

Society of St. Vincent de Paul
St. John the Evangelist Vancouver Conference
Safeguarding Policy (EIN 27-1387856)



As recommended by the Archdiocesan Council of Seattle (ADC) and the District Council of the Columbia River, St. John the Evangelist of Vancouver Conference has adopted this policy to ensure all members are serving in a safe and respectful environment.

Upon the effective date of this policy, all existing and new members/volunteers shall complete a new-member application form which shall be kept on file with the conference.

All members and volunteers who have access to the people we serve **OR** have access to personal information about the people we serve, **OR** have repeated contact with the general public while representing or working for SVDP (e.g.; pantry, thrift store workers) must have background checks prior to commencing a position with the Society **AND** complete Safe Environment training.

- a. Safe Environment training shall consist of the Virtus modules selected by the Safeguarding Committee of the Archdiocesan Council.
- b. In addition, all new volunteers must be supervised and accompanied by a trained Vincentian until they have completed all applicable training and a background check.
- c. In all cases, the applicable training and background check **must be completed within 45 days** of beginning service with St. Vincent de Paul.
- d. If a member volunteers with one or more other conferences, the first conference will confirm with the Safeguarding Administrator of other conferences through submission of certificate or E-mail that the member has completed appropriate training and/or background check as required by secondary position.
- e. All persons with access to financial accounts, cash, checks, or other negotiables shall complete a criminal background check.
- f. The Conference President, in concert with the District Council, will maintain an up-to-date Membership List and track all Safeguarding records to ensure that anyone with access to vulnerable people has completed the appropriate ADC-provided training and has completed a background check. Records will be maintained of any complaints received/action taken.
- g. "Repeated contact with the general public" does not include picking up donations from commercial operations or other organizations, nor does it include volunteering for a

once-a-year or twice-a-year special activity or event.

h. Background checks shall be repeated every three years.

All members, volunteers, and staff are required to read the Safeguarding policy, Code of Conduct, and reporting procedure attached. They shall sign a Statement of Receipt and Agreement (SRA) either electronically in the Virtus system or on paper. See Appendix A for a paper form. This is required even in circumstances where no background check or training is required.

Where visitors (consultants, donors, vendors, family of members/volunteers) are likely to have significant contact with children and/or vulnerable adults, especially over an extended period, the President and Safeguarding Administrator shall conduct background checks.

Concerns or allegations of abusive or exploitative behavior are always taken seriously, investigated, and acted on as appropriate. Concerns and allegations shall be reported to SVDP and civil authorities as appropriate, following the DCCR Reporting Process. It is our understanding that in the state of Washington, Vincentian members, volunteers, and staff are not mandatory reporters at this time.

This Safeguarding policy shall be made available to the public.

This policy has been voted upon and approved unanimously at the St. John the Evangelist Conference meeting held on September 5, 2023 and incorporated as such in minutes recorded this day.