



St Vincent de Paul Society
(TASMANIA) INC

good works

Safeguarding of Children and Adults at Risk Policy

Version 1.0

11 February 2023

Table of Contents

1	Introduction	2
1.1	<i>Policy Introduction</i>	2
2	Definitions	3
3	Policy Statement	4
3.1	<i>Commitment</i>	4
3.2	<i>Intent of this Policy</i>	5
3.3	<i>Scope</i>	5
3.4	<i>Responsibilities</i>	5
3.5	<i>The Society’s International Work and Overseas Development Program</i>	6
3.6	<i>Capture, Storage and Publication of Photographs, Videos and Interviews for use on the Society’s Website, Social Media Platforms and Other Publications</i>	7
3.7	<i>Managing and Safeguarding Risk</i>	8
4	Reporting of Incidents	9
5	Complaints Management	11
6	Privacy and Data Protection	12
7	Policy Administration	13
8	Related Policies	14
	Appendix A Authorisations	15
	Appendix B Preparation of Policy Document	16
	Attachment 1	17
	Attachment 2	19

1 Introduction

1.1 Policy Introduction

The St Vincent de Paul Society National Council of Australia requires each State Council, each Council's incorporated body and any subsidiary entity to have safeguarding policies and procedures in place ensuring that all Society members, volunteers, and employees follow the Society's safeguarding policies that apply to them. Compliance with the legal requirements applying to safeguarding policies and procedures in each state and territory is the responsibility of the relevant state or territory council. The St Vincent de Paul Society (Tasmania) safeguarding policy is a cornerstone of the organisational culture of providing a safe and secure environment for children and adults at risk when they come into contact with the Society in Tasmania.

This document sets out the policy and guidelines that St Vincent de Paul Society (Tasmania) Inc. uses to ensure the legislative obligations for safeguarding of children and adults at risk are met.

2 Definitions

Within this policy and all related governance documents, the following definitions apply:

Abuse, neglect, or exploitation means all forms of physical and emotional and psychological abuse, exploitation, coercion or ill-treatment. This might include, for example:

- sexual harassment, grooming, bullying or abuse;
- any kind of sexual criminal offences;
- threats of, or actual, violence, verbal, emotional or social abuse;
- cultural or identity abuse, such as racial, sexual or gender-based discrimination or hate crime;
- coercion and exploitation;
- failure to provide basic necessities; and/or
- abuse of power.

Adult at risk means any person 18 years or over who is at increased risk of experiencing neglect, harm, or exploitation. This might include, for example:

- age;
- gender;
- disability;
- mental or physical illness;
- socio-economic circumstances;
- linguistic skills; and/or
- other circumstances that make that adult vulnerable to neglect, harm or exploitation.

Child/children means any person or persons under the age of 18.

Child/person-centric approach means commencing from a position of considering and lawfully prioritising the needs, right and wishes of children and adults at risk that have been impacted by any incident of abuse, neglect or exploitation.

National Council (National Association) means the superior Council of the Society in Australia.

Overseas Development Program means the work undertaken with partners of the International Confederation of the Society of St Vincent de Paul to carry out the good works of the Society. The Overseas Development Program's good works include the following initiatives:

- Twinning and Grants
- Projects
- Humanitarian Assistance; and
- Assist A Student.

Society means the *St Vincent de Paul Society (Tas) Inc.* which is an incorporated entity under the Associations Incorporated Act 1964 (TAS).

3 Policy Statement

3.1 Commitment

The Society commits to protecting the safety and wellbeing of all children and adults at risk who come into contact with the Society in Tasmania. It has zero tolerance for abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

It takes a child/person-centric approach in all it does when responding to any allegation of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

The Society's commitment means that at every level of the Society, all people, regardless of their age, gender, race, religious beliefs, disability, sexual orientation, or family or social background, have equal rights to protection from abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

Serving some of the most vulnerable people in communities through relationships of trust and respect is at the heart of the Society's Vincentian mission. The safety of those interacting with the Society and the inclusion of children and adults at risk in participating in decisions that affect them is central to the Society. The Society supports the participation of children and adults at risk by valuing, listening, and respecting them.

The Society is responsible for operating under policies and procedures which are written according to the relevant jurisdictions' laws and regulations. National Council ensures national consistency through the adoption of the Commonwealth's National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and National Catholic Safeguarding Standards.

Safeguarding Children

The Society describes a child as any person under the age of 18 years. Children are vulnerable persons.

All members of the Society, whether they have direct or indirect contact with children, will ensure the safety of all children is at the centre of every decision made by the Society.

The safety of children and their participation, and their legal guardian's participation, in decisions that affect them, is critical and is a responsibility of all people that are engaged by the Society in Tasmania.

Safeguarding Adults at Risk

The Society describes an adult at risk as any person 18 years or over who is at increased risk of experiencing neglect, harm or exploitation. This may be due to age, gender, disability, mental health challenges, physical illness, socio-economic circumstances, linguistic skills, or other circumstances that make that adult vulnerable to abuse, neglect or exploitation.

All members of the Society, whether they have direct or indirect contact with adults at risk, will ensure the safety of adults at risk is at the centre of every decision made by the Society.

The safety of adults at risk and their participation, and where applicable, their legal guardian's participation, in decisions that affect them, is critical and is a responsibility of all people that are engaged by the Society in Tasmania.

3.2 Intent of this Policy

The intent of this policy is:

- to protect all children and adults at risk who come into contact with the Society, its employees and volunteers;
- to support a positive and effective Vincentian culture towards safeguarding in Australia and internationally;
- to define the key terms used when talking about protecting or safeguarding children and adults at risk;
- to define the specific roles and responsibilities of the Society for managing safeguarding
- to define the Society's practices for managing safeguarding risks; and
- to prescribe the procedures for the appropriate management of incidents.

3.3 Scope

This policy applies to members of the Society and Society representatives.

3.4 Responsibilities

The Society will:

- oversee the protection of all children and adults at risk who come into contact with the Society in Tasmania;
- ensure there are appropriate and effective ways for the Society to do this;
- require the Society to observe all relevant laws relating to child abuse and safeguarding; and
- require the Society to take a zero tolerance and child/person-centric approach towards safeguarding.

The National Association's Chief Executive Officer is the National Council's Safeguarding Officer.
The Society's Chief Executive Officer is the Society Council's Safeguarding Officer.

The Society's Chief Executive Officer will:

- assist State Council with its safeguarding responsibilities;
- ensure the Society has effective and appropriate ways to manage safeguarding of children and adults at risk;
- ensure the Society, its employees and volunteers complies with applicable child abuse and safeguarding laws;
- ensure at all times the Society takes reasonable steps for maintaining and promoting safeguarding;
- take a zero tolerance and child/person-centric approach when responding to and managing any report of abuse, neglect, or exploitation;
- ensure all State Council representatives, members, employees and volunteers are aware of relevant laws, policies and procedures and applicable Codes of Conduct;

- facilitate regular safeguarding training for State Council representatives, members and Society employees, and volunteers;
- coordinate Australian Federal Police checks and where required Working with Vulnerable People (or equivalent) checks for all new State Council representatives, members, employees and volunteers before their commencement, prior to undertaking Society activities in Tasmania, prior to engaging in international work, or prior to being delegated as a representative under the Overseas Development Program; and
- facilitate the confidential storage of documents relating to any reports of misconduct of State Council, members, employees, volunteers and representatives of the Association.

Members of State Council, Members, employees and Volunteers:

- engage with the Society's Chief Executive Officer to follow all due diligence checks and understand their obligations regarding safeguarding;
- adhere to relevant local legislative requirements applicable when undertaking Society activities;
- undertake regular safeguarding training;
- undergo Australian Federal Police and Working with Vulnerable People (or equivalent) checks applicable to Tasmania; and
- report any allegations or incidents of harm or potential harm towards children and adults at risk who come into contact with the Society by following safeguarding policy, procedures and statutory requirements of the jurisdiction in which the allegation or incident occurred.

3.5 The Society's International Work and Overseas Development Program

Good Work Undertaken by Members of National Council, Society members and Representatives of the Association

All persons representing National Council, the International Council General or the Association overseas will put the safety and the wellbeing of children and adults at risk at the centre of their work including in situ overseas and electronic communications such as phone calls, e-mail, text messages and social media platforms.

Overseas Visits

Members of National Council, National Council representatives and Society members may be required to undertake international travel and to work in partnership with international constituents to conduct good works.

All approved travellers will adhere to the Society's safeguarding policy and National Council's Travel Policy and Overseas Visits Policy. Approved travellers should be aware of the [Commonwealth Criminal Code Act 1995](#), which states it is a crime for Australians to travel overseas to engage in, encourage or benefit from sexual activity with children (under 16 years of age).

Approved travellers are required to undergo due diligence checks before undertaking travel. The National Association's Chief Executive Officer facilitates these checks.

National Council requires all approved representatives of international partners visiting Australia to comply with this policy and adhere to relevant safeguarding laws and regulations when visiting or working with representatives in Australia. National Council will make this policy available to

international partners and will provide support to non-English speaking partners in understanding this policy.

Overseas Development Program – Good Works Undertaken by Delegated Representatives

National Council manages the Society in Australia's Overseas Development Program.

The work undertaken within the Overseas Development Program is also conducted by state and territory representatives of the Society. These representatives are delegated by National Council to conduct the Society's good works internationally and will put the safety of children and adults at risk at the centre of their work.

Delegated representatives will put the safety of children and adults at risk at the centre of their work when communicating with international partner constituents, including face to face communications and when communicating electronically using phone calls, e-mail, text messages or social media platforms.

As part of undertaking work under the Overseas Development Program, delegated representatives may require access to the National Association's Overseas Programs' Database. Access to the National Association's Overseas Programs' database requires the delegated representatives to complete applicable due diligence checks in consultation with the National Association's Chief Executive Officer.

National Council will make this policy available to international partners and will provide support to non- English-speaking partners in understanding this policy.

3.6 Capture, Storage and Publication of Photographs, Videos and Interviews for use on the Society's Website, Social Media Platforms and Other Publications

1. The Society will at all times portray children and adults at risk in a respectful and appropriate way.
2. The Society is responsible for managing the Society's website, social media platforms and publications. The website, social media platforms and publications often contain images, videos, interviews and stories of individuals who have been supported by the Society, to promote the Society's work including fundraising and public awareness campaigns.
3. The Society will seek consent from individuals, or where appropriate their legal guardian, before taking photographs, videos or conducting interviews. Consent will be gained by using the consent form available at **Attachment 1**.
4. The Society will clearly outline the intended use of the images, videos, and interviews. All images, videos, interviews and appropriate consent are stored securely in accordance with this Privacy Policy. Individuals can revoke their consent at any time, by using the contact details below.
5. In accordance with National Council's Safeguarding of Children and Adults at Risk Policy, images, videos and interviews of children and adults at risk are generally captured in a way to avoid the possibility of identifying the subjects, or this is achieved through post-production processes. Similarly, written stories focused on these subjects generally do not provide information, such as names or locations, that could be used to identify the individuals involved.
6. Where a person has agreed to their identity being used in advocacy or other initiatives of

the Society, this agreement is explicitly documented, in accordance with the above policy.

7. The Society engages with partner organisations to promote the work of the Society and its mission. Where images and videos are included in this work, the Society will ensure that the above-noted consent is in place.

3.7 Managing and Safeguarding Risk

The Society manages the risks associated with the safeguarding of children and adults at risk by adopting the following approaches:

- Following the law – the Society will ensure that it understands and complies with the law in everything it does, in all jurisdictions in which it works including when conducting work of the Society locally and internationally.
- Being proactive – The Society will proactively work to identify, prevent, detect, and take action on incidents, including reporting incidents to the appropriate statutory authority.
- Risk-based approach – The Society will regularly assess the risks to people in its operations and develop controls to mitigate those risks.
- Adopting a child/person-centric approach to safeguarding practices – The Society will put people at the heart of its approach to safeguarding and take a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, neglect or exploitation of children and adults at risk.

When preparing risk assessments for the delivery of any National Council or Society program or activity that will impact children and or adults at risk, safeguarding risks will be captured using the National Council's Risk Management Framework. Identified risks will have mitigation strategies implemented.

4 Reporting of Incidents

If a person believes that another person is at risk of immediate harm or the victim of a criminal offence, they must dial 000 to notify local Police.

Representatives of the Society will:

- report all suspected, perceived, potential or actual incidents of abuse, neglect or exploitation of children and adults at risk to the Society's Chief Executive Officer; and
- cooperate with the Society's Chief Executive Officer to actively manage incidents promptly, honestly and fairly at all times.

If you have any concerns about **your safety** or the **safety of a child or young person**, you must report it immediately.

- **Contact 000 for urgent police or medical help if a child is at immediate risk of harm.**
- **Contact the [Strong Families, Safe Kids Advice and Referral Line on 1800 000 123](#) or make an online notification**
- **Call police on [131 444](#) if you have any information about child sexual abuse.**
- If your concerns relate to a school, you should report them to your teacher or the school principal.
- Any incidents of suspected, perceived, potential or actual incidents of abuse, neglect and exploitation must be reported to the Society's Chief Executive Officer through the Safeguarding Incident Form at **Attachment 2**.

The Tasmanian State reporting requirements are based on the [National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#) are our benchmark and [the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#).

The safeguarding policy for Tasmania is available at [Safeguarding Children and Young People - The Department for Education, Children and Young People Tasmania \(decyp.tas.gov.au\)](#).

The Society's Whistleblower Policy applies to members, volunteers and employees of the who make a report regarding the conduct of another representative of the Society. Whistleblower protection legislation also applies within Australia.

Reporting Requirements for Incidents Occurring at National Council Facilitated Programs or Activities

Any incidents of suspected, perceived, potential or actual incidents of abuse, neglect and exploitation that occur at a National Council Facilitated Program or Activity, whether in Australia or overseas, must be reported to the Association's Chief Executive Officer, through the National Council [Safeguarding Incident Form](#) available from the St Vincent de Paul Society national website.

The form and all associated records and papers will be permanently retained and stored in a secure confidential file held by the National Association's Chief Executive Officer in accordance with National Council's Privacy Policy.

Any incidents of suspected, perceived, potential or actual incident of abuse, neglect and exploitation conducted by members of National Council will be assessed by the National Association's Chief Executive Officer who will determine in their absolute discretion whether the incident should result in:

- the incident being reported to the Police and relevant statutory authority in the state or

territory where the suspected, perceived, potential or actual incident occurred; and

- disciplinary action which may include the member of National Council being stood down while an investigation takes place or dismissal.

5 Complaints Management

A member of the public can lodge complaints regarding the conduct of any member, volunteer or employee of the Society in relation to the safeguarding of children and adults at risk. The Society's Complaints Management Policy is available on the Society's website.

6 Privacy and Data Protection

National Council will protect personal information in line with the National Council Privacy Policy. The Society will publish and update this Policy on its website (www.vinnietas.org.au) and will make available a copy of the policy on request.

7 Policy Administration

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

8 Related Policies

National Council policies and procedures

- National Council Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy
- Whistleblower Policy
- National Council Safeguarding Incident Form
- Overseas Partnerships Program Policy
- Overseas Partnerships Program Compliance Procedures
- National Council Travel Policy
- Overseas Visits Policy

Society policies and procedures

- Complaints Management Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Whistleblower Policy
- Safeguarding Incident Form
- Consent Form

Appendix A Authorisations

Document Name:

Privacy Policy

Prepared by: Les Baxter
Chief Operating Officer

Signature:



Date:

29/03/2023

Approved by: Heather Kent
Chief Executive Officer

Signature:



Date:

29/03/2023

Authorised by: Corey McGrath
President, St Vincent de Paul Society (Tasmania) Inc

Signature:



Date:

29/03/2023

Appendix B Preparation of Policy Document

Change History

Version	Date	Revision Description	Author
1.00	January 2023	Version 1.0	Les Baxter

Review History

Version	Scheduled Review Date	Review Date	CEO	President State Council

Attachment 1

CONSENT FORM FOR USE OF INTERVIEWS, PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEO

8.1.2 BACKGROUND

The St Vincent de Paul Society (Tasmania) Inc. (The Society) and in conjunction with others, produces publications and administers public awareness campaigns to:

- increase public and stakeholder awareness of our mission, programs and services
- advocate for outcomes associated with our mission.

For the above purposes, the Society produces and distributes a range of promotional materials, including:

- external and internal publications, such as updates, newsletters and magazines
- corporate publications, such as annual reports and fact sheets
- online publications, such as websites and social media presences
- television, print, radio and online media segments or advertisements.

The Society's privacy policy is available at www.vinniestas.org.au/privacy and contains information about how to access and correct personal information and how you may complain about a breach of your privacy.

The copyright in images used for these purposes, rests with the Society.

8.1.3 CONSENT

I give permission for images in which I/my child/the children of whom I act as the guardian appear and are used by the Society for public relations purposes.

In particular, I note that this may include images or video being used in the above print and electronic publications.

I give permission for video interviews to be transcribed and used in print and electronic publications noted above.

I understand that the Society will not be accountable should overseas recipients of these images breach Australian privacy laws and that I will not be able to seek redress under the Australian Privacy Act.

I have read and understand this notice, and consent to the collection, use and disclosure of my image, including disclosure to overseas recipients, as outlined above.

I understand this consent is valid in perpetuity. I acknowledge I am able to revoke my consent by contacting media@svdp.org.au.

I acknowledge that Society may continue to hold my/our images after this date and may use them for archival or documentary purposes after this consent has expired.

Signed _____

Dated _____

SHOOT INFORMATION SHOOT

Date _____

Image Details _____

PHOTOGRAPHER

Name _____

Number _____

Email _____

Signature _____

APPROVALS

Name of Subject(s)/Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

Attachment 2

THE SOCIETY'S SAFEGUARDING INCIDENT FORM

CONFIDENTIAL WHEN COMPLETED

SAFEGUARDING INCIDENT RESPONSE FORM

If a person believes that another person is at risk of immediate harm or the victim of a criminal offence, they must dial 000 to notify local Police.

SCOPE

Safeguarding is the responsibility of all members, volunteers and employees of the Society in Australia.

In accordance with Society's Safeguarding of Children and Adults at Risk Policy, members, volunteers and employees of Society must report any incidents of suspected, perceived, potential or actual incidents of abuse, neglect and exploitation towards children and vulnerable people to Society's Chief Executive Officer.

This form must be completed by members, volunteers and employees of the Society and where any incidents of suspected, perceived, potential or actual incidents of abuse, neglect and exploitation occur at a National Council Facilitated Activity or Program.

NOTICE

The following related National Council policies apply:

- Safeguarding of Children and Adults at Risk

The Society's Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy applies to all members, volunteers and employees of the Society.

- Privacy Policy

In accordance with the Society's Privacy Policy, the Society will protect personal information in accordance with the Australian Privacy Principles which are set out in the **Privacy Act 1988** (Cth).

All information contained in this form will be treated sensitively and will be stored in accordance with the Society's Privacy Policy and will be permanently retained by the Society's Chief Executive Officer.

- Whistleblower Protection Policy

The Society's Whistleblower Policy applies to members, volunteers and employees of the Society who make a report regarding the conduct of another representative of the Society. Whistleblower protection legislation also applies within Australia.

Details of Person Completing the Incident Response Plan

Date:	
Name:	
Position:	
Location of Work:	
State/Territory:	
Contact Number:	
Have Police been notified?	

Incident Type

- Sexual Harassment
- Threats of Violence
- Verbal/Psychological Abuse
- Coercion
- Cultural, gender or sexual based discrimination
- Other (please specify):
- Sexual Criminal Offences
- Physical Abuse
- Abuse of Power
- Exploitation
- Neglect

Incident Details

Date/s:	
Time/s:	
Location/s:	
State/Territory:	

Persons Involved

Person 1

Description of Involvement:	
Name:	
Position:	
Usual Location of Work:	

Person 2

Description of Involvement:	
Name:	
Position:	
Usual Location of Work:	

Person 3

Description of Involvement:	
Name:	
Position:	
Usual Location of Work:	

Incident Details

Please attach any supporting documents to this form

Name:			
Signature		Date:	

**CONFIDENTIAL WHEN
COMPLETED**