



ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY CANBERRA/GOULBURN SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE CHARTER

1. Structure

- 1.1** The Safeguarding Committee (Committee) is a committee of the Board of the St Vincent de Paul Society Canberra Goulburn (the Society). This charter governs the meetings and proceedings of the Committee.
- 1.2** Nothing in this charter limits any of the powers or responsibilities of the Board or the Board President (the President).
- 1.3** The Committee's work is supported by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and his or her nominees, principally the Safeguarding Coordinator.

2. Safeguarding

Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults to protect them from harm. Safeguarding means: protecting children and the vulnerable from abuse and maltreatment, preventing harm to children's health or development and ensuring children and the vulnerable grow up with the provision of safe and effective care. A culture of Safeguarding must be deeply embedded into beliefs and operation of the St Vincent de Paul Society.

3. General Purpose

The Safeguarding Standing Committee ('the Committee') is an advisory body of the Board ('the Board') with oversight from the Canberra Goulburn Territory Council of the Society of St Vincent de Paul. The Committee promotes safe environments for children and young people and vulnerable people working and volunteering with, and receiving support from, the St Vincent de Paul Society within the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn.

4. Committee responsibilities

The scope of the Committee includes:

- 4.1** Providing advice on and monitoring compliance with the Society's Safeguarding Framework

As requested by the Canberra Goulburn Board or Territory Council, the Committee will:

- (i) provide advice on all matters relating to safeguarding;
- (ii) develop and regularly review safeguarding policies and procedures, in consultation with the Board and the Council;
- (iii) oversee complaints handling procedures in response to safeguarding matters;
- (iv) monitor compliance with the national safeguarding framework, state and federal law and the Catholic National Catholic Safeguarding Standards as amended from time to time.

4.2 Developing and implementing the St Vincent de Paul Society Safeguarding Framework

As requested by the Board in consultation with Council, the Committee will:

- (i) support the development and implementation of the St Vincent de Paul Society Safeguarding Plan which outlines the monitoring and continual improvement of child safeguarding practices.
- (ii) monitor compliance with the St Vincent de Paul Society Safeguarding Framework of all operations delivered within the Archdiocese Canberra Goulburn in the name of the Society;
- (iii) support and liaise with other state and territory councils to implement the St Vincent de Paul Society Safeguarding Framework.

4.3 Ensuring compliance with the National Redress Scheme ('the Scheme')

As requested by the Board, the Committee will:

- (i) oversee the Society's involvement in the Scheme in collaboration with St Vincent de Paul Society National Redress Scheme Limited;
- (ii) work in collaboration with St Vincent de Paul Society National Redress Scheme Limited to monitor the compliance of the Board with the requirements of the Scheme.

In fulfilling this scope, the Committee will ensure adherence to, and faithful interpretation of, the Statutes of the Society, the Rule of the St Vincent de Paul Society and the civil and canon laws and other relevant legal sources for the work of the Society.

5. Exercise of Powers

5.1 The Committee must exercise the powers delegated to it in accordance with any directions, strategies, objectives, or policies of the Board; and

5.2 Recommendations by the Committee, where the Committee has no delegated power, shall not be binding on the Society unless they are appropriately approved by the Board.

6. Composition of the Committee

6.1 The Board Chair or their delegate will be the Chair of the Committee.

6.2 The Board Chair will appoint an employee as Safeguarding Co Ordinator to advise the Committee.

6.3 The Board Chair will appoint the members of the Committee who will consist of up to three (3) members drawn from persons with qualifications and/or experience in safeguarding and the membership and works of the Society.

6.4 Membership will lapse when the term of office of the Committee Chair ceases. Members can indicate their willingness to be reappointed for up to 4 years.

6.5 The Committee can co-opt experts, as appropriate, with the approval of the Board.

6.6 While the CEO and Director Community Engagement and Youth, are not officially members of the Committee and do not vote, they will be available to attend meetings as requested.

6.7 Secretarial support will be provided by the Secretariat of the Society or other delegate approved by the Board. This person will not be an official member of the Committee.

7. Access to Management

The Committee, in performing its functions, may:

- 7.1 Request any employee of the Society to attend a meeting of the Committee.
- 7.2 To the extent permitted by law, access any document, report, material, or information in the possession of the employee or external adviser to the Society; and
- 7.3 Have direct access to executive management of the Society.
- 7.4 Receive advice from the Executive Leadership Team to comply with the implementation of the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards and associated compliance requirements;

8. Access to independent advice

- 8.1 The Committee may engage external consultants and advisers where the Committee considers this necessary in order to respond to matters referred to it;
- 8.2 The engagement of external parties identified at (i) is subject to the prior allocation of moneys from the Board to cover these expenses;
- 8.3 The engagement of external consultants or advisers shall ordinarily be managed by the Chief Executive Officer.

9. Meetings

- 9.1 The Committee shall meet at least four times a year or more frequently as circumstances dictate.
- 9.2 Meetings shall either be face to face or via teams or a combination of both as considered appropriate to meet the Committee's needs; and
- 9.3 Any member of the Committee can request a meeting to be convened.
- 9.4 The Chair of the Committee in conjunction with the Safeguarding Coordinator shall be responsible for preparing the Agenda for meetings of the Standing Committee.

10. Quorum

- 10.1 At least fifty percent plus one of the members present in person or by using technology, shall constitute a quorum. A quorum must be present for the full duration of the meetings of the Committee.

11. Attendance at Meetings

- 11.1 The CEO and Director of Community Engagement and Youth Programs, or their delegates, may attend all meetings of the Committee, other than those meetings or parts of Committee meetings which are deemed to be closed to management; these positions are Advisers with no voting rights.
- 11.2 Other employees may be asked to attend should the Committee believe it requires such attendance; and
- 11.3 The Chairperson of the Board may attend any meetings called by the Committee and participate in its deliberations.

12. Confidentiality

- 12.1 Committee members, and employees of the company and advisers are required to keep all matters pertaining to deliberations of the Committee confidential.

13. Committee Papers

- 13.1 Committee papers shall be prepared by the Secretariat in conjunction with the Committee Chair and shall be distributed at least five working days prior to any Committee meeting. The content of the papers shall be agreed upon by the Committee Chair prior to dispatch.

14. Committee Minutes

- 14.1 The Secretary shall prepare minutes of meetings and have them approved by the Committee Chair. A summary of the Minutes are also be provided to the next meeting of the Board for noting/information.