

**A BILL FOR THE  
GENERAL SYNOD PRESENCE (AMENDMENT) CANON 2025**

**EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM**

**GENERAL OVERVIEW**

This bill is for a canon amend the General Synod Presence Canon 2022 allow a person unable to attend in person by reason of their disability or medical condition to participate instead by videoconference.

An amendment to the Bill for the General Synod Presence Canon was moved and passed in Committee at the 18<sup>th</sup> General Synod, but then removed to allow the Standing Committee to give the matter more careful consideration. The General Synod required that the amendment proposed by the Standing Committee be presented to a Special General Synod at least 12 months before the 19<sup>th</sup> session of General Synod.

**NOTES ON CLAUSES**

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| Clause 1 | provides for the title of the canon.   |
| Clause 2 | adds to the grounds on which under section 4(1) of the General Synod Presence Canon a member of General Synod can seek a certificate that they are prevented from or will face significant and onerous impediments in travelling to or from or being at a session of the General Synod: the additional ground is “by reason of their disability or serious medical condition”.   |
| Clause 3 | amends section 4(2)(a) of the General Synod Presence Canon regarding the obligations of the General Synod where there is a hybrid meeting. The current Canon requires the General Secretary to provide “the means of participating”. This could potentially lead to claims for IT equipment or adequate connectivity. A proposed amendment to require the General Secretary to provide “the opportunity to participate”, meaning that the obligation is to only put in place the videoconferencing facilities and associated technologies (such as electronic voting). |

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The General Synod prescribes as follows:

**Title**

1. This canon is the General Synod Presence (Amendment) Canon 2025.

**Grounds of application to include disability or medical condition**

2. In section 4(1)(c) of the General Synod Presence Canon after the words “a State or a Territory” insert “or by reason of their disability or serious medical condition”.

**Obligations of General Secretary**

3. In section 4(2)(a) of the General Synod Presence Canon for “the means of participating” substitute “the opportunity to participate”.
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