

**GRAFTON DIOCESAN GOVERNANCE ORDINANCE 2008
AMENDING ORDINANCE (PASTORAL BREAKDOWN) 2023
Ordinance No. 12 of 2023**

An Ordinance to amend the Grafton Diocesan Governance Ordinance 2008 regarding circumstances in which there is a breakdown in the pastoral relationship of an Incumbent with their Ministry Unit.

PREAMBLE

Whereas the arrangements for termination of clergy licences are contained within Chapter 12 of the Grafton Diocesan Governance Ordinance 2008; and

Whereas it is desirable to include arrangements for circumstances where there is a breakdown in the pastoral relationship of an Incumbent with their Ministry Unit;

Therefore, the Bishop, Clergy and Laity of the Diocese of Grafton, assembled as the Synod, decree and enact as follows:

AMENDMENTS

That the Grafton Diocesan Governance Ordinance 2008 be amended by inserting the following as new clauses following clause 129.5 and renumbering subsequent clauses:

- 129.6 Not fewer than 15 people of a Ministry Unit, being either currently Parishioners or Parishioners within the last 12 months, may submit a written petition to the Bishop stating that due to circumstances of what they perceive as an irretrievable breakdown in pastoral relationship between the Incumbent and members of the Ministry Unit, they are petitioning the Bishop to investigate an irretrievable breakdown in pastoral relationship.
- 129.7 Upon receipt of a petition as described in clause 129.6, the Bishop shall notify the Incumbent and Churchwardens of the petition received within 14 days, and the Bishop may, at his or her prerogative, determine to:
- (a) Not act upon the petition; or
 - (b) Conduct an investigation to ascertain whether an irretrievable breakdown in pastoral relationships exists and whether the termination of the Incumbent's licence to that Ministry Unit is justified.
- 129.8 An investigation under clause 129.7(b) shall be conducted with impartiality and can be conducted with the Bishop appointing one or more of the Archdeacons and the Dean to investigate on his or her behalf.
- 129.9 Any investigation under clause 129.7(b) may include the interviewing of Parishioners and former Parishioners, either individually or in groups, and shall provide the Incumbent with the opportunity to make written and/or oral statements in response to any substantive accusation of pastoral breakdown made by the petitioners, or in response to any other material arising from the investigation pointing substantively towards pastoral breakdown.
- 129.10 The Bishop may stipulate that the Incumbent stand aside from their role for the period of investigation and until the findings of the investigation have been sufficiently considered. In such circumstances, the Incumbent's stipend, allowances, housing, motor vehicle and other pecuniary benefits of their position are maintained and paid for by the Ministry Unit.

129.11 No one shall unreasonably prevent the Bishop from arranging pastoral or other forms of support for an Incumbent who is the subject of a petition submitted under clause 129.6.

129.12 On completion of the investigation, and being satisfied that the Incumbent and Churchwardens have had reasonable opportunity to respond under clause 129.9, the Bishop may, at his or her prerogative, determine to, either:

- (a) confirm the licence of the Incumbent with or without any special conditions imposed; or
- (b) terminate the licence of the Incumbent with their duties ceasing immediately but with their stipend, allowances, housing and motor vehicle benefits, paid or provided by the Ministry Unit, continuing for a further month.

COMMENCEMENT

This Ordinance shall come into effect upon the assent of the Bishop.

SHORT TITLE

This Ordinance may be cited as the Pastoral Breakdown Amending Ordinance 2023.

ASSENT

We hereby certify that this Ordinance was passed by Synod on the 25th day of June, 2023 and that the Ordinance as printed is in accordance with the Ordinance as passed.



Chair of Committees



Registrar

I assent to this Ordinance.



Bishop



Date