

# Code of Pastoral Conduct

## Policy Statement

Those who minister as clergy, employees and volunteers on behalf of the Eparchy of Edmonton must conduct themselves in a manner that upholds Christian values and behaviour.

## Intent of Policy

To provide clear standards of behaviour for those who minister in the Church in order to create safe and respectful Church communities and responsible, healthy ministerial relationships.

## Procedure

### General Expectations

1. All clergy, employees and volunteers will confirm in writing their adherence to this Code of Pastoral Conduct by signing the Eparchy of Edmonton's Covenant of Care.
2. All clergy, employees and volunteers are responsible to maintain their own personal, spiritual, physical and psychological health and are expected to maintain good hygiene, proper appearance and wear clean, modest and appropriate clothing.
3. Clergy, employees and volunteers assume the full burden of responsibility for adherence to the Code of Pastoral Conduct and for establishing and maintaining clear, appropriate and respectful physical, emotional and social boundaries in all ministerial relationships and situations, especially those involving minors and vulnerable adults.
4. All clergy, employees and volunteers are expected to provide ministry that is free of physical, sexual, psychological, verbal, written or electronic harassment, misconduct or abuse, including bullying, grooming or any other exploitative behaviours inappropriate to the ministerial relationship.
5. Clergy, employees and volunteers must not:
  - a) use alcohol and/or cannabis when in active ministry and/or working with youth or vulnerable adults
  - b) possess or use illegal drugs at any time
  - c) possess or distribute child pornography
6. All clergy, staff and volunteers in a position of trust or who are involved in a ministerial relationship where ministry is conducted via any form of electronic communication will

also govern themselves in compliance with the Eparchy of Edmonton's Electronic Communication and Technology Policy.

## 7. **Physical Boundaries**

- a) Appropriate physical contact includes, but are not limited to:
- Shoulder to shoulder hugs, pats on the shoulder or back
  - Handshakes, high fives/hard fives
  - Verbal praise
  - Holding hands while walking with small children or during prayer
  - Pats on the head when culturally appropriate.
- b) Inappropriate/prohibited forms of physical contact include, but are not limited to:
- Kisses on the mouth, lengthy/inappropriate embraces
  - Holding minors on one's lap
  - Touching a person's private parts, knees or thighs as a sign of affection
  - Showing physical displays of affection in isolated areas
  - Sleeping in the same bed as a minor/vulnerable person
  - Wrestling with, tickling or giving massages or piggyback rides to a minor
  - Any display of unwanted affection
  - Compliments relating to sexual attractiveness or sexual development P4

## **Minors and Vulnerable Adults**

8. Two qualified adults who have been screened and trained for ministry within the Eparchy of Edmonton must be present for all Church sponsored activities, programs, transport and/or pastoral care outreach that involve minors or vulnerable adults. The two qualified adults must not be related. However, qualified adults who are related may minister together in this regard as long as there are other qualified adults present.
9. When ministering to minors or vulnerable adults, the following must be observed:
- a) programs, activities and ministry must occur in appropriate areas of Church property that are open to public view
- b) two qualified adults always must be present
- c) windows in doors should never be covered and/or doors should be left open during the Sacrament of Confession - the confessor and penitent must be clearly visible, as through clear glass in confessional doors, or as in open areas, such as in front of the iconostasis
- d) in all cases, the supervision must be reasonably adequate to ensure the safety and well-being of the minors and/or vulnerable persons present

10. Clergy, employees and volunteers should avoid being alone with a minor or vulnerable adult in a private residence, sleeping facility, locker room, rest room, dressing facility, or other closed room or area that is inappropriate to a ministerial relationship.
11. Off-site or overnight activities with minors must be solely for the purposes of an organized group program and held in a public area, with at least two qualified adults and for which parents have given written permission on the Parent Consent Form.
12. Clergy, employees and volunteers must sleep in separate areas from minors or vulnerable adults on over-night activities. Church personnel are not to share private overnight accommodations with individual minors or vulnerable adults.
13. In cases where minors or vulnerable persons may be in a state of undress, such as in a dorm room or bathroom, two qualified adults must be present to supervise. Access to such places is limited to those who are authorized for ministry. Other staff members, volunteers and parents are not permitted to enter these areas while in they are in active use. Under no circumstances is anyone allowed to take a photo or video in areas where minors or adults may be changing clothes.
14. No clergy, employee or volunteer is permitted to take personal trips or vacations with a minor or vulnerable adult whose relationship has been established through a Church ministry.
15. Clergy, employees and volunteers should not help children with toileting or diapering. Girls and boys must not change together, and adults must change separately from minors.
16. Clergy, employees and volunteers shall not engage in corporal punishment of minors or vulnerable adults in their care.
17. Clergy, employees and volunteers will not dispense medications to minors without written consent from a parent or legal guardian.
18. All allegations of harassment, misconduct or abuse (i.e., sexual abuse, grooming, bullying, etc.) must be taken seriously and reported to the appropriate person in charge (i.e., pastor or program administrator) who will then report it to the Pastoral Centre.

19. Those who learn information indicating clear and imminent danger to a minor or vulnerable adult, including the sexual, physical, emotional abuse or neglect of a minor, must take the allegations seriously and report first to the proper civil authorities, including the police, as required by the Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act, as well as to the appropriate person in charge (i.e., pastor or program administrator) who will then report it to the Pastoral Centre. P6
  
20. All clergy, employees and volunteers must report their own ethical or professional misconduct and the misconduct of others to their immediate supervisor.