

# UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND AND OCEANIA

## Terms of Reference Eparchial Safeguarding Committee



**UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND & OCEANIA  
TERMS OF REFERENCE  
EPARCHIAL SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE**

**“How precious is your unfailing love, O God!**

**All humanity finds shelter in the shadow of your wings.”**

**Psalm 36:7-8**

**DOCUMENT INFORMATION**

NAME OF POLICY	Terms of Reference
DESCRIPTION	A Document which outlines the roles, responsibilities and tenure of the Eparchial Safeguarding Committee
POLICY SCOPE (policy applies to)	Members of the Eparchial Safeguarding Committee
POLICY STATUS	Initial Policy
POLICY CATEGORY	Committed leadership, governance & culture (NCSS Standard1)
POLICY SUB -CATEGORY	Embedding safeguarding of children in the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy’s leadership and others who serve the Ukrainian Catholic Church in Australia New Zealand and Oceania.
APPROVAL AUTHORITY	Eparch Ukrainian Catholic Church in Australia, New Zealand & Oceania
GOVERNING AUTHORITY	Bishop’s Chancery, Parish Administrator & Safeguarding Committee
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Eparch/ Parish Administrator & Chair Eparchial Safeguarding Committee
APPROVAL DATE	July 25 2025
DATE OF POLICY REVIEW	One year from adoption

**1. PURPOSE**

- The Eparch of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in Australia, New Zealand and Oceania (The Church), has responsibility for the oversight of the operation of the Eparchial Safeguarding Committee (ESC).
- The ESC is not a governing body, but its role is to support the overall governance of the Eparchial system in relation to Safeguarding of its parishioners, in particular, children and adults at risk. It is advisory in nature and provides a forum for discussion and discernment, where the parents’ guardians and children’s voices and perspectives are available to inform and support the decisions made by the Eparch and Parish Administrator to support this area of the work of the Church.
- ACSL provides support to the Eparchial Safeguarding Committee, such as policy guidance, templates and examples for the work of the Committee

The following are some ways the ESC supports the Eparchy and its parishes:

- Drafting Policy
- Promoting Safeguarding
- Implementing policies as required
- Sharing information and ideas
- Training and development
- Handling safeguarding complaints
- Ensuring compliance with relevant legislation and standards.



## **2. COMMITTEE STRUCTURE**

### **2.1 Members of the Eparchial Safeguarding Committee**

- The ESC is to be comprised of a minimum of four (4) Committee members.
- Committee members are appointed every three years at a set time devised by the Eparchy.
- Serving on the Eparchial Safeguarding Committee is a response to the call to support the Eparchy in a particular way. It is a means for members of our Eparchy to share their skills and talents for the common good, especially with regard to the needs of the most vulnerable.

### **2.2 Process of appointment of Committee members**

- When appointments are being made it is important to keep in mind the need for a balance of gender and skill sets in forming the Committee.
- The Eparch has the power of appointment, re-appointment and removal of members of the Eparchial Safeguarding Committee
- The Eparch may remove a Committee member if he is of the view that a Committee member is not complying with the expectations of the role of a Committee member or is engaged in conduct unbecoming of a Committee member or prejudicial to the interests of the Eparchy.
- The Chair of the Eparchial Safeguarding Committee acts on delegation from the Eparch. No delegation of power prevents the exercise of a power directly by the Eparch or Vicar General as relevant.
- Adherence to the NCSS must be at the forefront of any appointment process. Committee members must have both a police check and Working with Children check. Once appointed, it is a requirement that all Committee members sign and comply with the Eparchy's Code of Conduct.

### **2.3 Conflict of Interest**

- Eparchial Safeguarding Committees must be free from fraud or corruption or the perception of fraud or corruption. Conflict of interest arises where a Committee member's duty to the Eparchy is affected by a personal (actual, potential or perceived) interest. In such cases, the line between personal and professional conduct may become blurred and interfere with a Committee member's capacity to provide advice and fulfil his or her responsibilities on the Committee.
- The Eparchy's Conflict of Interest Policy addresses the requirements for disclosure and management of conflict of interest and extends to Committee members. It is a requirement of the role that Committee members abide by and comply with this policy.

## **3. PROCESS OF APPOINTMENT AND INDUCTION**

### **3.1 Expressions of Interest**

- Anyone interested in becoming a member of the Eparchial Safeguarding Committee may seek advice from the Vicar General or the Chair of the ESC, on the process of appointment.
- Consideration will also be given to succession planning through staggered renewal of members to ensure continuing institutional memory.

### **3.2 Diversity**

- The ESC seeks to be inclusive of all community members and will demonstrate a genuine commitment to gender equity, cultural diversity and requisite skill sets.
- Collectively, Committee members should bring a range of personal skills and experience to add value to the ESC. See 'The role of individual Committee members' in these Terms of Reference.
- The Committee should be composed of people who appreciate, value and share the mission and ethos of the Catholic Church. When seeking Committee members, it is important to reflect on the qualities and skills of benefit to the Committee in carrying out its functions. Their capacity to contribute, their shared understanding and their positivity is essential.

### **3.3 Appointment and induction of members**

#### **3.3.1 Appointment**

- As being a member of the ESC is a form of Church ministry, the process of appointment is preceded by discernment



to assist potential new Committee members to understand:

- the mission and vision of the Ukrainian Catholic Church
  - the roles, responsibilities and processes within the structure of the Eparchy and the ESC
  - how Committee members, can support the Chair
  - the appropriateness of their personal readiness to serve.
- This discernment process commences when expressions of interest are sought for new Committee members, and /or a chance for potential nominees to discuss the role of the Committee and the expectations of a Committee member with the Chair or Vicar General.

### 3.3.2 Induction

- Formal induction to the Eparchial Safeguarding Committee includes access to the Eparchial Safeguarding Committee documentation and relevant Eparchial Governance policies as well as assistance to understand the history of the Eparchy and the Parishes.
- The induction process continues after appointment and is a continuing process rather than an event.

### 3.3.3 Terms and conditions of appointment

- The period of appointment for Committee members, excepting the Vicar General, and any other ex officio appointment, is generally a term of three years ending on the conclusion of the third year following their appointment, with the option of being reappointed for a total of three consecutive terms.
- Other terms and conditions of appointment of Committee members may be determined by the Eparch.
- The office of a Committee member will become vacant if the Committee member:
  - is absent without the consent of the Committee from three (3) successive meetings of the Committee;
  - resigns by notice in writing;
  - is removed from office by the Bishop;
  - ex officio appointment to the Committee, ceases to occupy the relevant office;
  - becomes of unsound mind; or
  - dies.
- Any period of office of a Committee member held during a casual vacancy appointment by the Eparch (that is, a period of less than three years between annual appointment rounds) is disregarded in counting the maximum permitted tenure of office of a Committee member of three consecutive terms.

## 4. THE ROLE OF INDIVIDUAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

### 4.1 Qualities and skills of a Committee member

- The following is a list of some of the key qualities and skills for members of the Eparchial Safeguarding Committee:
  - commitment to the Ukrainian Catholic faith
  - commitment to the vision and mission of the Eparchy
  - an understanding of the role of the Eparch, Vicar General and Committee members
  - willingness to ask questions and seek clarification
  - ability to think strategically
  - willingness to support the contributions of other Committee members
  - capacity to listen in an active and meaningful way
  - willingness to work collaboratively with others
  - commitment to always maintaining absolute confidentiality.

### 4.2 Expectations of the Committee member

- Each Committee member is required to commit to the following:
  - understanding the Committee's role
  - having a positive and constructive attitude
  - elevating any appropriate issues for consideration by the Committee
  - declaring and not allowing any personal interests to conflict with the interests of the Committee and properly manage any conflict of interest in accordance with the Eparchy's Conflict of Interest Policy.
  - attending each Committee meeting, unless there are extenuating circumstances
  - bringing expertise and views to discussions
  - participating actively and responsibly
  - acting honestly and fairly, in good faith and in the best interests of the Eparchy



- acting ethically and with a high level of integrity
- conducting themselves professionally and treating other Committee members fairly, sensitively, consistently and with respect
- undertaking Committee work with reasonable care and diligence
- keeping confidential the information received in the course of service as a Committee member
- not taking improper advantage of their position as a Committee member
- abiding by all applicable Eparchy governance policies and key documents.

#### 4.3 Key roles

There are key roles on a Eparchial Safeguarding Committee. The Chair has a significant role on the Committee as does the Vicar General responsible for Safeguarding and each of these roles carries specific responsibilities.

##### 4.3.1 Chair

- In addition to the qualities, skills and expectation outlined above, the role of the Chair is to:
  - chair Committee meetings
  - develop meeting agendas, check papers for meetings and draft minutes
  - ensure the meetings are focused on the agenda
  - encourage participation by all Committee members in meetings
  - act as a spokesperson for the Committee when authorised to do
  - attend important Eparchy and parish events as appropriate
  - participate as a member of the Committee
  - play a key role in developing the overall goals and priorities of the Committee
  - ensure follow-up of actions arising from Committee meetings
  - make arrangements to maintain an archive of relevant Committee documentation in accordance with these Terms of Reference, including minutes from previous meetings
    - make arrangements to distribute papers and draft agendas or minutes before meetings
    - ensure that Committee members are kept informed between meetings
    - make arrangements to maintain a register and record of Committee, committee and working groups and all applicable documentation and records, including minutes, agendas and correspondence.

##### 4.3.1.1 Appointment

- The Chair is appointed by the Eparch.
- The Chair is selected based on the person's achievements and his or her record as a leader.
- The term of the Chair aligns with their term of office as a Committee member. The office of the chair will terminate if they cease to be a Committee member whether by way of expiry of their term, resignation or removal.
- The Chair does not have a casting vote in addition to their ordinary vote as a Committee member.

##### 4.3.2 Vicar General responsible for Safeguarding

- In addition to other duties of the Vicar General in the Eparchy, this is a key role of supporting the ESC in its distinctive Catholic identity, spirituality and life. Therefore, the role on the Committee is to:
  - as the key evangeliser and educator in faith within the Committee, provide guidance to Committee in its deliberations as relevant
    - guide the Committee and bring to the Committee's attention, matters relevant to the operation of the Committee
    - be engaged with, and bring to the Committee's attention, those aspects of the Eparchy's operations that have the potential to harm the Eparchy's good name
    - be involved in and provide input in the Committee's planning of any transaction that will change the nature of the Eparchy or affect the use of any other areas of Eparchial property
    - oversee the provision of nominations and appointments for Committee positions that become vacant.

## 5. EPARCHIAL SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

### 5.1 Meetings

- The Eparchial Safeguarding Committee should meet a minimum of 6 times during a year. The Eparchial Safeguarding Committee may call extra meetings if required.
- Agendas should be prepared and distributed prior to each meeting, with sufficient notice and time for preparation



by Committee members.

#### 5.2 Quorum

- A quorum must always be present at each Committee meeting for the meeting to be valid and all decisions made at the meeting to be valid. The quorum for meetings is three quarters of the total number of Committee members at any given time.

#### 5.3 Conduct of Committee meetings

- Committee confidentiality and solidarity are key ingredients in building trust at Committee meetings. As a rule all Committee meeting proceedings are confidential. At times, there may be occasion to formally declare an issue, a paper and/or a discussion as particularly sensitive and confidential. This should be done by the Chair prior to a Committee meeting and confirmed before the close of the meeting.
- Committee members must respect the right of individuals to express their views freely at Committee meetings without fear of their being named outside the Committee meetings as taking particular positions. As in all similar groups, a sense of trust among Committee members is vital for the wellbeing of the Committee.
- A meeting should close by reviewing actions and deadlines set and noting of the details of the next meeting.

#### 5.4 Disclosure of interests by Committee and working group members

- In accordance with the Eparchy's Conflict of Interest Policy all Committee and working group members must disclose any personal interest which relates, or may relate, to the operations of Safeguarding, in order to ensure that any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest with a duty that the person has on the Committee is identified and appropriately managed.
- When an issue arises at a meeting, relating to such an interest or duty, the member must not attend the meeting while that matter is discussed and must not vote on that or any related matter. The Conflict of Interest Policy must always be complied with by all members of the Committee.

### **6. ENGAGING WITH THE CHURCH COMMUNITY**

The Committee encourages full participation of stakeholders to ensure a high level of engagement and participation by the community and adherence to NCSS

### **7. RECORD KEEPING**

#### 7.1 Documents and Records

- As a minimum, the Chair must ensure the maintenance of the following Committee documents and records:
  - the Eparchial Safeguarding Committee Terms of Reference (this document) and the terms of reference of any working group established by the Committee
  - agenda and minutes of Eparchial Safeguarding Committee and working group meetings
  - a register of the current members of the Committee, and working groups and any Committee members holding key roles
  - a register of interests disclosed by Committee and working group members
  - the Eparchial Safeguarding Committee correspondence file.

#### 7.2 Agenda and minutes

- The minutes of Committee meetings must be recorded in a consistent format and maintained in an appropriate archive system.
- Minutes of meetings should be distributed as soon as possible after the meeting to allow sufficient time for action items to be followed up between meetings.
- The minutes should be approved by the Committee at its next meeting, as an accurate record of the meeting.
- Committee minutes are not public documents.

#### 7.3 Publication of this Terms of Reference

- An up-to-date version of these Terms of Reference must always be available on the Eparchy's website.

### **8. EVALUATING THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

- The Eparchial Safeguarding Committee must undertake an annual evaluation to reflect upon its performance and areas for improvement.



- The Committee must agree to the process to be followed each year and appoint a Committee member to oversee the evaluation process and, if appropriate, take a leadership role in implementing the findings. Each year the Committee should consider whether any improvements to its operation or this Terms of Reference should be recommended.
- The Committee may determine to evaluate all aspects of its work or concentrate on some key areas. Areas for evaluation may include Committee processes such as meeting procedures, planning, communication and the nature and extent of involvement of the Eparchy parishes.

