

**THE ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF GRAFTON  
DIOCESAN POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

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<b>SUBJECT: BACKGROUND CHECKS AND MINIMUM TRAINING STANDARDS FOR COMMUNITY PROTECTION</b>		<b>PROCEDURE REFERENCE NUMBER</b> GEN-006
<b>DATE APPROVED</b> 3 March 2019 by Bishop-in-Council		<b>REVISION NUMBER</b> Original
<b>POLICY IMPLEMENTATION DATE</b> 4 March 2019	<b>REVIEW DATE AND FREQUENCY</b> 3 Yearly	<b>RESPONSIBLE FOR REVIEW</b> Bishop-in-Council

## **1.0 PURPOSE**

This procedure sets out the minimum requirement for background checks and compliance training for particular roles in the Anglican Diocese of Grafton. These checks and training are an important part of the protection that the Diocese provides to the community it serves, especially with regard to vulnerable persons.

## **2.0 SCOPE**

### **2.1 Applicability**

This procedure applies generally in the Anglican Diocese of Grafton covering the Bishop-in-Council and its committees, The Corporate Trustees of the Diocese of Grafton, the Bishops Registry, Anglican Funds Grafton Diocese, Archives, Parish ministries, and operation of any other minister or ministry of the Diocese except those specifically excluded below.

This procedure is applicable to persons aged 18 years or older. For applicable persons under the age of 18 years, the procedure will need to be modified to account for availability of criminal record checks and Working With Children's Check.

### **2.2 Exclusions**

This procedure does not apply to the scope of operation of each of the bodies corporate of the Diocese of Grafton (i.e. Lindisfarne Anglican Grammar School, Emmanuel Anglican College, Clarence Valley Anglican School, Bishop Druitt College, St Columba Anglican School, St Columba Anglican School Foundation, Anglicare North Coast, Lismore Parish Pre-School, St Cuthbert's Retirement Living Complexes) except with respect to the appointment of any chaplain (or other appointment holding the Bishop's license) to any of these bodies.

## **3.0 BACKGROUND CHECKS**

### **3.1 Criminal Record Check**

#### **3.1.1 Description**

- (a) This action is a formal check of the records of the law enforcement agencies across Australia (i.e. national police check).
- (b) Unless there is a strong reason to do otherwise, this check should be obtained from the NSW Police Service.  
[https://www.police.nsw.gov.au/online\\_services/criminal\\_history\\_check](https://www.police.nsw.gov.au/online_services/criminal_history_check)

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**3.1.2 Requirement**

- (a) A criminal record check is required before the appointment of the following categories of church worker regardless of whether the person is paid or not paid for their involvement:
- Clergy;
  - Those ministering to the aged, frail, intellectually disabled and those with a limited command of English (except where this ministry only occurs in a public setting) This specifically includes clergy, chaplains, LLMs and designated parish volunteers visiting aged care facilities.
  - Employees in the Bishop's Registry, Anglican Funds Grafton Diocese and parish offices;
  - Parish Treasurers;
  - Any other parish position where the Churchwardens, or Bishop's delegate, have assessed that the position includes a significant risk to vulnerable people interacting with that position or a significant risk to parish finances.
- (b) Churchwardens are encouraged to conduct risk assessments of all types of positions within their parish to determine which positions will require a criminal record check.
- (c) Where a person who has an extensive background working overseas and little or no recent Australian residency, an application for a criminal record check in the countries relating to their most recent and most extensive residency or working experience should be made.
- (d) For each appointment or role that requires the license of the Bishop, a criminal record check is required every 3 years and will be associated with the renewal of a license where practicable.
- (e) Parish Treasurers who have provided a criminal record check are not required to provide a fresh criminal record check on re-appointment but must do so whenever 3 years has elapsed since the most recent criminal record check provided.
- (f) For other positions that do not require the license of the Bishop, a criminal record check is required on commencement only.
- (g) The person(s) responsible for recruitment or making an appointment is responsible for advising the potential recruit or appointee that a criminal record check is required before the employment or appointment is confirmed.
- (h) The criminal record check for clergy who will become the Incumbent of a parish (i.e. Rector or Priest-in-Charge) will be required by the office of the Bishop.

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- (i) The potential recruit or appointee is responsible to make the application for a criminal record check. (No application can be made without the involvement and consent of person subject to the check.)
- (j) The parish or organisation making the appointment can withdraw an offer of employment or cancel an appointment if the potential recruit or appointee fails to make an application for a criminal record check within a reasonable time (e.g. 2 weeks). Before withdrawing any offer or cancelling any appointment, the person should be advised that this action is being considered and a deadline will be imposed.
- (k) A valid criminal record check issued not more than 6 months previously may be accepted.
- (l) In all cases, photographic identification shall be used to ensure that the Criminal Record Check presented is valid for the person to be employed or appointed.

### **3.2 Working With Children Check**

#### **3.2.1 Description**

- (a) A Working With Children Check (WWCC) is a screening conducted by the Office of the Children's Guardian and is compulsory for a number of occupations and volunteer activities. Those who fail the Check or fail to undergo the Check are disqualified from working in certain occupations or certain volunteer activities.
- (b) More information about the WWCC can be found at <http://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/working-with-children-check>

#### **3.2.2 Requirement**

- (a) A current WWCC is required before the appointment or commencement of the following categories of church worker regardless of whether the person is paid or not paid for their involvement:
  - Those who are responsible for religious ministry (clergy and lay holders of a license issued by the Bishop);
  - Those involved in ministry to youth and children (Leaders and designated helpers).
  - Members of Parish Council.
- (b) Further to the above, a WWCC is required for all parent volunteers attending overnight kids camps with their own child.
- (c) To remain current a WWCC must be renewed after 5 years.

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- (d) Holders of WWCC have a responsibility to keep their personal details up to date with the Office of the Children's Guardian. A fine may apply for non-compliance.
- (e) Parish Council (and the equivalent in non-parish locations) is responsible to ensure that each relevant person of their parish has a current WWCC.
- (f) The potential recruit or appointee is responsible to make the application for a WWCC. Applications are made online at [www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/check](http://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/check)

#### **4.0 MINIMUM TRAINING REQUIREMENTS**

##### **4.1 Faithfulness in Service (Code of Conduct) Awareness**

###### **4.1.1 Description**

- (a) Faithfulness in Service is a code of conduct for church workers that has been adopted across the Anglican Church of Australia. It covers the topics of Pastoral Relationships, Children, Personal Behaviour, Sexual Conduct and Financial Integrity.
- (b) Faithfulness in Service has been incorporated into a policy and procedure document of the Anglican Diocese of Grafton. Copies of GEN-002 Faithfulness in Service are available on the diocese's website at <https://www.graftondiocese.org.au/documents/policies-procedures/>
- (c) Widespread awareness and understanding of this code is important for the standards of the Diocese of Grafton therefore training in this code has been made a requirement for various positions and roles.

###### **4.1.2 Requirement**

- (a) Training in Faithfulness in Service is a requirement for those in the following roles or positions regardless of whether the person is paid or not paid for their involvement:
  - Holders of a license issued by the Bishop (e.g. clergy, LLMs)
  - Members of Parish Council;
  - Parish Treasurers;
  - Leaders and designated helpers in Family, Special Religious Education (SRE), Youth or Children's Ministry or similar;
  - Leaders or coordinators of parish ministries;
  - Church office workers and volunteers where public contact is involved;
  - Leaders and designated helpers with street ministry, hospital visiting, aged home visiting, soup kitchens, Op Shops, and other people contact ministries.

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- (b) To remain current in Faithfulness in Service training a full course or a refresher course is to be completed within 3 years.
- (c) Regardless of (b) above, currency in Faithfulness in Service requires a full course to be completed within every 6 year period.
- (d) Training in Faithfulness in Service is only valid for this purpose if it has been conducted by a trainer authorised by the Bishop of Grafton and a signed certificate of completion has been issued for that training.
- (e) Parish Council (and the equivalent in non-parish locations) is responsible to ensure that each relevant person of their parish has a current training in Faithfulness in Service.
- (f) Any person who is more than 3 months overdue in regard to their training requirements may be stood down by Parish Council from that ministry or involvement until the necessary training is completed.

## **4.2 Safe Ministry Training**

### **4.2.1 Description**

- (a) Through the National Council of Churches in Australia (NCCA), the Anglican Diocese of Grafton has become a participant in the Safe Church Training Agreement with the aim of making all church environments safer for the people that use them.
- (b) The NCCA accredited Safe Ministry Training (SMT) is designed to assist church leaders to ensure churches, activities and programs are safe. SMT, usually delivered as a Safe Church Awareness Workshop or a Safe Church Refresher Workshop, includes modules on:
  - Key concepts in protecting vulnerable people
  - Child protection and vulnerable people
  - Christian Leaders – Good practice guidelines for safe leaders
  - Safe programs
- (c) Widespread understanding of safe ministry principles among the leaders of the Anglican Diocese of Grafton is important for the safety of both members and those interacting with our churches and ministries so SMT has been made a requirement for various leadership positions and roles.

### **4.2.2 Requirement**

- (a) SMT is a requirement for those in the following leadership roles or positions whether the person is paid or not paid for their involvement:
  - Holders of a license issued by the Bishop (this includes clergy and LLMs);
  - Members of Parish Council;

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- All leaders of Family, Special Religious Education (SRE), Youth or Children’s Ministry or similar;
  - All leaders or coordinators of parish ministries;
  - All leaders of street ministry, hospital visiting, aged home visiting, soup kitchens, Op Shops and other people contact ministries.
- (b) To remain current in SMT a full course or a refresher course is to be completed within 3 years.
- (c) Regardless of (b) above, currency in SMT requires a full course to be completed within every 6 year period.
- (d) Training in SMT is only valid for this purpose if it is through an SCTA accredited course. The Diocese of Grafton conducts SCTA accredited courses from time to time and other options for completing this training are:
- On-line courses offered by the Anglican Diocese of Sydney  
<https://safeministry.training/>
  - An SCTA accredited course offered by another Anglican Diocese or Christian denomination <http://www.ncca.org.au/departments/safe-church-program>
- (e) Parish Council (and the equivalent in non-parish locations) is responsible to ensure that each relevant person of their parish is current in SMT.
- (f) Any person who is more than 3 months overdue in regard to their training requirements may be stood down from that ministry or involvement until the necessary training is completed.

**5.0 OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

**5.1 Record Keeping**

- (a) Parishes and agencies should ensure that they maintain a record including copies of certificates of any checks or training relevant to their activities.
- (b) A copy of each record is to be provided to the Bishop’s Registry (Maree Collett [pa@graftondiocese.org.au](mailto:pa@graftondiocese.org.au)) for maintenance of a master record.

**5.2 Costs**

- (a) Criminal Record Checks for clergy in receipt of a stipend will be at the expense of the clergyperson.
- (b) Criminal Record Checks relating to recruitment or appointment for positions other than (a) above, will be initially at the cost of the person subject to the check who will be reimbursed if appointed.

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- (c) Where a WWCC is required for employment purposes, the cost will be the responsibility of the employee.
- (d) There is currently no charge for a WWCC for a volunteer.
- (e) Any costs related to either Faithfulness in Service or SMT will be the responsibility of the participant.
- (f) Regardless of the provisions of this section, parishes and agencies may choose to reimburse any of these costs either in full or in part.

## **6.0 DEFINITIONS**

### **6.1 Designated Helper**

A designated helper is an assistant in an activity (i.e. not a leader or co-ordinator) who has been recognised as being involved in the activity. Indications that a person is a designated helper include:

- Inclusion on a roster;
- Wearing a name badge or uniform;
- Being trained for the role or activity;
- Being in the area reserved for approved workers (e.g. behind a serving counter).

Volunteering ad hoc to assist with a general task (e.g. washing up, moving furniture) would not by virtue of that action become a designated helper.

### **6.2 Designated Leader**

A designated leader is an individual who holds recognised responsibility for a group and/or coordinates a group at some point during an activity.

## **7.0 REFERENCES**

GEN-002 Faithfulness in Service

REG-001 Administration Code of Conduct

Professional Standards Ordinance 2004

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**ATTACHMENT A**

**Summary of Requirements for Background Checks and Minimum Training**

<b>Position/Role</b>	<b>Criminal Record Check</b>	<b>Working With Children Check</b>	<b>Faithfulness in Service Awareness</b>	<b>Safe Ministry Training</b>
<b>Renewal Frequency</b>	As per 3.1.2	5 years	3 years	3 years
Licensed clergy	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lay people holding a Bishop's license (e.g. LLM)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Registry employees (including Anglican Funds Grafton Diocese)	✓		Administration Code of Conduct	
Parish employees	✓		✓	
Churchwardens		✓	✓	✓
Parish Treasurers	✓		✓	
Parish Councillors		✓	✓	✓
SRE teachers		✓	✓	✓
Family, Youth or Children ministry leaders		✓	✓	✓
Family, Youth or Children ministry designated helpers		✓	✓	
Leaders or coordinators of parish and outreach ministries			✓	✓
Designated helpers in ministries with people contact (e.g. street ministry, hospital visiting, aged home visits, soup kitchens)	For ministry to the aged, frail, intellectually disabled and those with limited English		✓	
Op Shop volunteers			✓	
Volunteers in office and administration functions where public contact is involved			✓	

Other positions or roles may be included where a risk assessment highlights the need for the check or training.

Where more than one position or role applies to a person, then the check or minimum training requirement is applicable if it is specified for any of the relevant positions or roles.



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**ATTACHMENT B**

**Roles or activities that do not require Background Checks or Minimum Training**

Attendance at worship, home group or general church gathering  
Bible reading as part of public worship  
Leading intercessions (prayers) as part of public worship  
General participation or volunteering for gardening, cleaning, maintenance work  
Parents and guardians in activities where their children are involved (except where the person has a designated leader role and for overnight camps or similar)  
Parish Auditor

Note: Background Checks or Minimum Training become applicable if a person holds a position or role specified in Attachment A regardless of their inclusion in Attachment B.