



Anglican Diocese
of the Northern Territory

Due Diligence Appointment Protocol

DOCUMENT NUMBER	SM002
TYPE	Protocol
SUBJECT	Due Diligence in Appointments
AUTHORISED BY	Diocesan Council in accordance with Part 3 of the Professional Standards Ordinance 2017.
DATE AUTHORISED	

SCOPE

This protocol describes the screening requirements for the appointment of all church workers (ordained and lay, paid and voluntary, licensed and unlicensed) who are associated with the ministry of the Anglican Church in the Diocese of the Northern Territory, with the exception of Anglicare NT workers and those who work with Nungalinya College. These organisations have their own appointment 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 ensure we have done all that is reasonably practicable to ensure that those appointed to ministry positions have been assessed for their suitability.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The principles used to implement due diligence include:

- Rigour:** we require that all church workers in the Diocese, regardless of licence or appointment, undertake the relevant screening, even if they have been in ministry roles for a long time.
- Accountability:** we need to be able to show that we have done all we can to ensure that those appointed to ministry positions have been assessed for their suitability, particularly where there may be vulnerable adults, youth and children.

CATEGORIES OF APPOINTMENT

This protocol details the screening and training requirements which for different church workers vary according to role. It is the intention of this protocol to cover every church role, in two categories:

Category 1: All Ordained Ministry, or appointment as a Paid, Licensed or Authorised Church Worker, including Vocational Mission Workers

Category 2: All Church Workers excluding category 1. All persons appointed to or performing a function with the actual or apparent authority of the church are church workers under this protocol (whether paid and voluntary, licensed and unlicensed).

Please note that an alternative due-diligence process is available for culturally and linguistically diverse individuals or parishes, for whom the normal safe ministry processes would not result in effective diligence – see page 7 of this protocol.

DEFINITIONS

All definitions in this protocol are set out in the Diocesan *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:

- **Authorised Personnel** in relation to access to private information means:
 - Specified personnel from the Bishop's Office, The Office of the Director of Professional Standards, the Professional Standards Committee, any individual or organisation contracted by the Diocese to provide relevant advice in relation to safe ministry, any other relevant professional, the parish Rector and Parish Safe Ministry Administrator.
- **Children:** persons who are under the age of 18 years
- **Clergy:** a church worker who is an ordained person, including deacons, priests and bishops, whether paid or unpaid.
- **Confidential:** in relation to information means that the information is stored in a secure location to be accessed only by legally authorized persons
- **Declared Circumstances:** means those facts and circumstances declared to be correct in the declarations within the application for ministry form.
- **Lay-licensed ministry worker:** a non-ordained church worker, licensed to a ministry role by the Bishop under a stipendiary arrangement
- **Ministry Coordinator:** a church worker who makes program decisions, bears legal responsibilities such as duty of care and undertaking risk assessments, handles participants' personal information, and may conduct role interviews / ministry appointments within the ministry area they coordinate
- **Ministry Helper:** a church worker who does not make program decisions, but assists the leader under supervision
- **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):** a formal agreement for ministry which documents the scope and responsibilities of a ministry partner or short term worker's ministry while working in or in conjunction with the Diocese of the NT. The Bishop's Office is responsible for the approval of all MOUs
- **Ochre Card:** the Working with Children Clearance conducted by the *SAFE NT* Branch of the NT Police Service
- **Parish Safe Ministry Administrator (PSMA):** the church worker appointed within each parish to support the Rector and Diocese on Safe Ministry compliance checks for church workers in a parish
- **PTO:** a licence from the Bishop allowing the holder Permission to Officiate as defined in the *Clergy Appointment and Regulations Ordinance* of the Diocese
- **Vulnerable Adult:** an adult at a higher than usual risk of harm due to their mental health, disability, age or life circumstance
- **Working with Children:** Regular and/or not incidental

LIMIT OF APPROVED STATUS: ALL CATEGORIES

Completed diocesan safe ministry screening requirements are valid for 3 years or unless the church worker:

- (a) has a change in their circumstances (including but not limited to a change in their declarations, a conviction, or failure to maintain a current ochre card if needed)
- (b) moves to another ministry.

PROCESS

CATEGORY 1: ALL CLERGY & LAY LICENSED MINISTERS

RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION: CATEGORY 1:

People in this category of appointment fall into two groups:

1. **Clergy and Vocational Mission Workers:** The Bishop's office is responsible for implementing this protocol for all clergy and workers received from mission partner organisations, including candidates for ordination and locums. All information collected as part of screening is confidential when completed at the Diocesan Office.
2. **Lay Stipendiary Ministers and parish-based lay licensed workers:** Rectors are responsible for implementing the protocol including conducting role interviews with those undertaking ministry in their parish. However a licence and safe ministry clearance can only be provided by the Bishop's Office. Accordingly, all confidential information is to be forwarded and kept securely by the Diocesan Office, who provide formal notification of safe ministry clearance together with any relevant risk assessment advice in relation to those being appointed as lay stipendiary workers or lay-licensed workers.

REQUIREMENTS: CATEGORY 1

	Office Use Only																
	Safe Ministry Check (OPA)	Safe Ministry Check (Referee)	WW Children Clearance	National Police check	Safe Ministry Workshop part 1	Safe Ministry Implementation Workshop	Role interview	Letter of Good Standing	Medical exam	Psychological exam	Oaths of obedience	Declaration of Assent	Submission to Synod	National Register Assessment	Letters testimonial	SI Quis	Examining Chaplains
Clergy – general licence & PTO	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		*	*	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Visiting Clergy / Locum (PTO)	✓	✓	✓	✓	*	*	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓			
Ordinand	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lay-licensed ministry worker (Paid and unpaid)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓			
Vocational Mission Workers	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓			

NOTES: CATEGORY 1:

- **Working With Children Clearance:** a valid *Ochre Card* clearance number must accompany the application. The Diocesan Office verifies the clearance number on receipt of each application using the online tool. In the case of visiting minister assisting for less than 14 days, a valid interstate *Working with Children’s Clearance* is acceptable
- **A National Police Check:** not older than 3 months must be submitted with the application
- **Safe Ministry Workshop:** Applicants cannot be cleared for ministry until they have provided evidence of their completion of approved Safe Ministry Training within the past three years, or not later than 3 months after being ordained, licensed, or authorized, or appointed.
- **Role Interview:** for Clergy is conducted by the Bishop (or delegate) and may include interviews with examining chaplains. For lay licensed ministers, this is conducted by the Rector.
- **Exceptions*:** The asterix (*) in the table above indicates items conducted at the discretion of the Bishop.

SUPERVISION AND REVIEW: CATEGORY 1

Ongoing supervision and review are also important aspects of due diligence. The Bishop (or delegate) meets with all clergy at least annually. Rectors are required to meet with Lay Licensed Ministers regularly to provide adequate support, and an annual ministry review is recommended. Clergy are also encouraged to enter into professional supervision or a similar relationship with a suitably qualified person. In the event of a change in circumstance, arising from any source, the safe ministry clearance is subject to review by authorised personnel.

OUTCOMES: CATEGORY 1

Authorised personnel process all Category 1 application forms and prepare a risk assessment for the Bishop for interview and action. Once this is complete, the Diocesan Office provides formal notification of safe ministry clearance or refusal to the applicant.

CATEGORY 2: ALL OTHER CHURCH WORKERS (EXCLUDING CATEGORY 1)

RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION: CATEGORY 2

1. **For diocesan roles** such as members of Diocesan Boards (denoted in the following tables with a #), the protocol is implemented by the Bishop's office.
2. **For parish roles**, the protocol is implemented at parish level by the Rector, with support from the PSMA.
3. **For short term workers**, the protocol is implemented by the Diocesan host. (Also see the *SM007: Protocol for Short Term Workers*).
4. For any roles in parishes without a Rector, ministry units or entities the Bishop's Office should be consulted for advice.

All information collected as part of screening is stored as confidential when completed.

Where the parish is unable to maintain secure records, the Diocesan Office can assist on request.

ELIGIBILITY FOR APPOINTMENT: CATEGORY 2

Where satisfactory references cannot be obtained, a minimum 6 months of regular church attendance demonstrating appropriate character and conduct is a requirement before a person may enter into a category 2 role. It is generally recommended that church workers have become well-known as regular attenders of the parish, ministry group or entity before commencing volunteer work.

REQUIREMENTS: CATEGORY 2:

Church Worker Categories	Safe Ministry Check	WW Children Clearance	National Police check	Safe Ministry Workshop – part 1	Role interview	National Register Assessment	Safe Ministry Implementation workshop
Volunteer Adult Church Worker – Working with Children	Adult	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Volunteer 13-17 year old Church Worker – Working with Children	Youth	*	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Person Performing a Safe Ministry Role	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Roles Prescribed By Ordinance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	*
Volunteer Adult Church Worker	Adult		✓	✓	✓		
Volunteer 13-17 year old Church Worker	Youth		✓	✓	✓		
Short Term Church Worker	MOU	✓	MOU	MOU	MOU	✓	
A Child Doing Ministry (12 years old or younger)					✓		
Onsite Contractor (Paid or unpaid)	Contractor Form				✓		
Unpaid Regular Community Volunteer	✓						

NOTES: CATEGORY 2:

- A person cannot be appointed to a role until clearance is complete.
- **Contractors:** Contractors are not required to complete normal application forms, but must complete a *Contractor Site Safety* form. This requires contractors to provide their details and sign a short commitment to ensuring the safe work practices for themselves and others as per the WHS Act. These forms should be kept by the parish and submitted as part of the *Annual Parish Safe Ministry Return*. Rectors are also to consult the Diocesan Office and implement confidentiality agreements where a contractor may have access to private or sensitive information. It is important that contractors are supervised if there is any possibility of contact with children or vulnerable people. Ideally, contractors should attend when the site is unused. Contractor extends to people who are doing the gardening and cleaning for the church, regardless as to whether they are paid or unpaid.
- **Contracted Professional (paid or unpaid):** i.e. auditor, lawyer.
- **National Police Check:** Where this is a requirement, a notice not older than 3 months must be submitted with the application. Leaders will need this as well as an ochre card if they will be driving participants as part of their role.
- **Unpaid Regular Community Volunteer** This role is specifically for people who are not regular attendees of the regular church service, not paid by the church, do not work directly with kids and do

not require a workshop, but whom serve on a regular basis. To request approval for these people, the PSMA or rector must request special consideration from the DSMO for a Category 3 form.

- **PSMA role:** This role has specific requirements in addition to clearance checks. These are detailed in full in the *PSMA Protocol SM012*.
- **References:** The Rector should check referees for all persons who have not been members of the parish for more than three years. Where satisfactory references cannot be obtained, a minimum 6 months regular church attendance demonstrating appropriate character and conduct is mandatory.
- **Role Interview:** for lay stipendiary ministers, and all parish roles, this is conducted by the Rector. For Diocesan roles as indicated by the # symbol, the Bishop (or delegate) will conduct the interview.
- **Roles prescribed by Ordinance:** The Ordinances of the Diocese of the NT specify in detail the responsibilities of Wardens, Parish Councillors, members of Synod, members of the Professional Standards Committee and members of the Tribunal. In addition, Diocesan Protocols detail some roles and functions. It is recommended that Rectors provide regular support to church workers engaged in such ministries, and role interviews should focus on ensuring that applicants have a copy of legislation, policies and protocols relevant to the role they are applying to undertake. Attendance for the Implementation workshop is not required for clearance, but valuable for all relevant roles to attend.
- **Safe Ministry Workshop:** A church worker may be cleared for ministry prior to completing the Diocesan *Safe Ministry Workshop*; but they must undertake to complete the workshop as soon as practical and within 3 months of starting the ministry position. Clearance will be revoked if this condition is not met as required.
- **Short term workers** from interstate or overseas may provide a valid interstate *Working with Children's Clearance*, provided that their ministry in the NT will not exceed 14 days in duration. In the case of short term volunteers please refer to the *Protocol for short term workers*, which details the process and requirements for short term workers. This includes guest preachers or guest speakers.
- **Synod Representatives:** Safe ministry clearance for Parish Representatives must be undertaken at the parish level, prior to their attendance at any meeting of Synod. The Bishop's office will undertake the clearance for any Bishop's appointments.
- **Unspecified Roles:** If a specific role is not mentioned or if the Rector believes that the requirements listed in the chart above do not adequately relate to the specific role in their parish, the Rector is required to contact the DSMO for risk management advice regarding which checks to undertake.
- **Volunteers aged 12yrs or less:** it is presumed that children will be fully supervised and supported at all times in their ministry.
- **Working Bee** For people volunteering for an occasional (4 or less times a year) working bee, a sign in sheet is required to note their name, date and time they were on the church premises.
- **Working With Children Clearance:** A valid Ochre Card clearance must be obtained prior to commencing ministry with children or youth. The Rector, PSMA or DSMO must verify the clearance number on receipt of each application using the online tool. In the case of short term workers for less than 14 days, a valid interstate *Working with Children's Clearance* is acceptable. It is presumed that all persons in roles above that are listed above as **not** requiring an ochre card will at all times be fully supervised in ministry by persons with safe ministry clearance where there is potential for contact with children. This may require careful management of building use in some cases. An Exemption can be made for children aged 13 to 14 years old who can't get an ochre card.
- **Volunteers who have turned 18:** upon turning 18 will be required to submit all new forms for an adult church worker.

OUTCOMES: CATEGORY 2

- In cases where the applicant answers 'Yes' to any question(s) on the Application Form questionnaire, the Rector must contact the Safe Ministry Helpline for assistance to access advice on reasonable risk management measures
- It is an offence to engage a person in child related work who is barred from clearance in relation to an Ochre Card. Therefore, if a bar is found upon verification for a person in a ministry role that requires an Ochre Card, the matter will immediately be referred to the the Diocesan Safe Ministry Officer, who will, after investigation, refer the matter to the Diocesan Professional Standards Committee. In

addition, the Rector will be responsible to ensure the applicant immediately stops their involvement in all child related work. Please also refer to the *Persons of concern protocol*.

- In the event of an adverse finding or declaration from the police clearance, the rector must contact the Safe Ministry Helpline for assistance to access advice on reasonable risk management measures

Once the application process is completed, including the preparation of a risk assessment as required, the Rector (or Bishop's Office in the case of Diocesan roles) provides formal notification of safe ministry clearance, or refusal to the applicant.

SUPERVISION AND REVIEW: CATEGORY 2

Ongoing supervision and review are also important aspects of due diligence. Rectors are required to provide, including by means of appropriate structural delegation, regular meetings to provide church workers with adequate support for the ministries they are involved in. It is recommended that a ministry review be undertaken with all church workers annually.

ALTERNATIVE DUE DILIGENCE PROCESS FOR CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE PARISHES OR INDIVIDUALS

The purpose of this part of the protocol is to provide a process for due diligence in recruitment of church workers to prevent harm from risk that could have been known. However, it is necessary to provide an alternative, culturally appropriate mechanism for undertaking safe ministry clearance with individuals seeking appointment under either categories whose English or culture makes it likely that due diligence would not be achieved through use of the documented processes.

It is the responsibility of rectors, ministry development team personnel and the Bishop to identify any individuals or parishes in their pastoral care who may benefit from an alternative due diligence process.

In conjunction with the Diocesan Safe Ministry Officer, an alternative process will be designed with reference to the needs of each individual situation and may include:

- assistance or interview to enable completion of safe ministry application forms
- assistance to obtain statutory requirements as relevant (ie: Ochre Card and / or National Police Check)
- interview with clergy or senior parish leaders to ascertain and manage potential known risks in the parish and / or community.
- the assistance of a translator
- gender separated Safe Ministry Workshop sessions
- modified psychological exam in the case of applicants seeking ordination to take account of cultural and/or linguistic issues.

DOCUMENTS AND SCREENING CHECKS THAT SUPPORT THIS PROTOCOL

CIVIL SCREENING CHECKS

National Police Check

Ochre Card: The SAFE NT Working with Children Clearance for those working or volunteering with children

CHURCH SCREENING CHECKS

General Synod recommendations regarding screening prior to ordination

Anglican Church of Australia National Register Check

Anglican Church of Australia Safe Ministry Check (separate forms for category 1, category 2 and referees)

DIOCESAN LEGISLATION

- Professional Standards Ordinance
- Clergy Appointments Regulations Ordinance
- Bishop’s Election Ordinance
- Parishes Ordinance

DIOCESAN AND GENERAL SYNOD DOCUMENTS

- The Diocesan Code of Conduct: *Faithfulness in Service*
- SM001 Safe Ministry Policy
- Contractor Site Safety Form
- Persons of Concern protocol.
- SM007: Protocol for Short Term Workers
- Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017

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
4	2019	Re-naming of categories of ministry to reflect Safe Ministry to Children canon requirements and General Synod forms. Updating of record keeping references to reflect encrypted database now used. Definitions updates as required by these changes.	Amendments to align with Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017. Approved by DC.