

CODE OF CONDUCT



INSTITUTE OF
SISTERS *of* MERCY
OF AUSTRALIA & PAPUA NEW GUINEA

November 2021

INTRODUCTION

The Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea (ISMAPNG) is a religious order of Catholic women. The mission of ISMAPNG is to advance the reign of God in a contemporary world.

In carrying out its mission, ISMAPNG partners with employees, contractors, associates and volunteers.

Sisters of the Institute and others who choose to be involved with it are expected to respect the Gospel of Jesus and to appreciate the founding inspiration of Venerable Catherine McAuley.

ISMAPNG affirms the fundamental Christian belief that God, in whose image every person is created, is the source of human dignity. It wants to encourage practices that reflect this belief.

This Code of Conduct (Code) promotes attitudes and behaviours, as well as practices in the delivery of professional services, that are consistent with ISMAPNG's deep values and the teachings of the Catholic Church.

The Code is founded on a set of commitments, each of equal importance. It does not attempt to list every aspect of those commitments.

The Code applies to all sisters wherever they are at any time. It applies to others while they are engaged in the work of ISMAPNG.

In these times, when Australian Church agencies are wishing to comply with the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, this Code of Conduct has particular relevance.

All individuals are accountable for their own conduct, but any breaches of the Code have implications for ISMAPNG as a whole.

If the Code is breached by an individual, the person to whom she or he is immediately accountable will take action appropriate to the nature of the breach and appropriate to the individual's status and role within ISMAPNG.



Please read the Code carefully and sign below to confirm your acceptance. This is your personal copy. The formal acceptance form will be handed to you at the training session and is to be signed and given to the trainer or returned to your Community Leader/Manager.

I, _____
(full name)

agree that I have read and understood the Code of Conduct and will behave in accordance with it. I will attend training to develop a deeper understanding and appreciation of my Code of Conduct responsibilities.

(signature)

(date)

It is important that you:

Know your responsibilities: familiarise yourself with the Code, attend training information sessions and ask questions if you are unsure.

Speak up: if you do or see something you believe is not right, speak to your Community Leader, Manager, Human Resources, or a member of the Institute Leadership Team.

Understand the potential consequences: which may include responding to breaches through remedial education, counselling, warnings, suspension, restrictions, termination and official reports to police and other statutory agencies as required.

COMMITMENTS

1. I commit to behaving respectfully, justly, honestly and with integrity.

2. I commit to creating a supportive, safe and caring environment.

3. I commit to safeguarding all people, particularly children and vulnerable people.

4. I commit to acting within the law, carefully, diligently and as a good steward of resources.

1 I COMMIT TO BEHAVING **RESPECTFULLY, JUSTLY, HONESTLY AND WITH INTEGRITY**

I support the values of Compassion, Hospitality, Respect and Justice and I demonstrate these in my relationships with all people.

I acknowledge the inherent value of every member of the Earth community.

I treat others with courtesy and am appropriate in my relationships with them.

I listen attentively to all, including those who may not be of the same mind or faith as I am.

I recognise the strength and value in diversity of thought and experience.

I display compassion and generosity of spirit.

I am fair in all my interactions with others.

Consequently

I do not behave in a manner inconsistent with the stated values of ISMAPNG.

I do not dismiss a person's opinions or beliefs.

I do not talk about others in a disrespectful or inappropriate way.

I do not engage in illegal or disreputable activities.

I do not engage in behaviour that seeks to diminish or embarrass a person.

I do not make decisions or take actions that may harm ISMAPNG in any way.

2 I COMMIT TO CREATING A **SUPPORTIVE, SAFE AND CARING ENVIRONMENT**

I prioritise and take reasonable actions to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of myself and all people I encounter.

I ensure that my behaviour is consistent with my commitment to respect all people and uphold the work of ISMAPNG.

I promote a culture of safety and maintain a safe environment, free from hazards and risks.

I foster right relationships with those with whom I interact.

I search for ways to improve ISMAPNG's environmental sustainability.

Consequently

I do not tolerate harassment, discrimination, bullying or any disrespectful behaviours or language, especially in relation to race, culture, age, gender, disability, religion, sexuality or political views.

I do not shame, humiliate, oppress, belittle or degrade any person.

I do not engage in any form of physical, psychological or emotional behaviour that could be considered inappropriate, wrong or unsafe.

I do not ignore hazards and risks which may harm me or others.

I do not intentionally waste resources.

3 I COMMIT TO **SAFEGUARDING** ALL PEOPLE, PARTICULARLY CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE PEOPLE

I ensure that all people, particularly children and vulnerable people are treated with respect and have their rights protected.

I act appropriately with children, vulnerable people and others with whom I come into contact, including maintaining boundaries, using appropriate language and tone.

I act according to acceptable standards of physical and sexual contact at all times.

I communicate respectfully with and about all people, particularly children and vulnerable people.

Consequently

I do not engage in activities with any person that are likely to be physically or emotionally harmful.

I do not use physical action or threats of physical action as punishment.

I do not develop “special” relationships with children or vulnerable people for my own gratification.

I do not initiate unnecessary physical contact with individuals or do things of a personal nature for them that they can do for themselves.

I will not be alone with a child or vulnerable person unnecessarily or in an inappropriate context.

I do not use any means, including online contact or text messaging, to make inappropriate contact with any person, particularly children or vulnerable people.

I do not engage in any inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature with children or vulnerable people.

I do not photograph or video children or vulnerable people without consent of parents or guardians.

4 I COMMIT TO ACTING WITHIN THE LAW, CAREFULLY, DILIGENTLY AND AS A GOOD STEWARD OF RESOURCES

I comply with the law, respect the privacy of others, and am a good steward of the Mercy heritage, assets and reputation.

I take my legal responsibilities seriously and strive to maintain the highest levels of compliance with relevant authorities.

I maintain confidentiality and discretion and protect the privacy of people's personal information.

I strive to ensure my ministry or work is consistently conducted in accordance with professional standards.

I meet my obligations to report suspected wrong doing, including conduct which is not consistent with this Code.

I comply with reasonable and lawful instructions, whether or not I personally agree with them.

I take appropriate action to avoid actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest.

I comply with all ISMAPNG Policies where applicable.

I use social media and public forums in ways that are acceptable to ISMAPNG.

Consequently

I do not misuse my position for personal or financial advantage.

I do not engage in ministries or activities for which I have inadequate experience or qualifications.

I do not personally solicit gifts, rewards or other benefits.

I do not intentionally commit any unlawful or illegal act.

I do not divulge confidential information to those who have no need or right to know it.

I do not engage in conduct that may harm ISMAPNG in any way.

Glossary of Terms:

Adults at risk: any person aged 8 years and above who is or may be unable to take care of themselves, or is unable to protect themselves against harm or exploitation by reason of age, illness, trauma or disability, or any other reason.

Child or Children: any person under the age of 18 years.

Culture of Safety: a culture that places a high level of importance on safety beliefs, attitudes and values – and these are shared by the majority of people.

Diversity: celebrating differences and valuing everyone of all cultures with particular sensitivity to indigenous people and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Engaged in the work of ISMAPNG: any person, whether paid or unpaid, involved with the mission of ISMAPNG. This may include religious, employees, contractors, associates, volunteers and others.

Hazards and Risks: a hazard is something that can cause harm whilst a risk is the probability that the hazard will cause harm.

Earth Community: the interconnected diversity of cultures and life forms which call Earth home and have a shared reliance on Earth's life support systems.

Environment: the surroundings or conditions in which a person lives or operates.

Right Relationships: good, healthy working relationship appropriate to the person based on trust, mutual respect, diversity and open communication.

Safeguarding: the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and vulnerable people and protect them from harm.

'Special' Relationship: providing inappropriate preferential treatment to a child or vulnerable person.

Vulnerable Person or Vulnerable People: any person or people aged 18 years and above who is or may be unable to take care of themselves, or is unable to protect themselves against harm or exploitation by reason of age, illness, trauma or disability, or any other reason.

Complementary Policies and Related Documents:

Compliance Policy

Conflict of Interest Policy

Integrity in the Service of the Church

Integrity in Ministry

Pastoral Care for Survivors Policy

Privacy Policy

Protocols for Right Relationships in Ministry (PNG)

Safeguarding Policy

Sustainable Living Policy

Workplace Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy

Workplace Health and Safety Policy

Note: this Code of Conduct is to be read and understood along with each ministry's Code of Conduct or comparable document.



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