



THE ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF GRAFTON
DIOCESAN POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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| SUBJECT: Conversion Practices Policy | | PROCEDURE REFERENCE NUMBER GEN-016 |
| DATE APPROVED 30 April 2026 by Bishop-in-Council | | VERSION 1 Original Version |
| IMPLEMENTATION DATE Immediate | REVIEW FREQUENCY 3 Yearly | RESPONSIBLE FOR REVIEW Bishop-in-Council |

1. PURPOSE

To provide guidance to the Diocese on the *Conversion Practices Ban Act 2024 (NSW)* and Synod directives on Conversion Practices.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the entire Diocese, including ordained and lay ministers, office holders, members of governance bodies, employees and volunteers.

3. DEFINITIONS

“**Conversion Practices**” – A practice, treatment or sustained effort that is:

- a) Directed at an individual to change or suppress their sexual orientation or gender identity; or
- b) Directed to changing or suppressing their sexual orientation or gender identity.

“**The Act**” - The *Conversion Practices Ban Act 2024 NSW*

4. BACKGROUND

In 2019, Synod passed a motion opposing Conversion Practices and calling on the government to prohibit them. Further, in 2024, the NSW Government passed the *Conversion Practices Ban Act*, which prohibited these practices in New South Wales.

The penalties under this Act are significant, including imprisonment for up to 5 years for a Conversion Practice that cause substantial mental or physical harm (Section 5), or imprisonment for up to 3 years for taking a person out of NSW for the purposes of a Conversion Practice (Section 6). There are also civil penalties that may be levied by Anti-Discrimination NSW for less serious breaches of the Act.

5. POLICY

5.1 General Principles

The Diocese of Grafton is committed to following the law in relation to Conversion Practices, and to providing respectful and non-coercive pastoral care regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

All people named in the Scope of this policy must:

- a) Comply with the Act, and all other applicable laws prohibiting Conversion Practices
- b) Not engage in, provide, perform, promote, refer to or facilitate a Conversion Practice



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- c) Ensure that all activities do not have the objective of changing a person's sexual orientation or gender identity
- d) Offer pastoral care that is supportive, non-coercive and responsive to needs
- e) Respect the autonomy and lived experience of each person
- f) Ensure that spiritual guidance, joint prayer, or pastoral conversations are not directed towards changing or suppressing a person's sexual orientation or gender identity
- g) Promote awareness and understanding of this Policy and the Act
- h) If in a leadership role, take reasonable steps to prevent Conversion Practices
- i) Model conduct consistent with this policy and the Act

5.2 What is a Conversion Practice?

The following is a non-exhaustive list of actions that may constitute Conversion Practices:

- Pastoral counselling or spiritual guidance which encourages or directs a person to change their sexual orientation or gender identity or which attempts to suppress their sexual orientation or gender identity
- Prayers directed at a particular individual to change or suppress their sexual orientation or gender identity
- Group interventions or meetings where an individual is encouraged or coerced to change or suppress their sexual orientation or gender identity
- Courses or retreats which claim or intend to get an individual to change their sexual orientation or gender identity

5.3 What is not a Conversion Practice?

The following is a non-exhaustive list of actions that do not constitute Conversion Practices:

- A expression of a religious belief or principle, including in prayer
- An expression of that a belief or principle ought to be followed or applied
- The expression of Christian teaching (including what the Bible teaches) on sexual orientation or gender identity, including in sermons, teachings, written materials or liturgical practice
- The imposition by the Diocese of general requirements for individuals being members of, or holding positions in the Diocese or associated organisations
- Parents discussing matters relating to sexual orientation, gender identity or Christianity with their children.



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5.4 Complaints and Reporting

- a) Any person may make a complaint to the Diocese regarding a suspected Conversion Practice
- b) Complaints shall be made to the Director of Professional Standards or referred to them if made to another person in the Diocese.
- c) If made to the Diocese, the complaint can be dealt with internally unless there is an indication it is a criminal offence under Section 5 or 6 of the Act, in which case the Director of Professional Standards will refer it to the NSW Police
- d) A complaint may also be made to Anti-Discrimination NSW (ADNSW), which will investigate the claim. There is no requirement for a complaint to go to the Diocese prior to ADNSW.
- e) ADNSW may take the following actions:
 - i. Consider it unfounded and take no action
 - ii. Direct an apology from the offending party
 - iii. Arrange mediation between the parties
 - iv. Refer to NCAT for a hearing and potential civil penalties
- f) If an investigation (whether internal or external) reveals that an individual has undertaken Conversion Practices, disciplinary action may be taken, per Diocesan disciplinary guidelines.

6. References

1. Conversion Practices Act 2024 NSW - [Conversion Practices Ban Act 2024 No 19 - NSW Legislation](#)
2. Conversion Practices Guidelines - [Conversion Practices | Anti-Discrimination NSW](#)