

ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF ROCKHAMPTON

SAFE MINISTRY POLICY

Safe Ministry Policy

1.1 Purpose

Our Policy:

- Guides our work in establishing and maintaining safe environments for all people, including children and young people
- Underpins our biblical mandate to: Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength and to love your neighbour as yourself (*Matthew 22:37-40*)
- Promotes and provides for the provision of services that foster the health and safety of all who access our church and/or programs
- Ensures that all workers (paid and volunteer) associated with our church fulfil their pastoral, organisational and duty of care responsibilities
- Ensures that all workers recognise and agree to abide by our code of conduct – Faithfulness in Service

Ensures compliance with legislation in regard to Safe Ministry with Children and Vulnerable Adults (*Child Protection and Education Legislation (Reporting of Abuse) Amendment Bill 2017, Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld)*), and WH&S and also with the intention of the legislation, as it relates to protecting people.

1.2 Scope

This Policy applies to all those associated with our church including:

- All workers, including paid employees, volunteers and members of Parish Councils and boards;
- Guests or hirers of the church and its facilities;
- Those who access our site and/or programs;
- Contractors, subcontractors, delivery persons or others engaged to provide services.

1.3 Policy statements

As a church we are committed to spiritual, emotional and physical safety and well-being:

- We acknowledge that all people have a right to feel and be safe, and to experience life- giving, harm-free interactions at our churches and in our programs
- We acknowledge the need for sensitivity and consideration of all people of aboriginal, or culturally and/ or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as any person with a disability
- We commit to the welfare of all people through the implementation and ongoing improvement of our Safe Ministry Program which includes:
 - safe and friendly environments where people are listened to, feel safe, accept challenges, develop faith and grow in connection with God and others

- safe and adequate recruitment, training, supervision, support and resourcing of our workers
- appropriate and expedient responses to all incidents, accidents, child protection and/or safe ministry (misconduct and abuse) concerns in relation to children (0-18years) and adults.
- We acknowledge the primary role of parents and caregivers, as well as the role of children in child protection, and will actively engage with children and caregivers, inviting open communication and feedback as part of our procedures and interactions.
- In relation to children, we acknowledge the shared responsibility of the whole community for child safety and welfare, including caregivers and our workers, and as such, we will actively promote the role of the wider community in the shared responsibility of child safety.
- It is a serious breach of this policy for any worker in our church to contravene this policy, any related procedure, or any regulation in law, in relation to the safety and protection of children and the vulnerable.

1.4 Responsibilities

All people at church are to:

- be respectful of all people's boundaries, especially of children and the vulnerable, respecting the rights of all people at our church to safe and friendly interactions and ministries,
- have a say (e.g. talk to any of the leaders when feeling unsafe, contribute to policies and procedures),
- foster and encourage the participation and empowerment of all people in staying safe,
- take all reasonable care for their own health and safety
- recognise and agree to abide by our code of conduct – Faithfulness in Service
- take reasonable care that their actions do not adversely affect the health and safety of others
- comply with all reasonable instructions from the church leadership
- comply with church policies, procedures and directives from the leadership as communicated, including the code of conduct (Faithfulness in Service) relevant to role/position
- report all child protection and other safe ministry (misconduct and abuse) concerns, allegations or incidents immediately to the Director of Professional Standards or the Safe Church Team and Police if required.
- report all incidents or hazards to the Health & Safety Officer (or to a Team Leader) as soon as practicable.

In addition to the general responsibilities under this policy, the following office holders and those associated with our church have the following specific responsibilities:

Bishop in Council (Diocesan)

- primary duty of care, to ensure, so far as is practicable, the health and safety of all persons involved in the church
- create Diocesan protocols, policies and procedures
- monitor and review the implementation of Diocesan protocols, policies and procedures
- ensure disclosures of harm are reported to all relevant regulatory bodies
- fulfil relevant legislative 'head of agency roles' in child protection related investigations.

Wardens/Parish Council (Parish)

- responsible for the day to day local church ministry
- maintain a positive, safe and friendly God-honouring culture,
- overall responsibility for implementation of Diocesan protocols, policies and procedures
- regular reporting to Bishop in Council in relation to implementation of Diocesan protocols, policies and procedures

Safe Ministry Contact Person (Parish)

- maintain a Parish Register of Safe Ministry documentation (including recognition of the Code of Conduct: 'Faithfulness in Service'), training and Blue Card information.
- maintain the register in a format that aligns with the Diocesan register.
- liaise with both the Priest/Wardens and the Diocesan Safe Ministry Officer about changes/updates to the register on a regular basis (at least 2x per annum).
- ensure that each person on the register holds and maintains current documentation, training and Blue Card registration.
- keep Safe Ministry on the agenda at meetings of the Parish Council
- advertise and raise awareness of current information on Training opportunities and Safe Ministry issues.
- complete the Safe Ministry section of the Annual Returns.

Ministry Coordinators/Program Leaders (Parish)

- implementation of this policy and related procedures as applicable to their ministry program/events
- monitor workers who they oversee to ensure workers are acting safely and according to policy and procedure
- provide reasonable instruction to workers regarding the provision of safe environments
- report to Priest-in-charge, Wardens, Director of Professional Standards or Safe Church Team any suspicions, allegations, incidents or potential breaches of the relevant code of conduct
- identify and report all risks and hazards to Health & Safety Officer/Team for treatment.

Director of Professional Standards (Diocesan)

- Receive and act upon reports of sexual misconduct.

Safe Ministry Officer (Diocesan)

- implementation of the procedures in relation to responding to Safe Ministry concerns, including child protection
- liaise with Parish Safe Ministry Contact Person
- tasks as directed by Bishop in Council
- maintain secure records in relation to Diocesan protocols, policies and procedures
- regular reporting to Bishop in Council
- maintain a register of all workers in the Diocese and their current documentation
- liaise and report to bodies carrying out audits of Safe Ministry procedures, protocols and policies
- conduct training workshops as required.

Safe Church Team (Diocesan)

- receive reports of incidents and/or concerns of risk of harm in relation to children or workers
- respond to grievances according to Diocesan policy
- be peace makers, suitably trained in dealing with conflict situations

Health & Safety Officer / Team (Diocesan and Parish)

- implement WHS policies, including privacy policy and evacuation procedures
- keep WHS on the agenda at meetings of the Parish Council and Bishop in Council
- receive notifications of hazards/incidents such as serious events and dangerous incidents from workers and visitors
- notify incidents such as serious events and dangerous incidents within a prescribed period to the Diocesan Office
- address health and safety concerns within reasonable timeframe
- undertake a site safety audit at regular intervals (minimum 2 times per year).

Workers (Parish) (paid and volunteer)

- uphold all church policy and procedures
- report to Priest in Charge, Director of Professional Standards, Wardens or Police any suspicions, allegations, incident or potential breaches of the relevant code of conduct
- identify and report all risks and hazards to relevant officer holder for treatment.

Caregivers of children and vulnerable adults (Parish)

- provide all information as necessary to ensure the safety of the person in their care
- provide feedback to management group.

1.5 Safe Ministry procedures

As part of our Policy we will implement the following procedures for the establishment and provision of safe environments and interactions at our church:

- Diocesan protocols, policies and procedures
- Record keeping
- Training and resourcing of workers
- Safe environments
- Responding to concerns about adults
- Resolving misunderstandings and conflicts
- Safe Ministry with persons of concern
- Participation and inclusion of children and caregivers
- Recruitment procedures
- Supervision of workers
- Responding to child protection concerns
- Responding to incidents
- Workplace investigation (Disciplinary)

1.6 Policy approval & review

This Policy was revised and updated to reflect current legislative requirements. It was approved by the church governing body and adopted for use by our church in January 2019.

The Policy and procedures will be reviewed at least every 2 years, or as often as necessary, in order to remain compliant with new legislation.

Any proposed changes will be submitted to the governing body of our church for approval at a properly convened meeting for approval before being adopted and implemented.