

What to do if you have a suspicion, concern, knowledge or allegation about an adult safeguarding matter.



**Safeguarding
Office**

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF DOWN AND CONNOR

The Diocese of Down and Connor believes that all adults are entitled to live a life free from abuse and exploitation.

The Diocese commits that all adults will be treated with **DIGNITY** and **RESPECT** in a way that promotes **EQUALITY** and **DIVERSITY**.

The Diocese has a Designated Liaison Person (known as “Adult Safeguarding Champion” (ASC) under the Department of Health Adult Safeguarding Procedures). The role of this person is to provide a service which processes and manages all allegations relating to adult safeguarding brought to the attention of the Diocese.

If you have a suspicion, concern, knowledge or allegation about an adult safeguarding matter, you have several options for addressing this. You may contact any of the following:

- 1. The Police (PSNI)**
- 2. Social Services**
- 3. The Church through the Diocesan Designated Liaison Person/
Adult Safeguarding Champion**

Contact details can be found on the back of this leaflet. (If out of office hours or weekends, please use the statutory services out of office contact details found on the back of this leaflet.)

If you make contact with the Diocesan Designated Liaison Person/Adult Safeguarding Champion, then s/he will undertake the following.

1. Step One – GATHERING INFORMATION.

- Gather the information you wish to share
- In doing so the DLP will clarify that the adult about whom you are concerned is not in immediate risk or danger
- Make a written record of this information (this is not a formal statement) and share this with you for accuracy
- Explain to you that the information must and will be referred to the Police and if appropriate with Social Services by the DLP/ASC
- Remember **NOT ALL** concerns are of a safeguarding nature that the police may investigate, however the DLP will ask you about the information you have become aware of and wish to share.

2. Step Two – SUPPORTS AVAILABLE

The DLP/ASC will offer you support and if you are the person who is the subject of the safeguarding concern, will talk to you about support and counselling organisations who may be able to provide you with the kind of support you need. (*contact details at the back of this leaflet*).

3. Step Three – WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

Once the information has been referred to the PSNI/Social Services the DLP/ASC will:

- Inform the Bishop that an allegation has been received and has been passed on to the statutory authorities and that a file record has been created.
- Engage in ongoing liaison and consultation with the PSNI and Social Services, to ensure that all relevant information has been shared and to monitor the progress of the statutory investigation and any potential implications for the complainant. **(the DLP/ASC does not take part in the statutory investigation of the case)**.
- Make contact with the person about whom the allegation has been made. The timing and the content of this contact with the respondent will be determined and agreed with the Police. This meeting will outline the following:
 - (i) That an allegation has been made and if agreed with the statutory authorities – who made the allegation.
 - (ii) What information is to be shared with, if any, again determined by the statutory authorities.

NB: Given the complexities of some allegations, this process can be lengthy and may take some time to complete.

What if you are unhappy with how your allegation/ concern has been dealt with?

If you are unhappy about the way your allegation or concern has been dealt with by the Safeguarding Office you can raise this complaint through the Safeguarding Office in writing or email directly to the Director of Safeguarding, (details at back of this leaflet).

If the complaint relates to the Director of Safeguarding, then you may communicate in writing or email to the Chancellor of the Diocese.

Contact details

PSNI

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Social Services

The Diocese of Down and Connor is located across four of the Health and Social Care Trusts

Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

Adult Protection, Safeguarding

028 9504 1744

South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust

Adult Protection, Safeguarding

028 9250 1227

Southern Health and Social Care Trust

Adult Protection, Safeguarding

028 3756 4423

Northern Health and Social Care Trust

Adult Protection, Safeguarding

028 9441 3659

Out of Office Hours Social Services Regional

(All Trust Areas) Adult Protection, Safeguarding

028 9504 9999

Down and Connor Safeguarding Office

120 Cliftonville Road, Belfast, BT14 6LA

028 9049 2798

office@soddc.org

Designated Liaison Person/Adult Safeguarding Champion

028 9049 2798

NEXUS NI

Sexual Abuse/Violence Counselling

028 9032 6803

info@nexusinstitute.org

Domestic and Sexual Violence Helpline

0808 802 1414

help@dsahelpline.org

Lifeline Experiencing distress or despair

0808 808 8000

Action on Elder Abuse

080 8808 8141

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