

Motion # 7

Personal Files for Clergy

Mover: The Rt Rev'd Peter Carrell

Secunder: The Reverend Kofe Havea

That this General Synod/ te Hīnota Whānui 2026:

1. Affirms in the light of the Royal Commission on Abuse the importance of accurate, accessible records of relevant data, correspondence and licensing for its licensed lay and ordained ministers.
2. Acknowledges the complexity of maintaining accurate, accessible records in the light of privacy laws, requirements for the protection of data and upholding of confidentiality about sensitive matters.
3. Requests the General Synod Standing Committee to commission a small working group, which includes at least one legal advisor, to bring a Bill to GSTHW 2028 setting out requirements for this church in respect of accurate, accessible records of relevant data, correspondence and licensing for its licensed lay and ordained ministers.
4. Recommends to the General Synod Standing Committee that the scope of the working group's considerations include but are not limited to the following matters:
 - a. Every person on becoming a licensed minister (lay or ordained) of this church should have a personal file holding information about their ministry appointments, ending of those appointments, findings in relation to formal complaints, as well as contact details.
 - b. Every person (whether or not otherwise a licensed minister) on being accepted for training for ordination should have a personal file holding information about their discernment process, this file being retained by the episcopal unit in which their acceptance for ordination training is made, but transferable to an episcopal unit if that person transfers to another episcopal unit. And this file being the beginning of this person's continuing personal file.
 - c. Such files will be transferred from one episcopal unit to another whenever the minister changes from one episcopal unity to another.
 - d. Each episcopal unit is requested to keep a copy of information in such personal files related to that episcopal unit, along with contact information, for the purpose of responding to any future complaint should that complaint be about ministry while the minister was ministering in that episcopal unit.
 - e. The storage of all personal files (and copies thereof) must meet requirements in civil law for protection of data, privacy and the like, and must meet requirements in church law for archiving of such material.
 - f. Every clergyperson has the right to request a copy of their personal file.
 - g. The minimal and maximal extent of the contents of a personal file, recognising that the minimal extent would include formal correspondence and copies of documents relating to (e.g.) acceptance for ordination training, training fulfilled as a lay or ordained minister, reports made along the way of training and formation

for ministry, issuing of licences, appointments to licensed roles whether stipendiary or non-stipendiary, formal complaints and the outcomes of complaint investigations, while the maximal extent could include all correspondence a bishop receives about a minister, even expressions of concern which (a) may not have become formal complaints (b) may, if investigated, have no substance to them, all notes made by bishops about a minister, and the like.

- h. The extent to which any of the matters herein should be enshrined in legislation or be a matter of policy, and the role of the General Synod Standing Committee in making policy from time to time in respect of requirements for personal files.