

Media and Electronic Communication Policy

(July 2025)



The Waikato Cathedral Church of St Peter
Te whare karakia matua o Pita Tapu ki Waikato

Policy Statement

Communication technology has opened many opportunities for relationship building, managing work, and evangelism. It has also opened more opportunities to make mistakes and to compromise privacy. All social media, other media and electronic communications must be respectful, truthful, fair and careful to protect the privacy of the persons involved.

Scope

The procedures below apply to all clergy, cathedral employees, volunteers in the office, office holders, those leading children and youth ministry or pastoral care, and those leading any other group affiliated with the cathedral.

Procedures to be Followed

1. All communications are to be in accordance with the Diocese of Waikato and Taranaki and the Provincial Codes of Conduct, Ethical Guidelines and Ministry Standards (<https://ministrystandards.org>)
2. Individuals may not represent themselves as cathedral spokespeople. The only person who can speak for the cathedral is the Dean, or someone appointed by the Dean to be a media spokesperson.
3. Persons who have been asked to give media interviews about something related to the cathedral must seek permission from the Dean.
4. Appropriate language, content and behaviour will be maintained.
5. Social media must not be used to disparage the Church, the Diocese or Cathedral or its personnel.
6. Communications sent digitally are not confidential and potentially may be shared or reposted to others without an individual's knowledge or permission. Personal and institutional privacy settings must be applied and regularly reviewed. A clear statement must be included on sites that materials posted are not confidential.
7. Staff or volunteers running activities that involve children and youth must adhere to the Diocesan guidelines on working with children and youth. [Child Protection Policy 2024](#), [Code of Conduct - around children - 2024](#)
8. These guidelines include the use of social media to contact children and youth and their families, whether photographs can be taken or shared, and consents necessary for this.

Contacts between group leaders and youth should only occur in group communication and not privately.

9. Social media groups for children and youth must have an adult administrator who can remove posts or photo tags that they deem inappropriate and may block a user who repeatedly writes inappropriate posts.
10. Civil laws concerning the reporting of suspected child abuse or exploitation of children, youth and vulnerable adults also apply in the virtual world. Use of social media and other digital communication must comply with the law and the privacy legislation.
11. Online gatherings, Bible study or meetings are subject to the same rules and parameters as physical meetings.
12. Personal sites of clergy and diocesan/parish employees should reflect their Christian values. Whilst there is a distinction between personal and professional communication Christianity is a 'whole of life' call. Clergy in particular, through ordination, are called to publicly witness to the call of God and exemplary standards of behaviour.
13. The Cathedral must give permission for use of their logos on social media sites.
14. Complaints about behaviour in relation to social media and electronic communications should be taken to the Dean or Wardens in the first instance and could also be sent to Vestry.
15. Complaints about misconduct by clergy or officeholders should be taken to the Ministry Standards Commission registrar@ministrystandards.org

The Vestry of the Waikato Cathedral Church of St Peter