

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Procedures for Safeguarding Adults

Aim of the chapter

- i. To introduce procedures for keeping adults safe when engaging in our ministries
- ii. To connect the procedures with the Joymount Presbyterian Church Safeguarding Adults Policy

Our commitment to safeguard

The aim of these procedures is to overall promote confidence that Joymount Presbyterian Church is safe for all.

We want to clearly state the arrangements for adult safeguarding, including preventative and protective measures.

We will establish effective working structures are in place to respond to concerns.

Joymount Presbyterian Church will update these procedures in line with the central PCI Safeguarding Team who will ensure that policy and these procedures remain in line with both current regional legislation and policy and *The Code: The constitution and government of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (2026)*.

Joymount Presbyterian Church promotes a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, wherever it occurs or whoever is responsible.

Scope of the procedures

The policy and associated procedures are applicable to all clergy, staff and volunteers working within Joymount Presbyterian Church.

This includes all those who occupy a position of leadership, paid or unpaid, within our denomination.

This policy outlines the expectation for behaviour for all those who come into contact with our church and ministries.

This policy applies to all aspects of ministry and work within Joymount Presbyterian Church, whether this be within a church building or an individual's own home or workplace.

We accept and recognise our responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues that cause adults harm, and to establish and maintain a safe environment for all.

We are committed to practices that promote the welfare of adults and prevent harm.

Therefore, we will:

- Adhere to these adult safeguarding procedures
- Follow the procedures laid down for the recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers
- Provide effective management for staff and volunteers through support and training
- Implement clear processes for raising awareness of and responding to abuse within the church in a compassionate and timely manner
- Report concerns to statutory agencies that need to know, while involving adults at risk and their carers appropriately
- Ensure that general safety and risk management procedures are adhered to
- Promote full participation and have clear procedures for dealing with concerns and complaints
- Manage personal information, confidentiality and information sharing
- Implement a code of behaviour for staff and volunteers

If any of our members and leaders were to operate across borders between Northern Ireland (NI) and the Republic of Ireland (ROI), then note that these are the safeguarding procedures that apply to all ministries that have an operational base in NI, that is, extend from an NI church. This includes, for example, if you are running a home group in your home in ROI for the church you attend in NI.

However, we recognise that at times these procedures will not fit easily into this scenario (for example, if the person is harmed via an NI church but their domicile is in ROI).

Parallel policies and procedures exist for the Republic of Ireland on the PCI website which are aligned with ROI legislation, policy and arrangements.

Therefore, advice can be sought from the central PCI Safeguarding Team.

This should NEVER DELAY making a statutory report and when necessary, taking immediate advice from PSNI/An Garda Síochána or social services/HSE.

Outline of the legislative context

The rights of adults to live a life free from neglect, exploitation and abuse are protected by the Human Rights Act 1998.

Their right to life is protected (under Article 2); their right to be protected from inhuman and degrading treatment (under Article 3); and their right to liberty and security (under Article 5).

Additional areas of legislation that inform this policy and procedures include:

- The Criminal Law Act (Northern Ireland) 1967
- The Health and Personal Social Services (Northern Ireland) Orders and the Health and Social Care (Reform) Act (Northern Ireland) 2009

- The Mental Health (Northern Ireland) Order 1986
- The Police and Criminal Evidence (Northern Ireland) Order 1989
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- The Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997
- The Public Interest Disclosure (Northern Ireland) Order 1998
- The Family Homes and Domestic Violence (Northern Ireland) Order 1998
- The Northern Ireland Act 1998, Section 75
- The Criminal Evidence (Northern Ireland) Order 1999
- The Health and Personal Social Services Act (Northern Ireland) 2001
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007 (as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012)
- The Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2008
- The Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007
- The Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Criminal Justice and Support for Victims) Act (Northern Ireland) 2015 and Human Trafficking and Exploitation Regulations 2025
- Mental Capacity Act (Northern Ireland) 2016
- Domestic Abuse and Civil Proceedings Act (Northern Ireland) 2021

Northern Ireland does not currently have explicit adult safeguarding legislation. The Adult Protection Bill (NI) is currently completing its legislative passage at the NI Assembly.

Regional policy context

The regional adult safeguarding policy 'Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership' was launched in July 2015. The policy was jointly developed and published by the Department of Health (DOH) and the Department of Justice (DOJ) on behalf of the Northern Ireland Executive.

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/articles/adult-safeguarding-prevention-and-protection-partnership>

This sets out how the Northern Ireland Executive intends adult safeguarding to be taken forward across all Government departments, their agencies and in partnership with the voluntary, community, independent and **faith organisations**.

A key objective is to reduce the incidence of harm of adults who are at risk, to provide them with effective support and, where necessary, protective responses and access to justice for victims and their families.

Awareness and implementation

The Joymount Presbyterian Church Adult Safeguarding Policy Statement is displayed in our church and website.

These procedures accompany this policy and will be available to all on request. They will remain accessible on the Joymount Presbyterian Church website.

Our organisations vary in size, structure and in the delivery of ministry and services. The adult safeguarding procedures provide a framework for all our activities.

Everyone involved with leadership in any sector of the ministries of Joymount Presbyterian Church must receive or have access to a copy of the full safeguarding policy and procedures.

The central PCI Safeguarding Team has responsibility for ensuring the dissemination of the policy and procedures across the denomination. Joymount Presbyterian Church adapt and tailor these for our congregational use.

The central PCI Safeguarding team will provide information sessions on the safeguarding policy which will be arranged at least annually.

Provision of alternative formats when necessary – for example, large print or easy read versions – can be accessed via Joymount Presbyterian Church Office / Designated Person.

Approval, governance and review

The central PCI Safeguarding Team will review the wide-scope policy, procedures, code of behaviour and practice at least once every three years.

Joymount Presbyterian Church will also complete a review of policy, procedures, code of behaviour and practice once every three years.

It is the responsibility of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland Council for Social Witness to direct the development of the policy, through the Safeguarding Development Committee.

This will include to write, review and ensure that the policy remains in line with regional legislation and procedures.

The PCI Safeguarding Lead will ensure that it is fully implemented and reviewed every three years.

The central PCI Safeguarding Team will endeavour to help Joymount Presbyterian Church write their own policy and procedures at all times.

CHAPTER END