



# The Ontario Provincial Synod

## The Anglican Church of Canada

---

### **The Provincial Misconduct Policy TASK FORCE**

#### **Background**

The Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario strives to act in accordance with the core belief that every person is created in the image of God, and therefore should be treated with respect, dignity, and love, regardless of age, race, gender, or socio-economic status. At the same time, we recognize that the sin of abuse still occurs and needs focused attention to safeguard the vulnerable.

In the Anglican Church of Canada, the jurisdiction and authority for the development of conduct policies belongs to dioceses. The role of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario with respect to this area of work is three-fold:

- 1) To ensure that its own policy is clear and effective where the Ecclesiastical Province has jurisdiction,
- 2) To encourage dioceses in the continued development of their own policies and practices by promoting helpful resources.
- 3) Provide opportunity for shared practices and capabilities that may support diocesan policies, procedures and activities.

The TASK FORCE will draft for enactment by the Provincial Council a policy (POLICY) for the initiation and resolution of complaints of sexual misconduct, harassment or other abuse that fall within the jurisdiction of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario. It will therefore apply to such complaints arising from the conduct of:

- 1) lay persons
- 2) ordained persons
- 3) bishops

whose conduct falls within the sole jurisdiction of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario and not within the jurisdiction of any Diocesan policy or Canon or a policy or Canon of any other ecclesiastical jurisdiction within the Anglican Church of Canada.

#### **Objective**

The output of the TASK FORCE will be a draft POLICY which will be presented to Provincial Council. In addition to the proposed POLICY, the TASK FORCE may also provide any other documents, materials, processes or supporting information that it feels is relevant.

The POLICY will not impact or place limitation on the Canons of the Ecclesiastical Province including those that deal with Ecclesiastical Offences which remain in full force and effect.

### **Membership**

The TASK FORCE will consist of Six (6) members, appointed with due regard to diversity by the Metropolitan. It should include:

- A Bishop
- At least one Cleric
- At least one Lay Person
- A Diocesan Chancellor

In addition, the Provincial Prolocutor and the Provincial Executive Officer shall serve as staff support and sit Ex-Officio on the TASK FORCE.

### **Timing**

While it is anticipated that the work of the TASK FORCE will be completed within one year the TASK FORCE may seek an extension if it considers an extension necessary.

### **Guidelines**

The work of the TASK FORCE must be completely transparent. This means without restricting the foregoing that all submissions, filings, correspondence, reports, and the minutes of the TASK FORCE and all related documents will be made available to the public on a timely basis.

The TASK FORCE will keep minutes of its meetings and a record of its work.

The TASK FORCE will have in the course of its work, the right to speak to anyone and to have access to any information it deems appropriate. For example, this would include the Executive Officers of the dioceses of the Ecclesiastical province, or any others that have experience or expertise on any related matter. It should also review any policies or practices which it feels may offer input, guidance or potential best practices.

The TASK FORCE may in its sole discretion retain experts, but will not incur a financial obligation without the prior approval of Provincial Leadership.

The Task Force may seek the advice and counsel of the Archbishop and the Provincial Chancellor at any time. The TASK FORCE will provide a quarterly update to the Provincial Leadership on progress, highlighting any issues or concerns that may be impeding the work.