

# ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF ROCKHAMPTON

## SAFE COMMUNITIES OF FAITH POLICY

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The Rockhampton Diocese is committed to holistic Safe Ministries.

This means: we acknowledge that Diocesan parishes, ministries and entities should be abuse-free and harm-free, person valuing and respectful spaces for ministry to God's glory.

This Safe Communities of Faith policy commits the Diocese to pastoral, insurance, legal and duty of care obligations with the intended goal that all ministries are spiritually, emotionally and physically safe. This Policy outlines the broad principals and protocols incorporated in the Safe Ministries area and underpinned by the Diocesan Code of Good Practice: Faithfulness in Service.

This Policy and Code are underpinned by Scripture:

Jesus Christ said, "Love your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength; and love your neighbour as yourself." These commands guide our behaviour in our relationships and provide the basis for the establishment and exercising of safe activities and events, run in safe environments in an abuse-free Christian community.

We seek to build and maintain safe communities of faith by:

- fostering relationships between members, and those of the wider community, based on the teachings of Jesus Christ;
- establishing guidelines and maintaining processes to prevent abuse and provide a safe and secure environment where all people can feel respected;
- providing responsible and loving Christian leadership and management practices built on a scriptural base, and
- ensuring that cases of alleged abuse or neglect and complaints are handled in a consistent, transparent and empathetic manner.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The clergy and Parish Council, and those in authority in other diocesan agencies, are responsible for ensuring that:

- as far as is reasonably practicable, all church workers and those accessing ministries conducted by the ministry unit comply with the guidelines and processes established under this policy;
- all reasonable and practicable steps are taken to avoid risks of physical and psychological harm to members of the church and wider community arising from their involvement in any ministry;
- all persons in leadership positions, especially those relating to children, young people and vulnerable adults are appropriately authorised and suitably qualified, trained and supervised
- on an annual basis, they remind all members of the ministry unit of the spirit, intent and procedures associated with this policy and their responsibilities within it;
- all church workers have agreed to adhere to the Diocesan Safe Ministry Guidelines and Faithfulness in Service.

## SAFE LEADERS

The Diocese commits to:

- assessing the suitability of leaders before they are appointed in ministry positions to children, young people and ministries to vulnerable adults by following the Diocesan Due Diligence Protocol covering: recruiting, screening and appointing of leaders;

We require that all clergy, leaders of children, young people and ministries to vulnerable adults, wardens and Parish councillors:

- undertake an endorsed Diocesan Safe Ministry Training Workshop and refresher sessions;
- attend additional ministry-specific training as required by churches and Diocesan agencies (e.g. Aged Care );
- report disclosure or suspicions of child or elder abuse or neglect using the Diocesan Guidelines for Reporting complaints of Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault or Sexually Inappropriate Behaviour;
- follow relevant Diocesan protocol when a grievance or complaint is made .

## SAFE PROGRAMS

### a. Safe emotional environments

- We encourage all people to provide input into the programs and activities in which they are to participate by valuing and fostering their ideas, and encouraging participation in the life of the church.
- We will follow the Diocesan privacy policy in respect to information relating to program participants, and situation,
- We require those in ministry leadership to be respectful and nurturing and affirming in their ministry interactions with those they minister to and with.

### b. Safe physical environments

- Leaders will assist in establishing and maintaining physically safe ministry environments in accordance with this policy. Forms, checklists and templates will be provided to assist Parishes and Diocesan entities through a consistent holistic approach
- Ministry Coordinators will ensure that the following areas are incorporated into establishing and maintaining a safe physical environment:
  - fire safety; building safety; first aid; food safety practices; risk assessments for activities and environments; adequate ministry supervision for activities; transport protocols; critical incident and emergency protocols and ministry program review.

## TERMINOLOGY

**Child:** means a person who is under the age of 12 years.

**Young Person:** means a person who is 12 years but less than 18 years.

**Vulnerable Adult** means an adult at a higher risk of abuse due to their mental health, disability, age or life circumstance

**Ministry Coordinator:** means a person who is responsible for a ministry area. It is a role that may be undertaken by Rectors, Wardens or other Diocesan/ Parish leaders. They may be responsible for one program or they may be responsible for several programs under a general area

**Safe Program:** means a program in which its risks have been assessed and the events have been thought through and planned and ministry approval has been given by senior church leadership (Clergy & Parish Unit)

**Church Worker:** means a church or church agency worker who is a member of clergy or lay person (paid or voluntary) appointed or elected to a position of leadership or responsibility in the Diocese.

**Grievance:** means but is not limited to:

- a disagreement between two or more people, one of whom is a member of a Parish in this Diocese,
- a situation in which a church worker who is licensed or employed by a Church Authority in this Diocese has failed his or her ministry role and includes a breach of Faithfulness in Service which is not a serious breach

**Complaint** means a claim that:

- a person claims that a member of the clergy or a licensed lay person has committed a serious breach of a term of his or her licence,
- a person claims that a member of the clergy or a licensed lay person has taught doctrine that is contrary to the Doctrines of this Church or has otherwise committed any breach of faith, ritual, ceremony or discipline.

## LEGISLATION & REGULATIONS

The following legislation is particularly relevant to ensuring a safe ministry community:

### QUEENSLAND:

Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 Qld  
Child Protection (Offender Reporting) Act 2004

### NATIONAL:

- Privacy Act 1988(Cth)
- Aged Care Act 1997
- Community Visitors Grant Amendment Principles 2006
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011

## MORE INFORMATION

More information is available through the Diocesan website, [www.anglicanchurchcq.org.au](http://www.anglicanchurchcq.org.au)

- Protocol for responding to Complaints of Sexual Harassment, Sexual Abuse and Sexually inappropriate Behaviour
- Due Diligence Protocol
- Faithfulness in Service
- Safe Ministry Guidelines Clergy & Paid Workers
- Safe Ministry Guidelines for Volunteer Workers
- Professional Standards Canon 2004

## CONTACTS

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