

Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland

Disciplinary Procedure Advice and Guidance Notes

1. What is the Disciplinary Procedure?

1.1 The Disciplinary Procedure is detailed in chapter 8 of the Constitution and Code of Discipline of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland; it is referred to as: 'Forms of Proceeding in cases of Alleged Misconduct and in the Infliction or Removal of Church Censure.'

1.2 Members of the church are reminded that it can only be implemented when a written complaint has been made regarding the conduct of a minister, in accordance with the Constitution and Code of Discipline.

2. Who is covered by the procedure?

2.1 This procedure applies to all ministers on the roll of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland, regardless of length of service, who are currently serving a congregation in Ireland. It also applies to ministry students and licentiates of the denomination.

3. Using this procedure

3.1 This procedure should only be invoked appropriately, and never in a vexatious manner; nor should it be used to address matter of sickness management which is covered elsewhere by the denomination's Sickness Management Policy.

3.2 Complaints must be made in writing and submitted in accordance with the Constitution and Code of Discipline of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland in a timely manner.

3.3 Those in receipt of a formal complaint will have a statutory right to be accompanied by a ministerial colleague or an accredited representative. We will consider an alternative companion if it is required as a reasonable adjustment. Whoever they choose, cannot also be party to the complaint made. All companions must respect the confidentiality of the investigation. Principles of natural justice shall apply at all stages of the Disciplinary Procedure detailed with chapter 8 of the Constitution and Code of Discipline of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland.

This policy should be reviewed Bi-Annually by the General Purposes Committee.

Footnote taken from the coversheet when the Policies and procedures were in one document:

The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland Policies & Procedures for Ministers within the NSPCI As adopted by the General Synod originally in 2013, amended in 2016 and reviewed, expanded, adopted by Pro Renata General Synod in January 2026.

Preface to supplementary policies and procedures for Ministers

The law of the church is the Code of Discipline of the General Synod.

It is intended that the Code of Discipline shall provide the principles and procedures which shall guide and govern the administration of the church and relations between ministers, people and the courts of the church.

Nevertheless, it is understood that for greater clarification and for further guidance in proceeding regard shall be had to the following policies and procedures, which are supplementary to the Code of Discipline, though not integral to it.

It should be noted that the ministry of this denomination is understood to be a vocation. That is, those entering into it should demonstrate a sense of calling; and all parties involved, whether ministers, congregations, or courts of the church, shall give full regard to the values of Christian Service, Christian Fellowship, and Christian Endeavour, as indicated in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament.

With regard to the profession of the Christian ministry, it is noted that while the nature of this work may not be physically demanding, it is however, highly demanding in intellectual and emotional terms. The hours can be lengthy and unpredictable. There are many challenges in supporting, comforting, and assisting a broad range of people; and the minister will carry the burdens of those people on his/her shoulders. While the ministry does bring deep spiritual satisfaction, it presents a challenge of life and work which is continuous.

Therefore, the minister must at all times seek the blessing and strength of the Holy Spirit, as should all who feel obliged to apply the following policies and procedures.