



ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF
CANBERRA & GOULBURN

Diocesan
Protocol for
Safe Ministry Clearances

Adopted by BIC 23 June 2023



Protocol for Clearances

A. Purpose and Scope

This Protocol describes the Safe Ministry Clearances requirements for all Diocesan church workers as defined in Appendix 1 i.e. clergy, lay, licensed, unlicensed, paid or unpaid, including all volunteers in Diocesan Ministry units and Diocesan Boards and Committees, and the process for undertaking the required clearance requirements.

All Diocesan Ministry Units and Boards/Committees, and those agencies that have not received an exemption shall clear and train church workers using this Protocol or approved equivalent processes.

The Safe Ministry Clearance requirements vary according to role.

The Safe Ministry Unit in consultation with the Bishop and the Professional Standards Reference Group shall determine the necessary requirements so as to ensure compliance with the standards for Safe Ministry Screening and Training in the Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017 of General Synod (Adopted by the Diocese in March 2018), all relevant state and territory legislation (including the 10 Child Safe Standards) and in line with good practice.

This Protocol for clearing of appointments relates to the implementation of the following Safe Ministry Policy statements:

- 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
- we commit to the welfare of all people through the implementation and ongoing improvement of our Safe Ministry which include safe and adequate recruitment, training, supervision, support and resourcing of our workers

B. Our Commitment

We are committed to all Ministry Units and Diocesan agencies being person-valuing and respectful spaces, that are free from harm to God's glory. This means that we commit to our pastoral, duty of care, legal and governance obligations; with the goal that all ministries are spiritually, emotionally and physically safe.

We are mindful of the work involved in the implementation of rigorous due diligence appointment processes. However, we know that this work makes a vital contribution to the safety and well-being of vulnerable people in our ministry units. We must ensure we have done all that is reasonably practicable to ensure we have safe church workers as they have positions of leadership, power and trust.

C. Principles that guide this Protocol

1. **Duty of care** – we must do all that is reasonably practical to ensure people are safe and unharmed, this Protocol seeks to ensure that safe people are appointed to positions.
2. **Rigour** – we require that all church workers undertake the relevant clearance.
3. **Accountability** – we will show that we have done all we can to ensure vulnerable people are being ministered to by safe church workers.
4. **Partnership** – we work together across the Diocese to ensure we support and learn from each other in implementing best practice in safe ministry.
5. **Continuous Review and Improvement** – we regularly review and improve our practice in this area to ensure that it remains current and effective.

D. Implementation of the protocol

1. The oversight of the implementation of this Protocol is by the Bishop and Bishop-in-Council through the Diocesan Safe Ministry Unit.
2. The Diocesan Safe Ministry Unit is the Bishop's delegate as the clearance authority.
3. The Diocesan Safe Ministry Unit in consultation with the Bishop and the Professional Standards Reference Group will determine clearance requirements according to a church worker's role (see Appendix 1)
4. Ministry Unit Rectors, Chaplains or delegates (e.g. Safe Ministry Coordinators) have a vital role in the implementation of this Protocol.
5. All Diocesan Safe Ministry clearance required by this Protocol is valid for 3 years, and is acceptable across all Ministry Units and Diocesan Boards, unless an applicant is applying for a role which requires a higher level of clearance (see the Clearance Requirements table (appendix 1) or otherwise required by law or rule of the church (e.g. WWCC and WWVP). That is, in cases where a person moves ministry units or roles within the Diocese, only position application and interviews will need to be renewed. If a person commences a new role that requires a higher level of clearance, only the 'higher' level clearances need to be renewed, e.g. Addition of a Police background check if a person moves from a volunteer role to a Lay Stipendiary licensed role.
6. After three years, clearances will be renewed, except for position interviews & endorsements.
7. The secure storage of all Safe Ministry clearance documentation related to this Protocol is essential. Safe Ministry clearance documentation will be held by the Diocese and retained permanently. Ministry Units may also hold a copy of these records for volunteer church workers (securely).
8. The implementation process and information about Clearance is found in the Clearance Guidelines, available on the Diocesan website and on request from the Safe Ministry Unit.

The Safe Ministry Check forms, declarations and information about Safe Ministry training are available on the Diocesan website and on request from the Safe Ministry Unit.

E. Terminology

The terms and definitions relevant to this protocol are those found in the Safe Ministry Policy, and the Diocesan Code of Conduct for Safe Ministry with children.

F. Documents & Programs Used to Support this Protocol

- The 10 Child Safe Standards
- Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017
- Anglican National Register Canon 2007
- Safe Ministry Policy 2019
- Faithfulness in Service (section 5) - Standards and Guidelines for ministry to children
- Diocesan Clearance Guidelines
- Safe Ministry Check – Ordained Ministry or appointment as a Paid, or Licensed Church Worker
- Safe Ministry Check – Volunteer Church Worker over 18 years
- Safe Ministry Check – Volunteer Church Worker 13-17 years
- Safe Ministry Declaration – Board Appointments, Parish Council and non-child related volunteers
- Australian Federal Police Background Check Application Form
- NSW Working with Children Check – Paid staff and Volunteers
- ACT Working with Vulnerable People Check – Paid staff and volunteers
- Anglican Church of Australia National Register Check
- SRE Teacher’s Engagement Letter
- Referees Form (licensed positions)
- Position Interview sample for Licensed Church Workers
- Position interview sample for Unlicensed Church Workers
- Documentation for Ordination candidates
- Safe Ministry training (online or face to face) or Diocesan approved equivalent.
- Policy for Safe Ministry to Persons of Concern 2019

G. Review

This Protocol was endorsed by Bishop-in-Council on 23 June 2023 and will be reviewed in 2025.

For More Information Contact the Safe Ministry Unit

E: safeministry@anglicands.org.au

PH: 6245 7160

Appendix 1. SAFE MINISTRY Clearance Requirements

This section provides the Safe Ministry Clearance requirements for church workers and clergy in the Diocese.

Prior to Commencement of Clearance

Prior to clearing an applicant would normally be known to the Ministry Unit or Bishop's Office. It is a requirement that:

- Applicants for **Lay Church Worker** positions will be a committed church member, and in ordinary circumstances will have been involved in a Ministry Unit for a period of not less than three months prior to commencement of clearing.
- Applicants for **Volunteer (non-child or vulnerable person)** roles in Ministry Unit community-based ministries (e.g. Op-Shops, Food-banks etc) will commit to the Diocesan Code of Conduct, and be endorsed by the Ministry Unit.
- Applicants for **Licensed positions** only occur after discernment and engagement with the relevant church office holder prior to clearing.

There are 6 categories according to role:

- Category 1 - Clergy
- Category 2 - Licenced lay church workers (paid or unpaid) and other Paid Workers
- Category 3 – Volunteer Church Workers in Ministry with Children
 - Category 3a Volunteer in Ministry with Children/Vulnerable People (aged over 18yrs)
 - Category 3b Volunteer in Ministry with Children/Vulnerable People (aged 13-17yrs)
- Category 4 Volunteer (Non-Child or Vulnerable People), e.g. those who assist in prayers, readers, communion assistants, musicians, those who do maintenance, and leaders of home bible study groups.
- Category 5 – Ordination Candidates
- Category 6 – Diocesan Boards and Committees

The requirements for Safe Ministry Clearance for each category are set out on the table below.

TABLE OF REQUIRED SAFE MINISTRY CLEARANCES:

| | Category 1 Clergy | Category 2 Licenced Lay Persons and Paid Workers | Category 3a Volunteer in Ministry with Children/ Vulnerable People (aged 18yrs and over) | Category 3b Volunteer in Ministry with Children/ Vulnerable People (aged 13-17 yrs) | Category 4 Volunteer (Non-Child or Vulnerable People) | Category 5 Discernment Process for Ordination | Category 6 Diocesan Boards & Committees |
|--|-----------------------------------|---|---|--|--|--|--|
| NSW Working with Children Check | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | |
| ACT Working with Vulnerable People Check | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ (16 years & over) | | ✓ | |
| Police Background Check | ✓ | ✓ | | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Safe Ministry Questionnaire Clergy and Licensed | ✓ | ✓ | | | | ✓ | |
| Safe Ministry Questionnaire Lay Volunteers | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | |
| Safe Ministry Declaration | | | | | ✓ | | ✓ (stat dec) |
| Interview & Endorsement | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Referee Checks | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| National Register Check | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Professional Standards Clearance | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | |
| Safe Ministry Training (SMT) Module 1 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | see note for SMT for 3b | ✓ | ✓ | See note for Cat 6 - BIC |
| SMT Module 2 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | |
| SMT Module 3 | ✓ (see notes for Cat 1) | ✓ (see notes for Cat 2) | ✓ (see notes for 3a) | | | | |

Explanatory Notes:

- Category 1** – Clergy holding an ATO who are available for locum ministry shall complete Safe Ministry Training (SMT) Module 3. Clergy not in a parish role (e.g. chaplains) do not have to complete SMT Module 3.
- Category 2** - **Not** in Senior parish leadership role **do not** have to complete SMT Module 3.
- Category 3a** – Who are also in Senior parish leadership roles, such as Kids or Youth Program coordinators shall complete SMT Module 3
- Category 3b** – Young Leaders (13-17yrs) are not expected to complete online Safe Ministry Training alone, and shall only attend Module 1 training with the permission of their parents/guardians.
- Category 6** – Bishop in Council members who have no other parish category (i.e. no other roles in a Parish) shall complete SMT Module 1
- Parish council and wardens** are Category 3a, this is in accordance with the Parish Administration Ordinance – Parish council are in partnership with the Bishop and Rector responsible for the ministry and mission of the parish. Any nominee for election to the Parish Council must successfully complete the Safe Ministry Clearance requirements.
- NSW SRE teachers** are Category 3a – In addition to the Safe Ministry Clearance requirements for Category 3a, SRE teachers must complete the required SRE engagement form and training.
- Aged Care Facility Pastoral Visitor** are Category 3a, in addition will need a Police Background check, and WWVP in the ACT.