



Anglican Diocese  
of the Northern Territory

# Parish Safe Ministry Administrator (PSMA) Protocol

DOCUMENT NUMBER	SM012
TYPE	Protocol
SUBJECT	Protocol to guide the PSMA role
AUTHORISED BY	Diocesan Council, in accordance with the Safe Ministry Policy
DATE AUTHORISED	

## SCOPE

This protocol describes the role and function of the Parish Safe Ministry Administrator (PSMA) in the Diocese of the Northern Territory.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The principles used to implement the PSMA protocol include:

1. **Duty of Care:** we commit to our pastoral, biblical, insurance, legal and duty of care responsibilities, with the intended goal that all ministries are spiritually, emotionally and physically safe
2. **Pastoral Care:** we must ensure that the diligence of parishes in implementing safe ministry ordinance, policy and protocols does not undermine the commitment of the Diocese to be person-valuing, harm-free, and respectful environments for ministry to God's glory. The PSMA role therefore exists to support this commitment in providing support to the Rector and church workers in the parish to achieve compliance with the safe ministry requirements
3. **Confidentiality:** we are committed to ensuring that the collection, storage and sharing of information in relation to safe ministry compliance is consistent with legislated Privacy Principles and that information is only accessible by authorised personnel who have a valid reason for doing so

## DEFINITIONS

All definitions in this protocol are set out in the *Professional Standards Ordinance*, the Diocesan Code of Conduct: *Faithfulness in Service* and the Diocesan *Safe Ministry Policy*. In addition, this protocol uses the following definitions:

- **Annual Parish Safe Ministry Return (Annual Return):** the information relating to safe ministry compliance, which each parish forwards to the Diocese each year following the Annual General Meeting of each Parish in accordance with the *Parishes Ordinance*.
- **Parish Safe Ministry Administrator (PSMA):** the person appointed within each parish to provide administration support to the Rector and Diocese on Safe Ministry compliance checks for church workers in a parish.

## SELECTION CRITERIA

Owing to the sensitive nature of the information the PSMA collects, records and maintains it is important that the person appointed to this role is widely trusted by members of the parish. It is recommended that the prospective appointees for the role of PSMA be selected by the Rector and approved by the Parish Council. Nominees for the role of PSMA must:

- be approved by both the Rector and Parish Council
- sign a confidentiality agreement

- be provided, or able to provide secure storage of paper and/or digital records

If a parish cannot appoint an appropriate person who can satisfy these criteria, the responsibility for the role and functions of the PSMA remain with the Rector. In the absence of a Rector, the Parish must work with the DSMO.

## ROLE

The specified responsibilities of an individual appointed to the PSMA role are agreed in a role interview between the appointee and the Rector prior to the commencement of each PSMA. In some instances, a PSMA role may be limited, in which case the Rector retains responsibility for all items that have not been delegated. The agreed role may be recorded in writing using the following checklist as a guide. The PSMA may undertake any or all of these responsibilities as ticked:

- provide all church workers with relevant forms and documentation relating to safe ministry checks (including Category B – Church Worker Check, Ochre Card clearance applications and National Police Check forms)
- provide general advice to church workers regarding how to apply for various clearances (NT government and Diocese of the NT)
- maintain paper and/or digital safe ministry records detailing names of church workers and which clearances have been completed
- maintain secure paper records of safe ministry checks
- actively monitor compliance records and notify the Rector and church workers when clearance or renewal is due
- notify the Rector of any refusal to comply with Diocesan safe ministry ordinance, policy or protocol by church workers in the parish
- check the validity of Working With Children Clearance (Ochre Card) notice numbers using the online tool
- forward all application forms containing any “yes” answer to the Safe Ministry Helpline for risk management advice and notify the Rector and DSMO immediately.
- seek advice from the Diocesan Safe Ministry Officer (DSMO) or Safe Ministry Helpline as required
- report Process Failures to the DSMO
- forward records to the Rector and Diocese as required, including completion of the Annual Safe Ministry Return to the Diocese, as specified in the *Parishes Ordinance*

The PSMA does not play a role in receiving information in relation to allegations, responding to allegations nor mediation of grievances. However, if specifically appointed in a given circumstance the PSMA is not precluded from undertaking such roles in another capacity.

The Rector will:

- provide the names of all new church workers to the PSMA
- undertake all of the functions above not ascribed to the PSMA

## CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

The Diocese of the Northern Territory is committed to safe ministries, as set out in the Safe Ministry Policy. This means that Diocesan parishes, ministries and entities should be person-valuing, harm-free, and respectful environments for ministry to God's glory. We must therefore do all that is reasonably practicable to maintain the confidentiality of people's personal information to maintain respect, dignity and privacy of people.

Therefore, I hereby agree to ensure that I do not in any capacity, be it verbal, written or through any other form of electronic communication, disclose to any person, persons or body corporate outside of the Diocese itself, any confidential aspect of the Diocese's operation, including information about church workers, church members, policies, procedures, work methods, corporate affairs or intellectual property.

I further understand and agree that in certain circumstances disclosure of the above information about the Diocese may be necessary, but any disclosure must be authorised by the Secretary of the Synod of the Diocese.

Any breach of this Confidentiality Agreement may result in instant dismissal; or in the case of a volunteer disciplinary action under the protocols of the Diocese or legal action.

I understand it is not a breach of confidentiality to provide information, to any interested parties, about what services the Diocese of Northern Territory provide. Nor is it a breach of confidentiality to liaise with Union Officers.

Further, I agree not to disclose any confidential aspect of the diocese's operations after ceasing my appointment as a church worker with the Diocese of Northern Territory.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ accept all the above conditions.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## MORE INFORMATION

- *Professional Standards Ordinance*
- *Diocesan Code of Conduct: Faithfulness in Service*
- *Diocesan Safe Ministry Policy*
- *Due Diligence Appointment Protocol*
- *Safe Ministry Implementation Protocol*
- *Privacy Policy*
- *Church Worker Check: Category B*
- *Safe Ministry Annual Return Forms*

*For completion when document supersedes and existing policy, procedure or protocol.*

VERSION NUMBER OF THIS DOCUMENT	DATE OF PREVIOUS DOCUMENT	SUMMARY OF CHANGE	REASON FOR CHANGE
1	n/a		