

Diocese of North West Australia

Safe Ministry Policy

This Policy is part of the Diocese of North West Australia (DNWA) Safe Ministry system which has been developed in conjunction with consultants Safe Ministry Resources Pty Ltd.

Purpose

Our Policy:

- Is based on our understanding of Jesus' commandment to love the Lord your God with your heart, soul, mind and strength and to love your neighbour as yourself;
- Guides our work in establishing and maintaining safe environments for all people, including children and young people;
- Promotes and enables the provision of services that foster the health and safety of all who access our programs;
- Ensures that all church workers (paid and volunteer) fulfil their pastoral, organisational and duty of care responsibilities; and
- Ensures compliance with legislation as it relates to protecting people, particularly the vulnerable (including children).

Scope

Our Policy applies to all church workers including:

- The Bishop, all clergy, paid employees and lay volunteers;
- Guests or hirers of diocesan facilities
- Contractors, subcontractors, delivery persons or others engaged to provide services; and
- All those who access our parish sites and/or programs.

Note: the policy does not apply to employees or volunteers working in diocesan entities that are separately incorporated except those persons who are licensed by the Bishop.

Policy statements

DNWA acknowledges that all people have a right to feel and be safe (duty of care), and to experience life-giving, harm-free interactions in our programs.

DNWA is committed to spiritual, emotional and physical safety and well-being:

- We commit to the welfare of all people through the implementation and ongoing review of our Safe Ministry system (policy, procedures & implementation resources) to ensure that in the DNWA context:
 - Safe and friendly environments are established where people are listened to, feel safe, are respected, develop faith and grow in relationship with God and others.

- Diocesan procedures are implemented to ensure safe church workers, i.e. they have been recruited, screened, appointed and inducted according to procedure.
 - Attention is given to ensure safe and adequate training, supervision, support and resourcing of church workers.
 - Harm is actively prevented through the implementation our Safe Ministry policy and procedures.
 - There are sensitive, appropriate, child-focused and expedient response responses to all incidents, accidents, child protection/safe ministry (misconduct and abuse) concerns, and care for those who have been harmed by church workers.
 - Records in relation to Safe Ministry are maintained and held securely, according to diocesan procedure.
- In relation to children (i.e. anyone under 18 years old), we acknowledge the:
 - Primary role of parents and caregivers
 - Need to help children learn about protective behaviours.
 - Shared responsibility of the wider community for child safety and welfare.

It is a serious breach of trust for any church worker to contravene this policy, any related procedure, or any regulation in law, in relation to the safety and protection of children and the vulnerable.

Responsibilities

Synod/Diocesan Council

- Communicate and endorse the DNWA safe ministry system.
- Assign responsibilities for the management of the system.
- Monitor and review implementation of the system.
- Ensure so far as is practicable the health and safety of all people engaging with DNWA.
- Ensure there are procedures in place to effectively recruit, screen, appoint, induct and supervise all church workers.
- Ensure mechanisms are in place for disclosures of harm to be reported to all relevant regulatory bodies.
- Fulfil relevant legislative 'head of agency roles' in child protection related investigations.
- Ensure the Policy for Safe Ministry in a Parish where there is a risk of sexual abuse by a Person of Concern is implemented.

Safe Ministry Coordinator

- Oversee implementation of the DNWA safe ministry system including development of policy and procedure, audit and compliance.

- Liaise with the DNWA Director of Professional Standards on all matters in relation to Professional Standards Statute, Child Protection, Person of Concern and Redress matters.
- Liaise with Safe Ministry Resources consultant on policy review and development, safe ministry training, safe ministry screening and responding to grievances and conflict.

Ministers

- Implement this policy and related procedures as applicable to their ministry programs and events.
- Monitor church workers to ensure they are acting safely and according to policy and procedure.
- Liaise with the Safe Ministry Coordinator any suspicions, allegations, incidents or potential breaches of the relevant code of conduct.
- Liaise with the Safe Ministry Coordinator to ensure accurate records are maintained according to DNWA policy and procedure.

Church Workers

- Comply with DNWA policies, procedures and instructions from church leaders, including complying with Faithfulness in Service.
- Take all reasonable care for their own health and safety.
- Take reasonable care that their actions do not adversely affect others health and safety.
- Report all child protection and other safe ministry (misconduct and abuse) concerns, allegations or incidents immediately to the Safe Ministry Helpline.
- Report all incidents or hazards to their Minister as soon as practicable.

Policy approval and review

This Policy was revised and updated to reflect current government and church legislative requirements in August 2018. It was endorsed by Diocesan Council on 29 August 2018.

The Policy and procedures will be reviewed at least every two years, or as often as necessary, in order to remain compliant with new legislation.