

# Authorisation of Lay Ministry Ordinance 2015

(Reprinted under the Interpretation Ordinance 1985.)

The Authorisation of Lay Ministry Ordinance 2015 as amended by General Synod – Lay Assistants of Holy Communion Canon 1973 Repeal and Exclusion Ordinance 2019.

### Table of Provisions

Clause

1 ..... Name

2 ..... Interpretation

3 ..... Authority required for certain lay ministry

4 ..... Authorisation of lay ministry

5 ..... Authority may be limited

6 ..... Authority may be revoked

7 ..... Exercise of certain functions by an Assistant Bishop

8 ..... Regulations

9 ..... Authority of lay persons to assist in the service of Holy Communion

10 ..... Other authorities and requirements

11 ..... Transition and repeal

χ χ χ χ χ χ χ χ χ χ χ

### Long Title

An Ordinance to provide for the authorisation of certain lay ministry in the Diocese and for related matters.  
The Synod of the Diocese of Sydney Ordains as follows.

#### 1. Name

This Ordinance is the *Authorisation of Lay Ministry Ordinance 2015*.

#### 2. Interpretation

In this Ordinance –

“church” means –

- (a) a building or part of a building duly consecrated or licensed for the celebration of divine service,
- (b) an associated congregation of a church within the meaning of Schedule 1 of the *Parish Administration Ordinance 2008*, and
- (c) a congregation of a parish within the meaning of Schedule 2 of the *Parish Administration Ordinance 2008*.

“deaconess” means a person who has been admitted to the order of Deaconess described in the *General Synod – Order of Deaconesses Canon 1969 Adopting Ordinance 1970*.

“lay minister” means a lay person appointed as a staff member to assist a minister undertake ministry in a parish or church, whether full-time or part-time or as an employee or volunteer.

“minister” means –

- (a) in relation to a parish or a church of a parish, the rector of the parish,
- (b) in relation to the Cathedral Church of St Andrew, the Dean, and
- (c) in relation to a church which is not a church of a parish, the person licensed to officiate at the church.

“parish” means a parish or provisional parish recognised under the *Parishes Ordinance 1979* or a recognised church or provisional recognised church under the *Recognised Churches Ordinance 2000*.

### **3. Authority required for certain lay ministry**

(1) The minister of a church or parish must not permit a lay person to exercise the office of lay minister or deaconess in the church or parish unless the lay person has been authorised to do so pursuant to this Ordinance.

- (2) The minister of a church must not permit a lay person (including a lay minister or deaconess) to –
- (a) deliver sermons on a regular basis in the church,
  - (b) administer baptisms in the church, or
  - (c) conduct funerals in the church,

unless the lay person has been authorised to do so pursuant to this Ordinance.

### **4. Authorisation of lay ministry**

(1) The Archbishop may, by authority issued to a lay person, authorise the lay person to exercise the office of lay minister or deaconess in any church or parish.

- (2) The Archbishop may authorise a lay person (including a lay minister or deaconess) –
- (a) to undertake, at the request of the minister, one or more of the following ministries in any church –
    - (i) conduct services of public worship,
    - (ii) administer baptisms,
    - (iii) conduct funerals,
    - (iv) deliver sermons, and
    - (v) give expositions on the aims, functions and needs of an organisation, and
  - (b) to perform, under the oversight of the minister, pastoral duties in any parish,

as specified in an authority issued to the lay person.

### **5. Authority may be limited**

An authority issued pursuant to this Ordinance –

- (a) may be limited to a church or to the churches named in the authority or to the parish or parishes named in the authority or may apply to the whole of the Diocese or to any part of the Diocese specified in the authority, and
- (b) may be issued subject to any conditions which are specified in the authority.

### **6. Authority may be revoked**

An authority issued pursuant to this Ordinance may be revoked at any time by the Archbishop.

### **7. Exercise of certain functions by an Assistant Bishop**

The functions under clauses 4 and 5 may be exercised by an Assistant Bishop on behalf of the Archbishop.

### **8. Regulations**

The Archbishop-in-Council may make regulations from time to time concerning –

- (a) the qualifications which a person must possess and the conditions which a person must satisfy before an authority may be issued to that person pursuant to this Ordinance, or
- (b) the manner in which any authority issued pursuant to this Ordinance is to be given and exercised.

### **9. Authority for lay persons to assist in the service of Holy Communion**

A lay person is authorised to assist the minister in the ministering and distribution of the Holy Communion where the following requirements are satisfied –

- (a) the lay person has attained the age of 18 years,
- (b) the lay person has been invited by the minister to provide such assistance,
- (c) the lay person is a communicant member of the Anglican Church of Australia,
- (d) the minister is satisfied concerning the doctrine held by and the character of the lay person,
- (e) the lay person is not the subject of a direction of the Archbishop or an Assistant Bishop that the lay person does not provide such assistance, and
- (f) the lay person is not the subject of an undertaking given under or a suspension or prohibition order issued pursuant to the Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017 or an equivalent ordinance.

## 10. Other authorities and requirements

- (1) Nothing in this Ordinance affects any requirement in relation to the licensing of deaconesses under the *General Synod – Order of Deaconesses Canon 1969 Adopting Ordinance 1970*.
- (2) This Ordinance does not apply to the ministry exercised by a lay person as a Chaplain or Assistant Chaplain of a school.

## 11. Transition and repeal

- (1) A lay person who, immediately before the commencement of this Ordinance, holds an authority issued under the *Deaconesses, Readers and Other Lay Persons Ordinance 1981* continues to hold that authority subject to the terms and conditions on which it was issued and may continue to do any of the things which the person has been authorised to do in that authority. Such an authority is taken to have been issued pursuant to this Ordinance.
- (2) Subject to subclause (1), the *Deaconesses, Readers and Other Lay Persons Ordinance 1981* is repealed.
- (3) A lay minister who, immediately before the commencement of this Ordinance, does not hold an authority required by this Ordinance under the *Deaconesses, Readers and Other Lay Persons Ordinance 1981* to exercise the office of lay minister or undertake any of the ministries of that office, may continue to exercise such office and undertake such ministries without an authority under this Ordinance until –
- (a) in the case of a lay minister appointed as an employee, the end of his or her appointment, and
  - (b) in any other case, 31 December 2016.
- (4) A reference in an ordinance (other than this Ordinance) to the *Deaconesses, Readers and Other Lay Persons Ordinance 1981* or any provision of that ordinance is taken to be a reference to the *Authorisation of Lay Ministry Ordinance 2015* or the corresponding provision of that ordinance as applicable.
- (5) Schedule 1 of the *Parish Administration Ordinance 2008* is amended by omitting rule 5.3(c) and inserting instead –
- “(c) in the case of a lay person, he or she –
    - (i) has been requested to do so by or on behalf of the minister, and
    - (ii) holds a relevant authority issued pursuant to the *Authorisation of Lay Ministry Ordinance 2015* if required.”

---

## Notes

1. The date of assent of this ordinance was 21 October 2015.

## Table of Amendments

Clause 9	Inserted by Ordinance No 44, 2019.
Clause 10	Amended by Ordinance No 44, 2019.

STEVE LUCAS  
**Senior Legal Counsel**

DANIEL GLYNN  
**Diocesan Secretary**

25 August 2022