



## LONE WORKER POLICY

### Summary

This Policy outlines the Parish of Manuka's guidelines to protect clergy, staff, volunteers and visitors who may at any time work alone on parish premises or activities. It also provides guidelines the Parish expects clergy, staff and volunteers to follow to minimise risks.

### Context and Authority

This policy was last updated and authorised by the Rector on 10 July 2019 and will be reviewed annually by the Rector and Church wardens/WHS Committee. It forms part of the Parish of Manuka's Workplace Health and Safety Policy and Procedures and within the broader Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn Safe Ministry Policies and Guidelines.

### Scope

This policy applies to those who work alone on Parish premises or on behalf of the Parish. This may include:

- Clergy
- Parish Administration Officer
- Music Director and Organists
- Office volunteers
- Other volunteers who come into church (eg. sacristy team, flower arrangers, cleaners) for special services
- Those securing church buildings
- Those doing maintenance and other tasks in church buildings including contractors and persons hiring church facilities and working alone.
- Pastoral visitors to people's homes
- Clergy working at home
- People handling money including for banking

## Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that clergy, staff and volunteers are aware of the potential risks associated with working alone and that practices are adopted by all responsible parties (the staff member, volunteers, Parish Council and clergy) that minimise associated risk.

## Risks

Risks for lone workers may include:

- Physical accident with no one to assist (eg. burn)
- Sudden illness
- Physical violence or threat of abuse in any form from a visitor
- Other inappropriate or threatening behaviour
- Accusations by a visitor of inappropriate behaviour by staff / volunteers when there are no witnesses
- Stress arising from abusive calls / messages
- People demanding money or other assistance and refusing to leave the premises

## Parish Responsibilities

The Parish will take steps to:

- Identify and minimise risk
- Provide a safe and secure workplace
- Review policies and procedures regularly
- Ensure all clergy, staff and volunteers comply with this policy
- Respond to lone worker concerns raised by clergy, staff and volunteers

## Individuals' Responsibilities and Practical Steps to Minimise Risk

**Individuals** (clergy, staff and volunteers) –must ensure that they don't put themselves in unnecessary danger. The following practices should be followed:

### General

- Inform the Wardens or Rector of any suspicious behaviour or any threats made to you.
- Inform the Wardens or Rector of any other concerns you have about your working conditions and any risks that should be addressed.
- All clergy, staff and volunteers will be familiar with the Emergency Procedures and aware of the location of First Aid kits and fire extinguishers.
- **The Diocese and Parish have no appetite for high risk.** If you find yourself in a situation where a person, the environment you are working in or a task to be

performed makes you feel concerned about your personal safety, assess whether you can minimise risk so that you feel confident. If you cannot minimise risk so that you feel confident, do not continue. Contact the Rector or your activity leader for help and support.

## Personal Security on Site

- Be alert to possible dangers and minimise them – for example keep lights on until a building is completely vacated; use safety guards on power tools and only use equipment that is in good working order and do not use tools, ladders etc when working alone.
- When working alone in the church or other parish buildings, keep the building secured and well-lit. Keep a mobile phone to hand and ensure someone else knows when you are / will be on site (parish office / clergy / wardens) and When working in the church alone (or visiting someone off-site) make sure someone else knows where you are, and what time you are due back/home. Notify them when you are back/ home so that if the contact hasn't heard from you and can't contact you they can raise the alarm.
- Persons working alone in the parish office and clergy are particularly vulnerable to incidents arising from members of the public. The parish office door, internal window and corridor door should be kept locked when working alone. In the event of anti-social behaviour that is threatening or abusive care should be taken not to be confrontational. Instead seek support from other clergy / staff or the police. The alarm system also can be activated.

## Money

- Under no circumstances is money to be given to people asking for cash. Giving out cash increases risk to all working on site and has the potential to create recurrent demand and to stimulate patterns of addiction. All requests for material assistance on site should be referred to the clergy who will respond by either referring the person to other welfare services or in their discretion purchasing or providing items of food or clothing to them.
- Money should not be taken to the bank by a predictable routine and route.

## Working Alone Off-Site

**Pastoral visiting** should be exercised in light of Safe Ministry Guidelines, including:

- Do not meet anyone alone in an isolated location.
- One to one pastoral visits should be made in a public space ( eg. café). Home visiting should not be 1:1. have another pastoral team member attend with you.
- Beware of dangers posed by pets or other potential hazards

- Make sure before attending a visit that the Parish Office or Rector is aware of your movements and expected time of return. Make arrangements for you to advise of your return or for who is to raise the alarm if you cannot be contacted after your return is overdue.

Issued by the Rector 10 July 2019

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