

**Vexatious Complaints Policy**

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Just as people have the right to complain when they believe that something is wrong, so staff, volunteers and clergy have the right to protection from complaints which are made aggressively, unnecessarily frequently, or without any foundation in fact.

Examples of what might be viewed as vexatious behaviour include:

1. Repeated phone calls, emails, letters or social media posts during or after the complaints process making similar points to those already made.

2. Sending similar complaints to a range of diocesan staff or clergy when the matter is being attended to in line with the policy or when the procedure has been completed.

3. Lodging a series of similar or closely related complaints with the Diocese or other Church bodies.

4. Communication that is rude or personal, or unnecessarily persistent or repetitive.

5. Unwanted and repeated behaviour that causes undue stress to a member of staff, such as unwanted complaints about matters that appear to be made with the express purpose of causing distress.

In the event that the Diocesan Secretary/CEO or Bishop (or person delegated by them to handle a complaint) in consultation with other relevant internal and external parties considers a complainant to be vexatious they will make contact with the complainant and either:

1. Ask the complainant to desist and explain that further contact will be ignored or blocked. OR

 2. Ask the complainant to use the complaints policy and reassure them that the process will be followed explaining that the matter cannot be revived after stage 3 has been completed.

Incidents of actual or alleged vexatious complaint will be reported to the DBF Trustees.

*The Diocesan Secretary/CEO or Bishop reserve the right to contact the Police and share any communication with them that they feel demonstrates that the complainant presents a threat to themselves or to others or threatens a breach of the peace or that any other criminal offence may have been or will be committed.*