

Archdiocese of Dublin

Policy and Procedures for Garda Vetting



A useful guide and answers to
frequently asked questions

Policy and Procedures for Garda Vetting

This Policy and Procedures document sets out the arrangements for Garda Vetting for:

- Diocesan Offices,
- Diocesan Agencies,
- Parishes,
- Clergy and religious within the Diocese,
- Primary Schools,
- Staff and volunteers of other organisations who use the Diocesan Garda Vetting Service.

Contact details

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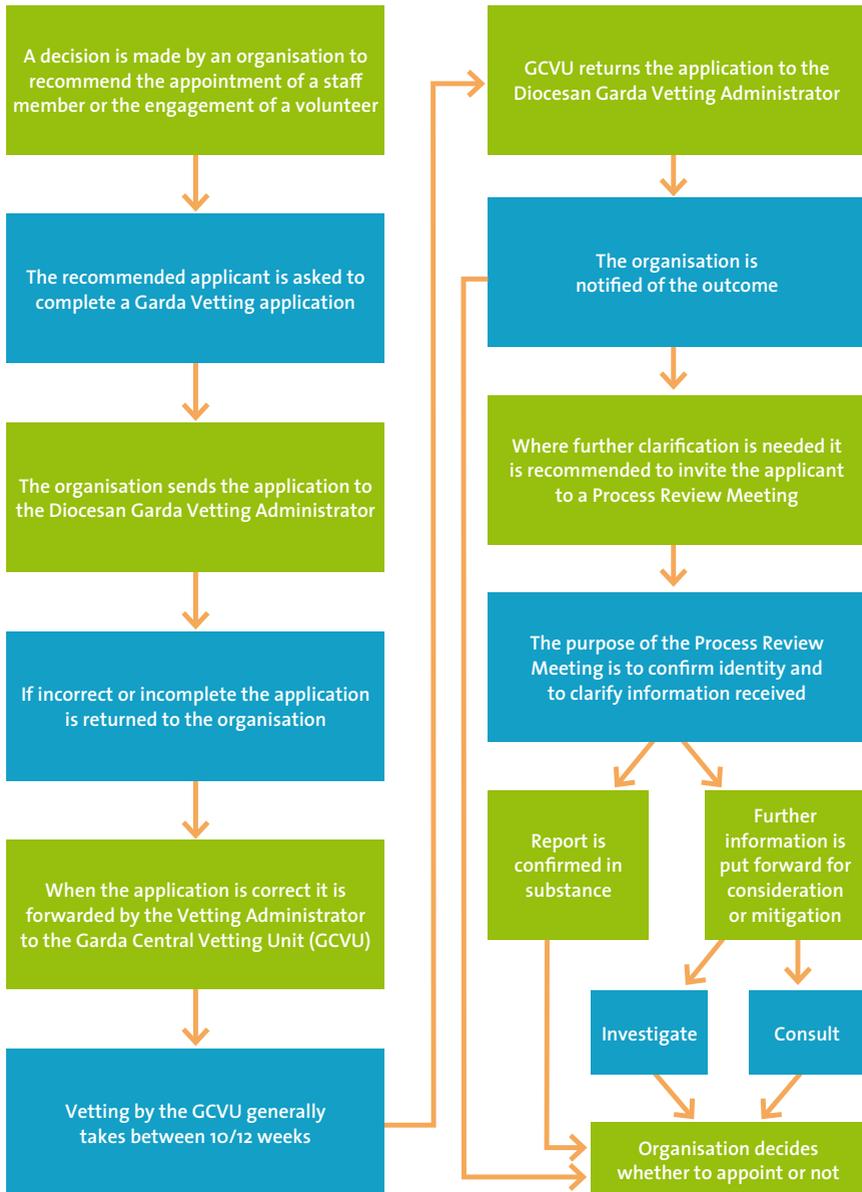
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Summary of Vetting Process



Introduction

The Archdiocese of Dublin is committed to the highest standards of professional practice in its recruitment processes. It is committed to ensuring that all people who are employed or are volunteers within the Archdiocese act according to the highest standards in all aspects of their roles and responsibilities.

This document outlines the Diocesan Policy and Procedures in relation to Garda Vetting.

Garda Vetting in Dublin Archdiocese

Garda Vetting is one component of a good practice recruitment framework which includes such practices as verification of identity, gathering of personal details, interview and references. Garda Vetting is provided to the Archdiocese by the Garda Central Vetting Unit [GCVU].

Children form an integral part of the Christian Community. So also do staff members, agency volunteers and parish voluntary lay faithful (e.g. Ministers of the Eucharist, Parish Council Members, Church Readers, Sacristans and Parish Child Protection Representatives).

Garda Vetting is one among a range of safeguards and not necessarily the most important one. However, it acts as a deterrent to those who are a danger to children and vulnerable adults from using the Church to get access to them. It is good practice to require everyone to complete the application before they start work or act as a volunteer. If people have to commence work or volunteering before their vetting application has been processed, they should, as an interim measure, be asked to sign a Declaration Form (available on the Child Safeguarding and Protection Service website, www.csps.dublindioocese.ie and there is a sample on page 22) and to sign their agreement to adhere to the parish or agency's child protection policy. Their contact with children or vulnerable adults should be closely supervised until the Garda Vetting process is complete.

Garda Vetting in Parishes

The Archdiocese of Dublin supports the principle that Church personnel who have contact with children and vulnerable adults should undergo Garda Vetting. Every role potentially involves contact with children and/or vulnerable adults, and irrespective of the degree of such contact, the Diocese requires all who are employed or who engage in volunteer ministry or works of service for the Christian community to undergo

Garda Vetting as an expression of our common commitment to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

Persons being appointed to positions of any duration must be vetted prior to commencing employment unless they have already been vetted through the Diocesan Vetting Administrator during the same or previous calendar year.

Other persons (non-staff members) such as volunteers, sports and activities coordinators, etc. must be vetted unless they have already been vetted within the previous five years.

Garda Vetting in Primary Schools

Primary schools must follow the Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures as issued by the Department of Education and Skills (DES). Schools are also required to adhere to procedures detailed in Circulars which may be issued from time to time by the DES.

Proper recruitment procedures are an essential element of child protection practice. Vetting forms part of the procedures which must be followed when recruiting teachers or ancillary staff.

All persons being appointed to teaching positions of any duration must be vetted prior to commencing employment unless they have already been vetted during the same or previous calendar year. This requirement includes teachers who are changing employment to other schools. Teachers who are not changing employers but are returning to work after a leave of absence of two years or more must also be vetted. Applications should be submitted to the Teaching Council.

Persons being appointed to non-teaching positions of any duration must be vetted prior to commencing employment unless they have already been vetted through the Diocesan Vetting Administrator during the same or previous calendar year. The requirement for vetting also applies to those changing employment to other schools or those who are not changing employers but are returning to work after a leave of absence of two years or more. Applications should be submitted to the Diocesan Vetting Administrator.

Other persons (non-staff members) such as volunteers, sports coaches, those involved in extracurricular activities, external tutors etc. that have or may have unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults must be vetted unless they have already been vetted within the previous five years. Vetting of these people should, where possible, be done by the relevant sporting, voluntary or community organisation. For all other cases applications should be submitted to the Diocesan Vetting Administrator.

The school contact person liaises with the Diocesan Vetting Administrator regarding vetting for non-teaching staff and other non-staff members/volunteers. The school

contact person will usually be the Chairperson of the Board of Management or the School Principal.

Any person who refuses to be vetted cannot be appointed or engaged by the school in any capacity including in a voluntary role.

As an additional safeguard, the child protection related Statutory Declaration and Form of Undertaking (Appendix 2 Circular 63/2010) must be provided by all persons being appointed to teaching and non-teaching positions of any duration. A Statutory Declaration and/or Form of Undertaking (specific to the employing school authority) is deemed valid if completed in the same or previous calendar year. The documents are available from the Department of Education and Skills.

Providing Garda Vetting

Garda Vetting is provided by the Garda Central Vetting Unit through the Diocesan Garda Vetting Service to the following:

- Diocesan Offices;
- Diocesan Agencies - Crosscare and Accord;
- Clergy and Religious holding Diocesan appointments;
- The parishes of the Archdiocese with respect to clergy, staff, volunteers, students on placement or others who may be using parish facilities;
- The primary schools within the Archdiocese in respect of ancillary staff, sports coaches, volunteers, those involved in extracurricular activities, external tutors etc. (Vetting of teachers is provided by the Teaching Council);
- Staff and volunteers in other organisations who are subject to this policy.

For the purposes of this document all references to “Applicant” include clergy, staff members, volunteers, lay faithful and students on placement. Where “relevant information” is mentioned it refers to all convictions/events disclosed by GCVU (Garda Central Vetting Unit).

Vetting Process within Dublin Archdiocese

Legal responsibility for employment and duty of care remains with the organisation¹ which enters into a contract of employment or engages an applicant:

- The applicant is asked to complete a Garda Vetting application (a standard form given to him/her by the relevant organisation). It is the responsibility of the

¹ Organisation refers to any Diocesan Office, Diocesan Agency, Parish, School or other subject to this policy.

organisation hiring or engaging to ensure that the information relating to the applicant is properly completed on the application.

- The application is forwarded by the organisation to the Diocesan Garda Vetting Administrator who will enter it into the Diocesan Database and examine it for any omissions, mistakes or lack of clarity.
- Any incomplete application is dated and returned to the organisation with a cover letter requesting the application's correction and resubmission. Changes cannot be made other than by the applicant on the authorised application.
- As soon as possible, the Administrator forwards the application to the GCVU, either singly or in batches.
- Applications are returned to the Garda Vetting Administrator (usually between 10-12 weeks). However, it is not uncommon for some applications to take considerably longer. The organisation is informed of the outcome by the Garda Vetting Administrator.
- Where the returned application contains relevant information² to the employment/engagement of the applicant, the organisation must consider seriously whether or not a Process Review Meeting is appropriate (see next section).
- Support and advice is available from the Diocesan Garda Vetting Service, based in Holy Cross Diocesan Centre, Clonliffe College, Dublin 3, Telephone: 01 808 7593.

In accordance with best practice, Garda Vetting should be sought in respect of each applicant prior to the offer of employment/engagement and approximately every 5 years thereafter, or at any time or times within the said 5 year period as deemed appropriate by the organisation.

Applicants should be informed early of the requirement for Garda Vetting and if possible at the advertising stage.

² Relevant information refers to convictions/events disclosed by Garda.

Recommended procedures following the receipt of information from the Garda Central Vetting Unit

1. Consideration of holding a Process Review Meeting

The Gardaí provide the organisation with details of all prosecutions, successful or not, pending or completed, and/ or convictions.

No Process Review Meeting is required where none of the above are identified on an application.

Consideration for a Process Review Meeting will occur when an application is returned from the GCVU with relevant information attached. The organisation should clarify any information received from the GCVU with the applicant.

If the information received gives rise to concern, a Process Review Meeting is strongly recommended. Advice can be sought from the Diocesan HR Manager (or agency HR Director) in relation to holding a Process Review Meeting. Principals/Chairpersons of Boards of Management of primary schools should seek the advice of the Diocesan Director of Education.

2. The Process Review Meeting

In the event that a Process Review Meeting is to be held please note the following:

- It is the organisation who will arrange the meeting. Support can be provided by a Diocesan Representative. Appropriate decision makers and support personnel if required should attend.
- The applicant is invited to attend and to bring someone along as a support if he/she wishes.
- The meeting has two purposes, firstly to clarify the applicant's identity and secondly to give the applicant an opportunity to discuss his/her application in the light of the information received from the GCVU. The applicant must provide proof of his/her identity.
- A discussion then takes place following which a decision will be made. The discussion is for clarification purposes so that all information required to make a recruitment decision is accurate. A written record will be kept of the meeting.
- An applicant who asserts that his/her Garda Vetting Disclosure may be inaccurate must provide satisfactory evidence to support his/her assertion.

- If the applicant provides satisfactory evidence to support his/her assertion that his/her Garda Vetting Disclosure may be inaccurate, the Garda Vetting Administrator will contact the Garda Central Vetting Unit with the information, and any other information as deemed necessary. The Garda Central Vetting Unit will conduct further checks required in respect of the applicant and write back to the Garda Vetting Administrator who will communicate the response to the organisation.

3. Risk Assessment Guidelines

A conviction, prosecution or case pending will not necessarily prevent an applicant from being considered for employment/engagement.

The decision-making process is fundamentally to assess the suitability of an applicant. Any information which arises from the Garda Vetting process may influence the decision of the organisation to offer employment/engagement.

The following criteria will be considered (this list is not exhaustive):

- The nature of any convictions
- The number of any convictions
- The frequency of any convictions
- The post for which the applicant is seeking employment/engagement
- The self disclosure of the conviction/case pending by the applicant
- Time lapse since last conviction
- The steps the applicant has taken to prevent reoffending

4. Relevant Legislation

Relevant legislation refers to convictions relating to the following legislation in Ireland and elsewhere. Legislation from other jurisdictions will, in some cases, bar the applicant from the outset. In the interest of fairness, however, the organisation should consider whether the applicant should be asked to attend a Process Review Meeting before a final decision is made. Examples of the legislation that may affect employment/volunteering decisions is given hereunder:

- The Child Care Acts 1991 to 2007
- Adoption Act 2010
- Domestic Violence Act 1996 to 2002

Non-Fatal Offences against the Person Act, 1997, as amended; Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998 as amended; Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, as

amended; Children Acts 2001 to 2007; Sex Offenders Act 2001, as amended; Common Law Offences relating to murder, manslaughter, rape etc.

- Criminal Justice Act, 2006, as amended
- Illegal Immigrant Trafficking Act 2000, as amended

Offences against the Person Act, 1861, as amended; Criminal Law (Rape) Acts, 1981 and 1990; Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Acts, 1885 to 1993; Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act, 2006, as amended; Child Trafficking and Pornography Act, 1998 to 2004; Punishment of Incest Act, 1908, as amended; Sexual Offences (Jurisdiction) Act, 1996, as amended; Offences against the State Acts, 1939 to 1998; Criminal Justice (Terrorist Offences) Act, 2005, as amended; Misuse of Drugs Acts, 1977 to 2007; Criminal Justice (Drug Trafficking) Act, 1996, as amended; Criminal Justice (Theft and Fraud Offences) Act, 2001, as amended; Criminal Justice Act, 1990, as amended; Criminal Justice Act, 1964, as amended; Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) (Amendment) Act 2007; Criminal Justice Act 2007, as amended; Criminal Justice Act 1994, as amended; Criminal Law (Insanity) Act 2006, as amended; Criminal Law (Insanity) Act 2010.

Criminal Law (Human Trafficking) Act 2008. This list is not exhaustive. Due care must be taken to keep informed about the meaning of legislation and any relevant changes to legislation. The following areas must also be considered with care:

- Number and frequency of convictions, particularly in the last ten years.
- Non-child protection related offences that may still give cause for concern: for example, a prosecution and successful conviction under the Domestic Violence Act 1991.
- Serious road traffic offences such as drunk driving, dangerous driving, hit and run, no insurance and car theft.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Archdiocese of Dublin

The Archdiocese provides a Garda Vetting Service for its own needs and on an agency basis for applicants as set out in the introduction on Page 3. If required, as set out in this policy, the Archdiocese will provide advice to organisations in respect of any aspect of Garda Vetting.

Dublin Diocesan Vetting Service

Diocesan Vetting Service personnel managing the Garda Vetting process are trained by and registered with the GCVU and are known as Authorised Signatories. The function of the Authorised Signatory is to manage all Garda Vetting applications on behalf of the Archdiocese. All the Garda Vetting applications are managed by the Authorised Signatories in the Archdiocese, one of whom is the **Diocesan Garda Vetting Administrator based in Holy Cross Diocesan Centre, Clonliffe College, Dublin 3.**

The Dublin Diocesan Garda Vetting Service will provide advice and support to the Diocesan Offices and related organisations subject to this policy.

It will manage the interactions between the GCVU and the users of the service.

Other Diocesan Personnel may be involved as required.

Dublin Diocesan Education Secretariat

The Education Secretariat will ensure that procedures for vetting are communicated to the Boards of Management of all primary schools in the Archdiocese and that they are adequately informed about the availability of the Diocesan Garda Vetting Service.

The Director of Education will be available to advise and support Chairpersons of Boards of Managements and/or Principals of primary schools in dealing with disclosures/relevant information in respect of ancillary staff, sports coaches, volunteers, those involved in extracurricular activities, external tutors, etc. .

Dublin Diocesan Child Safeguarding and Protection Service

The Child Safeguarding and Protection Service administers the Dublin Diocesan Vetting Service and supports the implementation of this policy by giving advice to Human Resources or the Education Secretariat as required. It will also ensure that the principles of best practice recruitment and vetting form part of its various communication and training initiatives.

Garda Central Vetting Unit (GCVU)

In the Archdiocese and related organisations, the GCVU is the single point of contact within An Garda Síochána to conduct Garda Vetting. Garda Vetting is not conducted by local Gardaí in local Garda Stations.

Responsibilities of Organisation Using Service

Garda Vetting applications are issued by the Vetting Administrator, Child Safeguarding and Protection Service, Holy Cross Diocesan Centre, Clonliffe College, Dublin 3. They are also available from the Child Safeguarding and Protection Service website (www.csps.dublindiocese.ie). It is the responsibility of the organisation to ensure that the applications are completed correctly and returned to the Vetting Administrator.

When the vetting information is returned, the organisation will make a decision to offer employment/engagement depending on all of the information that is available including interview, education and qualifications, skills assessment, previous employment history/experience, references and medical checks where appropriate etc. Organisations using this service have agreed to the standards set out in these policies and procedures.

Responsibilities of Applicant

The applicant is responsible for completing the application truthfully and in its entirety and returning it to the organisation. The applicant is required to make a full and complete declaration. Failure to do this may jeopardise the offer of employment/engagement. Please note the risk assessment section of this document. A false declaration will be viewed very seriously and may affect the offer of employment/engagement.

Recruitment Best Practice

It is recommended that no person should start work or be engaged, until Garda Vetting procedures have been completed. This is discretionary depending on whether working with children or vulnerable adults is involved. For example, it may be possible for an applicant to start work, subject to vetting, but not with children or vulnerable adults until the vetting process has been completed. However, advice should be sought, and a Garda Vetting application should be completed before taking up any duty. If people have to commence work or volunteering before their vetting application has been processed, they should, as an interim measure, be asked to sign a Declaration Form (see page 22 and www.csps.dublindiocese.ie), and to sign their agreement to adhere to the parish or agency's child protection policy and their contact with children and/or vulnerable adults should be closely supervised.

Data Confidentiality

- All information passed to other appropriate and relevant staff must only be done on a basis required by the recruitment process.
- Any staff member of the Archdiocese who breaches confidentiality in the management of vetting information may face disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Other serious sanctions may apply in respect of non-staff members. All organisations who avail of this service from the Archdiocese are required to be vigilant about confidentiality and will be expected to treat breaches of confidentiality on the part of any staff member in similar fashion to the Archdiocese.
- In the case of a review meeting the applicant's information must be protected.

Data Protection

Purpose of Data Protection Policy

The Archdiocese of Dublin Garda Vetting Data Protection Policy has been developed to outline the retention and disclosure processes for all information obtained from Garda Vetting Applications.

Garda Vetting Database

All applications received by the Garda Vetting Administrator are entered onto the Garda Vetting Database. The database contains information such as full name, current address, date of birth, position applied for and the date the application was completed by the applicant. The database also keeps a record of the status of the application. Once applications have been completed and returned from the Garda Central Vetting Unit (GCVU), the database is updated accordingly. Access to the database is restricted to authorised Diocesan personnel and the data is stored securely.

Parish Applications

Completed applications returned from the GCVU in respect of parishes are kept in the Child Safeguarding and Protection Service of the Diocesan Offices, in lockable storage cabinets. The Parish Priest is notified, in writing, of the outcome of the vetting process where, according to Garda records, there are no previous convictions recorded against the applicant.

Applications in respect of parishes which are received from the GCVU with disclosures are returned, by ordinary post but marked “Strictly Private & Confidential – For the Attention of Addressee Only”, to the Parish Priest with a letter listing all convictions, prosecutions and pending prosecutions that currently appear on the Garda Pulse System. The database is updated and a brief description of the disclosure/relevant information is recorded. A copy of the application and letter sent to the Parish Priest are kept in the Child Safeguarding and Protection Service in lockable cabinets. The Parish Priest must return the application once the matter has been dealt with and the copy destroyed. If, for any reason, this is not done, the Parish Priest is obliged under data protection laws to destroy the application once the matter has been dealt with.

School Applications

Completed applications belonging to primary schools are returned, by ordinary post but marked “Strictly Private & Confidential – For the Attention of Addressee Only”, to the school contact person who will be the Chairperson of the Board of Management or the Principal along with a letter stating the outcome of the vetting process.

Applications in respect of schools which are returned from the GCVU with disclosures/relevant information are returned, again, by ordinary post but marked “Strictly Private & Confidential – For the Attention of Addressee Only”, to the school contact person who will be the Chairperson of the Board of Management or the Principal with a letter listing all convictions, prosecutions and pending prosecutions that currently appear on the Garda Pulse System. The database is updated and a brief description of the disclosure/relevant information is recorded.

No copies are made of applications belonging to schools.

Applications from other organisations

For all other organisations availing of the Garda Vetting Service e.g. religious orders / diocesan agencies, the “Schools’ Applications” process described above is applied.

Responsibility for Recruitment Decision

Where a disclosure/relevant information is received, as part of the outcome of the vetting process, it is the responsibility of the organisation to decide whether the information received has any impact on its decision to employ / engage or retain the applicant. The Archdiocese of Dublin or the GCVU does not have an input into such decisions and can take no responsibility for them.

Retention of Information

All applications belonging to parishes are kept in lockable storage cabinets located in the Child Safeguarding and Protection Service of the Diocesan Offices. Applications will not be stored for longer than is necessary.

Under guidance from the GCVU, applications belonging to parish volunteers will be kept for as long as the person is volunteering and for one year thereafter. Once the year has lapsed, the hard copy application will be destroyed in an appropriate manner. The information on the database will be kept securely for statistical purposes. This same process will apply to applications containing disclosures.

It is the responsibility of the parish to inform the Garda Vetting Administrator, on an annual basis, of any volunteers/staff members which are no longer engaged/employed in the parish. This will allow the administrator to make amendments to the Garda Vetting Database and filing system required by data protection legislation.

Access to Information

It is Diocesan policy that only those who are entitled to see the application (or any data disclosed as part of the vetting process) as part of their duties will be allowed to do so.

Under the Diocesan Garda Vetting Policy and Data Protection laws, applicants can request access to any personal data held about them. Reflecting their status as “data controllers”, data access requests should be made to the Parish Priest, for parish applications, to the school contact person who will be the Chairperson of the Board of Management or Principal for school applications, or to the heads of other organisations for which the vetting service is provided.

Garda Vetting Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Archdiocese of Dublin

Garda Vetting FAQs

> What is the purpose of Garda Vetting?

The purpose of Garda Vetting is to provide details regarding all prosecutions, successful or not, pending or completed, and/or convictions in respect of an individual applicant³ to a registered organisation for Garda Vetting.

Garda Vetting is one component of recruitment and selection best practice procedures which may also include an application form, qualifications, skills assessment, previous employment history/experience, declaration form, interview and the checking of references.

> Who is subject to Garda Vetting?

- In parishes: all those who work in the parish setting including clergy, staff, volunteers and lay faithful.
- All ancillary staff, volunteers, sports coaches, etc in Primary schools.
- All clergy and religious holding Diocesan appointments.
- Staff in the Diocesan agencies: Crosscare and Accord and others by arrangement.
- Clergy and lay staff working in the Diocesan Offices.
- When applying for Garda Vetting the applicant gives his/her written authorisation on the Garda Vetting Application for the GCVU to forward details of all prosecutions, successful or not, pending or completed, and/or convictions in respect of an individual applicant to a registered organisation.

> Why should an organisation avail of the Garda Vetting Service?

Properly designed pre-employment screening procedures provide a mechanism to assess the suitability of prospective applicants to work with children and vulnerable adults.

For the most part people who become involved in service in schools, parishes and the local community are properly motivated. However, there have been incidents where people with malicious intent have tried to gain access to children and vulnerable adults through Church organisations.

Robust screening procedures have been shown to enhance our ability to safeguard the well being of children and vulnerable adults.

³ "Applicant" include staff members, volunteers, voluntary lay faithful, clergy and students on placement.

> Are organisations obliged to use the Vetting Service?

Organisations to whom this policy applies have a duty of care to ensure that no one is appointed who is not suitable to work with children or vulnerable adults. Failure to use the service to identify those people could be viewed as a failing in the duty of care and could give rise to legal liability.

> What are the benefits of the Garda Vetting Procedure?

- Protection of children and vulnerable adults.
- Protection of the organisation providing services to children and vulnerable adults.
- Protection of personnel within an organisation providing services to children and vulnerable adults.
- Management of risk in respect of former offenders.
- Garda Vetting is widely viewed as one of the key elements in the delivery of a comprehensive and robust child protection system in the State.

> Who provides Garda Vetting?

The vetting is carried out by the Garda Central Vetting Unit (GCVU) in Co. Tipperary.

Garda Vetting can only be accessed by Diocesan organisations through the Diocesan Garda Vetting Service in the Holy Cross Diocesan Centre. The GCVU can not deal with individual applicants nor directly with individual organisations within the diocese.

Garda Vetting cannot be obtained through local Garda stations.

> Can I employ/engage an applicant who has not yet completed the Garda Vetting process?

The ideal situation is to adhere to safe recruitment practices and not engage or employ an applicant prior to the completion of the Garda Vetting process.

It is important to prepare well in advance if you plan to employ someone or if you are going to engage volunteers. You should introduce Garda Vetting at the earliest opportunity.

If people have to commence work before their vetting application has been processed, they should, as an interim measure, be asked to sign a Declaration Form (refer to sample on page 22) and to sign their agreement to adhere to the parish's/agency's child protection policy and their contact with children or vulnerable adults should be closely supervised.

> What information will the Gardaí provide?

The Gardaí provide the organisation with details of all prosecutions, successful or not, pending or completed, and/ or convictions.

> How does an organisation get Garda Vetting for an applicant?

- The organisation should request a Dublin Diocese Garda Vetting application by contacting the Diocesan Garda Vetting Administrator at:

Address: Child Safeguarding and Protection Service,
Holy Cross Diocesan Centre, Clonliffe College, Dublin 3

Phone: 01-8087593 **Email:** vetting@dublindiocese.ie

Web: www.csps.dublindiocese.ie

- The applicant fills in the application. The application can be filled out online at www.csps.dublindiocese.ie. When it is filled out it needs to be printed, signed and returned to the relevant organisation. The organisation should ensure it is completed correctly before returning it to the Garda Vetting Administrator.
- The Administrator will, in turn, examine the application for errors or omissions before forwarding it to the GCVU in Tipperary.
- In the event that there are errors or omissions, the application is returned to the organisation with the error or omission highlighted.
- Vetting usually takes at least 10-12 weeks and the organisation should factor this into the recruitment and selection process.
- The Diocesan Human Resource Office will advise organisations on how to interpret the information and communicate with the applicant.

> Who has access to information on the Garda Vetting Application?

For example, in a Parish, it is the Parish Priest. If you are applying through a school or Diocesan agency, it will be the employer.

The Diocesan Vetting Administrator will check the application and send it to the GCVU. The GCVU will process your application.

In certain circumstances other Diocesan staff may have access to the information as part of the decision-making process outlined in the policy. The process is highly confidential and breaches of this may give rise to disciplinary or other serious action.

> What does data protection mean?

Data protection legislation requires that each individual's information is treated in an appropriate manner. Every organisation has a responsibility to manage any data given

to them by the Gardaí as laid out in the Data Protection legislation. Each organisation should have a policy to manage information in accordance with the legislation.

› What are the implications if I have previous conviction(s)?

All applicants must declare previous conviction(s) on the Garda Vetting application. Details of any previous conviction(s) will be listed on the application returned to the Garda Vetting Administrator.

The organisation will consider whether the information is relevant to the role and to the suitability of the applicant to fulfil the particular role.

Please note that no conviction is ever spent in Irish law no matter what it was or when it was incurred (with the exception of minors).

› What if I have a case pending against me?

An applicant should provide relevant information, which will be taken into account when considering the application.

› What if I do not disclose that I have a previous conviction?

Applicants are required to disclose all relevant information on the Garda Vetting application. If this is not done, the applicant will be given an opportunity in a review meeting to explain the omission and the organisation will make a decision based on all the information.

› What is a Process Review Meeting?

The Process Review Meeting is part of the decision-making process to deal with relevant information provided by the GCVU. The applicant will be invited to a review meeting with appropriate decision-making personnel to clarify and discuss the information received and to establish his or her identity. Each case will be dealt with on its own merits. All aspects of the meeting will be dealt with confidentially.

› What happens if I don't know where I used to live?

Exceptionally, some people are unable to provide full details of where they have lived from birth. There may be a number of reasons for this and the applicant should write a short explanation for the Gardaí on the margin of the application. If the GCVU need further clarification they will return the application to the applicant through the Vetting Administrator.

› What happens if I travelled when I was a student?

This information should also be written on the margin. However, you should identify the countries and cities you visited as well as the addresses of places you stayed for a significant amount of time. The GCVU are not interested in past visas.

> What if I was born abroad or have lived abroad as an adult?

If you resided in another country as an adult (since you were over 18 years of age), you must provide evidence of a police certificate from that state. Information can be sought at the Embassy or Consulate that is appropriate for you. You must supply this information to the organisation.

> What happens if the information provided by the GCVU is disputed?

The Authorised Signatory will contact the GCVU with the information from the Process Review Meeting. The GCVU will write back to the Authorised Signatory who will communicate the response to the organisation.

> Do I need to be vetted every time I change employment/engagement?

The need to be vetted again depends on when you were last vetted, whether verification is still available and the standards applied by the new organisation.

Persons being appointed to positions of any duration must be vetted prior to commencing employment unless they have already been vetted through the Diocesan Vetting Administrator during the same or previous calendar year.

Other persons (non-staff members) such as volunteers, sports and activities coordinators, etc. must be vetted unless they have already been vetted within the previous five years.

> What happens if an applicant refuses to fill out an application requesting vetting?

It is Diocesan policy that all applicants for employment/ engagement should be vetted by the Gardaí as part of the selection process and they should be notified about this at the advertising stage or as early as possible in the process. A refusal to complete a Garda Vetting application may deem the application for the position incomplete.

> Do existing staff need to be vetted?

Existing staff members and volunteers will be informed in detail about this Diocesan policy and its importance in safe-guarding children and vulnerable adults.

All staff will be asked in time to complete a Garda Vetting application as part of the best practice in child protection in the Diocese.

Experience has shown that people can have some reservations which will need to be addressed. Therefore, people will receive adequate consultation and an opportunity to fully raise their concerns.

> Can someone under 18 years of age be vetted?

Yes, Garda Vetting can be sought for people aged between 16 and 18 years provided the Garda Vetting Consent Form is completed by their parent/guardian (available at www.csp.dublindiocese.ie)

Appendix Sample Declaration Form

Archdiocese of Dublin

Appendix 1: Sample Declaration Form

Archdiocese of Dublin

Declaration form for all persons working as employees or volunteers with children and young people

Confidential

Legislation in both jurisdictions in Ireland, have at their core, the principle that the welfare of children and young people must be the paramount consideration.

Church organisations therefore ask that everyone working or volunteering for the Church, who will come into contact with children or personal details of children, abide by good practice by completing and sign this declaration.

Do you have any prosecutions pending or have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of a Caution or of a Bound Over Order (please tick)

Yes

No

If yes, please state below the nature and date(s) of the offence(s)

Date of offence: _____

Nature of offence: _____

Have you ever been the subject of disciplinary procedures or been asked to leave employment or voluntary activity due to inappropriate behaviour towards a child? (Please tick)

Yes

No

If yes, please give details including date(s) below:

Full name (print): _____

Any surname previously known by: _____

Archdiocese of Dublin

Address:

Date of birth: _____ Place of birth: _____

Declaration:

I understand that, if it is found that I have withheld information or included any false or misleading information above, I may be removed from my post whether paid or voluntary, without notice. I understand that the information will be kept securely by the Church organisation.

I hereby declare the information I have provided is accurate.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Archdiocese of Dublin

Contact details

Vetting Administrator

Dublin Archdiocese Garda Vetting Service
Child Safeguarding and Protection Service
Holy Cross Diocesan Centre,
Clonliffe College, Dublin 3

Telephone: 01 808 7593

Email: vetting@dublindiocese.ie