

Code of Conduct of the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan

Scope

The *Code of Conduct of the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan* applies to all members of the clergy, all paid employees of the Archdiocese and its parishes, and all volunteers in ministries of the Archdiocese and its parishes.

Our Values

As a local faith community of the Catholic Church, the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan upholds and promotes the values expressed in the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the teachings and laws of the Catholic Church. These include, but are not limited to:

- Serving others in love, humility and sacrifice
- Respecting the dignity and well-being of every person
- Acting in justice and charity in every situation and relationship

Our Code

The principal elements of the *Code of Conduct of the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan* are: Accountability, Confidentiality, Respectful Attitudes, and Protection of Vulnerable People.

- **Accountability**
 - Adhere to the published policies of the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan and, if applicable, the parish where you serve.
 - Comply with the elements of orientation and training provided to you for carrying out your ministry.
 - Act always with integrity and take responsibility for your actions and words.
 - Respect the hierarchy of the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan.
 - Follow the chain of reporting for your position.
 - Do not exceed the authority of your position.
- **Confidentiality**
 - Respect and maintain the confidentiality of any personal information you gain through your position.
 - Respect and maintain the confidentiality of information related to the business and operation decisions of the parish and/or the Archdiocese gained through your position.
- **Respectful Attitudes and Behaviours**
 - Abuse of any kind is strictly prohibited.
 - Harassment of any kind, including personal (physical and verbal), sexual, and cyber, is strictly prohibited.
 - Personal harassment means any kind of discriminatory conduct, whether physical or verbal, directed at an individual and causes that individual substantial distress.

- Sexual harassment means any conduct, comment, gesture or contact of a sexual nature directed at an individual and is unwanted and/or unwelcome.
 - Cyber harassment is using technological means of communication to direct sexual or discriminatory words, gestures, or images at an individual that causes that individual substantial distress.
- Bullying of any kind, including verbal, physical and cyber, is strictly prohibited. Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance.
 - Verbal bullying is the use of words and language to intimidate an individual in order to force him or her to do what you want.
 - Physical bullying is the use of physical force or coercion against an individual in order to force him or her to do what you want.
 - Cyber bullying is the use of technological means of communication in a threatening or an exploitative way against an individual in order to force him or her to do what you want.
- Mishandling and/or misappropriation of temporal goods (i.e. money and property) of the Church is strictly prohibited.

- **Protection of Vulnerable People**

- **One-on-one meetings (e.g. counselling, reconciliation, education activities, home visits)**

- **Children and adolescents**

It is prohibited for one, unrelated, adult to be alone with a child or an adolescent when serving in or at an activity of a parish or the Archdiocese. There must always be two, unrelated adults present for any ministry to a single child or adolescent.

- **Vulnerable adults**

It is recommended that there always be two adults, preferably unrelated, present for any ministry that involves a single, vulnerable adult.

- **If ministry requires one-on-one for effectiveness or confidentiality reasons**

If it is essential to serve a child, adolescent, or vulnerable adult one-on-one, then it must be done in a location that is entirely visible to other people. For example, in an open space but off to one corner; in a room with glass doors and/or window; if for the purposes of confession, a traditional confessional may be used, as long as the priest and penitent are entirely separated by a physical barrier.

- **Group activities and events**

- **Children and adolescents**

In activities that involve groups of children and/or adolescents, there should always be two adults present, preferably unrelated, to offer instruction or supervision. These two adults must always be visible to one another during the activity or event. See **Section 8**

of the *Policy Manual* for Codes of Conduct that are specific to youth activities and events.

- **Vulnerable adults**

In ministry activities involving groups of vulnerable adults, there should be two adults present, preferably unrelated.

- **Sacramental Preparation**

The preparation of children for the celebration of the Sacraments of first Reconciliation, first Communion, and Confirmation is to be done in a group format, with at least two unrelated adults present. One-on-one instruction for children and adolescents is never permitted. The two adults must always be visible to one another.

- **Liturgy of the Word with Children (“Sunday School”)**

The Liturgy of the Word with Children during Sunday Mass is always to be conducted by at least two adults. It is preferred that the adults be unrelated to each other, but that may not always be possible in smaller communities. The two adults must always be visible to one another.

- **Other catechetical and recreational programs for children and adolescents**

Two unrelated adults are to be present for all recreational and catechetical programs.

***Specifically for Clergy**

The indefensible conduct of clergy across Canada and around the world that has been made public in recent decades makes it imperative that the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan spells out the prohibited behaviours for its priests and deacons.

- **Sacrament of Reconciliation**

The celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation is always to be done in (a) a room which is open to the view of others, through a window or glass-paneled door; or, (b) in a traditional confessional where the priest and penitent are completely separated by a physical barrier.

The location of Reconciliation rooms and confessionals is to be in a high traffic area of the church building. Any new construction or renovation of Reconciliation rooms is to provide for clear glass openings, either as windows or in doors.

- **Prohibition on guests in living quarters**

Under no circumstances is a priest or deacon to use his living space, whether attached to or separate from the parish office or church, to host a child, adolescent or vulnerable adult, whether individually or in groups.

- **Prohibition on travelling**

Under no circumstances is a priest or deacon to travel with a child, children, an adolescent or adolescents or a vulnerable adult or adults, without the parent or legal guardian present.

- **Prohibition on gifts**

Under no circumstances is a priest or deacon to give expensive gifts to or accept expensive gifts from children, adolescents or vulnerable adults.

- **Displays of affection**

Priests and deacons are strongly discouraged from engaging in physical displays of affection with children, adolescents and vulnerable adults.