



# DRAFT Diocese of Nelson Disciplinary Policy 2026

Date Approved: DD-MM-YYYY Date to take effect: DD-MM-YYYY

Approved By: Standing Committee

Review Date: MM 202X

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## 1. Purpose

1.1 This policy establishes a fair, transparent, and consistent framework for addressing conduct and performance concerns. It supports a safe, respectful, and productive workplace, aligned with the Diocese of Nelson Code of Conduct.

1.2 It aims to:

- Support Employees to meet expected standards.
- Encourage corrective action and learning before punitive measures.
- Ensure due process, impartiality, and documentation.
- Protect employees and the company through consistent application.

## 2. Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all employees (full-time, part-time, contractors, interns) of the Diocese of Nelson, its Parishes and any subsidiary bodies or mission units, under the Employment Relations Act 2000.

2.2 This policy does not apply to clergy, lay ministers or volunteers.

## 3. Related documents

### External guidance

- [Employment New Zealand website](#)
- [People Matter / He Taura Tangata](#) – Provincial Church Employment Guidelines
- [Title D Ministry standards](#) – Standards of Ministry for Bishops, Ministers and Office Bearers in the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia.

### Diocese of Nelson documents

- Performance Management Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Anti-Harassment & Bullying Policy
- Equal Employment Opportunity Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- IT Acceptable Use Policy
- Whistleblowing/Speak Up Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Privacy & Data Protection Policy

## 4. Principles

4.1 **No surprises:** Performance issues are addressed as soon as they have been identified.

4.2 **Fairness & Consistency:** Similar cases handled similarly, with consideration for context.

4.3 **Proportionality:** Disciplinary action matches severity and frequency of issues.

4.4 **Right to be Heard:** Employees may respond to allegations before decisions are made.



- 4.5 **Confidentiality:** Information handled on a need-to-know basis.
- 4.6 **Documentation:** Accurate records kept securely.
- 4.7 **Compliance:** Applied in accordance with applicable laws and any collective agreements.

## 5. Title D Supremacy

- 5.1 Where Title D applies to an Employee, and a breach of Ministry Standards has potentially taken place, its provisions will take supremacy over this policy and the matter should be immediately referred to the Ministry Standards Commission.

## 6. Definitions

**Misconduct:** Breach of the Code of Conduct or policy (e.g., disrespect, minor attendance issues, unauthorized use of assets).

**Serious Misconduct:** Gross breaches risking safety, trust, or business (e.g., harassment, theft, fraud, violence, severe data breach).

**Performance Concern:** Failure to meet role expectations after training/support.

**Informal Action:** Coaching or counselling without formal sanction.

**Formal Action:** Documented steps that may result in sanctions.

**Performance Improvement Plan (PIP):** a plan agreed between the employer and the Employee to address performance issues in a supportive way.

## 7. Expected Standards

- 7.1.1 Employees must adhere to the Diocese of Nelson Code of Conduct, including:
  - Professional behaviour and respect.
  - Integrity, honesty, and compliance with laws.
  - Safe work practices.
  - Proper use of church assets and data.
  - Avoidance of conflicts of interest.
  - Responsible use of technology/communications.
- 7.1.2 Employees are expected to perform the tasks in their job descriptions to the best of their abilities.

## 8. Informal Disciplinary processes

When a performance issue is identified, managers should:

- 8.1 Discuss the matter with the employee to:
  - explain the concern,
  - clarify expectations
  - ascertain if there are any training needs,
  - discuss if there are any work/personal issues that need to be addressed
  - agree on actions to be taken and on a timeline for review.



8.2 Offer appropriate support, for example

- Coaching / training.
- Referral to EAP.
- Regular check-ins with the Employee.

8.3 Keep brief notes of informal steps taken.

## 9. Formal Disciplinary processes

When informal steps are insufficient or the matter is serious, managers should contact the Diocesan Manager for advice. In consultation with the manager, the Diocesan Manager will:

### 9.1 Initiation

- Decide whether to initiate a formal process.
- Determine who should lead the process (this may involve external contractors)
- Seek written statements from the manager and/or other complainants outlining the performance/conduct issue.

### 9.2 Notification

- Provide the Employee with a written note of concerns, relevant evidence, meeting date and the right to have a support person present.

### 9.3 Investigation

- Meet with the Employee (and support person) to discuss concerns and to hear their response.
- Consider evidence provided by the Employee.
- Conduct further investigations as appropriate.
- For serious allegations, precautionary suspension (paid) of the Employee may be considered if necessary for safety or integrity of the investigation.
- Give Employee opportunity to respond to any new information.

### 9.4 Decision and Outcome

- Consider all information available, context and past record of Employee
- Decide appropriate action
- Provide a written outcome letter with reasons, the applicable standard/policy, and any next steps.

### 9.5 Appeal

- Employee may appeal within 10 business days to the Bishop.
- Appeals should state grounds (e.g., procedural unfairness, new evidence, disproportionate sanction).
- A different decision-maker reviews the case; outcome is confirmed or varied.

## 10. Disciplinary Actions (Sanctions)

Sanctions may be applied progressively or directly (for serious misconduct), taking into account circumstances:

1. **Verbal Warning** (documented)
2. **Written Warning**



3. **Final Written Warning**
4. **Demotion or Role/Responsibility Adjustment** (as agreed)
5. **Suspension** (paid or unpaid)
6. **Termination of Employment** (with or without notice)
7. **Other Remedies:** Training, coaching, restitution, performance improvement plans (PIP), or mandatory counselling.

**Serious Misconduct** may lead to **summary dismissal** immediately.

## 11. Performance Improvement Plans (PIPs)

PIPs can be used to provide a supportive framework for addressing performance issues under both informal and formal processes.

### 11.1 Initial set-up

Prior to a meeting, the manager will:

- Consider whether expectations of the employee's performance are reasonable.
- Prepare a draft performance improvement plan (see template) for addressing the performance issues, this should include relevant training or support that can be put in place.
- Think about a reasonable timeframe to bring the employee's performance up to the desired standard.
- Prepare a letter inviting employee to a meeting.

During the meeting, the manager will:

- Provide examples of where the employee isn't meeting expectations.
- Present the draft plan for addressing the performance gaps or issues.
- Offer EAP.
- Ask for the employee's feedback on your plan.
- Confirm next steps with the employee.

The Employee should:

- Provide any relevant information including mitigating circumstances.
- Contribute ideas to address performance issues e.g. training required.

The Manager will then:

- Finalise the PIP, taking into account the matters discussed.
- Set a date for a formal review of progress (the review date) and the frequency of meeting throughout the review period
- Advise the employee that if there is no improvement then disciplinary action may be taken.

Both parties should then sign the PIP.



## 11.2 Over the review period

The review process is a forward-looking process – it is not the time to raise issues from the past. Focus on the areas that are seeking to be improved or corrected. Issues from the past that were not discussed in the initial set-up meeting should not be raised.

The manager must meet regularly with the Employee to monitor and assess performance through the whole of the review period. Managers should use each progress meeting, set out in the PIP, to provide the Employee with clear and honest feedback against their performance improvement plan. Any issues or concerns must be identified during those meetings, and the Employee provided with guidance/assistance to improve as necessary. This ongoing feedback is important.

## 11.3 Formal Review Meeting

The formal review meeting should be used to discuss progress over the review period. The outcomes of the meeting will be one of the following:

- No disciplinary action but continuation of PIP
- No disciplinary action and resume normal management
- No disciplinary action and move to an informal performance management process.
- Commencement of Disciplinary action with continuation of PIP.

The Employee should have the opportunity to respond to the manager's preliminary assessment before it is finalised and presented to the Employee in writing. Refer to sections 9 and 10 if the decision is to proceed with disciplinary action.



## Performance Improvement Plan **template** (PIP)

Employee Name:		Position:	
Parish:		Manager:	
Date Issued:		Review Date: (e.g. after 30/60/90 days):	

### Purpose

This Performance Improvement Plan is designed to help you meet the required performance standards for your role. It outlines the areas of concern specific areas for improvement, measurable goals, and any support to be provided by your manager.

### Areas of Concern

List specific performance issues or behaviors that need improvement. Be factual and reference code of conduct, job description or KPIs.

<b>Area of concern</b>	<b>Current performance (give specific instances/dates where available)</b>	<b>Expected performance (refer to job description or code of conduct where relevant)</b>
<i>e.g. timekeeping</i>	<i>Starting later than 9:15</i>	<i>In office and ready to start at 9:00 am each day</i>

## Action Plan

SMART<sup>1</sup> goals to assist Employee to meet expected performance standards. Include actions to be taken by Manager (e.g. organise training) as well as the Employee.

Action Item	Responsibility	Deadline
<i>e.g. Complete compilation of parish newsletter</i>	<i>Employee</i>	<i>By 12:30 pm each Friday</i>
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

## Progress reporting

Date	Progress Summary	Manager Comments	Employee Comments

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<sup>1</sup> Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timebound

### Notes:

- This PIP is intended to support you to be successful in your role.
- If progress is satisfactory over the review period, and the expected performance standards are met, then this PIP will be closed off.
- If progress is not satisfactory over the review period and expected performance standards do not meet expectations, the PIP may be extended and altered and it may be used in evidence as part of a future disciplinary process.

### Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have reviewed and understand this Performance Improvement Plan.

Employee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Manager Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_