



Dominican Province of the Assumption
Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands

Code of Conduct

1. Introduction

The Dominican Friars are committed to a Safeguarding Framework and a Code of Conduct that ensures that we uphold the dignity of each person in both our personal and professional relationships within our environment. This Code of Conduct is consistent with the National Catholic Code of Conduct, and the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards.

2. Geographical Application

The Code of Conduct has application throughout the Province of the Assumption (“the Province”) in Australia, New Zealand, Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea.

3. Purpose

The purpose of a Code of Conduct is to have a common understanding of what is expected from us as a community. It expresses our commitment to promoting the recommendations of the Commonwealth of Australia’s Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse as we all have a responsibility to protect and safeguard children and adults at risk.

This document sets out the standards of professional and personal conduct that promote a safe, supportive and harmonious environment for all. We all have a responsibility to protect and safeguard children and adults at risk. A Code of Conduct further reminds us all about our use of personal power and maintaining personal and professional boundaries.

4. Personal and Professional Conduct

All Dominican Friars, employees, and volunteers (“Personnel”) will:

- a) demonstrate personal behaviours that promote respect, care and wellbeing.
- b) respect and maintain appropriate confidentiality and privacy.
- c) be honest and act with integrity and courtesy.
- d) acknowledge and respect people from different cultural and religious traditions.
- e) prevent and respond to unlawful discrimination against other Friars and Personnel and stakeholders.
- f) not engage in bullying, violence, harassment, or victimisation.
- g) understand and comply with all Dominican Friars policies, procedures and supporting documents of the Province.

- h) receive ongoing formation, professional development and support as required.
- i) work with the appropriate authority if a complaint or concern is raised.
- j) take responsibility for seeking supervision and support when needed.
- k) exercise care, responsibility and sound judgement in the performance of their duties.
- l) take reasonable care of the safety and health of themselves and others.
- m) report any instance where they or any others have been treated in a discriminatory or harassing manner.
- n) use the Province's resources economically and ethically.
- o) use all technology and internet in an ethically appropriate manner.
- p) comply with all applicable work health and safety legislation and policies.
- q) not use, possess or distribute offensive materials, including electronically and online in social media forums.
- r) ensure they are not affected by alcohol or other drugs in the performance of their duties.
- s) recognise the limits of their skills and experience, and will not undertake any ministry (such as relationship counselling, counselling for abuse or addictions) that is beyond their competence.
- t) seek advice on how to proceed where their ministry responsibility to one person may conflict with their responsibility to another person to whom they are ministering, or with their own needs.
- u) exercise care and sound judgement before providing pastoral ministry to a person with whom they already have a close personal relationship, such as a friend or member of their family.

5. Child Safeguarding

All Friars and Personnel have a legal, professional and moral obligation to safeguard the safety, welfare and wellbeing of all children and young people with whom they come into contact as part of their ministry or work.

Across the Province, there are different needs and vulnerabilities among people that may make them particularly at risk of abuse, for example the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Australia, those living with disability, those from cultural and linguistic minorities, children and adults who are unable to live at home, and sexual minorities.

All Friars and Personnel must understand and observe child protection legislation and follow all relevant policies, procedures, standards and instructions with regard to the safety of children and young people, and maintain appropriate professional boundaries in their behaviour towards children and young people.

As well as all behaviours identified in section 4, this includes;

- a) not having any type of sexual interaction (whether sexual contact, activity, or behaviour) with a child or young person under the age of 18.
- b) not providing drugs or alcohol to any child or young person under 18.
- c) ensuring that there is no physical contact with children except as is reasonable for liturgical rites or social customs, and is appropriate to their age, maturity, or health, or other circumstances.
- d) not discriminating unjustly against a child due to their gender, race, culture, or disability.
- e) not singling out a particular child or young person repeatedly for attention, either positively (favouritism) or negatively.
- f) not abusing power or influence to get children or young people to do things they would not otherwise do or could be uncomfortable with, or to intimidate, scare or control children or young people.
- g) not making sexually suggestive comments towards or in the presence of children or young people, even in jest.
- h) not carrying out their role with children or young people while under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs.
- i) not using illicit drugs (in the presence of children and young people).
- j) not taking photographs, videos, or recordings of children or young people except in the presence of others.
- k) ensuring that such photographs, videos, or recordings are taken only with the consent of the child or young person and their parent or carer.
- l) ensuring that such photographs, videos, or recordings are transferred as soon as practicable to a storage device or computer drive for the parish or place of ministry and deleted from personal equipment.
- m) not publishing or distributing photographs, videos, or recordings of children and young people, including on social media, without first seeking permission from a parent or guardian.
- n) not publishing or distributing full names or contact details of children without express permission from a parent or guardian.

- o) not interacting with or befriending children or young people via a personal social media account, other personal online account, or via individual text message.
- p) interacting with children or young people only via group text messages, parish or group social media accounts, or messages to parents, and only if necessary.
- q) not posting or publishing any personal information (names, contact details) on any online platforms including social media about children or young people.
- r) not being in a one-to-one private conversation or video conference with a child or young person. If necessary to do so for the performance of duties, ensuring that the interaction takes place in an area of visibility and all communication is appropriately transparent.
- s) not deliberately pursuing interaction or a relationship with a child or young person beyond what is required in the formal role of ministry or work.

6. Adults at Risk

All Friars and Personnel have a legal, professional and moral obligation to safeguard the safety, welfare and wellbeing of adults at risk with whom they come into contact as part of their ministry or work. "Adult at risk" means persons aged 18 years and over who have a vulnerability whether permanent or situational that places them at increased risk of experiencing abuse (See Safeguarding Policy for Definition of Adult at Risk).

All Friars and Personnel must understand, observe and follow all relevant policies, procedures, standards and instructions with regard to the safety of adults at risk and maintain appropriate professional boundaries in their behaviour towards them.

As well as all behaviours identified in section 4, this includes;

- a) not engaging in any sexual contact, activity or behaviour with an adult at risk under any circumstances.
- b) not providing illicit drugs or alcohol to an adult at risk.
- c) ensuring that there is no physical contact with an adult at risk except as is reasonable for liturgical rites or social customs, and is appropriate to their age, maturity, or health, or other circumstances.
- d) not discriminating unjustly against an adult at risk based on stable attributes such as gender, race, culture, or disability.
- e) not singling out a particular adult at risk repeatedly for attention, either positively (favouritism) or negatively.

- f) not abusing power or influence to get adults at risk to do things they would not otherwise do or could be uncomfortable with, or to intimidate, scare or control adults at risk.
- g) not making sexually suggestive comments towards an adult at risk, even in jest.
- h) not carrying out their role with an adult at risk while under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs.
- i) not deliberately pursuing interaction or a relationship with an adult at risk beyond that required for the performance of duties.

7. Conflicts of interest

All Friars and Personnel 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 when Friars and Personnel 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 their duties. This benefit may be financial or non-financial.

To ensure that conflicts of interest are avoided, all Friars and Personnel must:

- a) conduct themselves in a manner which is consistent with Catholic values.
- b) be objective, open and honest, making recommendations or decisions with integrity and accountability and in a way that best serves the mission of the Dominican Friars and is consistent with broader moral and pastoral responsibilities.
- c) declare all private interests (including financial and non-financial) that conflict or may conflict with the discharge of their responsibilities
- d) consult with a colleague or superior in determining the appropriateness of non-cash gifts and hospitality
- e) ensure all decisions are free of bias or apparent bias
- f) behave with integrity and impartiality
- g) ensure all processes where there is the risk of a conflict of interest are transparent and documented.

8. Compliance

All Friars and Personnel must act lawfully and comply with all legislative, contractual and industrial requirements. This includes compliance with all reasonable and lawful directions and compliance with this Code of Conduct.

9. Breaches of Code of Conduct

Breaches of this Code of Conduct should be referred to the Provincial, who is to respond to any matters which relate to serious misconduct with concern for justice and the wellbeing for all involved.

Breaching the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary proceedings up to and including dismissal (with or without notice) and possible criminal proceedings. This may impact on the individual's ability to work with children and/or adults at risk in the future. For Dominican Friars, breaching the Code of Conduct may lead to them being removed from ministry and dispensed from their vows or dismissed from the clerical state, as applicable.

Where a complaint about the sexual abuse of a child or adult by clergy or religious is substantiated under a civil standard, the Dominican Friars will undertake a risk management process to determine the appropriate action, in keeping with Church protocols. Where a cleric or religious is convicted of a canonical offence relating to sexual abuse, they will be prohibited from exercising ministry until the process for imposing a penalty is completed by the relevant dicastery.

10. Responsibility and Implementation

The Provincial and the Provincial Council is responsible for the implementation of this Code of Conduct. Friars and Personnel have further responsibilities regarding the reporting of concerning conduct that are outlined in the Safeguarding Policy and the Dominican Friars Complaint Handling Policy.

11. Reporting Requirements

All Friars and Personnel will comply with all requirements to report concerns about the safety of children or adults at risk to police and other relevant regulatory authorities, as required by legislation. To ensure the Dominican Friars can fulfil these reporting requirements, Friars and Personnel must report any concerns about the safety of children or adults at risk to the relevant authority as soon as practical, as detailed in the Dominican Friars Complaint Handling Policy.

12. Working Environment

Friars and Personnel are expected to create a fair, welcoming and safe working environment, where unlawful discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation in any form are considered unacceptable.

13. Related Documents of the Dominican Friars

- Safeguarding Commitment Statement
- Safeguarding Policy

- Complaint Handling Policy

Signed acknowledgement of acceptance of the Code of Conduct

I agree to abide by this Code of Conduct during my role with the Dominican Friars	
I understand that breaches of this Code of Conduct may lead to disciplinary action, including dismissal, and/or criminal proceedings.	
Signed:	
Name:	
Priory of assignation:	
Superior:	
Date:	

DOCUMENT CONTROL

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