



diocese  
of limerick  
our catholic community

# VETTING NEWSLETTER

ISSUE NO: 1 / MAY 2023



## **Message from Bishop Leahy**

Welcome to the first Diocesan Newsletter dedicated to Vetting.

All organisations, involved with children and adults who may be vulnerable, have learned that we must ensure they are safe from harm and that their welfare is protected.

Families of children and people who may be vulnerable must be confident that parishes have the necessary "safety" arrangements in place. These include volunteers being recruited with references and Garda Vetting being obtained.

Garda vetting and increasingly Foreign Police Clearance are cornerstones of ensuring safety.

I appreciate that people willing to be volunteers can be off put by what appears to be bureaucratic requirements within a faith community. However we must learn the lessons of the past and ensure our standards are as good as all other organisations.

Increasingly in parishes lay people are taking on the role of Designated Signatories, and support people through the vetting process. Their work is deeply appreciated.

We welcome feedback on how we can provide information and support to everyone involved in the life of our parishes.

## **TOPICS**

### **TOPIC 1**

Message from Bishop Leahy

### **TOPIC 2**

Vetting Process

### **TOPIC 3**

Parish Designated Signatories

### **TOPIC 4**

Roles that Require Vetting

### **TOPIC 5**

Sacramental Preparation

### **TOPIC 6**

Parish Vetting Due to Expire

### **TOPIC 7**

Safeguarding Training

### **TOPIC 8**

Pilgrimages

### **TOPIC 9**

Foreign police Clearance

### **TOPIC 10**

FAQ

## **2. Vetting Process**

**A Person who is going to be involved with children or vulnerable people on behalf of a Parish or Diocesan Ministry must be Garda Vetted**



### **Steps for Garda Vetting**

- Applicant completes the NVB1 Vetting Form which is signed by the Parish Priest / Vetting Designated Signatory and submits to the Diocesan Vetting Service.
- The Diocesan Vetting Service reviews the application and submits it online to the National Vetting Bureau for processing.
- The National Vetting Bureau e-mail the applicant, the e-mail contains a link to the applicant's online vetting application which must be completed in order for the Garda Vetting process to commence.
- The applicant completes the online application and submits to the National Vetting Bureau.
- The application is processed by the National Vetting Bureau
- The National Vetting Bureau completes the process and provides the outcome to the Diocesan Vetting Service.
- The Diocesan Vetting Service sends a letter to the Parish Priest / Vetting Designated Signatory confirming that the applicant has been successfully vetted.

Vetting forms can be downloaded at: <https://www.limerickdiocesesaeguarding.com/vetting/>



### **3. Parish Designated Signatories.**

A number of Parish Priests have nominated a person to take responsibility for vetting in their parish. These Vetting Designated Signatories are trained and supported by the Diocesan Vetting Service. Training and refresher training is offered on an ongoing basis. The Overall responsibility for vetting in the parish remains the responsibility of the Parish Priest. As these forms are updated periodically it is important to download forms from the website when required. Vetting forms can be downloaded at:

<https://www.limerickdiocesesaeguarding.com/vetting/>

#### **4. Roles That Require Vetting.**

The Vetting Service and the National Vetting Bureau have agreed a list of roles, in the Limerick Diocese, that meet the Requirement for vetting.

Roles:

- Parish Pastoral Workers,
- Children's Catechist,
- Safeguarding Representatives and Children's Officers,
- Sacristans with supervisory function,
- Altar Server Leader,
- Children and Youth Choir Leaders,
- Children Liturgy and Prayer Group Leaders,
- Parish Youth Club Leaders,
- Sacramental Preparation Leaders,
- Visitation Team Members,
- Parish Pilgrimage Leaders,
- Parish Centre Staff & Volunteers,
- Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist
- Diocesan Youth Ministry Leaders.

The list of these roles can be viewed at:

<https://www.limerickdiocesefsafeguarding.com/vetting/>



#### **5. Sacramental Preparation**

Preparation for receiving the Sacraments takes place in both the school classroom and the Local Parish Church. A number of Parents volunteer to accompany the children from the classroom to the church for practice etc. and they must be vetted prior to commencing in this role. The ratio for Sacramental Preparation Leaders is 1 Leader to 8 children. Vetting forms should be submitted for processing at least six weeks in advance of Sacramental Preparation Program starting and Safeguarding Training must also be undertaken for Leaders.

## **6. Safeguarding Training**

It is a requirement that all volunteers who are vetted also attend Safeguarding Training. Once a person has been successfully vetted they will be invited to the next available one day Training session. Refresher Training will be offered every three years to those still in their role.

## **7. Parish Vetting Due to Expire**

Vetting is Valid for 3 years, It is necessary to be re-vetted after this period if a person is still in the role for which they were vetted. The Vetting Service will notify the Parish Priest / Designated Signatory of any person in their Parish whose vetting is due to expire and request that the Person is re-vetted if still in the role. If the person is no longer in the role the Vetting Service must be notified so that vetting records can be updated to reflect this. Vetting forms can be downloaded at:

<https://www.limerickdiocesesafeguarding.com/vetting/>



## **8. Pilgrimages**

Vetting is required for volunteers who are involved in the care of assisted pilgrims during Pilgrimages for the annual Lourdes Pilgrimage, the vetting is not processed through Parishes but through the Diocesan Pilgrimage Committee. The Committee has decided that there will be no assisted pilgrims on this year's Pilgrimage. The Youth Pilgrimage to Lourdes will go ahead and vetting required for the Youth Ministry Leaders involved will be organized through Youth Ministry.

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### **Other Pilgrimages.**

An appropriate number of Leaders need to be vetted and may be required to attend training. Organisers should discuss this with the Director of Safeguarding.

Ger Crowley

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### **9. Foreign Police Clearance**

Foreign Police Clearance is required if the applicant has lived for more than a year outside Ireland after the age of 18 Years.

- The Vetting service will contact applicants who will need to provide Foreign Police Clearance for each country in which they have lived for more than a year over the age of 18 years.
- It is important to note that only the applicant themselves can obtain police clearance.
- The applicant should not be engaged in relevant work or activities until the Garda Vetting and Foreign Police Clearance process has been completed.

### **10. FAQ**

The Vetting Service has compiled a list of questions that tend to recur.

The link to Frequently Asked Questions is:

<https://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/vetting/>