



## Protocol: Dealing with volunteers and contractors

*This protocol provides a summary of the requirements for engaging volunteers and contractors who will or are expected to have contact with children in the course of their activities in the relevant parish or agency. It also outlines the Archdiocese's expectations of employees, volunteers and religious appointees.*

*This protocol also applies to students on placement.*

### Key obligation

Child protection obligations at parishes and agencies apply to volunteers and contractors as well as employees, clergy and religious Brothers and Sisters.

## 1 Engaging volunteers

### 1.1 Screening

- a) All volunteers must be screened in accordance with **Protocol: Screening of persons who work with children**.
- b) If a volunteer who requires a Working with Children Check to be engaged in a particular position is not cleared to work with children, they cannot be engaged in that position.

### 1.2 Induction and training

- a) Once they have been engaged, volunteers must undertake child protection induction and/or training in the **Parish and Agency Child Protection Manual** and sign the **Code of Conduct for Working with Children**.
- b) Induction must be provided to all volunteers who will, or are expected to, have contact with children in the course of their activities in the relevant parish or agency, regardless of whether they are required to be screened under the **Protocol: Screening of persons who work with children**.
- c) The same applies for the **Code of Conduct for Working with Children**, which must be read and signed by all volunteers who will, or are expected to, have contact with children in the course of their activities in the relevant parish or agency, regardless of whether they are required to be screened.
- d) The induction for volunteers should be similar to the induction for new staff. If the volunteer will only have limited contact with children, the induction need not be as extensive as for new staff.
- e) Volunteers should also be invited to attend staff child protection refresher training at the relevant parish or agency.

### 1.3 Compliance with child protection requirements

- a) Volunteers are expected to comply with the Parish and Agency Child Protection Manual, in particular requirements regarding reporting child protection concerns.
- b) Reports of inappropriate conduct by volunteers must be reported to the:
  - i) NSW Police if they constitute reportable crimes – see **Protocol: Reporting reportable crimes to the NSW Police**; and/or
  - ii) relevant Parish Priest (or administrator) or agency head, who must inform the Vicar General.
- c) Volunteers are considered “employees” under the *Ombudsman Act 1974* (NSW). Accordingly, the Vicar General will then determine whether the conduct is also reportable to the NSW Ombudsman under **Protocol: Reporting inappropriate employee conduct to the NSW Ombudsman**.
- d) The Vicar General may also determine that it is appropriate to report the volunteer’s conduct to the Department of Family and Community Services (**FaCS**) under **Protocol: Reporting a child at risk of significant harm to the Department of Family and Community Services**.

## 2 Engaging contractors

### 2.1 Engagement of contractors generally

- a) First and foremost, the Archdiocese’s rules and policies for engaging contractors apply before any child protection requirements are considered.
- b) A number of the Archdiocese’s pro forma agreements contain a child protection clause.
- c) All contractors must sign on and sign off when attending a parish or agency to provide services.

### 2.2 Screening

- a) Self-employed contractors must be screened in accordance with **Protocol: Screening of persons who work with children**.
- b) If a self-employed contractor who requires a Working with Children Check to be engaged to provide particular services is not cleared to work with children, they cannot be engaged to provide those services.
- c) Contractor companies are responsible for screening their own workers. The Archdiocese’s relevant standard contracts require those contractors to undertake that they have complied with their screening obligations.

### 2.3 Induction and training

- a) Once they have been engaged, contractors must undertake child protection induction and/or training in the **Parish and Agency Child Protection Manual** and sign the **Code of Conduct for Working with Children**.
- b) Induction must be provided to all contractors who will, or are expected to, have contact with children in the course of their activities in the relevant

parish or agency, regardless of whether they are required to be screened under the **Protocol: Screening of persons who work with children**.

- c) The same applies for the **Code of Conduct for Working with Children**, which must be read and signed by all contractors who will, or are expected to, have contact with children in the course of their activities in the relevant parish or agency, regardless of whether they are required to be screened.
- d) The induction should provide contractors with an overview of child protection issues, with a focus on rules for appropriate contact with children, and be provided at the same time as work health and safety induction.

#### 2.4 Compliance with child protection requirements

- a) Contractors are expected to comply with the Parish and Agency Child Protection Manual, in particular requirements regarding reporting child protection concerns.
- b) Reports of inappropriate conduct by contractors must be reported to the:
  - i) NSW Police if they constitute reportable crimes – see **Protocol: Reporting reportable crimes to the NSW Police**; and/or
  - ii) relevant Parish Priest (or administrator) or agency head, who must inform the Vicar General.
- c) Contractors are considered “employees” under the *Ombudsman Act 1974* (NSW). Accordingly, the Vicar General will then determine whether the contractor’s inappropriate conduct is also be reportable to the NSW Ombudsman under **Protocol: Reporting inappropriate employee conduct to the NSW Ombudsman**.
- d) The Vicar General may also determine that it is appropriate to report the contractor’s conduct to the Department of Family and Community Services (FaCS) under **Protocol: Reporting a child at risk of significant harm to the Department of Family and Community Services**.