



LLM Categories and training for the Diocese of Bunbury

Introduction

In the Diocese of Bunbury, we rely on the ministry of a great many dedicated and skilled Licenced Lay Ministers (LLMs) who follow God's call to minister to their communities in a variety of ways. We are enormously grateful for the work and ministry we all enjoy from this dedicated group of people. After much discussion throughout the diocese this document details our response to many requests for some work to be done in the area of training, supporting and resourcing LLMs for their important work amongst us.

We currently have Licenced Lay Ministers (LLMs) with a variety of permissions such as:

- assisting in public worship
- preaching
- leading public worship
- administering extended communion in homes and aged care
- Safe Church Contact People

In the past there has been some confusion about the various types of LLMs and a lack of clarity regarding the training expected prior to new LLMs being approved. In order to address these issues we have separated the LLMs into 5 categories and this document will offer guidance on the necessary training courses, practical training and Safe Church compliance for each type of licence.

Please note, existing LLMs wishing to renew their licence and existing children and youth workers who wish to continue in the same ministry as they currently offer DO NOT need to complete a training manual or undertake any additional courses.

Individuals may well have ministries which require a number of these categories, and this is perfectly fine. There is no reason why a person may not in fact hold a licence which covers all 5 categories if their ministry is particularly broad. Anyone wishing to refresh their knowledge is welcome to do additional training at any time and hopefully this guidance will give them some ideas of what types of training might be available and helpful.

Categories of LLMs

In the diocese of Bunbury there are a number of key roles the laity perform which are licenced and these roles continue to be necessary. These roles fall into 5 categories each with their own particular roles and responsibilities, a full description of which can be found at the end of this document. The categories are:

- Preaching
- Liturgical
- Pastoral
- Administrative
- Children and Youth

Training for new LLMs

When a person wishes to offer themselves for a particular role as an LLM for the first time they will need to undertake or offer evidence of some prior learning and training relevant to the role. There

are a number of options for this training. Where a person has done relevant training on a published course whether accredited or not and can show evidence of such via a certificate or transcript, the Bishop will decide if this is sufficient. The types of courses which offer suitable training include, but are not limited to, the Wollaston Certificate, Education for Ministry and Australis. Canon Geoff Chadwick with the Archdeacon are working on a platform to offer relevant modules from the former Bishop's Certificate from the Bunbury Diocese in an online format. While this is still being rolled out, please contact the Archdeacon if you have any queries regarding training for new LLMs.

Compliance for LLMs

Each category of LLM has a level of practical experience and Safe Church compliance as detailed below. The LLM handbook is a document designed to help new LLMs ensure their experience is sufficient to hold the relevant licence. It is expected that after the initial licence is issued the day-to-day activity of the LLM in their role will continue to keep their experience relevant and current under the guidance of the Priest in Charge locally. Safe Church compliance is necessary at all times and some elements must be renewed every 3 years for the licence to remain valid.

When does this begin?

In line with current practice, LLM licences come up for renewal from July 1st in the calendar year of each new synod triennium so the next round will be issued in July 2021. When preparing renewal, LLM application forms can be found at <https://www.bunburyanglican.org/ph---forms.html> entitled 'Lay Minister Nomination and Declaration'. When completing these, where it requests 'type of ministry', please use one or more of the 5 categories outlined in this document which best match the ministries currently undertaken by the LLM in question. When possible, via Bishop in Council resolution, a new form will be available on the diocesan website which offers the 5 categories as tick boxes in order to ensure the forms are as easy as possible to complete.

Where you are applying for a new LLM, please follow the LLM handbook for details of training, practical experience and Safe Church compliance. Once this is complete for the relevant section, please send in a copy of the handbook, any relevant certificates and transcripts along with the LLM nomination form, noting that this is a New Applicant. Please note, LLMS can be nominated at any time in the triennium so this does not have to be completed prior to July 1st. We recommend sending it once everything is in place.

Children and Youth

In the past those providing ministry to children and youth had safe church compliance requirements but were not required to be LLMs. The Safe Ministry to Children canon and recommendations from the Royal Commission are clear that all those who work face to face with children must be appropriately recruited, screened and trained for their role. As there are many ways in which adults and children interact in church communities, and for the avoidance of any doubt, it is necessary to be clear about who this LLM category applies to and for whom the licence is not necessary.

All adults (persons 18 years and older) who undertake ministry in which they are supervising children without the parents or guardians of those children present are required to be licenced for this ministry. For example, a Sunday School or Youth Club where under 18s are left under the supervision of adults who are appointed by the church must ensure that all of the adults are LLMs (except for those observing and training to become LLMs who will be supervised by an appointed person as part of their training for a fixed period of time). No distinction is made in this scenario between leaders and assistants.

However, in ministries where children and/or young people attend with their parents or guardians only the ministry leader is required to be LLM. Such ministries might be playgroups where the parents stay or Messy Church which involves the whole family. Any adults assisting in these types of ministry still need to be safe church compliant but do not require a licence.

Where there are young people aged 16-17 years assisting with children and youth ministry, they need to meet the safe church requirements but are not appointed as LLMs. Once these individuals turn 18 years, they will then need to apply for a licence on the same terms as other adults. This group may benefit from undertaking the training offered by the diocese but it is not mandatory for them to do so until they are of age to be licenced.

Conclusion

Thank you for your support in assisting with this process of clarifying the LLM licencing and rolling out the same in the diocese of Bunbury. Thank you also, to those who offer themselves in this type of ministry, following God's call to work and lead amongst God's people, lay ministries of all types greatly enrich the Christian experience of the whole community and we appreciate the skill, commitment and enthusiasm of all those who contribute in this way.

If you have any queries, concerns or suggestions regarding this document or the process it describes please get in touch with the Archdeacon, archdeacon@bunbury.org.au

Licensed Lay Minister Categories

Licensed Lay Minister Preaching

- Creating and delivering sermons during acts of public worship with or without clergy present.
- Leading Bible Study groups.
- Preaching for the purposes of online worship.

Licensed Lay Minister Liturgical

- Leading Morning Prayer and other non-eucharistic acts of public worship when clergy are not present.
- Leading Reserve Sacrament worship when clergy are not present with permission of the Bishop.
- Leading online worship on behalf of a parish or diocesan body.
- Leading Funeral services.

Licensed Lay Minister Pastoral

- Taking Extended Communion to individual homes, hospitals and aged care settings.
- Visiting and contacting parishioners as part of a pastoral care support team.
- Preparing families for pastoral offices such as Baptism, First Communion, Confirmation and Holy Matrimony

Licensed Lay Minister Administrative

- Holding the role of Safe Church Contact Person
- Holding other administrative roles in the diocese which the Bishop deems to require a licence.

Licensed Lay Minister Children and Youth

- Leading or assisting with any ministry aimed at under 18s where parents and guardians are not present (i.e. Children's Church, Godly Play or Youth Groups).
- Co-ordinating children and/or youth activities.
- Training and preparing children and young people to take part in other ministries in the parish.

Licensed Lay Minister Training

Licensed Lay Minister
Preaching

- New Testament
- Old Testament
- Preaching
- Introduction to Theology

All from the Bishop's
Certificate or equivalent

Licensed Lay Minister
Liturgical

- Liturgy
- Communion
- Online Ministry

All from the Bishop's
Certificate or equivalent

Licensed Lay Minister
Pastoral

- Catechism
- All from the Bishop's
Certificate or equivalent
- Pastoral Partners
 - Prepare Enrich

Or other suitable pro-
grammes as authorised
by the Bishop

Licensed Lay Minister
Administrative

- Safe Church Contact
Person Training
- Computing for Parish-
es

All from the Bishop's
Certificate or equivalent

Licensed Lay Minister
Children and Youth

- Introduction to Child
Focussed Theology

All from the Bishop's
Certificate or equivalent

- Training offered for
specific Child centred
programmes (i.e.
Godly Play, Open the
Book etc) as appro-
priate to the context.

Licensed Lay Minister Compliance

Licensed Lay Minister
Preaching

- Locally completed handbook detailing practical training by parish priest or equivalent
- Safe Church Form 1
- Police Clearance within 3 years
- Safe Church online training current within 3 years
- Working with Children Card

Licensed Lay Minister
Liturgical

- Locally completed handbook detailing practical training by parish priest or equivalent
- Safe Church Form 1
- Police Clearance within 3 years
- Safe Church online training current within 3 years
- Working with Children Card

Licensed Lay Minister
Pastoral

- Locally completed handbook detailing practical training by parish priest or equivalent
- Safe Church Form 1
- Police Clearance within 3 years
- Safe Church online training current within 3 years
- Working with Children Card

Licensed Lay Minister
Administrative

- Safe Church Form 1
- Police Clearance within 3 years
- Safe Church online training current within 3 years
- Working with Children Card

Licensed Lay Minister
Children and Youth

- Safe Church Form 1
- Police Clearance within 3 years
- Safe Church online training current within 3 years
- Working with Children Card



Information Sheet

Mandatory Reporting of Child Sexual Abuse

Ministers of Religion

Mandatory reporting refers to the legal requirement for certain persons to report child sexual abuse to child protection authorities.

Mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse in Western Australia is governed by the [Children and Community Services Act 2004](#) (the Act). In October 2021 the Western Australian Parliament passed the [Children and Community Services Amendment Act 2021](#) to introduce new mandatory reporter groups, including ‘ministers of religion’.

The legal obligation for ministers of religion to report child sexual abuse commenced on **1 November 2022**.

How is a minister of religion defined?

A person whose role falls within the definition of a ‘minister of religion’ in section 124A of the Act (below) is a mandatory reporter.

Extract from Section 124A - Terms used

“minister of religion –

- (a) means a person who is recognised in accordance with the practices of a faith or religion as a person who is authorised to conduct services or ceremonies in accordance with the tenets of the faith and religion; and
- (b) includes such a person regardless of how the person’s position or title is described (for example, member of the clergy, priest, minister, imam, rabbi or pastor)”

Key points to note:

- The definition is intended to apply to relevant persons in all faiths and religions of any denomination or belief system in Western Australia.

- Faiths or religions have different ways of recognising and authorising persons to carry out key roles.
- The title given to a role does not determine whether a person is a minister of religion under the mandatory reporting law.
- It does not matter if a person's role as a minister of religion is paid or unpaid – both are captured.

How can faiths or religions work out who is included?

Answering the following questions may help identify who, in your faith or religion, the new law applies to.

What services or ceremonies form a core part of the faith or religion?

For example, ceremonies initiating or inducting a person into the faith or religion, joining persons in marriage, conducting funerals or other services that mark key events for the faith or religion.

Who is recognised, in accordance with the faith or religion, to conduct or carry out the ceremonies and/or services?

Some faiths and religions have formal structures where only persons holding certain positions are authorised to conduct or carry out these ceremonies or services. Other faiths and religions may recognise and allow many of their members to fulfil these roles. These persons, recognised by their faith or religion as authorised to conduct or carry out ceremonies and services, are included as mandatory reporters.

When must a minister of religion make a mandatory report?

From 1 November 2022, a minister of religion must make a report to the Department of Communities' Mandatory Reporting Service if they:

- form a **belief** that a **child** is, or has been, the subject of **sexual abuse** that occurred on or after 1 November 2022; and
- the belief is based on **reasonable grounds**; and
- the belief is formed, on or after 1 November 2022, **in the course of their** paid or unpaid work **as a minister of religion**.

A minister of religion is not excused from making a report if:

- he/she forms that belief based on information disclosed to the minister during a religious confession; or

- disclosing that belief, or the information on which the belief is based, would be contrary to the tenets of his/her faith or religion.

Will ministers of religion have to report child sexual abuse they knew of before they became mandatory reporters?

Mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse is intended to protect children from sexual abuse that may be occurring now. The duty to make a report applies if the reporter forms the belief on or after commencement day (which is the day they became a mandatory reporter), and the belief relates to sexual abuse that occurred on or after the commencement day or is still occurring. For ministers of religion, this is on or after 1 November 2022.

Where there is ongoing concern for the safety of children arising from historical abuse (which may have occurred when a person who is now an adult was a child) a person may contact Communities' Central Intake Team on 1800 CPDUTY (1800 273 889), or by submitting a [Child Protection Concern Referral Form](#).

Historical abuse may also be reported to Police for investigation and potential prosecution (if the victim is over 18 years of age you should seek their views before doing this).

Who do I make a mandatory report to and when does it need to be made?

The Department of Communities' Mandatory Reporting Service receives and responds to mandatory reports of child sexual abuse. The best way of making a mandatory report is through the [Mandatory Reporting website](#). Reports can be made 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

A mandatory report must be made as soon as practicable after the reporter forms their belief regarding the sexual abuse of a child.

An initial report can be made in writing or orally; however, if an oral report is made, it must be followed by a written report as soon as practicable after making the oral report (ideally within 24 hours). Failure to submit a written report as soon as practicable after submitting an oral report is an offence that carries a maximum penalty of \$3,000.

What has to be included in a mandatory report?

Under section 124C of the Act, a mandatory report must contain the following information:

- the reporter's name and contact details;

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Mandatory Reporting of Child Sexual Abuse: Ministers of Religion Information Sheet

- the name of the child, or, if this cannot be obtained after reasonable inquiries, a description of the child; and
- the grounds on which the reporter believes that the child has been the subject of sexual abuse or is the subject of ongoing sexual abuse.

The following information must also be provided to the extent that it is known:

- the child's date of birth;
- where the child lives;
- the names of the child's parents or other appropriate persons (e.g. adult relative or person who the child usually lives with); and
- the name of the person alleged responsible, their contact details and their relationship to the child.

What if I don't make a mandatory report?

Failure to make a mandatory report is an offence with a maximum penalty of \$6,000.

A minister of religion is not excused from criminal responsibility for failing to make a report on the grounds that their belief is based on information disclosed during a religious confession, or any disclosure of the belief or information on which it is based is otherwise contrary to the tenets of the faith or religion.

If a person is charged with the offence of failing to make a mandatory report, there is a defence under section 124B(3) of the Act if the person can prove that he or she honestly and reasonably believed that a report had already been made to the Department of Communities or that the Department of Communities had already made inquiries or taken action in relation to the child's wellbeing.

How will my identity be protected if I make a mandatory report?

Section 124F of the Act has strict provisions about the confidentiality of the identity of a mandatory reporter. Anyone who becomes aware of the identity of a mandatory reporter must not disclose identifying information to another person unless an exception under that section applies. The maximum penalty is a fine of \$24,000 and imprisonment for two years.

How will I be protected from liability if I make a mandatory report?

Section 129(2) of the Act provides protection for mandatory reporters from liability. This section provides that mandatory reporters who make a report under section 124B(1) in good faith:

- do not incur any civil or criminal liability; and
- are not to be taken as having breached any duty of confidentiality; and
- are taken to have not breached any professional conduct principles.

Where can I find more information?

Further information about mandatory reporting laws is available in the mandatory reporting online training, which can be accessed through the [Mandatory Reporting of Child Sexual Abuse website](#), and the [Mandatory Reporting Resources page](#).

What if I have concerns about a child's wellbeing due to physical, emotional abuse or neglect?

If you are mandatory reporter of child sexual abuse but have concerns about a child due to physical, or emotional abuse or neglect, including exposure to family and domestic violence, you can and should notify the Department of Communities. This will enable a professional assessment of the circumstances and action to be taken to protect the child and other children where necessary.

If you are concerned about a child's wellbeing, but are not making a mandatory report, please contact the Central Intake Team on 1800 273 889 or submit a [Child Protection Concern Referral Form](#).

Please note that the Department of Communities is unable to provide tailored legal advice in response to enquiries from faiths or religions about who may be a mandatory reporter under the Act. Some faiths and religions may choose to get legal advice to assist them.