

 SISTERS OF MERCY PARRAMATTA	
Code of Conduct Draft	Version: 1.0
Date of Approval	2nd March, 2021
Approved by	Sr Mary-Louise Petro
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Date of Next Review	March 2024

CODE OF CONDUCT

1.0. INTRODUCTION.

Inspired by its founder, Venerable Catherine McAuley, Sisters of Mercy Parramatta commits to live and work in accordance with the gospel ideals and the values and principles articulated in the *Constitutions of the Congregation of Sisters of Mercy Parramatta* and relevant church protocols. In particular, Sisters of Mercy Parramatta recognizes the inherent dignity and rights of all people and the gospel imperative to protect and nurture those who are most at risk.

*We will nurture relations that are kind, just, respectful and inclusive
among each other and those with whom we share our Mercy ministries.*

Chapter Statement, Eleventh General Chapter 2016.

In carrying out its mission, Sisters of Mercy Parramatta partners with employees, volunteers and long-term contractors. The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to promote a common understanding of the attitudes, behaviours and practices that are consistent with the values of Sisters of Mercy Parramatta and the teachings of the Catholic Church, taking particular account of the needs of all who are at increased risk of discrimination, exploitation and all forms of abuse. Congregation members and all who are engaged with the ministries and work of Sisters of Mercy Parramatta have a responsibility to uphold this Code and to avoid by word, action or public lifestyle behaviour which is contrary to it.

2.0. SCOPE

This Code applies to Congregation members at all times. It applies to staff members when they are engaged in the work of Sisters of Mercy Parramatta.

3.0. POLICY

The ethical and professional behaviour of all Congregation members and staff members is expected to be consistent with and reflective of the values of Sisters of Mercy Parramatta and the teachings of the Catholic Church, as outlined in this section:

3.1 ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR

- 3.1.1** Demonstrating behaviours that promote the values of integrity, justice, honesty, compassion, respect and equality. Particular attention to be paid to situations where there is a real and/or perceived imbalance of power.
- 3.1.2** Respecting the dignity, rights and privacy of others and maintaining confidentiality.
- 3.1.3** Listening to all respectfully and seeking to understand different points of view. (This does not necessarily mean agreeing with the point of view).
- 3.1.4** Communicating and acting respectfully with and about others, particularly children and adults at risk.
- 3.1.5** Displaying compassion and generosity of spirit, including acknowledging the genuine contributions that others make.
- 3.1.6** Acknowledging and respecting different cultural, ethnic and religious traditions, including not harassing, bullying or discriminating against colleagues or anyone connected to the work and ministries of Sisters of Mercy Parramatta, in relation to race, culture, age, gender, disability, religion, sexuality or political views.
- 3.1.7** Extending assistance and courtesy to all.
- 3.1.8** Acting according to acceptable standards of physical, emotional and sexual contact at all times.

3.2 PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOUR

- 3.2.1** Maintaining a high standard and quality of work and exercising care, responsibility and sound judgement when carrying out duties.
- 3.2.2** Ensuring procedural fairness and natural justice in all processes.

- 3.2.3** Maintaining and developing knowledge and understanding relevant to one's role and area of expertise.
- 3.2.4** Acting appropriately with children and adults including maintaining appropriate boundaries and using appropriate language and tone.
- 3.2.5** Acting as a good steward of the heritage, assets and reputation of Sisters of Mercy Parramatta.
- 3.2.6** Maintaining appropriate confidentiality and security concerning all records and information, obtained during and after employment or as a Congregation member.
- 3.2.7** Taking reasonable care of the health and safety of oneself and others.
- 3.2.8** Acting lawfully, complying with all legislative, contractual and industrial requirements and Sisters of Mercy Parramatta policies as well as following all reasonable and lawful directives given by Sisters of Mercy Parramatta.
- 3.2.9** Taking appropriate action to avoid actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest.
- 3.2.10** Reporting illegal, unethical or unprofessional behaviour, including breaches of this Code of Conduct, to the appropriate authority.
- 3.2.11** Using technology, including social media, in ways that are consistent with the policies and procedures of Sisters of Mercy Parramatta.
- 3.2.12** Refraining from using alcohol, drugs or gambling in ways that interfere with one's work or ministry.
- 3.2.13** Not taking or seeking to take advantage of one's position or any information gained through one's work, to benefit oneself or others.
- 3.2.14** Not engaging in fraudulent behavior, inappropriate use of funds or resources, lying/misrepresenting decisions/directions for personal gain.

3.3 SAFEGUARDING

- 3.3.1** Congregation members and staff members are expected to take all reasonable steps to ensure the protection of children and adults at risk and to comply with Sisters of Mercy Parramatta safeguarding policies and procedures, including responding to and reporting all suspicions and allegations of abuse, risk of harm or other inappropriate conduct.
- 3.3.2** Duty of care to children and adults at risk applies during all activities and functions conducted or arranged by Sisters of Mercy Parramatta where children or adults at risk are involved. Congregation members and staff members must assess and manage the risks associated with any activity before it commences and provide adequate supervision during the activity.

3.3.3 Congregation members and staff members must not:

- (i) Provide inappropriate preferential treatment to children or adults at risk for personal gratification including offering gifts to children or adults at risk in ways that could result in the receiver feeling “specially chosen” and/or indebted to the giver (grooming).
- (ii) Be alone with a child or adult at risk unnecessarily or in an inappropriate context.
- (iii) Engage in inappropriate physical contact with a child or adult at risk or act in ways that may cause them to reasonably fear that unjustified force will be used against them.
- (iv) Make sexually explicit comments or engage in other sexually overt or implied behavior towards or in the presence of children or adults at risk in person or on-line.
- (v) Photograph or video a child without the permission of the child’s parent/carer.
- (vi) Sexualize any pastoral or professional relationship.

4.0. BREACHES OF THIS CODE

Sisters of Mercy Parramatta will apply sanctions if this Code of Conduct is breached. Such sanctions include but are not limited to training, counselling, suspension, restrictions, disciplinary action including termination of employment and /or official reports to police and other statutory agencies as required. Congregation members may also be subject to restriction of ministry as determined by the Congregation Leader.

5.0. REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every three years.

6.0. DEFINITIONS

“**Abuse**” means any intentional harm or mistreatment of a child or adult. The most common categories include physical abuse, psychological/emotional/spiritual abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, grooming and exposure to family violence.

“**Adult at risk**” means any person aged 18 years and over who is at increased risk of abuse, such as those who:

- * are elderly
- * have a disability

- * suffer from mental illness
- * have diminished capacity
- * have cognitive impairment
- * are subject to significant power imbalance
- * are experiencing transient risks, such as bereavement or relationship breakdown (or other such adversity) or have any other impairment that makes it difficult for that person to protect themselves from abuse or exploitation.

“**Child**” means any person under the age of 18 years.

“**Congregation member**” means a professed member of the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy Parramatta.

“**Staff member**” means all those engaged with the work and ministries of Sisters of Mercy Parramatta, including employees, volunteers, religious (other than Congregation members), contractors and students on work experience.

7.0. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Acceptable Use of Electronic Communication Systems and Devices Policy.

Conflict of Interest Policy.

Gifts and Benefits Policy.

Privacy Policy.

Protected Disclosure Policy

Safeguarding Policy.

www.facs.nsw.gov.au/families/Protecting-kids/mandatory-reporters/how-to

8.0. ACCEPTANCE OF CODE

I have read and understood the above Code of Conduct and agree to comply with its provisions.

NAME: _____

POSITION: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____