



Anglican Diocese
of the Northern Territory

Safe Ministry Implementation Protocol

DOCUMENT NUMBER	SM005
TYPE	Protocol
SUBJECT	The Implementation of the Safe Ministry Policy and Safe Ministry Training
AUTHORISED BY	Diocesan Council in accordance with Part 3 of the Professional Standards Ordinance 2017.
DATE AUTHORISED	

SCOPE

This protocol describes the guidelines for implementation of the Safe Ministry Policy, which applies to all Parishes, Ministry Units, Entities and all church workers (ordained and lay, paid and voluntary, licensed and unlicensed) associated with the ministry of the Anglican Church in the Diocese of the NT. This protocol does not apply to Anglicare NT, Kormilda College and Nungalinga College workers as these organisations have their own policy and protocols as approved by their respective boards.

COMMITMENT

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 everything practical to ensure that the policy is implemented in a timely manner, with rigour and accountability, giving due account to the complexities of individual circumstances.

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*.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The roles and responsibilities for implementation are set out in the Diocesan Safe Ministry Policy. In addition, safe ministry protocols may specify particular responsibilities for implementation. If it is not clear which authority is responsible to implement a particular protocol, or part thereof, then:

- In relation to Diocesan property, the church worker should contact the Diocesan Registrar to clarify
- In relation to all clergy and lay stipendiary ministers, the question should be directed to the Bishop's Office.
- In relation to Diocesan roles (such as those serving on Diocesan boards or committees), the question should be directed to the Bishop's Office.
- In relation to culturally and linguistically diverse parishes who may require a modified process, the question should be directed to the Bishop's Office.
- In relation to all other church workers, the question should be directed to the Rector or Safe Ministry Helpline.

PROCESS

The five policy statements of the Diocesan Safe Ministry Policy (safe recruitment, adequate training, continued supervision, safe environments, and safe to raise concerns) are implemented through the diocesan safe

ministry protocols. The following process should be followed in each instance of implementing safe ministry policy.

1. Select the appropriate protocol
 - if it is unclear which protocol is appropriate for a situation then contact the Safe Ministry Helpline
 - if no appropriate protocol is available for a situation then contact the Safe Ministry Helpline
2. Implement the appropriate protocol
 - if it is unclear how to implement the protocol for a particular situation then contact the Safe Ministry Helpline
 - if the situation is outside the scope of the relevant protocol then contact the Safe Ministry Helpline
3. When a report must be made
 - follow all reporting procedures as specified in each protocol
 - report compliance with appropriate protocols as required by the annual parish safe ministry return to the Diocese
 - the relevant persons with responsibility under ordinance, policy and protocols must keep records of compliance consistent with legislated privacy principles
 - report breaches of compliance as detailed in this protocol below

TIME FRAME

Interim Measures

The Diocesan Professional Standards Ordinance 2017 along with the Safe Ministry Policy authorised in May 2017 requires all diocesan parishes, ministries and entities to implement the Diocesan Safe Ministry Policy and Protocols. The Diocese recognises:

- compliance is an ongoing process. As people enter and resign as church workers various protocols will need to be continually implemented over time
- a process of training and communication of the new Safe Ministry Policy and Protocols is required across the Diocese of the NT
- the new Safe Ministry Protocols will take time to implement
- the need for urgent action by all those with responsibilities under the policy and protocols
- policy and protocol do not guarantee safety and therefore vigilance by all church members is required to prevent harm to the vulnerable

The initial implementation of the Diocesan Safe Ministry Policy and Protocols will commence from June 2017. Each diocesan parish, ministry and entity must show a commitment to safe ministries through implementation of the Safe Ministry Policy and Protocols:

- progressively from June 2017
- as soon as is practical
- as specified in particular protocols (e.g. the appointment of church workers in the Due Diligence Appointment Protocol)
- aiming for full implementation all safe ministry policy and protocol by 31 December 2018.

SAFE MINISTRY TRAINING

Safe Ministry Workshop

The workshop is part of the diocese's commitment to adequate training of all church workers and all adult members of church communities to promote a culture of safety in the Diocese. The Diocesan Safe Ministry Workshop has been carefully prepared to reduce the instances of ministry misconduct, abuse, duty of care and/or safety failures by providing churches with good policy, practice and procedure implementation advice for Safe Ministry. The workshop raises awareness of NT legislation and Diocese of the NT legislation, policy and protocols. Promoting a widespread culture of safety in the Diocese gives vulnerable people a voice, which has been shown to reduce instances of harm. For that reason attendance at a Diocesan Safe Ministry Workshop is:

1. mandatory for all church workers every three (3) years
2. recommended for all adult members of church communities every three years

3. required for church workers starting in the Diocese as soon as practical and within 12 months of starting the ministry position
4. required even if safe ministry training has been completed within two years in another diocese, or with another church or secular organisation.

It is important to note that, due to the changing nature of government requirements and legislation, Diocesan Safe Ministry Ordinance, Policy and Protocols are revised and updated as required. These changes are incorporated into the Diocesan Safe Ministry Workshop as relevant.

Mandated Training

Other training may occur at different times. Church workers must attend additional ministry-specific training as mandated by the Diocese and/or their local ministry supervisor. This may include: training in the implementation of new Safe Ministry or other Diocesan Protocols, the content and application of the diocesan Code of Conduct: *Faithfulness in Service*, Diocesan Continuing Education Days, and Clergy Conference. Failure to attend mandated training may result in disciplinary action.

Workshop Trainers

All trainers who run the Diocesan Safe Ministry Workshop are accredited by the external consultants and authorised by the Bishop. In addition, trainers must undergo a refresher and training assessment by the consultants (or their delegates) every 12 months.

BREACHES

Where there is a failure to implement the Safe Ministry Policy or Protocols this may be: a breach causing risk of harm, a process failure, or various other forms of non-compliance. The priority is to protect those at risk of harm and rectify the breach as soon as possible. For any breach, or at any time, the Bishop has the right:

- 1) to seek risk management advice
- 2) to review any church worker's safe ministry clearance
- 3) to remove any church worker's clearance

Risk of Harm

If a breach leads to concerns about risk of harm the concern must be reported immediately to the Safe Ministry Helpline. For concern about other breaches contact the Rector or Parish Safe Ministry Administrator, or the Diocesan Safe Ministry Officer.

Process Failures:

Where a failure occurs in the process of implementing the Diocesan Safe Ministry Policy or Protocol then:

- if possible, the failure should be rectified immediately in order to comply with the *Safe Ministry Policy*
- if compliance is not possible, contact the Safe Ministry Helpline
- the Diocese may undertake a risk assessment with a view to exploring modified process or requirements
- ongoing or significant process failures will be reviewed annually and may require investigation.

Non-Compliance:

Where compliance with the Safe Ministry Policy and Protocols is not possible because of cultural, linguistic or other physical reasons:

- report the matter to the Safe Ministry Helpline
- an alternative process may be designed according to the needs of an individual situation
- the Diocese may undertake a risk assessment with a view to exploring modified requirements:
 - when there is physical remoteness
 - when there is physical incapacity
 - when church workers retire from full-time ministry due to age or infirmity
 - for existing retired clergy with a Permission to Officiate licence
 - For non-active but existing appointments (e.g. emeritus and honorary canons of the cathedral)

In the event of wilful refusal to comply with the Safe Ministry Policy and Protocols:

- in the first instance, a warning will be issued
- the Diocesan *Grievance Protocol* may be utilised
- safe Ministry clearance is refused, suspended or revoked pending compliance with the *Safe Ministry Policy*
- licences will be refused, suspended or revoked pending compliance with the *Safe Ministry Policy*
- civil proceedings may be undertaken.

Historical:

When there are concerns regarding an historical breach of the current Safe Ministry Ordinance, Policy and Protocols the Safe Ministry Helpline should be contacted.

An investigative process may be required. Relatives of persons breaching the Safe Ministry Policy may need to be informed of any action. Examples of actions may include, but are not limited to:

- renaming buildings which honour the person in breach
- renaming awards named after the person in breach

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
2	June 2017	Addition of emeritus canons of the Cathedral	