



Lay Authorisations and Required Checks

Anglican Diocese of Bendigo

As of 17 February 2016

*Suggestions for change or additions are welcome,
and should be sent to the Bishop's Office.*

A Message from the Bishop

This is a new Lay Authorisation for Ministry Policy document for the diocese. It replaces the previous policy and takes into account many new areas of compliance the diocese is required to implement.

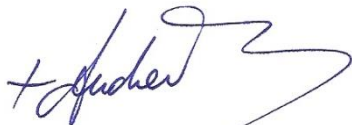
The new policy reflects the need to establish a stronger Safe Church environment and is consistent with state government requirements for police checks and working with children.

Some lay people may find it challenging, but please reassure them it is all about making our Churches safe and welcoming environments. The implementation of this policy will take some time and they will be required to be in place by 30 June 2017.

- National Police Checks are to be applied for through the diocese
- Working with Children Checks are to be lodged by the applicant using PO Box 2 BENDIGO VIC 3552 as the address.

If you have any concerns please email my PA Sarah Crutch on bishoppa@bendigoanglican.org.au.

I thank you for your cooperation and goodwill.



The Rt Rev'd Andrew Curnow AM
Bishop of Bendigo

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Background and Explanations

1.1 Background

This Authorisation Policy has been developed in the diocese to address what checks would be required for the majority of parish/church based ministries undertaken across the diocese.

A list of ministries was created – taking into account the various churches and the names used for different roles across different theological perspectives – for example “Lay Reader” and “Lay Preacher.” *(This list is not considered exhaustive - more roles may be identified and added as the policy is applied)*

For each role in the list it was determined if the applicant would require the following checks:

- Bishop’s Authorisation
- Working with Children’s Check (WWC)
- Police Check
- Safe Church Awareness Workshop (SCAW) attendance

The team took into account the following factors in determining the requirements for each role:

- Representing the Church in the public sphere
- Level of theological understanding and/or training required
- Possibly acting without clergy supervision
- Access and involvement of children
- Access and involvement of vulnerable people
- Access to significant monies
- Access to private and confidential information
- “Seen” as a leader in the Church by a young person or a new person to the Church because of a role they have performed in a worship service – leading to them being approached by a possibly vulnerable person
- May require a WWC or Police Check by a third party – for example a Nursing Home might have a policy requiring particular checks
- Attempting to compose a manageable system in terms of administration required.
- The requirements of the Victorian Government for volunteers

1.2 Required Checks & Diocesan Minimum Standards

Where a role is deemed to “require” or “not require” a particular check - it is understood that this is the Diocesan Policy and the minimum standard. In some cases it may actually be a legal requirement.

The Rector or Parish Council has the discretion to require a particular check where it is not deemed necessary by Diocesan Policy or by any legal requirement. *(An example may be where a parish requires all children’s workers who are registered teachers with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) to still have a WWC.)*

1.3 Context Driven Situations

Some roles may not automatically require a particular check but may be context driven.

An example may be the Eucharistic Assistants. In an early morning or midweek traditional service that has no children attending it may be determined that no WWC is required. However the Rector and Parish Council may decide it prudent to have the same role in a Family Service requiring a WWC.

1.4 The Range of Authorisations & Checks

Bishop’s authorisations are required for roles that...

- Are an intrinsic part of a worship service or may be understood to be representing the Church in public
- May require a higher level of theological understanding or training
- May be conducted unsupervised by clergy
- May involve children

The highest category of a Bishop’s authorisation is “Category 1.” Holders of a Category 1 authorisation are authorised to fulfill duties covered by lower categories (2, 3 and 4). Category 2 holders can fulfill duties covered under levels 3 and 4; and so on.

The exception is Category 5. No church member is permitted to engage in ministry duties with children and youth without a Category 5 authorisation.

The category descriptions are as follows.

Category 1

Ministry Category	<i>Worship Leader / Lay Reader</i>
Brief Description of Duties / Requirements	Authorised to have major responsibility in leading of worship services.
	(1) Authorised to lead an entire non-sacramental worship service - even unsupervised.
	(2) MAY be approved to be a lay preacher
	(3) Involves training in the above areas on at least one occasion per year
	(4) Attend Safe Church Awareness Workshops as required
	(5) Also authorised to fulfill duties outlined in categories 2-4
Reports to/Supervisor	Rector/Incumbent/Priest-in-Charge of Parish

Category 2

Ministry Category	<i>Liturgical/Worship Assistance</i>
Brief Description of Duties / Requirements	Authorised to play a minor role in worship services but not have the major responsibility for it.
	(1) Lead part of a sacramental worship service or an entire non-sacramental worship service or part there of - supervised by clergy
	(2) Prepare and lead intercessions / prayers
	(3) Involved in worship as a Crucifer, Server or Acolyte
	(4) Verger/Assisting with pastoral services
	(5) Involves training in the above areas on at least one occasion per year
	(6) MAY need to attend Safe Church Awareness Workshops as required - see detailed requirements outlined below
	(7) Also authorised to fulfill duties outlined in categories 3-4
Reports to/Supervisor	Rector/Incumbent/Priest-in-Charge of Parish

Category 3

Ministry Category	<i>Eucharistic Assistant / Holy Communion Assistant</i>
Brief Description of Duties / Requirements	Authorised to participate in administering the Eucharist / Holy Communion
	(1) Complete necessary training
	(2) Also authorised to fulfill duties outlined in category 4
Reports to/Supervisor	Rector/Incumbent/Priest-in-Charge of Parish

Category 4

Ministry Category	<i>Pastoral/Community Ministry and other roles</i>
Brief Description of Duties / Requirements	Undertakes a pastoral or community ministry role on the behalf of the parish.
	(1) MAY include visits to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parishioners at home • nursing homes or hospitals • Visit parishioners on behalf of and in the name of the parish • Home Communion
	(2) MAY involve concerted and long term pastoral ministry to specified individuals
	(3) MAY involve coordinating a Community Meal
	(4) MAY involve coordinating an Op Shop
	(5) MAY need to attend Safe Church Awareness Workshops as required - see detailed requirements outlined below
	(6) Complete necessary training
Reports to/Supervisor	Rector/Incumbent/Priest-in-Charge of Parish or Pastoral Care Coordinator

Category 5

Ministry Category	<i>Ministry with Children / Youth / Young adults</i>
Brief Description of Duties / Requirements	(1) Work with children or youth under the age of 18 years
	(2) MAY involve coordinating and/or involvement in a church children's ministry
	(2) MAY involve coordinating and/or involvement in a church youth ministry
	(3) MAY involve coordinating and/or involvement in a church playgroup
	(4) MAY include coordinating and/or involvement in a school ministry
	(5) MAY conduct a supervised children's talk in a worship service
	(4) MAY need to attend Safe Church Awareness Workshops as required - see detailed requirements outlined below
	(5) Complete appropriate training
Reports to/Supervisor	Rector/Incumbent/Priest-in-Charge of Parish/Youth Minister

Working with Children (WWC) are required for roles that...

- Involve engagement with children (excluding a one off occurrence or with a person's own children only)
- May cause someone to be seen as a leader by a new person or a young person
- May be conducted unsupervised by clergy
- Require a WWC from a third party authority (usually conducted on the property of non-church organisations)

Police Checks are required for roles that...

- May be conducted unsupervised by clergy
- May be understood to be representing the Church in public
- May involve handling significant amounts of money or confidential information

Safe Church Workshop (SCAW)

Safe Church Awareness Workshops (SCAW) are conducted in conjunction with other Christian denominations at various times throughout the year and in various locations.

SCAW's are designed for all congregational members, all ministry leaders, children, youth and family leaders.

In SCAW's the following topics are covered:

- duty of care, codes of conduct, power, transparency and accountability
- protecting vulnerable people, indicators of abuse, responding to abuse and protective behaviours
- training, recruiting and supervising leaders
- how to establish and undertake Safe Church ministry programs (risk management)

SCAW attendance is valid for 3 years and requires a refresher course when expired.

1.5 Noting 'Administration & General Ministry' Roles

A number of roles for 'Parish Administration' and 'General Ministry' (see sections 2.4 and 2.5) do not require either a Bishop's authorisation, WWC or Police Check and for this reason would not normally be recorded by the Diocese. However those fulfilling these roles should be noted by the Parish.

A list of names attached to the Annual General Meeting minutes is encouraged as the easiest method to fulfill this requirement.

Checklist - Authorisation Roles, Notifications and Requirements

2.1 Liturgical & Worship Roles

Role	Bishop's Authorisation Category	Working With Children	Police Check	SCAW
Lay Reader / Lay Preacher	1 ¹	Yes ²	Yes ³	Yes
Worship Leader / Service Leader / Lay Leader	2 ⁴	Yes ⁵	Yes ⁶	Yes
Crucifer, Server/Acolyte	2	Context Driven ⁷	Context Driven ⁸	Yes
Verger	2	Context Driven ⁹	Context Driven ¹⁰	Preferable
Sunday Intercessions	2 ¹¹	No	No	Preferable
Eucharistic Assistant / Communion Assistant	3	Context Driven ¹²	No	Preferable

¹ This role requires a higher level of theological understanding and/or training.

² A WWC is required because the role would be observed as significant within a worship service and may be conducted without clergy supervision and represent the Church in public.

³ A Police Check is required because the role would be observed as significant within a worship service and may be conducted without clergy supervision and represent the Church in public.

⁴ This role requires a higher level of theological understanding and/or training.

⁵ A WWC is required because the role would be observed as significant within a worship service.

⁶ A Police Check is required because the role would be observed as significant within a worship service.

⁷ A WWC is required if the role involves or may reasonably expect to involve working with children.

⁸ A WWC is required if the role involves or may reasonably expect to involve working with children.

⁹ A WWC is required if the role involves or may reasonably expect to involve working with children.

¹⁰ A WWC is required if the role involves or may reasonably expect to involve working with children.

¹¹ This role requires a higher level of theological understanding and/or training.

¹² It is the Rector's decision – the role may facilitate a worship service with no expectation of children attending.

2.2 Pastoral & Community Ministries

Role	Bishop's Authorisation Category	Working With Children	Police Check	SCAW
Pastoral Worker / Visitor	4	Yes	Yes	Yes
Home Communion	4	Context Driven ¹³	Yes ¹⁴	Preferable
Nursing Home Visitor	4	No	Yes ¹⁵	Preferable
Op Shop Coordinator	4	Yes	Yes	Yes
Community Meal Coordinator	4	Yes	Yes	Yes

2.3 Children & Youth Ministries

Role	Bishop's Authorisation Category	Working With Children	Police Check	SCAW
Sunday School Coordinator or Teacher / Children's Church Leader	5	Yes	Yes	Yes
Youth Leader	5	Yes	Yes	Yes
Playgroup Coordinator	5	Yes	Yes	Yes
School's Ministry	5	Yes	Yes	Yes
Children's Talk (Worship Service)	5	Yes	No	Preferable

¹³ It is the Rector's decision – there may be an expectation that no home communions would be conducted in homes with children.

¹⁴ A Police Check is required because the role may be conducted without clergy supervision and represent the Church in public.

¹⁵ A Police Check is required because the role may be conducted without clergy supervision and represent the Church in public.

2.4 Parish Council Roles

Role	Bishop's Authorisation Category	Working With Children	Police Check	SCAW
Warden	Noted by Diocese & Parish ¹⁶	Yes ¹⁷	Yes ¹⁸	Yes
Parish Councillor	Noted by Diocese & Parish ¹⁹	Context Driven	Context Driven	Yes
Parish Council Secretary	Noted by Diocese & Parish ²⁰	Context Driven	Context Driven	Yes
Parish Treasurer	Noted by Diocese & Parish ²¹	Context Driven	Yes ²²	Yes

¹⁶ Both the Diocese and Parish will annually note the persons fulfilling the role of Warden.

¹⁷ The significance of the Warden's role in the life and management of the Church and the stewardship of its property, along with their close working relationship with the Rector/Priest-in-Charge requires that they have checks similar to those of the clergy. Furthermore a Warden may expect to be viewed as a leader in the Church by a young person or a new person attending and therefore a WWC is required.

¹⁸ The significance of the Warden's role in the life and management of the Church and the stewardship of its property, along with their close working relationship with the Rector/Priest-in-Charge requires that they have checks similar to those of the clergy.

¹⁹ Both the Diocese and Parish will annually note the persons fulfilling the role Parish Councillor.

²⁰ Both the Diocese and Parish will annually note the persons fulfilling the role Parish Council Secretary.

²¹ Both the Diocese and Parish will annually note the persons fulfilling the role of Parish Treasurer.

²² A Police Check is required because the person has access to significant monies.

2.5 Parish Administration & General Ministry

Role ²³	Bishop's Authorisation Category ²⁴	Working With Children	Police Check	SCAW
Morning Tea or Catering Coordinator	Noted by Parish	Context Driven ²⁵	No	Preferable
Music Leader / Musician / Choir Coordinator / Choir Member	Noted by Parish	Context Driven ²⁶	No	Yes
Bible Study Leader / Small Group Leader	Noted by Parish	Context Driven ²⁷	No	Preferable
Offertory or Collection Counter	Noted by Parish	No	Yes ²⁸	Preferable
Parish Office Secretary / Office Helper	Noted by Parish	No	Yes ²⁹	Yes
Bible Reader	Noted by Parish	No	No	Preferable
Groundskeeper / Landscaper	Noted by Parish	No	No	Preferable
Property & Maintenance	Noted by Parish	No	No	Preferable
Cleaners	Noted by Parish	No	No	No
Sidesperson / Welcomer	Noted by Parish	No	No	Preferable
Multimedia Operator	Noted by Parish	No	No	No
Hospitality / Catering Team / Morning Tea helpers	Noted by Parish	No	No	No

²³ The Parish will annually note the persons fulfilling these roles. There is no prescribed method at this point for such reporting but it may be prudent to attach a list to the AGM minutes.

²⁴ No Bishop's Authorisation is needed for these roles but the Parish will annually note the persons fulfilling these roles. A list of names attached to the Annual General Meeting minutes is encouraged as the easiest method to fulfill this requirement.

²⁵ A WWC is required if the role involves or may reasonably expect to involve working with children.

²⁶ A WWC is required if the role involves or may reasonably expect to involve working with children.

²⁷ A WWC is required if the role involves or may reasonably expect to involve working with children.

²⁸ A Police Check is required because the person has access to significant monies.

²⁹ A Police Check is required because the person has access to private information and/or significant monies.

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