

Safe Church Report

This report was prepared on July 19, 2024. The number of completed forms and training in the Safe Church Program shift constantly. Every year we ask our parishes to hold in-person training opportunities during the month of September. The deadline to submit updated or new training, criminal record checks and policy forms is September 30, 2024. The numbers in this report will change between October to November 2024 as the Synod Office records and files these submissions. Therefore, by the time Synod 2024 convenes, the percentage of completion for all parishes, clergy and employees will increase.

Overall Numbers:

No. of people in need of training in the diocese:	1593
No. of documents to process:	4779
No. of complete documents:	3482
No. of outstanding documents to be submitted:	1297
Percentage complete for diocese:	72.86%

Clergy:

We have 107 members of Clergy who are active in our diocese and require Safe Church Training. The percentage of completion for this group is currently at 89.4%. There are currently 16 members of clergy who are either being onboarded and working on their safe church requirements or who are needing to complete or update their safe church requirements. The Synod Office is responsible for tracking and informing clergy when their training needs updating or completing.

Lay Employees:

We have 70 lay employees active in our diocese that require Safe Church Training. The percentage of completion for this group is currently at 77.6%. There are currently 19 employees who are either being onboarded and working on their safe church requirements or who are needing to complete or update their safe church requirements. The majority are still needing to complete their safe church requirements. Making sure all safe church requirements are completed is often a step missed at the parish level when onboarding an employee. To prevent this moving forward, new employees may not be added to payroll until their safe church requirements are met. Currently the parish is responsible for informing an employee that they need to complete all three safe church requirements and Synod Office receives, files and tracks employee completion.

Parish Volunteers:

We have 46 parishes with a total of 1,416 volunteers active throughout our diocese. These volunteers all require safe church training. The Synod Office collects and tracks parish completion, but each parish has a designated Safe Church Liaison who contacts volunteers and assists with training and form completion. Ultimately it is the Incumbent's or the Wardens' responsibility to ensure all volunteers have completed their safe church requirements. Currently, most parishes report back expressing concern that some volunteers do not take completing these requirements seriously, put off the training or refuse to complete the training.

Individual Parish Completion Record:

Parish	Percentage Complete
St Christopher & St Aidan, Lake Cowichan	88%
Christ Church, Gabriola	82.60%
St Michael & All Angels, Chemainus	41%
St John the Baptist, Duncan	68.50%
St John the Baptist, Cobble Hill	61.60%
St Paul, Nanaimo	77%
St Mary, Nanoose Bay	92.80%
St Philip, Cedar	85.80%
St Peter, Quamichan	84.50%
St Philip by-the-Sea, Lantzville	97.60%
Christ Church Cathedral, Victoria	52.38%
St Dunstan, Gordon Head	65.30%
St George the Martyr, Cadboro Bay	73.10%
St Mary the Virgin, Oak Bay	74.50%
St Matthias, Victoria	60.40%
St John the Divine, Victoria	54.70%
St Barnabas, Victoria	59.10%
St Luke, Cedar Hill	81.10%
St Peter & St Paul, Esquimalt	98.90%
St Philip, Oak Bay	61.90%
Two Saints Ministry	100%
St Anne & St Edmund, Parksville	75.90%
St Columba, Tofino	0%
Christ Church, Alert Bay	100%
St Peter, Campbell River	88.80%
St John the Divine, Courtenay	91.60%
St John Gualbert, Port McNeill	14.81%
St Peter, Comox	76%
St Columba, Port Hardy	100%
Trinity Anglican + Lutheran, Port Alberni	84.70%
St Mark, Qualicum	58%
Holy Trinity, Sooke	81%
Parish of Central Saanich	66.66%
Parish of Pender & Saturna Islands	91.60%
Holy Trinity, North Saanich	94.25%
Church of the Advent, Colwood	56.14%
St Margaret of Scotland, Galiano Island	56.41%
St Mary Magdalene, Mayne Island	65.07%
Parish of Salt Spring Island	94.32%
St Andrew, Sidney	78%
St Mary of the Incarnation, Metchosin	63%
St Michael & All Angels, Royal Oak	75%

Primary Challenges for the Safe Church Program:

Out of the three groups we track in the Safe Church Program (clergy, lay employees and parish volunteers), the parish volunteers have proved the most challenging. There are a few reasons for this:

- They are our largest group to train and track.
- Volunteers are often invited to volunteer before the safe church requirements are met.
- New Volunteers are sometimes not reported to the Safe Church Liaison.
- There is a general opinion amongst some parish volunteers that the safe church requirements are onerous which we are working to change.
- Some volunteers feel very strongly about not completing the safe church requirements and because some parishes are short on volunteers and don't want to lose any, they hesitate to inform them that they cannot volunteer without the training.
- Some volunteers express a high level of frustration when discussing the safe church requirements which is occasionally poorly placed on the safe church liaison or the synod office employee managing the program. This creates a stressful situation where training is often delayed.
- Not every parish closely monitors their safe church training records and ensures they are 100% complete every September. This creates a low accumulation of training and forms over the course of the year making it impossible for the parish to ever be 100% complete.

We face few compliance issues with our Clergy and Lay Employees as the Safe Church Program is a condition of employment. We have also created a condition that all safe church requirements must be met with these two groups prior to them being placed on payroll. The one exception is a grace period of three weeks for the online Praesidium Safe Church modules to be completed. We do not expect employees to complete mandatory training prior to being paid for office hours. However, a criminal record check must be requested from the police station, a signed policy form must be submitted and a Praesidium account must be created prior to their first day of work. With our Clergy, the Synod Office is responsible for all communication and compliance. The higher percentage of compliance is due to this. With our Lay Employees, the lower percentage of competition is largely due to parishes not making sure the safe church requirements are met or updating pre-existing employees properly.

Thank you:

This program owes its success to the incredible work of our safe church liaisons. These remarkable volunteers track volunteers requiring safe church training in their parishes and provide training opportunities through out the year. They field many questions and engage in difficult conversations that help keep our parishes safe and educated. We are grateful indeed for their service and support.

This report was created by:

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