



**Anglican Diocese of Ballarat**

**Safe Church Program Guides**

# Guidelines for Screening and Licensing for Ministry

**For all clergy and church workers**

This guide provides information for all clergy and church workers on the Clearance for Ministry and licensing process including:

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## Document Information

This document has been compiled by the Diocesan Safe Church Officer for use in the Anglican Diocese of Ballarat. Information contained in this document is specific to this diocese. Information contained in this document is compiled from a variety of sources including diocesan legislation, protocols and policy and Victorian state standards and regulation.

**Advice should be sought from a Safe Church Officer, diocesan cleric or the Director of Professional Standards in individual situations.**

Version: December 2019.

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# Forward

The Bishop and the Diocese acknowledge that the material contained in the Safe Church Program establishes a significant shift in culture for the diocese. We are not used to the onerous safety processes and rules imposed upon workplaces and industry. However, this is a long-overdue response to the severe problem of violence and harm in our society to which our churches have not, and are not, immune. The Safe Church Program is being carefully developed to produce a positive shift in culture to protect the people of our diocese.

The diocese recognises the significant contribution that volunteers make to the life of their parishes, but those same parishes are also subject to national church, diocesan and government laws. A careful balance has been sought that fulfils our legal and ethical obligations and the need to respect and encourage the work of volunteers in our parishes.

To transform unjust structures of society,  
to challenge violence of every kind  
and pursue peace and reconciliation.

Fourth mark of mission  
Anglican Communion: [anglicancommunion.org/](http://anglicancommunion.org/)

The Anglican Board of Mission's fourth mark of mission, our diocesan theme for 2020, speaks to the spiritual imperative behind the Safe Church Program. The program is not just about fulfilling our legal obligations; it is also part of our job as disciples of Christ to follow in his way and challenge violence, injustice and oppression in our churches, families and communities. As church leaders, we have a role to fulfil in our communities to call out disrespect and be peacemakers.

The Rev'd Glen Wesley  
Safe Church Officer

# Safe Church Policy

## Introduction:

We affirm that all people have the right to be emotionally and physically safe, respected, and have their views and opinions valued at all times. We also live in a country that legislates for people's safety.

God calls his body to minister to vulnerable people. God identified classes of vulnerable people who were to be protected and given special care and treatment in society because of their powerlessness (Ex. 22:21-22, Deut. 10:17-19, Jer. 22:2-4, James 1:27)

## Our policy aims to:

- Minimise the risk of abuse, ministry misconduct and the misuse of positional power. - Ensure that all cases of suspected abuse and ministry misconduct are handled thoroughly.
- Ensure that leaders and programs are safe.
- Ensure that all people are respected and valued.

## We commit to:

Safe recruitment of leaders.

- A| We will screen all prospective leaders in ministries before they are appointed. (ie. relevant working with children's check/ /police check, other background checks as required).
- We will have a minimum church attendance policy for all prospective volunteer leaders.
  - Adequate training of leaders. ▪ We require that all leaders attend a Safe Ministry Induction (or SCTA endorsed) workshop within their first year of leadership and attend a refresher workshop every 3 years.
- B| We require all leaders to attend additional ministry-specific training as required.
- Continued supervision of leaders. ▪ We commit to ongoing leadership training, supervision and support for leaders.
  - All leaders will agree to follow our Parish Code of Conduct – Joys and Responsibilities and Faithfulness in Service.
- C| Responding to allegations of risk of harm (abuse) and serious ministry misconduct
- All leaders will report disclosures or suspicions of child abuse, according to our procedure and as required by law.
  - Where a leader has an allegation of ministry misconduct made against them, we will provide support to alleged victims and perpetrators and seek appropriate denominational help for a just and fair resolution.

Approved Date of Issue: February 2018

Review Date: February 2020

# Codes of Conduct

The diocese of Ballarat has one code of conduct to which all clergy and Church Workers must adhere to in their behaviour: Faithfulness in Service 2021. Copies of the code of conduct can be obtained from your Parish Safe Church Officer or from the Safe Church Publication Librarian at [ballaratanglican.org.au/safechurch/](http://ballaratanglican.org.au/safechurch/).

## Definition: Church Worker

Church Worker means a layperson:

- Who is licensed or authorised by the bishop of a diocese.
- who is employed by a church body in respect of whom this Code is part of their employment contract.
- who, for payment or not, holds a position or performs a function with the actual or apparent authority of a church authority or church body, including an office, position or function:
  - Of leadership in a parish, diocese or General Synod body.
  - As a member of the General Synod or a diocesan synod.
  - As a member of a body incorporated by the General Synod, a diocese or a diocesan synod.
  - As a churchwarden, member of any parish council or member of any committee constituted by or by the authority of the General Synod, a diocesan synod or a parish council.

# Clearances for Ministry

General Synod, diocesan and state legislation require appropriate screening of everyone involved in ministry. This includes all clergy, all involved in decision making around safety (parish councils, etc.) and all involved in child, liturgical or community-based ministries.

The diocese has compiled a list of all ministries requiring a Clearance for Ministry (screening process) based on the Anglican Church of Australia standards. Every member of the diocese who is conducting a ministry on this list must apply for and maintain a Clearance for Ministry. Any member who does not will be asked to stand aside from their ministry.

Clearances for Ministry expire after three years for lay members and two years for clergy, after which a renewal application must be made.

## Clearance for Ministry Process

A Clearance for Ministry application has multiple parts:

- An online application form and questionnaire
- An online application for a National Police Check
- Referee checks and church history (only for members who have been members of their parish for less three years)
- Providing a Valid Working with Children Card where needed.

# Who Needs a Clearance for Ministry?

Any person engaged in one or more of the ministries below must undertake a Clearance for Ministry before they begin their ministry and on a regular basis thereafter to maintain authorisation to continue in their ministry.

## Group A: Clergy and Special Screening Categories

All licensed deacons, priests and bishops including clergy with permission to officiate
All members of religious orders engaged in parish ministry, including members living a Single Consecrated Life.
Seekers (laypersons exploring ordination)
Ordination Candidates (to deacon)
Registrar, Diocesan Safe Church Officer or Director of Professional Standards

## Group B: Church Governance & Administration

Member of Bishop-in-Council & Director of Ballarat Anglican Diocese Corporation
Member of Synod
Member of General Synod
Lay member of the Cathedral Chapter
Churchwarden or a member of a parish council
Parish treasurer or secretary (to parish council)
Parish Safe Church Officer
Persons with Team Leader and above access level on the Child Safe Safety Management Online system
Any salaried or otherwise remunerated layperson who does not engage in 'child-related' work

## Group C: Liturgical, Pastoral and Community Ministries

Head Server, Serving Team coordinator, Verger or Master of Ceremonies.
A server where children participate in the liturgical, musical or choral ministries of in that church.
A person authorised to conduct a Divine Liturgy (Service of the Word)
A person authorised to conduct a Divine Liturgy (Service of the Word with Communion by Extension)
A person authorised to prepare and preach sermons during Divine Liturgy
A person authorised to administer Holy Communion during Divine Liturgy (Eucharistic Assistant)



A person authorised to administer Holy Communion in a home, health or aged care facility
Music director or coordinator where children participate in the liturgical, musical or coral ministries of in that church.
Musician (inc organists) or vocalist where children participate in the liturgical, musical or coral ministries of in that church.
Children's group leader, coordinator, helper or worker (including Sunday Schools and youth groups)
Small group leader where children who are not accompanied by their parent/guardian are present.
Playgroup or Crèche coordinator
Playgroup or Crèche worker except for parents/guardians where their children are actively present
A person engaged in an evangelism or outreach program
A person engaged in a parish run emergency relief program (not Anglicare)
Home/hospital/aged care pastoral care coordinator or visitor
Volunteer engaged in 'child-related' work not described in other categories.
Op shop coordinator or convener
A bus driver of children or elderly
Community meals coordinator or worker
Any salaried or otherwise remunerated layperson who is engaged in 'child-related' work

## Applications

Applications for a Clearance for Ministry can be completed online at [ballaratanglican.org.au/safechurch](http://ballaratanglican.org.au/safechurch)

## Variations

The Safe Church Officer or Director of Professional Standards reserves the right to specify any clearance application or renewal form for an individual application or renewal.

## Safe Church Training

All members who require a Clearance for Ministry as scheduled above must attend and maintain currency in the Safe Church Training and any other training as specified by diocesan policy.

## National Police Check

Every application for a Clearance for Ministry must be accompanied by a National Police Check consent form.

## Working with Children Cards

A validated **Working with Children Check** is required for all class A and class C ministries. Please use the diocese as your nominated organisation (not your parish):

The Anglican Diocese of Ballarat  
49 Lydiard St Sth  
Ballarat VIC 3350  
safechurch@ballaratanglican.org.au  
5331 1183.

If a validated **Working with Children Check** is required for any ministry specified above, then it is needed for all ministries. For example, if a person is engaged as a Eucharistic Assistant (Class C5) and as a member of Synod (Class B3), they would need to submit a copy of their Working with Children Card.

Validation is conducted by the Diocesan Safe Church Officer by validating a card copy or sighting the original.

Teachers who are registered with the **Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT)**, must notify Working with Children Check Victoria of their work with the diocese.

**Victorian Police or Australian Federal Police (AFP) officers** may submit a copy of their identity card or proof of their employment, in place of a Working with Children Card.

## Parish Council and Church Officers

For the purposes of this schedule, a member of a council, committee or other church body includes elected, appointed and ex-officio members.

## Playgroups

**Playgroups** :Playgroups are (church-based) community meetings of parents and caregivers with their under-school age children. **Playgroups require the parents or caregiver to be present and responsible for their children at all times.** All adults who attend, lead or assist with playgroups, who do not have their own children present, are required to undertake a Clearance for Ministry and Safe Church Training.

If no church members attend the playgroup meetings they at least one person involved in a playgroup must undertake a Clearance for Ministry and Safe Church Training and be that playgroup's safety person.

## Renewal Schedule

	Clearance for Ministry <sup>1</sup>	Working with Children Card <sup>2</sup>	Licence	Training <sup>3</sup>
<b>Licensed Cleric</b>	2 years	5 years	2 years <sup>4</sup>	2 years
<b>Permission to Officiate</b>	2 years	5 years	4 years	2 years
<b>Lay Member</b>	3 years	5 years <sup>5</sup>	3 years <sup>6</sup>	3 years
<b>Seekers &amp; Ordination Candidates</b>	2 years	5 years	2 years	2 years
<b>Registrar &amp; Director of Professional Standards</b>	2 years	5 years	NA	2 years
<b>Registry Staff</b>	3 years	NA	NA	3 years

### Renewal Schedule notes

1. A Clearance for Ministry includes a National Police Check.
2. Working with Children Card renewals are specified and conducted by the Department of Justice.
3. Renewable training is the Safe Church Training: Team Member unit.
4. Licences pertaining to clerics are only renewable if they have an expiry date or are for a Cleric-in-Charge of a parish and are at the Bishop's pleasure. Rector's licences do not expire.
5. Lay members require a Working with Children Card for ministries in Class C.
6. Only for Lay members who need a Lay Licence. See schedule above.

# Parish Clearance for Ministry Process

## Step 1: List Generation

Using the **Who Needs a Clearance for Ministry and Training?** guide and the **Progress Tool** (spreadsheet), create a list of all parish members who require a Clearance for Ministry and their ministry codes. This includes all elected officeholders.

The Clearance for Ministry and Training? guide and the Progress Tool are available from the Safe Church area of the diocesan website in the clearances section.

This stage may be done in consultation with parish wardens, parish councillors etc.

## Step 2: Parish Council Approval

Table the list for discussion at a meeting of Parish Council.

Note that each person and their ministries should be discussed individually. For members whose ministries require a Bishop's License community, children and community-related ministries (Class C), a motion approving the tabled list should be moved. The date of this motion and the approved ministries needs to be annotated on every member's application form.

Members who only hold and governance and information related ministries (Class B) do not require parish council approval. Their election by the parish or prior appointment by parish council meets that criteria.

## Step 3: Applications

Applications for a Clearance for Ministry can be completed online at [ballaratanglican.org.au/safechurch](http://ballaratanglican.org.au/safechurch)

# Church Contacts

## Diocesan Safe Church Officer

The Rev'd Glen Wesley  
Anglican Diocese of Ballarat  
safechurch@ballaratanglican.org.au  
**03 5331 1183** – Registry  
0429 146 566 - Out of Hours

## Safe Church Program Information Website

[ballaratanglican.org.au/safechurch](http://ballaratanglican.org.au/safechurch)

The diocesan website holds all Safe Church Program information in an easy to navigate area. It contains:

- Clearance for Ministry forms and guides
- Codes of conduct
- Training and education material
- Policy and legislation documents
- Safe Church Training dates
- Links to further information and websites

## Director of Professional Standards

Ms Claire Sargent

**1800 377 842** - 24/7 Messaging Service

PO Box 337, Canterbury, Vic. 3126

The Director of Professional Standards responds to all **complaints of abuse against clergy and Church workers**. The first step in making a complaint is to call the information line.

## Director of Episcopal Standards

**1800 997 747**

PO Box 33144, Domain LP, Melbourne Vic. 3004

The Director of Episcopal Standards responds to all complaints of misconduct including, but not limited to, sexual, physical, spiritual or emotional abuse **by a Bishop**.

# Safe Church Program Guides

These documents are aimed at informing people across all levels of leadership and church engagement to help ensure greater awareness, transparency and accountability within our churches and to help foster a culture of safe ministry at all levels of the church.

- Guidelines for Screening and Licensing for Ministry
- Guidelines for Reporting Abuse
- Guidelines for Parish Clergy
- Guidelines for Parish Safe Church Officers
- Guidelines for Ministry to Children
- Guidelines for Ministry to Young People
- Guidelines for Parents and Families
- Recognising and Responding to Family & Domestic Violence
- Recognising and Responding to Bullying
- Guidelines for Physically Safe Churches

All guides are available from the Bishop's Registry or from the diocesan website at [ballaratanglican.org.au/safechurch](http://ballaratanglican.org.au/safechurch)