

The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland
Policies & Procedures for Ministers within the NSPCI
As adopted by the General Synod 2013

CIRCULATION TO:
CLERKS OF PRESBYTERIES
CLERKS OF SESSIONS
CHURCH SECRETARIES
MINISTERS ON THE ROLL OF THE NSPCI

Contents Page

Preface	1-2
Sickness Absence Management Policy	2-4
Long Term Sickness Absence Management Policy	4
Prevention of Disability Discrimination Policy	4-6
Capabilities Policy and Procedure	6-10
Disciplinary Procedure, Advice and Guidance Notes	10
Grievance Procedure	10-12
Equal Opportunities Policy	12-13
Particulars of Call — Minister of Religion	12-13

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.

In the event that any issue or dispute may arise all parties are earnestly commended to a sense of charity, mutual respect and love; and are enjoined to have regard to *1. Corinthians Ch. 6, 1-8*. 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.

Short-Term Sickness Management Absence Policy

1. Purpose 1.1. The purpose of this policy and procedure is to ensure that sickness is both reported correctly and managed correctly.

2. Applicability

2.1. This policy and procedure applies to all ministers in pastoral charge within the denomination.

2.2. The sickness absence reporting procedure should be followed by a minister whenever he or she is unable to work due to personal sickness or injury

2.3. Unauthorised absence, failure to observe the requirements of the sickness absence reporting procedure, or misuse of the sick pay arrangements will be regarded as possible misconduct and may lead to disciplinary action in accordance with the Constitution and Code of Discipline of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland.

3. Roles & Responsibilities

3.1. The Clerk of Synod has overall responsibility for ensuring that absence reporting is managed appropriately in accordance with this policy and procedure.

3.2. The Clerks of Presbytery have responsibility for ensuring that all ministers and churches shall be made aware of this policy and procedure and that all churches within the denomination appoint a member of the church to be their 'designated person' and shall make this appointment known.

3.3. The designated person may be the Church Secretary, or Clerk of Session or Church Elder or another responsible office holder within the church.

3.4. All ministers are responsible for familiarising themselves with, and ensuring that they comply with this procedure.

4. Sickness Absence Reporting Procedure and Stipend Payment

A minister who is unable to report for duty should as soon as possible and not later than 12.00 noon on the day of their sickness report (save in exceptional circumstances) their unavailability to work to the designated person (or persons in the event of a minister working for more than one church).

4.1. Where the designated person is not available to take the call, the minister should, where possible, leave a message (where appropriate) and a contact number so that the designated person can contact him/her.

4.2. The minister will normally inform the designated person of the reason for the absence and its estimated duration.

4.3. If a minister is unable to personally report his/her sickness absence he/she should, where possible, ensure that someone else notifies the designated person on his/her behalf and within the same time-frame.

4.4. Where the sickness absence is expected to last between 1 and 3 days but the absence continues the minister will contact his/her designated person again on the 4th and 8th day of absence, and thereafter at intervals agreed between the minister and his/her designated person to keep him/her informed of the situation.

4.5. For sickness periods over seven days a doctor's Certificate (Fitness for Work Certificate) should be sought and passed-on to the designated person as soon as is reasonably possible. The Clerk(s) of Presbytery shall also be informed by the designated person of sickness periods over seven days.

4.6. Where the minister fails to contact the designated person as stated in this procedure, then the designated person may contact the minister.

4.7. The following self-certification arrangements apply:

On return to work the minister and the designated person should complete a return to work interview for all absences of up to and including seven calendar days. All absence, in excess of seven calendar days must be covered by a doctor's certificate or hospital certificate where the minister is an in-patient which shall be provided to the designated person. A return to work interview should be held with the Clerk(s) of Presbytery in attendance. The designated person should discuss with the minister whether or not they feel able to return to work. This discussion shall be supportive of the minister.

The minister does not necessarily need to have a statement from the doctor that they are fit to work, although where there are concerns, the Clerk(s) of Presbytery may through the Clerk of Synod refer the minister to Occupational Health.

Alternatively, the Clerk(s) of Presbytery may advise the minister to obtain a private medical note from their GP (or another GP). The General Synod will pay for this private note, and/or the cost of referral of a minister to Occupational Health.

4.8. If the minister becomes unwell during a work day and needs to leave before his/her normal finish time he/she should notify the designated person. The minister should be recorded as absent from their church or churches from the time that he/she is unavailable to work.

4.9 The designated person will ensure that sickness absence is reported to the Clerk(s) of Presbytery or (in the event of the sickness affecting to Clerk(s) of Presbytery) to the Clerk of Synod as appropriate.

4.10 Where sickness absence is due to a disability as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as amended (hereinafter "the Disability Discrimination Act"), the designated person should seek advice from their Clerk of Presbytery in the first instance about how this should be managed. This may give rise to the need for reasonable adjustments to ensure compliance with Disability Discrimination Act.

4.9 Where sickness absence is due to pregnancy, the designated person should seek advice from their Clerk of Presbytery about how this should be managed.

5. Long Term Sickness Absence Procedures- for periods exceeding one month

5.1 Where there is a continuous period of absence through sickness of more than one month, or where there are discontinuous periods of absence through sickness of six months in twelve, then this matter should be reported to the Church Session, and through them to the Presbytery. The Presbytery shall ensure that pastoral support will be offered as appropriate and on an on-going basis, and that assistance is provided for ministerial duties for the church or churches concerned.

In addition, the designated person should discuss with minister whether or not, they feel able to return to work. This discussion shall be supportive of the minister.

5.2 Where there is reasonable cause for concern that a minister remains unable to return to their duties then the church may seek a referral to Occupational Health (as per paragraph 4.7).

Alternatively, the Clerk(s) of Presbytery may advise the minister to obtain a private medical note from the GP (or another GP). The General Synod will pay for this private note and/or the cost of referral of a minister to Occupational Health.

5.3 Where sickness absence is due to a disability as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, or is due to pregnancy, the designated person should seek advice from their Clerk of Presbytery in the first instance about how this should be managed.

Absence due to disability may give rise to the need for reasonable adjustments to ensure compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act..

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 restricted.

The designated person shall inform ministers of the sickness payment arrangements:

5.4 Sickness payment arrangements shall be made in writing, when sickness seems likely to exceed one month in duration. The Stipend shall be continued to be paid during sickness at full rate for a period not exceeding six months. There shall be one clear month's notice given of

termination of full Stipend. Statutory Sick Pay shall apply thereafter. Ministers may wish to consider Income Protection Insurance in respect of longer periods of sickness absence. Reasonable adjustments as to sick pay arrangements will be considered, where appropriate, in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as amended.

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, and to those candidating for ministry within the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland. This policy outlines the denomination's commitment to ministers and ministry candidates with disability and provides guidance on good practise as it relates to ministers 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, 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 s/he has a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her 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 restricted.

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 him/her 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 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 s/he has been subject to discrimination on the basis of disability then s/he should raise the matter with their Clerk of Presbytery, and the Clerk of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland. They may also consult the denomination's Official Grievance Policy, should that be appropriate.

Capabilities Policy and Procedure

I. Context

1.1 The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland seeks to support ministers in improving their capability or competence and to deal fairly and reasonably in instances where ministers cannot meet the required standards of performance.

1.2 This policy and procedure applies to all ministers of the Roll of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland.

2. Introduction

2.1 Ministers provide good and on many occasions excellent spiritual leadership and pastoral care.

However, sometimes ministers may not perform to the desired standard as a result of a lack of capability or competence.

2.2 Although it may be difficult and uncomfortable for churches to address these issues, it is essential they do so if the denomination is to meet its responsibility to both God and the communities we seek to serve.

2.3 This procedure explains the steps to be followed when problems arise that have their cause in the capability or competence of a minister to discharge the duties for which they were appointed.

3. Definition

3.1 Capability relates to the inability of a minister to meet the responsibility of their vocation due to insufficient skill, aptitude, or commitment.

3.2 In order to distinguish whether an issue should be managed through either the: **CAPABILITY PROCEDURE, SICKNESS ABSENCE MANAGEMENT or DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE** Please seek advice from the Presbytery as to which may apply.

4. Purpose

4.1 To provide a church or churches with the necessary information to support a minister with a capability issue whilst recognising that a church or churches cannot guarantee to maintain a minister in their role..

4.2 To ensure ministers are performing their roles effectively and capably and to deal with those ministers not so performing, in a fair and consistent manner.

4.3 To encourage sensitive, imaginative, realistic and constructive approaches from all concerned when dealing with capability issues.

4.4 To clarify and confirm that the responsibility for resolving capability problems rest with individual churches who may receive advice from their Presbytery and, as necessary. from other sources.

4.5 To ensure that capability difficulties are dealt with efficiently within agreed time periods (according to circumstances) and with clear outcomes at all stages.

5. Procedure

5.1 Capability covers all matters related to performance other than those aspects, which would fall within a candidate's time as a licentiate.

5.2 Examples of incapability could be associated with, drug/alcohol abuse, unsatisfactory performance, failure without good reason to take services or to meet pastoral needs etc. This list is not exhaustive. This procedure should be followed where a minister is unable to carry out the tasks required to an acceptable standard because they do not have the skills or aptitude, or competency to perform in the role effectively.

6. General Principles

6.1 Churches should take all necessary and appropriate action if a minister does not achieve an acceptable level of general performance, standards or attendance in carrying out the duties of their position.

6.3 Ministers' representatives should be aware of the denomination's policy and procedure on capability, and the importance of ensuring consistent standards of performance. They will have a right of attendance at meetings held with churches within the informal/formal stages of this procedure.

6.4 In cases of incapability the process seeks to ascertain the reason for the problem and to establish a means of resolving the problem to restore effective levels of spiritual leadership and of pastoral care.

6.5 When the incapability is the result of a lack of required skills, the minister, and the church or churches are expected to agree, a reasonable period of time for the minister to obtain the

improved and acceptable standard of performance. Additional training may be offered as appropriate.

6.6 Additional training is under the direction of the minister's Presbytery(s), from whom appropriate advice should be obtained. In the event of such retraining not securing appropriate progress then the following stages shall apply.

7. Informal Resolution

7.1 Where there are continuing concerns regarding a minister's capabilities, the church or churches should initially meet with the minister to determine reasons for the unsatisfactory performance.

This should be undertaken after seeking advice from the minister's Presbytery(s), and with the Clerk(s) of Presbytery in attendance.

7.2 As soon as any apparent difficulty arises the church or churches should have an informal discussion with the minister, concentrating on the following:

- definition of the issue/problem • standards of ministry required (realistic & achievable) •
- shortcomings in reaching these standards • exploring possible reasons for shortcomings •
- agreeing how and when acceptable performance might be achieved.

7.3 In discussion, consideration should be given to the minister's circumstances. The church or churches, should explore fully the circumstances behind an apparent lack of capability (for example — seek to understand if any personal circumstances have contributed to the minister's behaviour) and then give the minister every opportunity to present their explanation of the situation. Options available at this stage would include:

- additional training/development • referral, where appropriate, to Occupational Health •
- closer supervision by the Presbytery(s) for a limited period •
- mutually agreed alterations to duties to facilitate improvement

7.4 During the process a written record should be made by the Clerk(s) of Presbytery which will include an agreed action plan to address the problem/meet the standards required. A programme of action and review dates must be agreed.

7.4 Consideration will be given within the process to any implications arising from the Disability Discrimination legislation and other legislation, as well as relevant denominational policies and procedures.

7.5 The object of the informal stage is to alleviate or remove the problem after adequate time has been allowed for improvement or assessment. However, if it becomes clear that regardless of further action acceptable performance in the ministry cannot be achieved within reasonable time scales, the matter should be referred to a higher level. The minister should be advised of this and a formal procedure in accordance with Stage 1 below will be followed.

8. Formal Procedure

8.1 If improvements in performance are not achieved, the formal procedure will be instigated. In such cases the minister shall be given notification in writing of an interview to be held under the procedure, within 10 working days after the informal stage is completed. The notification should also include details of the general nature of the matter and examples of the unsatisfactory performance, a copy of the Capability Policy and Procedure and the minister's right to be accompanied (by an accredited representative or a ministerial colleague of their choice), together with any documentation from the informal stage.

9. Stage One

9.1 A formal interview to be conducted by the Clerk(s) of Presbytery attended by the minister, their companion or accredited representative as well a representative from the church or churches concerned. This part of the procedure shall cover:

- exploration of the alleged unsatisfactory performance •
- a review of set targets and timescales for improvement •
- impact of the shortcomings outlined •
- options on remedies, together with training/retraining support

9.2 After the interview, all parties will leave the interview and the Clerk(s) of Presbyteries, in consultation with the church or churches concerned will review the situation fully and decide what action to take or recommend to the minister.

9.3 The Clerk(s) of Presbytery will reconvene the meeting and shall advise all concerned of the recommended appropriate action. Review dates should be agreed between all parties at the conclusion of the interview. The outcomes of the interview should be recorded and all concerned should clearly understand the recommended agreed actions. The minister should be issued with written First Stage Advice in the form of a letter with a recommended action plan attached. This will be recorded by the Presbytery(s) for a period of not less than 6 months and should be linked with update reports from the church or churches commenting on developmental progress.

9.4 The application of the actions should be reviewed until the Clerk(s) of Presbytery and church or churches are satisfied that the standard of performance is acceptable and likely to be maintained or it is likely that despite action taken, the required performance will not be achieved in ministry to the church or churches. At the final review if it is agreed that the objective may be reached by a short extension period; for example to complete training, then a revised review date should be agreed. The monitoring period will depend upon the particular circumstances of the case.

9.4 In the case of more serious performance problems, or where following the issue of previous advice there has been insufficient improvement, or any improvement has not been maintained, it will be necessary to proceed to Stage Two.

10. Stage Two

10.1 Where, after the agreed or extended period of time, improvement to the standard required has not taken place, the Clerk(s) of Presbyteries and church or churches shall hold a further

formal interview (arranged and held as in Stage 1) with the minister concerned. It is expected that the minister shall make every effort to attend this meeting.

It should be noted that non-attendance by a minister to a properly convened meeting without due cause shall not prevent the meeting from taking place or prevent due deliberation and the taking of such decision as may be necessary.

10.2 The minister should be advised at the interview that, having regard to all the circumstances and evidence available, termination of his/her ministry on the grounds of capability may be recommended. He or she should then be invited to respond.

10.3 Immediately following the interview the Clerk(s) of Presbytery should recommend one of the following options:

- **Candidating** for alternative ministry which may be more suitable;
- **Termination of ministry** with notice or with pay in lieu of notice • Reversion to Stage One or any other mutually agreed alternative.

The decision should be communicated in writing to the minister within 3 working days and relevant correspondence retained by the Clerk(s) of Presbytery for 12 months.

11. Notice to Terminate Ministry

The Clerk(s) of Presbytery will notify the minister, in writing, giving notice to terminate his/her ministry, the reason for the termination, the date on which his/her ministry will end and the right of appeal to the Clerk and the Moderator of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland, whose decision shall be final.

The notice period will be in accordance with the Constitution and Code of Discipline of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland and Call.. Given that the working relationship may have become strained at this point, payment in lieu of notice may be arranged.

12. The Right to be Accompanied — Role of the 'Companion'

12.1 The constructive purpose of the informal part of the procedure is to try to avoid recourse to the formal stages, unless it is necessary to do so.

12.2 In accordance with the legislation, the minister will have a statutory right to be accompanied by a companion of their choice, who shall be acceptable to both parties. This companion may be a ministerial colleague or an accredited representative.

12.3 If the minister's chosen companion is not able to attend the meeting an alternative date should be proposed to the minister. This must be within 5 days of the date arranged for the original meeting.

13. Records

13.1 It is important to keep written records during each part of this process these will be kept confidential, and retained in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

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 ministers in receipt of a formal complaint made may be accompanied at any Grievance Hearing and/or Church Court, by their companion, who may be a ministerial colleague or an accredited representative, if they choose, providing that the same are not party to the complaint made. 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.

Grievance Procedure

1. Who is covered by the procedure?

1.1 This procedure applies to all ministers regardless of length of service, it also applies to all ministry students and licentiates.

1.2 This procedure does not form part of any ministers' Call. It may be amended at any time and the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland may depart from it depending on the circumstances of any case, acting on legal advice.

2. Using this procedure 2.1 Most grievances can be resolved quickly and informally through discussion with the Church Secretary. It is advisable to first seek an informal resolution to any issues of concern. If this does not resolve the problem you should initiate the formal procedure below reasonably promptly. 2.2 Differences of opinions should not be dealt with under this procedure but should rather be resolved through existing church processes and by appropriate church democratic structures, such as Church Committee and/or the Church Session.

3 Step I: written grievance

3.1 You should put your grievance in writing and submit it to the Clerk(s) of the Presbytery in which the minister serves; or if this is inappropriate for any reason, to the Clerk of the General Synod.

3.2 The written grievance should set out the nature of the complaint, including any relevant facts, dates, and names of individuals involved so that the relevant body may investigate it.

4 Step 2: meeting

4.1 The Clerk(s) and Moderator(s) of Presbytery (or Clerk, or Moderator of the General Synod) will appoint a Grievance Investigation Panel of three persons normally within two weeks of receiving your written grievance. A Minister shall be appointed as the Chair of the Panel with two further members not connected with the church in which a grievance has been raised.

4.2 You may bring a companion to the Panel meeting (in accordance with Article 12 of the Employment Relations Order (NI) 1999), who may be a ministerial colleague or accredited representative. You and your companion should make every effort to attend, and be prepared to state your reason for submission of the Official Grievance, providing appropriate supportive evidence.

4.3 If you or your companion cannot attend at the time specified you should let the Chair know as soon as possible and the Chair will try, within reason, to agree an alternative time.

4.4 The Chair may adjourn the meeting if s/he considers that further investigation is necessary, after which the meeting will usually be reconvened.

4.5 The Clerk(s) of your Presbytery will write to you, usually within one week of the final Panel meeting (upon receipt of the Panel Report from the Chair of the Panel) to report the decision of the Panel and notify you of any further action that s/he intends to take to resolve the grievance. The Clerk(s) will also advise you of your right of appeal.

5 Step 3: appeals

5.1 If the grievance has not been resolved to your satisfaction you may appeal in writing to Clerk(s) of the Presbytery or Clerk to the General Synod (as may be appropriate) stating in writing your full grounds of appeal, within one week of the date on which the decision was sent or given to you.

5.2 The Clerk of the Presbytery or Clerk to the General Synod (as may be appropriate) in consultation with the appropriate Moderator will appoint a Grievance Appeals Panel, normally within two weeks of receiving the appeal. This will be dealt with impartially by three persons nominated by the same who have not previously been involved in the case. A Minister shall be appointed as the Chair of the Grievance Appeals Panel. You will have a right to bring a companion.

5.3 The Clerk(s) of Presbytery will confirm the Church's final decision in writing, usually within one week of the appeal hearing (upon receipt of Panel's Report). There is no further right of appeal.

Equal Opportunities Policy

1. Introduction:

The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and full participation for all of its ministers. All people have the right of equal access to all the opportunities provided to ministers, and to those candidating for ministry within the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland. This policy outlines the denomination's commitment to equality among its ministers and ministry candidates. It is our intention to work proactively within our church family to identify and to eliminate all forms of discrimination, wherever and whenever it occurs, and to celebrate God-given diversity within the human family.

2. Scope and Implementation

This policy covers all existing ministers, together with anyone applying for ministry within the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland. It provides protection for individuals of diverse backgrounds. All ministers and church office bearers are expected to become familiar with and to fully comply with this policy and to ensure that all ministers and candidates for ministry are treated with dignity and respect in accordance with these provisions.

3. Opposing Discrimination

The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland opposes all forms discrimination in accordance with law and it is their policy to comply with its duties under the anti-discrimination legislation save as where there is genuine and determining occupational requirement so as to comply with the doctrines of the NSPCI. *See Below*

4. Review of the Policy:

This policy will be reviewed on an 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 practice. The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland further welcomes submission from all stakeholders as to how this policy may be improved.

5. Non-compliance:

Where a minister believes that s/he has been subject to discrimination then s/he should raise the matter with their Clerk of Presbytery, and the Clerk of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland. They may also consult the denomination's Official Grievance Policy, should that be appropriate.

Particulars of Call — Minister of Religion

In the appointment of any minister to charge within the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland the Call issued by the congregation and sustained by the relevant Presbytery, in accordance with the Code of Discipline, shall be the foundation document of appointment.

The following shall be for the clarification of rights and responsibilities arising from that Call, and shall be taken in conjunction with that Call.

- a. The date of appointment and commencement of duties shall be the date of Ordination and/or Installation.
- b. The sum of Stipend shall be initially that set in the Call. This sum shall be reviewed annually.

The Stipend shall be paid monthly in arrears, and shall fall due on the 1st day of the subsequent or earlier by mutual agreement.

c. The payment of expenses shall be as specified in the Call, and may be reviewed and revised by mutual agreement.

The payment of out of pocket expenses shall be as agreed between the minister and the church committee and the congregation.

d. In the event of protracted illness of the minister the congregation shall pay to the minister his/her full Stipend for period not exceeding six months. After that period, if the minister shall remain unable to work because of their illness all entitlement to Stipend shall cease. Thereafter, Statutory Sick Pay may apply.

e. Annual leave/holiday shall be as specified in the Call.

f. Pension arrangements shall be as specified in the Call.

g. The duties of the minister shall be as stated in Section e. of the Service of Ordination and Installation as set forth in the Code of Discipline of General Synod.

To this end the minister shall undertake to apply themselves with faithfulness, integrity, and zeal; and shall devote such hours to the task as may reasonably be required by the demands of their ministry.

h. In the temporal affairs of the congregation the minister shall be accountable to the church committee directly, or through the office of the Church Secretary. In the spiritual affairs of the congregation the minister shall be accountable to the Kirk Session directly, or through the office of the Clerk of Session. In any matter of discipline, brought formally against the minister, the minister shall be accountable to their Presbytery; to which body shall also appertain the right of Appeal against decision of Session or Committee, subject to the Code of Discipline and in accordance with relevant policy and procedure.

i. Termination of the Call and of an individual's ministry within a congregation or congregations shall be subject to the Code of Discipline and in accordance with relevant policy and procedures.

The written acceptance of these terms and of the relevant Call, by the minister-elect and Church Secretary of the appropriate congregation (or congregations) must be in the hands of the Clerk of Presbytery before that Presbytery can proceed to any Service of Ordination or Installation.

For the avoidance of doubt, all ministers in pastoral charge whose Call predates the approval of these terms by General Synod should also proceed to sign-up to the same.

Appendix

The following paragraph was accepted by Synod June 2016 and replaces Item 3 under Equal Opportunities Policy

Resolution 2 Policies and Procedures

That Synod reaffirms the Policies and Procedures adopted in 2013 (subject to annual review).

That Synod affirms and promotes ministry that is open to all (excluding genuine and determining occupational requirements) and hereby states that the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland welcomes applications for Christian ministry from all sections of the community; regardless of age, marital status, gender, gender identity, disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, political opinion, of any individual applicant, or candidate.

Passed by Synod June 2016