

## MANAGING THE VETTING APPLICATION PROCESS

### Guidance for Parish Representatives

Anyone carrying out a Regulated Activity within the Catholic Church requires vetting. Vetting involves the completion of two forms and two online processes and must be overseen by a delegated Parish representative. This document aims to provide guidance to the Parish Representative to ensure successful vetting.

#### 1. VETTING APPLICATION FORM

Use this form to inform the Northern Dioceses Vetting Office that an applicant is applying for a particular role within the parish/organisation.

- the **applicant** must fully complete Part 1 of the **Vetting Application Form** - remind the applicant to enter **all** Forenames and Surnames that they have **ever** used or been known by, including maiden or former married names. This means that AccessNI can do a thorough background check.
- As Parish representative, you must complete Part 2 (details of the Role) and Part 3 (a Checklist & Signed Declaration) of the Vetting Application Form.
- Please ensure that the applicant's 10-digit AccessNI Case Reference number is entered at the top of the form before sending it to the Vetting Office.

**Please note: Access NI charges a fee of £32 per check for paid staff. For paid roles please enclose a cheque made payable to “Northern Dioceses Vetting”. Checks for volunteers are free.**

#### 2. CONFIDENTIAL DECLARATION FORM

The applicant is required to provide information on any offending history that they might have.

- Give the applicant the document named: “**Confidential Declaration Form**”.
- Ask the applicant to complete and sign this form which includes answering all questions with a “YES or NO” (answering N/A is not acceptable).
- The applicant must also **tick all the Declaration boxes** on the second page to confirm that they have read, understood and agreed to the statements. If these boxes are not ticked, the form will be returned to the applicant.
- On completion, the applicant inserts this form into an envelope, seals it and hands it back to you.

**Please note: this is a confidential form and no-one, except the applicant and the Vetting Office, is permitted to see it. Do not ask to see the completed form.**

#### 3. ONLINE PROCESSES – NIDIRECT ACCOUNT

Before applying for an online AccessNI Enhanced application, the applicant must already have an NIDirect Account or be ready to create one prior to making the online AccessNI application.

If the applicant does not have NIDirect Account, give the applicant a copy of the: “**Guide to creating an NIDIRECT account.**”

#### 4. ONLINE PROCESSES – ACCESSNI ONLINE APPLICATION

Give the applicant a copy of “**Information for applicants completing an Enhanced Application**” which is a step-by-step guide to help the applicant process their own AccessNI application when an NIDirect account has been opened.

- Instruct the applicant to make an application for an **Enhanced** check. If the Vetting Office sees a request for a *Standard* check in the online system, it will NOT be processed and will be returned to the applicant online. A *Basic* application must not be made either - it will not show up in the online system at all.
- Explain to the applicant that they will need to use the Catholic Church Northern Dioceses PIN number which is 480892. The PIN number links the online application to the Catholic Church. Vetting Office Staff will match the online application to the documentation received and process the application to AccessNI.

- From 3 April 2025 all applicants are required to upload two identity documents to their online AccessNI Enhanced disclosure application. These documents must come from the specified “Access NI, Acceptable Documents List” which will be displayed within the application.

**Please note: this application must be made by the applicant. Do not do it for them or ask them to put either your or the Parish email address in the application.**

## **5. SUBMITTING THE DOCUMENTS**

Only when you have confirmed with the applicant that an online AccessNI Application has been made and you have then entered the AccessNI 10-digit Case Reference Number on the Vetting Application Form, should you post the applicant’s Vetting Application Form and the sealed envelope containing the Confidential Declaration Form to:

**The Registered Person, Catholic Church Northern Dioceses Vetting Office  
120 Cliftonville Road, Belfast, BT14 6LA**

**Please ensure that you have put the correct postage on the envelope and put the sender’s address on the reverse of the envelope. Royal Mail will not deliver underpaid items and will open them and return to the sender after a period of time.**

## **6. WHEN VETTING IS COMPLETE**

Vetting staff will track the progress of an application with AccessNI. When a Certificate with No Disclosures (offences) is issued, Vetting Staff will issue a “Free to Appoint” letter to the delegated Parish/Diocesan representative.

When a Certificate with Disclosures (offences) is issued, the application will be subject to a risk assessment process before a “Free to Appoint” letter can be issued.

An applicant cannot undertake the designated role unsupervised until the “Free to Appoint letter” has been received to the Parish. The Free to Appoint letter relates only to the role applied for and does not mean that the applicant can automatically undertake another role. (Depending on the circumstances, either a Vetting Confirmation Request or new vetting will be necessary.)

## **7. CONTACT**

All forms and guidance documents referred to can be downloaded from the Diocesan website or by clicking on the links in the attached Flowchart. If you have any queries about the process or roles being carried out, please contact the Northern Dioceses Vetting Office.

**Telephone: 02890 492783**

**Email: [vetting@soddc.org](mailto:vetting@soddc.org)**

**VETTING FLOW CHART**

