



*From the Bishop*

29 May 2020

Dear Friends in Christ,

### **Safe Ministry Requirements**

With the easing of restrictions that have been put in place as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic it is important that everyone involved with church ministry is up to date with all of the relevant Safe Ministry Requirements. Attached with this letter is a flyer that highlights “Who needs to do what?” in regards to the Diocesan Safe Ministry Requirements. Details of each of the requirements are provided below.

### **Working With Children Check (WWCC)**

The Working With Children Check (WWCC) is the newest Safe Ministry Requirement to be implemented and has been introduced in South Australia by the Government as a response to recommendations of the *Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse* and the *South Australian Child Protection Systems Royal Commission*. The laws mean that everyone working or volunteering with children must have a valid child-related screening.

*“Working with children” includes activities in the course of which a person would reasonably be expected to have contact with a child. It includes physical contact with a child, close physical proximity to a child or communication with a child. Communication with a child includes oral, written, electronic or communication by any other means. The Diocese is also asking people who make decisions about children, ie Diocesan Councillors, Parish/Pastoral District Councillors and members of Synod, to obtain a WWCC.*

There has been a grace period since mid-2019 for people to apply for a WWCC if they did not already have one, but that time is running out. Those required to have a WWCC **must** have one in place **before the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2020** or else will be committing an offence which carries heavy penalties. A WWCC is valid for five years and is portable across jobs, positions and organisations anywhere in South Australia.

WWCC are conducted through the Department of Human Services Screening Unit. The Screening Unit is processing applications quite quickly but they still recommend allowing six weeks for the application to be processed. Applications can be commenced through this link: <https://screening.sa.gov.au/applications/application-information-for-individuals>

As this is an online application, Parishes and Pastoral Districts are encouraged to provide the necessary technical support and guidance to members of their congregation who don't have an email account and/or access to the internet. If there are any questions about the application, please contact the Registry Office or the Screening Unit hotline 1300 321 592.

Once the outcome of a WWCC has been received, it needs to be forwarded to the Registry Office. If you have a valid DHS/DCSI child-related employment screening this will be recognised as a WWCC until it expires. Please send a copy to the Registry Office for our records.



### **National Police Certificate**

A National Police Certificate (NPC) is different to a WWCC and will still be required for people who work or volunteer within the Diocese. The application for the NPC is attached with this letter, or can be accessed directly from the SAPOL website via this link:

<https://www.police.sa.gov.au/services-and-events/apply-for-a-police-record-check>

Fill in all relevant sections of the form and provide 100 points of ID for application to be complete. For volunteers, the Diocese is a Volunteer Authority with a VOAN (Volunteer Organisation Authorisation Number). Fill in the form and in "Check Type" mark "VOAN" then have your ID copied and certified by a Justice of the Peace or the Police. Once your ID has been certified, post the copies and your application form to the Registrar (PO Box 394, Murray Bridge SA 5253) and the Diocese will complete the remaining section and forward everything to the Police Records Unit.

The NPC will be posted to the applicant's nominated postal address but then this original certificate should be forwarded to the Registry Office for sighting purposes. Once received, a record will be made of the NPC and the original will be returned to the applicant. NPC's are valid for three years from the date of issue within the Diocese and the original certificate must be sighted within three months of it being issued.

### **Safe Ministry Training**

Safe Ministry Training (SMT) Full Day/Induction workshops and Refresher workshops have been a requirement for workers and volunteers within the Diocese for a number of years now. Since the implementation of the SMT, or the commencement of a new ministry role that requires the training, participants must complete the Full Day/Induction workshop and then the Refresher workshop every three years to remain current.

With the restrictions in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic it has not been possible for the Diocese to offer the face-to-face SMT as in previous years. An online version of the National Anglican SMT was introduced last year through Open Learning. If you choose to participate in the online courses, once you have completed the relevant course, please forward a copy of your certificate to the Registry Office so that our records can be updated accordingly. Please note that the cost of the online SMT will need to be funded by each individual.

The Safe Ministry Induction course (cost \$30) can be accessed by following this link:

<https://www.openlearning.com/courses/smr-training-anglican/?redirectTo=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.openlearning.com%2Fcourses%2Fsmr-training-anglican%2Fintroduction%2F>

The Safe Ministry Refresher course (\$15) can be accessed by following this link:

<https://www.openlearning.com/courses/smr-anglican-safe-ministry-refresher/?redirectTo=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.openlearning.com%2Fcourses%2Fsmr-anglican-safe-ministry-refresher%2FHomePage%2F>

If you require assistance with the online courses, email [eTraining@smr.org.au](mailto:eTraining@smr.org.au) or call 1800 070 511.

### **Child Safe Environments “Through Their Eyes” Course (CSE)**

The Child Safe Environments “Through Their Eyes” Course (CSE) was introduced across the Diocese as another recommendation out of the *Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse*. This course supplements the SMT course and is valid for three years from the date of participation so many within the Diocese are due to complete Refresher training this year. With the restrictions in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic it has not been possible for the Diocese to offer the face-to-face CSE Courses but hopefully this can change in the second half of the year.

The Diocese does not currently have an endorsed online CSE course, but there are options available. If you have done this course through your employment or through another volunteer organisation, please provide evidence by sending a copy of your participation certificate through to the Registry Office. This will be provided to the Diocesan Trainer, Linda Vinall, for her to assess the training completed and confirm whether the requirements have been met.

### **Safe Ministry Screening Questionnaire (SMSQ)**

The Safe Ministry Screening Questionnaire (SMSQ) is a document that asks a selection of questions to help ascertain a person’s suitability for a nominated ministry role within the Diocese. It also asks for a history of roles held within a church. The SMSQ should be completed every three years to remain current and is only valid when the Statutory Declaration and Information and Release statement are both signed by the applicant. A copy of the SMSQ is attached with this letter or can be found on the Diocesan website by following this link:

[https://murray.anglican.org/assets/pre-2020/downloads/parish/safe\\_ministry/Safe\\_Ministry\\_Screening\\_Questionnaire.pdf](https://murray.anglican.org/assets/pre-2020/downloads/parish/safe_ministry/Safe_Ministry_Screening_Questionnaire.pdf)

I recognise that these are quite frankly overwhelming requirements. However, this is the price we pay as a Church for not being diligent in the past. I am hopeful that, as with the WWCC, other parts will become more streamlined and more available online.

There will be no “wriggle room” from me on these requirements, they are just too important. In time we will be producing documents to make everyone aware of the requirements and they will therefore be in one place and, hopefully, a clear and consistent management approach can be seen by the whole of the Diocese to this important matter. Please make sure you are fully compliant, there will be no room for me to move if you are not.

Please make this information readily available for people and be in touch with the Registry Office if you have any further questions.

With prayers and good wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Keith Dalby', with a cross symbol to the left of the first name.

The Right Reverend Keith Dalby  
Bishop of The Murray