

RESPONSIBLE MINISTRY PROGRAM

*"Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these
who are members of my family, you did it to me." (Matt. 26:40)*

Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Ottawa

2008

January 7, 2008

Dear Father,

In order to provide the highest possible level of safety and security to everyone involved in parish ministry, the Archdiocese of Ottawa has developed a screening policy for all staff and volunteers serving in the Archdiocese. Screening is designed to create and maintain a safe environment for all. The decision to develop and implement such a policy is based on values that are of paramount importance to everyone who serves the needs of the people of God. Values such as *trust, justice* and *accountability* form the basis of this screening called *Responsible Ministry*.

The screening process assures that the most suitable match is made between volunteers and the ministries available. Screening measures are developed in order to minimize the risks to persons receiving assistance, as well as those serving in parish ministry. It is important to note that it is the nature of the ministry and the risks involved that dictate the need for screening, not the character of those involved in the ministry. Factors such as participants, activities, setting, and supervision determine the level of risk involved. For example, ministry to the sick, involving one to one interaction between a volunteer or staff member and a frail elderly person in his/her home will be designated as "high risk" ministry while an adult prayer group meeting in the parish hall can be considered a "low risk" activity. All parish ministries will be assigned a risk level and the appropriate screening measures for that level will be taken.

Risk management endeavours are designed to identify risks and problems which might arise and then to take steps to avoid, control, eliminate and minimize those risks for everyone concerned. Ask the critical question: what could go wrong and how could it be avoided? Even well-intentioned persons may overstep boundaries and, in doing so, cause harm to vulnerable persons.

The screening process, which was originally presented to you at Pastoral Days in February 2001, and which has been operating as a draft policy since October 2001, will become a permanent measure in the operation of our Archdiocese and all staff and volunteers who serve in the Archdiocese will become part of the process. With this letter be advised that the Responsible Ministry Program for the Archdiocese is formally promulgated effective this date. It is expected that all parishes will establish a volunteer screening committee and be actively involved in the Responsible Ministry Program.

The Policies and Procedures Manual for this program is attached.

Terrence Prendergast, S.J.
Archbishop of Ottawa

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

For

RESPONSIBLE MINISTRY PROGRAM

**A Resource Book for all persons involved in Ministry in the
Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Ottawa, English Sector**

2008

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SECTION 1

POLICY

PREAMBLE

The Roman Catholic Faith Community of the Archdiocese of Ottawa is intent on offering appropriate, helpful and safe programs to the community. Experience has shown that most people who offer their time, talent and energy to help in offering these programs serve with love and dedication and do great good.

However, we also are aware that certain people take advantage of organizations that have lax, or non-existent screening procedures. They gain access to vulnerable persons, win their confidence and trust, and bring immeasurable harm to them and their families.

Our faith community can better protect those who minister in our parishes and diocese through the development, adoption, and implementation of thorough, appropriate, consistent and on-going screening measures, for volunteers and paid staff.

At all times, the goal -- protection and safety of our people, our volunteers, our paid-staff and our Church -- will guide our intentions and actions.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

It is the purpose of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Ottawa

1. To safeguard, in all respects, all of those to whom we minister, but most especially the vulnerable.
2. To ensure the integrity, safety and reputation of our volunteers and paid staff.
3. To ensure that, as a faith community, we fulfill all of our obligations.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. The Archdiocese of Ottawa, English Sector, shall develop a screening policy and procedures for all staff and volunteers serving in the diocese.
2. The Archdiocese shall provide training sessions and resource materials to the pastoral regions to assist in setting up Volunteer Screening Committees in each parish.

PROTOCOL FOR ALL POSITIONS

All paid and volunteer positions within the Church will have the following procedures:

- Description of the ministry
- Invitation and selection process
- Appropriate training
- Support and feedback

PLAN

The development of the **Responsible Ministry** plan for volunteers and paid staff is an integral part of diocesan operations. **Responsible Ministry** will be a permanent feature of diocesan and parish life.

All questions or difficulties in arriving at an acceptable solution, should be referred to the Regional Vicar responsible for the parish concerned.

RESPONSIBLE MINISTRY DIRECTIVES

Frequently Asked Questions on Record Management and Criminal Record checks

The following responses clarify matters on Records Management for the English Sector of the Archdiocese of Ottawa (page number referenced to resource binder):

Record Management

1. *What records do you keep for low-risk volunteers?*

The following documents are kept in the file:

- Ministry Position Descriptors (P. 2.1)
- Completed Volunteer Information Form (P. 5.1–5.4)
- Signed Ministry Covenant Form (P. 5.11)
- Ongoing, Completed Support and Feedback Form (P. 6.3)

2. *What records do you keep for medium and high-risk volunteers?*

The following documents are kept in the file:

- Ministry Position Descriptors (P. 2.1)
- Completed Volunteer Information Form (P. 5.1-5.4)
- Completed Reference Letters (P. 5.4)
- Signed Criminal Record Check Consent Form (P. 5.4)
- Criminal Record Check Report which the Pastor has placed in a sealed envelope and is marked "Confidential" (for those 18 years and older)
- Signed Ministry Covenant Form (P. 5.11)
- Ongoing, Completed Support and Feedback Form (P. 6.3)

3. *What additional document may be included in the volunteer's file?*

- Letters of praise/appreciation
- Awards
- Certificates of Training
- Information the Volunteer would like added (i.e. recognition letters, etc)

4. *Who keeps the record and where?*

The file remains the property of the Parish/Diocese. All files are kept and updated while the volunteer is in a ministry position at the Parish. The file on screening and ongoing service should be kept at the Parish for **ten (10)** years after a person has ceased her or his ministry and then sent to the Archdiocese of Ottawa, to be archived. The original documents should be kept in the volunteer file. All records are to be kept in the parish office in a **locked filing cabinet**.

5. Who has access to the volunteer files?

The files gathered for the purposes of screening will be accessible only by the Pastor or designate and the volunteer applicant.

6. What about confidentiality?

A volunteer has the right to know and to expect that the sharing of personal information remains confidential. All information gathered either verbally or in writing is to be held in the strictest confidence. Only the volunteer applicant, pastor or designate and the screening committee members are to have access to the information gathered for the purpose of screening. A volunteer may request to examine his or her own file at any time and may insert personal documentation to support their ministry involvement in the parish.

7. How often does a criminal record check need to be renewed?

Parishes usually renew their volunteer ministry teams each year in September. If a criminal record check has been completed on a volunteer, it will not be necessary to renew the check each year unless the personal circumstances of the volunteer have changed and a check is deemed necessary.

SECTION 2

VOLUNTEER MINISTRY DESCRIPTORS

PROCEDURES FOR VOLUNTEER MINISTRY DESCRIPTORS

A volunteer ministry descriptor is a powerful and necessary tool since it is used to define the tasks of a ministry and to set ground rules for everyone involved in your programs. Ministry descriptors need not be lengthy but they must set guidelines and boundaries as well as define the inherent risk. If your parish already possesses ministry descriptors, they may only need to be adapted to meet the criteria of a responsible ministry descriptor. The following points should be considered when creating a responsible ministry descriptor. Some points may be combined in the descriptor or may be inapplicable. Be sure to include general do's and don'ts related to the position. For example, if a volunteer is not to visit seniors alone, make sure that condition is clearly stated in the volunteer ministry descriptor. It is difficult to create generic descriptors since each parish may assign different responsibilities, boundaries or training to the same ministry. Those that are already participating in the ministries in your parish are best equipped to create their own ministry descriptors. It could be the responsibility of the parish council or another designated group to compile the descriptors and check to ensure the descriptors include all the necessary information.

COMPONENT CHECKLIST

- Title of ministry
- Participant group
- Length of term of ministry appointment
- Goals of ministry
- Outline of responsibility
- Activities and tasks associated with the ministry
- Boundaries and limits to the ministry
- Skills, experience and qualification required
- Personal traits and qualities needed or desired
- Orientation and training available
- Support supervision and evaluation provided
- Mandatory activities
- Working conditions
- Benefits
- Screening measures
- Location

THE MANAGEMENT OF RISK

When a position is classified as high risk, an effort will be made to manage or reduce the risk by using one of the following strategies:

1. Eliminate the risk - There may be activities that have risks and consequences so great that they should be discontinued or modified, as indicated below:

A parish may decide an overnight camping trip with altar servers is an activity with unacceptable risks. An alternative activity could be substituted.

2. Modify the activity - Change the location and the activity.

All home visitation for the sick could be done with a minimum of two volunteers. Youth group leaders could have at least one other adult volunteer present if they are driving youngsters home.

3. Transfer or Share Liability - Involve other organizations or service groups which are better prepared to handle the specific risk in question. Transportation for youth or vulnerable adults, such as seniors, could be arranged through a local bus or taxi company.

4. Assume the risk but minimize it wherever possible -

Design all volunteer tasks with risks in mind. Ensure appropriate screening of individuals, orientation and training and the ongoing supervision and evaluation of volunteers as described in this policy statement.

SAMPLES OF MINISTRY DESCRIPTORS

The following are samples of ministry descriptors. The first three are considered low-risk positions while the following two are high-risk positions.

Lectors

The Lectors proclaim the living Word of God in the liturgical assembly. Lectors are to arrive early on the day they are scheduled to read. Training is provided and lectors are asked to attend a workshop once during the year. You can expect to serve approximately once every three weeks. Ministers are installed each September. Service to this ministry offers a wonderful opportunity to grow in the knowledge of the Scriptures. All persons wishing to serve in this ministry are to fill out a volunteer information form and meet with the pastor.

Mass Coordinators

Mass coordinators are responsible for the overall coordination of the Sunday Eucharist. This includes preparing the bread and wine, ensuring that the lectors and eucharistic ministers and servers have arrived, choosing people for the collection and bringing up of the gifts. This can be undertaken by individuals or family groups. This is a great way for parents to teach their children more about our Sunday celebrations and about the responsibility of ministry to the community. Training is provided and all servers are asked to attend one workshop during the year. Ministers are installed each September. All persons wishing to serve in this ministry are to fill out a volunteer information form and meet with the pastor.

Hospitality

The Hospitality ministry is very active and visible in its many activities and fund-raising events. Some of its on-going activities might include Coffee Sundays, Breakfasts, Community Suppers and Bake Sales. They provide refreshments for various special events and celebrations throughout the year. Good organizational and culinary skills are an asset but not essential since on the job training will be provided by some more experienced members. Members of this group can expect regular monthly meetings and preparation time and assistance at events, and lots of friendly fellowship. If you are interested in this group, please fill out a volunteer information form and introduce yourself to the pastor.

Pastoral Care

The members of the Pastoral care team connect us to those who cannot join in our community life due to illness or other difficulties. They minister by personal visits to those who are ill in the hospital, in other institutions or at home. Support is offered through prayer, by providing comfort and encouragement. Pastoral care ministers may bring communion to those who request it. Volunteers wishing to participate in this ministry should be comfortable with the elderly and the very ill. A ten week Pastoral Care course is mandatory before serving in this ministry. **Since workers make visits to private homes ministers are to be aware that this is determined to be a high-risk ministry. The procedures for high-risk ministry must be followed.**

Sacramental Preparation Team

The Parish Sacramental Team is a group of adult parishioners interested in helping the parish fulfill its responsibilities as one of the three partners (parish, home, school) involved in the preparation and celebration of the school age sacraments, Confirmation, Eucharist and Reconciliation. The team is reestablished every September and functions until the end of the Easter season. An evaluation meeting will take place in June. The Team leader is determined by the pastor. The team prepares for parent meetings, enrolment and sacramental celebrations. Team members are responsible for contact with the parents of children celebrating the sacraments informing them of the various events and procedures for the celebrations. Training is provided for all tasks. Those with good organizational skills are a welcome addition to this ministry. Parents may wish to be involved in this ministry while their child is preparing for the sacraments. Serving in this ministry can provide a better understanding of the initiation sacraments and the sacrament of reconciliation which can lead to more meaningful and relaxed celebrations. There are many ways in which one may assist in this ministry from making phone calls to helping to prepare children. If you wish to serve in this ministry, fill out a volunteer information form and meet with the pastor.

Volunteers in this ministry who are involved in the sacramental preparation of children are to be aware that this is determined to be a high-risk ministry. The procedures for high-risk ministry must be followed.

SECTION 3

SCREENING PROCESS

TEN STEPS OF SCREENING

The nature of the ministry and the level of risk involved will determine the intensity of the screening process employed. Many of the tasks involved in screening should be delegated to the immediate contact person for a group. For low risk positions the application form, job description and training will be very simple and easy to handle.

Protocol for High Risk Positions

If it is determined that a ministry is "high risk", it is essential that ALL of the following "Ten Steps of Screening" be implemented in the recruiting, selecting, and managing of paid staff and volunteers. Should you believe that an exception must be made, you should discuss the matter with your Regional Vicar and arrive at an acceptable solution.

1. Determine the Risk

The nature of the ministry and the inherent level of risk involved dictate the degree of screening required. The greater the risk, the greater will be the degree of screening used.

Factors that will help determine the level of risk include: the participant, the setting, the nature of the activity, and the level of supervision required.

2. Ministry Description

A role description will be written for each ministry. Ministry descriptions do not have to be long but they must set clear and appropriate guidelines and boundaries.

3. Invitation and Selection Process

The invitation and selection process for volunteers and staff normally should be done by a formal public process.

Recruiting materials should indicate clearly that the faith community takes its responsibility towards participants seriously and assesses all applicants.

4. Application Form

An application form must be completed for all positions. The application form should collect basic information -- name, address, previous ministry experience -- as well as give permission for references and, where deemed necessary, agree to obtaining the necessary police record checks, as appropriate.

5. Interview

Appropriate interviews are conducted for all high-risk positions. In the case of high-risk positions, the interview should be carried out by at least two persons.

The interview will include questions directly related to risk concerns: i.e.

interpersonal style with children or vulnerable adults; history of working with money, and so on.

Notes from the interview should be kept in a secure parish file along with the application form and the ministry description.

6. Reference Checks

For positions which are considered to be high risk, the reference checks should be written up and retained in the file. Referees should never be relatives (including cousins). In this manner, the integrity of the verification program is safeguarded.

7. Police Record Checks

For all positions which are deemed to be high risk in nature, a police record check must be obtained. A clear record of the discussion surrounding the police check results should be placed in the file – and, inasmuch as possible, it should be conducted by two persons.

8. Orientation and Training

Appropriate orientation to the ministry will be provided along with guidelines for working within the volunteer ministry or paid position.

Applicants should be required to sign an acknowledgment form stating they have read the screening policy, they understand and freely comply with it, and that they have attended required training/orientation.

9. Support and Feedback

Every effort should be made to ensure that each ministry is appropriately supported and supervised.

Of course, the intensity and nature of the supervision will vary with the risk involved in the position. In the case of high risk ministries, the supervision should be systematic and records placed in the file.

Opportunities for feedback should occur at least once a year and possibly two or three times in the first year. For high risk positions, a record should be kept of the feedback.

10. Participant Follow Up

The pastor or designate must monitor on an ongoing basis the volunteer program to determine participant satisfaction.

SECTION 4

CONFIDENTIALITY AND RECORD KEEPING

CONFIDENTIALITY AND RECORD KEEPING (TO PROTECT THE INDIVIDUAL)

The information gathered for the purposes of screening should be accessible only to the candidate for positions of ministry and to those directly responsible for engaging them.

The policy on maintenance and confidentiality of records will be explained to all candidates.

It is important to have basic information, such as addresses and telephone numbers for all volunteers and staff. This can be delegated to the person in charge of each low risk ministry. They will need such information to be able to operate efficiently.

Where more extensive screening processes are used because of the nature of the ministry, the record should be kept and updated while the person is serving with the parish or diocese. For legal reasons, basic data on screening and supervision of this type should be kept on file for a number of years after a person has ceased the ministry. The number of years will be determined by legal counsel.

It is important to explain these procedures to candidates and incumbents and to make it clear that they can examine their files at any time and may insert documentation of their own.

Records for those involved in low-risk ministry will be kept in the parish for one year after the person has left that particular ministry. The pastor, pastoral assistant, parish secretary, and perhaps the ministry coordinator will have access to these files.

Records for those involved in high-risk ministry will be kept in the parish files for seven years after the person has left a high-risk ministry. Access to these files will be limited to the pastor, the pastoral assistant, and the parish secretary for filing purposes. These records then will be sent to the diocesan archives. "Documentation detrimental to the reputation of persons should not be kept in parish archives; if necessary, such should be kept in the diocesan archives." Diocesan Administration Manual. Policy number 32, #3, i.

The police check report is only read by the pastor who places it in an envelope, seals it and puts it in the individual's file.

SECTION 5

INVITATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

Responsible Ministry

Volunteer Information Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Province: _____

Postal code: _____ Home Phone: _____

Previous address if less than 2 years at current address: _____

Work Place: _____ Work Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Ministry in which you are seeking to serve: _____

How did you hear about this ministry? _____

If this ministry is not available, would you consider a different ministry? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, in which ministries are you interested?

Please provide a contact in case of emergency:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Postal code: _____

Phone: (Res.) _____ (Bus.) _____

Relationship to applicant: _____

5.1

EXPERIENCE:

What gifts, talents and skills do you feel you bring to this parish ministry? What experiences in your life do you feel have prepared you for this ministry?

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE:

Have you ever been a volunteer with another parish/organization? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes, please specify parish/organization and telephone number for reference purposes.

Position _____

Organization _____

Telephone _____

Position _____

Organization _____

Telephone _____

PERSONAL BACKGROUND AND REFERENCES:

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence for which you have not received a pardon?

☐ Yes ☐ No

IF THE MINISTRY YOU ARE SEEKING HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED AS LOW RISK, PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THIS FORM TO THE COORDINATOR.

- I certify that the information that is provided on this Volunteer Information Form is true and complete.
- I understand that this information will remain confidential and is the property of the Parish.
- If I have indicated that I would consider volunteering in another area of ministry then I understand that my name and phone number will be given to the appropriate ministry leader so that they may contact me. I understand that if that ministry has a risk level higher than the one for which I am volunteering, it will require additional screening procedures.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

IF THE MINISTRY YOU ARE SEEKING HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED AS HIGH OR MEDIUM RISK, PLEASE COMPLETE THE NEXT SECTION.

For a medium or high risk ministry, please complete this section.

Please provide two references who can describe your suitability for this ministry. (Referees should not be family members; however, they may be other parishioners who know you or other people with whom you have worked.)

Please remember to notify these people that the parish will be contacting them.

Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

Postal Code: _____ Phone Number: _____

Relationship to applicant: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

Postal Code: _____ Phone Number: _____

Relationship to applicant: _____

For medium or high risk ministries.

I, _____, authorize the Parish Responsible
(name of applicant)

Ministry Coordinator of _____ to contact the character
(name of parish)

references and/or volunteer organizations which I have listed on this Information Form, in order to obtain the information which is appropriate. I understand that the information obtained will be confidential.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

For high risk ministries only.

I further agree to provide a Police Record Check if I am called for an interview for a high risk ministry.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

**PLEASE RETURN THIS COMPLETED FORM TO
THE PARISH RESPONSIBLE MINISTRY COORDINATOR AT YOUR PARISH.**

Interview Questions

Note to interviewer:

Be aware of single word answers – yes or no – rather than complete answers to the questions. Notice evasion, and general, roundabout answers rather than specific information. Record keeping must be 100% objective. Accurate records which are as objective as possible are the safest and most useful. The more objective the information on paper, the safer for everyone concerned.

Volunteer's Name: _____

Ministry: _____

Date: _____

1. Please share any experience or information which has prompted you to serve in this ministry.

2. What attracts you to this ministry position?

3. Have you ever been involved in any activity like this in the past?

4. What challenges or difficulties do you foresee in this ministry?

5. Are there some persons or groups with whom you prefer to work? e.g. adolescents, elderly, immigrants, children, etc... Why?

6. Do you have any questions about what you have read in the Ministry Descriptor?

7. How would you handle the following situation? (*Hypothetical case: You are driving home on a cold and rainy evening and you see one of the youths of the parish walking in the rain. This young person seems to be crying and quite distressed. He/She clearly is in need of help. He/She sees you and when you stop, asks for a ride home. What do you do? Why?*)

8. Is there support for you in this ministry from your spouse/family/friends?

9. Are there any challenges that you can foresee that might make it difficult for you to carry out your responsibilities in this ministry? Explain.

10. What support or training do you think you might need to be able to carry out your ministry?

11. In what ways do you think this ministry might help you to grow in your relationship with God?

12. Is there additional information that you would like to share? Do you have any questions which you would like to ask?

Comments:

More information required:

Recommendation: _____

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

Parish Responsible Ministry Coordinator: _____

Parish: _____

Address: _____

Reference Check

Throughout the province, volunteer organizations and churches are asking their volunteers to provide references. This is done to assure the safety of children, the elderly, vulnerable adults and the volunteers themselves. The information on this form remains in a confidential file in our parish and will not be shared with any outside organizations or institutions.

_____ is interested in
(applicant's name)
volunteering at _____ Parish and thus, has been asked
(parish name)
to provide references. This person has submitted your name and address.

We wish to receive current, accurate information. The information you provide will be an important tool in our decision-making process. Please base your assessment of this person on your experience of the work you have done together. Again, your comments will be held in strict confidence. We expect that this will take about 15 to 20 minutes of your time. **Please complete this form and return it to the coordinator named above.**

Position Summary

Title:

Responsibilities:

[specific details to be entered for each ministry position]

Please PRINT your name:

What is your relationship to the applicant? _____

How long have you known each other? _____

How would you describe this individual's ability to keep information confidential?

Please circle the appropriate number:

	Unsatisfactory	Outstanding
Dependability:	1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10	
Trustworthiness:	1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10	
Honesty:	1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10	
Stress Management:	1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10	
Respect for others:	1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10	
Leadership Ability:	1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10	
Role model for others:	1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10	
Emotional stability:	1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10	
Tolerance of diversity:	1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10	
Commitment:	1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10	
Team Worker:	1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10	

How would you describe the individual's personality and temperament?

How well does this individual work on her/his own?

What would you identify as this individual's strengths?

What would you identify as this individual's weaknesses?

Would you recommend this person for other ministries in our Parish?

Signature: _____ Date: _____

We sincerely thank you for your time in providing information and returning this form to the person listed at the top of this form.

Ministry Covenant

I, _____ of _____ Parish,

acknowledge that

I have received the following documents:

- ☐ The Ministry Descriptor for the ministry in which I will serve
- ☐ The Responsible Ministry Policy Statement
- ☐ The Guidelines For Working With Children and Vulnerable Adults
- ☐ The contact information of the Ministry Coordinator with whom I will be working

I have provided the Parish with the following documents:

- ☐ Completed and signed Volunteer Information Form
- ☐ Police Record Check for High Risk Ministry Positions (if required)

I agree to carry out my responsibilities as _____
(name of ministry)

I understand the responsibilities of the ministry and agree to meet them.

I understand the limits of this ministry and that I represent this Parish as a
volunteer, only when I am functioning as described in the Ministry Descriptor.

Volunteer:

Print Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

The Parish will provide the necessary training, resources and support to assist in this volunteer activity.

Parish Responsible Ministry Coordinator:

Print Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

SECTION 6

VOLUNTEER SUPPORT

Orientation and Training

Orientation and training are an important part of volunteering in our Church community. In particular, prior to high-risk volunteer ministry roles, orientation and training must be implemented to support the volunteer and should be ongoing throughout the entire ministry.

During the orientation and training period, your group should achieve:

- knowledge of the volunteer's approach, values and work style. Role-playing may be used to explore some of these issues;
- translation of the policies to the individual's role within the faith community. The policies must be clearly understood by new volunteers, especially in areas that relate to participants who are vulnerable;
- development of expected interpersonal skills in areas where each individual will be ministering; and
- the final decision of whether the person is appropriate and comfortable in carrying-out the responsibilities of the ministry role.

Tips on reassigning a volunteer:

- inform all volunteers of the length of period or term of the ministry assignment;
- discern why the volunteer wants to serve and what personal needs are being met. Then find a more suitable, low-risk, ministry to reassign this volunteer to which addresses those personal needs;
- if the volunteer wants to know why they are being reassigned, tell them their gifts and talents are not being put to the best use. You and the volunteer can then together explore new ideas for ministry;
- if the volunteer is insistent and you continue to believe there is a more suitable role then you must reassign the volunteer. Do not compromise the safety of your children and other vulnerable people.

Although training volunteers may use some parish and community's resources, you will benefit in the long run through better equipped and knowledgeable volunteers, safe environments and the opportunity to continue attracting and retaining volunteers. These sessions provide opportunities to test our observations of individuals, to see them under different circumstances.

Make orientation and training events mandatory, not optional. Apart from providing an opportunity for you pass on information, and clarify questions, it gives you and other volunteers a chance to follow up on the ministry appointment. Urge people to participate at these sessions. Refusal to attend, or constant excuses for not attending may signal that something is wrong.

Design an activity to involve participants in brainstorming and exchanging ideas about orientation and training that would be helpful to your volunteers and serve as a protective mechanism for the participants. Discuss how these sessions can be implemented within your parish or pastoral region for new volunteers and existing volunteers.

Support and Feedback

Volunteer: _____

Ministry: _____ Date: _____

1. Please check the appropriate column:

	Needs Improvement	Satisfactory	Outstanding
Dependability / Punctuality			
Preparation for Ministry Duties			
Team Work			
Understands / Fulfills Role as described in Ministry Descriptor			
Other (indicate)			

2. Practical suggestions for improved effectiveness:

3. Recommendations:

- ☐ Volunteer meets expectations and should continue to serve in this ministry.
- ☐ Volunteer needs improvement in the following area:

- ☐ Volunteer should no longer continue in this ministry.

4. This feedback was discussed with:

Volunteer (name): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Ministry: _____

Ministry Coordinator (name): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

A copy of this feedback will be placed in the volunteer's personal file in the parish office.

6.3

SECTION 7

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

PROFILE OF TRAINERS

Orientation and training are important aspects of the process, Responsible Ministry. It is the hope of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Ottawa that the individuals who are trained to be trainers will assist the Archdiocese in the critical work of preparing individuals in each parish to carry out the screening process as outlined in the Policy and Procedures Handbook.

The following is a generic profile of a trainer. The pastor and parish council will select the key trainer(s) for the parish. The person(s) may be already a key volunteer in the parish, but it would be helpful to consider persons who have experience in facilitating group activities in their work setting which could be applied to the parish setting.

A trainer is one who has the following:

- leadership skills
- communication skills
- organizational skills
- mentoring skills
- team player
- committed to the process of screening
- discrete, respectful of confidentiality

The expectation is that each trainer is willing to work with members of the parish as a key facilitator for the Responsible Ministry process. Ideally, each parish should have a team of trainers.

SOME SPECIFICS OF THE ROLE OF THE TRAINER:

The pastor and parish council may use the following as specifics of the role once the people have accepted the role as trainer.

The trainer will exhibit the following characteristics:

- committed
- feels comfortable in leading a group
- good listener
- respectful of others and their ideas
- positive attitude to the process
- open to change
- manages expectations
- clarifies perspectives
- can draw out ideas from the various members of the group
- able to synthesize the ideas of the group
- gets and gives feedback
- able to work with challenging personalities
- creates a "win-win" situation
- creates opportunities for continual growth
- gains closure
- arrives at decisions by consensus

BASIC IDEAS TO KEEP IN MIND WHEN CONDUCTING AN INTERVIEW

1. PUT YOURSELF IN THE OTHER PERSON'S SHOES

- think about how he or she may feel about being interviewed by a peer
- think about how this is a new concept for the Church and although you as an interviewer understand the reason and process, do not assume that the person you are interviewing has the same knowledge

2. CHOOSE AN ENVIRONMENT THAT IS CONDUCIVE TO AN HONEST EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

- choose a time that is convenient for both the interviewer and interviewee so neither party feels rushed
- choose a location that is free of distractions and interruptions e.g. phone calls, other people walking into the room

3. PROVIDE A FRAMEWORK FOR THE INTERVIEW THAT INCLUDES:

- the reason for the screening process

4. ASK OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS THAT INVITE MORE THAN A YES OR NO RESPONSE

e.g. Closed ended question – I understand you like working with children; is that correct?

Open ended question – I understand you like working with children. Could you please tell me about the talents and gifts you possess that contribute to your work with children.

5. REFRAIN FROM JUDGMENTS AND NON VERBAL COMMUNICATION THAT WOULD INTERFERE WITH AN EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

6. BE PREPARED

- ensure that you go into the interview with all the necessary material, such as the interview format, pens, Responsible Ministry pamphlets

(Material taken from "Train the Trainers" Information)

PROVIDING A FRAMEWORK

- A. an introduction of the reason for the Responsible Ministry process
 - e.g. inform and protect the volunteer
 - protect those most vulnerable in our church community – elders and children
- B. review the process – application, references, police check, interview
- C. church expectations / policies / procedures
- D. church responsibilities – to train volunteers to maximize their gifts / talents / abilities with the appropriate population
- E. confidentiality – inform the volunteer that any information provided will remain confidential and will not be released without written authorization

(Material taken from "Train the Trainers" Information)

CONDUCTING AN INTERVIEW

In preparation for holding interviews, it may be useful to provide training for interviews. The following examples may be helpful.

Scenario 1:

Maureen as the interviewer was frazzled and unprepared – she barely greeted the applicant and had no place for her to sit. She dealt with a personal phone call in the presence of the applicant and gave the appearance of being completely disorganized and was chatty to the point of being unprofessional. In an attempt to put the applicant at ease she jokingly used highly inappropriate words to explain why screening was necessary. Maureen's questions were completely inappropriate. She asked the applicant's age, marital status, income and if she had a police record! Maureen displayed shock at some of Eileen's answers which showed a judgmental attitude.

Scenario 2:

In the second role play Eileen interviewed Maureen. Maureen was greeted warmly, shown to a chair, no phone calls were taken during the interview. Eileen thanked Maureen for her application and for coming for the interview and asked if Maureen was familiar with the Responsible Ministry process and based on her answer, went on to tell a bit about it. Maureen made the point that she had been giving Communion to a number of seniors for years and screening had never been an issue. Eileen responded that the Church was not doubting nor questioning Maureen, that the Church was very grateful for her time and gifts but that it has now become necessary to ensure that all volunteers are properly trained and that they are aware of potential risks – that they are protected by this training and that the Church needs to ensure that volunteers caring for our most vulnerable members are suitable. It was explained that the process involved a detailed application form, references, interview, and when necessary, a police check when the volunteer is seeking to work in a high risk category. Maureen was told that she would be provided with literature outlining expectations, policies and procedures, and that confidentiality issues would be addressed. Training and guidance would be provided in order to fully utilize Maureen's talents in the appropriate ministry.

Eileen pointed out that she would be taking notes during the interview and then noted from Maureen's application that Maureen was a social worker and asked her to tell a bit about herself – e.g. her skills / talents, interests, availability. Maureen was also asked why she wanted to be a volunteer and what she hoped to achieve in this role. Towards the end of the interview Eileen asked Maureen if she was aware that the position she was interested in was categorized as a high-risk one and would require a police check and was she all right with that. Maureen said she was aware and that she had no objection to it. Maureen was told that all information would be confidential and would be kept in a secure parish file along with her application form and ministry description.

Maureen was given a pamphlet on screening when she was leaving. Eileen thanked her for coming and told her she would contact her soon.

MINISTRY SURVEY

Parish Name: _____

Ministry Name	Do you have a job description to share (yes/no)	For your parish, determine if this is low/high risk.
PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL		
EDUCATION		
RCIA Process		
Baptismal Preparation		
Marriage Preparation		
Sacramental Preparation		
Adult Religious Education		
Landings		
Family Religion Program		
Children's Religion Classes		
Library		
Cursillo Movement		
School Councils		
Other parish education programs		
LITURGY		
Liturgy Committee		
Eucharistic Ministers		
Lectors / Commentators		
Altar Servers		
Music Ministers		
Sacristans		
Hospitality Ministers / Ushers		
Children's Liturgy		
Gift Bearers		
Decorations		
Mass Co-ordinators		
Other		

Ministry Name	Is this a lay ministry in your parish? (yes/no)	Do you have a job description to share (yes/no)
PARISH & COMMUNITY LIFE		
Special Needs Committee		
Pastoral Care Team		
Youth Ministry		
Marriage Enrichment		
Ministry to Seniors		
Parish Office Volunteers		
Legion of Mary		
Prayer Group		
Meditation Group		
Ladies' Auxiliary		
Ministry to Adult Singles		
Property Maintenance		
Other		
SOCIAL MISSION		
St. Vincent de Paul		
Interchurch Council		
Pro-Life Committee		
Development and Peace		
Catholic Women's League		
Shepherds of Good Hope		
Knights of Columbus		
Northern Missions		
Play Group		
Social Action		
League of Sacred Heart		
Brownies		
Guides		
Scouts		
Cubs		
Beavers		
Street Ministry Program		
Others concerned with social needs of the community		

