

STANDARD 1

CREATING AND MAINTAINING SAFE ENVIRONMENTS GUIDANCE FOR INDICATOR 1.1

1.1A Guidance on Safe Recruitment Procedures

The Church authority acknowledges that safe care starts with the appointment of suitably qualified, skilled and vetted personnel who have the desired competencies and skills to carry out their function in an effective, efficient and safe manner. Whoever is employed by the Church, either in a pastoral or voluntary role, must be recruited safely and deemed suitable for the role that they are being asked to undertake.

Safe recruitment means that the Church authority will ensure that:

- All reasonable steps are taken to ensure that the Church eliminates applicants who might pose a risk to children;
- Those engaged in the recruitment process are suitably trained and experienced to undertake this task;
- The Church's recruitment procedures are transparent, adhere to best practice and comply with the rules of natural justice, appropriate record-keeping and human resource management;
- The Church is committed to the policy of inclusion and equality.

Appointment procedures (clerics/religious)

For clerics/religious who are part of the Church body in which they are ministering, the following procedure must be completed. All priests and religious should have gone through a formation programme that should include safeguarding children. In addition to this, the Church authority must ensure the following takes place prior to any appointment:

- Ensuring the cleric or religious signs the agreement form to following the Church's policy and child safeguarding standards;
- Requiring the cleric/religious to sign a declaration form stating that there is no reason why they would be considered unsuitable to work with children (Guidance 1.1A Template 3);
- Requiring the cleric/religious to undergo relevant vetting/clearance procedures (Guidance 1.1B);
- Ensuring the volunteer is inducted in the Church's child safeguarding policy (Guidance 5.1A) and that they agree to follow the policy and the procedures of their Church body by signing two agreement forms (Guidance 5.1A Template 1 and Guidance 5.1A Template 2);
- Ensuring the volunteer agrees to work within the Church body's code of behaviour (Guidance 1.2A);
- Ensuring that the cleric/religious attends training, in particular child safeguarding training detailed under Standard 5: Training and Support for Keeping Children Safe.

If a cleric or religious is not part of the Church body and applies for a voluntary or paid role within the Church body, they must follow the recruitment procedures for paid or voluntary staff. If the cleric or religious is visiting the Church body and is seeking to minister, the procedures outlined in Guidance 1.1C must be followed.

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Recruitment procedures (paid staff)

The following procedures apply to the process of all appointments. It should be noted that these procedures do not affect the applicant's rights under the relevant employment legislation.

- Use a recruitment and selection checklist to ensure that effective practices are followed (1.1A Template 1).
- Use an application form, including reference requests (1.1A Template 2).
- Interview applicants to discuss their application form. This interview will include applicants being advised of their responsibilities towards children, and assessment of their suitability will include an awareness of child protection and safe care practices.
- Interview boards will be comprised of experienced and qualified personnel with a proven ability to draw out and explore the information that the candidate has included on their application form.
- All paperwork associated with the application process should be kept in accordance with record storage policy (Appendix B). All references, reports and communications in respect of the applicant should be in writing, and access to them will only be available to appropriate personnel within the Church. Candidates will be advised that their application and the follow-up process of recruitment will be dealt with in the strictest confidence.
- The successful applicant will be offered a position subject to:
 - a. Suitable references (1.1A Template 4);
 - b. Signing a declaration form (1.1A Template 3);
 - c. Proof of qualifications, where applicable;
 - d. Relevant vetting/clearance procedures (Guidance 1.1B);
 - e. Positive proof of identification.
- It should be noted that any lay person who is coming to work or volunteer in Ireland, who worked or volunteered in another country for more than one year, must provide a certificate of police clearance from the country or countries in which they have lived for a year or more, prior to coming to Ireland. Advice and support in obtaining a police clearance certificate can be found at www.fingerscan.ca and also at www.coru.ie/en/registration/police_clearance.

Once appointed, the following elements are critical:

- Ensure probationary periods are served, where appropriate;
- Ensure that the member of Church personnel is inducted in the Church's child safeguarding policy (Guidance 5.1A) and that they agree to follow the policy and the procedures of their Church body by signing an agreement form (Guidance 5.1A Template 1);
- Ensure professional support, supervision and appraisals are offered to Church personnel, where appropriate (Guidance 5.6A);
- Provide ongoing training to Church personnel, in particular child safeguarding training detailed under Standard 5: Training and Support for Keeping Children Safe.

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Recruitment procedures (volunteers)

Reasonable steps should be taken to ensure that all volunteers who work with children in the Church are assessed as 'safe'. This includes conducting the following procedures for all volunteers:

- Vetting through the Garda Vetting Bureau/AccessNI (Guidance 1.1B). It should be noted that any lay person who is coming to work or volunteer in Ireland, who worked or volunteered in another country for more than one year, must provide a certificate of police clearance from the country or countries in which they have lived for a year or more, prior to coming to Ireland. Advice and support in obtaining a police clearance certificate can be found at www.fingerscan.ca and also at www.coru.ie/en/registration/police_clearance;
- Requiring the volunteer to sign a declaration form stating that there is no reason why they would be considered unsuitable to work with children (Guidance 1.1A Template 3);
- Ensuring the volunteer is inducted in the Church's child safeguarding policy (Guidance 5.1A) and that they agree to follow the policy and the procedures of their Church body by signing an agreement form (Guidance 5.1A Template 1);
- Ensuring the volunteer agrees to work within the Church body's code of behaviour (Guidance 1.2A);
- Ensuring the volunteer agrees to report all safeguarding concerns to the DLP of the Church body (Standard 2).