

CHURCH IN WALES

BISHOPS' POLICY – GRANTS OF PERMISSION TO OFFICIATE

The decision as to whether or not to grant Permission to Officiate to clergy not holding an ecclesiastical office in a particular diocese is at the discretion of the relevant diocesan bishop. Nevertheless, the bishops have agreed, in exercising that discretion, that they will adopt the following common principles.

DBS/CRIMINAL RECORD CHECKS

- 1.) The Church in Wales' safer recruiting principles (as detailed in the Provincial Safeguarding Policy and in the DBS guidance on the Provincial website) apply identically to an application for Permission to Officiate as for any licensed role.
- 2.) This means that no cleric will be given PTO without a satisfactory and up-to-date DBS check.
- 3.) A satisfactory DBS check means either that the DBS check is 'clear' or that the Provincial Safeguarding Panel has reviewed the contents of the DBS disclosure and has recommended that the Bishop may grant PTO.
- 4.) An up-to-date DBS check means:
 - a. A full enhanced DBS check (including barred lists of both children and adults) has been undertaken through the Provincial Office within the past 5 years; and
 - b. The cleric has subscribed to the DBS Update Service.
- 5.) If the cleric is moving from outside the United Kingdom (or has spent a significant period of time resident outside the United Kingdom during their adult life) the Bishop will, before granting PTO and in addition to the steps above, liaise with the Provincial Office (Safeguarding Manager and/or Head of Legal Services) as to what further criminal record checks are required in the circumstances of the case.

REFERENCES AND PERSONNEL FILES

- 6.) If the cleric is moving from another Diocese, the Bishop will, before granting PTO, have obtained a written reference from the cleric's current/last Bishop, with an explicit statement that the document contains details of all relevant concerns of a safeguarding nature (or explicit confirmation that the Bishop has made enquiries and is not aware of any such concerns).
- 7.) If the Cleric is moving from the Church of England, the Bishop will obtain a Clergy Current Status Letter before granting PTO.
- 8.) If the cleric is to be solely ministering in the new Diocese the Bishop will, obtain, review and make arrangements for retention of the relevant clergy personnel file before granting PTO.
- 9.) If the cleric will be ministering in more than one Diocese, the Bishop will, before granting PTO, ensure that the clergy personnel file has been satisfactorily reviewed and that sufficient information-sharing protocols are in place to ensure that the clergy personnel file (wherever it is held) will continue to be updated with all relevant information.

TRAINING

- 10.) No cleric shall be granted PTO without having undertaken the Church in Wales “Safe Church” training module and any such other training as may be specified from time-to-time by the Representative Body.

CONDITIONS OF PTO

- 11.) PTO shall be granted for a fixed period, not exceeding five years (with clerics eligible to re-apply at the end of such period).
- 12.) PTO shall never be restricted by attempting to exclude ministry involving children or adults at risk.
- 13.) Normally, PTO shall be granted to cover the entire Diocese. Any geographical restrictions in a PTO and the reasons for such restrictions shall be notified in writing to all Archdeacons in the Diocese and the relevant Provincial Safeguarding Officer.

Bench of Bishops
June 2019