

VERSION 2 - COMPLIANCE

Toronto Monthly Meeting Of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

Policy and Procedures Regarding the abuse of children and vulnerable adults

Approved by Toronto Monthly Meeting Sept 9, 2017
First Revision

There are six versions of these policies and procedures:

- Version 1 Master
- Version 2 Compliance
- Version 3 Care of Children
- Version 4 Care of Vulnerable Adults
- Version 5 Staff
- Version 6 Oversight

The Master version contains all sections, appendices and forms. The other versions are tailored to specific positions, and contain selections from the master version. A spreadsheet filed in the TMM office identifies which sections, appendices, and forms belong in each protocol.

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INTRODUCTION

The Compliance version of the TMM protocol is intended to guide those who develop, maintain, or oversee the abuse protocols in Toronto Monthly Meeting, and to provide an overview of their responsibilities.

Those positions include:

- Trustees
- Contact People
- The Sexual Abuse and Harassment Committee (or its successor)
- Clerk(s)

To supplement this overview, you should also review and have a general understanding of the Master version of the protocol, a reference document containing all sections, appendices and forms.

Details about procedures involving the Trustees and Contact People, such as those for incident reporting and police checks, can be found in the Master version.

SECTION 1: POLICY

Policy statement

The care of children, young people, and vulnerable adults is a sacred trust. Honouring that trust, Toronto Monthly Meeting is committed to ensuring that they are safe and secure in our care.

The testimony to equality, a belief in the equality of all persons, has been a base tenet of Quaker faith and practice since the beginnings of Quakerism. All persons are to be treated equally, respectfully and with love and care, irrespective of age, race, gender, or ability. Consequently, Toronto Monthly Meeting (TMM) commits itself to do everything possible to create safe environments for its activities in which vulnerable persons, including children and youth, are nurtured, and physical, emotional and sexual abuse is prevented. While it is not the intention of this policy to insulate vulnerable persons, including children and youth, from the balance of challenge and risk that they need for healthy development, we recognize that our peace arises out of right relationships and that children and young people are especially vulnerable to the tragic consequences of broken relationships and abusive treatment. Child abuse in any form, physical, emotional, sexual, as well as neglect, is unacceptable.

Toronto Monthly Meeting is also committed to ensuring that vulnerable adults are safe and secure in our care. Any of us may find ourselves to be vulnerable at different times in our lives.

The following procedures are intended to:

- provide a safe environment for the children, adolescents, and vulnerable adults in our care
- guide us in carrying out our responsibilities
- protect staff and volunteers from false or wrongful allegations
- comply with insurance requirements

Screening

1. Police checks

All the volunteer and staff positions in TMM have been listed and assessed for risk, based on factors like responsibility for children or vulnerable people, isolation, or oversight of these protocols. Police checks are required for “high” risk positions.

All checks will be “Vulnerable Sector Screening Program – Police Reference Checks” except those for Signing Officers, who will have a less intensive “Clearance Letter” Check.

A complete list of positions and requirements can be found in the Master protocol. The following describe just those positions addressed by this protocol.

These positions are required to have a “Clearance Letter” police check:

- Trustees
- Clerk(s)

These positions are required to have a “Vulnerable Sector” police check:

- Contact People
- The Sexual Abuse and Harassment Committee

None of the police checks will include searches under the Mental Health Act (MHA)

All positions requiring a police check are conditional on a completed check

Police checks must be renewed every three years for those who remain in the position

Training

1. Initial training

All employees and volunteers who require training must complete the online training program on the TMM website for their position(s)

2. Renewal training

The online training program must be renewed every three years for those who remain in the position

3. Training workshop

A training workshop will be presented by TMM every three years. All those who require training must attend.

Details on the workshop can be found on the TMM website.

SECTION 2: RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities of the Clerk(s)

While the clerk has no responsibilities to oversee these protocols, an understanding of their contents may, from time to time, assist in the business of the Meeting. The Clerk(s) should:

- Review and have a general understanding of the Master version of the protocols

Responsibilities of the Trustees

It is the responsibility of the Trustees to confirm that these procedures are properly used and maintained.

Annually, when the insurance is renewed, the Trustees will ensure that the following steps are taken:

- legislative changes are monitored to determine if changes are needed to the procedures, and see that they are made and signed off
- Contact People have been appointed and that at least one of them is trained in relevant sections of the Human Rights Code
- the house notice is up to date with the names of the Contact People and posted in appropriate locations
- questionnaires are distributed to and completed by all committees, employees, volunteers or participants who have responsibilities for this protocol, to determine if they have carried out their duties (Note that the “Responsibilities” checklists have been designed for this purpose)
- further action is taken if any committees, employees, volunteers or participants do not adhere to this policy or undertake the measures outlined

Periodically, when an incident is reported, they shall

- with the Contact People, respond to and coordinate oversight of any reported incidents

If any claim is made against the Meeting for an incident, the Trustees will inform the insurance company as soon as possible, and carry out other duties as outlined in the insurance policy.

Responsibilities of the Contact People

It is the responsibility of the Contact People to carry out the police check procedures and assess applicants. They must first have a completed police check themselves.

It is also their responsibility to address any reported incidents.

At least one of them must be trained in certain sections of the Ontario Human Rights Code

Periodically, as part of the hiring of new staff, they shall

- ensure that initial police checks have been done, and any failures properly dealt with and recorded

Annually, at the start of First Day School, they shall, for all those working with Children

- ensure that initial police checks have been done, and any failures properly dealt with and recorded
- ensure that any police checks over 3 yrs old have been renewed and any failures properly dealt with and recorded

Annually, at the start of each year, they shall, for all positions requiring a police check:

- ensure that initial police checks have been done, and any failures properly dealt with and recorded
- ensure that any police checks over 3 yrs old have been renewed and any failures properly dealt with and recorded

To manage the police checks, they should

- Ensure that someone responsible for the review and assessment of applicants is trained in the Ontario Human Rights Code
- Keep a record of those who require, or have had checks
- Provide applicants with the police check package, (or alternately, the self-declare package), and explain the process
- Sign the applications, give signed copies to the applicants, and arrange for the completed applications to be sent in
- Assess the returned reports against the predefined disqualification criteria
- Consult with the Trustees or Personnel Committee, as appropriate, where decisions are to be made about the report results, and document any decisions
- In the case of prior convictions, consult with the Trustees as to who needs to be informed

To manage the training process, they should

- Keep a record of those who have been trained

Periodically, when an incident is reported, they shall

- With the Trustees, respond to and coordinate oversight of any reported incidents
- Ensure that all actions taken to respond to a reported incident are recorded and filed, even if the incident is determined to be a misinterpretation. This includes any final decision or assessment
- Ensure that all documentation is stored in the locked files

Responsibilities of the Sexual Abuse and Harassment Committee

It is the responsibility of SAHC (or any committee established by the Meeting to replace it) to produce and maintain abuse policies and procedures.

It shall:

- create these policies and procedures, and amend them as needed:
 - Policies and Procedures regarding the abuse of children and vulnerable adults (all versions)
 - House Statement
 - Police Check Package
- ensure that any changes to the procedures are distributed (see Appendix)
- advise all members and attenders of the existence of these policies and procedures and where they can be found
- advise all members and attenders of their responsibilities under the law
- ensure that master copies of policies and procedures are properly stored
- ensure that necessary training is carried out