

Family Friendly Policies

1. Introduction

It is important that those whom God has called to positions of authorised ministry have confidence that the Church will support them properly and enable them to continue in ministry if they become parents.

2. Rights and responsibilities of office holders

Under Regulation 23 of the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Regulations 2009 which was revised in 2018 office holders are entitled to a corresponding entitlement to maternity, paternity, parental, adoption or shared parental leave as employees are entitled to under the Employment Rights Act 1996. This revision provided that any further changes to the entitlement of employees to maternity, paternity parental, adoption or shared parental leave should apply automatically to clergy office holders.

Stipendiary office holders already have a right to statutory maternity, paternity, shared parental and adoption pay because of their National Insurance Contributions. This applies to office holders on freehold and common tenure.

Holding of office is distinct from employment in a number of ways that affect consideration of office holders' entitlements in connection with maternity, paternity, parental and adoption leave:

- Office holders remain in office while they are on leave – which means they retain the rights and responsibilities that go with the office, for example the right to remain in any accommodation provided for the better performance of their duties and the obligation to ensure that the duties of the office are carried out on their behalf.
- This also means that, unlike an employee, an office holder does not have the right to be found an equivalent post when she returns from maternity leave. She has not left her office whilst on maternity leave and therefore returns to work in her existing post as of right unless she resigns or is removed from it.
- Clause 2 (2) of the Directions confers a requirement on office holders 'in consultation with a responsible person or authority' to 'use all reasonable endeavours to make arrangements for the duties of the office to be performed by another person or persons during the period of leave'. This may simply involve a discussion with the Archdeacon about how best to ensure that cover is provided whilst the office holder is on leave. Regulation 29 allows for someone to be appointed to a post designated as created in order to cover for an office holder's authorised absence from work. This may be held for

a fixed term or under terms which provide for the appointment to be terminated on the occurrence of a specified event, such as the return of the original office holder from maternity leave.

Clergy receiving maternity or other pay will continue to earn pension as usual. If they pay voluntary contributions, these also continue but can be reduced or stopped. If clergy take unpaid leave, this is not pensionable.

3. Employees

Clergy employees have the same statutory rights to pay and leave as other employees, and whose entitlement to enhanced pay during any period of statutory maternity (and other) leave will be determined by their employment contract.

4. Self-supporting ministers

Self-supporting ministers have the same entitlement to maternity (and other) leave as other beneficed and licensed clergy, but are not eligible to receive maternity (and other) pay, as they do not receive a stipend. For unpaid leave, this is up to 52 weeks regardless of length of service. If self-supporting ministers are provided with a house for the better performance of their duties, they have a right to stay in the house while on maternity leave (or any other type of leave) providing they remain in office. Self-supporting ministers will also need assistance with cover while on maternity or adoption leave (they are unlikely to share leave, as they will not be eligible to receive shared parental pay) and when returning from leave.

5. Ordinands

Ordinands in training have no legal entitlement to remuneration or pensionable service as they have a different legal status to office holders. Ordinands who have been studying full-time are unlikely to be eligible for statutory benefits (though first year students should check their eligibility for maternity allowance and statutory maternity pay). However, the Diocese of Newcastle supports ordinands who become parents to complete their training and start their ministry.

Ordinands are either training for ordination on a part-time or full-time basis. Academic fees for part-time and full-time ordinands are paid for in full. Full-time ordinands may also be eligible to receive a means-tested maintenance grant in accordance with the national ministry team guidance.

Pregnant ordinands within the Diocese of Newcastle can take up to one year of maternity leave from training and continue to be assessed for a means-tested maintenance grant and are also

entitled to paternity leave. Ordinands should notify their DDOV of their pregnancy before the 15th week before the Expected Week of Childbirth.

In circumstances where an ordinand has completed their ordination training and has accepted a stipendiary title post within the Diocese of Newcastle but is on or due to go on maternity leave, they will be entitled to Diocesan Maternity Pay providing the notification requirements are followed.

6. Training posts

The length of a training post may be extended to take account of maternity or adoption leave or additional paternity leave.

7. Boundaries whilst on leave

Clergy who are office holders remain in post whilst on leave, and therefore are not eligible for Keeping In Touch days (KIT days). However, the principle of being able to step away from work concerns to focus on adjusting to parenthood is as important one. It is highly recommended that clergy do no more than 10 days of active ministry during their leave. These should be planned, and should not be within the first 2 weeks after birth.

Clergy may wish to think about how they manage their communications whilst on leave, for example briefing churchwardens on when they may be contacted, or by checking emails on a reduced basis. If clergy wish to attend their own church whilst on leave, they should make arrangements with their churchwardens to ensure that they are able to do this without being approached with parish matters or pastoral concerns. It is not reasonable for clergy to continue to lead worship or activities on a regular basis during their leave.

Pregnancy and Maternity Rights

1. Ante-Natal Care

Reasonable time off work is given for pregnant office holders to attend ante-natal care at appointments made on the advice of a registered medical practitioner, registered midwife or registered health worker. Appointments may include exercise, relaxation and parent-craft classes that the office holder is encouraged to attend. Where such appointments conflict with the conducting of parish duties, the office holder should give sufficient notice to the Churchwardens and/or make arrangements for suitable cover. If requested, a certificate of pregnancy and an appointment card must be provided.

8. Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP)

On stopping work and meeting all of the following conditions an office holder is entitled to receive SMP. She must:

- have continuously held office for at least 26 weeks at the end of the 15th week (the qualifying week) before the Expected Week of Childbirth (EWC).
- have average weekly earnings of not less than the figure set by the Government for the payment of National Insurance contributions still be pregnant at the 11th week before the EWC or have given birth by that time.
- give at least 28 days' notice that she intends to stop work.
- provide medical evidence of the EWC no more than 3 weeks after the birth, in the form of a certificate from a midwife or doctor confirming the date of her EWC.
- have ceased work

For the first six weeks SMP is payable at 90% of normal weekly earnings and for the remaining 33 weeks at the statutory rate as set annually by the Government or 90% of normal weekly earnings, whichever is the lower.

9. Diocesan Maternity Pay

Clergy and licensed lay workers will receive 39 weeks paid maternity leave on full stipend. The payment of Diocesan Maternity Pay includes any entitlement to SMP. There is no qualifying period for Diocesan Maternity Pay, however it is necessary to inform the Diocesan Office in writing of the intention to take maternity leave before the end of the 15th week before the EWC including the following information:

- Her full name and place of work.
- That she is pregnant.

- Give the expected week of childbirth (EWC).
- The date on which the office holder would like to start Maternity Leave (intended start date, which should be no earlier than the start of the 11th week before the EWC).
- Be accompanied by the MATB1 form

The Commissioners' Clergy Payments Department should then confirm the date in writing, including the date when the clergywoman or licensed lay worker is expected to return to work.

The clergywoman/licensed lay worker can change her mind about the dates but should give 8 weeks' notice of any changes, which should again be confirmed by the Commissioners' Clergy Payments Department in writing. To qualify she must either be pregnant at the 11th week before the EWC, or have had the baby.

10. Maternity Leave

If an office holder stops work no earlier than the 11th week before the EWC, and meets the following conditions, she is entitled to 52 weeks' maternity leave. To comply she must notify the diocese (in writing if requested) by the 15th week before the EWC unless that is not reasonably practicable, of the following:

- that she is pregnant (preferably by submitting a MAT B1 form);
- the EWC;
- the date on which she intends her ordinary maternity leave to start;
- if requested, provide medical evidence of the EWC.

The diocese will confirm in writing the date upon which the 52-week maternity leave period will end. The office holder must not work during the 2 weeks immediately after the birth; this is known as the "compulsory maternity leave period" and is considered part of the ordinary maternity leave period.

If an office holder gives birth before the intended maternity leave start date, the maternity leave will start automatically on the day after the birth of the child.

If the office holder wishes to return to work before the end of the 52-week period of maternity leave she must give at least 8 weeks' notice of her intended date of return.

11. Miscarriage, Premature Birth and Stillbirth

The death of a baby at any stage of pregnancy is devastating and is usually completely unexpected and in every case the death of a baby is traumatic. Following the death, the parents go home without the baby they love and have prepared for and they also face the loss of their

dreams, plans and hopes for the future. For clergy to return to their office can be incredibly challenging even with the love, support and understanding of their fellow clergy and parishes.

The grief and shock of losing a baby after 14 or 16 weeks of pregnancy can be much the same as following a stillbirth. This can be very hard for parents who want their baby and their loss to be officially recognised. However for legal purposes, a loss at any stage before 24 completed weeks of pregnancy is called a miscarriage and so the maternity provisions do not apply.

If an individual is unable to return to office after a miscarriage for medical reasons, they will qualify for Sick Leave and Sick Pay, provided a note from the GP is supplied. It is good practice to record this separately from other Sick Leave in order to make sure that the woman cannot be regarded as having been treated unfavourably because of the miscarriage. Therefore the office holder can request their pregnancy related absence be recorded as such. If an office holder is not sick but needs time off, we will consider allowing them Compassionate Leave. Alternatively, office holders can ask for paid or unpaid leave.

If the baby arrives early, Maternity Leave will automatically start on the day after the birth. If the baby is stillborn after the 24th week of pregnancy or if the baby is born alive at any point (even if the baby later passes away), the office holder will be entitled to full maternity rights. If any office holder experiences the loss of a child, through a miscarriage, a still birth or their baby passes away after birth, pastoral support is available to all clergy through the Counselling Service.

An office holder usually has enough flexibility to arrange their duties so as to be able to attend medical appointments, but additional support will be given to help an office holder attend such appointments caused by the loss of a child, in agreement with their Archdeacon, and the Diocese will offer other support that is within the Diocese capacity to offer the office holder under such circumstances.

12. Health and Safety Considerations

A pregnant mother is given specific health and safety protection under the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and the Working Time Regulations 1998. Whilst clergy are office holders not employees, the Diocese recognises sound advice and good practice, and strongly advises expectant mothers to be mindful of these and to take responsibility for familiarising themselves with their content.

The Archdeacon may be approached for advice and assistance on assessing the risks to which a pregnant mother may be exposed in the course of her duties through discussion at the start of the pregnancy. Where appropriate, adjustments will be agreed, bearing in mind the risks to new and expectant mothers and their unborn child. Individuals have a responsibility to identify any areas of work practices which might adversely affect their work, health and safety, and to

raise any concerns with their Archdeacon to identify a suitable course of action. Where a risk cannot be avoided, a discussion will take place about what measures can be taken to mitigate the risks. Following such a risk assessment, in exceptional cases and where suitable alternative work cannot be found, it may be necessary to consider alternatives.

13. Changes to Working Arrangements

Flexible working as it is understood in the employment context, does not apply to clergy office holders. The Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Directions 2010 currently confer a legal entitlement on clergy to make requests to take time off or make adjustments to the duties of the office to care for a dependant, but not for other reasons (see paragraphs 20 -32). When the right to request flexible working was extended to all employees, the view was taken that it was not appropriate to extend it to clergy office holders, as they already had sufficient flexibility.

Where an individual wishes to return to work but on a different basis, the office holder may wish to negotiate new working arrangements / adjustment to duties when they return from Maternity Leave and this should be discussed with the Archdeacon. Although such requests will be considered, there is no guarantee they will be agreed. Any decision will be reached in consultation with the Archdeacon and churchwarden/s and advice from the Diocesan Office, and only after having thoroughly explored the details and implications of the request.

Such implications of a return to work on a different basis, i.e. part-time include:

- Where a house is provided as an entitlement for the better performances of duties and where the reduction of hours is requested and granted, the entitlements to housing will remain unchanged unless the new agreed working hours fall below the minimum set for entitlement to housing.
- If the individual is receiving a 'housing allowance', the reduction in stipend will come with a proportionate reduction of the 'housing allowance'.

If approved, the stipend will be adjusted pro rata to reflect the reduced hours. Any permanent changes to working arrangements will need to be formally agreed with the office holder and Archdeacon and documented in a revised Statement of Particulars and Working Agreement and issued by the relevant Archdeacon.

When new working hours are negotiated, there is further impact on other entitlements:

- Pension contributions: with a reduced stipend, there is a corresponding downward adjustment in pension entitlement.
- Heating, lighting and cleaning allowances will also be impacted when someone moves from a full-time role to a part-time role.

The office holder is advised to speak to the Diocesan Office regarding the individual's circumstances.

14. Deciding Not to Return

If an office holder is unsure about returning to her duties, it is helpful if this can be discussed with us as early as possible. If an individual decides not to return after Maternity Leave, she must inform her Archdeacon and the Bishop, stating her decision to resign from her office and giving the appropriate notice period as detailed in the Statement of Particulars. The amount of Maternity Leave left to run when notice is given must be at least equal to the contractual notice period. Otherwise we may require the office holder to return to office for the remainder of the notice period.

15. Further Support

If you would like further support with regards to adjusting to ministry with a new child, the following may be useful:

- Bishop's Advisor for Women's Ministry (<https://www.newcastle.anglican.org/about-us/leadership/bishop-of-newcastle/bishops-advisors/>). The Bishop's Advisor may be able to organise peer mentoring from people who have taken maternity, paternity or adoption leave before.
- Clergy Support Trust (<https://www.clergysupport.org.uk/>) and Lord Crewe's Charity (<https://www.lordcrewescharity.org.uk/>) may offer grants for eligible clergy who are struggling with costs relating to a new child.
- Clergy Babies Network (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/356434788385491/>). Offers advice and support for clergy who are pregnant, adopting or have a baby, toddler or preschool child.

Paternity Leave

1. Statutory Entitlement

Office holders are entitled to choose to take either one week or two consecutive weeks' paternity leave (not odd days), subject to the following conditions:

- The office holder must have held office continuously for at least 26 weeks by the end of the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth (EWC).
- The office holder must have, or be expected to have, responsibility for the upbringing of the child.
- The office holder must be the child's biological father or married to or the partner of the child's mother.
- The leave must be taken for the purpose of caring for the child or supporting the mother in the care of the child.
- The leave, can start on any day of the week on or following the child's birth but, must be completed within a period of 56 days beginning with either the child's birth or the first day of the EWC, whichever is the later. The diocese will allow up to two weeks to be taken in one period if that is more convenient.
- If an office holder is entitled to SPL he will also qualify for SPP provided that his normal weekly earnings are not below the lower earnings limit applying to NI contributions, and, he gives at least 28 days' written notice of the date liability to pay SPP is expected to begin.

16. Notice and Evidence Requirements

The office holder must give written notice of the intention to take paternity leave in or before the 15th week before the EWC.

The notice must state the EWC, whether the office holder intends to take one or two consecutive weeks leave and the date on which they want the leave to start.

Note: If, after providing this notice, the office holder has a change of mind as to the commencement date or the amount of leave to be taken, further notice of at least 28 days must be provided (or, in cases where this is not reasonably practicable, as soon as is reasonably practicable).

The office holder must provide evidence of entitlement to statutory paternity pay at least 28 days before the date on which they wish the pay period to start or as soon as reasonably practicable. The notice must state the office holder's name, the EWC or date of birth if the child

has already been born, whether paternity is to be payable for one or two weeks and the date on which the pay period is to start.

As part of the above notice a declaration must be signed that the conditions of entitlement to statutory paternity leave and statutory paternity pay are fulfilled and that the purpose of the leave is to care for the child or to support the child's mother and that they are the child's father or the mother's partner and expect to have responsibility for the upbringing of the child.

SPP will be at the rate determined by the government or 90% of weekly earnings (calculated at an average of the eight weeks preceding the Qualifying Week), whichever is the lower.

17. Diocesan Paternity Leave at full pay

The Diocese will give 2 weeks paternity leave on full stipend. There is no qualifying period for Diocesan Paternity Pay.

Shared Parental Leave

An eligible mother can choose to end her maternity leave early and, with child's father, opt for Shared Parental Leave instead of Maternity Leave. As the shared parental leave provisions are complex an eligible mother wishing to take leave should clarify the relevant procedures through the Diocesan Office to ensure that they are followed correctly.

1. Eligibility

Clergy may be eligible for Shared Parental Leave (SPL) and Shared Parental Pay (ShPP) if:

- They share responsibility for the care of the child with the child's other parent.
- The mother or primary adopter is entitled to maternity or adoption leave or pay and has curtailed that leave or pay.
- Both parents meet the statutory employment and earnings tests required under SPL legislation: Shared Parental Pay (General) Regulations 2014

18. Amount of Shared Parental Leave

- Up to 50 weeks of SPL may be available, less any maternity or adoption leave already taken (37 weeks paid, 13 weeks unpaid).
- The mother or primary adopter must take at least two weeks of compulsory maternity or adoption leave immediately following the birth or placement.
- SPL must be taken within 52 weeks of the birth or placement for adoption.

19. Taking Shared Parental Leave

- SPL may be taken by one parent or shared between both parents.
- Leave may be taken consecutively or concurrently.
- SPL may be taken in a maximum of three separate blocks.
- Requests for discontinuous blocks of leave will be considered by the diocese and agreed where practicable, taking account of ministerial cover and pastoral needs.

20. Shared Parental Pay

- Shared Parental Pay is paid on the same basis as Enhanced Maternity Pay
- Adopting parents have the same rights as other parents to Shared Parental leave and pay.

21. Notice Requirements

Clergy wishing to take SPL must provide written notice to the Diocesan Office (and copy the archdeacon and Bishop's House) as follows:

- **Notice of Curtailment:** Written notice from the mother or primary adopter confirming the date maternity or adoption leave will end.
- **Period of Leave Notice:** At least eight weeks' notice must be given before the start of any period of SPL, specifying the start and end dates of that period.

Adoption Leave and Adoption Pay

There is a statutory entitlement to adoption leave and adoption pay when adopting a child, providing certain qualifying conditions are met. Statutory Adoption Pay is payable for up to 39 weeks.

1. Eligibility

Qualifying employees will receive 90% of average earnings for the first six weeks followed by the statutory rate or 90% of average weekly earnings if this is less than the statutory rate for the remaining 33 weeks.

- the individual must be the child's adopter;
- the individual must have agreed the date of placement with the adoption agency.
- over the eight weeks ending with the date on which the adopter is notified of the match, the individual must have had normal weekly earnings of at least the lower earnings limit for national insurance contributions
- the individual must have ceased to work.
- within 7 days of being matched with a child, the adopter must notify the employer of the expected date of placement and the date the individual intends the adoption leave to start.

2. Diocesan Adoption Pay

The Diocese will follow the Central Stipends Authority recommendations and give clergy and licensed lay workers who intend to return to work up to 39 weeks' adoption leave on full pay, followed by a further period of up to 13 weeks unpaid additional adoption leave, subject to the conditions and eligibility criteria.

Either partner may receive Adoption Pay, but not both. The other partner may receive Statutory Paternity Pay, if they have been continuously employed for the period between 30 the end of the week in which the adopter is notified of being matched and ending with the day on which the child is placed for adoption and subject to eligibility conditions.

An office holder who is planning to adopt should discuss this with the relevant Archdeacon.

Where both adoptive parents are either office holders or employees, then they must choose which of them is to benefit from Adoption Leave, or agree how it is to be shared.

Menopause Policy

1. What is Menopause?

The menopause is a natural transition stage in most women's lives. It is marked by changes in hormones over a period of time during which periods stop. For some it will be medically induced through surgery or medical treatments. 'Going through the menopause' can take several years. About 70% of women experience a wide range of physical and psychological symptoms and it has been found that approximately 60% of women find their working life negatively affected by symptoms.

Each woman will be affected in different ways and to different degrees over different periods of time, and menopausal symptoms can often indirectly affect their partner, families and colleagues as well.

Some women with pre-existing health conditions, may find that the menopause can aggravate their existing health conditions or even trigger new ones. Menopausal symptoms can in turn also be made worse by any pre-existing health conditions.

3. Policy Statement

Every experience of the menopause is different and not every woman¹ will experience menopausal symptoms. However, some women experiencing the menopause and menopausal symptoms, whether before, during or after this time of hormonal change may need additional consideration and support with some adjustments made to their working patterns or conditions.

Every woman's personal and professional circumstances are different. Because of this, it is neither feasible nor desirable to provide a policy with a structured set of specific actions that office holders or senior clergy should take when seeking to support office holders experiencing the menopause.

This menopause policy aims to develop and promote an environment and culture that supports office holders experiencing the menopause, so they can feel confident about raising issues relating to their symptoms and seek help with reasonable adjustments to help them carry out their role and perform their duties.

This policy also reflects the Diocese of Newcastle's commitment to ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of all office holders, as well as its commitment to equality and diversity within the ministerial environment and culture.

4. Policy Aims

This policy aims to:

¹ This document equally applies to anyone who experiences the menopause

- Enable office holders experiencing the menopause to continue to be effective and feel supported in their role;
- Foster a supportive ministerial environment to help reduce or prevent absenteeism and the stress of trying to manage menopausal symptoms;
- Help Churchwardens, Clergy in positions of responsibility², Area Deans and Archdeacons or those to whom office holders are accountable, to understand how the menopause can affect an office holder, and how we as an organisation at parish, deanery, archdeaconry and diocesan level can help to support those office holders experiencing the menopause to carry out their role and perform their duties.
- Raise awareness amongst office holders of their rights and responsibilities with regards their experiencing of the menopause and any menopausal symptoms, as well as the rights and responsibilities of their colleagues.
- Foster an environment in which office holders can openly and comfortably instigate conversations or engage in discussions about the menopause in a respectful and supportive manner.
- Offer full assurance to office holders that they will not be subject to any disadvantage if they take up any of the support available or request changes to their work patterns or how they perform their duties.
- Encourage office holders to request to be signposted to a different officer if they are uncomfortable sharing their personal and sensitive menopausal experiences with those to whom they are accountable. It should be noted the office holder may be asked to give their consent to the sharing of some information relating to their menopausal experience and symptoms with their Area Dean or Archdeacon to aid in the provision appropriate support.
- Reassure office holders that a 'need to know' only approach will be taken, keeping to an absolute minimum the number of people who are informed or involved in discussions regarding the provision of support and adjustments.
- Underline the importance of confidentiality and privacy by all concerned if other church officers need to be involved in the provision of support and adjustments.
- Highlight the need for all matters relating to an office holder's menopause and any requests for support and/or adjustments to be dealt with sensitively and in confidence and in accordance with the Diocese of Newcastle's Data Protection Policy.
- Ensure office holders are aware that if they require some support during any meetings with church officers they can request the support of a companion office holder.
- Raise wider awareness and understanding among all office holders about the menopause.
- Outline the support and reasonable adjustments available.

² For example a Training Incumbent or a Team Rector

- Help all engaged with the support of office holders across the Diocese of Newcastle to be recognised for fostering a supportive ministerial environment and culture, enabling the recruitment and retention of office holders experiencing the menopause.

This policy does not form part of the Statement of Particulars and it may be amended at any time. It may change because of amendments in the law.

5. Who is Covered by the Policy

This policy is intended to apply to all current and new office holders of the Diocese of Newcastle, including all persons beneficed, licensed or otherwise authorised by the Bishop for ministry in the Diocese of Newcastle. This includes all clergy holding office under Common Tenure, Qualified Common Tenure and Freehold and applies equally to Archdeacons, Cathedral Clergy and Bishops.

6. Self-management for Office Holders Experiencing the Menopause

- a) Office holders experiencing menopausal symptoms are encouraged not to suffer in silence. They are encouraged to consider:
 - Seeking medical advice from a GP or other relevant health care professional.
 - Discussing symptoms with their Clergy in posts of responsibility, Area Dean, Archdeacon and request assistance with appropriate adjustments to the ministerial environment or working pattern.
- b) Office holders are encouraged to make healthy lifestyle choices that may help with some of the symptoms such as:
 - Drinking plenty of water.
 - Eating healthily and regularly: research has shown a balanced diet can help in alleviating some symptoms.
 - Exercising regularly: to reduce hot flushes, improve sleep, boost mood and maintain aerobic fitness levels.
 - Having access to natural light.
 - Not smoking: to help reduce hot flushes and the risk of developing serious conditions.
 - Ensuring alcohol intake is within recommended levels and cutting down on caffeine and spicy food all of which can trigger hot flushes.
 - Staying cool at night: wearing loose clothes and ensuring the bedroom is well ventilated to help with hot flushes and night sweats.
 - Ensuring adequate rest and relaxation to reduce stress levels and improve mood.
- c) Office holders are encouraged to:
 - Inform their Clergy in posts of responsibility, Area Dean or Archdeacon if/when their need for any adjustment changes.

- Report any instances of harassment, victimisation or discrimination experienced because of issues related to the menopause. If an office holder is found to have harassed, victimised or discriminated against another office holder in relation to the menopause, this will be considered a disciplinary offence.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

- a) Clergy in posts of responsibility, Area Deans and Archdeacons are responsible for:
- Ensuring all office holders and churchwardens are aware of this policy; and that they understand their own and the office holder's responsibilities.
 - Encouraging appropriate discussions with office holders, when this is raised by them, regarding the impact of their menopausal symptoms on carrying out their roles and performing their duties, and on their professional relationships and relationships with those they serve.
 - Knowing how to enable those who need help to access the support available and the adjustments that can be offered.
 - Respecting the personal and sensitive nature of any conversations regarding an office holder's menopause and ensuring any discussions or requests for support or adjustments are held in confidence and conducted in a professional manner, all in accordance with the Diocese of Newcastle's Data Protection Policy.
 - Considering all requests for support and adjustments sympathetically and not discriminating against those office holders who are experiencing the menopause; and putting in place the required support or adjustments in a timely manner.
 - Ensuring a 'need to know' only approach is taken, keeping to an absolute minimum the number of people who are informed or involved in discussions and ensuring appropriate consent is obtained from office holders for third party discussions.
 - Encouraging office holders to make use of the support of a companion office holder during any meetings with church officers and helping the office holder identify a willing and competent companion.
 - Signposting office holders to the Pastoral and Counselling Support provided by the Diocese of Newcastle and outlined in the Clergy Handbook.
 - Recording in writing any substantial adjustments to an office holder's working patterns or changes to the performing of their duties; ensuring an ongoing dialogue between themselves and the office holder and any key church officers; ensuring all agreed adjustments are implemented.
 - Ensuring reviews of the arrangements are conducted to ascertain if they are still appropriate and practicable.
 - Highlighting the need for confidentiality to be maintained throughout any period of support and adjustment.
- b) The Diocese of Newcastle is responsible for:

- Providing all office holders with appropriate information so they can better understand and discuss as needed the effects of the menopause
- Supporting and guiding parish representatives (Churchwardens, PCC members etc) who are negotiating any significant changes and adjustments to an office holder's work patterns and the performing of their duties.
- Ensuring any complaints of discrimination, harassment or victimisation relating to the menopause are taken seriously and investigated appropriately using the agreed procedures and respecting confidentiality.
- Ensuring all policies and procedures take account of the effects of the menopausal symptoms so any office holders experiencing the menopause are not disadvantaged because of their symptoms.
- Offering further support when adjustments have not been successful, or symptoms have proven to be more problematic to manage than anticipated. Any further support will be discussed with the office holder and they will be able to review the advice received and implement the recommendations where reasonably practicable.
- Informing their Clergy in post of their responsibility to notify their Area Dean or Archdeacon if/when their need for any adjustment changes. Reporting any instances of harassment, victimisation or discrimination experienced because of issues related to the menopause¹. If an office holder is found to have harassed, victimised or discriminated against another office holder in relation to the menopause, this will be considered a disciplinary offence.

8. Support and Reasonable Adjustments

The Diocese of Newcastle aims to:

- Provide as much support for office holders as is reasonably practicable and ensure Officers, Clergy in posts of responsibility, Area Deans and Archdeacons support office holders sympathetically.
- Provide an alternative contact to office holders experiencing the menopause should they not feel comfortable discussing their problems with their Clergy in posts of responsibility, Area Dean or Archdeacon. If this is the case please contact the Administrative Lead at Church House, North Shields who will arrange an alternative contact.

¹ Area Deans should notify their respective Archdeacons, Archdeacons/Suffragan Bishop should notify the Diocesan Bishop, the Diocesan Bishop should notify the Chair of the NDBF.

- Ensure, Clergy in posts of responsibility, Area Deans and Archdeacons make allowances if there is an additional need for sickness absence by office holders experiencing menopausal symptoms to manage those symptoms. The menopause will be considered as an ongoing condition requiring the consideration of reasonable adjustments and flexibility in absence procedure. The obligations and rights for office holders, if they are

unable to perform their duties because of sickness, are set out in Regulations 27 and 28 of *The Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Regulations 2009*.

9. Assessments for Reasonable Adjustments

- a) Clergy in posts of responsibility, Area Deans and Archdeacons may need to help identify reasonable adjustments. The areas to consider are:
 - The ministerial environment including temperature and ventilation.
 - Access to adequate toilets, sanitary provision and washing/changing facilities.
 - Access to drinking water.
 - Adequate working times and break times.
 - Workload and work patterns
 - Bullying and harassment.
- b) Office holders who are experiencing menopausal symptoms can apply for the following adjustments to support them in a workplace setting (where their main workplace is outside of their accommodation provided by the Diocese):
 - Control over environmental factors: such as the provision of desk fans on request; review of office seating plans so affected office holders can be near the window or open doors, or away from direct sources of heat such as radiators; fitting blinds to windows.
 - Provision of greater access to chilled drinking water.
 - Access to toilets, sanitary provision and changing/washing facilities for office holders to change clothes during the working day.
 - Flexibility around the taking of breaks, or increased breaks during the working day, in which case the office holder may need to arrange cover as necessary for these breaks.
 - Flexibility around attending relevant medical appointments.
 - Temporary changes to the office holders' duties, such as carrying out fewer high visibility activities, such as giving formal presentations or running meetings as it can be difficult to cope with symptoms such as hot flushes,
 - Flexibility around working times if an office holder is affected at particular times of the day.

10. Flexible Working Patterns

Flexible working, as it is understood in the employment context, does not apply to office holders. The *Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Directions 2010* currently confer a legal entitlement on office holders to make requests to take time off or adjust the duties of the office to care for a dependant, but not for other reasons (see paragraphs 20 -32). When

the right to request flexible working was extended to all employees, the view was taken that it was not appropriate to extend it to office holders, as they already had sufficient flexibility.

Depending on the severity of the office holder's menopausal symptoms and the changes needed to manage these symptoms other church officers may also need to be informed or included in any discussions, this may include church wardens, PCC members, church workers and official volunteers. Where this is the case, every effort will be made by the Clergy in posts of responsibility, Area Dean, or Archdeacon to make this process as tactful and sensitive as possible.

11. Further Guidance and Information

For further guidance and information on the symptoms and for advice on how to manage the symptoms please refer to the following links:

- British Menopause Society (BSM)
www.thebms.org.uk/
- Daisy Network
www.daisynetwork.org
- Menopause Matters
www.menopausematters.co.uk
- NHS information:
www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause
- NICE guidelines on 'Menopause: diagnosis and treatment':
www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng23/ifp/chapter/About-this-information
- The Menopause Exchange
www.menopause-exchange.co.uk
- Women's Health Concern
www.womens-health-concern.org