrespects their human rights and dignity e. not respecting a person’s privacy f. any form of financial abuse or exploitation
If I think this Code of Conduct has been breached by another person I will:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. take action to respond to any immediate safety concerns b. promptly report any concerns to the Provincial Leader or the Safeguarding Coordinator (if the concerns relate to the relevant Leader). c. comply with the processes outlined in the OLSH Complaint Handling Policy d. undertake all actions necessary to meet my obligations to report any safety concerns to the appropriate external authorities

I agree to abide by this Code of Conduct during my engagement with the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Australia.

I understand that breaches of this Code of Conduct may lead to disciplinary action, including dismissal, and/or criminal proceedings.

Signed:	
Name:	
Role:	
Organisation:	Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart
Supervisor:	
Date:	