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Diocese of Christchurch

Fraud Policy

May 2011

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1. Purpose

- 1.1 To minimise the risk of losses to Diocese of Christchurch and its Parishes and other related Bodies as a result of fraudulent acts, and to provide clear guidance for all employees, committee members, clergy and laity as to the appropriate course of action should fraud be suspected.

2. Applicability

- 2.1 All employees and any parties conducting business with the Diocese of Christchurch, its Parishes and other related Bodies.

3. Policy Statement

- 3.1 Employees, office holders, clergy and laity are required at all times to act honestly and with integrity and to safeguard the organisation's resources. Fraudulent behaviour will not be tolerated. All allegations will be investigated following the process outlined in this policy and will usually be referred to the New Zealand Police.
- 3.2 It is recognised that alleged cases of fraud can affect the rights and reputation of the person(s) implicated. All matters related to the allegation shall remain confidential and all documentation kept secure, except to the extent required by the Police or any investigating authority to fully investigate the matter.
- 3.3 Allegations of fraud will be dealt with by the Diocesan Manager. Allegations against the Diocesan Manager are to be handled by the Bishop.

4. Definition

- 4.1 Fraud is defined as deliberate deception or cheating, intended to gain advantage. The term 'fraud' is used to describe any act, expression, omission, or concealment, calculated to deceive another for advantage.
- 4.2 Fraud includes, but is not limited to:
- Forgery or alteration of documents.
 - Misappropriation of funds, supplies or other assets.
 - Presenting false credentials or qualifications.
 - Unauthorised use, including the destruction or removal of Diocesan or Parish property, equipment, materials or records.
 - Authorising or receiving payment for goods or services not received or performed.
 - Fabrication or falsification of data (e.g. timesheet, leave form or expense form), plagiarism or other dishonest practices.
 - Accepting or offering bribes or inducements.
 - Granting a contract, or engineering the granting of a contract to a third party with a view to direct or indirect personal gain.
 - Disclosing confidential information to a third party.
 - Using information technology equipment to manipulate programmes or data dishonestly, e.g. by altering, substituting or destroying records.

5. Reporting of Suspected Fraud

- 5.1 In the event of suspected fraud, employees must promptly advise the Diocesan Manager, or the Bishop, if the Diocesan Manager is suspected.
- 5.2 An individual who reports a suspicion of fraud in good faith will in no circumstances be threatened, intimidated, or dismissed because he or she acted in accordance with this policy.
- 5.3 The Diocesan Manager will immediately notify the Bishop of the suspected fraud.

6. Investigations

- 6.1 An allegation of fraud involving an employee will be treated in line according to Diocesan Disciplinary Guidelines.
- 6.2 The Diocesan Manager will consult with the Diocesan Finance and Audit Chair or Bishop as appropriate.
- 6.3 Unless considered minor and able to be dealt with through a disciplinary process, all instances of fraud will be referred to the New Zealand Police.
- 6.4 A post investigation assessment will be carried out. Any identified control system weaknesses will be addressed.

7. Recovery of Loss

- 7.1 It is Diocesan policy to pursue the recovery of lost money or other property wherever possible and practicable.

8. Public Relations

- 8.1 Queries from outside the Diocese with respect to any fraud investigation shall be referred to the Diocesan Manager who will immediately refer them to the Bishop and alert the Communications Officer. Staff should not discuss matters under investigation with any party.

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