



ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF GRAFTON

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

SUBJECT: CLERGY RESIGNATION/RETIREMENT		REFERENCE NUMBER GEN-014
DATE APPROVED 23 February by Bishop-in-Council		VERSION Original
IMPLEMENTATION DATE Immediate	REVIEW FREQUENCY As required but at least 3 yearly	RESPONSIBLE FOR REVIEW Bishop-in-Council

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure smooth arrangements and appropriate communication concerning clergy plans for resignation including those clergy who are planning imminent retirement.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy applies to clerical ministry in the Diocese.
- 2.2 This policy does not apply to Anglicare North Coast, Lismore Parish Centre Pre School or the schools of the Diocese.

3. DEFINITIONS

“**Bishop**” – the Bishop of Grafton, or the Administrator if there is a vacancy in the episcopate, or the Commissary if the Bishop is absent from the Diocese.

“**Clergy**” – bishops, priests and deacons licensed to serve in the Diocese.

“**Diocese**” – the Anglican Diocese of Grafton.

“**Parish**” – a Ministry Unit of the Diocese within a defined geographic area.

4. PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 Clergy who serve in the Diocese are ministering as an extension of the Bishop’s ministry and under the licence of the Bishop. Early and open communication with the Bishop about potential major changes in ministry is consistent with this principle.
- 4.2 Clergy in incumbency have a key role in a ministering community and should ensure that any significant change to their ministry is considered carefully in terms of communication with other parish leaders and the parish generally with the aim of enabling the parish to make the best possible transition.
- 4.3 Although not employees as such, clergy in receipt of a stipend participate in payroll processes. Those processes operate best when the necessary detail is provided in writing in the required format in a timely manner.

5. PRACTICES

Resignation

- 5.1 Clergy contemplating resignation, either to move to another clerical role or leaving active ministry, should discuss their intentions with the Bishop not less than 3 months prior to the intended finish of service. This will allow for a discussion on:
- Reasons for the change
 - The joint planning of communication with the Ministry Unit(s) affected by the change
 - How to reduce any negative impacts of resigning from the Ministry Unit
 - Using annual leave entitlements
 - Allow the Bishop to plan for transition.
- 5.2 The following steps are to be completed, in sequence, as a result of and subsequent to the discussion in 5.1 above:
- Clergy informs the Bishop of intention to resign
 - A resignation date is agreed by clergy and Bishop
 - A date for announcing resignation in the relevant Ministry Unit(s) is agreed by clergy and Bishop
 - Clergy formally writes to the Bishop offering resignation as agreed.

Payroll

- 5.3 Prior to resignation, Clergy may contact the Payroll Officer in confidence to ascertain the status of their payroll entitlements including eligibility under the Anglican Church of Australia Long Service Leave Fund.
- 5.4 The formal written offer of resignation received by the Bishop is passed to the Payroll Officer so that arrangements regarding pay and entitlements can be organised. Formal advice should be at least one month prior to the resignation date.
- 5.5 Clergy submitting their resignation should plan the use of funds that they have accumulated under GEN-011 Clergy Salary Sacrifice.
- 5.6 Clergy resigning from a stipended role in a Parish are to ensure that all of their annual leave is taken prior to taking on a role in another Parish, whether that Parish is within the Diocese of Grafton.

Retirement

- 5.7 The desired practices concerning Resignation also apply to Clergy contemplating retirement.
- 5.8 Clergy contemplating retirement should also consider how post-retirement the parish can adjust to new leadership enabling parishioners to establish a relationship with their new priest and the new priest to develop their ministry without feeling inhibited by their predecessor. Noting GEN-002 Faithfulness in Service at 4.20 “When you resign or retire, you should generally terminate existing pastoral relationships. You should do this in a sensitive and timely manner to allow these responsibilities to be undertaken by your successors. Consult with your successor where the other person wishes to maintain an ongoing pastoral relationship with you.”
- Strategies that can be considered in the light of discussions with the Bishop include:
- Participating in a formal farewell to designate the ending of a particular ministry;
 - Retiring to a location outside of the Parish;
 - Participating in regular worship in a different Parish;

- Minimising social contact with members of former parish for 12 months
- Apart from a handover and answering their questions, avoid contact with the locum and/or new minister of the Parish for at least 12 months.

The above should recognise that authority will transfer to the new holder of the office.

5.9 Clergy contemplating retirement should also consider how they and their families make a personal adjustment to their new circumstances. Strategies to consider are:

- Refraining from pastoral and priestly activities for at least 6 months. [Note: Some retiring clergy take an extended vacation when they retire. In such cases, it is recommended that the 6 months commence from the end of the vacation so that there is good time for personal adjustment to new circumstances.]
- Planning a variety of fulfilling post-retirement activities
- The section 5.7 above will also help to establish boundaries for the retired person, making it less likely that they will be contacted by former parishioners about pastoral matters or requests to conduct pastoral services.

5.10 After a rejuvenating break from ministry, clergy are welcome to seek an Authority to Officiate (ATO) licence from the Bishop.

6. REFERENCES

6.1 Relevant Policies and Procedures of the Diocese

- GEN-002 Faithfulness in Service
- GEN-011 Clergy Salary Sacrifice
- MUP-001 Parental Leave – Ministry
- MUP-002 Clergy Housing Standards
- REG-006 Clergy Removal Fund

6.2 Relevant Legislation, Regulations and Standards

- Anglican Church of Australia Long Service Leave Canon 2010
- Anglican Church of Australia Holy Orders (Removal from Exercise of Ministry) Canon 2017
- Anglican Church of Australia Episcopal Protocols - Protocol 9: Approaching Clergy for Appointment in Another Diocese

6.3 Suggested reading

“Running through the Thistles – Terminating a Ministerial Relationship with a Parish” by Roy Oswald. Alban Books. 1998.

“Saying Goodbye: A Time of Growth for Congregations and Pastors” Edited by Edward A. White. Alban Institute. 1990.

“Thrive in Retirement – Simple Secrets for being happy for the rest of your life” by Eric Thurman. Waterbrook Press. 2019