

Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland

Prevention of Disability Discrimination Policy

1. Introduction:

The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and full participation for disabled ministers. Disabled people have the right of equal access to all the opportunities provided to ministers, students, licentiates, and ministry candidates within the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland.

This policy outlines the denomination's commitment to ministers and ministry candidates with A disability and provides guidance on good practise as it relates to those with disabilities. It should be read in conjunction with the denomination's Equal Opportunities Policy. It is our intention to work proactively within our church family to identify and to eliminate disability discrimination, wherever and whenever it occurs.

2. Scope and Implementation

This policy covers all existing ministers, students, licentiates, together with anyone applying for ministry within the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland. It provides protection for individuals who have a disability, or who develop a disability during their ministry. All ministers and church office bearers are expected to become familiar with and to fully comply with this policy and to ensure disabled ministers and candidates for the ministry are treated with dignity and respect in accordance with these provisions.

3. Definition of a Disability in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended)

A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

People who have had a disability in the past that meets this definition may also be protected by the Act.

4. Disclosure and Confidentiality:

Information about a disability, health condition or specific learning difficulty is considered to be personal sensitive information and is protected by the Data Protection Act. Any information given to any person connected with the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland regarding a disability or medical condition must be treated in confidence and must not be passed onto others without the minister's permission.

It should be noted that where a minister does not declare a disability, or if they state that they wish information to be kept confidential, the assistance or adjustments which can be put in place may be hindered as a result. If this predicament arises, the Church will explain this to the minister, so that they may make an informed choice.

5. Reasonable Adjustments:

Where in the course of ministerial duties disability arises and these are disclosed to the appropriate parties (see paragraph 4, above) then the minister may expect reasonable adjustments to be made in order to support them during the period of their disability and/or on an on-going basis as may be necessary. These will vary on a case-by-case basis.

6. Review of the Policy:

This policy will be reviewed on an bi-annual basis by the General Purposes Committee on behalf of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland with relevant stakeholders to ensure compliance with best practise. The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland further welcomes submission from all stakeholders as to how this policy may be improved.

7. Non-compliance:

Where a minister believes that they have been subject to discrimination on the basis of disability then they should raise the matter with their Clerk of Presbytery, and the Clerk of General Synod of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland. They may also consult the denomination's Grievance Policy, should that be appropriate.

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.