

RISK MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR PARISHES
IN THE ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF OTTAWA

Why should members of Synod be concerned about “risk management?” We all want our churches to be safe places, and to be safe places to donate money to.

Whose responsibility is this?

Holding title to property implies a general responsibility to manage it prudently. Through the statutes that incorporated the Diocese of Ottawa, the Province of Ontario authorizes the Diocese to regulate itself through Canons (which we refer to as the “CBRs”). Real estate is “vested” in the churchwardens and the Incumbent, by virtue of By-Law 5.0.3. This does not mean that the Incumbent and wardens actually own the property; rather, they hold it in trust for the worshipping community within the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa in the Anglican Church of Canada.

The CBRs assign many specific responsibilities. For example the duties of church wardens, listed in By-Law 5.03, includes care of the land and buildings, keeping track of important documents, collecting and depositing money. Who is in charge of those groups that meet in the church basement? The vestry is to have control of all organizations in a congregation (By-Law 5.0.2 (10)). The Incumbent is supposed to supervise all organizations that carry on activities in the name of the Church or upon its property (Canon 4.07).

We are therefore collectively and individually responsible for the management of money and real estate and for the oversight of activities that take place in our buildings.

Every parish within the Diocese is responsible for reviewing these requirements, identifying the clergy, staff and volunteers within the parish with responsibility for taking steps to manage the risk. The list and procedures put into place as a result of it should be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that risk management measures remain appropriate and effective and that information on resources and personnel is up to date. The Diocese will conduct audits from time to time to ensure that appropriate measures to manage risk are in place.

Where an individual is given responsibility for management of a specific risk, he or she may delegate the responsibility to implement appropriate measures to someone else within the parish.

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TYPE OF RISKS	SPECIFIC RISKS	REQUIREMENTS TO MANAGE RISK
<p>Health and Safety</p> <p>A central element of our mission is to provide a safe and secure environment for all community members. Parishes must do their part to minimize the risk of personal injury, to obtain assistance in medical emergencies, and to protect vulnerable persons.</p>	<p>Physical injury or medical emergency</p>	<p>Each warden must create and keep a list of emergency information next to the church office phone, including the location of first aid supplies and telephone numbers for police, fire and ambulance services. The information should also include a list of clergy, staff and regular parishioners who have training in CPR and who have volunteered to provide emergency medical help if necessary.</p> <p>The warden in each parish is responsible for organizing inspections of the parish’s physical premises. These inspections should occur more frequently during winter when snow and ice may create dangerous conditions, and whenever construction or renovation is underway.</p> <p>If a hazard within a parish building (for example, a broken stair, loose carpeting, ice on walkways) is identified, the warden is responsible for arranging for repairs. If repairs are not immediately possible, signs must be posted so that building users are alerted to the hazard.</p> <p>Where members of a parish are attending an event off-site organized by the parish, a person involved in the event must be designated to have overall responsibility for health and safety during the event. This includes adequate supervision of any children, youth and vulnerable individuals attending and protocols for first aid and emergency care.</p> <p>An individual within the parish must have overall responsibility for the safety of food prepared on-site and drinking water served at the parish. .</p> <p>Attendees at parish services and events should be alerted to the potential for allergens (nuts in foods, the use of incense during services) during specific events and activities. The person with overall responsibility for food safety should ensure that appropriate measures are in place to reduce the risk of any allergic reaction, including clear labels.</p>

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FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES**

		<p>Without violating any confidentiality, a record must be kept of pastoral care visits to individuals who are at risk due to isolation, medical conditions or psychological vulnerability. This record is required to ensure continuity of care if the person providing the pastoral care suddenly becomes unavailable and must be replaced.</p>
	<p>Sexual, physical and mental abuse</p>	<p>All clergy, staff and volunteers working with children, youth and vulnerable persons must be screened through the Screening in Faith process prior to beginning any assigned work.</p> <p>If an outside group seeks to use a parish premises for meetings or other events, the group must provide the parish with reasonable assurances that steps have been taken to screen leaders.</p> <p>Clergy within each parish are responsible for identifying individuals and groups who use parish premises and whose history may suggest a higher risk of offence (for example, individuals with addictions or with a history of having committed sexual, physical or mental abuse). Clergy and directors must ensure that such groups and individuals do not have access to parish premises at the same time as children, youth or vulnerable individuals.</p> <p>The incumbent is responsible for ensuring that the parish complies with the Diocese's Policy on Abuse.</p> <p>Where an allegation of abuse is made, the clergy of the parish involved must take immediate steps to advise the Bishop's Office.</p>
	<p>Violence and harassment</p>	<p>Within parishes, wardens are responsible for dealing with threats of violence and confrontation on parish premises and during parish activities off-site. This includes identifying individuals who may be seeking confrontation and taking appropriate steps to remove them from the premises, either directly or through the involvement of the police..</p> <p>The incumbent is responsible for ensuring that the parish complies with the</p>

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		Diocese’s Policy on Violence in the Workplace.
<p>Property</p> <p>We must safeguard the buildings and other physical assets used to provide services to the community. Parishes play a vital role in ensuring that the property in their care will be preserved.</p>	<p>Fire</p>	<p>The telephone number for the fire department must be clearly posted in each church office.</p> <p>Each church must have a fire evacuation plan, smoke detectors, a fire extinguisher, and must otherwise comply with provincial and municipal fire safety laws and regulations. The fire evacuation plan must designate an appropriate number of individuals in charge of response to any fire or threatened fire.</p> <p>Each parish must have an inventory of valuables kept on the premises. The inventory should be updated every year and transmitted to the Diocese so that it may ensure that adequate insurance coverage is in place.</p>
	<p>Theft</p>	<p>Each parish must have a procedure for safeguarding valuables. This includes keeping an up to date inventory of valuables, designating individuals responsible for ensuring that valuables are stored appropriately and ensuring locks and combinations to locks are changed as required.</p> <p>The warden is responsible for keeping track of the number of keys issued to church and parish buildings. Individuals who cease to have a role requiring them to have access to parish must return any keys issued to them.</p> <p>The warden must designate someone to ensure that the premises are secured after services and other events on parish premises.</p> <p>Any theft of parish over \$250 must be reported to the Bishop’s Office.</p>
	<p>Physical deterioration of buildings</p>	<p>The warden of each parish must organize regular “walk-arounds” of property to inspect for physical damage and deterioration and must keep a log of necessary repairs.</p>

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		<p>If renovations are not immediately possible due to cost or other constraints, appropriate steps should be taken to stop or slow the rate of deterioration.</p> <p>The cost of repairs and renovation should be accounted for in the annual parish budget.</p>
<p>Finances</p> <p>We hold money in trust for the benefit and use of the community we serve. Parishes must ensure that their practices safeguard against mismanagement and theft, and that donations by parishioners are used appropriately.</p>	<p>Mismanagement of funds</p>	<p>Wardens manage funds and property in trust for the Diocese.</p> <p>Every parish must have a financial management system that divides direct responsibilities and oversight functions.</p> <p>Every parish must ensure that proper book keeping procedures are in place. This includes ensuring that expenses and revenues are recorded and tracked against budget, and that receipts and other records are kept for an appropriate length of time.</p> <p>Access to petty cash held within parish offices should be limited and the amount of cash kept on hand should be subject to predetermined and appropriate limits.</p> <p>Parishes are responsible for keeping separate accounts for funds collected for specific purposes.</p> <p>Treasurers and wardens must comply with audit obligations as set out in the Diocese's Warden and Treasurer's Handbook.</p>
	<p>Theft</p>	<p>The warden must ensure that oversight of donations and other monies collected by the parish is given to more than one person.</p> <p>Each parish must have a system in place to ensure that any money collected or donated is deposited promptly into a bank account.</p>
	<p>Loss of income</p>	<p>The incumbent in each parish is responsible for reviewing the parish's ministries on a regular basis to ensure they meet the needs of the local community.</p>

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	or funding	<p>Each parish must have a system in place to ensure that any gifts and donations are recorded and acknowledged.</p> <p>Each parish must ensure that it has current information regarding tax credits associated with charitable donations, and that this information is available to individuals and organizations that might wish to donate.</p>
<p>Information</p> <p>We need to keep personal information about our community members confidential, and to ensure that vital information about ministries is preserved. Parishes must prevent unauthorized disclosure and use of personal information, and maintain adequate records of their activities.</p>	Disclosure of private information	<p>Each warden, treasurer, hired staff and other individuals in the parish with access to personal information about parish members must sign an undertaking to respect confidentiality.</p> <p>Every parish must have a written policy and procedures to protect the personal information of staff and community members whom they serve.</p> <p>Every parish must limit access to personal information (including names, addresses, other contact information, financial contributions, family relationships, etc.) to those who need such information for parish business.</p> <p>Wardens must take steps to ensure that information, whether in hard copy or electronic form, is kept in a secure place.</p> <p>Passwords to access electronic records containing private or confidential data should be changed regularly. Records no longer required must be destroyed after the warden has first verified with Diocesan Archives that destruction is appropriate.</p>

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	Loss of information	<p>Each parish must implement procedures to ensure that consistent and appropriate records are kept. This includes steps so that longtime clergy, staff and volunteers record their knowledge of parish history and procedures prior to departure.</p> <p>All parish information, whether in hard copy or electronic format, must be stored in a safe and secure place.</p> <p>A copy of key documents (for example bank records, insurance policies, deeds and other legal documents) should be stored securely off-site, to ensure that critical information remains available in case of flood, fire, theft or loss of original records for any reason.</p> <p>Electronic information held by parishes must be backed-up. Parishes should review storage software to ensure that the format is not becoming obsolete.</p>
<p>Legal liability</p> <p>We must avoid exposing the Diocese and its representatives to legal proceedings. Parishes should be aware that their activities may give risk to legal risk, and take steps to reduce this risk.</p>	Liability for injuries	<p>Where members of a parish are attending an event off-site that has been organized by the parish, waivers of responsibility for personal injury should be obtained.</p> <p>Each parish is responsible for reporting any new activities or ministries that may give rise to a risk of personal injury to the Director of Financial Ministry, so that the Diocese can ensure that appropriate insurance coverage is in place.</p>
	Liability for property damage	<p>Each parish is responsible for reporting any new activities or ministries that may give rise to a risk of property damage to the Director of Financial Ministry, so that the Diocese can ensure that appropriate insurance coverage is in place.</p>

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	Contractual liability	<p>Parishes should be aware that the Diocese’s insurance may not cover all liabilities incurred as a result of a contract between a parish and a third party. Wardens or incumbents must therefore review every proposed contract carefully to ensure that it is not assuming liability that it cannot support. The Director of Financial Ministry may be consulted for support as required.</p> <p>Parishes should have a written agreement with any employee or contractor, setting out his or her responsibilities and remuneration and the term of the agreement. Parishes must have a process in place for evaluating employees on a regular basis. Parishes may obtain advice about the form of such agreements and their obligations as employers from the Director of Financial Ministry.</p> <p>As a rule, parishes should limit the term of any lease or rental agreement for the regular use of parish premises by any outside party to one year, subject to possible renewal. In no circumstances should a parish enter into a lease or rental agreement with an indefinite term. Where an outside group or party is seeking to use parish premises for a one-time event, the parish should enter into a license agreement for such use. Template for rental, lease and license agreements can be obtained from the Director of Financial Ministry.</p>
<p>Reputation</p> <p>We have a duty to maintain good communications with the communities we serve, and to take steps to ensure that any allegations of impropriety and scandal are promptly reported so to the</p>	Communication	<p>Every parish should communicate regularly with community members through regular paper and/or electronic bulletins.</p> <p>Where a parish becomes aware that an individual or individuals are purporting to communicate regularly on behalf of the parish without being authorized to do so, the Bishop’s Office should be advised so that appropriate action can be taken.</p>

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Bishop's Office so they may be investigated.		
	Scandal	The incumbent and warden of each parish must be mindful that they represent the Church and the Diocese, and that any allegations of impropriety or wrongdoing must be reported promptly to the Bishop's Office so that appropriate action can be taken.