



**CHANCELLOR CHURCH**

# Church Safe Strategy

WORKING WITH VULNERABLE  
PEOPLE

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## Purpose

Under the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000, organisations regulated by the Blue Card System are legislatively required to develop, implement and maintain a child and youth risk management strategy.

The purpose of Chancellor Church's Church Safe Strategy (Strategy) for working with vulnerable people is to help identify potential risks of harm to vulnerable people and to implement strategies to minimise these risks.

This Strategy provides a clear and consistent framework to guide and support the stakeholders who work with Chancellor Church or who participate in Chancellor Church ministries and activities. The Strategy also cultivates a culture of safety so that all people, involved in or attending the Church are safe and free to grow in their relationship with God and others.

This Strategy is a framework that is considered by Chancellor Church to be a culmination of policy, procedure, guiding principles and resources that fulfill the obligations of the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 and reflect findings from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

## Definitions

**Blue Card** means the card issued by Blue Card Services after an application is received, verifying suitability for working with children. A positive notice always accompanies a Blue Card approval and accordingly where the term 'Blue Card' is used in this Strategy, it also refers to the positive notice issued by Blue Card Services.

**Blue Card Representative** is the Church Safe Coordinator in conjunction appointed Pastor/Elder

**Child** is an individual under 18 years of age (section 8 Child Protection Act 1999)

**Church** means **Chancellor Church** and includes the associated ministries and activities of the Church.

**Church Leader/s/ship** refers to persons appointed by the Church according to its constitution as responsible and accountable to the Church members for the governance of the Church.

**Contact Person/s** means the Church Safe Coordinator and/or Pastor who will be the responsible for managing blue cards and exemption cards.

**Disqualified Person** a person is a Disqualified Person if they are:

- convicted of a disqualifying offence
- a reportable offender under the [Child Protection \(Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order\) Act 2004](#)
- the subject of an offender prohibition order under the [Child Protection \(Offender Prohibition Order\) Act 2008](#)
- prohibited by a court from applying for or holding a blue card or
- the subject of a sexual offender order under the [Dangerous Prisoners \(Sexual Offenders\) Act 2003](#)

**Disqualifying Offence** is an offence categorised as a disqualifying offence under the Act if it is an offence:

- against a provision of an Act detailed in the list of disqualifying offences
- under a law of another jurisdiction that, if it had been committed in Queensland, would have constituted an offence of a kind detailed in the list of disqualifying offences
- of counselling or procuring the commission of an offence of a kind mentioned in the list of disqualifying offences
- of attempting, or of conspiring, to commit an offence of a kind detailed in the list of disqualifying offences

- that has, as an element, an intention to commit an offence of a kind mentioned in the list of disqualifying offences, or
- that, at the time it was committed, was an offence of a kind mentioned in the list of disqualifying offences.

[View the list of disqualifying offences here](#)

**Harm** is defined as 'any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing'. (section 9 Child Protection Act 1999).

**Parent** means custodial parent or lawful guardian of a child.

**Person of concern** means a person who:

- has pleaded guilty to, been convicted of, or has admitted to a sexual criminal offence.
- has been found to have sexually offended, arising through due diligence checks related to recruitment (screening).
- is currently charged with a sexual offence.
- has been the subject of an allegation of a sexual offence and this was not appropriately investigated.
- has been found to have received an adverse risk assessment arising from sexual misconduct.
- is deemed to be a risk to the safety of vulnerable people because of an adverse risk assessment relating to sexual misconduct.
- exhibits constant wandering across other people's sexual boundaries.

A **Restricted Person** is a person who:

- has been issued a negative notice, or
- has a suspended blue card, or
- is a *disqualified person*, or
- has been charged with a *disqualifying offence* which has not been finalised.

**Restricted Employment** refers to particular exemptions which allow a person to work with children without a blue card, such as:

- a volunteer parent;
- a volunteer who is under 18;
- paid or unpaid staff who work in child regulated employment for not more than 7 days in a calendar year; or
- a consumer at a child-related service outlet where they also carry out work at the outlet.

**Church Safe Coordinator** means the person appointed by the Church Leaders to manage the practical implementation of this Strategy under the guidance and direction of the Church Leaders. If there is no designated person in the Church, this person means by default means the Lead Pastor or other appointed Pastor/Elder in the Church. Church leadership will work in conjunction with the Church Safe Coordinator and ensure, due to the often unpaid nature of the role, that specified Church Safe Coordinator responsibilities are divided fairly and appropriately where necessary amongst leadership

**Staff and volunteers** refer to both paid employees and volunteers who have contact with vulnerable people (including contractors, visitors or agents) and the Church Leadership team who make decisions about vulnerable people.

**Vulnerable people/persons** means a child/ren under the age of 18 years **or** an individual aged 18 years and above who is or may be unable to take care of themselves, or is unable to protect themselves against harm or exploitation by reason of age, illness, trauma or disability, or any other reason.

**Work/working** refers to any activity or ministry of the Church whereby individuals have contact with vulnerable people, whether in an employed or voluntary capacity.

## Scope

This Strategy applies to the following persons:

- The Church Leadership which consists of the Church council and pastoral team.
- Any person engaged by the Church to provide a service to the Church, whether paid or voluntarily, and who while providing their service will be in contact with vulnerable people. This includes staff, volunteers, contractors and visitors (who are in direct contact with vulnerable people).
- All members of the Church Leadership team who make decisions about vulnerable people.
- Vulnerable People and Parents.
- Trainee students doing placement in the Church as part of their studies with an education provider who will be in contact with vulnerable people.

## Commitment

### Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (Royal Commission) was established in response to allegations of sexual abuse of children in organisations that had been emerging in Australia for many years (Royal Commission Final Report 2017).

At the end of the 5-year enquiry, the Commissioners had listened to the personal stories of over 8,000 survivors, read over 1,000 written accounts and reviewed allegations of child sexual abuse in more than 4,000 institutions.

The Royal Commission found that organisations had failed to keep children and young people safe in their care.

*“the sexual abuse of children has occurred in almost every type of institution where children reside or attend for educational, recreational, sporting, religious or cultural activities” (Royal Commission Final Report 2017).*

Some common findings that contributed to this included:

- Poor practices
- Inadequate governance structures
- Failures to record and report complaints, or understating the seriousness of complaints
- A culture where the best interests of children were not a priority.

The Royal Commission Final Report 2017 emphasised that:

*“protecting children and promoting their safety is everyone’s business. It is a national priority that requires a national response. Everyone – the Australian Government and state and territory governments, sectors and institutions, communities, families and individuals – has a role to play in protecting children in institutions.”*

The Royal Commission resulted in 409 recommendations to make organisations safer for children and that all organisations that have any contact with children must be compliant with 10 National Child Safe Standards (10 National Principles).

Final Report recommendations from the Royal Commission included ones specific to religious institutes in Australia.

*These recommendations are listed in the Related Documents Section of this Strategy.*

## Statement of Commitment

It is **Chancellor Church**'s policy to respect everyone as unique individuals created by God, and to give special attention to the care, protection and wellbeing of vulnerable people. Staff and Volunteers of **Chancellor Church** will behave towards them in a manner that resembles and represents Christ's attitude and approach, providing environments and ministries that promote their spiritual, social and physical safety and personal growth and development.

To this end **Chancellor Church** will promote a culture of safety throughout the Church, constantly communicating and reinforcing our commitment across all aspects of **Chancellor Church**'s ministries and activities.

Queensland Baptists and **Chancellor Church** recognise the [10 National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#). They provide a nationally consistent approach to embedding child safe cultures within organisations that engage with children, and act as a vehicle to give effect to all Royal Commission recommendations related to child safe standards. Therefore, **Chancellor Church** will have regard to these as guiding principles for cultivating a safe Church environment and safe activities.



## 8 Minimum Requirements in QLD

To comply with The Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (the Act) and the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2011, the Strategy includes the 8 minimum requirements.

<b>COMMITMENT</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. A STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO THE SAFETY AND WELLBEING OF CHILDREN AND THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM HARM.</li><li>2. A CODE OF CONDUCT FOR INTERACTING WITH CHILDREN.</li></ol>
<b>CAPABILITY</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>3. WRITTEN PROCEDURES FOR RECRUITING, SELECTING, TRAINING AND MANAGING STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS.</li></ol>
<b>CONCERNS</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>4. POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING DISCLOSURES OF HARM, INCLUDING REPORTING GUIDELINES.</li><li>5. A PLAN FOR MANAGING BREACHES OF YOUR RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY.</li><li>6. RISK MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR HIGH RISK ACTIVITIES AND SPECIAL EVENTS</li></ol>
<b>CONSISTENCY</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>7. POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES FOR MANAGING COMPLIANCE WITH THE BLUE CARD SYSTEM.</li><li>8. STRATEGIES FOR COMMUNICATION &amp; SUPPORT.</li></ol>

## Code of Conduct

Chancellor Church applies a Code of Conduct to define expectations relating to standards of behaviour for all staff and volunteers working with vulnerable people. It provides clear guidelines about what is expected and the consequences of not meeting these expectations.

The Code of Conduct will be completed:

- during the application process for working at Chancellor Church.
- by any guests or visitors participating in ministries/activities involving contact with vulnerable people, to ensure laws relating to Restricted Persons and Restricted Employment are upheld.
- by Church Leaders, staff and volunteers on an annual basis.

The Code of Conduct addresses the following:

- People, Property and Language
- Behaviour, Supervision and Communication
- Physical Contact
- Pastoral Care
- Pornography and Sexuality
- Workplace Health & Safety
- Blue Cards
- Restricted Persons and Restricted Employment
- Breaches
- Illegal drugs and Alcohol

*The full Code of Conduct is in the Related Documents section of this Strategy.*

## Recruitment, Selection, Training & Management

### Recruitment

**Chancellor Church** recognises the importance of recruiting staff and volunteers who have skills and attributes to fulfill the roles involved in working with vulnerable people. To ensure this, all such roles will require an application form as an initial screening tool. Any such roles that involve paid employment will be further defined by a position description and selection criteria.

When recruiting for roles involved in working with vulnerable people, applicants will be made aware (via the application form) that they are going to be subject to blue card screening, referee checks, identification verification, and that **Chancellor Church** will request that the applicant disclose any information relevant to their eligibility to engage in activities involving vulnerable people, including if they are a Restricted Person.

**Chancellor Church** will include information regarding Restricted Persons and Restricted Employment laws in position descriptions, application forms and any advertisements for roles working with vulnerable people.

Applicants for roles involved in working with vulnerable people at **Chancellor Church** will be provided a copy of this Strategy when they receive an application form. This is to ensure they are fully informed of the requirements of this Strategy prior to submitting an application.

An application for working with vulnerable people will have the following criteria assessed:

1. Churches that the applicant has attended (or has been involved or connected with) in the past five (5) years are contacted to ascertain whether there have been any alleged or actual incidents of harm involving the applicant.
2. The applicant has signed and returned the Code of Conduct.
3. The Church Safe Coordinator has completed an interview to ascertain the suitability of the applicant.
4. In the case of a volunteer, the person has attended the church regularly for a minimum of six (6) months unless exceptional circumstances apply.
5. Where certain roles require Registration by Queensland Baptists, the applicant must also successfully pass the application process under those Registration Guidelines.
6. Where a position description (for paid employment) has stipulated additional educational, skill or other requirements, the applicant is also required to satisfy these criteria before commencement.
7. The applicant's Blue Card has been sighted and details recoded.

8. If the applicant has not obtained their Blue Card through the Church, the Church leaders must also arrange the completion of a *Link an Applicant/Cardholder to this Organisation*
9. Referees checks have been completed.

*An Application for Working with Vulnerable People for use with volunteers is in the Related Documents section of this Strategy.*

## Selection

Chancellor Church sees the selection stage as opportunity for identifying the most suitable applicants for working with vulnerable people. The selection process will be supported by interviewing, referee checking and a probationary period.

## Interview

The Church Safe Coordinator will use the interview process to explore the background of an applicant, their work history, skills and values, and will evaluate their suitability to work with vulnerable people at the Church.

During the interview process, appropriate and informative questions will help the selection, and the responses provided by the applicant will demonstrate how well they will uphold Chancellor Church's values. The interview questions will explore the applicant's capacity to contribute to a safe and supportive environment for vulnerable people. As, Chancellor Church has a responsibility to provide a safe and supportive environment for vulnerable people, the Church Safe Coordinator will question any inconsistencies in an applicant's work history.

*An Interview for Applicants for Working with Vulnerable People is in the Related Documents section of this Strategy to be used as a guide.*

## Referee Checks

The Church Safe Coordinator will use referee checks as an important step to validate information of an applicant. Referee checks will be completed, preferably with most recent place or work (staff or volunteer) to verify the:

- identity of prospective employee
- accuracy of the details of previous employment, and
- suitability of individual to work with vulnerable people.

If the reference is written, the Church Safe Coordinator will contact the referee to confirm authenticity.

*A Referee Check is located in the Related Documents section of this Strategy to use as a guide.*

## Probationary Period

Probationary periods will be used to allow for monitoring how a person is settling into their role of working with vulnerable people. The length of a probationary period will be determined by the Church Safe Coordinator.

For paid employees the probationary process will involve setting goals and identifying any training required. For volunteer roles this will be a less formal process of “checking in” to get feedback and see how things are going. If the Church Safe Coordinator feels it necessary, they will move to the more formal process used of paid employees, to provide further support to the volunteer.

## Training

The Church Safe Coordinator is responsible for establishing an arrangement for the appropriate supervision, support and training of staff and volunteers in contact with vulnerable people.

The Church Safe Coordinator must report to the Church Leaders and the annual Church members' meeting about the supervision, support and training of staff and volunteers.

The Church Safe Coordinator will in consultation with staff and volunteers establish a training plan, setting out the type of training that will be provided, the regularity of the training and the expectations that the Church has for attendance and participation.

Staff and volunteers must receive induction/training and development on an annual basis and as required.

Training will include such things as:

- Application of this Strategy
- Risk Assessments (identifying, assessing and minimising risks)
- Reporting disclosures or suspicions of harm, including reporting guidelines
- Laws pertaining to Restricted Persons
- Code of Conduct
- Identifying sexual grooming
- Indicators of abuse
- First Aid and Emergency Response
- Best practice
- What constitutes a breach of this Strategy
- Any other relevant Church policies and procedures

The Church Safe Coordinator will maintain a calendar of training and a register of who has completed what training.

## Induction

Staff and volunteers will be inducted into their role before commencing by:

- Reviewing the Strategy (and seeking any clarification required at interview or any time after as it arises)
- Completing the Code of Conduct
- Completing any required training

## Management

It is the responsibility of **Chancellor Church** to ensure management procedures are in place to support and encourage safe and supportive environments for vulnerable people. As such the Church will ensure that management processes are consistent, fair and supportive.

To assist **Chancellor Church** in ensuring the ministries and activities offered reflect safe programs and safe environments for vulnerable people, it will continually promote and demonstrate respect for the rights and expectations of vulnerable people, parents and carers.

## Disclosures or Suspicion of Harm

### *Important notes:*

1. *The application of the Child Protection Act 1999 pertains to **children** and while this Strategy is a tool for managing risks that relate to vulnerable people (not just children), this section will reference “child or children” as we preserve the intent of this legislation.*
2. *Under the [Criminal Code \(Child Sexual Offences Reform\) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2020](#), failure to report a child sexual offence committed in relation to a child is a criminal offence, effective 5 July 2021. As such the process on reporting in this regard is different to responding to and reporting on other disclosures/suspicions of harm (detailed in [Managing and Responding to a Disclosure of Suspicion of Harm](#)).*

Children can only be protected from harm if it is reported and dealt with quickly and effectively. Therefore, **Chancellor Church** outlines in this Strategy procedures to ensure staff and volunteers respond as quickly as possible to a disclosure or suspicion of harm.

### Defining harm

Harm is defined as ‘any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child’s physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing’. Harm can be caused by physical, psychological, or emotional abuse or neglect; or sexual abuse or exploitation (section 9 of the Child Protection Act 1999).

Considerations when forming a reasonable suspicion about harm to a child include:

- whether there are detrimental effects on the child’s body or the psychological state or emotional state
  - that are evident to the person, or
  - that the person considers are likely to become evident in the future, and
- in relation to any detrimental effects mentioned above
  - their nature and severity, and
  - the likelihood that they will continue, and
- the child’s age (section 13C of the Child Protection Act 1999).

It is also important to remember that harm can be caused by a single act or omission or a series of acts or omissions.

## Identifying Harm

The below is not a complete list of the types of abuse and resulting harm that may be experienced by children, however it is to be used as a predictive tool for potential signs of harm. Each child's experience is different and depends on a range of factors, including the child's age, the nature of harm, how long the abuse has been occurring, their relationship to the abuser, and their support networks.

<b>TYPES OF ABUSE</b> <i>Actions/behaviours by perpetrator</i>	<b>RESULTING HARM</b> <i>Impact experienced by the child</i>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Physical abuse</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hitting</li> <li>• Shaking</li> <li>• Burning/scalding</li> <li>• Biting</li> <li>• Causing bruise or fractures by excessive discipline</li> <li>• Poisoning</li> <li>• Giving children alcohol, illegal drugs or inappropriate medication</li> <li>• Domestic and family violence</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Physical</b> <i>Refers to the body</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bruising</li> <li>• Fractures</li> <li>• Internal injuries</li> <li>• Burns</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Psychological or Emotional abuse</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scapegoating</li> <li>• Persistent rejection or hostility</li> <li>• Constant yelling, insults or criticism</li> <li>• Cultural affronts</li> <li>• Teasing/bullying/cyberbullying</li> <li>• Domestic and family violence</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Psychological</b> <i>Refers to the mind and cognitive processes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning and developmental delays</li> <li>• Impaired self-image</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Neglect</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not giving a child sufficient food, housing, clothing, enough sleep, hygienic living conditions, health care and adequate supervision</li> <li>• Leaving children unattended</li> <li>• Children missing school</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Emotional</b> <i>Refers to the ability to express emotions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depression</li> <li>• Hypervigilance</li> <li>• Poor self esteem</li> <li>• Self harm</li> <li>• Fear/anxiety</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Sexual abuse or exploitation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kissing or holding a child in a sexual manner</li> <li>• Exposing a sexual body part to a child</li> <li>• Exposing children to sexual acts or pornography</li> <li>• Making obscene phone calls or remarks to a child</li> <li>• Having sexual relations with a child or young person under 16 years of age</li> </ul>	

### **GENERAL INDICATORS OF CHILD ABUSE**

Some general indicators of child abuse include:

- showing wariness and distrust of adults
- rocking, sucking or biting excessively
- bedwetting or soiling
- demanding or aggressive behaviour
- sleeping difficulties, often being tired and falling asleep
- low self-esteem
- difficulty relating to adults and peers
- abusing alcohol or drugs
- being seemingly accident prone
- having broken bones or unexplained bruising, burns or welts in different stages of healing
- being unable to explain an injury, or providing explanations that are inconsistent, vague or unbelievable
- feeling suicidal or attempting suicide
- having difficulty concentrating
- being withdrawn or overly obedient
- being reluctant to go home
- creating stories, poems or artwork about abuse.

### **GENERAL INDICATORS OF NEGLECT**

Some indicators of neglect include:

- malnutrition, begging, stealing or hoarding food
- poor hygiene, matted hair, dirty skin or body odour
- unattended physical or medical problems
- comments from a child that no one is home to provide care
- being constantly tired
- frequent lateness or absence from school
- inappropriate clothing, especially inadequate clothing in winter
- frequent illness, infections or sores
- being left unsupervised for long periods.

### **Disclosure of Harm**

A disclosure of harm occurs when someone, including a child, tells you about harm that has happened, is happening, or is likely to happen to a child.

Disclosures of harm may start with:

- 'I think I saw...'
- 'Somebody told me that...'
- 'Just think you should know...'

- 'I'm not sure what I want you to do, but...'

It is important to act quickly and in the best interests of the child after a disclosure of harm is received, irrespective of the alleged source of harm.

## Suspicion of Harm

A suspicion of harm is when someone has a reasonable suspicion that a child has suffered, is suffering, or is at an unacceptable risk of suffering, significant harm. This includes circumstances which relate to an unborn child who may be in need of protection after he or she is born. A child who has been, or may be experiencing, abuse may show behavioural, emotional or physical signs of stress and abuse.

There may also be other circumstances where there is concern for a child's welfare but it does not reach the threshold to be considered a disclosure or suspicion of harm.

**Chancellor Church** has a duty of care to follow up any suspicions of harm or potential risk of harm to children in our care. We do this by observing and recording the actions of children who might be at risk and reporting the concerns to the relevant authority.

A suspicion of harm exists if:

- a child tells you they have been harmed
- someone else, for example another child, a parent, or an employee, tells you that harm has occurred or is likely to occur
- a child tells you they know someone who has been harmed (it is possible that they may be referring to themselves)
- you are concerned at significant changes in the behaviour of a child, or the presence of new unexplained and suspicious injuries, or
- the harm is witnessed

In relation to suspicion of harm, staff and volunteers working with children at **Chancellor Church** will:

- remain alert to any warning signs or indicators
- pay close attention to changes in the child's behaviour, ideas, feelings and the words they use
- make written notes of observations in a non-judgemental and accurate manner
- assure a child that they can come to talk when they need to, and listen to them and believe them when they do, and
- follow **Chancellor Church's** process for reporting a disclosure or suspicion of harm.

## Managing and Recording a Disclosure or Suspicion of Harm

### Reporting a Disclosure or Suspicion of Harm

Mandatory Reporting - child sexual offence committed in relation to a child.

With proclamation of the [Criminal Code \(Child Sexual Offences Reform\) and Other legislation Amendment Act 2020](#), section [229BC Failure to report a child sexual offence committed in relation to a child](#) becomes applicable to **Chancellor Church**'s ministries and activities for children/vulnerable people in regards to reporting. *(NB: for the purpose of understanding offences under this section of the Act, a child is defined as under 16 years of age **or** a person with an impairment of the mind).*

Under the provisions of this Act, **it is an offence** not to report a belief (including disclosure or suspicion) of an offence of a sexual nature committed in relation to a child. This in effect mandates reporting of child sexual offences for all adults, and so by default includes **all staff and volunteers** engaged in **Chancellor Church**'s ministries and activities for children/vulnerable people.

Furthermore, failure to report is an offence even if the information was gained during a **religious confession**.

The Act requires the report be made to the Police as soon as reasonably practicable after the belief is (or ought reasonably to have been) formed, that the offence has been committed.

For the avoidance of doubt, staff and volunteers working with children at **Chancellor Church** who believe on reasonable grounds that a child sexual offence is being or has been committed against a child by another adult **are to report to the Police** as soon as reasonably practicable. In addition, they are to liaise with the Church Safe Coordinator for support and guidance in recording the reporting process, particularly if a breach of this Strategy has also occurred.

### Mandatory Reporting – harm (other than child sexual offence)

The Child Protection Act 1999 requires certain professionals, referred to as 'mandatory reporters', to make a report to Child Safety, if they form a reasonable suspicion that a child has suffered, is suffering or is at an unacceptable risk of suffering significant harm.

Under the Child Protection Act 1999, mandatory reporters are:

- teachers
- doctors
- registered nurses

- police officers with child protection responsibilities
- a person performing a child advocate function under the Public Guardian Act 2014
- early childhood education and care professionals, from 1 July 2017.

These individuals MUST report to Child Safety and should also report to Child Safety a reasonable suspicion if an unborn child may be in need of protection where the harm or risk of harm relates to any other type of abuse or neglect under s13A of the Child Protection Act 1999.

Non - Mandatory Reporting (excludes child sexual offence committed in relation to a child).

Child protection is everybody's responsibility, and every person SHOULD report to Child Safety if that person forms a reasonable suspicion that a child (including an unborn child) has suffered, is suffering, or is at unacceptable risk of suffering significant harm AND does not have a parent able and willing to protect them from the harm.

Any person is lawfully entitled to make a report if they are concerned for a child's welfare, even if they are not required to do so as a mandatory reporter. Anyone making a voluntary (non-mandated) report is protected with regard to confidentiality and immunity from legal liability.

**Staff and volunteers working with children at Chancellor Church who receive a disclosure or have a suspicion of harm (other than child sexual offence) are to liaise directly with the Church Safe Coordinator who will guide them through and manage the reporting process.**

Responding to a disclosure or Suspicion of Harm (other than in response to an offence of a sexual nature committed in relation to a child).

Receiving a Disclosure of Harm

- remain calm and listen attentively, actively and non-judgementally.
- ensure there is a private place to talk.
- encourage the person to talk in their own words and ensure just enough open-ended questions are asked to act protectively (e.g. 'Can you tell me what happened?'...or 'Can you tell me more about that?'). Don't ask leading questions which tend to suggest an answer. Ensure the person is advised that the disclosure cannot remain a secret and it is necessary to tell someone in order to get help.
- reassure the person they have done the right thing by telling you.
- **advise the child that you need to tell someone else who can help the child.**
- do not attempt to investigate or mediate an outcome
- consider if additional barriers exist such as if the child:

- identifies as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- is culturally and linguistically diverse
- has disabilities
- follow this Strategy's procedure for reporting a disclosure of harm.

The Church Safe Coordinator will consider whether there are requirements to report matters to the Queensland Police Service or Child Safety, or consider what support services could be offered to the family if the concern does not meet the relevant threshold to make a report. This determination will involve implementing the recommended 3 step process for assessing a disclosure or suspicion of harm.

### Assessing a Disclosure or Suspicion of Harm

*Step 1 – Considering whether the disclosure or suspicion needs to be reported to the Queensland Police Service*

**If an individual (including staff, volunteer and/or the Church Safe Coordinator) believes a child is in immediate danger or in a life-threatening situation, they should immediately contact the Queensland Police Service by dialling 000.**

Queensland Police Service has a number of child protection and investigation units across Queensland. To contact the Queensland Police Service the nearest Police District Communication Centre can be located following this link [QLD Police - Contact Us](#)

*Step 2 - Considering whether the disclosure or reasonable suspicion of harm needs to be reported to Child Safety.*

### How to determine if there is significant harm?

Section 13C of the Child Protection Act 1999 provides guidance when forming a reasonable suspicion about whether a child has suffered significant harm, is suffering significant harm, or is at an unacceptable risk of suffering significant harm. The matters the Church Safe Coordinator will consider include:

- whether there are detrimental effects on the child's body or psychological or emotional state:
  - that are evident to the person, or
  - that the person considers are likely to become evident in the future, and
- in relation to any detrimental effects to the child the reporter may consider:
  - their nature and severity, and
  - the likelihood that they will continue, and
- the child's age.

The consideration of these matters may be informed by an observation of the child, other knowledge about the child or any other relevant knowledge, training or experience that the person may have.

### **How to determine if there is a parent willing and able to protect the vulnerable person?**

A parent may be willing to protect a child, but not have capacity to do so and therefore they are not considered 'able'. This may include parents suffering from a severe mental health condition or physical illness/injury.

Alternatively, a parent may have the capacity to protect a child (i.e. they may be able), but may choose not to do so (i.e. they are not willing). This may include a parent continuing a relationship with a person who is sexually abusing their child.

In some circumstances, a parent may be both not able and not willing to protect the child from harm.

In some cases, the circumstances in which the harm occurred will be so serious that it can be presumed there is no parent able or willing to protect the child.

If there is considered to be at least one parent both 'able' and 'willing' to protect the child, the child is considered to not be in 'need of protection'.

### **What information which must be provided to Child Safety?**

Under section 13G(2) of the Child Protection Act 1999, the written report about a 'reportable suspicion' must contain the following details:

- the basis on which the person has formed the reportable suspicion, and
- the information prescribed by regulation, to the extent of the person's knowledge.

### *Step 3 - Consider whether referral is required to other support services, including Family and Child Connect*

Concerns for a vulnerable person that do not amount to a reasonable suspicion of harm will be considered in terms of what support services could be offered to the family. This may include contacting Family and Child Connect who can provide information and advice about connecting families with support services and the circumstances in which a referral can and should be made to one of these services.

**A mandatory reporter can refer a family without their consent, but others require the consent of the family to make a referral.**

The criteria for Family and Child Connect service to work with the family is:

- the referred family has a child from unborn to 18 years of age, and

- the child is not currently in need of protection, and
- without support the child, young person and family are at risk of entering or re-entering the statutory child protection system, and
- the family would benefit from access to intensive and specialist support services, and
- the family has multiple and complex needs.

The [Family and Child Connect](#) website provides useful materials, including Training resources in relation to family support services, which can assist you further.

### Procedure for Recording and Reporting a Disclosure or Suspicion of Harm

The person receiving a disclosure or who have a suspicion of harm, is able to report this directly to the relevant authorities. However staff and volunteers working with children at **Chancellor Church** who receive a disclosure or have a suspicion of harm are asked to liaise directly with the Church Safe Coordinator who will guide them through and manage the reporting process. It is important that the person who receives a disclosure or is reporting a suspicion of harm is involved in the reporting process because:

- the integrity of the information is retained when the person receiving the disclosure is the person reporting the matter to the authorities.
- information is not accidentally mishandled in the internal reporting procedures, prior to the matter being reported to the authorities, and
- where there is immediate risk of harm to a child, all staff or volunteers are aware they can act immediately to protect that child and contact the authorities.

In all cases where harm is disclosed or suspected, the best interests of the child will be paramount, and **Chancellor Church's** response will be clear and transparent to those affected.

When recording and reporting a disclosure or a suspicion of harm, the following will occur:

1. Document the disclosure/suspicion clearly and accurately, including a detailed description of:
  - the relevant dates, times, locations and who was present
  - exactly what the person disclosing said, using "I said," "they said," statements
  - the questions you asked
  - any comments you made, and
  - your actions following the disclosure

- Care must be taken to record information and evidence in the words of the child to assist with the accurate presentation of the information or evidence.
2. Follow the steps for Assessing the Disclosure of Suspicion of Harm
  3. Consider restrictions in relation to privacy obligations, making sure to keep information confidential, only including necessary people in the report handling process. The Church Safe Coordinator will ensure that information included in the report is properly stored either physically and/or electronically and that accessibility to the data is correctly managed.
  4. Gain clear guidance and advice from the Queensland Police Service or Child Safety as to:
    - a. who should tell the child or young person's parents or carers about the disclosure and the action taken.
    - b. who can give ongoing help and trained support to the child and family.
  5. If the disclosure or suspicion of harm relates to a Registered Minister of Queensland Baptists, then the Church Safe Coordinator or Church Leaders will also inform either the QB Church Safe Officer or the Director of Pastoral Services for Queensland Baptists.
  6. If the disclosure or suspicion of harm relates to a staff or volunteer then the Church Safe Coordinator or Church Leaders will immediately stand down that person from any involvement in Church ministries/activities pending an investigation from the report, and also notify Blue Card Services

*A Record of a Disclosure of Harm and a Record of Suspicion of Harm are located in the Related Documents section of this Strategy.*

### Child Safety Contact Information

Child Safety Services can be contacted as follows:

- During normal business hours - contact the Regional Intake Service

#### Regional Intake Service

- After hours and on weekends - contact the Child Safety After Hours Service Centre on 1800 177 135 or (07) 3235 9999. The service operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

If unsure who to call, or for assistance in locating the nearest Child Safety Service Centre, contact Child Safety Services' Enquiries Unit on 1800 811 810. Child Safety Service Centres have professionally trained child protection staff members who are skilled in dealing with information about harm or risk of harm to children.

*A person making a report is protected from liability under the Child Protection Act 1999 from civil or criminal legal actions and is not considered to have broken any code of conduct or ethics.*

### Reviewing Reporting Procedure

Chancellor Church will undertake a review of the procedures following a disclosure or suspicion of harm being actioned to:

- consider the application of the procedure and whether there are any changes necessary, for example, whether they are suitable for:
  - responding to a child or young person when a disclosure is made
  - protecting children and young people from harm, and
  - assisting involved parties within your organisation, and
- identify any additional training requirements.

The review must not interfere with court processes, and it may be a necessary to seek legal advice in this instance. During the review, Chancellor Church will record what worked well and what may need to be improved upon. If new procedures and/or are required, information regarding the changes will be provided to all stakeholders.

### Persons of Concern

There may be instances where behaviour of an individual is observed that is of a concern to ensuring the safety of others. Chancellor Church will seriously consider implementing the **Australian Baptist Response** to Persons of Concern in these instances. If so, this process would be employed:

*Information on the Australian Baptist Response in regards to Persons of Concern is located in the Related Documents section of this Strategy.*

- even if the person of concern is not engaged as a staff or volunteer in working with vulnerable people.
- if a person who is attending or interested in attending Chancellor Church:
  - discloses that they have committed a sexual offence
  - in the course of completing due diligence checks for recruitment they disclose they have committed a past sexual offence
  - if the church is or becomes aware that a person has had an allegation of past or current sexual offence
  - is deemed to be a risk to the safety of vulnerable people because of an adverse risk (for example, exhibiting wandering across other people's sexual boundaries)

*Information on Persons of Concern and Individual Accountability & Safety Agreements is located in the Related Documents section of this Strategy.*

## Managing Breaches of The Church Safe Strategy

### What is a breach?

A breach is any action or inaction by individual captured in the Scope, that fails to comply with any part of the strategy.

### Who must comply?

All persons/roles identified in the Scope of this Strategy must comply.

### Responsibilities and Delegations

The Church Safe Coordinator will be responsible for managing breaches of this Strategy. If the Church Safe Coordinator is unavailable or is in breach themselves, the Church Leadership will manage the breach and may engage the QB Safe Church Officer.

### Types of Breaches

There may be different types of breaches of this Strategy and the consequences determined by **Chancellor Church** will vary accordingly.

Depending on the severity of the breach and the level of risk that results will determine the consequence. Consequences will range from additional training, supervision/probationary periods, stand down, reporting to relevant authorities and permanent removal from ministries and activities and/or the Church.

### Breach Procedure

Where the breach does NOT relate to a disclosure or suspicion of harm a Breach Incident Form will be completed. This process will identify details of the breach, outcomes and follow up.

Appropriate confidentiality will be maintained to protect privacy.

All breaches will be recorded in the Breach Register and reported to the relevant authority as applicable including the Queensland Police Service, Child Safety and/or Blue Card Services.

*A Breach Incident Form and Breach Register template is located in the Related Documents section of this Strategy.*

## Risk Management Plans for High Risk Activities & Special Events

A high risk activity or special event, due to their nature, will require extra planning to ensure that appropriate control measures are implemented to manage the identified risks.

**Chancellor Church** recognises that in order for a vulnerable person to suffer harm, there must be an opportunity for harm to arise. These opportunities can be reduced by engaging in forward planning to identify risks and implement strategies that reduce the possibility of being harmed during high risk activities and special events.

The Church Safe Coordinator and Church Leadership will lead in the determination of whether an activity or event is deemed high risk. Such criteria to be considered will include (but not limited to) if the activity/event:

- involves the participation of volunteers or people who are external to **Chancellor Church**
- involves additional participant numbers than would ordinarily be provided for
- is to take place at an external venue or destination
- has a large amount of people and/or hazards (e.g. involving water hazards such as ponds, lakes or pools), and/or
- is to take place overnight or for a lengthy period of time.

There may be other criteria that the Church Safe Coordinator or Church Leadership identify that requires the activity or event to be managed as a high risk.

### Risk Management Process

Adapted from the Standards Australia's AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009 Risk Management - Principles and Guidelines, **Chancellor Church** will apply a six step process in the development of an effective plan for high risk events and activities:

1. Describe the activity
2. Identify the risks
3. Analyse the risks
4. Evaluate the risks
5. Manage the risks and reassess, and
6. Review

*Tools for implementing the risk management process is located in the Related Documents section of this Strategy.*

## Compliance with Requirements of the Blue Card System

This Strategy ensures Chancellor Church is compliant with the Blue Card System requirements and demonstrates our committed to maintaining a safe and supportive environment for vulnerable people. Chancellor Church is committed to ensuring the Strategy remains compliant, current and effective in identifying and minimising risks of harm to vulnerable people. As such, an annual review will be completed by the Church Safe Coordinator in collaboration with all stakeholders, with consideration given to:

- whether processes and procedures were followed
- whether any incidents relating to vulnerable people's risk management issues occurred
- the actual process used to manage any incidents
- the effectiveness of processes and procedures in preventing or minimising harm to vulnerable people, and
- the content and frequency of training in relation to the Strategy.

Reviews of this Strategy will be documented by the Church Safe Coordinator using the Church Safe Strategy Annual Review Form *located in the Related Documents section of this Strategy.*

## Restricted Persons & Restricted Employment

From 31 August 2020, an employer cannot employ or continue to employ a restricted person in restricted employment.

The maximum penalty is \$26,690 (200 penalty units) or 2 years in prison. Penalties will also apply to individuals.

Chancellor Church has a responsibility to ensure that all staff and volunteers working with vulnerable people, including those in Restricted Employment are not a Restricted Person. Chancellor Church must also ensure anyone beginning to work or volunteer in Restricted Employment is not a Restricted Person, before that person begins working or volunteering with children within the Church.

The definition of Restricted Employment captures scenarios that could commonly arise in Chancellor Church setting, specifically a volunteer parent, a volunteer who is under 18, or a staff or volunteer who do not work more than 7 days in a calendar year. As such, any Staff or Volunteer (as per the definition and scope of this Strategy) working in these capacities will be required to complete the Code of Conduct.

To fulfill obligations relating to Restricted Persons and Restricted Employment, the Code of Conduct will be completed:

- at the implementation of this Strategy; and
- during the application process for working at Chancellor Church (including for parents who wish to volunteer as their child participates); and
- on an annual basis thereafter

If at any time Chancellor Church becomes aware that a person is a Restricted Person, that person will be immediately stood down and will not be permitted to continue working. Chancellor Church will liaise with Blue Card Services and the QB Safe Church Officer regarding any further action that may be required or if a Response to a Person of Concern process needs to be undertaken.

If at any time Chancellor Church becomes aware of a breach to the Restricted Person & Restricted Employment laws, the Church Safe Coordinator will liaise with the Church leadership in reporting the breach to Blue Card Services and the Queensland Police Service. Chancellor Church will also liaise with the QB Safe Church Officer regarding any further action that may be required.

## Blue Card Screening Requirements

### Persons Requiring a Blue Card

All Church staff and volunteers must hold valid and current Blue Cards to attend or participate in any church activities that will bring them into contact with vulnerable persons. Exceptions to this strictly relate to a volunteer parent, a volunteer who is under 18, or a staff or volunteer who do not work more than 7 days in a calendar year (see Restricted Persons & Restricted Employment for more information and requirements).

### Disqualified Persons and Disqualifying Offences

The blue card system stops certain people from holding or applying for a blue card such as:

- People convicted of disqualifying offences
- Current negative notice holders
- People convicted of serious offences as they can only hold a blue card in exceptional circumstances.

*More information regarding Disqualified Persons and Disqualifying Offences is located in the Related Documents section of this Strategy.*

### No Card No Start

No Card, No Start means that all staff and volunteers must have a blue card (paid employees can no longer start pending an application) before they can work with vulnerable people.

### Nominated Contact Person/s

The Church Safe Coordinator and appointed Staff will be the **Contact Person/s** responsible for managing blue cards and exemption cards for **Chancellor Church**. Each blue card or exemption card application form for a paid employee or volunteer has a space in the "Organisation details" section for a "Contact Person". This is who Blue Card Services will send all notifications to and this is the only people who Blue Card Services can discuss a person's Blue Card status with unless additional authorisation is provided. The Contact person for Blue Card,

### Managing Blue Card Applications

To manage **Chancellor Church's** obligations, the Contact Person may use the online [Organisation Portal](#) to manage blue card records.

### *Linking Blue Cards*

The Contact Person must ensure a Blue Card belongs to the card holder and link them to **Chancellor Church** before engaging them in work. This ensures the Church is kept up to date about a card holder's status.

When a new applicant is progressed and appointed to work with vulnerable people the Contact Person must check the card holder's identity. This will be completed by sighting identification before linking the card holder to **Chancellor Church**. Blue Cards can be linked by submitting the link form or via the Organisation Portal. Blue Cards can also be validated online.

When a card holder leaves **Chancellor Church** the Contact Person will notify Blue Card Services by completing a Delink a Person form or via the Organisation Portal.

All staff and volunteers engaged by **Chancellor Church** must be linked (NB: card holders can be linked to more than one organisation).

### *Renewals*

As long as an individual submits their renewal application before their current card expires, they can continue to work - even if their new Blue Card has not been issued by the time their previous card expires.

The Contact Person will use the Organisation Portal to check whether a card holder has applied to renew their card or will contact Blue Cards Services on 1800 113 611 to determine whether a card holder has applied to renew their card.

### *Frequency Test*

An individual does not need a blue card if their work is not more than 7 days in a calendar year. If it is more than 7 days, a blue card is needed.

For this test, a 'day' includes a full day or part of a day (e.g. 2 hours of work on 1 day is considered to be a day). A 'calendar year' covers the period from 1 January to 31 December.

The new frequency test only applies to volunteers, paid employees and students doing practical placements for their course. It does not apply to an individual who is either:

- a restricted person
- a business operator.

### *Exemption Cards*

Police officers with the Queensland Police Service and teachers registered with the Queensland College of Teachers apply for exemption cards, not blue cards. From 31 August 2020, exemption cards have expiry dates and are valid for three years.

Exemption cards expire if not renewed. Existing exemption card holders whose cards do not have an expiry date have until 31 August 2023 to renew their card or it will expire.

Exemption card applicants are able to start work as soon as they apply online or submit their application (i.e. No Card no Start does not apply) AND have been linked to **Chancellor Church**.

### *Police Information*

Blue Card Services will notify the Contact Person of any change in an individual's police information, when appropriate. It is no longer a requirement for **Chancellor Church** to notify Blue Card Services of any changes in police information that the Church becomes aware of.

### **Managing High Risk Individuals**

The Church Safe Coordinator will stand down any staff or volunteer from duties immediately if they:

- i. receive a negative notice or is a known disqualified person.
- ii. have their blue card or exemption card cancelled or suspended.
- iii. have their blue card application withdrawn.
- iv. receive a notification in relation to a serious change in criminal history.

### **Blue Card Register**

The Church Safe Coordinator for **Chancellor Church** must maintain a register of all staff and volunteers engaged to work with vulnerable people. This may be maintained in hard copy or electronically and must be made available if requested by Blue Card Services.

The Blue Card Register will be maintained to include up to date information on:

- whether or not the person requires a blue/exemption card (if not, why not – e.g. an exemption applies under the Act)
- the type of application/blue card (e.g. paid or volunteer) or exemption card
- when the person applied and/or the date of issue of the positive notice and blue/exemption card
- the blue card/exemption card number and the expiry date of the blue card, and
- the renewal date.

*A link to a sample register is located in the Related Documents section of this Strategy.*

The Church Safe Coordinator will ensure that appropriate and confidential records in relation to the following are maintained:

- whether a negative notice has been issued
- any change in status to a blue/exemption card or exemption card (such as a change in police information, or the cancellation or suspension of a blue/exemption card)
- where there is a change in police information
- where an employee leaves **Chancellor Church** and the date Blue Card Services were informed, and
- any change to a staff or volunteer's personal information, including the date Blue Card Services were informed (NB it is an offence for any staff or volunteer to fail to notify Blue Card Services on the appropriate form of any change in personal details within 14 days).

## Communication & Support

### Communication

**Chancellor Church** recognises this Strategy is most effective when it is communicated to all stakeholders. If parents/carers, staff and volunteers and vulnerable people are actively involved and aware they are more likely to accept, support and implement the Strategy. This is aimed at strengthening a culture of safety.

The Church Safe Coordinator and church leadership will:

- ensure that all stakeholders are aware of responsibilities and understand what is acceptable behaviour for interacting with vulnerable people.
- enable individuals to feel comfortable addressing issues of concern
- highlight the importance of **Chancellor Church's** commitment to protecting the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable people in our environment, and
- reduce the likelihood of breaches of this Strategy.

This will be achieved through an ongoing commitment promoting safety by:

- training both annually and as required
- use of **Chancellor Church's** website
- induction of staff and volunteers
- enrolment process for families into programs/ministries/activities
- annual review of this Strategy.

Child protection and a culture of safety is everyone's responsibility and **Chancellor Church** is committed to considering and implementing new ways of communicating this.

### Support

**Chancellor Church** recognises that staff and volunteers may require support to deal with issues such as behaviour management, stress, conflict, bullying including cyberbullying, child protection concerns, breaches of this Strategy and dealing with disclosures or suspicions of harm. As such the Church Safe Coordinator will ensure support is available.

The types of support that will be made available include:

- risk management guidance from the Church's workplace health and safety officer/s.
- annual training and specific training as required.
- partnering with external support and counselling services.
- implementing mentoring programs.
- mediation or other alternative conflict resolution techniques.

## Relevant Information

## The Royal Commission Recommendations to all Religious Institutions in Australia

### **Recommendation 16.31**

All institutions that provide activities or services of any kind, under the auspices of a particular religious denomination or faith, through which adults have contact with children, should implement the 10 Child Safe Standards identified by the Royal Commission.

### **Recommendation 16.32**

Religious organisations should adopt the Royal Commission's 10 Child Safe Standards as nationally mandated standards for each of their affiliated institutions.

### **Recommendation 16.33**

Religious organisations should drive a consistent approach to the implementation of the Royal Commission's 10 Child Safe Standards in each of their affiliated institutions.

### **Recommendation 16.34**

Religious organisations should work closely with relevant state and territory oversight bodies to support the implementation of and compliance with the Royal Commission's 10 Child Safe Standards in each of their affiliated institutions.

### **Recommendation 16.35**

Religious institutions in highly regulated sectors, such as schools and out-of-home care service providers, should report their compliance with the Royal Commission's 10 Child Safe Standards, as monitored by the relevant sector regulator, to the religious organisation to which they are affiliated.

### **Recommendation 16.36**

Consistent with Child Safe Standard 1, each religious institution in Australia should ensure that its religious leaders are provided with leadership training both pre- and post-appointment, including in relation to the promotion of child safety.

### **Recommendation 16.37**

Consistent with Child Safe Standard 1, leaders of religious institutions should ensure that there are mechanisms through which they receive advice from individuals with relevant professional expertise on all matters relating to child sexual abuse and child safety. This should include in relation to prevention, policies and procedures and complaint handling. These mechanisms should facilitate advice from people with a variety of professional backgrounds and include lay men and women.

**Recommendation 16.38**

Consistent with Child Safe Standard 1, each religious institution should ensure that religious leaders are accountable to an appropriate authority or body, such as a board of management or council, for the decisions they make with respect to child safety.

**Recommendation 16.39**

Consistent with Child Safe Standard 1, each religious institution should have a policy relating to the management of actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may arise in relation to allegations of child sexual abuse. The policy should cover all individuals who have a role in responding to complaints of child sexual abuse.

**Recommendation 16.40**

Consistent with Child Safe Standard 2, wherever a religious institution has children in its care, those children should be provided with age-appropriate prevention education that aims to increase their knowledge of child sexual abuse and build practical skills to assist in strengthening self-protective skills and strategies. Prevention education in religious institutions should specifically address the power and status of people in religious ministry and educate children that no one has a right to invade their privacy and make them feel unsafe.

**Recommendation 16.41**

Consistent with Child Safe Standard 3, each religious institution should make provision for family and community involvement by publishing all policies relevant to child safety on its website, providing opportunities for comment on its approach to child safety, and seeking periodic feedback about the effectiveness of its approach to child safety.

**Recommendation 16.42**

Consistent with Child Safe Standard 5, each religious institution should require that candidates for religious ministry undergo external psychological testing, including psychosexual assessment, for the purposes of determining their suitability to be a person in religious ministry and to undertake work involving children.

**Recommendation 16.43**

Each religious institution should ensure that candidates for religious ministry undertake minimum training on child safety and related matters, including training that:

- a) equips candidates with an understanding of the Royal Commission's 10 Child Safe Standards
- b) educates candidates on:

- I. professional responsibility and boundaries, ethics in ministry and child safety
- II. policies regarding appropriate responses to allegations or complaints of child sexual abuse, and how to implement these policies
- III. how to work with children, including childhood development
- IV. identifying and understanding the nature, indicators and impacts of child sexual abuse.

**Recommendation 16.44**

Consistent with Child Safe Standard 5, each religious institution should ensure that all people in religious or pastoral ministry, including religious leaders, are subject to effective management and oversight and undertake annual performance appraisals.

**Recommendation 16.45**

Consistent with Child Safe Standard 5, each religious institution should ensure that all people in religious or pastoral ministry, including religious leaders, have professional supervision with a trained professional or pastoral supervisor who has a degree of independence from the institution within which the person is in ministry.

**Recommendation 16.46**

Religious institutions which receive people from overseas to work in religious or pastoral ministry, or otherwise within their institution, should have targeted programs for the screening, initial training and professional supervision and development of those people. These programs should include material covering professional responsibility and boundaries, ethics in ministry and child safety.

**Recommendation 16.47**

Consistent with Child Safe Standard 7, each religious institution should require that all people in religious or pastoral ministry, including religious leaders, undertake regular training on the institution's child safe policies and procedures. They should also be provided with opportunities for external training on best practice approaches to child safety.

**Recommendation 16.48**

Religious institutions which have a rite of religious confession for children should implement a policy that requires the rite only be conducted in an open space within the clear line of sight of another adult. The policy should specify that, if another adult is not available, the rite of religious confession for the child should not be performed.

**Recommendation 16.49**

Codes of conduct in religious institutions should explicitly and equally apply to people in religious ministry and to lay people.

**Recommendation 16.50**

Consistent with Child Safe Standard 7, each religious institution should require all people in religious ministry, leaders, members of boards, councils and other governing bodies, employees, relevant contractors and volunteers to undergo initial and periodic training on its code of conduct. This training should include:

- a) what kinds of allegations or complaints relating to child sexual abuse should be reported and to whom.
- b) identifying inappropriate behaviour which may be a precursor to abuse, including grooming
- c) recognising physical and behavioural indicators of child sexual abuse
- d) that all complaints relating to child sexual abuse must be taken seriously, regardless of the perceived severity of the behaviour.

**Recommendation 16.51**

All religious institutions' complaint handling policies should require that, upon receiving a complaint of child sexual abuse, an initial risk assessment is conducted to identify and minimise any risks to children.

**Recommendation 16.52**

All religious institutions' complaint handling policies should require that, if a complaint of child sexual abuse against a person in religious ministry is plausible, and there is a risk that person may come into contact with children in the course of their ministry, the person be stood down from ministry while the complaint is investigated.

**Recommendation 16.53**

The standard of proof that a religious institution should apply when deciding whether a complaint of child sexual abuse has been substantiated is the balance of probabilities, having regard to the principles in *Briginshaw v Briginshaw*.

**Recommendation 16.54**

Religious institutions should apply the same standards for investigating complaints of child sexual abuse whether or not the subject of the complaint is a person in religious ministry.

**Recommendation 16.55**

Any person in religious ministry who is the subject of a complaint of child sexual abuse which is substantiated on the balance of probabilities, having regard to the principles

in *Briginshaw v Briginshaw*, or who is convicted of an offence relating to child sexual abuse, should be permanently removed from ministry. Religious institutions should also take all necessary steps to effectively prohibit the person from in any way holding himself or herself out as being a person with religious authority.

**Recommendation 16.56**

Any person in religious ministry who is convicted of an offence relating to child sexual abuse should:

- a) in the case of Catholic priests and religious leaders, be dismissed from the priesthood and/or dispensed from his or her vows as a religious
- b) in the case of Anglican clergy, be deposed from holy orders
- c) in the case of Uniting Church ministers, have his or her recognition as a minister withdrawn
- d) in the case of an ordained person in any other religious denomination that has a concept of ordination, holy orders and/or vows, be dismissed, deposed or otherwise effectively have their religious status removed.

**Recommendation 16.57**

Where a religious institution becomes aware that any person attending any of its religious services or activities is the subject of a substantiated complaint of child sexual abuse, or has been convicted of an offence relating to child sexual abuse, the religious institution should:

- a) assess the level of risk posed to children by that perpetrator's ongoing involvement in the religious community
- b) take appropriate steps to manage that risk.

**Recommendation 16.58**

Each religious organisation should consider establishing a national register which records limited but sufficient information to assist affiliated institutions identify and respond to any risks to children that may be posed by people in religious or pastoral ministry.

## Guidelines for using Electronic Communication in Ministries involving Vulnerable People

### *Preface*

Navigating the COVID-19 pandemic called upon our Church ministries to adapt and work to stay connected through online platforms. In this process, it became important to consider best practice for online safety, particularly in relation to ministries and activities involving vulnerable people.

For the purpose of this guide, where the term “young people” is used, it includes children, youth and vulnerable people.

For many of our young people, online platforms such as social media, text messaging, and video are a natural way for them to interact and express themselves. This affords an opportunity for the Church to create safe places for young people to build community, explore faith and grow as disciples, and to receive care and support.

Caution must be taken however, when engaging with young people in the various forms of electronic communication and social media. Intentional boundaries are fundamental to keeping young people safe. As such, this tool provides guidance for churches to assist their decision making in setting up different ways to deliver ministers and activities in an online context.

It remains essential that church staff and volunteers continue to adhere to the Church’s Code of Conduct for standards of behaviour when interacting with young people via online platforms.

### *Guiding Principles*

#### Consent

Parental/Guardian consent must be in place before engaging online or via any form of electronic communication with young person. Verbal consent would be considered unacceptable as it does not meet the principle of Traceability. No online engagement or electronic communications can occur where consent has not been given or where the Parent/Guardian has indicated that they do not want online communications to take place between their young person and church staff or volunteers.

Any online group involving children 12 years or younger must be set up using only a Parent/Guardian’s email and login, and login-in details must not disclose a child’s full name. Groups involving teenagers must ensure that Parental/ Guardian consent covers off young person’s email being used as a login.

Consent should also encompass the details of all platforms to be used, the purpose of the engagement/activities and how information will be managed (accessed/stored).

Additionally, consent should identify specific timeframes for when church staff and volunteers are permitted to communicate online with young people. For example, not before 8am or after 8pm.

### Traceability

Does the platform have a digital footprint, and can it be accessed if the need arises? The Church should consider what platforms they will use and how they will effectively achieve the principle of Traceability and being able to review online activity/engagement.

### Accountability

What "in person" practices in ministry can be replicated in an online environment to ensure accountability remains in place? For example, student/leader ratios, two leaders present during online engagement etc.

### Transparency

How is church governance and oversight enacted in implementing online ministries? For example, have processes/procedures relating to ministries and activities been updated and endorsed by the church leadership? Additionally, the concept of Transparency should be considered in the context of oversight, data protection and also privacy obligations. For example, considering the privacy requirements of gathering people's data to an online platform. How is this data stored and used by the platform? Who has access to this information now and in the long term?

### Safety

Online platforms are ever changing, and churches need to consider how to remain up to date with changes to privacy settings/restrictions etc.

The following are recommended considerations for incorporating into online ministries and activities for young people:

#### Live Stream

- When using live stream, no images of young people should be used if the Church does not have consent for their image to be online, or if there is a custody issue that could endanger them if they were seen online.
- If a church is streaming in a way where members of the public can access the stream, chat functions should be disabled.
- If a church is streaming in a way where members of the public cannot access the stream (closed Facebook group for example) chat is permitted.

#### Online Groups

- Links to any online platform should not be available in the public domain, instead they should only be sent to those invited into the group.

- Private chat functions through these platforms should be disabled.
- Maintain a minimum of 2 staff/volunteer leaders and a minimum of 2 participants
- Consider gender dynamics. For example, never have a group discussion where the group of participants are all of the opposite gender.
- Photographs/screenshots should not be permitted.

#### Social Media

- Comply with the terms of any social media platform. For example, Facebook and Instagram have a minimum age of 13 years for someone to have a personal account.
- Where possible use of social media with young people should be via church/ministry accounts rather than personal accounts.
- Establish systems to enable a minimum 2 staff or volunteer leaders able to see all communications with a young person. This includes direct messages, text, email, social media, video chats, clips, etc
- Retain chat history. The church and its staff and volunteers should not use social media platforms for ministry activities which cannot be traceable.
- Consider privacy settings which prevent personal contacts from seeing or interacting with the young people contacts connected to your ministry.
- Care must be taken with online communication, and consideration given to how an engagement may be perceived differently by those who view/receive it. For example, ensuring the text/image is beyond reproach and cannot be misconstrued.

#### Text Based Communications

- To assist with the principle of Accountability, all emails to young people be cc'd to a Church email address or the email address of a supervising Church staff member.
- Where possible text/direct message communication should be restricted to providing general and publicly available information or must have another person added to the conversation.
- Emails, texts, and direct messages that are sent or received should be kept and stored in an appropriate place for the purposes of Traceability.

#### *Risk Assessments*

Online events/activities should be risk managed as would be done for any in person event using a risk assessment tool.

When completing risk assessments, consideration needs to be given to how to communicate to parents/guardians the event/activity specific details (outside of the original consent) as would be done when hosting any in person event/activity.

*Awareness and Training*

The Church needs to provide training and education to staff/volunteers around etiquette and expectations as well as protecting personal and private information during online activities/engagements.

Churches can also encourage Parents/Guardians to educate themselves and their young people about online safety. The QLD Family and Child Commission has a variety of [online safety resources](#) useful in this area.

## Disqualifying Persons and Disqualifying Offences

### *Disqualified Person*

You are a disqualified person if you are:

- convicted of a disqualifying offence, which includes
  - having sex with a child (regardless of the type of relationship, e.g. teenage boyfriend/girlfriend, unlawful carnal knowledge)
  - other child-related sex or pornography offences
  - murder and other serious sexual or violent offences against an adult or child (regardless of the penalty and regardless of when and where it occurred)
- a reportable offender under the [\*Child Protection \(Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order\) Act 2004\*](#)
- the subject of an offender prohibition order under the [\*Child Protection \(Offender Prohibition Order\) Act 2008\*](#)
- prohibited by a court from applying for or holding a blue card

or

- the subject of a sexual offender order under the [\*Dangerous Prisoners \(Sexual Offenders\) Act 2003\*](#).

### *Disqualified Offence*

All disqualifying offences are listed in the [\*Working with Children \(Risk Management and Screening\) Act 2000\*](#).

An offence is categorised as a disqualifying offence under the Act if it is an offence:

- against a provision of an Act detailed in the list of disqualifying offences
- under a law of another jurisdiction that, if it had been committed in Queensland, would have constituted an offence of a kind detailed in the list of disqualifying offences
- of counselling or procuring the commission of an offence of a kind mentioned in the list of disqualifying offences
- of attempting, or of conspiring, to commit an offence of a kind detailed in the list of disqualifying offences
- that has, as an element, an intention to commit an offence of a kind mentioned in the list of disqualifying offences

or

- that, at the time it was committed, was an offence of a kind mentioned in the list of disqualifying offences.

View the [list of disqualifying offences](#).

[More information on who cannot apply for or hold a Blue Card](#)

## Facts on Child Sexual Abuse

### *What is child sexual abuse?*

Child sexual abuse occurs when an adult, adolescent or child use their power or authority to involve a child in sexual activity. Child sexual abuse can cause physical and emotional harm to a child.

Sexual abuse can be physical, verbal or emotional and can include but is not limited to the following:

- kissing or holding a child in a sexual manner
- exposing a sexual body part to a child
- having sexual relations with a child
- talking in a sexually explicit way that is not age or developmentally appropriate
- making obscene phone calls or remarks to a child
- sending obscene mobile text messages or emails to a child
- fondling a child in a sexual manner
- persistently intruding on a child's privacy
- penetrating the child's vagina or anus by either the penis, finger or any other object
- oral sex
- rape
- incest
- showing pornographic films, magazines, internet sites or photographs to a child
- having a child pose or perform in a sexual manner
- forcing a child to watch a sexual act
- child prostitution.

### *Grooming behaviour of people responsible for the sexual abuse of children*

Grooming refers to the process by which some people who are responsible for the sexual abuse of children groom people in the community, such as parents, carers, teachers and children to establish trust and gain access to a child.

Some people who are responsible for the sexual abuse of children spend considerable time targeting, enticing and trapping a child for sexual purposes. Grooming involves the person responsible for the sexual abuse integrating themselves into places where they have access to children and then grooming the adults to create opportunities for the person to abuse their victims. Grooming behaviour can be difficult to identify as it

can sometimes include the use of in some contexts, appropriate behaviours. Some examples of grooming behaviour can include a person:

- regularly offering to babysit a child for free or take a child on overnight outings alone
- actively isolating a child from other adults or children
- insisting on physical affection such as kissing, hugging, wrestling or tickling even when the child clearly does not want it
- being overly interested in the sexual development of a child
- insisting on uninterrupted time alone with the child
- enjoying taking lots of pictures of children
- sharing alcohol or drugs with younger children or adolescents
- exposing their genitals to a child.

#### *Indicators of sexual abuse*

A child may say things, do things or exhibit physical signs that may indicate sexual abuse, even if they do not disclose clear information.

Some indicators of child sexual abuse may include:

- displaying greater sexual knowledge than normally expected for their age or developmental level
- inappropriate sexual play and behaviour with themselves, other children or dolls and toys
- hints about sexual activity through actions or comments that are inappropriate to the child's age or developmental level
- excessive masturbation or masturbation in public after kindergarten age
- persistent bedwetting, urinating or soiling in clothes
- persistent sexual themes in their drawings or play time
- running away
- destroying property
- hurting or mutilating animals
- creating stories, poems or artwork about abuse
- difficulty concentrating or being withdrawn or overly obedient
- having unexpected redness, soreness or injury around the penis, vagina, mouth or anus
- having torn, stained or bloody clothing, especially underwear

- recurring themes of power or control in play.

*Protecting children from sexual abuse*

To help protect a child from sexual abuse:

- be suspicious if an adult wants to spend time alone with your child
- be wary of people who are overly affectionate or generous with gifts to your child
- be careful about the company your children keep. Watch children's behaviour for signs of stress — their reactions to certain individuals may tell you something
- teach children about being safe in a way that does not frighten them
- teach children that the parts of their bodies covered by underwear are private
- teach children anatomical names for body parts, such as penis or vagina
- encourage children to tell someone they trust if anyone tries to touch their private parts
- carefully consider who else you might want your children to tell if you are not available — let your children know these contact options
- speak to children who are under school age about personal safety in simple language and repeat the same rules often — play 'what if' games to reinforce the message
- teach children of primary school age basic family safety rules and how to apply them in potentially dangerous situations
- assist adolescents to think independently, and to develop decision-making and assertiveness skills
- know who is supervising your children when they are away from home
- listen to your children and trust what they say, even if it shocks you — children rarely make up stories about sexual abuse.

*Because you cannot be with them all the time*

You have a right to know your children are safe. Ask organisations about their policies, activities and who is looking after your children.

Remember:

- People who work with children have an obligation to keep them safe.
- Adults who work with children must have a blue card from the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian.

- Organisations should have written policies available to read showing how they respond to child sexual abuse allegations.
- Organisations must provide activities that are suited to the developmental stage of the children involved.
- Organisations must supervise all children in their care.

#### *Where to get help*

If you would like further information on child sexual abuse, an information booklet is available from Child Safety Services. If you suspect a child has experienced harm, or is at risk of experiencing harm, there are a number of agencies that can provide support and advice.

#### The Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women

- Contact **the department** on **13 QGOV (13 74 68)**.
- After business hours, call the Child Safety After-Hours Service Centre, freecall **1800 177 135**.
- Visit [Child safety](#) website

#### Queensland Police Service

The Queensland Police Service has a number of dedicated Child Protection and Investigation Units across the state to investigate criminal matters relating to child abuse. If you have concerns about criminal behaviour, contact your local police station.

In an emergency, call **000**.

#### Parentline

Parentline is a free, confidential telephone service that provides counselling and referrals. Counsellors are available from 8am to 10pm, seven days a week. Call **1300 30 1300** to speak with a Parentline counsellor.

*Source: QLD Government Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women*

#### More Information – Child Abuse

[Department of Children, Youth Justice & Multicultural Affairs - Child Abuse Information](#)

Persons of Concern and Individual Accountability & Safety Agreements

[Persons of Concern Brochure](#)

## Related Documents

## Code of Conduct

1. In relation to **people, property and language**, staff and volunteers respect and acknowledge that they:
  - b. Must be responsive and courteous to others and avoid improper use of their position.
  - c. Must promote the participation and empowerment, education and awareness regarding safety of vulnerable people, recognising that attention needs to be given to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and other vulnerable groups.
  - d. Must avoid discriminatory and /or harassing treatment of others and must not use inappropriate or crude language in the presence of, or towards others.
  - e. Must always demonstrate integrity and act in a manner consistent with being a Church representative.
  - f. Must not make any sexual or crude innuendos such as suggestive looks, comments, jokes, sounds, display visuals, words, acts or gestures towards any individual/s.
  - g. Must respect privacy and protect the confidential information of others, subject to complying with the reporting requirements of this Strategy and to also comply with any other obligations under the law.
2. In relation to **behaviour, supervision and communication**, staff and volunteers acknowledge that they:
  - a. Must comply with Church practices for managing group sizes, ratios, enrolments, sign in/out procedures, toileting/nappy change, injury and illness management and collection procedures.
  - b. Must comply with the Church's practices for positively guiding behaviour, photography and complaint handling.
  - c. Will listen carefully and consider respectfully the input from vulnerable people concerning decisions affecting them and what makes them feel safe or unsafe.
  - d. Must comply with the Church's guidelines for the use of electronic communication and social media (see Electronic Communication with children and vulnerable persons).
  - e. Must not be alone with vulnerable person where they cannot be seen by other Church workers. Unless if necessary, then in a frequented public location as pre-arranged by parents and church leaders. For other potential situations including transport questions see Church Leadership and See Guidelines for transportation of children and vulnerable persons for further guidance.

- f. Must not take a vulnerable person to their home or visit a vulnerable person in their home unless the visit is part of a Church approved organised activity for the group or in the company or consent of the child's parents/guardian. (See Guidelines for transportation of children and vulnerable persons for further guidance)
  - g. Must not drive a vulnerable person. If extreme circumstance exists, this should occur with 2 staff/volunteers and after gaining permission from child's parents (where it involves a child) and a Church leader in a direct position of responsibility. (See Guidelines for transportation of children and vulnerable persons for further guidance)
  - h. Must not commit any sexual offence, sexual misconduct committed against, with or in the presence of a vulnerable people (including a child pornography offence) or any assault, ill treatment of or neglect of a vulnerable person or any behaviours that causes psychological or other harm to a vulnerable person.
  - i. Must not attempt to do any of the things described above or do any act in preparation of doing any of the things described above.
  - j. Must not engage in any communication via electronic or other means that would be in breach of this policy.
3. In relation to **physical contact**, staff and volunteers acknowledge that they:
- a. Must comply with the Church's protocols for injury management.
  - b. Must not touch any person in a way that is inappropriate to the situation, or uncomfortable or confusing to the receiver.
  - c. Will only console (if a vulnerable person is distressed and needs to be consoled) if this is with the permission and or welcomed by the vulnerable person.
  - d. Will where possible seek to only console a vulnerable person of the same gender and always with another staff or volunteer within sight.
4. In relation to **pastoral care** staff and volunteers acknowledge that they:
- a. Will not step beyond their level of competency or training.
  - b. Will not encourage vulnerable people to keep things hidden from their parents, guardians or other leaders.
  - c. Will avoid providing pastoral care for members of the opposite sex where possible.
  - d. Will always provide pastoral care in an open area in view of others, never in a closed room.
  - e. If a vulnerable person makes a disclosure regarding any kind of harm, this disclosure must be reported to the Church Safe Coordinator but must not be revealed to any person, except as required by this policy or the law.
5. In relation to **pornography and sexuality**, staff and volunteers acknowledges that:

- a. They recognise it is inappropriate to access or view pornography.
  - b. They will not display, discuss or distribute pornography to other adults or vulnerable people.
  - c. The sexuality of staff must be under the guidelines and Lordship of Christ.
  - d. They will dress modestly, and not sexually suggestive, and clothing will be without slogans contrary to Christian principles.
6. In relation to **Workplace Health & Safety**, staff and volunteers acknowledge that they:
- a. Must comply with risk management plans that are required and in place for high risk activities or special events.
  - b. Must not put themselves or others in danger.
  - c. Must not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything in the interests of safety.
  - d. Must follow the Church's Workplace Health & Safety policies and procedures and encourage others to do the same.
  - e. Must follow the Church's COVID Safe Plan and encourage others to do the same.
  - f. Must use all safety devices including knowing the location of first aid kits and fire extinguishers and should know the identity of the first aid attendant in their area.
  - g. Must report all incidents and accidents.
7. In relation to **Blue Cards**, staff and volunteers will:
- a. Hold a current Blue Card (unless excepted)
  - b. Stand down from duties immediately if they:
    - i. receive a negative notice or is a known disqualified person.
    - ii. have their blue card or exemption card cancelled or suspended.
    - iii. have their blue card application withdrawn.
    - iv. receive a notification in relation to a serious change in criminal history.
  - c. Immediately advise Chancellor Church and Blue Card Services if there is a change to their police information (the maximum penalty for failing to report to Blue Card Services a change in your police information is \$13,345 - 100 penalty units).
8. In relation to **Restricted Persons and Restricted Employment**, staff and volunteers acknowledge that:
- a. From 31 August 2020, you cannot start or continue in 'Restricted Employment' if you are a 'Restricted Person.' The maximum penalty is \$66,725 (500 penalty units) or 5 years in prison.
  - b. A Restricted Person is a person who:
    - i. has been issued a negative notice, or

- ii. has a suspended blue card, or
    - iii. is a disqualified person, or
    - iv. has been charged with a disqualifying offence which has not been finalised.
  - c. Restricted Employment refers to particular exemptions which allow a person to work with children without a blue card, such as:
    - i. a volunteer parent;
    - ii. a volunteer who is under 18;
    - iii. paid or unpaid staff who work in child regulated employment for not more than 7 days in a calendar year; or
    - iv. a consumer at a child-related service outlet where they also carry out work at the outlet.
  - d. If they are a Restricted Person, they will not start or continue to work in Restricted Employment. If they currently work in Restricted Employment at time of re/signing the Code of Conduct, they will immediately stop or they will be breaking the law and can be prosecuted.
  - e. If they are a Restricted Person they do not need to tell the Church the reason why they are no longer able to work. However, they will immediately stop working for the Church as this would be committing a prosecutable offence.
9. The Church is committed to maintaining an **illegal drug and alcohol-free environment** with vulnerable people. Staff and volunteers acknowledge that:
- a. The consumption, sale of or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while working with vulnerable people (other than properly prescribed and administered drugs) will result in dismissal and possibly a report to the police.
  - b. Consumption of cigarettes/tobacco is also prohibited on Church premises.
10. In relation to this **Strategy**, staff and volunteers agree to:
- a. Comply with all aspects of the Strategy
  - b. Participate in training provided by the Church and for which the Church leadership requests their participation
  - c. Report any suspected breaches of this Code of Conduct and/or this Strategy to the Church Safe Coordinator or relevant Church Leadership immediately.
  - d. Take careful written records of any suspected breaches for future reference.
  - e. Not make a report which is false, vexatious or malicious.

## Declaration

I agree to abide by this Code of Conduct and understand that breaches of this Code may lead to disciplinary action.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Electronic Communication with children and vulnerable persons

1. Interaction with children and vulnerable persons through electronic communication and social media will be kept to a minimum and done in a team or group message context that allows for transparency and accountability.
2. Staff/Volunteers will not be Social media friends/followers etc. with children. Instead, a specific Facebook page, Instagram account or any other similar social media outlet related to our church's ministry will be set up and used by staff/volunteers communicating with children. Exemptions to this may be granted at the discretion of the church leadership and when given parental consent, an example of exemption may arise due to a family or close family friendships.
3. Where possible and practical, we will seek the permission of a parent or guardian before phoning or messaging a child.
4. Non-group SMS communication or non-transparent electronic communication will be restricted to providing general and publicly available information. In cases where this is not possible, permission will be given at the discretion of Church Leadership and only if parental permission is granted. Church leadership and parents have the power to view such conversations for accountability and transparency. In extraordinary situations where parental permission is not possible, permission will be granted at discretion of Church leadership and a record of the conversation will be provided to church leadership for accountability and transparency.
5. Staff/Volunteers will not engage in video conversation with children without the permission of a parent or guardian, and only after explaining the purpose of the video conversation.
6. Any photographs of children's ministry activities will be taken by someone appointed by the church leaders and with parental consent. See Schedule 11.
7. Photographs of children will not be used for promotional purposes without the permission of a parent or guardian. See Schedule 11.
8. For extraordinary major situations that require major digital ministry interaction such as the COVID-19 Pandemic see the specific social media policy.

## Guidelines for transportation of children and vulnerable persons

1. Vehicle Transportation by Staff/Volunteers will be done only when there is no suitable other options available
2. Vehicle transportation of children and vulnerable persons are only to be done by Staff/Volunteers on an Open or 'P2' licence that is in a vehicle of sound mechanical and road worthy condition and be deemed fit to volunteer in this capacity (not being under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol; not having lost their license or had their license suspended for dangerous driving or criminal offenses).
3. Motorcycle transportation is prohibited
4. Where possible Staff/Volunteers should make use of Church owned Vehicles, following appropriate policy regarding that vehicle, instead of their own personal vehicles
5. If vehicle transportation is required by a program it will be done with two adults in a vehicle. This is the ideal and best practice for transparency and accountability. Where this is not possible a Vehicle Convoy will be formed with other Staff/Volunteers Vehicles, where the convoy will travel keeping eye shot of each other.
6. If vehicle transportation is required for pastoral care type situations or transport is required to and from a church program while operating as a staff/volunteer, involving one staff/volunteer and children or a child, parental and church leadership permission is essential. In these cases the Staff/Volunteer will communicate to their supervising leader the location where they are taking the child, when they leave and when they arrive at the destination, including the return journey.
7. These guidelines do not cover Staff/Volunteers who are not operating as Staff/Volunteers while transporting children or vulnerable persons (that are apart of Church programs) who are family friends. In these situations however parental permission is essential and it is advised to use the guidelines above to ensure transparency and accountability for the child and staff/volunteers sake. Where a staff/volunteer transports children or vulnerable persons while not operating in their staff/volunteer role does so at their own risk and without the church's liability.
8. All behaviour in Vehicle transport is covered by the Code of Conduct.

## Application for Working with Children

This application is to be completed by all applicants for any positions (voluntary and paid) involving the supervision of children.

Personal Information		
Full name		DOB:
Address		
Email		
Phone Numbers	H:	M:
Activities		
What types of activities are you interested in being involved in?		
Date available to begin?	/ /	
Minimum length of commitment?		
Church Involvement		
Length of attendance at Church?		
Are you a member of the Church?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Name all churches you have attended or been involved in during the past 5 years.		
List all previous involvement in church roles involving vulnerable people (identify which church next to the type of work).		
List any gifts, training, qualifications, or any other facts that have prepared you for working with vulnerable people.		
Overseas Status		
Have you lived or worked overseas for more than 12 months in the past 5 years?	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	Where?

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Do you consent to a criminal history check in these countries?	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Countries:	
<b>Referees (2 required)</b>		
Name (first referee)		
Email		
Phone	H:	M:
Name (second referee)		
Email		
Phone	H:	M:
<b>Blue Card Information</b>		
Do you have a current Blue Card?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>  Card No.	Expiry date:
If you have a current Blue Card, is it a Paid or Volunteer card?	Paid <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer <input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you or have you ever relied on a Blue card Exemption?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
If you rely on a Blue Card Exemption, please provide details.		
Has your Blue Card ever been suspended for any reason?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>  Reason:	
Has any complaint ever been made against you alleging harm to a vulnerable person? (provide details)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>  Details:	
If your application proceeds, do you consent to the Church linking your Blue Card?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	

**Restricted Person and Restricted Employment**

A restricted person is a person who:

- has been issued a negative notice, or
- has a suspended blue card, or
- is a disqualified person, or
- has been charged with a disqualifying offence which has not been finalised.

Restricted employment refers to particular exemptions which allow a person to work with children without a blue card, such as:

- a volunteer parent;
- a volunteer who is under 18;
- paid or unpaid staff who work in child regulated employment for not more than 7 days in a calendar year; or
- a consumer at a child-related service outlet where they also carry out work at the outlet.

*\*A child-related service outlet means a place at which disability services are provided to children.*

If you are a restricted person:

- you must not start or continue to work in restricted employment.
- if you currently work in restricted employment, you must immediately stop or you will be breaking the law and can be prosecuted.
- you do not need to tell the organisation the reason why you are no longer able to volunteer or work for them. However, you must immediately stop working or volunteering with the organisation or you will be committing an offence and can be prosecuted.

**It is prohibited to start or continue in 'restricted employment' if you are a 'restricted person'. The maximum penalty is \$66,725 (500 penalty units) or 5 years in prison. Penalties will also apply to organisations.**

Are you a Restricted Person?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
------------------------------	--

**Medical Information**

Any medical condition which may impact your interaction with children?	
--	--

Any physical or other conditions/limitations affecting your interaction with children?	
--	--

Applicant's Statement		
<p>The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I authorise the churches listed in this application to give you any information they may have regarding my character and fitness for working with children. Should my application be accepted, I agree to be bound by the any policies/procedures of Queensland Baptists and <b>Chancellor Church</b> and refrain from unscriptural conduct in the performance of my services on behalf of the church.</p> <p>I have read and agree to abide by the following:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The Code of Conduct; and</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This Church Safe Strategy.</p> <p>I understand the following:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> by signing the application form I am consenting to the screening process; and</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> it is an offence for a 'disqualified person' to sign a blue card application form or a renewal form.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> it is an offence for a staff or volunteer to fail to notify Blue Card Services on the appropriate form of any change in personal details within 14 days.</p>		
Signed (applicant)		Date     /     / 20

Office Use Only	
The applicant has signed and returned the Code of Conduct	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
The Church Safe Coordinator has completed an interview to ascertain the suitability of the applicant	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
In the case of a volunteer, the person has attended the church regularly for a minimum of six (6) months unless exceptional circumstances apply.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Where certain roles require Registration by Queensland Baptists the applicant must also successfully pass the application process under those Registration Guidelines.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Where a position description (paid employment) has stipulated additional educational, skill or other requirements, the applicant is also required to satisfy these criteria before commencement.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Applicant's identification has been sighted	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Blue Card details have been sighted and recorded	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
If the applicant has not obtained their Blue Card through the Church, the Church Safe Coordinator has verified their identification by sighting photographic ID and linked the card holder to the Church	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Contacted referees and churches and completed the 'References Check' form.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>I confirm that I have completed the following in relation to the applicant:</p> <p>Signed _____ Date     /     /</p> <p>Full name _____</p>	

## Interview - Applicants Working with Vulnerable People

Name of Applicant	
Name of Church Safe Coordinator	
Date of Interview	

Question: Why do you want to be a part of our church's ministry?

Response:

Question: What involvement / experience in the past have you had with vulnerable people?

Response:

Question: Have you read the Code of Conduct and do you have any questions regarding the code?

Response:

Question: Why do you think that our church's Church Safe Strategy is necessary? Are you willing to cooperate and comply with the standards and requirements of the Strategy?

Response:

Question: We are committed to ensuring that staff and volunteer behaviour towards vulnerable people is appropriate. Can you explain what you see as 'appropriate' and 'inappropriate' practices [refer to the particular ministry/activity of the Church that the applicant is interested in, for example, behaviour management techniques]?

Response:

Question: Can you describe how you would encourage a vulnerable person to participate in group activities?

Response:

Question: If a vulnerable person you are working with suddenly gets angry, swears loudly and walks off. What would you do?

Response:

Question: You are informed by one attendee that another attendee has stolen an item from her backpack. How would you handle this?

Response:

Question: Think of an experience you have had with a vulnerable person where you felt particularly close to, or proud of, the person. Tell us why you felt that way. Do you think it affected your behaviour towards them?

Response:

Question: Have you ever been known by any other name?

Response:

Question: Have you ever been the subject of a:

- a. complaint of harm to a vulnerable person
- b. breach of a code of conduct or policy; or
- c. decision to be precluded from attending or participating in a church/organisation' activities?

Response:

## Referee Checks

Details of applicant		
Full name		
First referee contacted		
Full name		Date
Relationship with applicant		Contacted by:
Questions		
Would you employ the person again?		
Have you directly observed their work with children?		
Can you give an example of a time when you observed them managing a child with challenging behaviours?		
Summary of remarks concerning suitability for working with children		
Second referee contacted		
Full name		Date
Relationship with applicant		Contacted by:
Questions		
Would you employ the person again?		
Have you directly observed their work with children?		
Can you give an example of a time when you observed them managing a child with challenging behaviours?		
Summary of remarks concerning suitability for working with children		
Church contacted		
Full name		Date
Relationship with applicant		Contacted by:

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Summary of remarks concerning suitability for working with children		
<b>Church contacted</b>		
Full name		Date
Relationship with applicant		Contacted by:
Summary of remarks concerning suitability for working with children		

## Record of Disclosure of Harm

Details of person disclosing			
Full name:	DOB		
Address:			
Phone Numbers: H:	M	:	
Details of person receiving disclosure			
Full name:	DOB		
Address:			
Phone Numbers: H:	M	:	
Details of other persons involved in incident including witnesses (attach additional pages if necessary)			
<i>Full name</i>	DOB		
Address			
Phone Numbers H:	M:		
<i>Full name</i>	DOB		
Address			
Phone Numbers H:	M:		
Disclosure			
Description of disclosure (relevant dates, times, locations and who was present)			
Details of disclosure (exactly what the person disclosing said, using "I said," "they said," statements)			
Responses provided (to the questions asked – include the questions)			
Additional (any comments you made)			
Location of disclosure		Date/Time of disclosure	

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Reporting	
Have the Police been contacted?	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/> Date and time contacted _____ Response:
Has the Department of Child Safety been contacted and consulted?	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/> Date and time contacted _____ Response:
Has the church leadership been informed?	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/> Date and time contacted _____ Response:
Has the QB Safe Church Officer been contacted?	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/> Date and time contacted _____ Response:
Follow Up	
Details of support provided (including referrals)	
Any other follow up	
Records	
A record of all conversations (with dates, times and names) has been kept.	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
File kept in secured location with restricted access marked "Do not destroy"	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Declaration – Church Safe Coordinator	Declaration – person receiving disclosure
Full name:	Full name:
Date:	Date:
Signature:	Signature:

## Record of Suspicion of Harm

Details of person suspected of suffering harm			
Full name:	DOB		
Address:			
Phone Numbers: H:	M	:	
Details of person suspecting harm			
Full name:	DOB		
Address:			
Phone Numbers: H:	M	:	
Details of other persons involved in incident including witnesses (attach additional pages if necessary)			
<i>Full name</i>	DOB		
Address			
Phone Numbers H:	M:		
<i>Full name</i>	DOB		
Address			
Phone Numbers H:	M:		
Details			
Description of concerns			
Additional (any other relevant information)			
Date of concerns		Date of record	
Reporting			
Have the Police been contacted?	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/> Date and time contacted _____ Response:		
Has the Department of Child Safety been contacted and consulted?	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/> Date and time contacted _____ Response:		

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Has the church leadership been informed?	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/> Date and time contacted _____ Response:
Has the QB Safe Church Officer been contacted?	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/> Date and time contacted _____ Response:
<b>Follow Up</b>	
Details of support provided (including referrals)	
Any other follow up	
<b>Records</b>	
A record of all conversations (with dates, times and names) has been kept	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
File kept in secured location with restricted access marked "Do not destroy"	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Declaration – Church Safe Coordinator</b>	
Full name:	Declaration – person suspecting harm Full name:
Date:	Date:
Signature:	Signature:

## Breach Incident Form

Details of person breaching the Church Safe Strategy			
Full name:	DOB		
Address:			
Phone Numbers: H:	M	:	
Details of Breach			
Description of Breach			
Additional (any other relevant information)			
Date of breach		Date of record	
Immediate action taken			
Reporting			
Have the Police been contacted?	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/> Date and time contacted _____ Response:		
Has the Department of Child Safety been contacted and consulted?	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/> Date and time contacted _____ Response:		
Has the church leadership been informed?	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/> Date and time contacted _____ Response:		

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Has the QB Safe Church Officer been contacted?	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/> Date and time contacted _____ Response:
<b>Assessment</b>	
Description of the assessment of the breach (nature, severity etc.)	
<b>Outcome/s</b>	
Consequences determined and implemented	
<b>Records</b>	
Breach Register No.	[insert number] (e.g. 2nd breach to have occurred is 0002)
Breach added the Breach Register	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
File kept in secured location with restricted access marked "Do not destroy"	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Declaration – Church Safe Coordinator</b>	
Full name:	Declaration – person in breach Full name:
Date:	Date:
Signature:	Signature:



## Church Safe Strategy Annual Review

<b>Reflections</b>	
Where processes and procedures of the Strategy consistently followed?	
Did any incidents relating to vulnerable people's risk management issues occur?	
What process used to manage any incidents worked or did not work?	
Evaluate the effectiveness of processes and procedures in preventing or minimising harm to vulnerable people.	
Evaluate the content and frequency of training in relation to the Strategy.	
<b>Action Items</b>	<b>Timeframe for implementation</b>
<b>Completed by:</b>	<b>Date:</b>

Risk Management Plans for High Risk Activities & Special Events

[BIS Risk Management Guidance](#)

[BIS Activity/Event Risk Assessment Template](#)

Blue Card Register

[Blue Card Register Template](#)

Posters for Display

[Poster—No Card, No Start changes are coming](#)

[Poster—New laws for Restricted Person, Restricted Employment](#)

Social Media Promotional Resources

[No Card No Start Campaign Promotional Kit](#)

## Useful References

1. Blue Card Services website:  
[www.bluecard.qld.gov.au/](http://www.bluecard.qld.gov.au/)
2. Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women:  
[www.csyw.qld.gov.au/department-child-safety-youth-women](http://www.csyw.qld.gov.au/department-child-safety-youth-women)
3. Criminal Code (Child Sexual Offences Reform) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2020  
<https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/asmade/act-2020-032>
4. Family and Child Connect Services:  
[www.qld.gov.au/community/caring-child/family-child-connect](http://www.qld.gov.au/community/caring-child/family-child-connect)
5. Queensland Police Service:  
[www.police.qld.gov.au](http://www.police.qld.gov.au)
6. Department of Education and Training:  
[www.deta.qld.gov.au](http://www.deta.qld.gov.au)
7. Early Childhood Education and Care:  
[www.deta.qld.gov.au/earlychildhood/](http://www.deta.qld.gov.au/earlychildhood/)
8. Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships:  
[www.datsip.qld.gov.au/](http://www.datsip.qld.gov.au/)
9. Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel to access legislation such as the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000, Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2011, Child Protection Act 1999 etc:  
[www.legislation.qld.gov.au/OQPChome.htm](http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/OQPChome.htm)
10. Play by the Rules:  
<http://www.playbytherules.net.au/>
11. Bullying and cyberbullying:  
[www.qld.gov.au/education/schools/health/bullying](http://www.qld.gov.au/education/schools/health/bullying)
12. Australian Human Rights Commission – Children’s Rights  
[www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/childrens-rights](http://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/childrens-rights)

13. Queensland Family and Child Commission

[www.qfcc.qld.gov.au/](http://www.qfcc.qld.gov.au/)

## Sources

[Changes to the Blue Card System](#)

[Child & Youth Risk Management Strategy Toolkit](#)

[Blue Card System Compliance Information & Resources](#)

[National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#)

[Baptist Insurance Services Risk Management for Churches](#)

[Dept. CSYW Mandatory Reporting](#)

[AIFS Mandatory Reporting](#)

[AIFS Child Safe Organisations](#)

[Royal Commission into Child Sexual Abuse Royal Commission Final Report Exec. Summary](#)

[Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse Recommendations](#)

[Who cannot apply for or hold a Blue Card?](#)

[CSYW Child Sexual Abuse](#)



## ***Australian Baptist Guidelines for Managing Persons of Concern - FORM A***

### **Step 1: Identification**

#### *1.1 The Pastor\* becomes aware of the presence of a Person of Concern.*

This may occur either:

- through the Person of Concern applying for leadership (via a Screening Check and or interview)
- allegation against a leader or congregation member
- rumor
- self-disclosure
- or reliable disclosure from others

#### *1.2 Who is a Person of Concern (POC)<sup>1</sup>?*

A Person of Concern:

1. has pleaded guilty to, been convicted of, or has admitted to a sexual criminal offence.
  2. has been found to have sexually offended, arising through due diligence checks related to recruitment (screening).
  3. is currently charged with a sexual offence.
  4. has been the subject of an allegation of a sexual offence and this was not appropriately investigated.
- 
5. has been found to have received an adverse risk assessment arising from sexual misconduct.
  6. deemed to be a risk to the safety of children and/or vulnerable adults because of an adverse risk assessment relating to sexual misconduct.
  7. exhibits persistent crossing across other people's sexual boundaries.

Persons in categories 1 to 4 above would be excluded from insurance cover if they were to re-offend, under the known offenders exclusion clause.

#### *1.3 Explanation of the Insurance position*

Currently with the General Liability Insurance Policy that covers all Baptist Churches in Australia there is an exclusion clause which states that the insurer will not cover any compensation claims, damages or legal costs associated with any claims in respect of injury sustained by a third person (i.e. a victim) where:

Part 1 - the injury arises either directly or indirectly from sexual abuse; and the perpetrator of the sexual abuse was a representative, member, employee or service provider of the insured

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<sup>1</sup>(Adapted from *the Anglican Church of Australia – Professional Standards Commission: "Guidelines for church safety where there is a risk of sexual abuse by a person of concern"*, 2010)

\*The title Pastor has been used throughout this document, but in Churches where there is no Pastor it will refer to the Leadership or a representative of the Leadership.

Part 2 - and the insured knew or ought reasonably to have known that the perpetrator of the sexual abuse had previously: committed sexual abuse; and/or been convicted of sexual abuse; and/or whilst being a representative, member, employee or service provider of the insured, been the subject of a prior complaint in respect of sexual abuse, which has not been appropriately investigated. (Numbers 1-4 of POC list above).

We want to be able to resource churches who face the situation where a Person of Concern has been worshipping and been involved, or wishes to worship and be involved, in your church.

This process has been developed to reduce the Church's exposure to risk by developing this 7-step process.

#### *1.4 Other Persons of Concern*

There are also other persons of concern who do not fall within the exclusion clause and so are covered by the General Liability Insurance Policy (Number 5-7 of POC list above). We have included them in the Person of Concern definition as we believe that this process perhaps in a modified way is necessary and will help the Churches manage the situation in a clear, transparent and pastoral way as well as reducing the risk of the Person of Concern causing harm.

#### *1.5 This Persons of Concern process acknowledges:*

- that there is a high level of community feeling and fear about sexual abuse.
- the duty of care we have to provide safe environments for all people in our churches.
- that there is no one type of Person of Concern, therefore individual Safety Agreements are necessary.
- that there are survivors of abuse in congregations, and we seek to care for them effectively.
- the issues of forgiveness and a Person of Concern's right to privacy.
- the liability issues around a Person of Concern re-offending.
- the need for denominational support, training, establishment, monitoring and oversight in this process.

This process aims to ensure that all reasonable measures have been put in place. Australian Baptists are committed to *safe ministry*, i.e. God honoring, abuse free, harm free, person valuing and respectful ministry.

## **Step 2: Notification**

### *2.1 The Pastor contacts the state Professional Standards Consultant.*

*2.2 The Professional Standards Consultant talks through with the Past/Leadership the issues surrounding safe and appropriate ministry in relation to a Person of Concern.* The Professional Standards Consultant will begin gathering information about the Person of Concern's offending history and church involvement.

*2.3 Current Charges/ allegations:* In situations where a church notifies of a person who is currently charged with and awaiting trial or is under any other formal investigation process, an Interim Individual Accountability & Safety Agreement will be necessary for the person to attend church. This plan must follow the form of the Interim Individual Accountability and Safety Agreement at Step 3.4, it will not assume guilt. It is designed as a pastoral response to help keep all people safe.

## **Step 3: Decision to proceed (*Meetings to help decision making*)**

*3.1 Leadership meeting:* If requested the Professional Standards Consultant meets with the Pastor/Church Leadership. This is an information and education session, it helps unpack the process and what this means for them to offer safe management to all. It explores who needs to know about the Person of Concern and aims at building an understanding of the issues around the management of a Person of Concern.

Prior to the meeting the church leadership may be informed by the Pastor about the presence of a Person of Concern and provided with this process document.

The church leadership will be informed that any specific information disclosed is strictly confidential.

After the meeting the Pastor/Church Leadership makes an initial decision as to whether they are willing to continue with the process of exploring placing the Person of Concern under an Individual Accountability & Safety Agreement and Accountability Group (5.2).

The Person of Concern will be given a detailed briefing of the proposed process by the Professional Standards Consultant with the Pastor if appropriate. The idea of an Individual Safety and Accountability Agreement and Accountability Group will be discussed, as well as the assessment and establishment phases.

The Person of Concern is given time to decide if they are willing to participate in the process. The church leadership also can take time to decide to proceed.

*3.2 Decision to proceed:* If all parties; Professional Standards Consultant, Person of Concern, Pastor/Leadership agrees that ministry in this form is to proceed then assessment and establishment steps enacted.

*3.3 Pastor/Leadership Group Meeting:* If the decision to proceed is made then a sub-committee of the church leadership, who will manage the implementation of the process, known as Pastor/Leadership Group, could be set up.

*3.4 Interim Accountability and Safety Agreement:* If it is decided by all parties that the process will continue, then an Interim Accountability and Safety Agreement will be discussed, agreed upon, signed and circulated to the Person of Concern, Pastor/Leadership Group and Professional Standards Consultant. It is important that the Pastor/Leadership establish and document an Interim Individual Accountability and Safety Agreement at this stage. That could be that the Person of Concern does not attend Church for a few weeks while the process is progressed or they only come to a specific service, group.

The Interim Safety Measures address the following areas:

- Acknowledgement of specific concern (e.g. details of the offense or area of boundary straying)
- Commitment of the Person of Concern to the church (e.g. accept that they are a risk, adhere to conditions of agreement).
- Commitment of the leadership of the church (or their appointees with the church leadership e.g. the Pastor/Leadership group)
- Disclosure – who will and will not be told and what they are told
- Specific conditions of church involvement given known risks (i.e. from the information already known from the meetings and discussions).
- Management of breaches of the plan (i.e. if the Person of Concern breaches the conditions of plan what the consequences will be).
- Commitment of the Professions Standards Consultant.
- Cessation of involvement (e.g. what is to occur if the Person of Concern moves to another church)
- Review of the interim plan.

*3.5 Decision not to proceed by either the Professional Standards Consultant, Person of Concern & Pastor/Leadership Group*

Reasons not to proceed include:-

- Professional Standards Consultant does not believe the church has the capacity to manage this Person of Concern.
- Professional Standards Consultant does not believe the church layout is appropriate.
- Professional Standards Consultant makes the assessment that the specific type of ministries run by the church make it inappropriate for the Person of Concern to attend.
- The Pastor/Church Leadership is not willing to proceed.
- The Person of Concern does not wish to participate, or
- The Person of Concern leaves the church
- Or for some other reason.

In such an instance the Professional Standards Consultant and Pastor/Church Leadership may offer support, where possible, an alternative worship arrangement outside of the church for the Person of Concern, e.g. referral to another church or organization, small group or one on one style ministry.

## **Step 4: Assessment Processes**

*4.1. Risk Assessment for the Person of Concern:*

Using the information gathered the Professional Standards Consultant will recommend to the church leadership which of the assessment pathways should be taken. This assessment process is conducted with the Person of Concerns written permission and full cooperation.

#### *4.1.1 Assessment pathway one – risk assessment by professional/s already working with the Person of Concern*

If the Person of Concern already has a current risk assessment report and a court appointed parole officer or is undergoing counseling, the Professional Standards Consultant will use these reports and professionals to formulate recommendations concerning risk level. Other options could professional profiling from suitably qualified person.

#### *4.1.2 Assessment pathway two- external professional risk assessment*

If during Steps 1-3 it is deemed that the Person of Concern's offending history is of a more serious nature, eg, Child sexual offences either contact or non-contact, or if the Person of Concern's exhibits cognitive distortions around the offending, or for any other reason deemed by the Professional Standards Consultant about the risk level of the Person of Concern, the Professional Standards Consultant will refer to a qualified Forensic Psychologist to carry out the professional risk assessment.

This Forensic Psychologist must have experience in writing court and prison reports about sexual offenders. The report must include full psychometric, static and dynamic testing, and a situational risk analysis. The report will also include information helpful in customizing the Individual Accountability & Safety Agreement, such as the Person of Concerns potential and latent risks and protective structures, persons and behaviors.

#### *4.1.3 Assessment Pathway Three – internal consultative risk assessment*

If during Steps 1-3 it is deemed that the Person of Concern's offending history is of a less serious nature, eg. the Person of Concern is a boundary violator in financial or relational boundaries, but has not offended against a child, and/or if the Person of Concern exhibits no cognitive distortions around the offending, e.g. has accepted their wrong doing, has made reparations and is actively seeking to not reoffend, the Professional Standards Consultant may use The Person of Concern Risk Assessment Tool to carry out a risk assessment.

The Professional Standards Consultant is to meet with the Person of Concern to carry out the assessment. The Professional Standards Consultant will use other sources of information to complete this assessment such as court, legal persons, other witness, family members, news and other media. The report is to include the Person of Concern's static and dynamic risks of re-offending, and any protective structures and measures that will help the Person of Concern manage their own risks of reoffending and offending thinking.

*4.2 Conduct Church Situational Risk Assessment:* The Pastor/Leadership Group with the Professional Standards Consultant will conduct a church situational risk assessment and may choose is to complete The Church Situational Risk Assessment Tool. The Professional Standards Consultant, Person of Concern and Pastor/Leadership Group will discuss the results of the church assessment and what other concerns or ways of managing risks the local church has in place.

The Church Situational Risk Assessment should include:

- Does the congregation have the capacity for ample monitoring and implementation of the Individual Accountability & Safety Agreement for the Person of Concern?
- What is the nature of the building, its layout, and movement of people throughout the site?
- What is the nature and level of children's participation at the church?
- What off-site activities are undertaken?
- Is there a presence of primary or secondary victims eg daughters? How is the church addressing this situation?
- Is there any influence from 'support bases' either for or against the Person of Concern?
- Special circumstances
- What ministries does the church run that the Person of Concern wishes to be a participant.
- Safe Church Ministry practices, i.e. policy and procedures around child protection training, recruitment process (screening of leaders), supervision of leaders (codes of conduct), risk management of the physical and emotional environment (gained from initial information gathering)<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Source" adapted from Safe Place Unit Seventh Day Adventist Church, Australia 2009

## ***Step 5: Establishment Phase***

### *5.1: Individual Accountability & Safety Agreement for the Person of Concern*

The Professional Standards Consultant, in **consultation** with the Pastor/Leadership Group & Person of Concern will develop the exact content of the Individual Accountability & Safety Agreement.

The Individual Accountability & Safety Agreement will then be signed by the Pastor/Leadership Group, Professional Standards Consultant and Person of Concern and all parties will agree to their role in the Agreement.

### *5.2 Establishment of the Person of Concern's Accountability Group*

Dependent upon the level of risk coming from the report and the churches capacity to manage the Person of Concern, an appropriate accountability group will be selected.

The main purpose of this group is to implement the Individual Accountability & Safety Agreement by: monitoring the Person of Concern whilst at church events, holding the Person of Concern accountable and supporting/helping the Person of Concern manage his or her personal risks and behavior..

The function of this group will vary according to the Person of Concern's level of risk, their offending history and the Church situation.

#### *5.2.1 Accountability Group selection*

This group will be trained, monitored and supported by the Professional Standards Consultant for the task of accountability, risk management and supervision.

The Professional Standards Consultant in consultation with the Pastor/Leadership Group will decide as to the appropriate size and make-up of the group, given the Person of Concern's risks and also the local church's capacity to manage these risks.

#### *5.2.2 The Accountability Group equipping and support*

The Professional Standards Consultant will provide resources to equip and support the Accountability Group.

5.2.3: Group members should generally be asked to participate in the accountability group for a period of at least 2 years

5.2.4 The Accountability Group will maintain consistent communication with the Professional Standards Consultant and the church leadership. Some accountability groups may choose to appoint a Team Leader to undertake these tasks.

5.2.5 The Accountability Group will meet regularly as required, at least twice per annum. They will maintain records which document the dates they have met and any key discussion points.

## ***Step 6: State Report***

6. The Professional Standards Consultant will provide regular briefings of the existence of the Individual Accountability & Safety Agreement to the appropriate person in the state union.

## ***Step 7: Ongoing Monitoring, Support and Review***

7.1 The management of the Individual Accountability & Safety Agreement will be overseen by the Accountability Group within the local church and monitored by the Professional Standards Consultant

7.2 Regular annual reviews of the plan will occur by the Professional Standards Consultant.

7.3 The Professional Standards Consultant will also be available to the Accountability Group when necessary for external advice and help for the group's management of the Person of Concern.

Updated November 2019

**Australian Baptists Safe Ministry to Person of Concern**  
**Form B: Meeting between the Pastor, POC and PSD**

**The purposes of this meeting:**

To discuss the process required for the person of concern to attend / continue to attend this church.

**Format for the meeting**

1. Ask the Pastor to explain what the Person of Concern already knows about the process.
2. Provide the POC with a copy of the Process document and explain in detail the process, clarifying the roles and responsibilities of PSD, pastor, a process management team, church leadership and the individual.
3. Discuss the concept of a life-long individual accountability and safety agreement with an accountability group
4. Discuss the assessment and establishment steps of the process
5. Reflect on the anticipated impact on the church.
6. Talk about privacy, confidentiality & disclosure
7. Address any questions the individual may have.
8. Explore pastoral needs, such as, who is looking after the person and their family?

**Action arising from the meeting**

If the POC shows an interest to explore the process, the PSD has the POC complete the Authority to Release Information (Form E).

Once the POC has completed the Authority to Release Information the PSD will complete the Self-Disclosure questions with the individual (Form F).

## Situational Local Church Risk Assessment - Queensland - FORM C

To be completed in conjunction with PSO for Queensland Baptists

	YES/ NO	Explanation
Does the church have the capacity for ample monitoring and implementation of the Individual Accountability & Safety Agreement given the person of concern's target group? (e.g. accountability group who will take responsibility in this area)		
What is the nature and level of children (or POC's specific target group) participation at the church? (e.g. details of children's/youth ministries undertaken)		
Are any of these undertaken off site? (Details please)		
Is there a presence of primary or secondary victims in the church? How is the church addressing this situation?		
Is there any influence from 'support bases' either for or against the person of concern?		
Are there any special circumstances specific to this person of concern		
In which ministries does the person of concern wish to be/or is already a participant?		

<p>What Risk Management Policy does the church utilize for Children's/Youth Ministry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Child Safe (SU)?</li> <li>- QB Alternate Policy?</li> <li>- Other?</li> </ul>		
<p>Do you have a Safety Person /Team who handles implementation of Risk Management Policy procedures?</p>		
<p>Do you hold regular training events for all stakeholders with respect to the Risk Management policy?</p>		
<p>Have all current leaders been recruited, screened, appointed &amp; inducted according to that policy?</p>		
<p>Do you ensure that all leaders sign a code of conduct as part of the recruitment process?</p>		
<p>Do all leaders know the church's procedures for reporting of abuse and misconduct?</p>		
<p>Are you able to provide a site map of the building/s, their layout and movement of people throughout the site? (Please include site map)</p>		

**Australian Baptists' Safe Ministry – Persons of Concern**

**INTERIM SAFETY AGREEMENT - FORM D**

.....  
agrees that they will comply with all five of the below conditions with regards to interaction with  
(insert name of church)  
.....

1. they will respect and comply with the church’s commitment to providing a God-honouring, safe place where every person’s right to be free from harm and abuse is valued and protected; *and*
2. they will not to accept nomination for any position within the church, *and*
3. they will only attend (*specify services and activities*) unless otherwise agreed and approved by the Church Leadership and then only in accordance with the specific conditions established by the leadership, *and*
4. they will not at any time visit or be present at any other place on the church premises where children or youth might be present (*at any approved activity with the presence of a child you must be in eye contact with an adult*), other than the place used for the Sunday public meeting and except for arriving and departing the property, *and*
5. they will only accept offers of hospitality from families within the church community with vulnerable persons where you have personally advised the responsible persons (*hosts, parents, guardians*) of your conviction and reporting requirements and the offer of hospitality is still extended

Failure to comply with the above conditions will result in a decision to prohibit

.....  
from attending any Sunday public meetings/and /or other activities of the church.

**DISCLOSURE**

Information about ..... will only be disclosed to:

- Church Leadership
- Professional Standards Officer -Queensland Baptists
- Persons responsible for the welfare and safety of children or youth within the church
- .....

Notwithstanding this, the Church Leadership and /or the Professional Standards Officer – Queensland Baptists reserves the right to disclose this agreement to any organisation or person within or outside the church, where they consider it necessary to ensure the welfare or safety of any person.

**SIGNATURES:**

**Date:**

**Person of Concern:**

**Church Leader:**

**Professional Standards Officer:**

**Queensland Baptists**



## AUTHORITY TO RELEASE INFORMATION - FORM E

I, ..... whose date of birth is .....

hereby agree to provide to and/or authorize The Baptist Union of Queensland (Queensland Baptists) on behalf of ..... Baptist Church to obtain private and confidential information about me as described below.

SIGNED BY ME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

WITNESSED BY: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

### The information requested

- (1) Report relating to personal and relevant offending history
- (2) A summary history of the offence/s resulting in these orders.
- (3) Psychologist Report/s in relation to matters above.

Furthermore I agree to actively participate in any specific assessments to inform and assist the church leaders to make a risk assessment of a person who has a known court history of an offence against a minor so that they can provide appropriate supervision and monitoring of the person while involved in a church community setting. I understand and support an approach that might involve significant others (e.g. partner, family and friends) in this assessment.

I also agree that any contribution made by me for all or part of the costs of this assessment, ownership of any report will be primarily held by The Baptist Union of Queensland (Queensland Baptists), and discretionary release of all or parts will be similarly invested.

### Release of information details

To: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your assistance

**Australian Baptists' Safe Ministry – Persons of Concern  
Form F: Self-Disclosure**

Name

Current address

Phone

When did the offense/s occur?

What was/were the age/s and gender/s of the person/s affected?

How did you have access to the person/s affected e.g. via a ministry role, family contact, etc.?

What was the frequency, i.e., one or multiple incidents? If multiple, state the number.

Please describe these incidents or events.

What is your marital and family status?

What is your occupational status?

What are the names of people and roles of people currently know about your offences?

Can you suggest any names of people in the church who could be part of your accountability group?

What services and ministries do you want to attend?



**Rev. Ken Conwell**  
**Professional Standards Officer**  
PO Box 6166  
Mitchelton QLD 4053  
Phone: 3354 5600  
Mobile: 0408 152 394  
Email: ken.conwell@qb.org.au

xxxxxxxxxxxxx 2017

XXXXXXXXXXXXX  
XXXXXXXXXXXXX  
XXXXXXXXXXXXX

Dear xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

**Request for Report – xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx DOB 19/7/1974**

I am writing to you in connection with the above who I understand was a client of yours following his release from prison. In order to provide xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx with an opportunity to participate in the life of the xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx church, part of the Baptist process includes a risk assessment to help establish an individual accountability and safety agreement between xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx, the church and Queensland Baptists.

xxxxxxxxxxxxx has provided the necessary consent for release of information (see attached) and I am requesting your assistance in providing this report. I trust you are in a position to provide us with a report that would encompass the following:

- Personal and offending history including information collected from various sources such as police, sentencing remarks, prison system reports etc.
- A risk assessment including static and dynamic recidivism levels
- Any risk management recommendations with reference to latent risks, protective strategies, structures and relationships.

I recognise that providing such a report will incur a fee for the work done and your invoice in this regard can be sent to Queensland Baptists.

If you have any questions in respect to this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me direct.

Sincerely

Rev. Ken Conwell



**QUEENSLAND POLICE SERVICE**  
**APPLICATION FOR A COPY OF**  
**OWN QUEENSLAND CRIMINAL HISTORY**

QP 0349A  
07/19  
Δ1

**Please ensure your Application is fully completed and legible. Failure to supply the requested information may mean that the QPS is unable to process this form. For ENQUIRIES contact a Client Liaison Officer by email: [pic.certificates@police.qld.gov.au](mailto:pic.certificates@police.qld.gov.au) or phone: (07) 3364 6262.**

**A copy of own Queensland criminal history    \$61.70**  
**NOTE: Does NOT include interstate criminal history and is NOT for employment purposes.**

**Proof of identity—Please ensure a copy of ONE of the following forms of identification is attached to this application:**

1.  Your current **driver licence**                      Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Issuing state: \_\_\_\_\_  
OR
2.  Your current **passport** –  
including photograph and signature                      Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Issuing country: \_\_\_\_\_  
OR
3.  **Two other forms of identification bearing your signature**                      Documents produced:  
(1) \_\_\_\_\_  
(2) \_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant details**

**Family name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Given name(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Other names you have been known by:** \_\_\_\_\_

(such as name at birth, alias(es), previous married name(s))

**Date of birth:** \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ (DD / MM / YY)      **Male**       **Female**

**Place of birth:** Town: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Country: \_\_\_\_\_

**Postal address:** \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

**Daytime contact:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**If the copy of own criminal history is required to be forwarded to your legal advisor, state name and address of legal advisor:**

\_\_\_\_\_

*In consideration of the issue and supply of the document requested herein, I hereby undertake and declare that I will not take any action either civil or criminal against the Commissioner of the Queensland Police Service or Police Service of any other State or Territory of the Commonwealth of Australia, or of any other country, or authorise or cause or procure or permit any person on my behalf to take any action concerning anything had or done by them in relation to this application.*

<p>_____ (Applicant signature)</p>	<p>Date: _____ (DD / MM / YY) (DD / MM / YY)</p>
<p>_____ (Witness signature)</p>	<p>_____ (Witness name)</p>

**Privacy Collection Statement**  
The Queensland Police Service (QPS) is collecting your information for the processing of your application for your Queensland criminal history. The collection of this information is authorised by the *Police Service Administration Act 1990* (Qld). The information on this form will not be used or disclosed without your consent unless such use or disclosure is authorised or required by law, including the *Police Service Administration Act 1990* (Qld) and the *Information Privacy Act 2009* (Qld). You have a right to access personal information that QPS holds about you, subject to any exceptions in relevant legislation. If you wish to seek access to your personal information or inquire about the handling of your personal information, please contact Right to Information and Privacy by email at [rti@police.qld.gov.au](mailto:rti@police.qld.gov.au).

**Police use only** (Ensure application is fully completed and legible)

**Name of applicant:** \_\_\_\_\_

Copy of proof of identity must be attached to this form:    **Attached**

Fee paid: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Receipt no.: \_\_\_\_\_ Police station: \_\_\_\_\_

**Send completed application and attachment(s) IMMEDIATELY and DIRECTLY to: Police Information Centre, GPO BOX 1440, BRISBANE Qld 4001.**

**CONFIDENTIAL**

FORM I

**INDIVIDUAL ACCOUNTABILITY & SAFETY AGREEMENT**  
**TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

**REGARDING THE INVOLVEMENT OF:**

**NAME**

**IN THE**

..... has been worshipping and involved in the above stated Church. This Individual Accountability and Safety Agreement is to record the conditions upon which ..... agrees to fully abide by, in order to attend the ..... Baptist Church.

**1      **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS****

.....acknowledges that he/she has been convicted of .....(nature of offence/s).....on .....(Date of offence/s) ..... (Outcome/criminal process) .....

It is acknowledged by all parties of the need for this agreement between the church and .....in order to as far as possible ensure the wellbeing of the congregation and the ongoing spiritual life of .....has agreed to be the contact and accountability person on behalf of the Church Leadership Team.

**2      .....(INSERT FULL NAME).....**agrees to:****

2.1    Only attend the ...(specify services)... and/or ...(specify activities)..... unless otherwise agreed to and approved by Church Leadership.

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- 2.2 Decline offers of hospitality from families within the church community where children might be present and where the parents offering hospitality are unaware of the circumstances, which have necessitated this agreement.
- 2.3 Not to engage in any church activity where children or youth might be present without prior agreement/approval and specific conditions established by the Church Leadership Team.
- 2.4 Not to accept nomination for election to any leadership role within the church.
- 2.5 Understands that any complaints against him will be taken seriously and treated appropriately.
- 2.6 To meet or make contact with the (insert name from) Accountability team/person). as established by the leadership team/accountability person.

**3 COMMITMENT OF THE CHURCH TO .....**

- 3.1 The Church commits itself to provide pastoral supervision, monitoring and support to ..... and his/her family and not to place ..... in any situation where he/she may be alone with children or youth.
- 3.2 Pastoral supervision and support to.....(Accountability person)..... will be provided by the Church Leadership.

**4 DISCLOSURE**

- 4.1 This agreement will be kept confidential except as follows.
- 4.2 ..... understands that the Church Leadership will disclose the details of this agreement:
  - To all persons undertaking pastoral supervision and support of .....

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- To persons responsible for the welfare and safety of children or youth involved in Church activities (as outlined and established by the church leadership, Professional Standards Director and the person of concern);
- To the members of the immediate church community as/if requested;
- To the Professional Standards Officer (or equivalent) of the State based Baptist Union.

4.3 ..... understands that the Church Leadership and/or the Professional Standards Officer of the State Baptist Union may disclose this agreement to any organisation or person, within or outside of the Church, where they consider that it is necessary to ensure the welfare and safety of any person.

4.4 ..... understands that if/she he breaches any condition of this agreement the Church Leadership may disclose this to any person involved in the Congregation as well as the State based Professional Standards Officer as deemed appropriate.

4.5 The disclosure can be verbal or by providing a copy of this agreement.

**5 CESSATION OF INVOLVEMENT OF .....  
IN THE CHURCH**

5.1 If Leadership become aware of ..... attending another church, the leaders of that church will be informed of this agreement.

5.2 If ..... breaches any provision of this agreement he/she will not participate in any Church activity unless another agreement is in place.



## Role of Accountability Group with Reference to Persons of Concern - FORM J

### 1. Understand the Process (refer brochure)

### 2. Monitoring the Person of Concern at Church services/events in line with the terms of the Accountability Agreement (see de-identified summary of terms of the agreement)

This agreement is designed to:

- Govern relationship of POC to the church
- Give certainty to the POC in relation to involvement in church community
- Enable the church to fulfil its duty of care to the congregation.

### 3. Help the POC to be responsible for:

- Spiritual growth and development through prayer and support.
  - Management of temptation
  - Integration within the life of the church and community (within the bounds of the accountability agreement)
  - Becoming a responsible, productive and accountable person before God.
- (In other words Discipleship with a particular focus around the struggles/temptations the POC faces)

### 4. Hold the POC accountable by helping him to Identify and Manage Risks/Temptation

- This will mean asking questions about how he is travelling – the nature of his daily activities etc. and how these may place him in a situation of temptation/risk etc.
- Have there been any situations/temptations where he has found it a struggle – are there risky behaviours in which he has participated?
- Talking through these situations will help him come up with strategies to avoid such behaviours.
- Identify any practical issues arising out of the terms of his Agreement that may need addressing further.
- Be aware of the possibility of manipulative behaviour on the part of the POC.

### 5. Practical Considerations:

- Meet periodically with POC to see how he is travelling and address any issues (perhaps bi-monthly)
- Draw up rosters for monitoring as needed
- Give the POC the freedom to make contact when needing support and encouragement
- Record details of any phone contacts/ counselling etc.
- Meet separately from POC (as required) in order to deal with any issues needing discussion without the POC's presence
- Support one another in prayer and practically
- Don't neglect your own spiritual life.

### 6. Breaches

If the POC breaches the plan in a way that is not a re-offence, then the accountability group will do one or more of the following:

- **Provide feedback** and explore the reasons for why the breach may have occurred by asking questions such as:  
Why do you feel this has happened?  
What is going on in his life (pressures etc) that may have caused him to behave in this way?  
What is motivating him at present to act in this way?
- **Help the POC to identify strategies** that can be used next time he is faced with the same situation so he can better handle the risk.
- **Refer the POC to a specialist** (e.g. psychologist) for breaches the POC continues to struggle with – if already seeing a specialist, request them to focus on this particular behaviour
- **Institute Sanctions** for ongoing breaches which are not addressed (e.g. Not allowed to services/activities for a period)

## 7. POC's Family

There are a number of things to be aware of where a POC is part of a family which may be important to consider in your ongoing relationship with the POC. Pressures caused by these things can impact how well the accountability arrangement functions. These include:

- Stigma faced because of having a POC in the family
- Victimisation of POC's family where the offence is public knowledge.
- Financial and other losses suffered by the family as a consequence of POC's actions
- Breakdown in family relationships with spouse/children
- Sense of isolation, loss of confidence and loss of self-esteem faced by families of POC's.

## 8. Values for the Group

### a. Love:

God's command is for love, the whole law and prophets can be summed up by Jesus' words "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind and strength, and love each other as your love yourself." (Luke 10:27) The group will love each other by supporting each other in prayer and by being available for each other.

### b. Respect:

As loved creations made in the image of our heavenly father, and made new again in and through the perfect life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus and gift of the Holy Spirit we will respect each other as brothers and sisters in Christ (1 Tim 5:1). Respect each other in action and deed, allowing the options of individuals to be expressed and explored. We will use words that build each other up and encourage (Ephesians 4:29).

### c. Non-judgmental accountability –acceptance and change:

All people need the support and social accountability. As relational beings we need to love each other by exhorting in love, rebuking gently, and celebrating victories over temptations with each other, "be patient, bearing with one another in love." (Ephesians 4:2, 2 Tim 4:2, Titus 2:15). The group is not a courtroom, "Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned" (Luke 6:37).

### d. Restorative justice:

The group is about providing a place of healing, a place of restoring the participant, not to administer punishment or judgment: i.e. we "need to remember that offenders were once members of the community and that, with appropriate rehabilitation and monitoring, many of them can likely reclaim some aspect of their former lives." (quoted from Circles of Support and Accountability gathering Report Calgary, Alberta, January 14-17, 2008 accessed 2.2.09)



**Annual Review of Individual Safety Plan / Accountability Agreement - FORM K**

**Date:**

**Review for ..... at .....Church**

During the past year the accountability team met \_\_\_\_\_ times.

During the year these risks for reoffending thinking and acting where discussed and worked on:

Strategies that where successfully used to overcome risks were:

List breaches of the Safety plan during the year:

List sanctions:

**Comment on the following if appropriate:**

Relationship with God in the past year:

Relationship with the congregation in the past year

Effectiveness of the safety plan in the past year

Effectiveness of the accountability group in the past year:



I,.....being the.....

of..... Church

hereby confirm that Persons of Concern (Individual Accountability and Safety Agreements) policy and process recommended by Queensland Baptists has been fully explained to us.

We understand the process involved and have consulted with the relevant leaders of the church and as a leadership we have decided not to implement the policy and will manage the matter independently of the services of the Professional Standards Officer for Queensland Baptists.

We also confirm that we understand that our liability insurance policy does not cover us for any legal liability arising out of abuse caused by a known offender.

Signed.....

Full Name.....

Date.....