

respect of which the permission has been granted³. It is the Bishop who is responsible for issuing PTO regardless of what other networks or staffing arrangements for clergy with PTO may exist in the diocese (which may vary widely from diocese to diocese)

2.6 The care and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in Church activities is the responsibility of the whole Church. Safer recruitment practice is an essential part of the Church of England's approach to safeguarding. The House of Bishops is therefore committed to safely appointing and supporting all those (including clerics with PTO) with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the Church, and ensuring that appropriate training is provided and that no-one whose training is not up to date is allowed to engage in ministry.

2.7 As clergy with PTO are engaging in ministry that will bring them into contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults, bishops must follow the House of Bishops' Safer Recruitment guidance (see para 1.3 of this policy) when granting PTO and ensure that: -

- an application form for permission to officiate is completed (see Annex 3 for an example);
- if the cleric is remaining in the diocese, the Blue File and DSA are consulted and, if the cleric is not known to the bishop, references are obtained;
- a Clergy Current Status letter (CCSL) is obtained if the cleric is coming from another diocese);
- a confidential declaration is obtained;
- an enhanced DBS check with barring information is carried out unless the cleric is remaining in the same diocese and already has a valid check;
- an interview takes place if new to the diocese;
- Clergy with PTO complete appropriate safeguarding training, which must be refreshed every 3 years;
- an induction takes place if new to the diocese, along with an introduction to safeguarding policies and procedures and a review of training needs
- appropriate arrangements are made for the oversight of all clergy with PTO, which may be done by designating a person (often a relevant incumbent or priest in charge) (see 4.32-.35) to be responsible for each cleric with PTO.

2.8 In addition, Bishops should ensure that

- PTO is issued for a fixed term, and a review is carried out before renewal, which must be subject to obtaining enhanced criminal record checks
- complete lists of clergy with PTO within their dioceses are maintained;

³ Strictly speaking, clergy licensed or beneficed to a benefice or parish in the diocese do not automatically have permission to officiate elsewhere in the diocese, and may therefore only officiate on the invitation of the minister having the cure of souls for a period of not more than 7 days within 3 months without reference to the Bishop, although the minister with the cure of souls is still required to check that they have authority to officiate first. It is hoped that an amending Canon, remitted to the Revision Committee at the February 2017 Group of Sessions, will, in due course, provide for clergy licensed or beneficed in the diocese automatically to have the Bishop's permission to officiate throughout that diocese.

- there is a record of when DBS checks need to be renewed and further safeguarding training undertaken for all clergy to whom they have given PTO;
- details of any changes are provided to the National Church Institutions so that they can maintain a complete and up to date national register of clergy with PTO.

2.9 In order to ensure that the oversight of clergy with PTO is properly carried out, the bishop will want to put in place arrangements for complying with these requirements, supporting the ministry of clergy with PTO and giving them appropriate opportunity to use their talents effectively to support the mission of the diocese.

2.10 In granting PTO, bishops should be aware of the following.

- They should not give PTO unless they are confident about the cleric's ability to officiate and are happy to recommend him or her to clergy in the diocese.
- PTO should not be granted where a licence is more appropriate.
- PTO may be granted to a cleric in more than one diocese, and they should keep a record of any other dioceses where PTO has been granted.
- PTO is not granted as of right, however senior or experienced the cleric may be.
- PTO should not be restricted by attempting to exclude children or vulnerable adults from someone's ministry. However, PTO may be restricted by geographical area (for example to a parish or deanery).
- PTO should not be suspended, but must be withdrawn, whilst investigations are carried out into any allegations made against a cleric in line with *House of Bishops Responding to, Assessing and Managing Safeguarding concerns or allegations against church officers practice guidance*.
- It is a criminal offence for an individual who is barred from working with vulnerable groups to apply for a regulated activity role (including PTO) and it is a criminal offence for an organisation to appoint a barred person to a regulated activity (including PTO).
- The conditions for PTO for retired clergy will be different from those for clergy of working age. (See further section 9 on PTO in retirement)

2.11 It important to ensure that clergy with PTO are fully aware that

- PTO is required for preaching, presiding at the Eucharist and taking the Occasional Offices;
- ministry under PTO requires the permission of the incumbent or priest in charge of the relevant parish (or in a vacancy, the area dean and churchwardens);
- PTO depends on holding an up to date DBS check and is only valid for as long as the DBS check remains in force;
- PTO is subject to carrying out safeguarding training and keeping this training up to date;
- they must work in accordance with *the House of Bishops Safeguarding Policy and Practice guidance* and report any safeguarding concerns or allegations to the DSA in line with House of Bishops guidance
- PTO is held entirely at the bishop's discretion and may be withdrawn by the bishop at any time, and without any right of appeal;