

# ChurchSafe and Safe Places Manual

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Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement  
Australasian Union Conference

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This manual draws on a body of 'best practice' experience and literature (See Supporting Documents and Standards below) by which the policy and content is informed and shaped. Although no sources are cited in the text of this manual, significant resources have been drawn upon courtesy of Safe Ministry Resources (SMR) and Safe Place Services (VIC). If you believe material should be cited, or listed in the Appendix, please contact ChurchSafe via e-mail at [churchsafe@sdarm.org.au](mailto:churchsafe@sdarm.org.au)

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### **Supporting Documents and Standards**

- Safe Ministry Manual 2015 (Safe Ministry Resources: [www.smr.org.au](http://www.smr.org.au))
- Safe Place Services' website, at URL [www.safeplaceservices.org.au](http://www.safeplaceservices.org.au)
- Safe Place Services Local Church Policy "Safer Environments for Children and Young People"

Access up-to-date ChurchSafe policy and information at:

**[my.sdarm.org.au/ChurchSafe](http://my.sdarm.org.au/ChurchSafe)**



## Part 1 – ChurchSafe

## Contents

Chapter 1: Getting Started.....	5
Definitions .....	6
Chapter 2: Legal Framework .....	7
1. Principles .....	7
2. Other Acts of Parliament .....	7
Chapter 3: Safer Ministry Policy .....	8
Chapter 4: Code of Conduct.....	10
Chapter 5: ChurchSafe Contact/Team.....	12
Chapter 6: Appointment of Leaders, Officers and Volunteers .....	13
Pre-selection Considerations .....	13
Check Requirements .....	13
Selection and Appointment of Officers .....	13
Safe Ministry Requirements .....	14
Chapter 7: Establishing and Maintaining Safer Environments for Children & Young People .....	15
Background.....	15
1. Two-Adult Requirement and Ratios of Staff/Volunteers.....	15
2. Rooms, Venues and Equipment.....	15
3. The Conduct of Adult Staff and Volunteers .....	15
4. Processes to Maintain Care and Protection Must Be Followed, Including: .....	16
5. Safe Programs and Activities .....	16
Chapter 8: Responding to Children and Young People ‘At Risk’ of Harm or Neglect .....	17
Responding to Signs, Indicators, and Disclosures of Harm or Neglect.....	17
Future Church Roles if Claims are Established, Proven or Sustained .....	17
Support for Victims/Survivors of Child Abuse .....	17
Chapter 9: Resolving Misunderstandings & Conflicts (Assisted Approach).....	19
Scope .....	19
Our Commitment .....	19
A Pathways Approach.....	19
Chapter 10: Responding to Allegations of Serious Misconduct and/or Abuse .....	22
A. Rationale, Guidelines and Principles .....	22
B. Responding: Definitions and Response Team .....	23
C. Variables to Consider .....	25
D. The Process .....	26
E. Flowcharts .....	29
Form Use, Description & Purpose .....	34

# Chapter 1: Getting Started

1. AUC to appoint:
  - a. A Case Response Pool (CRP) of not less than 12 persons, at least two from each Field/Conference under the auspices of the AUC.
  - b. A ChurchSafe Contact Team for receiving and reporting of concerns of misconduct/grievances/abuse and debriefing purposes.
  - c. A SafePlaces Team to oversee the general WHS process (Section 2 of this Manual) and to be the contact point for WHS issues.
2. Conferences/Fields to appoint:
  - a. At least one ChurchSafe Contact Person.
  - b. A SafePlaces Coordinator/Representative.
3. Local Churches to:
  - a. Appoint a local SafePlaces Coordinator/Representative/Team (eg. Deacons/Ushers).
  - b. Plan dates for implementation meetings.
  - c. Appoint a ChurchSafe Contact/Team.
    - i. Church leadership appoint and communicate who the team is with whole church.
    - ii. Local church may nominate Conference/Field ChurchSafe Contact as local contact.
  - d. Adopt ChurchSafe Safer Ministry policy & procedures at business meeting.
  - e. Provide the whole church with a copy of this ChurchSafe Manual.
4. Local Church SafePlaces Coordinator/Team to:
  - a. Communicate the approved AUC procedure for handling complaints/disputes.
  - b. Communicate WHS policy & procedure.
  - c. Ensure church officers and all department/program leaders understand policy & procedures for incidents - at a local church ministry level.
  - d. Ensure that people from each department or program running an event have a basic first aid certificate.
  - e. Ensure that an up-to-date first aid kit is on-hand.
  - f. Ensure a copy of your food safety guide (See Chapter 14) displayed in a visible manner.
5. Ensure all Church Leaders and Department Officers at all levels have attended a ChurchSafe Safer Ministry workshop or equivalent.
  - a. All leaders/officers must have done this in their first year of service, refresher every 3 years.
6. All leaders/officers ensure they follow the reporting abuse and misconduct process.
7. All departments & church officers at all levels to complete the Approved Missionary Program Form (Form CS4). This form is to be completed on an annual basis.
8. Screen and appoint leaders/officers using the approved procedure.
9. Program and Event Leaders to use checklists/forms and policies outlined in this Manual.

## Definitions

**AUC:** Australasian Union Conference, Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement.

**Approval For Missionary Service Form:** a process of written accountability, whereby the senior church leaders approve programs/events to take place in the church/organisation's name.

**Case Manager:** A person nominated by the Case Resource Group to manage the administrative responsibilities of the complaints process, including preparation of any CRG written reports.

**Case Response Group (CRG):** A group of three persons appointed from the ChurchSafe Case Resource Pool to hear complaints.

**ChurchSafe Case Resource Pool (CRP):** A group of suitably qualified persons, approved by the AUC Council, from which Case Response Groups are selected.

**Child:** a person who is under the age of 18 years.

**ChurchSafe Approved Leader:** has been through a recruitment process, understands responsibilities, is supervised via Code of conduct and is an accountable team player.

**Complainant:** Person making a complaint.

**Departmental Leaders:** Oversee a program or a group of programs and/or events in the church at local, Field and Union Conference level, for example the Sabbath School Department or Youth Department leaders. Care should be taken in the selection of those appointed to those roles, as such roles contain significant positional power.

**PSOA:** Person Subject of Allegation.

**Safe Environment:** discharges duty of care by taking steps to keep all those in our care safe from harm, including e.g. spiritual, physical, sexual, emotional abuse (including bullying) or neglect.

**ChurchSafe Contact/Team:** responsible for receiving and responding to safer ministry type complaints and concerns of misconduct, grievances and abuse issues, for arranging appropriate pastoral care and following up in these matters. They are also responsible for oversight of the implementation of the Safer Ministry Policy (found in Chapter 3 of this manual) and processes in their respective levels of administration (AUC, Conferences/Fields, Local Churches).

**Safer Ministry Program:** all risks have been assessed and events thought through and planned. These programs have had the ChurchSafe policy applied to all church workers (paid/ volunteer workers) associated with that particular ministry in our church.

**Senior Church Leadership:** Church Board, Ministers/Pastors, Elders and Deacons.

**Unit:** An administrative level of SDARM church governance such as an Organised Group, Local Church, Mission Field, State Conference, or Union Conference.

**SafePlaces Coordinator/Representative/Team:** is responsible for the oversight of the implementation of the Safe Places programs in their respective conference/field and local church levels.

# Chapter 2: Legal Framework

## 1. Principles

The local church has a duty to adhere to certain principles enshrined in legislation (Acts of Parliament) and established court and civil law (cased based on precedent rulings). These principles include:

- **Duty of Care:** Means any legal responsibility that the local church has to provide for and ensure the safety and wellbeing of: (i) those who organise activities and programs; and (ii) those who participate in them;
- **Reasonable Standard of Care:** Refers to the level of care that a leader or participant may reasonably expect that the local church will take when planning and approving a church-sponsored activity or program;
- **Reasonable Foresight:** Refers to the responsibility that the local church has, when planning activities that involve children and young people, to: (i) identify the likelihood and consequences of reasonably foreseeable risks/dangers; and (ii) implement strategies to prevent, avert, or minimize any potential adverse impacts from such assessed risks/dangers;
- **Vicarious Liability:** Means any legal liability that the local church may be determined to have for the actions and conduct of those who act on its behalf (e.g. staff, volunteers, appointed church officers, or contractors);
- **Negligence:** May be found to exist when it is established that the local church has a duty of care; that the said duty of care was breached; and that a specified loss or damages were experienced by a person or persons as a result; and
- **Confidentiality and Privacy:** As outlined in the principles of the Privacy Act and other relevant privacy legislation or regulations (Commonwealth, 1998; New Zealand, 2003).

## 2. Other Acts of Parliament

There are several Acts (legislation) of Parliament that outline: definitions of child abuse and neglect; violent and sexual offences; child-protection processes and notification requirements; the age-of-consent for sexual activity; criminal history check requirements; registration of sexual offenders; rules of evidence; victims of crime services and (financial) restitution or compensation/insurance; workplace relations; safety and welfare; and privacy. The local church will adhere to such legislation as applicable within its region or territory.

## Chapter 3: Safer Ministry Policy

We affirm that all people have the right to be emotionally and physically safe, respected, and express their views and opinions at the appropriate time and place. We also live in a country that legislates for people's safety. God calls His body to minister to vulnerable people. God identified classes of vulnerable people who were to be protected and given special care and treatment in society because of their powerlessness (Ex 22:21- 22, Deut 10:17-19, Jer 22:2-4, James 1:27).

Our policy has been developed to help us live out our Biblical mandate and our responsibilities under Australian legislation.

This policy is for use by local churches, and organised groups throughout the Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement in Australia and New Zealand. This policy applies to members, officers, staff, volunteers, attendees, and participants in the local church and its programs and activities.

Our Policy Aims To:

- minimise the risk of abuse, misconduct and the misuse of positional power.
- ensure that all cases of suspected abuse and misconduct are handled thoroughly.
- ensure that leaders and programs are safe.
- ensure that all people are respected and valued.

We Commit To:

### **1. Safe recruitment of church leaders (paid and voluntary).**

- a. We will screen all prospective leaders in our departments and ministries, before they are appointed. (ie. relevant working with children's check/vulnerable people/police check as legally required).
- b. We will have a minimum church attendance policy for all prospective officers and leaders, including transferring members, who have indicated a willingness to work with children.

### **2. Adequate training of officers and leaders.**

- a. We require that all church officers and leaders, including children/youth leaders, attend a safer ministry awareness workshop or equivalent within their first year of office or service and attend a refresher workshop or equivalent every 3 years.
- b. We require all officers/leaders attend additional department/officer-specific training as deemed necessary by AUC policies.

### **3. Continued supervision of church officers/leaders.**

- a. We commit to ongoing leadership training, supervision and support for officers/leaders.
- b. All officers/leaders will agree to follow our Code of Conduct.

### **4. Responding to allegations of risk of harm (abuse) and serious misconduct.**

- a. All Officers/leaders will report disclosures or suspicions of child abuse, in accord with our church procedures.
- b. All disclosures or allegations of a criminal nature will be reported to the relevant Statutory authorities such as the Police and Government Child-Protection Services and Church authorities.



- c. Where a leader has an allegation of ministry misconduct made against them, we will provide support to alleged victims and perpetrators and seek appropriate denominational help for a just and fair resolution.

**5. Safer environments in our ministry events, programs and departments.**

- a. We will serve participants as servants of Christ, commit to the good news of Jesus Christ and lead in spiritually non-abusive ways.
- b. We will encourage participant contributions by facilitating involvement in the programs and the activities ensuring that we value their input and concerns.
- c. We will obtain appropriate information relating to the program participants under 18, including children's health and family situation, to ensure that we are able to care for their physical and emotional needs.
- d. All leaders will discharge their duty of care through the use of forms, checklists and templates for establishment and maintenance of safer environments in our church.
- e. A ChurchSafe Coordinator, or Team, will be appointed at the Conference/Field level. Local churches will appoint a ChurchSafe Coordinator. In lieu of appointing their own ChurchSafe Coordinator, local churches may nominate the Conference/Field ChurchSafe Coordinator as their ChurchSafe Coordinator. Those responsible will ensure this Safer Ministry Policy is implemented according to the procedures outlined in the ChurchSafe Manual, including the ChurchSafe screening process for appointment of church officers/leaders (please refer to Chapter 6).
- f. A SafePlaces Coordinator, or Team, will be appointed at the Conference/Field level. Local churches will appoint a SafePlaces Coordinator. In lieu of appointing their own SafePlaces Coordinator, local churches may nominate the Conference/Field SafePlaces Coordinator as their SafePlaces Coordinator. Those responsible will implement: WHS procedures, including fire safety, building safety, first aid, food safety, safe transport, incident and emergency procedures.

## Chapter 4: Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct outlines ministry appropriate boundaries, rather than assuming that people know the boundaries. It applies to all church leaders/workers—both volunteer and paid.

As the leaders of this church we acknowledge that everyone who attends our churches needs to be confident that they will be cared for, nurtured and encouraged as they grow and at the same time, protected from spiritual, physical, & emotional harm.

Therefore we commit to the following ministry standards:

1. We serve out of a relationship with God by:
  - joining regularly in the life and ministry of the Church.
  - studying the Scriptures in private and in groups.
  - praying regularly in private and in fellowship with and for the people and ministry of the Church.
  - giving of our time and finances to the work of the Church, as an expression of our gratitude to God.
2. We serve others in the context of healthy relationships by:
  - loving and caring for our families; paying attention to the effect of service on them.
  - treating others with respect; teach and exercise authority respectfully.
  - upholding confidentiality; do not disclose to anyone (including spouse), any confidential information without the consent of the person providing the information. (There is an exception where there is a legal obligation or a duty of care issue.)
  - being a team player; cooperating with other officers and department leaders; there will be areas that overlap, and someone else may have the advice that you need.
  - using words that build up; do not ridicule or embarrass people.
  - avoiding ongoing counselling of people with whom we have pastoral (ministry) relationships.
  - making alternative arrangements for pastoral ministry for any person with whom we develop an appropriate romantic relationship.
3. As Christian Leaders we will:
  - be accountable to our team, watch out for each other and protect each other's integrity, e.g. never alone with one child or vulnerable adult.
  - act in the best interests of those we serve.
  - treat every program participant equally, 'no favourites'.
  - communicate with integrity, including accountable and wise use of electronic communication,
  - commit to following our church guidelines for electronic communication.
  - acknowledge when we are out of our depth, do not possess the required skill set in difficult pastoral situations, such as helping a victim of abuse, or a person who needs professional counselling, and seek help from a supervisor or denominational leader.
  - not take property belonging to others, including intellectual property (copyright).
  - not knowingly making false, misleading, deceptive, or defamatory statements.
  - not engage in bullying, emotional abuse, harassment, physical abuse, sexual abuse, sexual misconduct, sexual grooming or spiritual abuse of any person, including your own family.
  - not act violently or intentionally provoke violence when engaged in civil disobedience.
  - be responsible in our use of prescription medications and medical services.
  - abstain from the use of alcohol, tobacco, caffeine and prohibited substances.
  - act with sexual purity. Sexuality is a gift from God. We will express our sexuality in healthy, consensual and God-directed ways. All romantic and/or physical interactions will be in harmony with the highest standards of Biblical morality.
  - act with financial integrity, including having accountable and transparent systems in place for financial matters.
  - not seek personal advantage or financial gain from your position, other than in wages,

recognised allowances and deductions.

- disclose to the church leadership if we are being or have been investigated for any criminal offences or have any knowledge of serious criminal activity.
- not use or publish photos or videos of a child on church property or at church activities/ events without church authorisation and parental/guardian consent (see Form CS5).

## When the Code is breached

### *Minor Breach*

Everyone is capable of sin but can repent and be forgiven (1 John 1:8-9). It stands to reason then, that the Code of Conduct can be breached. When this happens in an area that is not a breach of civil or criminal law, simply cease the conduct. If this is difficult, the person should see the leader or supervisor they report to about receiving help (eg. counselling). In some cases it may be necessary to step a person aside from their duties whilst this takes place. It is crucial to deal with such matters confidentially and sensitively.

### *Unknown Breach*

Not all leaders/officers will understand 'unacceptable' behaviours. Even after having had the code explained to them, some may be unaware they are exhibiting unacceptable behaviours. Leaders need to be open to correction and humble enough to modify behaviours so as to not discredit the gospel. As above, stepping a person aside from their duties may be necessary.

### *Constant Breach*

There are breaches that are not a breach of civil or criminal law, but still unacceptable behaviour in a ministry context. Where a leader has been made aware of their behaviour and yet refuses to change:

- the local Church Elder/Leader meets with the person for behaviour review meetings. Communicate required behaviour change (no more than 3 meetings).
- If behaviour continues, a small group of church leaders are to arrange a meeting to address the behaviour. Stepping aside is appropriate at this point.
- If the behaviour/s continues beyond this meeting, then respectfully, and upholding confidentiality, the person will be stood down for a set period. They will be offered help in changing their behaviour via counseling if they are willing. Written notes of all meetings to be carefully taken and a copy given to all parties.

### *Breaches of the law or allegations of abuse:*

Allegations of abuse or serious misconduct are to be referred to the appropriate government authorities, inline with AUC approved processes.

## Concerns Register

- i. The ChurchSafe Coordinator shall create and maintain a Concerns Register, which shall be accessible by all ChurchSafe officers, all heads of units, and leaders of AUC Youth, Children and Education Departments.
- ii. The Concerns Register shall contain lists of each of the following: Persons of Interest, Negative WWCC Notices, Persons Stepping Aside, and Persons Unable to Work With Children (other reasons).
- iii. If a member has breached the Code of Conduct, there is a three-step process above that is to be followed. An unsuccessful outcome should result in a note being made on the Concerns Register, section "Stepping Aside (Down)."
- iv. If a member is subject of an allegation of misconduct or abuse that has not yet been resolved, including having stepped down as part of an investigation, this should also be noted on the Concerns Register as someone who is unable to hold office.
- v. If a member has received a negative notice for Working With Children / Vulnerable People, this information should be placed on the Concerns Register.
- vi. If a member is not able to hold office or work with children because they refuse a WWCC or in case there is a reason they are unable to hold office but that is confidential, this can also be listed on the Concerns Register.

## Chapter 5: ChurchSafe Contact/Team

These are appointed people to whom congregation members can bring ChurchSafe type concerns.

They are:

1. The contact point for local churches in relation to ChurchSafe type concerns, i.e. child-protection and concerns about adults in relation to misconduct and/or abuse.
2. The local church contact point for denominational ChurchSafe matters.
3. A resource for assisting with the implementation of relevant processes in responding to complaints, including police/government reporting and denominational AUC Policies and procedures.

They must act in accordance with State and Federal legislation and also with AUC reporting requirements.

At a local level - the size of the team will depend upon the size of the church. For most churches a team of 2-4 people with appropriate experience and or skills will be suitable. In the case of smaller churches, for example under 60 people this role may be one designated to a single person.

Other possible roles for the Local ChurchSafe Contact Person/Team may include:

1. Promote awareness of and adherence to Policy and Procedures.
2. Assist in the church's selection process.
3. Maintain a database of local church members who have attended a safer ministry awareness workshop or equivalent.

# Chapter 6: Appointment of Leaders, Officers and Volunteers<sup>1</sup>

This section outlines requirements to ensure that suitable people are appointed to work with children and young people. This includes a commitment by staff and volunteers to adhere to the Code of Conduct.

Thorough consideration in selection of all church workers is vital. By being thorough, churches are ensuring that those attending programs are being ministered to by people who are suited to their particular role and who are familiar with the ChurchSafe Program.

## Pre-selection Considerations

- All appointments should be to clearly defined roles, having clear expectations and defined start and end dates for the position.
- Rostered helpers: (ad hoc helpers on a roster) help once a month or less; not a part of the regular ministry team; must not be given responsibility for or left alone with a group of children or other vulnerable people.
- Team members: appointed by the church to work in a department or program; must be 18 years of age or older if caring for minors; accountable to their department leader or church elder.
- Junior team members: (under 18) can take on valuable roles under adult supervision.
- Department leaders: responsible for ensuring their department and programs operate according to the policies and guidelines.
- Senior leadership: Local Church Board, Church Elders or Ministers, who are ultimately responsible to oversee Department leaders and all the events/programs of the local church.
- Where it is possible, have a minimum qualifying period under which any prospective non-member volunteer must be an adherent e.g. attendance at the church for a minimum of 12 months.

## Check Requirements

- A current check (eg. Working With Children Check, Working with Vulnerable People, Ochre Card, Blue Card, Children's Worker Safety Check, etc) is a requirement for all positions mandated by state law and strongly recommended for all other positions.
- It is a requirement that all officers provide full details of their check and give full permission to link the check to our organisation as required by state legislation.
- A person who has declined a check or is unable to work with minors (under 18 years of age) must not be elected or given a position that involves leadership, decision making (that involves minors) or working with or supervising minors as required by state law.

## Selection and Appointment of Officers

We ensure safe appointment of our employees, leaders, officers and volunteers by:

### a) New Officers, Employees and Volunteers

All officers, employees and volunteers are required to view the ChurchSafe Introduction Video and complete the ChurchSafe Declaration before beginning to serve in their position. The video can be viewed individually or as a group together. While completing the online declaration is preferable, the Form CS2 ChurchSafe Declaration may be completed instead and given to the Field, Conference or AUC ChurchSafe Officer.

### b) Pre-Election

To assist with the selection of officers, the outgoing Secretary or ChurchSafe Officer is to prepare a list of members and clearly list who has a current WWCC and who has declined or is unable to obtain a check. This list is to be given to the Nominating Committee and

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<sup>1</sup> Full review of Chapter 6 accepted by AUC Council, 24 March 2024

Representative/Minister before sitting or the Representative/Minister in the absence of a Nominating Committee.

Where a person does not hold a current check but has not declined and is willing and able to obtain a check, once they have been elected to a position, they are required to complete initial screening within 6 weeks and before taking up their office.

### **c) Event Personnel**

To ensure that all employees and volunteers hold a current check as required by law, we require that event organisers ensure that all leading out or supervising with the program are screened prior to the event. It is best practice to screen individuals prior to asking them to lead out or supervise with the program.

An internal screening check can be done using mySDARM. A login can be made available to all officers and event organisers; please see the AUC Secretary to arrange a user ID and login permissions. The Field, Conference or AUC ChurchSafe Officers are able to assist with screening event personnel.

If you wish to ask an individual to lead out or supervise with an event program who does not hold a current check, please seek assistance from the state ChurchSafe Officer in which the individual resides or where they will serve; this will depend on the requirements of the state where the event will be held.

## **Safe Ministry Requirements**

Requirements to ensure safe ministry, accountability and training of officers and volunteers.

### **1. External Chair at Elections**

- a. All units to be organised or reorganised are chaired by a representative from the body above the unit to be organised, provided that they are not a member of that body (Church/Field/Conference). Having a representative outside the unit to be organised helps with accountability, neutrality and enables safer selection of officers.
- b. If a Minister/Elder represents both church and field or conference levels or Field/Conference and Union, another representative should chair who is not available for election as head of unit in the respective church/Field/Conference.

### **2. Induction and Training**

- a. Ensure all leaders, officers and volunteers have received appropriate induction training to enable them to successfully fulfil their role, including job description and clear instruction on the duties that the role entails. It is also important that they fully complete the ChurchSafe Training Induction Course within 3 months of selection.
- b. All officers are required to complete the ChurchSafe Training Induction Course and agree to the Code of Conduct **every three years**. Please complete the training, read the Code of Conduct and complete the online declaration or complete Form CS2 and give to the appropriate ChurchSafe Officer.

### **3. Accountability and Review**

- a. Accountability: It is important that officers, leaders, volunteers and employees are accountable and responsible in their communication, in their handling of confidential and private information and that they abide by our Code of Conduct and Safer Ministry Policy.
- b. After completing screening, Officers are encouraged and required to share their plans with their respective unit for approval and coordination before advertising and implementing them. Please see chapter 7 for further details.
- c. Review of an officer's compliance with the ChurchSafe policies is an important consideration in their continuing in or being re-elected to a church office, particularly one involving children and youth. It is important that each officer understands their obligations under this policy. Suitable review of ChurchSafe compliance within a unit would be beneficial prior to election.

# Chapter 7: Establishing and Maintaining Safer Environments for Children & Young People

## Background

The purpose of this section is to ensure that safer places and programs are provided for children and young people.

### 1. Two-Adult Requirement and Ratios of Staff/Volunteers

- a. The church requires at least two adults be present when working with children or young people.
- b. In addition to the two-adult requirement, there should be an adequate ratio of staff for an activity when considering (i) the age and developmental abilities of the children and young people; (ii) the venue; (iii) the nature of the activity being undertaken; as well as (iv) factors such as the presence of parents/guardians who may be in attendance with a person in their care.
- c. The following principles should be taken into account in determining an appropriate ratio of staff to children:
  - i. Younger children generally need more supervision and support than older children or young people;
  - ii. Children or young people with special needs may require more supervision or a designated staff/volunteer;
  - iii. Closed-venues or rooms generally require less personnel to maintain supervision than open or outdoor venues with good visibility;
  - iv. High-risk activities may require personnel with specific skills, ability, or training;
  - v. As a guideline, Youth camp-outs (and similar) will generally need to utilise a ratio of at least one (1) adult to five (5) participants, whereas a regularly operating Sabbath School class that is meeting in their usual room may only require one (1) adult to 12 participants provided that the Two-Adult Requirement is adhered to at all times.

### 2. Rooms, Venues and Equipment

- a. Activities for children and young people should be conducted in easily monitored places that are open to external view.
- b. Facilities and equipment for children and young people should also be:
  - i. Safe for use;
  - ii. Clean and hygienic;
  - iii. In sound working order and of good repair;
  - iv. Comply with servicing standards such as electrical safety testing and fire extinguisher servicing requirements;
  - v. Medications, chemicals or other hazardous substances should be stored securely out of reach of children;
  - vi. First-aid equipment should be clearly identified and staff and volunteers aware of its location;
  - vii. An evacuation plan and meeting location should be in place;
  - viii. Ensure that hats and sunscreen are used, as appropriate, during outdoor events and activities.

### 3. The Conduct of Adult Staff and Volunteers

The local Church requires that volunteers and staff who work with children and young people:

- a. Avoid showing favouritism of a particular child, children or young person(s);
- b. Refrain from using physical discipline with a child or young person participating in a Church-run activity, meeting or service;
- c. Adhere to appropriate standards and protocols of conduct when communicating with children or young people via electronic means (for example protocols such as: [i] adhering



- to suitable times for messaging; [ii] directing children and young people to access appropriate services and parents/guardians if issues/ concerns of an emotional, psychological, or psychiatric nature appear to emerge; [iii] refraining from issuing invitations or organising times to meet alone or privately outside of authorised programs, activities, and groups);
- d. Report concerns or inappropriate conduct of another staff person or volunteer to the team leader/coordinator, or someone in authority such as a Board member, the minister, an elder, or the local church ChurchSafe Coordinator;
- e. Abide by and uphold the Code of Conduct;
- f. Follow the reasonable and lawful directions of leaders and people in authority;
- g. Not engage in any illegal activity with a child or young person.

#### 4. Processes to Maintain Care and Protection Must Be Followed, Including:

- a. Responding to bullying and other inappropriate behaviour between children or young people, when it occurs;
- b. Transporting children with due care;
- c. Obtaining parental/guardian consents and permissions, where required, for particular events and activities;
- d. Not using photos or videos of a child taken on church properties or church activities unless church authorisation and the parent/guardian consent has been obtained (see Form CS5).
- e. Recording medical, allergy, dietary requirements, and emergency contact details of parents/guardians for particular events and activities off-site (see Form CS6);
- f. Using sign-in and sign-out forms, as suitable, particularly for activities where parents/guardians drop off, leave the premises, and then return to collect their children afterwards;
- g. Not releasing a child or young person to an adult who is not approved.

#### 5. Safe Programs and Activities

- a. The local church will plan and conduct safe programs with children and young people by: Completing a documented (written) Risk Assessment and Risk Management plan for all high-risk, off-site, or over-night events and activities.
  - i. Submitting the Risk Assessment and Risk Management form to the local church Board or Business Meeting, to obtain permission to proceed, prior to going ahead with the proposed high-risk, off-site, or over-night event or activity.
  - ii. Ensuring that people with appropriate qualifications or skills are present for specialist activities (such as qualifications in First Aid, outdoor recreation, or use of equipment), as relevant.
  - iii. Submitting an Incident Report (see Form WS1) to the church Board/Business Meeting for review, actioning, and the ongoing learning/safety planning following any accident, injury, or adverse event.



# Chapter 8: Responding to Children and Young People ‘At Risk’ of Harm or Neglect

## Responding to Signs, Indicators, and Disclosures of Harm or Neglect

The church requires all staff and volunteers who work with children and young people to:

1. Report any concerns or suspicions that a child is at risk of harm to a team leader or someone in leadership such as the Pastor, an elder, or the local ChurchSafe Contact. For advice on reporting a concern or suspicion to Government child-protection services or Police, contact the Conference/Field or AUC ChurchSafe Contact/Team.
2. Report all disclosures from children and young people alleging harm, abuse, or neglect to the above Government child-protection services and to local Police, and the Conference/Field or AUC ChurchSafe Contact.
3. Seek advice from the Conference/Field or AUC ChurchSafe Contact if there are any doubts, concerns or questions about reporting a situation to Police or to child-protection authorities.
4. Advise the Conference/Field ChurchSafe Contact on all reports/notifications made within the local church.
5. Report all suspicions, disclosures, knowledge, convictions, Court appearances, charges, or allegations about a Church worker (employee), volunteer, or officer committing sexual abuse or assault against a child or young person, to the Conference/Field or AUC ChurchSafe Contact. This can be done via a Person of Interest Form, Formal Allegation Record Form, or an Incident Report Form (Forms CS7, CS8 & CS9).
6. Encourage and support adults who disclose historical abuse to report that to Police and/or to seek support from a counsellor with appropriate skills, experience, and qualifications for working with survivors of sexual abuse and assault. In addition, refer the case to the Conference/Field ChurchSafe Contact who can assist in such instances.

## Future Church Roles if Claims are Established, Proven or Sustained

(Regarding a Person Subject of Allegation (PSOA))

1. According to AUC Bylaws, if there is a determination by statutory authorities (such as a Court or Tribunal) that establishes claims of child sexual abuse or assault or misconduct, then such individual “shall be dismissed from every position of responsibility in the church. Nor shall they, in the future, hold any church office or position or responsibility in the church that places them in contact with children or youth (e.g. Sabbath School, youth and social activities) as this could signal that the church supports this individual as a trustworthy leader.”
2. In addition, it is the Policy of the AUC throughout Australia and New Zealand that a person subject of allegation (PSOA) about whom a ‘positive finding’ or a conviction is determined (by a Court, Tribunal, or Church adjudication process) regarding an offense of a sexual, violent, or pornographic nature against a minor, shall not be permitted to either hold church office or perform a task that is imbued with moral or spiritual authority and leadership. Such office or task includes but is not limited to that of Elder, Deacon, song service leader, preacher/speaker in the pulpit for worship services, ceremonies, and any outreach meeting or other similar program or meetings.

## Support for Victims/Survivors of Child Abuse

### 1. Church-provide Services

- a. The Conference/Field-appointed ChurchSafe Contact/Team can assist a person who experienced abuse or neglect within the Church and its environments find a suitable counsellor or support service within their area. They may also work with the person’s advocate or the local Pastor to ascertain options for referral and support.

- b. The Church recognises that in many instances people may elect to choose counselling and supports that are separate to the Church organisation (or any other religious affiliation). Where this is the case, the ChurchSafe Contact should provide victims the local contact details for appropriate agencies and services.”
2. Victim Support Services and Agencies
- a. Most Governments across Australia and New Zealand operate insurance, victim support, compensation, or restitution programs for people who experience violent crime including victims and survivors of child abuse and neglect. It is not necessary in many instances for a person to be convicted before a Court of law for a victim or survivor to be eligible for assistance, including financial assistance.

# Chapter 9: Resolving Misunderstandings & Conflicts

## (Assisted Approach)

### Scope

For grievances between church members or unchristlike conduct of members, we are instructed to follow Matthew 18:15-20 to the letter. Please refer to the document Pathways To Reconciliation at the end of this manual.

Where personal efforts have not resolved the misunderstanding or conflict, the following process is suggested, where one or two others have been asked to assist.

The process is to be followed when there is a misunderstanding and/or conflict situation between two or more members of our church.

In this process misunderstanding and/or conflict situations are termed a 'grievance' between parties.

A grievance includes but is not limited to the following categories:

- a. A disagreement (including a conflict) between two or more people where at least one person is a member of the church congregation
- b. A perceived offence has been caused by a member of the church congregation
- c. A perception by one person that they have been bullied by a member of the church congregation
- d. Dissatisfaction with the manner in which a church worker (paid or volunteer) has fulfilled their ministry role

### Our Commitment

Our commitment is to provide a protocol for church leaders to address grievances within the church, in a godly, loving, compassionate and procedurally fair manner.

This protocol is not applicable where there is a serious breach of a relevant Code of Conduct. The ChurchSafe Process for responding to allegations of serious misconduct is recommended in such cases.

In cases where crimes are alleged, the police and/or appropriate authorities will be notified.

In implementing this protocol, we apply the overarching principles of:

- Seeking to glorify God in our responses to each other
- Striving to serve each other even in the midst of our disunity
- Seeking to grow Christ-like in our reactions to each other
- Extending grace to each other
- Focusing on restoration of relationships
- Seeking help, where needed, to address grievances

### A Pathways Approach

The nature of misunderstandings, conflicts (grievances) means that it is necessary to respond sensitively and with care for all parties involved. In many conflict situations the assistance of a neutral third party is essential, to help each party understand the key issues and ways forward. The processes must serve people, not the other way around. The church commits to a case-by-case approach to the resolution of substantive issues and, where possible, appropriate restoration of relationships between all parties.

The pathway employed will depend upon:

- the nature of the grievance

- the positions/roles of the parties involved
- the skills and/or capacity of the local church leader to address the situation

## Pathways Outlined

### *Locally-Assisted Approach*

This approach may be useful for personal grievances where a personal approach has not been successful in restoring the relationship, or where perceived bullying behaviours have taken place, or where there is dissatisfaction with the performance of a worker.

Where the alleged offender is a church employee, this approach may be assisted by a suitably skilled minister, elder or board member.

NOTE: it is advisable that the person assisting should not have a direct supervision role over any party. All conflicts of interest are to be declared and managed.

- Where a person feels for any reason they require help in resolving the grievance, they may speak privately to one or two spiritually minded church members or officers who are not stakeholders in the grievance, to request assistance in addressing their grievance. In general the church officers to address grievances will be the church's senior Ministers and/or Elders.
- Where the person/s assisting feels comfortable in assisting those impacted, they should go together with the aggrieved and meet with the alleged offender with the view to resolving the grievance.
- Where there is no resolution of the grievance after following point "b", and where all parties involved in the grievance are willing to work towards restoring relationships, the person/s assisting, after the initial meeting outlined in part "b" above, is to:
  - Meet with each party separately to ensure that all parties are given a chance to tell their story in private, work through the underlying concerns in moving towards resolution.
  - Clearly communicate the process to be used to each party during resolution meetings.
  - Hold meeting/s with all the parties to work through the issues and determine the course of action and desired outcome.
  - Follow up. Ensure that the solutions are implemented.
  - Monitor the situation. Over time check in with the parties to ensure they are going well with the past situation.

Where those dealing with the grievance believe the issue is a matter of disfellowshipment, they should confer with their Conference President before taking the matter to the church business meeting (See Pathways To Reconciliation - Ref. 9MR, p. 194; 12MR 113.1).

### *Externally Assisted Approach*

(External Conflict resolution person/s as appointed by State/Field Conference/AUC) - Where the grievance has:

- escalated beyond the ability or capacity of the local church to resolve the substantive and/or relational issues, or
- where the local church wants independent help in moving towards addressing the grievance, or
- the grievance involves allegations of bullying or
- concerns about workplace performance where the accused is a paid employee of the church,

Then, the church should contact the State/Field Conference Executive Committee who shall implement the following processes for conflict resolution.

## Assessment of the grievance

Upon receiving a request to assist with addressing a grievance, the external conflict resolution person will complete a fact finding exercise and make an initial assessment of the situation.

## Pathway Recommendation Report

The external assistant will write a report to the local church leadership group (board).

This report will include an outline of key issues (material and relational) and recommend a resolution pathway to follow.

1. Should the local church leader find the situation untenable in working with the Field/State Conference he may at any stage throughout the process contact the AUC Ministerial Committee Chairman, Vice-Chairman or Committee Secretary for assistance in the matter.

## Decision on pathway towards resolution

Taking into account the report, and any other advice or submissions made by key persons involved, the local church leadership group (board) shall determine the resolution pathway that will be employed in this situation.

## Pathway employed

- a. Where the decision is made for any conflict coaching, reconciliation, negotiation, or conciliation (mediation), the external consultant and relevant representatives of the local church board will work with the parties on this pathway to bring about agreed solutions.
- b. Where the decision is made for arbitration, then the relevant denominational representatives, along with relevant local church board will work with the stakeholders to work on an arbitrated solution to the substantive issues.
- c. Where the decision is made to implement a workplace bullying process, the Workcover process for addressing bullying shall be followed. A consultant (Association or other) external to the denomination (appointed by the AUC) shall be engaged to carry out the investigation. Furthermore, the following shall be taken into consideration:
  - i. "Investigations should always be carried out by an unbiased person who has experience and knowledge in dealing with workplace bullying matters.
  - ii. "If being led internally it is important to ensure all parties have confidence in the neutrality of the investigator and they are suitably qualified to lead the investigation. If this is not possible an external investigator is recommended. The investigator should be impartial, objective and focus on whether an allegation of workplace bullying is substantiated or not, or if there is insufficient information to decide either way." (WorkCover Guide, NSW)
- d. Where the decision is made to implement a workplace performance process, an accountable and transparent processes shall be followed.

## Implementation of solutions

Once all parties are in agreement, as far as is possible regarding solutions, then the relevant office holder shall communicate with all parties the implementation plan. Resources shall be given to implementation of the solution, both fiscal and human.

## On-going monitoring of the situation

The church representative will in negotiation with the parties, make health checks on the situation to ensure that the solutions that have been employed are working.

# Chapter 10: Responding to Allegations of Serious Misconduct and/or Abuse

## A. Rationale, Guidelines and Principles

The guidelines and principles are designed for addressing allegations of serious misconduct, inside a community of faith. It can be used by workers (volunteer or paid) and also members of the church where findings are necessary for implementation of risk management and/or disciplinary actions.

### Serious Misconduct

Serious misconduct is defined by allegations that if proven or have been more likely to have occurred than not (on the balance of probabilities), would lead to dismissal from a role or removal from a position (volunteer or paid). This misconduct may also lead to restrictions on the person's attendance or involvement in the church.

Serious misconduct includes, but is not limited to, all allegations of abuse behaviours including child abuse and neglect, sexual harassment and abuse, bullying behaviours, and allegations of domestic and family violence.

The process is to be used in connection with clearly defined expectations for behaviour for workers (volunteers and paid staff), such as the approved Code of Conduct (see Chapter 4).

### Minor Misconduct, Conflict or Misunderstanding

The response is not designed for use where there are allegations of minor misconduct or at times of conflict or misunderstandings between parties. For instances of conflicts between parties a process focused on restoring relationships, such as that outlined in Chapter 9 of this manual, is recommended.

For times where a worker (volunteer or paid) or a church member is alleged to have engaged in minor or unknown conduct or a minor breach (see Chapter 4) of a relevant code of conduct the matter should be dealt with pastorally by the appropriate local church leader or Conference representative with a view to correcting behaviours.

### Legal and Insurance Requirements

Following the outlined process of responding is recommended for compliance with legal and insurance requirements such as but not limited to:

- The church's insurance exclusion, which requires an appropriate investigation into complaints in relation to sexual abuse. Where "sexual abuse" includes any assault or abuse of a sexual nature, any type of molestation, indecent exposure, sexual harassment or intimidation, whether such act is the subject of criminal investigation or not. Injury includes any physical, mental or psychological injury.
- The Workplace Health and Safety Act classes churches as places of business and all volunteers as workers (in all states apart from Victoria and Western Australia), and workers and visitors must be afforded a duty of care, and safe emotional and physical environments. Under this legislation all persons must comply with all reasonable requests from the Person/s conducting a business or undertaking.
- Government agencies such as in NSW the Ombudsman's reportable employee conduct scheme and Office of the Children's Guardian require employers to investigate allegations against children's workers of certain types of abuse.

### Guidelines

The process aims at working through information relating to allegations of serious misconduct, for findings to ensure all parties are offered natural justice.

The principles of fairness and natural justice shall be applied throughout.

### *Requirements of Individuals*

All responding to concerns shall:

1. Act fairly, in good faith, without bias and in a dispassionate manner.
2. Provide each party the opportunity of adequately stating their case and correcting or contradicting any relevant statement prejudicial to the person's case.
3. Not receive information except as part of its information gathering and of assessment of the allegation.
4. Ensure that a person called upon to answer an allegation shall be given in writing the particulars of the allegation being made.
5. Ensure that each party has the opportunity to respond to further statements.

### *Case Management Guidelines*

The case is to be managed:

1. Without undue delay: Acting as quickly as possible shall be a genuine recognition of the seriousness of the allegation. Care should be taken to avoid delays.
2. With clear communication: All parties should be fully and speedily informed regarding decisions made, the reasons for the decisions and what processes are being used at all stages, particularly where there is any delay.
3. In a Non-biased manner: Disputed allegations will be investigated by persons who will act fairly and in a non-biased manner at all times and where possible have no close relationship (biological or other) to any party.
4. Considering Conflict of interest: Disputed allegations will be investigated by persons who have no stake in benefiting from any particular outcome of the case.
5. Ensure that evidence-based decisions are made: Decisions made are to be fact based. All outcomes will be based on the findings of the investigation. The burden of proof shall be on the balance of probabilities, e.g. was the conduct more likely to have occurred than not.
6. Privacy: Every effort must be made to protect the privacy of all parties. When the case manager/s report to relevant office holders, he/she will focus on the needs of: the complainant and any family; the PSOA and any family; the congregation.
7. Expenses: The expenses incurred to implement this policy should usually be borne by the church or by agreement with one of its governing Units. The goal of this policy is the protection of the members and the work of the church; therefore, a primary beneficiary of these procedures is the church and its members.

## **B. Responding: Definitions and Response Team**

### **Definitions**

#### *Disclosures*

A disclosure is when an individual reveals or tells of cases of harm, abuse, serious misconduct or concerns of a serious nature.

#### *ChurchSafe Officer*

An individual responsible for receiving and responding to safer ministry type complaints and concerns of misconduct, grievances and abuse issues, for arranging appropriate pastoral care and following up in these matters. An individual bringing a concern may choose any ChurchSafe Officer or ChurchSafe Contact that they feel most comfortable speaking with.

#### *ChurchSafe Contact*

An individual responsible for receiving safer ministry type complaints and concerns of misconduct, grievance and abuse issues. They may assist with responding but may often pass concerns to the appropriate ChurchSafe Officer and Head of Unit or Unrelated Minister.

#### *Head of Unit*

The Head of Unit refers to either the AUC President, Conference President, Field Leader or Church Leader. They are typically the first to join the ChurchSafe Officer in responding to concerns.



### *Unrelated Minister*

In cases where the Head of Unit is personally implicated, closely related or may be unable to be free of conflict of interest, a minister (unrelated to the case and parties involved in the concern) should assist in place of the Head of Unit. Refer to point 3, under Section A, Case Management Guidelines. An Unrelated Minister could be the assistant to Head of Unit or a minister from the level above.

The ChurchSafe officer should directly bring concerns to the Unrelated Minister where it relates to the Head of Unit or his immediate family. However, if concerns have been brought to the Head of Unit's attention before being brought to ChurchSafe or an Unrelated Minister, he is responsible to pass it on to an Unrelated Minister.

### *Case Response Group (CRG)*

A group of three formed to respond to concerns. This group is to include at least one minister and one lay member, the third individual could either be a lay member or minister.

#### *Qualifications of Case Response Group:*

1. Reflect the diversity of the church. A gender balance is preferred.
2. Be members of the church in good and regular standing.
3. None of the members on the CRG shall be first-degree relations.
4. Be free of any predisposition, bias or conflict of interest that may be material to the proceedings or issues involved.
5. Members who have been in the faith for a reasonable period of time.
6. An adult over 18 years of age and preferably older.
7. Exhibit neutrality and fairness of judgement.
8. Able to keep important information confidential.
9. Able to coordinate proficiently and act upon matters in a timely manner.
10. Have knowledge of what constitutes sexual misconduct as conveyed in the latest version of the ChurchSafe Induction and have fully completed the ChurchSafe Induction within the last 3 years.

### *Case Manager*

A person nominated by the Case Response Group (CRG) to manage the administrative responsibilities of the complaints process, including preparation of any CRG written documents and reports.

## **ChurchSafe Case Response Pool**

1. The Case Response Pool (CRP) shall consist of not less than 12 members, with a minimum of two and ideally at least five drawn from each Field/Conference under the auspices of the AUC.
2. Members of the ChurchSafe Case Response Pool shall be selected by either the AUC Council and Conference/Mission Field Council and, to the extent practicable, reflect the diversity of the Church.
3. The list of CRP members selected by the AUC Council and Conference/Mission Field Councils shall be given to the AUC ChurchSafe Coordinator and combined to form a list available to all units under the AUC. The current CRP list would be available on the ChurchSafe Resources SharePoint Group.
4. Members' Qualifications: Members selected to serve on the CRP shall:
  - a) Reflect the diversity of the church. A gender balance is preferred.
  - b) Be members of the church in good and regular standing.
  - c) Members who have been in the faith for a reasonable period of time.
  - d) An adult over 18 years of age and preferably older.
  - e) Exhibit neutrality and fairness of judgement.
  - f) Able to keep important information confidential.
  - g) Able to coordinate proficiently and act upon matters in a timely manner.
  - h) Have knowledge of what constitutes sexual misconduct as conveyed in the latest version of the ChurchSafe Induction and have fully completed the ChurchSafe Induction within the last 3 years.



4. Confidentiality Agreement: Each member of the CRP shall sign a confidentiality agreement (Form CS3) to ensure that the member understands the duty, extent, and nature of confidentiality. Confidentiality of the CRP is of utmost importance.
5. *Where the Case Response Pool does not offer a sufficient number of persons who are able to respond to a particular case and who meet the CRG qualifications for that case, the CS Officer and Head of Unit may appoint CRG members from outside the pool.*

## C. Variables to Consider

The process when responding to serious concerns may be similar in some cases and somewhat different in others. Scenarios unfold unexpectedly and as information comes to light, we need to be aware of guidelines that help guide us to respond in the best way.

### Different Scenarios:

#### *Adult vs. Minor*

We differentiate if the concerns only relate to adults vs. minors (below 18 yrs age).

An adult has the right to self-determine the response within the parameters of the law. This means that they often have the right to choose whether to press charges or not. Flowchart 3 illustrates the process in Responding to Serious Concerns where only adults are involved.

A child is not self-determining – they do not choose how we respond. Instead, the law guides us in our response. In all cases where sexual offences against a child are suspected, it is mandatory to report them to the authorities. Flowchart 2 illustrates the process in Responding to Serious Concerns where minor(s) are involved.

We can interview adults when responding to concerns. Interviewing minors can jeopardize the justice process. Expert advice should be sought on a case-by-case basis.

#### *Criminal vs. Non-criminal*

In most cases, criminal concerns must be reported to the authorities. State and Federal laws must be understood and respected. (See Romans 13:1-4, 1 Peter 2:17, Acts 5:29)

Non-criminal concerns, while not breaking the law of the land, may still break God's law. The behaviour of a Christian, especially a church officer or representative must be above reproach, a reflection of God's character, by His grace and through His power. (See our Code of Conduct and Principles of Faith for further information.)

### Different Individuals:

#### *Employee*

We need to ensure that concerns regarding employees are investigated fairly and promptly. In responding, we must act with regard to relevant legislation, their employee agreement, our code of conduct and principles of faith.

If required to step down from office and duties, please refer to our relevant policy. It is prudent to consult and work together with the AUC Leadership and the AUC Executive Committee when responding to concerns regarding employees.

#### *Ordained Person*

In no case should ministry condone or neglect to rebuke sin and hesitate to take action against wrong. However, caution needs to be exercised when responding to concerns that involve ordained personnel until an outcome (true vs. false allegation) is determined (see 3T p93, 1 Timothy 5:20). In most cases it would be prudent to have at least one ministers and at least one lay members respond to these concerns. In more serious cases involving one or more ordained personnel, two ministers from the level above and three lay members may be chosen.

#### *Leader or Office Holder*

Leaders or office holders may be asked to stand down from office during investigations. See further details under risk management.

### *Member*

A member, with sufficient evidence of wrongdoing (and/or witnesses to wrongdoing or with clear admission of guilt) and after fair investigation, should be disciplined or disfellowshipped for cases of confirmed serious misconduct.

### *Attendee*

We are responsible for who is permitted to attend, participate and lead out in our meetings, events and venues. While we would like to have all welcome to attend, the safety of minors and the vulnerable must take first priority.

### *Minor*

We receive disclosures from minors but understand that it is not good practice to interview or question them, as interviewing minors can jeopardize the justice process. Minors should be interviewed by suitably qualified professionals.

All known and suspected sexual abuse and harm against a minor must be reported to the authorities.

In cases of concern that are not serious and where authorities are not required to investigate an event involving a minor, parent/guardian consent should be sought prior to interviewing a minor.

## D. The Process

### Flowcharts and Steps in Responding

Flowcharts have been included to illustrate the steps in responding to serious concerns (see Flowcharts 1-4 at the end of this chapter). A guide to these steps in responding is included below first as a short summary and afterwards outlining these steps in further detail.

The process in responding to concerns is not always linear, a situation may change, the justice process may halt or speed up a response, further information may come to light and sometimes this necessitates taking a few steps back or forward in the process of responding.

### Disclosures: Initial Response

When an individual discloses (tells of) cases of harm, abuse, serious misconduct or concerns of a serious nature:

- i. Do not begin an investigation
- ii. Take notes/write them down as soon as possible
- iii. Speak with a ChurchSafe Officer or Leader as soon as possible
- iv. If the disclosure is criminal in nature, ensure that steps are taken to notify the authorities

### Short Summary of Process

1. Receive Concern
2. Triage Concern
3. Initial and Ongoing Considerations
  - a. Mandatory Reporting
  - b. Insurance
  - c. Risk Management
  - d. Pastoral Support and Counselling
4. Justice Process
5. Consideration & Investigation of Concerns by CRG
  - a. Receive and formalise allegations
  - b. Deliver formal allegation document to Person Subject to Allegation (PSOA)
  - c. If Disputed - Investigate allegations further
  - d. Make a Final Decision and Recommend Outcomes
  - e. CRG meet together with Head of Unit (or Unrelated Minister) and ChurchSafe Officer
  - f. Promptly Notify All Parties
6. Right of Appeal

## Detailed Process

These steps are further detailed below:

### *1. Receive Concern*

An allegation may come in any form: phone call, email, mail, or in conversation. If the person who receives the allegation is not the relevant office holder, i.e. the ChurchSafe Contact, a ChurchSafe Officer or their Assistant(s), it will be forwarded to the relevant ChurchSafe Officer as soon as practicable and without delay.

An allegation may also be made by a third party in relation to 'information' about alleged misconduct.

A senior church leader can make an allegation on behalf of a third party where a finding is deemed necessary for risk management purposes.

In relation to sexual harassment and/or abuse the complaint may be historical (whenever or wherever occurring) or current (wherever occurring), so long as the person subject of the allegation is still attending the church (denominationally) undertaking the process.

In all cases it is to be noted that anonymous complaints cannot be received or acted on.

### *2. Triage Concern*

The relevant ChurchSafe officer together with Head of Unit (or unrelated Minister) should triage the matter satisfactorily; including providing details of the process to the person bringing forward the allegation (provide documentation), research and discuss legal ramifications, and ensure the matter is an allegation of 'serious misconduct' against a person currently under the jurisdiction of the local church or denomination. In more complex situations, it may be wise to have another individual to assist both the ChurchSafe Officer and Head of Unit in the triage process, considerations of character and relationship to all parties would be the same as for Case Resource Group members.

### *3. Initial and Ongoing Considerations*

#### **a. Mandatory Reporting**

Where the allegation is clearly of a criminal nature the person receiving the allegation (ChurchSafe Officer) and/or appropriate witness will report to relevant State and/or Federal Government agencies and/or police. Criminal matters are defined in the criminal codes and include but are not limited to; child abuse and/or neglect, acts of indecency, sexual assault, fraud, drug dealing.

#### **b. Insurance**

On reception of the formal complaint the ChurchSafe Officer and Head of Unit (or Minister) will consult with appropriate office holders as to whether this is a matter over which the insurer should be notified or whether at this stage more formalisation is required before reporting.

#### **c. Risk Management**

A risk assessment must be undertaken by the relevant office holder/s (Head of Unit, ChurchSafe Officer and/or CRG), as to whether it is appropriate during the investigation, including the police or church investigation(s), to ask the person subject to the alleged serious misconduct (Person Subject to Allegation – PSOA), to step aside from their active duties and/or church attendance.

##### **i. Arrest of Office Holders**

If a church officer is arrested on allegation of misconduct, abuse or criminal behaviour, they automatically need to stand down or we will stand them down from office.

Standing down is not an admission of guilt, it is for protection of the vulnerable and preserving the good name of the organisation. As the officer holder's character is in question, until it can be cleared, it is the right action to step aside from any and all church duties.

#### **d. Pastoral Support and Counselling**

- i. Pastoral support should be offered to all parties.

- ii. Both the alleged victim and PSOA are entitled to have a support person present at all meetings/interviews, but they will not be part of the decision-making process and must maintain confidentiality. The support person must not be a party to the case and must maintain confidentiality.
- iii. Contact details for suitable professional counsellors should also be provided.

#### 4. Justice (Court) Process

We may receive concerns at different times, it may be:

- Before they are reported to authorities
- At the same time as they are reported to the authorities
- During the justice/court process
- After the completion of the court process.

Some allegations do not require mandatory reporting and those that only involve adults may never be reported, have charges pressed or go through the justice process.

Our response to allegations and concerns will differ depending when we receive the concerns and allegations and the nature/details of the case. In most cases involving minors, unless we have sufficient evidence of wrongdoing, it would be wise to wait until the justice process has finished.

While we should not delay taking action in clear cases where there has been wrongdoing, we should in no way take any action that could pervert the course of justice. If there is a court-suppression order (gag-order) in place, we need to wait until it is lifted. It is prudent to seek legal advice in cases involving the justice process.

#### 5. Consideration and Investigation of Concerns

The Head of Unit (or Unrelated Minister) and ChurchSafe Officer are to select suitable Case Response Members from the Case Response Pool. Once individuals have been chosen and accept to serve in the CRG, they are required to sign a Confidentiality Agreement (Form CS3) and give the completed forms to the ChurchSafe Officer.

One member should be selected as the **Case Manager** by the CRG and be responsible for the documentation relating to the case.

Where a member of a Case Resource Group (CRG) is, or appears to be, biased, prejudiced, predisposed or of have a conflict of interest, that person shall be replaced or excluded from appointment.

A complainant or PSOA may request that a CRG member be removed or replaced at any time where that member breaches privacy or perceived neutrality of the case.

#### The Process: Investigation by CRG

It is the responsibility of the CRG to:

- a. **Receive and formalise allegations** (generally these will be initially received by the ChurchSafe Officer)
  - i. Ensure that the Formal Allegation Form (Form CS8) is completed individually by all alleged victims or their parents/guardians
  - ii. Collate allegations into formal allegation document
- b. **Deliver formal allegation document to Person Subject to Allegation (PSOA)**
  - i. Deliver allegations in writing
  - ii. Explain process of Case Investigation
  - iii. Request PSOA to complete Process Acknowledgement Form (Form CS10)
  - iv. Identify members of CRG to PSOA
  - v. Where balance of positives outweighs negatives, discuss matter with PSOA
  - vi. Request response in writing within 14 days
- c. **If Disputed - Investigate allegations further**
  - i. Conduct interviews of all parties

- ii. Investigate allegations and outcome of the interviews
  - iii. Prepare written report detailing the conclusions and basis for the conclusions
- d. Make a Final Decision and Recommend Outcomes**
  - i. If not guilty – Apology to PSOA
  - ii. If insufficient evidence – No action taken
  - iii. Not proven but need caution – Recommend Changes
  - iv. PSOA engaged in alleged behaviour – Take Action
- e. CRG Meet Together with Head of Unit (or Unrelated Minister) and ChurchSafe Officer**
  - i. Case Response Group to meet with Head of Unit (or Unrelated Minister) and ChurchSafe Officer overseeing case to share Final Decision and Recommended Outcomes
- f. Promptly Notify All Parties**
  - i. Notify alleged victims in writing
  - ii. Notify PSOA in writing
  - iii. Notify appropriate committees, boards, church(es) and units when action needs to be taken

## 6. Right of Appeal

Where the PSOA is a paid employee (or in NSW a person working with children), the PSOA can lodge an appeal, providing reasons in writing, to the head of unit. The appeal will be a review of the process by the AUC Executive Committee. Where the AUC Executive Committee rules against the PSOA, the PSOA may appeal to the AUC Council. The decision of the AUC Council shall be final in matters involving loss of employment by the PSOA. In matters involving disciplinary actions other than loss of employment, the PSOA may appeal in accordance with the standard denominational appeals process.

## E. Flowcharts

There are four different flowcharts included on the following pages. They have different purposes in the process of responding and are suited for different cases. These are further detailed below:

### *Flowchart 1: Receiving Disclosures*

Flowchart 1 is to guide the process of receiving an initial disclosure.

### *Flowchart 2: ChurchSafe Responding to Concerns*

Flowchart 2 is to be used for the initial triage of allegations/concerns. This ideally will be done by the ChurchSafe Officer and Head of Unit or Unrelated Minister.

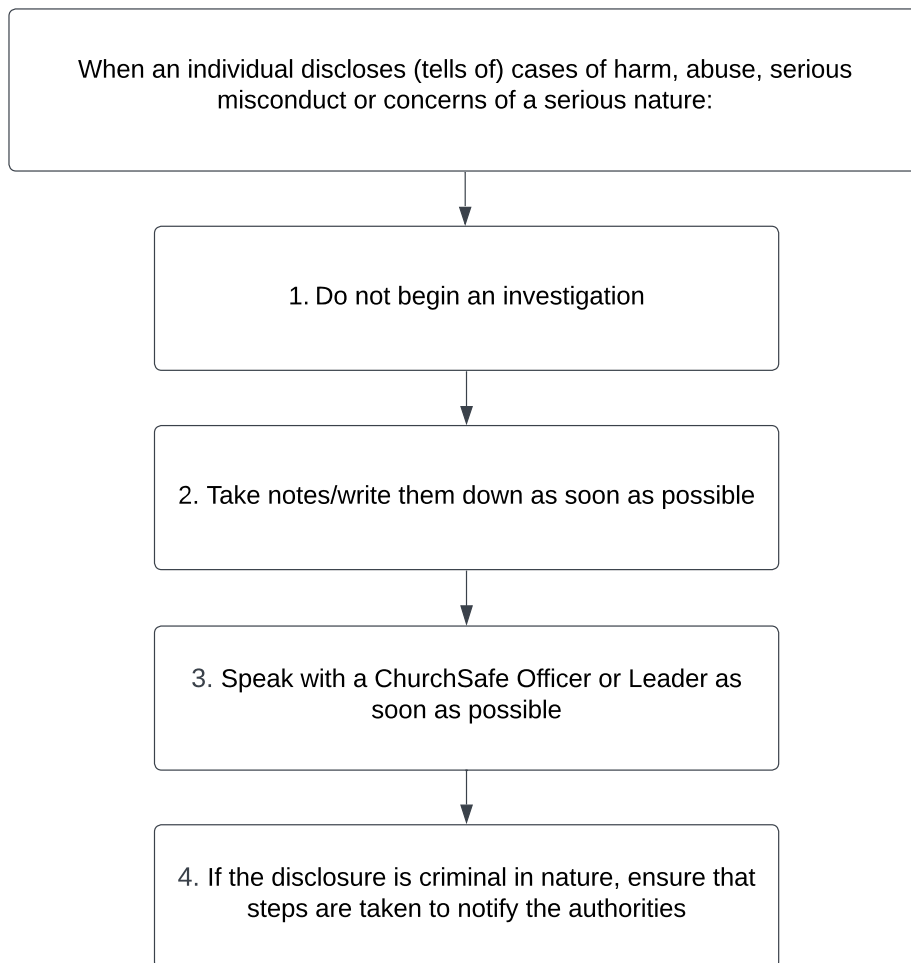
### *Flowchart 3: ChurchSafe Responding to Child Safety Concerns*

Flowchart 3 is to be used when responding to serious Child Safety Concerns. This means an allegation or concern that involves a child or minor (below 18 years of age).

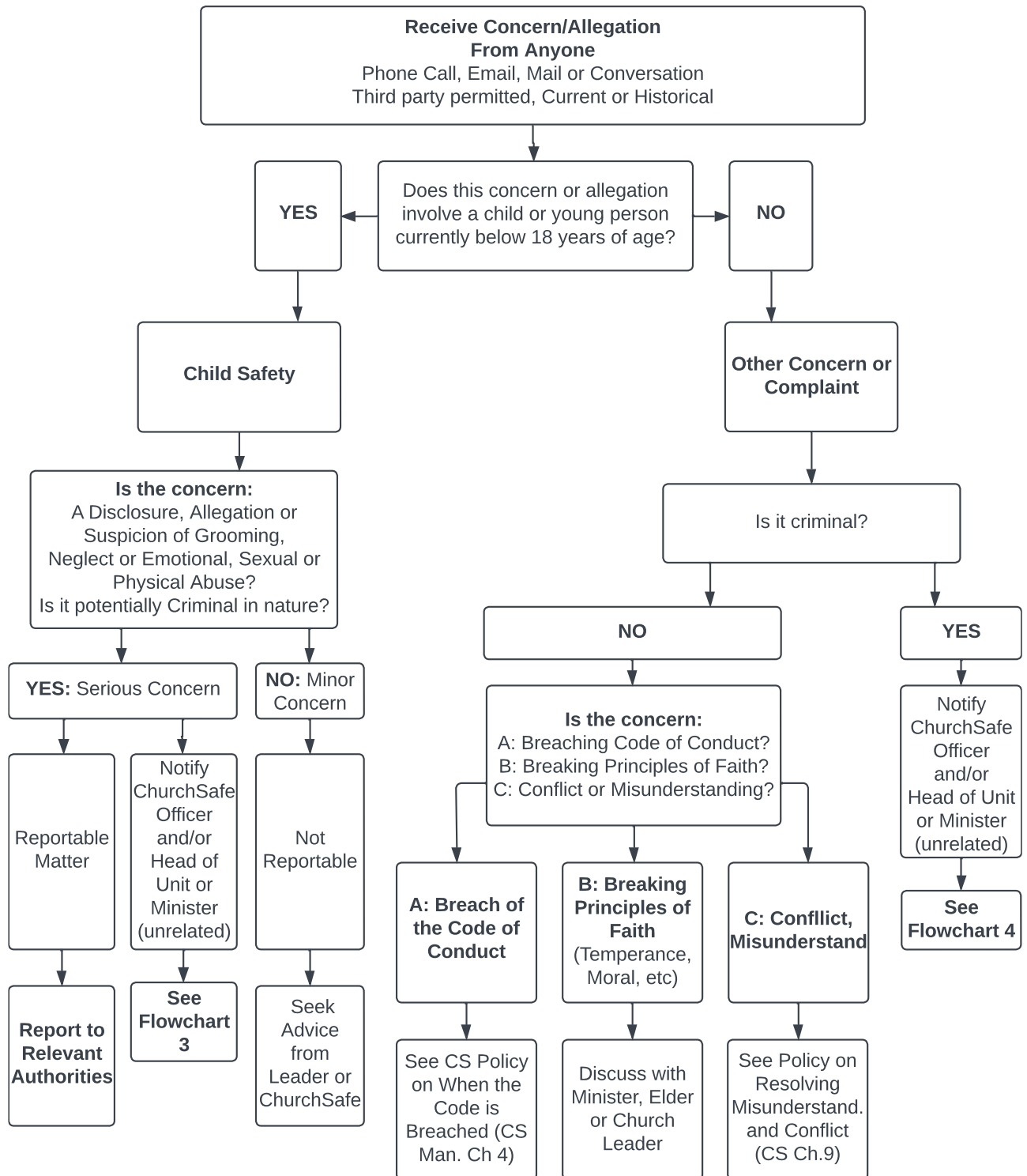
### *Flowchart 4: ChurchSafe Responding to Serious Misconduct – Adult*

Flowchart 4 is designed to guide our response when responding to Serious Misconduct that only involves adults. It is not designed to be used when any minors are involved.

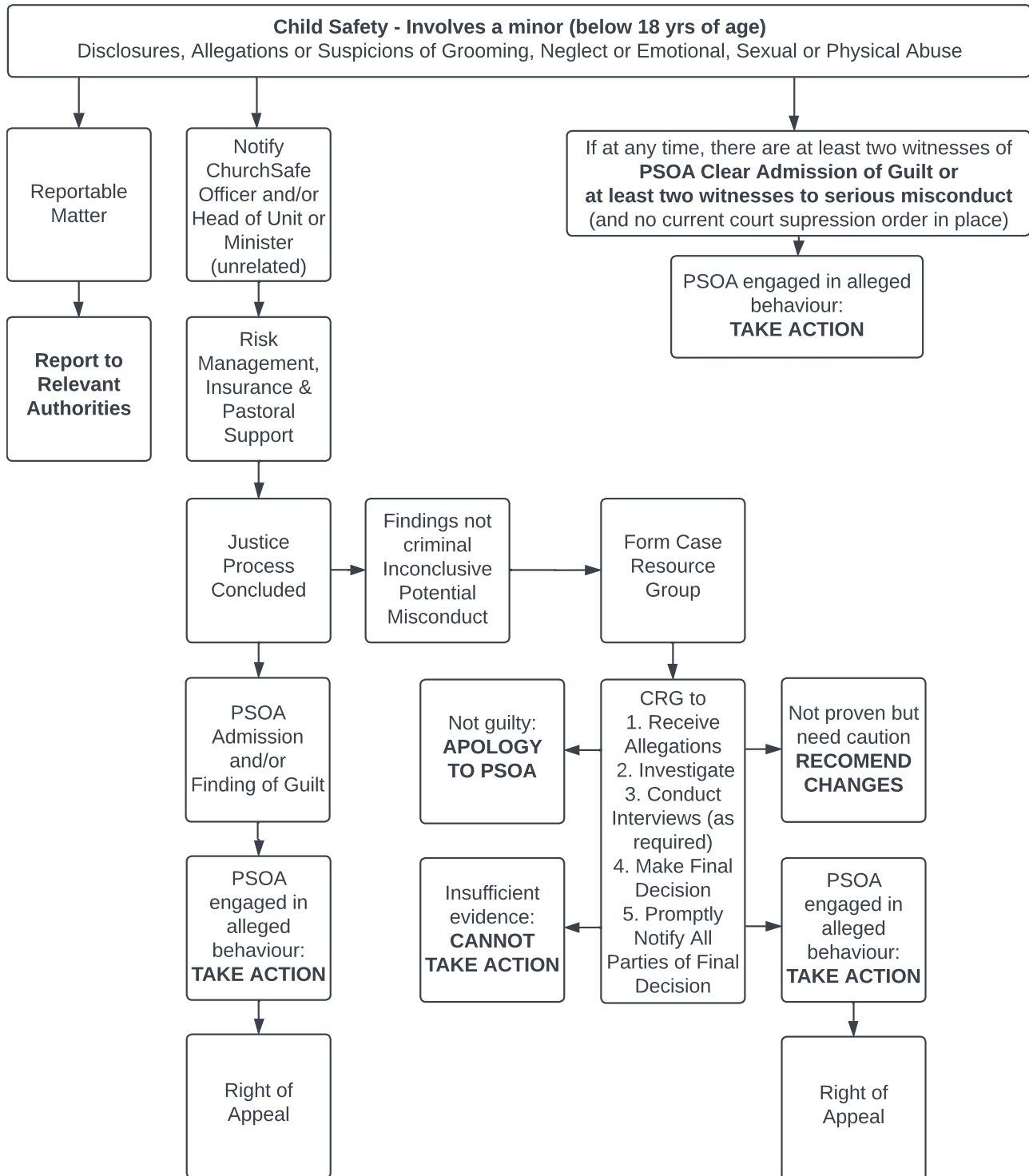
## Flowchart 1: Receiving Disclosures



Flowchart 2:  
ChurchSafe Responding to Concerns

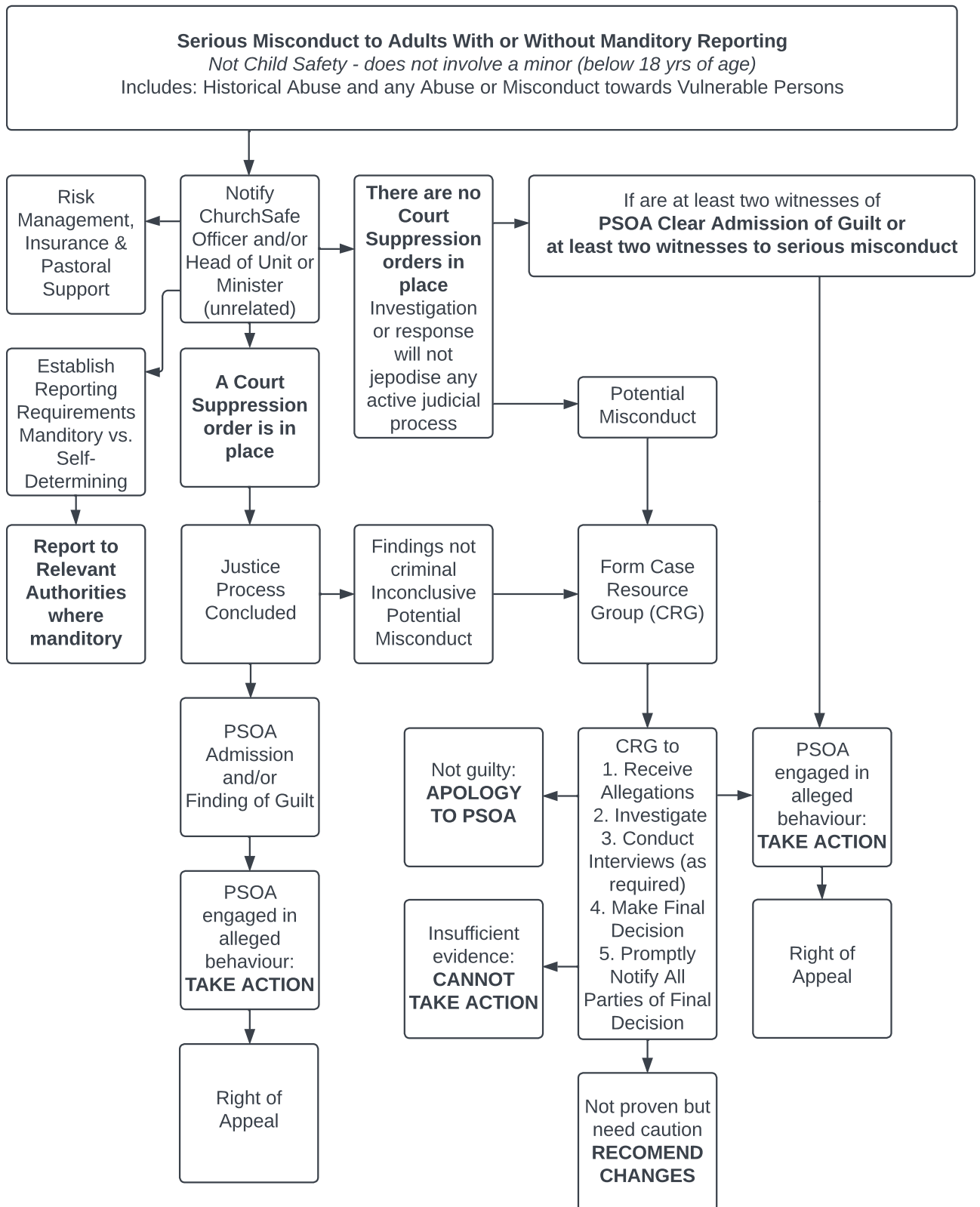


**Flowchart 3:**  
**ChurchSafe Responding to Child Safety Concerns**





Flowchart 4:  
ChurchSafe Responding to Serious Misconduct - Adult



# Form Use, Description & Purpose

All forms are to be used in conjunction with the ChurchSafe Manual to ensure we meet our legal requirements in promoting a Safe Environment within the Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement Australasian Union Conference and all its Conferences/Fields and Local Churches.

## Descriptions & Purpose

**CS1 - ChurchSafe Contact Job Description:** Identifies the key responsibilities and task in the role for all levels of administration.

**CS2 - ChurchSafe Declaration:** The purpose of this form is to enable the local Church and/or Church-sponsored activities and programs to maintain a record of the contact details of Church endorsed staff and volunteers who work with children and young people in the Church's environments.

**CS3 - Confidentiality Agreement:** To be filled out by all volunteer or paid officers.

**CS4 - Approved Missionary Program:** The Approved Missionary Program form is designed to assist in the implementation of a safer ministry program.

**CS5 - Photograph/Video Recordings Parental/Guardian Acknowledgement:** An opt-out form designed to be included in all event registration forms for Parents/Guardians who do not wish for photographs or video recordings of their children to be used by the church.

**CS6 - Event Medical Information Form:** General information regarding any medical conditions, dietary restrictions and emergency contact details.

**CS7 - Report A Person Of Interest:** A Person of Interest (POI) is someone believed, on reasonable grounds, to either (a) have a Court conviction for an offence against a child of a sexual, pornographic, or violent nature; (b) or to be undergoing a Police investigation for the above; or (c) to have a positive finding for misconduct of a sexual nature involving a minor, as determined by a duly authorised Commission (such as a Health Complaints Commission), Professional-member Registration Body or Association (such as a Teacher Registration Board), or Tribunal.

**CS8 - Formal Allegation Record (PSOA Form):** A record of an observed concern of abuse and/or misconduct.

**CS9 - ChurchSafe Incident Report:** A record of the details and nature of ChurchSafe type incidents and also records summary of action taken to address the issue. This form also specifies the entity the form is handed to for a response/decision.

**CS10 - Process Acknowledgement Form:** Enables the local Church to keep a record of the PSOA's declaration that they have read and understood the ChurchSafe Case Response Procedure to Allegations of Serious Misconduct &/or Abuse.

\*Completed forms are to be kept confidential at all times.

**FORM CS1**

## ChurchSafe Contact Job Description

Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement



**POSITION TITLE:** ChurchSafe Contact/Team member

**DESCRIPTION:** Assist and lead the AUC, Conference/Field/Church (Depending on your level of work) to become a safer place for children, young people & vulnerable people.

**SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES AND TASKS INCLUDE (Depending on your level of administration):**

**1. Australasian Union Conference**

- a. Manage and oversee the implementation of the ChurchSafe Manual, its policies and forms throughout the AUC and its Conference/Fields.
- b. Ensure that suspicions and disclosures of child abuse and neglect are reported to Government authorities.
- c. Conduct or organise ChurchSafe (or equivalent) training programs for volunteers and church officers/leaders within the AUC.
- d. Log any improvements to the ChurchSafe Manual and liaise with the Bylaws Committee to help implement any changes as necessary.

**2. Conference/Field**

- a. Manage and oversee the implementation of the ChurchSafe Manual, its policies and forms within your Conference/Field.
- b. Coordinate any training events with AUC Churchsafe Contact for all officers within the required time frame.
- c. Ensure local churches act in compliance with the ChurchSafe Manual.
- d. Reporting as required to AUC ChurchSafe Contact.
- e. Maintain up-to-date information regarding related legislation in their particular state and monitor compliance.

**3. Local Church**

- a. Promote the ChurchSafe Manual, its policies and the use of its Forms.
- b. Distribute materials needed by various volunteers and office holders to fulfill screening and appointment requirements.
- c. Keep a safe record of all forms filled out by volunteer leaders/officers.
- d. Maintain logs and records to demonstrate the Local Church's compliance, or otherwise, with the ChurchSafe Policies and required WWCC (Working with Children Checks).
- e. Advise the Church Board on matters such as compliance, training needs and issues that arise (such as activity approval compliance or conduct issues of staff/volunteers).
- f. Provide general advice and recommendations to the Church Board on making the church a safer place for children and youth.
- g. Provide/raise specific advice and recommendations made to the Local Church from the Conference/Field ChurchSafe Contact/Team.
- h. Meet on a regular basis and as needed, with the ChurchSafe Team (where a 'team' exists to assist the Leader).
- i. Ensure that suspicions and disclosures of child abuse and neglect are reported to Government authorities and the Conference/Field ChurchSafe Contact or AUC ChurchSafe Contact.
- j. Handle sensitive information with sensitivity to privacy and confidentiality.
- k. Liaise with the Church Secretary, Board and Nominating Committee on matters of member transfers and appointing appropriate volunteers to child-related positions.

***Tick your level of administration***

☐ AUC    ☐ Conference/Field    ☐ Local Church

**CHURCHSAFE CONTACT/TEAM MEMBER PLEDGE**

- ☐ I have read the ChurchSafe Manual, including the Safer Ministry Policy and Code of Conduct.
- ☐ I will endeavor to carry out and support the ChurchSafe Manual, including the Safer Ministry Policy and follow the Code of Conduct to the best of my ability.
- ☐ I have undergone a criminal history check (Working with Children Check / National Police Certificate etc.).
- ☐ I will be a confidential person on the relevant local Church committees including the ChurchSafe Team and Church Board.
- ☐ I will ask questions and seek information on matters I have concerns or am unsure about, to help me contribute constructively to the committee.

APPOINTEE'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

WITNESS NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**FORM CS2**

## ChurchSafe Declaration

Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement



Thank you for your desire to serve the Lord at \_\_\_\_\_ church. This application and declaration is part of our church's commitment to ensuring our duty of care to all people, and also to fulfil our insurance obligation and health and safety requirements.

### PERSONAL DETAILS

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_ Given Names: \_\_\_\_\_ Any Former Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Residential Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

### CRIMINAL HISTORY CHECK

I hereby consent to an Australian Federal Police Check if one is considered necessary for my role. My state-based Working With Children Check (or similar) details, where required are as follows:

Type: \_\_\_\_\_ Number: \_\_\_\_\_ State of Issue: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Type: \_\_\_\_\_ Number: \_\_\_\_\_ State of Issue: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### CONSENT TO HOLD INFORMATION

I consent to the information contained in this application including the subsequent pages to be kept by our church. I understand that this information will be kept in a confidential file and used only for screening and disciplinary purposes.

### REFEREE CHECK

If you have been at the church for less than 3 years, please nominate a character reference:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of my previous church, pastor and contact (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

### DECLARATION

I understand that the church operates in an environment of legal and ethical restrictions, and I will fully cooperate with the church in abiding by these.

I assure the church, in considering me for a volunteer role that:

1. I have no health impediment that will put me or any other person at risk in the fulfilment of my designated role other than those matters disclosed to the church.
2. I know of no past behaviour that renders me unfit to serve as a volunteer or which detracts from the obligation of the church to operate as a place of safety to a minor or any other person (including but not limited to any past allegations of, convictions or admitted sexual misconduct/sexual abuse).
3. I understand that if I am unclear as to any of the statements in this document, I will seek clarification from a church leader before signing.
4. I have provided this application and the information contained in it, and any documents accompanying it in good faith and declare they are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.
5. I understand that any material misstatement in or omission from this questionnaire may render me unfit to hold a particular role in the church.
6. I have received and read a copy of the Code of Conduct and I agree to abide by it.
7. I understand that when considering my application, my church may refer to church policies, guidelines and position papers.
8. I will respect the decision of my church as to where I volunteer my services within the church, and whether my services are required, from time to time.
9. I understand that a church leader will be available to me to discuss my service.

Applicant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*(If under the age of 18, please have this form co-signed by your parent/guardian.)*

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

### VERIFIED BY AUTHORISED REPRESENTATIVE OR CHURCHSAFE OFFICER

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**FORM CS3**

## **Confidentiality Agreement**

Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement



THIS CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT ("Agreement") dated \_\_\_\_\_, is by and between the Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement ("Church") and \_\_\_\_\_ (referred to as "I" or "me" below).

1. WHEREAS, the Church and I agree that the Bible was written by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and is our guide and rule of daily life;
2. WHEREAS, the Scriptures forbid the spreading of gossip, slander and the betraying of confidences (Exodus 23:1; Leviticus 19:16; Proverbs 6:19, 11:13, 16:28, 20:19; Romans 1:30; 1 Corinthians 6:10; 2 Corinthians 12:20 and Titus 2:3);
3. WHEREAS, as an inducement to the Church to allow me to volunteer, or to hire me or continue to employ me, or to provide me access to its confidential information, or to provide me compensation and/or benefits, as the case may be, I have agreed to execute this Agreement and be bound by its terms and covenants.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the above premises, I agree to be bound by the terms, conditions and covenants set forth herein:

### **1. CONFIDENTIALITY**

1. **Duty to Maintain Confidentiality.** I promise and agree that, except to the extent the use or disclosure of any Confidential Information (as defined below) is required to carry out my assigned duties with the Church, during my employment or volunteering with the Church and thereafter: (a) I will keep strictly confidential and not disclose to any person any Confidential Information, including information provided to me as a member of any Church committee, including as a member of ChurchSafe Case Resource or Case Response Group, and (b) I will not use for myself or for any other person or entity any Confidential Information. However, this provision shall not preclude me: (i) from the use or disclosure of information known generally to the public, other than as a result of my violation of this Section; or (ii) from any disclosure required by law or court order, so long as I provide the Church immediate written notice of any potential disclosure pursuant to this subsection and take all reasonable and lawful steps to limit the extent of such disclosure.
2. **Definition.** The term "Confidential Information" means all non-public information furnished to, obtained by, or created by me within the course and scope of my work (volunteer or otherwise) with the Church. Confidential Information includes, but is not limited to, such information relating to: (i) Church participants, including lists, contact information, prayer requests, personal information; (ii) the Church's finances, including personal financial/salary information related to the staff or members, the Church's financial statements, balance sheets, offerings information, cash flow, forecasts and cost analyses; (iii) the Church's plans and projections for opportunities for new or developing ideas; and/or (iv) the Church's research and development activities and technical data.
3. **Return of Property.** I agree that all Church property, files, documents, equipment, data and information used, prepared, or collected by me as part of my employment or volunteering with the Church, in whatever form, will at all times remain the property of the Church. I also agree that all Confidential Information that comes into my possession, whether prepared by me or others, is and will remain the property of the Church. I agree that I will return upon the Church's request at any time (and, in any event, prior to the end of my employment or volunteering with the Church) all property, files, documents, equipment, data and information belonging to the Church in my possession or control, regardless of how stored or maintained and including all originals and copies.

### **2. REASONABLENESS OF RESTRICTIONS**

I recognise that the terms of this Agreement are necessary to protect the Church's confidential information and the sensitivity of such information. I also agree that its terms are fair and reasonable. Thus, I agree not to contest the general validity or enforceability of this Agreement. The covenants in this Agreement shall survive the termination or end of my employment or volunteering with the Church as set forth above, regardless of the date, reason or manner of my separation. I acknowledge that this Agreement is supported by good and valuable consideration.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have duly executed this Confidentiality Agreement as of the date first above written.

YOUR SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Member of (Church or Field): \_\_\_\_\_



**FORM CS4**

## **Approved Missionary Program**

Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement



Safer ministry programs are transparent and accountable in relation to both procedures and relationships. A safe program ensures that both the physical and emotional environment are safe. Consideration is given to the participants' ages and cultural backgrounds. Safe programs are prepared for the fact that some activities or situations present more inherent risks than others. The local church board is ultimately responsible for any activities that take place in the name of the church. For this reason the local church board should approve programs and activities prior to their commencement. There are a number of considerations to be mindful of when establishing a missionary event or program. These considerations might be recorded for accountability purposes in an approval for missionary service process. The Approved Missionary Program form is designed to assist in the implementation of this process.

### **PROGRAM DETAILS**

Type of Program/Event: \_\_\_\_\_ Place of Program/Event (State): \_\_\_\_\_

Venue Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date/Time of Program: \_\_\_\_\_ Program Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Program/Event Coordinator (Department/Committee/Individual): \_\_\_\_\_

Program/Event First Aid Person/s: \_\_\_\_\_

### **COMPLETE & ATTACH (WHERE APPROPRIATE) THE FOLLOWING**

- ☐ Team list (team is large enough to safely run this program)
- ☐ Team has been trained appropriately (eg. ChurchSafe Training)
- ☐ Team has been screened and forms filled out and filed at church
- ☐ Housekeeping & Risk Assessment Form (Form WS2) completed
- ☐ Individual program risks have been assessed and mitigated
- ☐ Participant registration information required
- ☐ Program attached
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

### **ENDORSEMENT OF CHURCH FOR THIS PROGRAM/EVENT TO GO AHEAD**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**FORM CS5**

## **Photograph/Video Recordings Parental/Guardian Acknowledgement**

Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement



The following disclaimer is to be included on ALL event/program registration forms (print or electronic):

### **Photos/Video Recording Parental/Guardian Acknowledgement**

At this church event or program your child may be photographed or recorded on audio or video as part of our record or promotion of the activities taking place. These photos or recordings may be used or published in various church-controlled media platforms such as newsletters, brochures, bulletin boards, DVDs, YouTube, Facebook, etc. on a not-for-profit basis. Please place a check mark in the boxes below if you do not consent to this use of photos, sound, or video recordings of your child/children.

- ☐ I **DO NOT** consent for **photos** of my child/children that I am the parent/guardian of to be displayed or used in church publications such as newsletters, brochures, and the church's website.
- ☐ I **DO NOT** consent for **photos** of my child/children that I am the parent/guardian of to be used or displayed in church -authorised Facebook and other social media, and in church-authorised postings on YouTube and the like.
- ☐ I **DO NOT** consent for **video recordings** of my child/children that I am the parent/guardian of to be displayed or used in church publications such as newsletters, brochures, and the church's website.
- ☐ I **DO NOT** consent for **video recordings** of my child/children that I am the parent/guardian of to be used or displayed in church authorised Facebook and other social media, and in church-authorised postings on YouTube and the like.

### **PROGRAM DETAILS**

Type of Program/Event: \_\_\_\_\_ Place of Program/Event (State): \_\_\_\_\_

Local Church Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Venue Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Program: \_\_\_\_\_ Program Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Organised By: (Department/Entity): \_\_\_\_\_

### **DETAILS OF CHILDREN OR YOUNG PERSON/S**

Name/s (if more than one, separate by comma): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### **PARENT/GUARDIAN DETAILS**

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

Relationship To The Above Child/ren: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**FORM CS6**

# Event Registration & Medical Information Form

Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement

## 1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Event Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Event Location: \_\_\_\_\_  
Adult/Parent 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Adult/Parent 2: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Child's 1 Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
Child's 2 Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
Child's 3 Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
Child's 4 Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. MEDICAL INFORMATION *(Please use back of form if more space is required.)*

Individual	Allergies	Allergies/Medical Condition – Please List
Adult/Parent 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	_____
Adult/Parent 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	_____
Child 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	_____
Child 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	_____
Child 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	_____
Child 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	_____

Do you or does your child have an allergy action plan or Epi-Pen: ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, where are they kept? \_\_\_\_\_

## 3. MEDIA USE PERMISSION

At events or programs, your child may be photographed or recorded on audio or video as part of our record or promotion of the activities taking place. These photos or recordings may be used or published in various church-controlled media platforms such as newsletters, brochures, bulletin boards, YouTube, Facebook, etc on a not-for-profit basis. **If I do not give permission for media use, I understand that it is my responsibility to fill in Form CS5, Photograph/Video Recordings Parental/Guardian Acknowledgement.**

## 4. EMERGENCY CONTACT

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_ Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Work: \_\_\_\_\_

## 5. AUTHORISATION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

- I understand that it is my responsibility to notify leaders, staff or volunteers if I choose not to give permission for my child/children to participate in activities and I will supervise them during those times.
- I understand that it is my responsibility to state if I do not permit media use (photos and/or video recordings) and if so, I have filled out on Form CS5.
- I understand that in cases of serious allergies, meals may not be able to be provided at all events.
- I understand that in cases of serious allergies, I am responsible to bring my or my child/children's allergy action plans and prescribed medication and ensure that it is readily available at all times (I will notify leaders of location).
- In the case of emergency, I accept responsibility for payment of all expenses associated with medical transport and treatment. I give permission for leaders/staff to administer first aid and seek medical help as necessary.
- If any details and/or permissions change, I will notify leaders, staff and/or volunteers.

Adult/Parent 1 Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Adult/Parent 2 Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**FORM CS7****Report A Person Of Interest**

Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement

**Definition of a Person of Interest (POI)**

A Person of Interest (POI) is someone believed, on reasonable grounds, to either (a) have a Court conviction for an offence against a child of a sexual, pornographic, or violent nature; (b) or to be undergoing a Police investigation for the above; or (c) to have a positive finding for misconduct of a sexual nature involving a minor, as determined by a duly authorised Commission (such as a Health Complaints Commission), Professional-member Registration Body or Association (such as a Teacher Registration Board), or Tribunal.

**YOUR DETAILS**

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

Residential Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone/Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**DETAILS OF PERSON OF INTEREST**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact details (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

Age (estimate if not known): \_\_\_\_\_ Your relationship/connection/association to this person: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of POI (Or whereabouts): \_\_\_\_\_

Brief physical description (height; build; complexion; hair colour; eye colour; features: beard, tattoos, rings etc.): \_\_\_\_\_

Is the POI currently believed to be a Church worker or employee? ☐ Yes ☐ No What office? \_\_\_\_\_Is the POI currently believed to be attending a local Church? ☐ Yes ☐ No Which Church? \_\_\_\_\_

On what grounds do you believe the POI has a conviction or is under investigation? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any documentation that supports your belief? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Who else, do you believe, is aware of this apparent information about the POI? \_\_\_\_\_

Describe any other likely sources of information or people who are willing to be contacted: \_\_\_\_\_

Any other comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**DECLARATION - PLEASE CHECK ALL BOXES**

- ☐ 1. I submit this Report of a Person of Interest in good faith without malicious or vexatious intent.
- ☐ 2. The details are true and correct as far as I understand and believe them to be.
- ☐ 3. I consent to the relevant ChurchSafe Contact, or a relevant Church, Conference or Department of the Church representative, contacting me if required.
- ☐ 4. I have obtained the consent of any other people who may be likely sources of information, if indicated above.
- ☐ 5. I understand that the ability of the ChurchSafe Contact/s and/or the Church to act on this report may be limited by the information enclosed or the extent of information that emerges as a result of inquiries.
- ☐ 6. My identity in the submission of this Report will be kept confidential so far as the Confidentiality Agreement extends and that of any legal right or necessity for it to be disclosed (in such an event, ChurchSafe would seek to blank out details of the submitter on the grounds of relevance, in the first instance, and on the grounds of the necessity of maintaining privacy of sources so that future sources may not be discouraged from coming forward thereby increasing risk within Church environments).

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_



**FORM CS8**

## **Formal Allegation Record (PSOA Form)**

Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement



The completed form should be given to the team leader, who will pass the information on to the ChurchSafe Concerns Team.

### **FILL IN DETAILS**

Name of Team Leader: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of person filling in this form: \_\_\_\_\_

Time of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Incident: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Your mobile phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Residential Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

### **DETAILS OF PERSON ABOUT WHOM YOU HAVE A CONCERN**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact details (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

Age (if known): \_\_\_\_\_ Your relationship to this person: \_\_\_\_\_

### **DESCRIBE YOUR CONCERNS - WHAT WAS OBSERVED OR WHAT WAS SAID**

It is important to provide as much information as possible, basing your information on facts and observations, without making assumptions or jumping to conclusions or making "value" judgments. If a disclosure has been made, a verbatim (word for word) must be written of the disclosure to the best of the reporter's ability, as soon after the disclosure as is practical.

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE THIS REPORT WAS MADE: \_\_\_\_\_

**This confidential record is to be kept in accordance with privacy legislation**



**FORM CS9**

## ChurchSafe Incident Report Form

Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement



### DETAILS OF INCIDENT

Name of local Church/Entity: \_\_\_\_\_ Conference/Field: \_\_\_\_\_

Address/Location of Church/Entity: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

Name/s of person/s involved in incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact details of person/s involved in incident (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

Date/Time/Place of incident(s) (this might be approximate, if it is not known specifically): \_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT

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### NATURE OF INCIDENT

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### SUMMARY OF RESPONSE/S OR ACTION TAKEN (IF ANY) AND BY WHOM

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### SUMMARY OF ANY FOLLOW UP ACTION TAKEN AND RESULTS (IF KNOWN)

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### THIS FORM IS BEING SUBMITTED TO

- ☐ Local Church Board/Business Meeting for response/action
- ☐ Local Conference/Field ChurchSafe Contact for advice/response/action
- ☐ AUC ChurchSafe Contact for advice/response/action or transparency of response decision
- ☐ Other Church entity (describe)

Name of person filling out this form: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE THIS REPORT WAS MADE: \_\_\_\_\_

**This confidential record is to be kept in accordance with privacy legislation.**



**FORM CS10**

## **Process Acknowledgment Form**

Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement



### **DETAILS OF PERSON SUBJECT OF ALLEGATION**

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

Residential Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

### **YOUR DECLARATION**

I have read and understood the ChurchSafe Case Response Procedure  
to Allegations of Serious Misconduct &/or Abuse.

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE THIS REPORT WAS MADE: \_\_\_\_\_

**This confidential record is to be kept in accordance with privacy legislation**

Part 2

# Safe Places



# Chapter 11: Workplace Health and Safety

(with extracts from the NSW Act)

Every activity has its hazards and its risks. Some are avoidable while others are not. It is important to identify, assess and then eliminate or reduce these individual event or program risks. Consider the use of an activity risk assessment form to help assess and manage the individual risks in your program. Again, consider not only the physical but also the emotional and spiritual environment. We also recommend that you consult your insurance broker or insurance department for more information on assessing and managing program risks.

All employers have a general duty at common law to implement and maintain a “safe system of work” for both their employees and others.

In relation to the employer’s employees, this duty is often expressed as being a duty to take reasonable care to avoid exposing the employees to “reasonably foreseeable” risks of injury.

In assessing whether or not an employer has breached its duty of care to an employee, a court will generally consider a number of factors, including whether:

- the employer was aware of the risk of injury and, if not, would a reasonably prudent employer have been aware of such a risk
- the employer took all reasonable steps to avoid or reduce the risk
- the injury would have been prevented or minimised had the reasonable steps been taken.

The question of what is “reasonable” is ultimately determined by reference to community standards and expectations. Given the demanding statutory WHS obligations in each State and Territory, the standard is typically high.

The duty is simply to take reasonable care for their safety. Accordingly, at common law, the risk of injury must be real and not simply fanciful. Further, for an employer to be found liable, the employer must have failed to take reasonable steps.

In the church context in all States and Territories except Victoria and Western Australia, the WHS legislation applies. Victoria and WA operate on State-based legislation.

## **WHS Legislation places particular responsibilities on Officers and Directors**

Failure to comply with the Act and/or Regulations renders persons in management positions, i.e. those Persons Conducting the Business or Undertaking (PCBU), including Pastors, open to prosecution with penalties, which can include fines, imprisonment or both.

Pastors should familiarise themselves with the Legislation in their particular State or Territory (including staying abreast of any amendments to the applicable legislation) and ensure that pastors and employees, Committees of Management and other church leaders are aware of their responsibilities to maintain healthy and safe environments for pastors, employees and visitors.

## **Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (extracts)**

Note: not all States have come in line with the National Harmonised WHS legislation and some States have modified or passed regulations to run in tandem with the act.

### ***Division 2—Object***

The main object of this Act is to provide for a balanced and nationally consistent framework to secure the health and safety of workers and workplaces by:

- protecting workers and other persons against harm to their health, safety and welfare through the elimination or minimisation of risks arising from work; and
- providing for fair and effective workplace representation, consultation, co-operation and issue resolution in relation to Work Health and Safety; and

- encouraging unions and employer organisations to take a constructive role in promoting improvements in work health and safety practices, and assisting persons conducting businesses or undertakings and workers to achieve a healthier and safer working environment; and
- promoting the provision of advice, information, education and training in relation to Work Health and Safety; and
- securing compliance with this Act through effective and appropriate compliance and enforcement measures; and
- ensuring appropriate scrutiny and review of actions taken by persons exercising powers and performing functions under this Act; and
- providing a framework for continuous improvement and progressively higher standards of work health and safety; and
- maintaining and strengthening the national harmonisation of laws relating to Work Health and Safety and to facilitate a consistent national approach to Work Health and Safety in this jurisdiction.

In furthering subsection (1)(a), regard must be given to the principle that workers and other persons should be given the highest level of protection against harm to their health, safety and welfare from hazards and risks arising from work as is reasonably practicable.

### ***Section 5 Meaning of person conducting a business or undertaking***

For the purposes of this Act, a person conducts a business or undertaking: whether the person conducts the business or undertaking alone or with others; and whether or not the business or undertaking is conducted for profit or gain.

### ***Section 7 Meaning of worker***

A person is a worker if the person carries out work in any capacity for a person conducting a business or undertaking, including work as: an employee; or a contractor or subcontractor; or an employee of a contractor or subcontractor; or an employee of a labour hire company who has been assigned to work in the person's business or undertaking; or an outworker; or an apprentice or trainee; or a student gaining work experience; or a volunteer; or a person of a prescribed class.

### ***Section 17 Management of risks***

A duty imposed on a person to ensure health and safety requires the person: to eliminate risks to health and safety, so far as is reasonably practicable; and if it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate risks to health and safety, to minimise those risks so far as is reasonably practicable.

### ***Section 18 What is reasonably practicable in ensuring health and safety***

In this Act, reasonably practicable, in relation to a duty to ensure health and safety, means that which is, or was at a particular time, reasonably able to be done in relation to ensuring health and safety, taking into account and weighing up all relevant matters including:

- the likelihood of the hazard or the risk concerned occurring; and
- the degree of harm that might result from the hazard or the risk; and
- what the person concerned knows, or ought reasonably to know, about:
- the hazard or the risk; and
- ways of eliminating or minimising the risk; and the availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or minimise the risk; and after assessing the extent of the risk and the available ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, the cost associated with available ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, including whether the cost is grossly disproportionate to the risk.

### ***Section 19 Primary duty of care***

A person conducting a business or undertaking must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of:



- workers engaged, or caused to be engaged by the person; and
- workers whose activities in carrying out work are influenced or directed by the person;
- while the workers are at work in the business or undertaking.

A person conducting a business or undertaking must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the health and safety of other persons is not put at risk from work carried out as part of the conduct of the business or undertaking.

Without limiting subsections (1) and (2), a person conducting a business or undertaking must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable:

- the provision and maintenance of a work environment without risks to health and safety;
- the provision and maintenance of safe plant and structures; and
- the provision and maintenance of safe systems of work; and
- the safe use, handling and storage of plant, structures and substances; and
- the provision of adequate facilities for the welfare at work of workers in carrying out work for the business or undertaking, including ensuring access to those facilities; and
- the provision of any information, training, instruction or supervision that is necessary to protect all persons from risks to their health and safety arising from work carried out as part of the conduct of the business or undertaking; and
- that the health of workers and the conditions at the workplace are monitored for the purpose of preventing illness or injury of workers arising from the conduct of the business or undertaking.

### ***Other responsibilities for workers***

In addition to the general duty of care, an employer is vicariously liable for injuries, loss or damage caused by the negligence of an employee, provided the act was performed “in the course of the employment” or was “reasonably incidental to the course of the employment”. An act will generally be in the course of employment if it is authorised by the employer irrespective of whether the employee performs the act in a negligent or unlawful way.

At common law, where an employer is vicariously liable to pay damages as a result of the negligence of a worker, the employer may be able to recover these damages from the negligent worker.

An employer who fails to perform its legal duty, or is vicariously liable for the conduct of a negligent employee, is liable to pay damages for a resultant loss or damage, including any injury or disease suffered by the injured employee. These damages are primarily assessed with a view to compensating the injured employee for his or her loss. In each state and territory, an employer’s common law liability must be read in conjunction with the relevant workers compensation legislation.

### ***Responsibility to all people on site***

Employers also owe a common law duty of care to persons other than their employees in relation to anything arising out of their business or “undertaking”. As noted below, employers will be vicariously liable for the actions of their employees.

An example of an employer’s common law duty arises where the employer is an occupier of premises. As such, employers will be liable to the world at large under the common law concept of “occupier’s liability”. Since 1987, occupier’s liability is no longer dependent upon the relationship between the occupier and the injured person. For example, under old principles, the duty of care owed to a trespasser was less than the duty owed to an invitee. Under modern principles, occupier’s liability is not dependent on this relationship and liability will be determined by ordinary negligence principles of foreseeability.

### ***Workplace Rehabilitation Procedure***

Employees who sustain a work-related injury are entitled to assistance in the workplace.

To ensure workplace rehabilitation is effective, it is expected that all employees will be supportive of and committed to the rehabilitation program.

To facilitate this process, rehabilitation will commence as soon as practicable after the injury, with the approval of the injured worker's treating doctor.

Suitable duties are provided as an integral part of this process. The goal, through an individualised rehabilitation plan, is to return the injured worker to their normal duties.

A team approach to rehabilitation will be used, with co-operation, consultation and confidentiality being key requirements for all persons involved.

To ensure ongoing effectiveness, this procedure will be regularly reviewed and improved.

### ***Health & Safety responsible positions***

For each workplace there are a number of positions of responsibility in relation to WHS operations. These are not full time positions and should be sourced by trusted, responsible employees. Each local church must have a Safety Team, who, depending on the number of employees, may have the following roles: WHS Officer, Chief Warden, first aid officer. Again, check your state requirements on the relevant WorkCover websites.

### ***Responsibilities of workers at a workplace***

Each state and territory legislation has guidelines for employee responsibilities. In general terms here are some good practice guidelines. If in doubt please use your State or Territory WHS website for more information about employee responsibilities. To comply with the instructions given for the Workplace Health and Safety at the workplace by the employer at the workplace and, if the workplace is a construction workplace, the principal contractor for Workplace Health and Safety at the workplace.

- For a worker – to use personal protective equipment if the equipment is provided by the worker's employer and the worker is properly instructed in its use;
- Not to wilfully or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided for the Workplace Health and Safety at the workplace.
- Not wilfully place at risk the Workplace Health and Safety of any person at the workplace;
- Not to wilfully injure him or herself.
- Make sure you:
  - Follow methods of work you have been trained in;
  - Let your employer or Workplace Health and Safety representative know of any symptoms such as pain and discomfort that you think is caused by your work;
  - Make suggestions to your employer about how tasks could be arranged to break up repetitive work.

### ***Responsibility of others***

Visitors to workplaces must obey health and safety directions applied at the workplace.

Principal contractors should ensure the orderly conduct of all work at the construction workplace to the extent necessary to ensure Workplace Health and Safety at the workplace and to assist the discharge of Workplace Health and Safety obligations of an employer or self-employed person.

To ensure that persons at the workplace are not exposed to risks from:-something that has been provided for the general use of persons at the workplace for which no other person owes a Workplace Health and Safety obligation; or a hazard at the workplace for which no other person owes a Workplace Health and Safety obligation, to ensure that workplace activities at the workplace are safe and without risk of injury or illness to members of the public at or near the workplace; to provide safeguards and take safety measures prescribed under a regulation made for principal contractors.

## Chapter 12: Work Place Health and Safety

The Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement Australasian Union Conference together with all Conferences/Fields, Local Churches and Groups under its jurisdiction recognises its moral and legal responsibility to provide a safe and healthy work environment for everyone.

All people at church will endeavour to do nothing to place themselves or others at risk of emotional or physical injury or illness.

The senior Church leadership (i.e. committee members, board members and officers of each administrative unit) will endeavour to:

- Provide a safe workplace including a safe site and safe ministry programs
- Ensure compliance with legislative requirements and standards
- Provide workers (volunteers & paid) and contractors with information, instruction, training and supervision for their safety
- Provide support that will assist workers in maintaining their psychological and physical health
- To implement Work Health and Safety policies and procedures
- Actively promote and be involved in the implementation of those policies and procedures

Church workers (volunteer and paid) are responsible for:

- Following all health and safety policies and procedures
- Reporting all hazards identified to the Health and Safety team
- Complying with reasonable instructions
- Not behaving in a willful or reckless manner

The church is committed to encouraging consultation and cooperation between ministers, church administrators, employees and voluntary workers. It will involve all parties in workplace changes likely to affect their safety, health and welfare.

### **Acknowledgement**

*Adapted from the Australian Baptist Insurance Services policy*

# Chapter 13: Health & Safety Information & Procedures

## Recommended Manual Handling Procedure

Manual Handling means any activity requiring force by a person to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain any object. Everyone's manual handling capacity is different and depends on their individual ability to handle a load.

**Risk Assessment:** To reduce manual handling injuries, employees should be encouraged to: assess the size, shape and weight of the load to be moved; whether gloves or protective equipment will influence handling; determine where it is to be placed; how far it will be moved; and decide how it will be handled.

**Consider the following strategies, if lifting is required:** decide on the best position, clear path and try to face in the direction you will be moving; get a secure grip on the object being handled: the grip helps make manual handling safe; wherever possible, a comfortable power grip with the whole hand should be used rather than a hook or precision grip with fingers only; and make sure you have a firm footing so you don't slip while lifting. Pull the load in close to the body: for lifting in particular, it is important to have the centre of gravity of the load close to the body to prevent excessive stress on the back and to use the strongest muscles of the arms to hold the load; it is important to minimise the effects of acceleration by lifting smoothly, slowly and without jerking; and keep your spine in its natural alignment (maintain normal curves) and avoid twisting whilst lifting.

**Lifting:** lift the object by straightening your legs, not your back, keeping the load close throughout the lift.

- Seek guidance on manual handling from Workcover authorities in your state
- It is advisable that all leaders are to be briefed in safe lifting techniques annually

## Working at Heights procedures

Control measures protecting a person from the risk of falling from a height should be in place before any work at height of 2.4m or above commences.

Several control measures to protect persons from the risk of falling from a height when carrying out work at that height are listed in order of preference: erecting a physical barrier; providing personal fall protection; a measure to "catch" a person after the person has fallen.

Footwear, which minimises the risk of slipping, should be worn when working where there is a risk of falls from heights. Consideration should be given to the surface being worked on. A safety helmet should be fitted and attached to the person's head so that it remains in place should a person be arrested in a fall.

When using ladders ensure that they are in good working order and used for the purpose for which they were designed. Check safety labels on the ladder from the manufacturer for correct usage.

## Hazardous Substance Management

The Safety Team is responsible for:

- Consulting with managers, supervisors, and employees on hazardous substances and the level of compliance with policies, procedures and work practices etc.;
- Ensuring that hazardous substance management is included in the hazard workplace inspections;
- Conducting ongoing training and educational sessions;
- Compiling and maintaining a hazardous substance register; and
- Ensuring risk assessments are conducted on hazardous substances.

**Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS):** The supplier of a substance must provide a copy of the current MSDS when first supplying the substance to the organisation and/or when requested. Every hazardous substance has an MSDS. MSDS's are to be read and understood by the workers

and reasonable steps are taken to ensure the MSDS is not changed other than by the manufacturer or importer.

The information below will assist you in understanding a little more about material safety data sheets.

- What are they? Sheets containing important safety, first aid and other information on any chemical sold, under a trade or chemical name.
- Where do I get them? From the manufacturer of the product who is obliged by law to provide them.
- When should I get them? Now. All hazardous goods used in the workplace must be accompanied by an MSDS.
- How do I get them? Telephone or fax the supplier who will post you one or fax it to you.
- How will I know I've got the right document? If the document covers the areas listed below you have procured an MSDS.
- Product Identification: Name of Product, description, supplier's name and telephone number.
- Composition: Chemical name, ingredients and impurities.
- Emergency Information: Fire, spill, over exposure.
- First Aid: Inhalation, ingestion etc.
- Storage: How to handle, special containers, incompatible substances, transport.
- Physical Data: Boiling point, melting point, etc.

**Hazardous Substance register:** When compiling a hazardous substance register a survey should be conducted on all substances in the workplace. Once all substances are identified, the MSDS's are to be obtained; a copy of all MSDS's should be located with the Hazardous Substance register; and the register is to be made available to all staff.

**Labelling:** In the event of de-canting a substance into smaller containers, the supervisor is to ensure a label is affixed to a hazardous substances container. The label is to be in English and state the substance's product name, risk and safety phrases (e.g. Keep away from heat). If the hazardous substance is transferred from one container into a second container, the container must be labelled stating: the substance's product name; substance's risk and safety phrases; and relevant warning signs/information.

**Unlabelled Substances:** All substances should be labelled. If containers are not labelled and the contents are not known, mark the container – "Caution do not use: unknown substance". Store container away from other substances, and if not identified, contact the local Waste Management Branch of the Department of Environment for appropriate disposal procedures.

**Storage:** The supervisor is to ensure that the storage of hazardous substance is in accordance with the MSDS. If appropriate storage facilities are not available, the substance should not be purchased unless the material can be stored at an alternative approved storage site. Correct signage should also be displayed where hazardous substances are stored.

**Handling:** Supervisors are to ensure that: the requirements set out in the MSDS are followed; decanting is to be conducted using the method in the appropriate MSDS; Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is provided where it is not practicable to prevent or reduce exposure by other ways; other control measures such as ventilation equipment that is implemented, is maintained as required; regular monitoring is conducted where it is required; and prohibited substances are not used in the workplace.

**Disposal:** Surveys/inspections should be conducted at all workplaces to identify the hazardous substances used and stored at the workplace, and to identify the products no longer required which should be disposed of; the relevant MSDS of each hazardous substance identified for disposal should be reviewed to establish the appropriate disposal method.

Containers of hazardous substances should not be washed out in areas where there is a possibility of waste solution entering a storm water drain or natural watercourse.

Transporting Hazardous Substances: Supervisors are to ensure that hazardous substances are transported correctly when they are required within workplace according to the MSDS.

Employees are to: Follow the procedure for hazardous substances; read the MSDS of a hazardous substance before using any of the substance; use the appropriate PPE when handling substances; and report any concerns they may have with any hazardous substances.

### **Electric Safety (General procedures)**

Employers have an obligation to ensure electrical work is performed safely. Electrical work must only be undertaken by licensed electrical workers. They must follow the guidelines of their industry to ensure all those onsite are safe.

Ensure that all electrical equipment is properly safety tagged and in good working order, via a safety audit.

Inspect tools and equipment regularly. Ensure they are maintained in good order.

Ensure the insulation of insulated tools and insulated covers are maintained in good order and suitable for the work situation. Work from a safe position that would require a deliberate movement to contact directly energised conductors or parts.

Always warn others of known hazards. If possible rectify the problem immediately, e.g. turn off mains power. Contact an electrician to arrange for it to be fixed and take appropriate action to ensure safety in the meantime.

### **Working in the Sun Procedure**

Virtually all people in Australia are at risk of skin cancer. However, fair-skinned people, particularly those who freckle or who never tan or tan poorly, are more at risk.

Providing shade or scheduling outdoor work to hours other than the middle of the day is the simplest solution. Where this is not practicable, steps to ensure minimum effects are gained from working in the sun e.g. wear the most appropriate clothing to complete your task, wear a wide brim hat, wear eye-protection, application of sunscreen lotion (SPF30+ or greater), and constantly drink water to ensure the body is kept adequately hydrated during the day.

### **Handling and Disposal of Sharps Procedure (General)**

The term “sharps” means pointed or cutting implements that are capable of inflicting a penetrating injury.

**Steps involved with the safe handling and disposal of sharps once located:** protective gloves should always be worn; use a set of tongs or similar item to pick up the sharp; dispose sharp into a puncture resistant sharps container; check for any more sharps in the vicinity; place puncture resistant sharps container in the nearest collection wheelie bins, or other authorised disposal facilities as available from time to time. Wheelie bins are collected by waste removal contractors and disposed of safely.

**Sharps should never be:** bent; broken; or re-sheathed, as these are unsafe practices and are common causes of sharps injuries.

### **Noise & visual management Procedure**

It is important that safe visual and auditory care is provided for leaders and those attending programs as part of the church.

Noise is unwanted sound which may cause damage to hearing. The amount of damage caused by noise depends on the total amount of exposure received over time.

**Measurement of Noise Exposure is expressed as:** the noise exposure for a workday in Daily Noise Dose (DND); the “loudest noise”, is called a peak level. Exposure to a noise level of 85dB(A) over an 8-hour period amounts to a DND of 1. Long-term exposure to a DND of less than 1 does not result in permanent hearing loss.

- Auditory care: consideration is to be given to auditory comfort when setting volume levels of audio equipment; volume of audio equipment during church events should be kept at less than 85 decibels (Additional information on impact of noise may be found at [www.hearing.com.au](http://www.hearing.com.au)).
- Visual Care: effective lighting is to be used during all church events; faulty lights are not to be used during church events; faulty light globes and fittings are to be brought to the notice of the Church Safety Team and are to be replaced as soon as practicable.

## Use of church buildings

It is important to remember that there can also be risks associated with the design, maintenance and safety of indoor and outdoor environment.

**Areas that you may wish to address includes:** poor lighting, unsafe watercourses, lakes, boundary fences and gates; the positioning of shrubbery and toilet blocks; and the late collection of children in poorly/unlit car parks.

**Building Access:** The Church will check that the building is safe and easily accessible, e.g. easy to open wide doors; clear and visible signage; reduced hazards, or if hazards remain they are highlighted. Use the Housekeeping Checklist to help assess your buildings annually.

**Issuing Keys to Buildings:** The Church Secretary will be responsible for maintaining a register of all persons to whom a key/security code has been issued. These records are to be held in the Church Office and be available to insurance company and/or police in event of request from those parties following any break-ins etc.

**Hiring Church Property:** While we do not rent out our sanctuaries, in general we also do not rent out our churches or meeting halls, particularly where we gather for weekly services. However, we believe that we can make some exceptions, particularly where the church owns property that is not being used on a regular, weekly basis for religious services (an example of this may be a church-run school or a campground where conferences are held). Where this is the case, the properties generally are underutilized, by staying vacant most of the year. In such cases, we may consider renting the facilities to outside groups from Sunday to Friday. However, we should be careful in evaluating each group and each situation on its own merit. Some points to analyze include:

- the particular organization and its purposes,
- types of activities to be conducted, and
- any implications to the honor of God and the reputation of our organization for allowing that group or activity on our facility.

We should be careful not to allow such inappropriate activities as the playing of loud music, consumption of alcoholic beverages, or anything that is opposed to our fundamental principles, and so forth. If the facility rental would also include the Sabbath hours, then all the above are applicable, with the addition that the purpose and activities of the renting organization would not violate the principles of true Sabbath keeping. (SDARM 2015 General Conference Resolution).

Before hiring out Church property the following process is to be followed:

- Ensure any property or equipment to be hired is well maintained and free of known defects (e.g. flooring in good condition, power-points, cables and electrical equipment in good repair.)
- Do not hire the property for a purpose that could substantially increase the risk of damage to the property, or result in injury to other people accessing the building.
- It is the hirer's responsibility for cleaning, behaviour and any damage they may cause, and they are responsible for any of their own property they may bring on to the Church's property. Ask for written evidence of Public Liability insurance and keep a copy of it on file (Certificate of currency from the hirer's insurer).
- Where possible a Church employee or member should be responsible for opening and closing the area hired. Notify the Church's insurer of any claim submitted or potential claims, which arise from the hiring of the property.

## Chapter 14: Food Safety & Food Regulations

Laws regulating the transporting, handling, preparation and sale of food are covered by the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code. The Code is enforced by state and territory and New Zealand agencies and more specifically by local councils. All states have similar regulations with regards to food safety.

As long as Church events or programs are not being used to sell food for profit, they are classed as charitable and therefore we do not require a Food Business License.

All officers in charge of organising Church events (such as State Conferences) or community programs (such as Cooking Demonstrations), should adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Ensure all people handling food have completed a Food Safety Training course.
  - a. There are various online courses available and some local councils even provide online training free of charge. Most of these are online courses and can be completed within 1 or 2 days.
    - i. Example of a nationally recognised course:  
<http://www.accessallareatraining.com.au/courses/new-south-wales/food-safety-training/basic-food-safety-sitxfsa101>
    - ii. Example of local council course: [http://www.swan.wa.gov.au/Services-support/ Public-health/Food-Safety/Free-food-safety-handler-training](http://www.swan.wa.gov.au/Services-support/Public-health/Food-Safety/Free-food-safety-handler-training)
2. Notify local council of the event where food is being handled if you are selling that food to the public.
  - a. Check with your local council as they may have an online form you can fill out.

### Food Preparation & Storage Practices

#### Receiving Food

Keeping food safe starts from the moment that the food arrives:

- Check that your food suppliers are supplying safe food.
- Be careful to keep perishable food within safe temperatures. Frozen food to remain frozen until preparation for use and refrigerated foods cold.
- Dry goods, dry ingredients or canned foods should be in good condition, without torn packaging or heavily dented cans.

#### Preparing Food

- Use separate utensils, including cutting boards and knives, for raw food and cooked food. If this is not possible, thoroughly wash and sanitise equipment before using it.
- Wash all fruit and vegetables in clean water before using them.
- Don't use food from damaged packaging.
- Don't let raw food come into contact with cooked food to avoid cross contamination.

#### Handling of Food

- Cooked, or ready-to-eat food shouldn't be handled with bare hands. Use tongs, spatulas, spoons, or disposable gloves.
- Raw food to be cooked can be handled with bare hands.
- Change disposable gloves every hour and/or when they tear and/or when you change tasks.

#### Cooking And Heating Food

- Thaw frozen food before cooking in microwave or at the bottom of the refrigerator.
- Never put thawed food back in the freezer.
- Cook thawed food immediately after thawing.
- Cook all foods completely.



- Reheating: bring to the boil and simmer for a minimum of 5 minutes before serving (or microwave using manufacturer's guidelines).

### **Storing Food**

- **Temperature:** Store high-risk foods at the correct temperature, frozen (hard) at -15°C or cooler or refrigerated at 5°C or cooler.
- **Time:** Don't keep food in storage for too long. Record dates, 'first in - first out' rule. Food should be out of refrigeration for a maximum of four hours.

### **Displaying Food**

- Wrap or cover all food on display. Tag or label food trays, not the food.
- Refrigerated displays must be 5°C or cooler and hot displays 60°C or hotter.
- Don't use hot display equipment to reheat food.

### **Transporting Food**

- Keep cold by using insulated containers such as an Esky™ with ice or cold blocks.
- Food which is to be served hot should be transported cold and heated at the event.

## Chapter 15: Risk Management Guide

Team leaders should work with the Health & Safety Team to ensure that all individual programs risks have been considered and risk management steps implemented.

Where deciding upon activities for your ministry it may be useful to ask yourself the following:

- Could this be classified as a high risk activity?
- Is there a high likelihood for damage or trauma (physical, emotional and/or spiritual)?
- Does the benefit of this activity outweigh the possible risks that may be involved?
- Can the activity be changed to reduce the possible risks?
- Are there critical incident and emergency procedures in place if required?
- Does the ministry or church have suitably trained and qualified people to address critical incidents or emergencies?
- Would the activities be covered by your insurance?

### **What is Risk?**

Risk is the exposure to the possibility of such things as economic or financial loss or gain, physical damage, injury or delay, as a consequence of pursuing or not pursuing a particular course of action.

The concept of risk includes the perception that something could happen, likelihood of it occurring and consequence if it does occur.

These risks might include: workplace/Church health and safety (include hazards), financial and administrative, property, delivery of services, public liability, litigation &/or public relations.

### **What is Risk Management?**

Risk management is the process of managing your church's exposure to potential liabilities. It does this by identifying risks in order to prevent them or reduce them, and by providing funds to meet any liability if it occurs.

It can be a useful exercise to do a risk assessment for your ministry/program at least annually. This does not replace a Hazard Identification. The Risk Assessment looks at what might happen, whereas Hazard Identification looks at what is present at the venue at a specific time.

### ***Considers five key areas:***

- How likely is this risk?
- What is the consequence should it occur?
- What is the overall level of risk?
- What does this level of risk require to be managed appropriately?
- How adequately are we managing this risk?

# Chapter 16: Critical Incident Response Plan Overview

## What Is a Critical Incident?

A Critical Incident is an event or set of circumstances that have the potential to result in physical or psychological outcomes ranging from mild trauma to a fatality for one or more people.

It is important to note that a person does not have to be directly involved in the trauma (eg. Injury) to be impacted by a critical incident. For example, a critical incident may occur at a youth camp when a young person is notified that their parent has died in an accident. It could be deemed that other young people and leaders at the camp will be psychologically impacted by the announcement of the death and their observation of the response of the young person whose parent has died.

Another example may include a natural disaster, involving widespread death, injury and destruction. The young people involved in a youth group may not have any connection to people who have died or been injured, however, they could be impacted and need support to process what has taken place.

In both of these situations, a Critical Incident Response Plan may be warranted to manage the response to this situation.

## What Is a Critical Incident Response Plan?

A Critical Incident Response Plan is a systematic approach to planning and implementing an immediate and long-term response to a critical incident. It has 3 main stages.

1. Preparedness
2. Response
3. Review

Within the **Preparedness** stage, those responsible for ministry programs are responsible for ensuring that people are allocated to specific roles to be exercised during the **Response** stage. It is also important that clear descriptions are allocated to each of those roles and those fulfilling the roles are adequately briefed on their responsibilities. It is not necessary for a separate person to fulfil each role. However, when allocating roles, it is advisable to be mindful that in the Response stage some actions need to take place simultaneously.

## Getting Started

1. Meet with your ministry team to consider possible critical incidents that may occur during your ministry program either on-site or off-site.
2. Complete the Preparedness stage by allocating roles and briefing people on roles and responsibilities. It may be necessary to provide training on roles to adequately equip those fulfilling each specific role.
3. If a critical incident occurs, implement the Response stage.
4. After the incident, implement the recovery stage, being mindful that this stage may take longer for different people, depending upon how they have been impacted by the critical incident.

## Critical Incident Response Plan

Select people to fulfill the following roles. Some people are likely to have more than one of the roles.

PREPAREDNESS	
Role	Role Description
Critical Incident Response Manager	<p>This person is responsible for managing/overseeing the response. They will hold the authority in the situation and direct all others in response.</p> <p>They are responsible for ensuring safe and orderly emergency evacuation and safety measures used during the "Response" period.</p> <p>They are also responsible for liaising with senior church leadership during the "Response" and "Recovery" periods.</p>
Media Liaison	<p>This person is the only person who has authority to liaise with the media during or after the specific critical incident, excepting in cases where senior church leadership also chooses to make a media statement.</p> <p>Please note: In fulfilling this role, the Media Liaison person is not to seek out media contact, but respond to unsolicited media attention following guidelines as set down by the denomination.</p>
Emergency Services Liaison	This person is responsible for contacting emergency services (ambulance, fire brigade, SES, etc.) if required.
Parental/Family Liaison	This person is responsible for notifying the parents or family of any person injured during a critical incident.
Pastoral Support (immediate & ongoing)	This person is responsible for co-ordinating and providing pastoral support to leaders and people who have been impacted by the critical incident, during the "Response" and "Recovery" periods.
Supervision of people not involved in critical incident	<p>This person is responsible for ensuring that adequate supervision is provided for all people not immediately involved in the critical incident, during the "Response" period.</p> <p>This person is also responsible for ensuring that all people are not exposed to media attention during the "Response" period.</p>
Emergency First Aid Officer	This person is responsible for administering emergency first aid, prior to arrival of emergency medical treatment, to any person or leader impacted by critical incident.

RESPONSE	
Steps	Details
1	Attend to any injured people or leaders
	Supervise/ensure safety of uninjured people
2	Administer emergency first aid to injured people or leaders
	Notify emergency services as required (ambulance, fire brigade, police, SES, etc.) and senior church leadership.
	Notify the contact person of any injured person or leader.
3	Complete an Incident Report Form (Form WS1)
4	Provide pastoral support to all people impacted by the critical incident.

RECOVERY	
Role	Role Description
Critical Incident Response Manager	<p>Complete an evaluation of how the critical incident was handled with suggestions for improvement (eg. How it could be better handled if it occurred in the future, or how to minimise the likelihood of it happening again).</p> <p>Debrief with senior church leadership &amp; pastoral support person on processes followed and outcomes of Critical Incident Response.</p>
Pastoral Support	In consultation with parents, family and leaders, develop and implement a debriefing and pastoral support plan for people and leaders impacted by the critical incident.
Senior Church Leadership	<p>In consultation with Critical Incident Response Manager, prepare a letter to all families of those who were impacted by the critical incident, providing information on a “need to know” basis.</p> <p>In consultation with Critical Incident Response Manager, prepare and submit a briefing paper to the Leader of your church/conference/field or AUC leader.</p>
Church/Conference / Field/AUC Leader	Prepare a media statement regarding the incident to be used if required in consultation with your senior church leadership.



**FORM WS1**

## **WHS Incident Report Form**

Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement



### **DETAILS OF INCIDENT**

Name of local Church/Entity: \_\_\_\_\_ Conference/Field: \_\_\_\_\_

Address/Location of Church/Entity: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

Name/s of person/s involved in incident: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact details of person/s involved in incident (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

### **DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT (ATTACH DRAWINGS OR PHOTOS IF NECESSARY)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Which body parts were affected by the incident? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**WITNESS (NAME, ADDRESS, PHONE)** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**SUMMARY OF RESPONSE/S OR ACTION TAKEN (IF ANY) AND BY WHOM:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**OTHER FACTORS PERTINENT TO THE INCIDENT (FIRST AID, AMBULANCE, DAMAGE TO PROPERTY?:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of person filling out this form: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE THIS REPORT WAS MADE: \_\_\_\_\_

**This confidential record is to be kept in accordance with privacy legislation**

**FORM WS2****Event Risk Assessment Form**

Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement



The completed form should be given to your local WHS Contact.

EVENT DESCRIPTION: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Event: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Event: \_\_\_\_\_

\*1 = low, 5 = high

RISK ASSESSMENT					
To what degree is there potential or emotional harm to the participant/s and/or leaders?	1	2	3	4	5
To what degree is there potential to create personal discomfort for participants or leaders?	1	2	3	4	5
To what degree is there potential for activity to become emotionally or physically out of control?	1	2	3	4	5
To what degree are the leaders confident that they know what the possible outcomes of activity might be?	1	2	3	4	5
To what degree is there potential that a leader may lose control of the activity, resulting in one or more people (or leader) being subject to trauma from others?	1	2	3	4	5

**OVERALL LEVEL OF RISK**☐ **HIGH**☐ **MEDIUM**☐ **LOW**

Yes ☐ No ☐ Does the benefit of this activity outweigh the possible risks that may be involved for the participants, leader or church?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Can the activity be modified to reduce the possible risk?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Are there critical incident and emergency procedures in place if required?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Does the ministry have suitable trained people to address critical incidents or emergencies?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Has this activity been approved by the church?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Is this activity covered by our denominational insurance?

**RISK MITIGATION**

Identify strategies or changes that can be implemented to reduce level of risk in this activity: \_\_\_\_\_

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Name of person filling out this form: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

# Site Safety Checklist

FLOOR, AISLES, STAIRS ETC.	
	Are all aisles clear?
	Are all floors, aisles, stairs and landings free of slip, trip and fall hazards?
	Are stairs free of worn or broken treads?
	Are all handrails in good repair?
	Are non-skid strips on stairs in good repair?
ELECTRICAL POWER	
	Are all electrical plugs, sockets and switches in good working order?
	Are all appliances free of frayed or otherwise defective leads (checked and tagged)?
	Do appliances have access to a power socket free of double adapters?
	Are all lights adequate and operational?
	Are residual current devices installed and maintained?
EMERGENCY RESPONSE	
	Is the church evacuation procedure clearly displayed?
	Are fire extinguishers appropriate to materials used in their vicinity?
	Are fire extinguishers readily available and properly mounted?
	Are fire extinguishers properly maintained and inspected?
	Are exits and exit signs adequately illuminated?
	Are all exits and fire doors in good repair?
	Are all exits unobstructed both internally and externally?
	Are all incidents recorded on the Incident report form?
STORAGE	
	Are all items being stored clear of traffic areas?
	Where items are stacked for storage, are the stacks stable with a good solid base?
	Are storage areas kept clear of rubbish and unwanted material?
	Where it is necessary to store flammable items, are they stored correctly?

FIRST AID	
	Are all first aid kits clearly identified?
	Are the first aid kits properly stocked and maintained and operational?
	Are the names of qualified first aiders clearly displayed?
CAR PARKS & OUTDOOR AREAS	
	Are car parks and outdoor areas kept clean and free of rubbish?
	Do car parks and outdoor areas have even surfaces; i.e. no holes?
	Are car parks and outdoor areas free of grease and oil patches?
	Are car parks free of dense shrubbery obstructing vision?
	In car parks, are vehicle traffic ways clearly marked and lit?
	Does the program use a sign in/sign out sheet (or roll)?
	Outside play fence (minimum height 1.5metres) with a child-proof self-closing gate?
	Is the playing space (outside and inside) appropriate for the number of children?
	Are there any dangers, gully traps, unprotected steps?
	Are there appropriate surfaces for the program activities, e.g. impact absorbing under play equipment, paved areas?
	Is there a sand pit and is it well-drained; does it have safe surrounds and shade?
	Do you have appropriate shade provided in outside play areas?
	Do you have access to a telephone in case of an emergency?
	Are there appropriate toilet facilities available for children?