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## **Safeguarding Diocese of Limerick**

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# **Garda Vetting Policy and Procedures for Diocese and Parish**

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**April 2024**

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*Nothing in this policy should be taken to be a legal interpretation of any legislation nor does it confer any obligation or liability on the Diocese of Limerick*

# Diocese of Limerick Vetting Policy and Procedure

## Foreword

Garda vetting is a key element of safe recruitment of all persons involved in relevant ministry at parish and diocesan levels.


In the context of the Catholic Church, vetting is particularly relevant as there is, for example, a legal requirement for vetting for any person who may be involved in any work as a minister or priest, or any other person engaged in the advancement of any religious beliefs to children unless such work or activity is merely incidental to the advancement of religious beliefs to persons who are not children.

Vetting is required for anyone who is 18 years or over and involved in any form of ministry, employed/contracted or volunteering, who has contact with children and/or vulnerable persons which is more than incidental. Those who are aged over 16 years and under 18 years may be vetted, but this can only be carried out with the written consent of their parent/guardian and the young person themselves.

Vetting is not required for persons involved in church ministry whose contact with children and/or vulnerable persons is merely incidental.

This Diocesan Policy and Procedure sets out clearly how vetting, by the National Vetting Bureau, operates in the Diocese of Limerick.

Compliance with these procedures is essential for all diocesan and parish personnel and volunteers in order to ensure, not only compliance with legislation but also as a clear expression of our shared commitment to safeguarding children and vulnerable persons.



**+Brendan Leahy**  
**Bishop of Limerick**

## **Introduction**

The National Vetting Bureau (Children & Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 – 2016 (the “Acts”) makes it mandatory for relevant organisations, to vet certain persons through the National Vetting Bureau prior to allowing those persons to be involved in certain relevant work or activity with children or vulnerable persons.

An organisation shall not, in law, employ, permit or contract with any person to provide relevant work or activities without receiving a vetting disclosure from the National Vetting Bureau. A person who contravenes this obligation shall be guilty of an offence.

The Diocese of Limerick is registered as a ‘relevant organisation’ with the National Vetting Bureau for the purposes of applying for and receiving vetting disclosures. The Diocesan Vetting Service is managed within the Diocesan Safeguarding Service and the Diocese has nominated two Vetting Liaison Persons who are registered with the National Vetting Bureau.

Every person whom the Diocese requests to be vetted has the right to have the basis for this request outlined to them.

At this time the Liaison Persons are Jemma O’Shea and Finola Downes and they can be contacted at [vetting@limerickdiocese.org](mailto:vetting@limerickdiocese.org)

## **Vetting for Diocese/Parishes and Relevant Programmes.**

The Vetting Liaison Persons are authorised to submit applications for vetting disclosures on behalf of the Diocese/Parishes and relevant programmes/ministries and to receive vetting outcomes from the NVB.

## **Vetting for Affiliates**

The Vetting Liaison Persons are authorised to submit applications for vetting disclosures on behalf of another relevant organization, e.g. Primary Schools that have signed service level agreements with the Diocese.

## **Agreement to Share Vetting Information**

The Diocese can also, from time to time, enter into a shared vetting agreement with other relevant organisations for example a religious congregation.

Section 12.3(A) of the Acts allows for such sharing of information as follows: *Where 2 or more relevant organisations jointly agree in writing to the employment, contracting, permitting or placement of a person to undertake relevant work or activities, it shall be a defence in any proceedings brought against a person for an offence under subsection (2) to show that another relevant organisation who was party to the agreement received a vetting disclosure in respect of the employment, contract, permission or placement of the person concerned*

## **Who Needs to be Vetted?**

Any person involved in work or activity on behalf of the Parish/Diocese, with children or vulnerable persons, which is more than incidental must be vetted.

If the involvement in work or activity with children or vulnerable persons is merely incidental to involvement in work or activity with people who are not children or vulnerable persons, then vetting is not required.

## Key Roles Involved in Vetting at Parish Level

### Parish Priest

The Parish Priest is the responsible person for appointing, contracting or permitting a person to be involved in relevant work or activity in a Parish and is responsible for ensuring that, if required, vetting takes place.

Parish Priest should be taken to also refer to the person in charge of a programme of ministry which operates at a diocesan level or across a number of parishes, for example, Director of Lourdes Pilgrimage.

### Lay Designated Signatory

In 2019 the Diocese began the process of inviting Parish Priests to nominate a suitable person to act as the Lay Designated Signatory for Vetting Applications in their parish. The role of a Lay Designated Signatory includes providing information and assistance relating to vetting applications (NVB1 Forms) and maintaining certain parish records in respect of who has been vetted. The Lay Designated Signatory is trained by the Diocesan Vetting Service and signs a confidentiality agreement.

## Key Roles involved in Vetting at Diocesan Level

### Vetting Liaison Person

The Vetting Liaison Person is the person authorised by the Diocese to submit vetting application forms to the National Vetting Bureau and receive disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau.

### Director of Safeguarding

The Director of Safeguarding is authorised by the Bishop to have overall responsibility for the Diocesan Vetting Service.

### General

The procedures for processing vetting applications are set out in the Legislation and in guidance from the National Vetting Bureau. Changes particularly in the vetting application, Form NVB1, may be required from time to time and, therefore, the NVB Form(s) should be downloaded as required from the:

Safeguarding Website at <https://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/vetting/>

The National Vetting Bureau, in accordance with the provisions of the legislation, may disclose both particulars of a criminal record and a statement of certain specified information relating to the person who is the subject of the vetting application or a statement that no such record or specified information exists.

Specified information is information concerning a finding or allegation of harm to another person that is received by the Bureau from An Garda Síochána or certain scheduled organisations in respect of the person and which is of such a nature as to reasonably give rise to a *bona fide* concern that the person may:

- (i) harm any child or vulnerable person,
- (ii) cause any child or vulnerable person to be harmed
- (iii) put any child or vulnerable person at risk of harm
- (iv) attempt to harm any child or vulnerable person or
- (v) incite any other person to harm any child or vulnerable person

## For the Purposes of the Vetting Legislation

“**child**” for the purposes of this legislation means a person under the age of 18 years.

“**Relevant work or activity**” with children in the context of the Diocese/Parishes includes for example:

- Any work as a minister or priest or any other person engaged in the advancement of any religious beliefs to children unless such work or activity is merely incidental to the advancement of religious beliefs to persons who are not children.
- Any work or activity which consists of care or supervision of children unless the care or supervision is merely incidental to the care or supervision of persons who are not children.
- Any work or activity which consists of the provision of educational, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities (whether or not for commercial or any other consideration) to children unless the provision of educational, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities is merely incidental to the provision of educational, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities to persons who are not children.
- Any work or activity which consists of treatment, therapy or counselling provided to a child by a person in the course of that work or activity.

## For the Purposes of the Vetting Legislation

“**Vulnerable person**” for the purpose of this legislation means a person, other than a child, who:-

- a. is suffering from a disorder of the mind, whether as a result of mental illness or dementia.
- b. has an intellectual disability.
- c. is suffering from a physical impairment, whether as a result of injury, illness or age, or
- d. has a physical disability, which is of such a nature or degree.
  - i. as to restrict the capacity of the person to guard himself or herself against harm by another person, or
  - ii. that results in the person requiring assistance with the activities of daily living including dressing, eating, walking, washing and bathing.

“**Relevant work or activity**” with vulnerable persons in the context of the Diocese/Parishes includes for example:

- Any work as a minister or priest or any other person engaged in the advancement of any religious beliefs to vulnerable persons unless such work or activity is merely incidental to the advancement of religious beliefs to persons who are not vulnerable persons.
- Any work or activity which consists of the care (including the provision of health and personal social services and essential domestic services) of vulnerable persons unless the care is merely incidental to the care of persons who are not vulnerable persons.
- Any work or activity which consists of the provision of educational, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities (whether or not for commercial or any other consideration) to vulnerable persons unless the provision of educational, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities is merely incidental to the provision of educational, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities to persons who are not vulnerable persons
- Any work or activity which consists of treatment, therapy or counselling provided to a vulnerable person by a person in the course of that work or activity.

## **The Diocesan Vetting Services Provides**

A full vetting service to Parishes/Diocese in respect of people who are required to be vetted.

### **In relation to Church Ministry, vetting is required for:**

Anyone who is 18 years or over and involved in any form of ministry, employed/contracted or volunteering, who has contact with children and/or vulnerable persons which is **more than incidental**. Those who are aged over 16 years and under 18 years may be vetted, but this can only be carried out with the written consent of their parent/guardian and the young person themselves.

Vetting is **not** required for persons involved in church ministry whose contact with children and/or vulnerable persons is **merely incidental**.

### **Deciding Who Needs to be vetted in a Parish.**

The Parish Priest is the responsible person for appointing, contracting or permitting a person to be involved in relevant work or activity in a Parish and is responsible for ensuring that, if required, vetting takes place.

The Parish Priest, with the agreement of the Diocesan Vetting Service, may identify a suitable person in their Parish, such as the Parish Secretary/Safeguarding Rep, who is willing to take on the role of Lay Designated Signatory for Vetting Applications.

The Parish Priest at all times remains the responsible person for vetting in a Parish. The person who has been appointed as the Lay Designated Signatory for Vetting Applications will be trained and supported by the Diocesan Vetting Service.

It is important to consider the actual activity that the person is involved in when deciding who needs to be vetted.

### **Examples of Roles that typically will require Vetting.**

- Clergy (Bishops, Priests, Deacons), Chaplains.
- Parish Safeguarding Reps:
- Sacristans responsible for Altar Servers.
- Supervisors of Altar Servers.
- Eucharistic Ministers who bring the Eucharist to homes, hospitals, care homes and other institutions where there are children and/or vulnerable persons present.
- Leaders of youth ministry and youth liturgy groups including, for example, youth choirs, parish run youth clubs, Pope John Paul II Awards.
- Leaders of Communion Programme: "Do This in Memory of Me".
- Leaders of Confirmation Programme: "You shall be my witnesses".
- Those whose ministry, work or activity involves the coaching, mentoring, counselling, teaching or training of children and/or vulnerable persons.
- All other roles which involve a person in activities with children and/or vulnerable persons which are more than incidental.

**Vetting is not required for Church personnel whose contact with children and/or vulnerable persons in unregulated activity is 'merely incidental'.**

## Examples of Roles that typically may Not Require Vetting

- Readers of the Word.
- Those present in the Sacristy who don't have an official role with children and/or vulnerable persons. *(Note: However, these persons should never be left alone with children and/or vulnerable persons).*
- Eucharistic Ministers who only distribute the Eucharist within the main body of the church during public Mass or other liturgical celebrations
- Sacristans who have no involvement with children/vulnerable persons
- Collectors, Car park attendants, gardeners, cleaners, stewards etc.

## Foreign Police Clearance for Parishes.

The National Vetting Bureau managed by An Garda Síochána only provide Disclosures in respect of the island of Ireland.

In this context people wishing to be involved in ministry on behalf of the Diocese or with parishes in the Diocese, with children or adults who may be vulnerable, and who since the age of 18 have spent one year or more in any country outside the island of Ireland will need to be the subject of Foreign Police Clearance. In completing the (NVB2) online vetting form, the list of addresses lived in for more than a year outside Ireland should be included. The NVB2 vetting form will then be dealt with by the National Vetting Bureau in respect of Irish addresses and the Diocesan Vetting office use the foreign addresses provided to determine if Foreign Police Clearance is required. If so, the Vetting office will make contact with you explaining how to obtain this. All matters relating to Foreign Police Clearance will be dealt with by the Limerick Diocesan Vetting office. Contact: [vetting@limerickdiocese.org](mailto:vetting@limerickdiocese.org) or Limerick Diocesan Centre, Vetting Services, St. Munchins, Corbally, Limerick. If your Foreign Police Clearance contains an adverse disclosure, this may affect your eligibility to volunteer with the Diocese or parishes in the Diocese.

## The Role of the Lay Designated Signatory.

In 2019, the Diocese began the process of inviting Parish Priests to nominate a suitable person to act as the Lay Designated Signatory for Vetting Applications in their parish. The role of a Lay Designated Signatory includes providing information and assistance to vetting applicants with vetting applications, checking and signing vetting applications (Form NVB1), maintaining certain parish records in respect of who has been vetted; ensuring that appropriate documentation is sent to the Vetting Liaison Person during the vetting application process. The Lay Designated Signatory is trained by the Diocesan Vetting Service and signs a confidentiality agreement before carrying out their role.

The role of the Lay Designated Signatory for Vetting Applications includes:

- Providing information regarding the vetting application process i.e. providing a copy of Guidelines for Completing the NVB1 Vetting Invitation and Information in relation to the e-Vetting Process and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Handout.
- Advising the applicant to contact the Diocesan Vetting Service at [vetting@limerickdiocese.org](mailto:vetting@limerickdiocese.org) if their queries are not addressed in the FAQ handout or if any further advice is requested.
- Assisting the applicant when completing Section 1 & 2 of the NVB1 Form, as required
- Checking Section 1 & 2 of the NVB1 Form to ensure accuracy, legibility etc.
- Validating proof of photographic identification and proof of current address documents *(on behalf of the Diocese)* provided by the applicant and attaching copies of same to the NVB1 Form. Original documents should be returned to applicant in each case.
- Informing the applicant that they will receive an email directly from the National Vetting Bureau containing a link to the online NVB1 which must be completed within 30 days of receipt.
- Completing Section 3 of the NVB1
- Submitting the original NVB1 Form with attachments to the Diocesan Vetting Service for processing to the National Vetting Bureau

- Filing correspondence of confirmation of vetting in respect of each applicant in a safe, secure and confidential manner in the Parish Office/Pastoral Unit Office (*This information can be subject to audit by the National Vetting Bureau*)
- Informing the Diocesan Vetting Service when a person ceases to be involved in relevant work or activity.

The Vetting Service Liaison Person(s) will support the Lay Designated Signatory as follows:

- Provide an information training session to all Lay Designated Signatories to include information on data protection.
- Acknowledge receipt of each vetting application by email.
- Process Vetting Applications received in a timely manner.
- Forward correspondence confirming an applicant's vetting to the Parish Priest c/o the Lay Designated Signatory at the Parish Office when the National Vetting Bureau has completed the vetting process.
- Provide the Lay Designated Signatory with assistance and advice relating solely to the processing of Vetting Invitations.
- Make available any relevant updates/information in respect of vetting to the Lay Designated Signatory

### **Re-Vetting**

The section of the legislation which deals with re-vetting has not been implemented. The Dioceses of Limerick has adopted a general 3 Year Re-Vetting Policy. The Bishop may require more frequent vetting for a particular role if considered appropriate.

The Vetting Database will be fully operational from 2021 and will alert the Vetting Liaison Person when re-vetting is required. The Liaison Person will alert the Parish Priest/Lay Designated Signatory when a volunteer is required to be re-vetted in their Parish.

Pending the enactment of Section 20 the Vetting Legislation the time period for re-vetting may be extended in certain circumstances i.e. pandemic etc. by the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding.

### **How the Diocesan Vetting Process Operates**

Applications for Garda Vetting are submitted electronically to the National Vetting Bureau in a process known as e-Vetting. This e-Vetting process removes the lengthy paper application and replaces it with an electronic form. As the process is online it requires that the applicant has access to a valid email address and access to the internet.

### **Vetting Invitation Form**

[https://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/sites/lds/assets/File/2024\\_NVB1\\_Parish\\_Vetting\\_form\\_with\\_Police\\_Clearance\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/sites/lds/assets/File/2024_NVB1_Parish_Vetting_form_with_Police_Clearance_FINAL.pdf)

By completing the Vetting Invitation Form (NVB1) the applicant consents to the:

- Sharing of identification documentation or copies of such documents with the Parish Priest/Lay Designated Signatory/Diocesan Vetting Service as appropriate.
- Making of the application to the National Vetting Bureau by the Diocesan Vetting Service.
- Disclosure of information by the National Vetting Bureau to the Vetting Liaison Person.
- Sharing the disclosed information by the Vetting Liaison Person with the Parish/Diocese.



## Process

- A copy of the Vetting Invitation Form (NVB1) and associated guidance for completion should be provided to the applicant by the Parish Priest/Lay Designated Signatory.
- This is available to download at [https://www.limerickdiocesesafeguarding.com/sites/lds/assets/File/2024\\_NVb1\\_Parish\\_Vetting\\_form\\_with\\_Police\\_Clearance\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.limerickdiocesesafeguarding.com/sites/lds/assets/File/2024_NVb1_Parish_Vetting_form_with_Police_Clearance_FINAL.pdf)
- The NVB1 Form may also be requested from [vetting@limerickdiocese.org](mailto:vetting@limerickdiocese.org)
- Information regarding the process involved in the making of a vetting application should be provided to the applicant by the Parish Priest/Lay Designated Signatory

***NVB1 Forms are regularly updated, and you are advised to download forms as required and not to batch print. It is important to submit current forms to the Vetting Service.***

## Section 1 & 2 of the NVB1 Form must be completed by the Applicant.

The applicant must:

- Read the Guidelines prior to completing Section 1 & 2
- Provide details which are legible and accurate.
- Provide a valid Email Address
- *(If the applicant does not have their own email address, they can provide an email of a friend or family member. If the applicant uses a family member or friend's email address, the applicant should be informed that personal information regarding him/her will be sent to this email address and given details as to the nature of that personal information.*
- A full description of the role being applied for must be supplied and not just "volunteer", for example, 'Leader of Children's Choir', Eucharistic Minister visiting vulnerable people etc.
- Provide *original documents of **\*photographic proof of identification and proof of current address*** to the Parish Priest/Lay Designated Signatory for validation on behalf of the Diocese. (Forms will be photocopied and originals returned to the applicant).

### **\*Photographic proof of Identity & Current Address**

The applicant must produce at least one original form of identification to the Parish Priest/Lay Designated Signatory and one document evidencing current address so the identity and current address of the applicant can be validated. For example: -

- Photographic ID  
i.e. current passport or new format driver's license
- Proof of Current Address  
i.e. original utility bill or bank statement (issued within the last six months)

If these documents are not available other forms of identification/proof of current address may be used as outlined in Section 3 of the Vetting Invitation Form (NVB1).

## Section 3 of the NVB1 Form must be completed by the Parish Priest or their Lay Designated Signatory

On behalf of the Diocese the Parish Priest or Lay Designated Signatory must:

- Validate the original documents of photographic identify and proof of current addresses provided by the applicant and identify them at Section 3 of the Vetting Invitation Form (NVB1);
- Take a copy of the documents and attach them to the completed Vetting Invitation Form (NVB1);
- Return the original documents to the applicant.
- Post the original NVB1 and attached copies of document to the Diocesan Vetting Service at the Limerick Diocesan Centre, St. Munchins, Corbally, Limerick.

## Diocesan Vetting Service

The Vetting Service will: -

- Electronically process the NVB1 Form to the National Vetting Bureau.
- Retain the original NVB1 and copies of documentation in a secure location at the Diocesan Vetting Service in line with the Diocese Data Retention Policy.

## National Vetting Bureau Communication with Applicant

The National Vetting Bureau will

- Email the applicant directly inviting them to verify their details, as entered by the Vetting Liaison Person, and to complete the on-line form NVB2. This is referred to as e-Vetting.  
*(e-Vetting must be completed on-line within 30 days or the link will become inactive. A significant number of people fail to complete the online form within the required 30 days and therefore the importance of this should be stressed to each applicant)*

The Garda vetting process will only begin when the NVB2 Form is submitted online.

A key feature of the e-Vetting system is that an applicant can track progress of their own vetting application online and can see when their application has been processed and returned to the Diocesan Vetting Service.

## National Vetting Bureau Communication with Diocesan Vetting Service

Once the applicant completes the online e-Vetting process the National Vetting Bureau will

- Notify the Vetting Liaison Person who will review the application and submit it for processing to the National Vetting Bureau.
- Process the application when it has been reviewed by the Vetting Liaison Person and notify Diocesan Vetting Service when the disclosure is available.

There are two types of disclosures, the vast majority are NIL disclosures and some Actual disclosures.

## Diocesan Vetting Service Communication with the Parish Priest/Lay Designated Signatory

The Diocesan Vetting Service will

- Inform the Parish Priest/Lay Designated Signatory of the vetting outcome by letter.
- Retain the Vetting Disclosure with the applicants NVB1 Form *(in line with the Diocesan Retention Policy)*

## NIL Vetting Disclosures

A NIL Vetting Disclosure indicates that there is no criminal record or specified information in relation to the person.

### Actual Vetting Disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau

Two types of information may be disclosed to Diocesan Vetting Service:

- Criminal record information.
- Specified information.

The Director of Safeguarding is authorised to assess the disclosure and make an appropriate determination regarding the suitability of the applicant for the role.

The Director of Safeguarding will: -

- Arrange to make a copy of the disclosure available to the applicant (**Appendix 1**).
- Ordinarily, discuss the disclosure with the applicant and with the Parish Priest.
- Make a determination as to whether the person can act in the role and inform the applicant, the parish  
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priest and Vetting Liaison Person of the decision.

- If the applicant wishes to withdraw his/her application at this time they should inform the Director of Safeguarding in writing of their decision.
- Arrange to retain any relevant correspondence on file.

If the applicant maintains that the disclosure details are not correct the Diocesan Vetting Service will inform the National Vetting Bureau who will assess the information and provide an outcome to the Diocesan Vetting Service.

The Director of Safeguarding may obtain relevant advice and assistance as deemed necessary. This is done on an anonymised basis.

## **Appeals**

If the applicant wishes to appeal a decision not to employ, contract or engage them, an appeals process may be used. The Diocesan Vetting Service will inform the applicant in writing of the process of the appeal.

In respect of decisions based solely on the vetting disclosure, the appeal can only be in respect of this information. Appeals will be directed by the applicant to the Chairperson of the Appeals Committee who is the Diocesan Secretary/General Manager at Limerick Diocesan Centre.

The making of an appeal will require that the information disclosed by the National Vetting Bureau, and any further details provided by the applicant, is shared with the Appeals Committee. It may also arise that in order to fully assess information provided by the applicant, for example to explain the background to a conviction, the applicant may need to give the appeals committee further permission to discuss the information with relevant authorities. The consent of the applicant will be required as part of this process. If the applicant does not consent the process will not proceed.

Appeals will be made in writing but may also involve an oral hearing.

The role of the Appeals Committee is to make a final determination in relation to the application.

## **Consent regarding Retention Personal Information by the Diocesan Vetting Service**

In completing the NVB1 Form the applicant is:

- Confirming that they have been informed of the process involved in the making of the application for a vetting disclosure.
- Giving signed consent to the making of the application.
- Giving signed consent to the disclosure of information by the Parish Priest/Lay Designated Person to the Vetting Liaison Person and by the National Vetting Bureau to the Vetting Liaison Person.
- Giving signed consent to the sharing of the disclosed information from the National Vetting Bureau with the Director of Safeguarding and Parish/Diocese.

## **Retention of Information**

The retention of certain information by the Diocese is a requirement of the National Vetting Bureau in order that it can meet its functions of ensuring Diocesan compliance with the statutory process set out in the legislation.

When an individual is Garda vetted by the Diocese for a role in the Diocese or in a parish in the Diocese, the individual's name, contact details and data generated during the vetting process are stored and retained in our database. This data includes current address your date of birth, your role within the Diocese /parish, the date and outcome of your vetting. We process this information for administration purposes in connection with your vetting and also to determine when you next require vetting.

Only a very small number of employees have access to the vetting section of our database. Each employee has their own secure password for entry to the database. We use the Azure database operated by Microsoft to store and retain your information. This is stored in the cloud.

### **Personal Information - People who remain engaged in relevant work or activity.**

While a person remains engaged in relevant work or activity in the Diocese/Parish the following documentation is retained by the Diocesan Vetting Service: -

- Original Form NVB1
- Copy of ID documents
- Copy of Vetting Disclosure
- Any documentation provided by the applicant to the Parish/Pastoral Area or Diocesan Vetting Service in relation to the vetting application.

The documents will be retained securely by the Diocesan Vetting Service. The National Vetting Bureau and certain authorised personnel of the Vetting Service shall have access to the retained documents.

During this period, the Diocesan Vetting Service also has access to the history of each vetting application on the Garda e-Vetting System. This allows the Diocesan Vetting Service to see the procedural steps taken in respect of each vetting application. This information is available to the Diocesan Vetting Service for seven years from the date of vetting once the Garda vetting reference number is retained by the vetting service.

### **Actual Disclosures Information**

In the event that the vetting disclosure provides actual information and the person withdraws their application to be involved in relevant work or activity, the following information will be retained by the Diocesan Vetting Service

- Section 1 and 2 of the NVB1 Form
- Note of withdrawal of the application

If the Director of Safeguarding determines that having assessed the information disclosed by the National Vetting Bureau, the person can be involved in relevant work or activity then, usually with the agreement of the person, the following information will be retained by the Diocesan Vetting Service while the person is still engaged in relevant work or activities by a parish/the Diocese:

- Original Form NVB1
- Copy of ID documents
- Copy of Vetting Disclosure
- Associated correspondence between the applicant and the Vetting Service
- Note of determination

Previous Vetting Application

- Section 1 and 2 of their previous NVB1 Form
- Note of determination

If a determination is made not to allow the applicant to be involved in relevant work or activity, the following information is retained by the Diocesan Vetting Service:

- Section 1 and 2 of the NVB1 Form
- A note of the determination

The documents will be retained securely by the Diocesan Vetting Service. The National Vetting Bureau and certain limited personnel of the Vetting Service shall have access to the retained documents.

The Diocesan Vetting Service has access to the history of each vetting application submitted by the Diocese on the Garda e-Vetting System. This allows the Diocesan Vetting Service to see the procedural steps taken in

respect of each vetting application. This information is available to the Diocesan Vetting Service for seven years from the date of vetting once the Garda vetting reference number is retained by the vetting service.

### **Joint Vetting Agreement (Appendix 2)**

A copy of all joint vetting agreements will be permanently retained by the Diocesan Vetting Service.

### **Diocesan Vetting Service**

- Executive responsibility is held by the Director of Safeguarding

### **Vetting Appeals Committee**

The Vetting appeals committee will review decisions regarding suitability.

General Manager/Diocesan Secretary (Chair) at this time is Ms. Catherine Kelly,

Canon Lawyer at this time is Fr. Richard Keane

Safeguarding Trainer at this time Mr. Chirs Sheridan.

Any other person who may, from time to time, be appointed by the Bishop of Limerick

### **Quality Assurance**

The Diocesan Vetting Service works collaboratively with the National Vetting Bureau to ensure best practice is maintained.

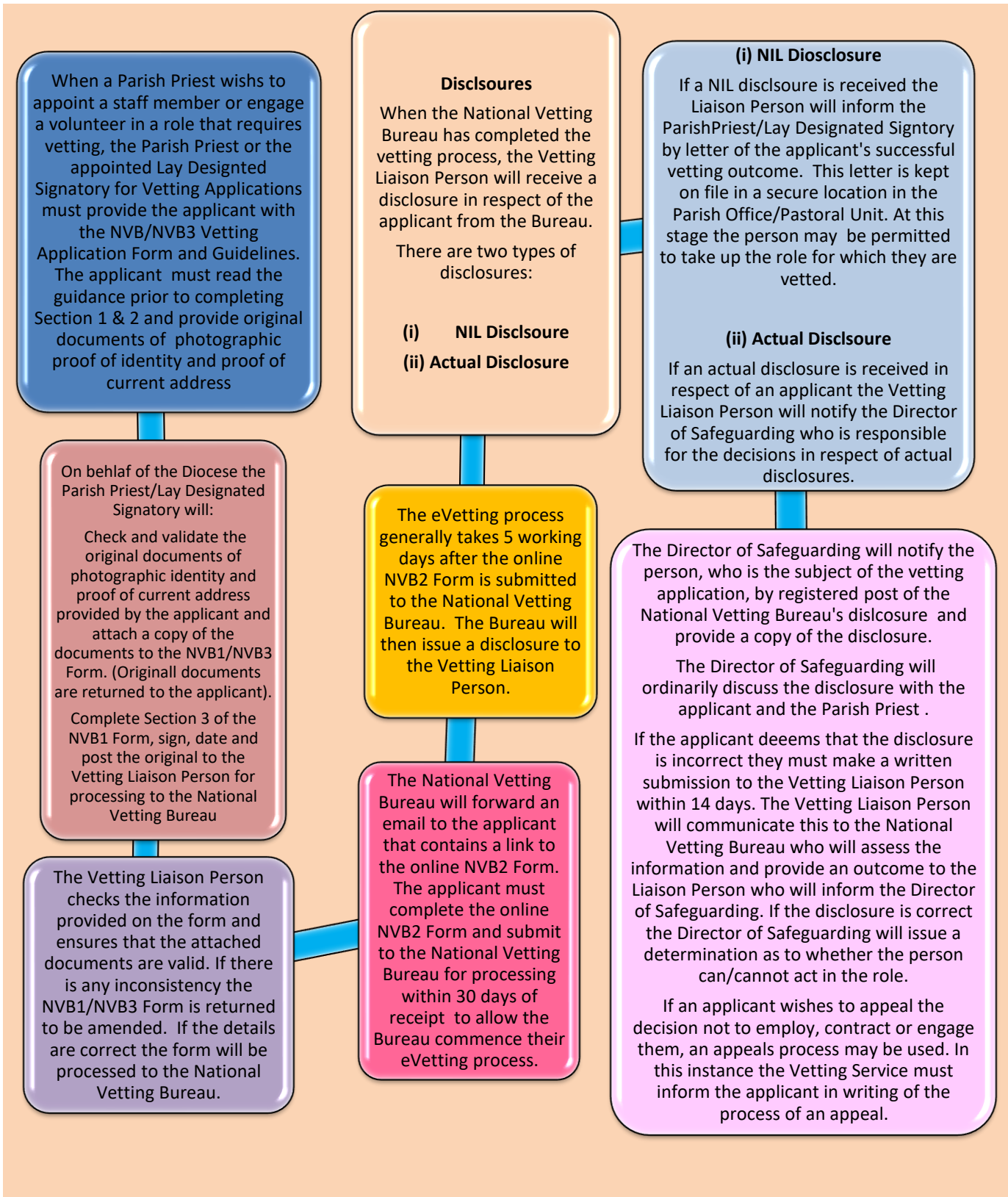
The Diocesan Vetting Liaison Person will

- Review every vetting application NVB 1 submitted by a Parish/Diocesan Service and ensure that all the necessary information is available prior to making a submission to the National Vetting Bureau.
- Inform both Parish Priest/Lay Designated Signatories of any relevant change in legislation, policy and procedures and will update its policies and procedures.
- Maintain a Vetting Advisory Committee to have oversight of the performance of the vetting service.
- Develop and operate a capacity to identify when relevant persons require re-vetting.
- Conduct an annual review of all practices.

### **Expired Vetting Invitations (Appendix 3)**

On a monthly basis the Diocesan Vetting Service will conduct a quality assurance exercise to identify any vetting applications that have not been completed online by an applicant and have therefore expired. The Parish Priest/Lay Designated Signatory will be informed of the expired applications relating to their Parish/Diocesan Service by email. If they wish to continue the vetting process for the applicant, they must email [vetting@limerickdiocese.org](mailto:vetting@limerickdiocese.org) requesting that the National Vetting Bureau re-issue a link to the applicant. This email should include the applicant's name, date of birth and email address. The Vetting Service will then request the new link. If a request to re-issue a link to the applicant is not received within 14 days, the expired vetting applications will be safely destroyed.

## Overview of the Diocesan Vetting Process for Parish/Church Ministry



***A person is not permitted to carry out relevant work or activities until the Vetting Service confirm, to the Parish Priest/Lay Designated Signatory that the persons vetting has been successfully completed***

## Appendix 1 Letter of Disclosure



diocese  
of limerick  
our catholic community

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

Date:

A Chara,

I refer to your application for vetting in connection with the role of ..... in .....Parish.

I am attaching a copy of the vetting disclosure received from the NVB for your information.

It is my responsibility to consider this disclosure and to determine whether it is appropriate for you to be allowed participate in the role of ..... within your parish and to communicate my decision to the Parish Priest.

If you wish to discuss this with me, prior to my making a decision, please contact me

Tel: 087 3233564

Email: [ger.crowley@limerickdiocese.org](mailto:ger.crowley@limerickdiocese.org)

I would welcome any observations or additional information that you may wish me to consider before making a recommendation.

Yours sincerely,

Ger Crowley  
Director of Safeguarding

**Limerick Diocesan Centre, St. Munchins, Corbally, Limerick.**  
**Tel: (061) 350000 email: [vetting@limerickdiocese.org](mailto:vetting@limerickdiocese.org)**  
**website: [www.limerickdiocese.org](http://www.limerickdiocese.org)**

**CRA 20014728**

**CHY 7140**

"Come and see the works of God tremendous his deeds among us" - Ps. 66 (65)

## Appendix 2 Joint Vetting Agreement

### Agreement to Share Vetting Information

This section must be completed by the Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Limerick

This agreement regarding Garda vetting and sharing of disclosures is between:

(A) The Catholic Diocese of Limerick

And

(B) \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of the other Organisation

This agreement sets out the arrangements for obtaining Garda vetting disclosures and the sharing of information obtained through a vetting disclosure, to determine the suitability of and to permit members of B) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ to minister in the Catholic Diocese of Limerick.

Section 12.3(A) allows for such sharing of information as follows: *Where 2 or more relevant organisations jointly agree in writing to the employment, contracting, permitting or placement of a person to undertake relevant work or activities, it shall be a defence in any proceedings brought against a person for an offence under subsection (2) to show that another relevant organisation who was party to the agreement received a vetting disclosure in respect of the employment, contract, permission or placement of the person concerned. National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016.*

If a person is vetted by organisation B \_\_\_\_\_ and he/she and

organisation B \_\_\_\_\_ wishes for this person to be permitted to minister in the Catholic Diocese of Limerick, then the following procedure will apply.

1. In order to obtain his/her original vetting by organisation B \_\_\_\_\_ the person will have given their consent for the Vetting to be undertaken. In addition to that Garda vetting consent requirement the person will now need to fill out the consent form attached which permits the sharing of a copy of the individual's vetting disclosure between organisation B \_\_\_\_\_ and Catholic Diocese of Limerick. Responsibility for getting this additional consent and keeping a record of it will remain with organisation B \_\_\_\_\_ and by forwarding a copy of the disclosure to the Diocese of Limerick, Organisation B warrants and confirms that it has received such consent.
2. Organisation B shall ensure that the copy of the vetting disclosure given to the Catholic Diocese of Limerick is the most up-to-date vetting disclosure of the individual concerned and is an exact copy of the disclosure received from the National Garda Vetting Bureau relating to the individual concerned.
3. Upon receipt of a copy of vetting disclosure, the Catholic Diocese of Limerick reserves the right to refuse to permit the person to minister within the Catholic Diocese of Limerick.
4. Only vetting disclosures dated subsequent to April 2016 satisfy the terms and spirit of this Agreement.
5. The conduct of the vetting process and the processing by both parties of the results of the vetting and verification processes shall be undertaken at all times in accordance with the requirements of the National Vetting Bureau legislation, Data Protection legislation and the Garda Vetting Bureau Code of Practice.
6. Without prejudice to the generality of paragraph 5 above, the parties agree that: -
  - a. They shall jointly decide on the method which is to be used by Organisation B to send the copy disclosure to the Diocese of Limerick. In deciding what method to use, the parties will take their obligations under data protection legislation to ensure the confidentiality and accuracy of the information into account.



- b. They shall ensure that the copy disclosure is used fairly and lawfully by the Diocese and by Organisation B respectively. Both parties shall ensure that they have legitimate grounds for processing the data contained in the disclosure under data protection legislation.
  - c. They shall ensure that they each have in place appropriate technical and organisational measures to protect the confidentiality of the copy disclosure and, in the case of Organisation B, the consent in the form attached, in accordance with data protection legislation.
  - d. The Diocese of Limerick shall hold the copy vetting disclosure and any associated documentation only for so long as is necessary for the fulfilment of the purpose for which it obtains it i.e. determining the suitability of an individual to minister in the Diocese and to permit an individual to minister in the Diocese. The period of retention shall be determined by the Diocese of Limerick with reference to its safeguarding and other legal obligations.
  - e. Any data to be deleted or disposed of under this Agreement shall be deleted or disposed of using secure and confidential methods.
  - f. They shall assist one another in complying with their respective obligations and the rights of data subjects under data protection legislation and shall maintain records of all data subject requests received.
  - g. In the event of a personal data breach, where a report of the breach to either the Data Protection Commission or to the affected data subjects is required under data protection legislation, each Party shall comply with its obligations to make such a report. Where appropriate, each Party shall inform the other Party of any such breach without delay, irrespective of whether it is required to be reported to the Data Protection Commission or to data subjects.
7. The Diocese of Limerick reserves the right to withdraw from this Agreement if the rights and entitlements of vetting subjects are breached or due to breach of vetting procedures or malpractice. In those circumstances, the Diocese of Limerick shall be entitled to retain such documentation as it has received prior to the termination of the Agreement, where the retention of the documentation is required pursuant to data protection legislation, safeguarding requirements or other legal obligations.
8. This Agreement shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of Ireland. Any dispute, controversy, proceedings or claim between the Parties relating to this Agreement, shall fall within the jurisdiction of the courts of Ireland.
9. This Agreement contains the entire agreement between the Parties with respect to this subject matter and may not be modified except by a further agreement in writing signed by the duly authorised representatives of both parties.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Bishop of Limerick**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Authorised Person on behalf of the organisation**

# Agreement to Share Vetting Information Consent Form

This section must be completed by each member of organisation B  
\_\_\_\_\_ and a copy provided to the Diocese of Limerick

I \_\_\_\_\_ (*insert name*) give my consent for my Garda Disclosure to be shared with the Diocese of Limerick to enable me to carry out relevant work relating to children and vulnerable adults as defined in the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016.

I understand that and I give my consent to a copy of my vetting disclosure including any adverse outcomes being shared with the Catholic Diocese of Limerick in order that the Diocese of Limerick may determine my suitability to engage in ministry within the Diocese without the need to conduct an additional vetting process.

I also agree to the Diocese of Limerick retaining a copy of the vetting disclosure for as long as is necessary in accordance with safeguarding and other legal obligations. I acknowledge that this may be for a significant period of time.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness by authorised person Organisation B

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Appendix 3 Expired Vetting Invitations



diocese  
of limerick  
our catholic community

### PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

**Date**

**Re: Expired Vetting Invitation NVB 1 - Parish**

A Chara,

I refer to your recent NVB1 Application regarding vetting Ms/Mr .....  
for the role of..... in your Parish.

The National Vetting Bureau provided a link to the online application via the email address the applicant provided on the NVB1 Form. The applicant did not complete this link within the 30-day allotted period and the link has now been made inactive by the National Vetting Bureau.

**Therefore, this applicant has not been vetted.**

You will be aware of your legal requirement and responsibility “not to allow” a person to be engaged in relevant work or activity as defined in the legislation without having completed the vetting process.

Yours sincerely,

Vetting Liaison Person

**Limerick Diocesan Centre, St. Munchins, Corbally, Limerick.**  
**Tel: (061) 350000 email: [vetting@limerickdiocese.org](mailto:vetting@limerickdiocese.org)**  
**website: [www.limerickdiocese.org](http://www.limerickdiocese.org)**

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