



Anglican Diocese  
of the Northern Territory

# Safe Ministry Policy

DOCUMENT NUMBER	SM001
TYPE	Policy
SUBJECT	Safe Ministry Policy
AUTHORISED BY	Diocesan Council in accordance with Part 3 of the Professional Standards Ordinance 2017.
DATE AUTHORISED	November 2018

## SCOPE

The Safe Ministry Policy applies to all Parishes, Ministry Units, Entities and all church workers (ordained and non-ordained, paid and voluntary, licensed and unlicensed) whose ministry is associated with the ministry of the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Northern Territory, with the exception of Anglicare NT and Nungalinya College. These organisations have their own safety policies and protocols as approved by their respective boards.

## COMMITMENT

The Diocese of the Northern Territory is committed to safe ministries. This means that Diocesan parishes, ministries and entities should be person-valuing, harm-free and respectful environments for ministry to God's glory.

This Safe Ministry policy expresses our Diocese's commitment to our pastoral, biblical, insurance, legal and duty of care responsibilities, in accordance with Part 3 of the Professional Standards Ordinance 2017 and associated protocols, with the intended goal that all ministries are spiritually, emotionally and physically safe.

As a Diocese we are also committed to implementing the recommendations from the Anglican General Synod in relation to safer ministry underpinned by the Diocesan Code of Conduct: *Faithfulness in Service*.

As a Diocese we are also committed to ensuring that the collection, storage, access to, and sharing of information is consistent with legislated Privacy Principles.

We therefore seek to build and maintain safe ministry communities by:

- fostering relationships between members, and people in the wider community, based on the teachings of Jesus Christ
- establishing and maintaining guidelines and processes to minimise the risk of harm and abuse, ministry misconduct and the misuse of positional power
- providing responsible and loving Christian leadership and management practices built on a scriptural base
- ensuring that cases of alleged abuse, ministry misconduct and grievances are handled in a consistent, transparent, fair and just manner (also known as procedural fairness).

## RATIONALE

We affirm that all people have the right to be spiritually, emotionally and physically safe.

This Policy and the Code of Conduct are underpinned by Jesus Christ's words: "Love the Lord 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 exercise of safe activities and events, run in safe environments in an abuse-free Christian community. Further, the Bible identifies classes of vulnerable people who are to be protected and given special care and treatment in society because of their powerlessness such as the poor, widows, orphans and aliens (Exodus 22:21-22, Deuteronomy 10:17-19, Jeremiah 22:2-4, James 1:27). As God's people we are called to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly before him (Micah 6:8).

This policy has been developed to help us live out our biblical mandate and our responsibilities under the Anglican Church of Australia and government legislation and regulations.

## POLICY STATEMENTS

### 1) Safe Recruitment

- All church workers will be assessed for their suitability before they are appointed in ministry positions by following the Diocesan Due Diligence Appointment Protocol covering recruiting, screening and appointing of church workers.

### 2) Adequate Training

- All church workers will regularly undertake approved Safe Ministry Training (e.g. Safe Ministry Workshop, refresher course).
- All church workers will attend additional ministry-specific training as mandated by the Diocese and / or their local ministry supervisor.

### 3) Continued Supervision

- All church workers are encouraged to access on-going leadership training, supervision and support.
- All church workers are required to embrace and comply with the Diocesan Code of Conduct: *Faithfulness in Service*.

### 4) Safe Environments

- The ideas and feelings of program participants will be valued through encouraging input into the programs and activities in which they are participate, and freedom to decline participation in any part of a program.
- All church workers will take all reasonable and practical steps to minimise risks of physical and psychological harm and care for their own health and the health of others involved in ministry;
- Parish Councils together with ministry leaders are responsible for meeting the requirements of the Work Health and Safety Act and associated regulations including the establishment and maintenance of: WHS, fire safety, building safety, first aid, food safety, safe transport, incident and emergency procedures.
- Parish Councils and relevant Church workers will follow the Diocesan Privacy Protocol with respect to information relating to other church workers and program participants.

### 5) Safe to raise concerns

- Church workers are required to report all safe ministry concerns, including grievances, significant breaches of *Faithfulness in Service* or disclosures or suspicions of child abuse and/or sexual misconduct to the Diocesan Safe Ministry Helpline. The Helpline staff will ensure the implementation of the appropriate safe ministry ordinance, policy and/or protocols.
- We are committed to providing survivors of sexual and/or child abuse by church workers with appropriate care and assistance through our Diocesan process for provision of pastoral care and assistance for those abused by church workers.
- Where a church worker has an allegation of ministry misconduct made against them, the Diocesan Professional Standards Ordinance and/or relevant Safe Ministry Protocols will be implemented to ensure that all parties receive appropriate support, and procedural fairness.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All clergy, Parish Councils, and those in authority are responsible for ensuring that as far as is reasonably practicable all church workers and those accessing ministries conducted by the ministry entity comply with the protocols and guidelines established under this policy. In particular:

#### **Bishop**

The Head of Agency, or Church Authority as defined by the Professional Standards Ordinance:

- Oversees and implements Safe Ministry Policy and Protocols at Diocesan level
- Licenses & Appoints clergy through the Due Diligence Appointment Protocol of the Diocese
- Licenses church workers through the Due Diligence Appointment Protocol of the Diocese
- Disciplines Clergy and church workers under Safe Ministry Protocols
- Reports to Government statutory authorities

- Diocesan Council**
- Approves all Safe Ministry Policy and protocols for the diocese
  - Assigns tasks to office holders to ensure 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 Committee (PSC), *Faithfulness in Service* investigations Committee (FISIC) and of the Diocesan Safe Ministry Reference Group
- Diocesan Safe Ministry Officer (DSMO)**
- Provides administrative support in the implementation of Safe Ministry Ordinance, Policy and Protocols, including record keeping and monitoring compliance and completion of reviews
  - Provides administrative support to the Professional Standards Committee and Faithfulness in Service Investigations Committee
- Diocesan Safe Ministry Reference Group**
- Writes, reviews and provides recommendations to Diocesan Council in relation to Safe Ministry related Ordinance, Policy and Protocols
- Faithfulness in Service Investigations Committee (FISIC)**
- Implements the *Faithfulness in Service* Investigations Protocol
  - Investigates allegations of breaches of the Diocesan Code of Conduct
- Professional Standards Committee (PSC)**
- Implements the Professional Standards Ordinance and protocols and carries out its functions in relation to investigations
  - liaise and communicate as detailed by the Professional Standards Ordinance of the Diocese
- Director of Professional Standards (DPS)**
- Carries out all functions as detailed in the Professional Standards Ordinance of the Diocese and relevant safe ministry protocols
  - Carries out all relevant functions in relation to the National Register Canon.
- Parish Council**
- Oversees the implementation of the Safe Ministry Policy at a parish level, particularly:
    - ensures safe physical environments for ministry
    - is responsible for the establishment and maintenance of WHS.
    - is responsible for parish compliance with the Privacy Protocol of the Diocese.
- Rector**
- Appoints lay church workers through the Due Diligence Appointment Protocol
  - With Parish Council, implements Safe Ministry Policy and Protocols within the parish.
- Church Workers**
- Complies with the Safe Ministry Policy and Protocols and any processes established under them.

## POLICY DEFINITIONS

The definitions in the policy are set out in the *Diocesan Professional Standards Ordinance* and the Diocesan Code of Conduct: *Faithfulness in Service*.

## MORE INFORMATION:

### Civil Requirements:

- The Work Health and Safety Act (2012)
- The Work Health and Safety Regulations (2012)
- The Care and Protection of Children Act (2016)
- The Domestic and Family Violence Act (2007)

### Church Requirements:

- The Diocesan Code of Conduct: *Faithfulness in Service* (November 2016)
- Professional Standards Ordinance (2017)
- Clergy Appointment and Regulation Ordinance
- The Offences Canon of General Synod
- Diocesan Work-Health and Safety Policy
- Diocesan Safe Ministry Awareness Workshop

### Diocesan Protocols:

- SM002: Due Diligence Appointment Protocol
- SM003: Grievance Protocol
- SM004: Protocol for Ministry with Persons of Concern
- SM005: Safe Ministry Implementation Protocol
- SM006: Faithfulness in Service Investigations Protocol
- SM007: Short Term Workers Protocol
- SM009: Protocol for Responding to Allegations of Sexual Misconduct
- SM012: Parish Safe Ministry Administrator Protocol
- PP001: Privacy Protocol

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

VERSION NUMBER OF THIS DOCUMENT	DATE OF PREVIOUS DOCUMENT	SUMMARY OF CHANGE	REASON FOR CHANGE
5	Nov 2017	Edits as suggested by DC in authorising process	-Increased clarity