

# Sample role description: Authorised Pastoral Assistant (APA)

## I INTRODUCTION

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### I.1 ABOUT THE ROLE DESCRIPTION

Every APA needs to have a role description. It helps set mutual expectations, give support, establish appropriate boundaries, and ensure good safeguarding practice.

### I.2 DEVELOPING THE ROLE DESCRIPTION

There are three stages in developing the role description.

- 1) When a person explores becoming an APA with their incumbent or other minister. At this stage, the outline will be sketchy, with the core description of the calling (as set out in the APA safeguarding policy).
- 2) When the incumbent commissions the APA at the end of their training, the APA may have more ideas of what they can offer, and the incumbent a clearer sense of how they will contribute to the benefice's ministry team.
- 3) An incumbent or other minister is encouraged to carry out an annual review with the APA (see the outline review form), as part of their ongoing pastoral support of the APA, and as they exercise their oversight over the ministry and mission of the benefice.

Every three years the APA role should be fully reviewed, and the parish priest, PCC and APA complete a reauthorisation process, concurrent with renewing the DBS check and refreshing the safeguarding training.

### I.3 ROLE DESCRIPTION TEMPLATE

The following outline role description is intended to be suggestive rather than exhaustive. It needs tailoring both to the context of the parish, and the gifts and time commitment of the specific APA. Please adapt it as appropriate to your situation.

## 2 ROLE DESCRIPTION

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### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

All ministry in the diocese is carried out under the authority and oversight of the Bishop, and within the framework established by canon law. In the parish, lay and ordained ministers are expected to work collaboratively and collegially under the authority and oversight of the incumbent, with whom the bishop has shared their responsibility for the "cure of souls" in the parish (that is, in modern English, care for all people residing in the parish, that they might be enabled to live well, in good relationship with God and one another). Each APA receives authorisation from the Bishop of Norwich and is commissioned by the incumbent, with the support of the congregation expressed

through the PCC and is responsible to their incumbent. That responsibility in a larger parish may be delegated in part to another minister.

As part of that commitment to the well-being of all people, the Diocese of Norwich is committed to the safeguarding of all children, young people and vulnerable adults. Therefore, APAs will be expected to complete all necessary safeguarding checks and relevant training to ensure they are appropriately equipped in this area.

## **2.2 ROLE: AUTHORISED PASTORAL ASSISTANT (APA)**

An APA is

- to provide pastoral care on behalf of the church to those who are in need of spiritual, physical, emotional or psychological support.
- to offer encouragement, advice, and practical support to those with temporary or long-term illnesses, disabilities or needs.

## **2.3 RESPONSIBLE TO**

The incumbent.

*Another minister may also be named here if, for example, in a larger benefice there is a team or group of people engaged in pastoral work, and another lay or ordained minister leads that team.*

## **2.4 KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

*The incumbent and APA should add to and delete from this list as appropriate, at the point of selection, at the point of authorisation, and at the point of review.*

- Offering bereavement support
- Organising a parish prayer support scheme
- Organising or being part of a parish visiting team or programme
- Organising or being part of lunch clubs, coffee mornings etc. offering pastoral support and friendship
- Visiting people in hospital
- Transporting people to and from church, lunch clubs, medical appointments etc.
- Visiting care homes
- Visiting those who are sick and housebound

## **2.5 LEVEL OF SAFEGUARDING CHECK REQUIRED**

Working with vulnerable adults as a Pastoral Worker requires an Enhanced DBS check with barring. Basic Awareness, Foundation, Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse and Modern Slavery online modules are also required.

## **2.6 ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRAINING AND SUPPORT**

*This list will need adapting according to context.*

- APA initial training will be provided in conjunction with the diocese.
- Safeguarding training will be provided by the diocese.
- The incumbent will meet with the APA every term/month/two months.
- The APA will attend meetings of the ministry team for support and collaborative working in ministry and mission.

## **2.7 FRAMEWORK FOR AUTHORISATION AND REVIEW**

- Authorisation by the Bishop follows the completion of APA training, relevant Safeguarding training, DBS clearance and is for three years.
- A review of ministry is encouraged after three years.
- The enhanced DBS check is required every three years.
- Safeguarding training is required every three years.