



ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF
CANBERRA & GOULBURN

Diocesan Safe Ministry Policy

Adopted by BIC 18 October 2019



Safe Ministry Policy

This Policy is underpinned by the Scripture:

Jesus Christ said, "Love your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength; and love your neighbour as yourself."

These commands guide our behaviour in our relationships and provide the basis for the establishment and exercising of safe activities and events, run in safe environments in an abuse-free Christian community.

All Diocesan parishes, ministries and entities should be abuse-free and harm-free, person-valuing and respectful spaces for ministry to God's glory.

We seek to build and maintain safe ministries by:

- fostering relationships between members, and those of the wider community, based on the teachings of Jesus Christ;
- providing a safe and secure environment where all people can feel respected;
- empowering and including people involved in our ministries in the decisions that impact their lives;
- providing responsible and loving Christian leadership and management practices built on a scriptural base;
- ensuring that any cases of alleged abuse, neglect or grievances and complaints are handled in a consistent, unbiased and thorough manner; and
- fulfilling our pastoral, legal and Diocesan obligations.

2. Scope

This policy outlines the policy statement commitments, responsibilities, and protocols in Safe Ministry.

It applies to all Ministry Units associated with the Diocese including:

1. All clergy and other church workers whether paid or voluntary,
2. Boards, Councils and Committee members; and
3. as specified below,
 - guests or hirers of the church and/or its facilities
 - contractors, subcontractors, delivery persons or others engaged to provide services; and
 - those who access our site and/or programs.

Diocesan Agencies such as Diocesan Schools, Anglican Diocesan Services (ADS) and Anglicare are exempt from this Policy, however they will have equivalent policy, protocols and guidelines which will be checked by the Professional Standards Reference Group.

2. Policy Statements

The Diocese is committed to spiritual, emotional and physical safety and well-being:

1. We acknowledge that all people at church have a right to feel and be safe, and to experience life-giving, harm-free interactions at our church and in our programs.
2. We acknowledge the need for sensitivity and consideration of all people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as any person with a disability.
3. We express this commitment through our Canons, Ordinances, Policies, Protocols and Guidelines which include:
 - a. Guidelines for safe and friendly environments (physical and online) where people are listened to, feel safe, accept challenges, develop faith and grow in connection with God and others.
 - b. Safe and adequate recruitment, training, supervision, support and resourcing of our workers.
 - c. Appropriate and expedient responses to all incidents, accidents, child protection and/or safe ministry (misconduct and abuse) concerns.
 - d. Just and caring responses in redress for those who have been abused by church workers.
 - e. Safe and appropriate ministry to persons of concern.
4. In relation to children (0-18 years), we acknowledge the primary role of parents and caregivers as well as the role of children in child protection and will actively engage with children and caregivers, inviting open communication and feedback as part of our procedures and interactions.
5. In relation to children, we acknowledge the shared responsibility of the whole community for child safety and welfare, including caregivers and our workers, and as such we will actively promote the role of parents and caregivers and the wider community in the shared responsibility of child safety.
6. We are committed to thorough and effective governance around safety (including child and vulnerable person protection) both at a Diocesan and Ministry Unit level.
7. We will engage in ongoing improvement of our Safe Ministry Ordinances, Policies, Protocols and Guidelines.
8. We will comply with all relevant legislation.

It is a serious breach of this policy for any paid or voluntary worker in our church to contravene this policy, any related protocol, or any regulation in law, in relation to the safety and protection of people who access ministry in our Diocese.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

a. General

- The clergy and ministry unit council, and those in authority in other diocesan agencies, are responsible for ensuring that, as far as is reasonably practicable, all church workers and those accessing ministries conducted by the ministry unit comply with the applicable Work Health & Safety legislation.
- All church workers are to take all reasonable and practicable steps to avoid risks of physical and psychological harm to members of the church and wider community arising from their involvement in any ministry.
- All church workers must agree to adhere to ordinances, policies, protocols and processes of the Diocese.

b. Specific roles under this policy

Bishop

- Is the Head of Agency (entity) for Reportable Conduct matters
- Is the Church Authority as defined by the Professional Standards Ordinance
- Oversees and implements Safe Ministry Policy and Protocols at Diocesan level
- Licenses & Appoints clergy once a Safe Ministry Clearance has been provided
- Licenses church workers once a Safe Ministry Clearance has been provided

Bishop-in-Council

- Acts as the Safe Ministry Authority of the Diocese in compliance with the Canon for Safe Ministry to Children
- Approves all Safe Ministry related policies and protocols for the Diocese
- Directs the Professional Standards Reference Group, Safe Ministry Unit and Ministry Units in the implementation of this Policy
- Ensures office holders have adequate resources for the implementation of the Safe Ministry Policy and Protocols
- Appoints members of the Diocesan Tribunal, Professional Standards Board, Professional Standards Committee, Professional Standards Reference Group
- Ensure that Safe Ministry implementation is a standing item on Council agenda.

Diocesan Boards and Committees

- All Diocesan Boards and Committees must take steps to ensure that those involved in their activities understand and are familiar with this Policy and comply with it.

Professional Standards Reference Group

- Writes, reviews and provides recommendations to Bishop-in-Council in relation to Safe Ministry related policy and protocols
- Writes and reviews Safe Ministry procedures, guidelines and implementation resources to implement Safe Ministry policy and protocols in the Diocese
- Recommends and monitors exemptions from the Code of Good Practice

Safe Ministry Unit (and Diocesan Safe Ministry Administrator)

- Writes, reviews and provides recommendations to the Professional Standards Reference Group in relation to Safe Ministry related protocols, guidelines, fact sheets and resources
- Is the clearance authority of the Diocese in compliance with the Canon for Safe Ministry to Children
- Maintains Safe Ministry Clearance records and holds them securely
- Is a resource for the Director of Professional Standards, Ministry Units, Boards and Councils in the area of implementation of Safe Ministry Canons, Ordinances, Policies, Protocols and Guidelines

Professional Standards Director

- Is a part of the Professional Standards Reference Group
- Manages risks in relation to adverse findings in clearance records and holds them securely
- Implements Professional Standards Ordinances, Towards Restoration, Policy for Safe Ministry to Persons of Concern, and the National Register Canon

Rector (Chaplains)

- Appoints lay church workers through the Diocesan Protocol for Clearances
- Reports all concerns in relation to risk of harm and any known Persons of Concern to the Professional Standards Director
- With Parish Council, implements Safe Ministry Policy and Protocols within the Ministry Unit

Ministry Unit (Parish) Council:

- Appoints/ maintains the role of a Safe Ministry Coordinator
- Ensures that Safe Ministry implementation is a standing item on the Parish Council agenda
- Ensures a link to the Policy and Safe Ministry protocols and guidelines can be easily found on their parish website
- On an annual basis, reminds all members of the ministry unit of the spirit, intent and procedures associated with this policy and their responsibilities within it

Parish Safe Ministry Coordinator

- Appointed by parish council to oversee the implementation of Safe Ministry standards, policies, protocols, procedures, and record keeping for clearances and training in the parish
- This person can be a member of Parish Council, staff worker or other appropriately skilled volunteer
They are the primary contact person for the Diocesan Safe Ministry Unit

4. Protocols, Guidelines, Factsheets and Resources for policy implementation

- Safe Ministry to Children Canon
- National Register Canon
- Professional Standards Ordinance
- Diocesan Code of Good Practice
- Code of Conduct for Safe Ministry to Children
- Protocol for Responding to Concerns about Abuse and Harm from Misconduct
- Protocol for Addressing Grievances
- Protocol for Clearances
- Policy for Safe Ministry to Persons of Concern
- Towards Restoration
- Protocol for sharing intelligence across Diocesan Agencies
- Creating Safe Ministries Program
- Safe Ministry Fact Sheets, forms and resources (found on the Diocesan Website)

More information is available through the Diocesan website www.anglicancg.org.au

5. Terminology

Abuse or harm from misconduct in the church means that whilst being a member of a church in this Diocese or attending a church event or ministry program in this Diocese or engaging with Diocesan personnel within the context of their professional or vocational role, the person has suffered physical, sexual, emotional, harassment, bullying or spiritual abuse or harm caused by unjustified or unjustifiable comments or behaviour. This includes harm occurring as the result of Reportable Conduct or other serious misconduct by a church worker, as defined in Reportable Conduct legislation (NSW & ACT) or by Diocesan Ordinance.

Child: means a person who is under the age of 18 years.

Child related role (ministry to children) means work of a kind which requires to holding a working with children check, or a working with vulnerable people check by reason that the person has contact with a child as part of engaging in a regulated activity; or

- (a) exercises a pastoral ministry which has direct, regular and not incidental contact with children; or
- (b) provides services to children that are ancillary to the exercise of a pastoral ministry within paragraph (b) which involve:
 - (i) contact with children during an overnight activity (such as camps and similar activities); or
 - (ii) close, personal contact with children (such as changing clothes, washing and toileting); or
- (c) supervises the ministry of a person within any one or more of paragraphs (a) to (c); or
- (d) performs a professional standards role; or
- (e) performs a safe ministry role;

'Contact' means physical contact, oral communication (whether face-to-face or by telephone), written communication or electronic communication (which includes email, instant messaging, social media and video chats); (*Definition from the Safe Ministry to Children Canon*)

Church worker means a person undertaking any ministry:

- (a) who is licensed or authorised by the Bishop of a diocese; or
- (b) who is employed by a Church body; or
- (c) who, for payment or not, holds a position or performs a function with the actual or apparent authority of a Church authority or Church body;

Clergy person: means an ordained person.

Diocesan Safe Ministry Administrator: is the Bishop's delegate as the clearance authority, as defined in the Safe Ministry to Children Canon, and the Manager of the Safe Ministry Unit of the Diocese.

Lay Church Worker: means a non-ordained church worker.

Licensed Church Worker, a person who holds a Bishop's licence.

Professional Standards Reference Group: Established by the Professional Standards Ordinance, is a reference group to ensure Safe Ministry Policy, Protocol and Guidelines are maintained, and to provide advice and recommendations to the Safe Ministry Authority.

Reportable Conduct legislation: means in NSW The Children's Guardian Act 2019 No 25 Part 4 and in the ACT section 17 E of the Ombudsman Act 1989.

Safe Ministry Authority: has the same meaning as the Canon for Safe Ministry to Children, in this Diocese Bishop-in-Council is the Safe Ministry Authority.

Safe Ministry Coordinator: means a person who is responsible for Safe Ministry Protocol communication and administration in a Ministry Unit. S/he is the local contact for the Diocesan Safe Ministry Unit. It is a role that may be undertaken by a member of Parish Council or appointed by the Parish Council.

Clearance Authority: has the same meaning as the screening authority in the Canon for Safe Ministry to Children. In this Diocese this is the Safe Ministry Unit.

Stored as confidential: means the documents are to be stored in a **locked cabinet or electronically with appropriate security** that may only be accessed by authorised persons e.g. Rector, Chaplain, delegate (e.g. Safe Ministry Coordinator) and Safe Ministry Unit.

Non-child related role, any paid or volunteer role in a parish in ministries that do not directly minister to children.

6. Legislation

The following legislation is particularly relevant to Safe Ministry:

NSW: Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998

- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998
- Child Protection (Working with Children) Regulation 2013
- Crimes Act 1900 (in particular, Failure to report child abuse & Failure to protect)
- Children Guardian Act 2019
- Civil Liability Act 2004

ACT: Children & Young People Act 2008

- Working with Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011
- Failure to report child sexual abuse 2019
- Reportable Conduct scheme legislation 2018
- Wrongs Act 2002

NATIONAL:

- Aged Care Act 1997
- Community Visitors Grant Amendment Principles 2006
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011

CONTACT THE SAFE MINISTRY UNIT

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