

**STANDING RESOLUTION - CODE OF CONDUCT**

**E12 CODE OF CONDUCT**

**(1) Preamble**

This code is for all people who hold a Bishop's Licence, and for others who minister under the authority of the Church, in the Diocese of Wellington.

**(2) Purpose**

- (a) This Code is intended to cover the conduct of persons who are licensed to practise as priest or deacon, also those who are qualified as priest or deacon, but who are not currently licensed by the Bishop, and all lay persons who are engaged in any formal duties recognised by members of the public as pertaining to church function (eg members of Vestry, pastoral workers, Lay Ministers, etc).
- (b) This Code is intended to provide a set of boundaries to protect such ministers and also those who seek their services.
- (c) As a companion document to the Code of Ethics, it is intended to offer support and guidance, and to empower ministers in the church in the day-to-day performance of their ministry.

**(3) The Code**

- (a) Ministers are actively involved in the community.
  - (i) Ministers who are licensed representatives of the Church must be available to the public, and must not, without good cause, refuse to respond to requests for priestly or pastoral services within the scope of competence.
  - (ii) Ministers need to be especially sensitive about confidentiality and self-monitor both public and private statements and comments.
- (b) Ministers must respect and never abuse the relationship of confidence and trust between themselves and any person seeking their services.
- (c) Ministers must not enter into a priestly or pastoral relationship where there is, or is likely to arise, any conflict between their personal interests and the best interests of the other party.
  - (i) Perception by a minister that a conflict of interest exists, or is likely to exist, is sufficient cause to act in the best interests of the party.
  - (ii) Consent should not be made an issue for the other party, and a minister should be aware that a deeply held personal conviction or principle can distort objectivity.
  - (iii) In the event of a conflict, or likely conflict of interest, a minister shall:
    - advise the other party of the conflict of interest, and that priestly or pastoral services should be sought elsewhere;
    - offer to assist with arranging alternative services.

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- (iv) Potential areas of conflict include, but are not limited to the following:
  - opportunity or invitation to exert power or control over a person's life;
  - sexual attraction towards the other person;
  - opportunity or invitation to act as a mediator/counsellor between two parties, where partiality exists for or against one of the parties.
- (d) Ministers should establish a work environment which, in a practical way, minimises the possibility of suspicion or misunderstanding.
- (e) Ministers must respect the ethnic and cultural background, gender, class and sexual orientation of those to whom they minister.
- (f) To evaluate, maintain and improve their work, ministers must learn how to recognise their personal and professional needs in areas of competence and emotional and spiritual well-being.
  - (i) To do this, ministers should utilise ongoing self-evaluation, peer support, consultation, supervision, continuing education and/or personal counselling.
- (g) Ministers should question practices in the church community that appear to be harmful or abusive.
  - (i) In exercising this tenet, they shall seek advice, and safeguard the rights and dignity of the persons involved before acting.
- (h) Ministers should be productive in safeguarding their own integrity in priestly or pastoral situations, including:
  - (i) maintaining proper appointments systems:
  - (ii) suggesting the presence of support persons (eg personal friend/relative, or church contact person) during private pastoral counselling sessions:
  - (iii) keeping discussion relevant to the issue at hand:
  - (iv) honouring confidentiality:
  - (v) refraining from undue familiarity:
  - (vi) avoiding physical closeness or inappropriate touch:
  - (vii) never using sexually demeaning words or actions, or jokes in doubtful taste:
  - (viii) not involving others in their own personal problems:
  - (ix) consulting about difficult situations, within the bounds of confidentiality:

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- (x) employing strong support systems and self-monitoring.
- (4) **Canon 1, Title D**
- (a) The provision of this Code of Conduct shall be read subject to Canon I, Title D, and
  - (b) If there is any inconsistency between the provisions of this resolution and the provisions of Canon I, Title D, the latter provisions shall prevail.