



Baptist Churches
of NSW & ACT

Services and Support

Provided by the NSW and ACT Baptist Association
and Available to Churches whose Affiliation Ceases

Scope

The supports and services outlined in this document are relevant to a church whose affiliation is removed by Assembly due to its inability to support the Association's Position Statement on Marriage. They are also relevant for a church if it withdraws voluntarily from affiliation with the Association due to the Association's position on marriage, whether or not it supports that position.

Where a support is not able to continue to be provided the reason for this is noted below.

General Principles

These supports will be available to a church on the same basis as affiliated churches either for a period of two years from the date its affiliation ceases, or on an ongoing basis, as outlined below. For those supports that are provided for two years, this is to assist the church in its transition process. After this, services and advice would continue to be available to the church on an at-cost basis, at the discretion of the Association. Any publicly available resources of the Association would continue to be available for the church's use.

Access to Baptist Insurance Services (BIS)	Yes, ongoing. BIS has confirmed that it is able to continue to insure the church into the future, with the concurrence of the Director of Ministries (DOM). The DOM has indicated to BIS, with the approval of Assembly Council, that insurance should continue to be extended to a church in this situation.
Ongoing access to property held on trust for the church with the Property Trust	Yes, ongoing, as long as the church remains Baptist. External advice has confirmed this is the case. A summary of the advice will be available soon. The detailed advice will also be available to affiliated churches on request to the Secretary of Assembly Council.
Auspicing of grants on behalf of an unincorporated church by the Property Trust	Yes, ongoing. This remains available to any church whose property is held on trust by the Property Trust
Ongoing participation in the Association's Participating Group of the National Redress	Yes, ongoing.

Scheme for Survivors of Institutional Child Sexual Abuse	AC has passed a resolution that, subject to approval by AC at the time, a church will continue to be able to be part of the Association's Redress Scheme Participating Group if it was a member of the group at the time they were disaffiliated and continue to pay their annual redress scheme levy.
Access to financial accounting services through Balance Ministry Services	Yes, ongoing.
General financial and administrative advice from the Association's Operations Team	Yes, for a period of two years.
Access to Safe Church resources and training	Yes, for a period of two years then on a non-affiliated basis. For the first 2 years after affiliation ceases access to Safe Church resources and training will be provided on the same basis as affiliated churches. Thereafter, access on the same basis as other non-affiliated churches. (There are many churches not affiliated with the Association that access these resources.)
Authorisation of SRE teachers	No. It is a government requirement that the Association is only able to authorise teachers who are teaching under the oversight of a church that is part of the Association.

In addition, the following services and supports are already available to churches broadly, regardless of their affiliation status with the Association, so will continue to be available for the church on the same basis.

- Access to loans from **Baptist Financial Services**
- Access to the **GodSpace** SRE resources for purchase and use
- Partnership with/support of **other Baptist agencies**, such as Baptist Mission Australia and Baptist World Aid Australia

The Association has provided clarifying information on the GST implications of no longer being an affiliated church, which can be found [\[HERE\]](#).

The Association will provide clarifying information on matters to be considered when employing a pastor who is not accredited or recognised.

Generalised human resources (HR) information will also be available soon on request for both churches and pastors around their respective responsibilities if the pastor is employed as an accredited minister but then either resigns that accreditation or has that accreditation removed.

Assembly Council

February 2024



Baptist Churches
of NSW & ACT

Services and Supports

Provided by the NSW and ACT Baptist Association and
Available to Pastors whose Accreditation or Recognition Ceases

The following supports are available to a pastor whose accreditation/recognition is removed by Assembly Council due to their inability to support the Association's Position Statement on Marriage. They are also available to a pastor who resigns their accreditation or recognition due to the Association's position on marriage, whether or not they support that position.

HR Information

The Association will make available on request generalised human resources (HR) information for both churches and pastors around their respective responsibilities if the pastor is employed as an accredited minister but then either resigns that accreditation or has that accreditation removed. This information will be available soon.

Long Service Leave Portability

The Association's Finance, Risk and Audit Committee has confirmed that the Association's Pastoral Long Service Leave (LSL) Fund can continue to manage Long Service Leave entitlements of pastors who are no longer accredited but are continuing in active ministry. The LSL Fund already manages funds on behalf of non-accredited pastors.

Transfer of Accreditation

The Association, through its Affirmation Oversight Team, has for many years had in place processes for assisting in the transfer of a minister's accreditation to other Baptist associations or other denominations, on the request of the minister. Initial discussions have already taken place with the Open Baptists Network regarding a similar process. This will be able to be finalised once an Open Baptist accreditation process is in place, which at this stage is anticipated to be in early-2025. It is noted that in the short term, due to government regulations, this will not be able to include marriage licences.

External Pastoral Support

Pastors will be able to access support through their existing relationships with a professional supervisor or mentor. However, the Association is also making available additional support through Bridges Counselling if support beyond what is possible within these relationships is required. The Association has entered into an agreement with Bridges Counselling to provide up to three sessions with a therapist, with the option for up to three further sessions upon the recommendation of that therapist. Sessions can be in person or online.

Eligibility includes previously accredited or recognised pastors, for a period of six months after their accreditation or recognition has ceased, and/or their spouses.

Persons who wish to access this support can contact Bridges Counselling directly on 9683 1444. On this initial call the centre manager will ask a few questions to ensure that the person is eligible and refer the person to the most suitable therapist for their needs.

Bridges Counselling will not report the identity of anyone accessing this service to the Association and will maintain strict confidentiality in all sessions.

The Association will continue to address other matters that may impact pastors in these situations as they arise.

Assembly Council

February 2024