



<b>PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES POLICY</b>		Document #	Level: Tier 1
		Prepared By: GRC Manager	Date Prepared: 6/07/2017
Effective Date: 1/09/2018	Revision # V4	Reviewed By: PRCM Committee	Date Reviewed: 7/08/2018
Compliance: National Committee for Professional Standards. (2010). Integrity in Ministry. National Committee for Professional Standards. (2011). Integrity in the Service of the Church			

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to articulate the high standards of professional boundaries that are integral to ensuring safe and supportive environments for Archdiocese of Hobart ('Archdiocese') communities, clients and workers alike. Respectful relationships that support the dignity of all, are central to the life and teachings of Jesus.

### Scope of Application

This policy applies to the Archdiocese and its agencies including: Archbishop's Office, Parishes, Church Office, CatholicCare Tasmania, Centacare Evolve Housing, Catholic Education Tasmania and the Catholic Development Fund.

This policy may also be used to apply to bodies or committees associated with any of the above agencies, established to progress initiatives under the auspices of the Archdiocese.

### Policy

The rights and needs of clients and communities are to be respected at all times. Workers must recognise and understand they have a duty of care and that it is often a fiduciary relationship, that is, a relationship based on trust.

In no sense does this policy detract from the need a worker may have to establish rapport with a person in order to be able to provide friendly and accessible services.

### Principles

The following principles from Integrity in the Service of the Church apply:

1. Workers know, understand and respect the physical and emotional boundaries of adults, children and young people
2. Workers are aware of the dangers involved when the boundaries between personal and service relationships are blurred
3. Workers understand the importance of meeting their own personal emotional needs outside work relationships
4. Workers take action when a relationship is not benefitting those being served
5. Workers understand the problems which can occur because of the imbalance of power in a service relationship.

Workers must abide by the following behavioural standards:

- Take action and report, when it is known or suspected that inappropriate behaviour has occurred

- Familiarise themselves with the signs and causes of abuse and the procedures to follow if harm, abuse or neglect is suspected or observed
- Treat everyone with fairness, dignity and respect
- Respect the personal and physical space of others, including technological contact
- Apply responsible use of telephony, electronic communications , including social media
- Provide support in in safe, open and visible environments
- Respect personal space where physical contact is necessary, apply prudent judgement and follow the appropriate standards
- Maintain a consistent professional manner
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries with colleagues
- Maintain information as private and confidential
- Avoid any form of over-familiarity or inappropriate language
- Honour differences among people including: religion, ethnicity, age, gender and sexual orientation
- Resolve conflicts peacefully and do not abuse power and/or control
- Do not show preferential treatment
- Terminate relationships when they are becoming ineffective or unsafe
- Do not serve alcohol or any prohibited substance to a minor
- Do not exploit their position for financial gain
- Maintain an adequate and reasonable work-life balance
- Draw conscious distinctions between their role as a worker and social interactions
- Seek professional advice and review relationships if it feels uncomfortable, dysfunctional or unproductive
- Reflect on the quality of their professional relationships.

These behavioural standards provide types of conduct that flow from the principles are not to be considered an exhaustive list.

## Definitions

**Duty of Care:** a moral and legal obligation to ensure the safety or wellbeing of others.

**Professional Boundaries:** refers to a limits of behaviour within communities, clients and workers can interact safely in relation to the emotional, psychological, intellectual, social, physical and online space.

**Worker:** anyone who is acting in support of the Mission of the Archdiocese and includes, employees, contractors and volunteers.

## Related Documents

- National Committee for Professional Standards. (2010). Integrity in Ministry.
- National Committee for Professional Standards. (2011). Integrity in the Service of the Church

**Changes to this policy**

The Archdiocese will review this policy from time to time and updates are available on the website.

---

**Policy approved by:**

Most Rev Julian Porteous, Archbishop of Hobart,

11 August 2018