

SUPPORT PERSONS

There may be meetings in which we need to discuss awkward, difficult, confronting, or painful issues, we have a duty of care to offer support to those we need to discuss these issues with, even if they choose not to avail themselves of this support. Should they wish, they may have a Support Person present in meetings where appropriate.



Anglican Diocese of
Canberra & Goulburn

SUPPORT PERSONS MAY BE USED BY PEOPLE GOING THROUGH:

- Performance or disciplinary meetings.



BULLYING
PROTOCOL

- The Diocese's [Grievance](#) or [Bullying](#) Protocols.
- People going through Professional Standards concerns may also bring a support person.

GRIEVANCE
PROTOCOL



THE SUPPORT PERSON IS NOT THERE TO

- Present material on behalf of the person they are present to support.
- Argue the case for the person they are present to support (i.e., act as an advocate)
- Distribute material to, or discuss the matters raised with third parties after the meeting.

THE ROLE OF A SUPPORT PERSON

Offer emotional and personal support (distinct from legal or procedural advice).

- Engage in active listening.
- Contact the person they are the supporting regularly for prayer and other appropriate encouragement.
- Take notes at formal meetings on behalf of the person being supported.
- Debrief with the person they were there to support.
- With permission they may ask questions of clarification for the person they are supporting.
- Communicate with the person running the process questions that the person they are supporting may have (not questions about the issues of concern themselves).
- Inform the Safe Ministry Unit of any concerns about issues of well-being of the person being supported.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE

- A support person must not be party to the concerns being discussed.
- A support person does not have to be with you for the entire meeting. You can choose to ask them to leave if you feel you only need their help for part of the meeting.
- You do not have to have the same support person if you have multiple meetings.
- The person running the process meeting can ask for the support person to leave if they are interfering with the process.
- For persons under 18, having their parent or guardian present as their support person should be considered normative and best practice, while those persons are still required to keep within the scope of the role.
- For those over 18 care and wisdom should be applied before selecting a spouse or close family member as a support person as they may either become triangulated in the proceedings towards other parties, or even potentially hear things that damage their relationship with the person they are present to support. Having a friend, peer, or colleague present as a support person is better practice than using a family member.