

Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Edmonton

Safe Environment Policy

Policy Statement

The Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Edmonton is committed to providing a safe pastoral environment which is free from abuse for all of those to whom we minister, especially those who are the most vulnerable.

- Vulnerable persons include children, youth, the elderly, and all those who for any reason are not able to fully represent themselves or protect themselves from harm.
- Abuse is any physical, verbal, emotional, spiritual or sexual behaviour which causes a person to fear for his or her physical safety, and psychological, emotional and spiritual well-being.¹
- Financial abuse is the theft or misuse, for personal or private gain, of church money or property, which are also considered vulnerable entities.

Intent of Policy

- To provide clear directives in order to establish and maintain a safe pastoral environment which is free from abuse.
- To provide clear directives to respond to allegations of abuse within the Eparchy of Edmonton.

Responsible Ministry

All parish and eparchial individuals providing ministry, including all clergy, religious, seminarians, laity, employees and volunteers, will:

- undergo **Volunteer and Employee Screening** according to eparchial procedures to determine their suitability for ministry and/or employment
- sign a **Covenant of Care**, thereby committing to follow all safe environment procedures, including adherence to the **Code of Pastoral Conduct**.

High Risk Ministry

Some parish and eparchial volunteers and employees will hold a position of trust and work in high-risk ministries.

- A **high-risk ministry** is one that involves vulnerable persons or entities (children, youth, the elderly, parish finances, among others) and where abuse is more likely to take place.

¹ CCCB *Protecting Minors* p 144.

For example, Sunday School teachers, Extraordinary Eucharistic Ministers, keyholders, parish treasurers, youth ministers, etc. are all in high risk ministries.

- A **general risk ministry** is that ministry that does not involve vulnerable persons or parish finances.

In addition to the above requirements, all volunteers in high-risk ministries as well as all eparchial and parish employees will:

- provide references prior to volunteering or employment
- provide a clear **Police Information Check (PIC)** and **Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC)** specific to their ministry within the parish or eparchy every four years
- sign an **Annual Attestation**, confirming that the clear status of their PIC/VSC has not changed during the time before an updated PIC/VSC is required
- participate in **Safe Environment Training**

Safe Environments Training

Safe Environments Training teaches us how to identify abuse, not only in our Church, but also in our families and communities. Safe Environment Training sets standards of appropriate behaviour so that non-appropriate behaviour is easily noticeable and can be addressed immediately. It teaches us when and how to report abuse to church and civil authorities.

Safe Environment Training is mandatory for:

- all priests, deacons, sub-deacons, lectors, women and men religious, and monastics
- all parish and eparchial employees and keyholders
- all volunteers in a high-risk ministry involving youth and children, as well as pastoral care ministries to hospitals, care centres, nursing homes, private homes, etc.
- all volunteers in a leadership role or those responsible for any parish or eparchial organization or committee, including all parish and eparchial Pastoral/Finance Council members, Volunteer Screening Coordinators and all presidents of parish and eparchial organizations such as UCBC, UCWLC, UCY, K of C, Centralia

Reporting Abuse

The Eparchy of Edmonton will respond swiftly and compassionately to allegations of abuse within the church, provide assistance to those in need of healing and reconciliation, and take any and all means to prevent a future occurrence of abuse.

To report abuse, contact Eparchial Safe Environment Coordinator at 780 424 5496 or chancery@eeparchy.com or www.eeparchy.com.

Care and Healing

The Eparchy of Edmonton is committed to spiritual care and healing by ensuring that:

- those who bring forth allegations of abuse are treated with dignity and respect
- spiritual care, counselling and support are made available to victims of abuse
- the good reputation and the privacy of all persons involved are protected

Resources

Government of Alberta "Abuse and Bullying," <https://www.alberta.ca/abuse-bullying.aspx>

Canadian Centre for Child Protection, www.protectchildren.ca

Alberta Elder Abuse Awareness Council, www.albertaelderabuse.ca

CCCB Protecting Minors from Sexual Abuse: A Call to the Catholic Faithful in Canada for Healing, Reconciliation, and Transformation,
https://www.cccb.ca/site/images/stories/pdf/Protecting_Minors_2018.pdf

Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, <http://www.protectionofminors.va>