Sample role description: ALM Pastoral Worker

# Introduction

## About the role description

Every ALM needs to have a role description. This is not fixed in stone, but changes over time. It is not meant to be tightly descriptive, but to help set mutual expectations, give support, establish appropriate boundaries, and ensure good safeguarding practice.

**For the Pastoral Worker, the role description needs to provide the evidence** **for the Parish Safeguarding Officer that the role needs an Enhanced DBS check.**

## Developing the role description

There are three stages in developing the role description.

1. When a person explores becoming an ALM 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 ALM safeguarding policy, fleshed out by a few bullet points that are part of discerning the appropriate ALM specialism. These bullet points will then provide evidence to the Parish Safeguarding Officer that the role needs an Enhanced DBS check.
2. When the incumbent authorises the ALM at the end of their training. At this point, the ALM 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. At the point of review. An incumbent or other minister is encouraged to carry out an annual review with their ALM (see the outline review form on the website), as part of their ongoing pastoral support of the ALM, and as they exercise their oversight over the ministry and mission of the benefice.

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

## Role description template

The outline role description overleaf 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 ALM. Please adapt it as appropriate to your situation.

# Role Description

## Introduction

All ministry in the diocese is caried 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 ALM receives authorisation from their 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 Worcester is committed to the safeguarding of all children, young people and vulnerable adults. Therefore, ALMs will be expected to complete all necessary safeguarding checks and relevant training to ensure they are appropriately equipped in this area.

## Role: ALM Pastoral Worker

An ALM Pastoral Worker 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.

## 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.*

## Key responsibilities

*The incumbent and ALM 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.*

* Leading or sharing in baptism preparation
* Leading or sharing in marriage preparation
* Offering bereavement support
* Organising a parish prayer support scheme
* Organizing 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

## Level of safeguarding check required

Working with vulnerable adults as a Pastoral Worker requires an Enhanced DBS check.

## Arrangements for training and support

*This list will need adapting according to context.*

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

## Framework for authorisation and review

* Authorisation by the incumbent follows the completion of initial training and is for three years
* A review of ministry is encouraged annually, and a full review is required after three years.
* The enhanced DBS check is required every three years.
* Safeguarding training is required every three years.
* The ALM is encouraged to attend at least one diocesan or other training opportunity a year.