

**MACKAY CHRISTIAN FAMILY
POLICIES, INFORMATION AND PROCEDURES**

ITEM: CHILD PROTECTION – RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

ISSUED: 06/12/2007

REVISED:	25/06/2008	12/04/2011	15/02/2013	17/12/2014	

**Child Protection –
Risk Management Policy 2014
Mackay Christian Family Church**

1. PURPOSE

Mackay Christian Family Church (MCF) has as its basis for philosophy and operations, the values and beliefs which are found in the Bible, which is the revealed written word of the one, true and living God. This basis underpins all policy related to child welfare, and the family. The Church believes that every child has a right to feel safe and free from the threat of harm.

As a Christian Church, MCF has a moral obligation to minimise the risk of harm occurring within the Church environment and during Church related activities. The Church also has a responsibility to train all children's workers to be vigilant to protect children.

This policy outlines the risk management procedures and practices designed to minimise the risk of harm to children occurring within MCF and its related activities. This is a proactive policy.

It is supported by:

- Child Protection Policy
- Child Protection Training Manual
- Children's Ministry Department Manual
- Youth Ministry Department Manual;

which outline the appropriate responses when an allegation of sexual harassment or harm to a student is made or when harm is suspected of occurring.

2. INTRODUCTION

1. Mackay Christian Family Church is committed to the safety and well-being of all children and young people who access its services and programs.
2. All children have a right to protection from harm.
3. Because the welfare and interests of children are paramount in the spiritual development process, MCF will act to ensure that children have a secure and safe environment, in which to grow and learn.
4. MCF supports the rights and well-being of its staff and volunteers and encourages their active participation in building and maintaining a secure environment for all participants.

3. DEFINITIONS

1. A child is an individual under 18 years.
2. Child/children include any person who is involved in the services or programs of MCF.
3. Harm to a child is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's physical, psychological or emotional well-being.

It is immaterial how the harm is caused. Harm may be caused by:

1. physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect; or
 2. sexual abuse or exploitation.
4. Staff those employed by Mackay Christian Family on a paid or unpaid basis. Volunteers and interns are recognised as staff in this policy

4. REFERENCES

1. 'Choose with Care', (2001) ECPAT. Australia, www.ecpat.org;
3. Department of Education Manual – Health and Safety HS – 17 Child Protection, (2004) Education Queensland.

3. *Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian (Reprinted as in force on 17 January 2005 [includes commenced amendments up to 2004 Act No. 49]) Act 2000*
4. *Commission for Children and Young People Amendment Regulation (No 1) 2005*
5. *ACC (Qld) Policies and Key Procedural Elements Documents 2013*

5. RAISING AND REPORTING CONCERNS OF HARM TO A CHILD

1. The procedures to be followed when harm is alleged are found in the attached SUSPECTED HARM TO A CHILD (INCLUDING SEXUAL ABUSE)
2. The procedures to be followed in cases of alleged sexual harassment are found in the attached SEXUAL HARASSMENT.

6. COMPLIANCE

All staff and volunteers of MCF are required to comply with this policy and are bound by law to observe all applicable statutory legislation relating to the protection of children from all forms of harm.

7. PREVENTION OF HARM TO CHILDREN

1. MCF is committed to providing best practice in recruiting, supervision and support of staff and volunteers, so as to minimise the risk of harm to children.
2. The Ministerial Code of Conduct for Credentialed Ministers in the Assemblies of God in Australia, The Child Protection Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers; and Mackay Christian Family Staff Code of Conduct are attached in Form 1, Form 2 and Form 3.

All staff needs to have read, understood and be prepared to abide by the relevant Codes of Conduct. Such affirmation should be recorded in the relevant form, which when signed and dated should be filed in the employee's personnel file and a copy given to the staff member.

3. MCF will comply with all relevant legislation in the area of child protection. This will involve criminal history checks for all board members, new staff and all volunteers who work with children or young people under 18 years of age. A checklist for these checks is contained in APPENDIX 2. The employment policy will be:

NO CARD – NO WORK

All members of the Board of Directors must hold a current Working with Children Card (Blue Card)

4. Application packages sent to enquirers about prospective employment at the Church, should contain clear statements about the commitment of the Church to child protection and child safety.
5. Application Forms for all positions should capture information about the employment/work history of the applicant. An explanation of any gaps in employment should be sought.
6. The application form for employed positions should secure the agreement of the applicant to apply for a Working With Children Card (Blue Card). If the applicant does not agree to a this application, the application will not proceed. Information in the application form needs to be signed by the applicant as being true and accurate.
7. The checking of references/referees for a job application should include questions designed to ensure child protection.

8. Questions asked at interviews should include some designed to ensure child protection.
9. All visitors to the Church's programs involving children should use the sign in/sign out procedures.
10. All volunteers serving at the Church should be provided with a copy of the Codes of Conduct (Forms 1-3).

All volunteers working or ministering to Children directly must hold a current Working with Children Card (Blue Card).

11. When children are involved in activities requiring being away from home/school overnight, such that there is an overnight stay at a Campsite or camping out, then any campsite staff, or anyone contracted to assist with or provide activities for students or any volunteers assisting with an overnight stay/s excursions, must have a BLUE CARD.
12. Appropriate touching should:
 1. be in response to the need of the child and not the need of the adult;
 2. be with the child's permission; and resistance from the child should be respected;
 3. avoid breasts, buttocks and groin;
 4. be open and non secretive; and
 5. be governed by the age and developmental stage of the child.
13. Where there are reasonable grounds to suspect that an employee has a criminal history that may make them unsuitable for their current child-related employment, the Church may apply for a "Working with Children Check" (FORM 2) without the consent of the employee.

On receipt of the "Working with Children Check" application and in instances where the screening processes indicate that an employee has a criminal history that would make them unsuitable for child related employment, the Commissioner for Children and Young People may give notice to the employee and provide an opportunity for the employee to respond.

14. The Church should:
 1. monitor all environments in which children's activities take place to ensure that the behaviour of all personnel supports the aims and policies of the Church;
 2. provide training and resources for employees to develop skills in and an understanding of how to protect children in their care, such training should include:
 - awareness of the Child Protection Policies of the Church
 - familiarity with how to detect and report suspected harm or risk of harm;
 3. implement a harm prevention program for children; and
 4. monitor the standards of behaviour of the employees, volunteers and children to ensure that ethical behaviour is maintained.
15. Staff and volunteers should not use intranet, Internet and/or e-mail services to download, distribute, store or display offensive or pornographic graphics, images or statements or

other material obtained from inappropriate Internet Sites.

16. Homestay providers for visiting children must have a Blue Card.
17. As required by the *Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000, Section 99G*, a Risk Management Strategies Plan must be put in place to ensure employment practices and procedures promote the wellbeing of children and to protect them from harm.

These strategies are summarised in a report shown in APPENDIX 1 and accompanying records.

This report should be completed at the end of each calendar year, signed off by the Senior Pastor and then filed in a Risk Register.

The following forms and appendices form the substantive part of the Child Protection Risk Management Policy for Mackay Christian Family Church.

This policy was approved by the Board of Mackay Christian Family Church at Mackay at its meeting held on 6 th December 2007 and updated and approved on 6 th April 2011.			
Signed:
	Chairman		Secretary
Name:	Name:
Date:	Date:



Ministerial Code of Conduct
for Credentialed Ministers
in the Assemblies of God in Australia.

The Rationale for a Code

Ministry is a call to serve both God and people. Credentialed Ministers are firstly accountable to God (1 Corinthians 4:4-5), but also to church members and those who receive ministry (Ephesians 4:1-2). Ministers are public figures whose lives are on display and are viewed with considerable public scrutiny. A high degree of conformity is expected with the biblical call to holiness (Matthew 5:48; Titus 2:7-8). Accordingly, pastoral relationships are to be characterised by love, justice, care, and compassion (Micah 6:8). A minister is firstly a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ, (1 John 2:6) and as such ministry is grounded by prayer, Bible study, regular worship and a readiness to follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19-20).

Ministers of our Movement are to live and minister in accordance with biblical values. Additionally, it is expected that every profession have a code of conduct that sets an example of excellence for the society in which it seeks to minister. Ministers are to be examples in the creation of healthy communities.

The following are guidelines are designed to identify areas, articulate relevant principles, note areas of caution, and state what is clearly prohibited in terms of biblical conduct for Ministers in our Movement.¹

The Purpose of the Code

This code is intended to guide the behaviour of Ministers in our Movement. It is articulated to assist leaders to serve in such a manner that it will cause our churches and ministries to be safe places for all; places where integrity is honoured, accountability is practised, misconduct is not concealed, and forgiveness is encouraged to bring about healing and restoration.

Article 15 of the United Constitution and Article 8.3 of the National By-Laws provides for action that may be taken where the holder of a ministerial certificate has committed improper conduct.

Improper conduct is generally regarded as behaviour that in all the circumstances of a case is an inappropriate or incorrect way of discharging a person's duties, obligations, or responsibilities.

¹ This Code of Conduct will set the basis for acceptable behaviour by ministers of the AOG in Australia. Behaviour inconsistent with this may form the basis for disciplinary procedures See ASSEMBLIES OF GOD NATIONAL CONFERENCE NATIONAL BY-LAWS May 1999 – ARTICLE 8, 13.4.11 Restoration and Reinstatement of Disciplined Ministers.

This Code of Conduct sets out the standard that is expected of credentialed Ministers, and therefore is an important document for determining whether a person has committed improper conduct.

A breach of a “**Prohibited**” provisions will always be improper conduct and will result in disciplinary action. A breach of a “**Cautionary**” provision, depending on the circumstances may be improper conduct, and may result in disciplinary action.

The Code of Conduct

1. Pastoral Example

Ministers should be “*above reproach*” (1 Timothy 1:11-12). The values of the Gospel of Christ should be obvious to members of the church and wider society (Matthew 5:16; 1 Corinthians 11:1). It is also important for an effective minister to have a healthy lifestyle and a balance of service, recreation, and family (Ecclesiastes 3:1-11; Titus 1:6). This lifestyle should also be supported and encouraged for all members of church staff.

Ministers should be good citizens and obey the laws of the community (Proverbs 24:21; Romans 13:1-4; 1 Peter 2:11-17). The only rare exception may be when a Christian engages in non-violent civil disobedience as a matter of protest (Acts 4:18-20).

Caution

Addictive behaviours: Scripture requires that we exercise caution in the use of alcohol (Proverbs 20:1; 1 Corinthians 6:12; 1 Corinthians 8). Abstinence is a stand that is highly respected in our Movement. Extreme caution must also be exercised with all potentially addictive and harmful behaviours that bring unwarranted harm to the body or jeopardise our own or another’s faith.

Language: The use of offensive language should also be avoided (such as swear words, sexual connotations, and racial or religious slurs).

Prohibited

A Minister must avoid drunkenness, gambling, and abstain from the use of all illegal drugs (Romans 13:13; Galatians 5:21). A Minister must not smoke.

2. Ministry Matters

Authority to minister comes from Jesus Christ; the head of the Church (Matthew 28:18; 1 Corinthians 12:27). Christian leadership must never be manipulative or authoritarian (John 15:15). Ministers are servants of Christ, who should endeavour to become servant leaders as modelled by Jesus (John 13:3-14). Leadership in all its dimensions must always be accountable, and it is essential that ministers act responsibly in the best interests of those they serve (James 3:1; 1 Peter 5:2-4).

Caution

Qualifications: Ministers must not misrepresent their competence, qualifications, training, or experience. Ministers should recognise their level of skill and experience. If they are unsure, they must seek additional advice from other colleagues or other professionals.

Pastoral relationships: Ministers should also be aware of the danger of dependency developing in pastoral relationships, and seek supervision or advice when such concerns arise. A balance should be found between the need for mutual support and the need for accountability.

Ministry gifts: It is a Pentecostal distinctive to honour the role of the Holy Spirit who imparts spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:7). There are a variety of gifts (1 Corinthians 12:4) and the true exercise of these gifts will always be consistent with the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). For example, prophecy is to be exercised for “*strengthening, encouragement and comfort*” (1 Corinthians 14:3). A leader must always be willing to held accountable, admitting to the possibility of human error when exercising the gifts of the Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19-21).

Public statements: We live in a society that has become increasingly sensitive to matters of discrimination and vilification. A Minister must show respect and godly care to all people, inside or outside the Christian community (Colossians 4:6). Care must be taken in how Ministers speak of the ministry of others in public (Mark 9:40) since reputation is something highly valued in Scripture (Proverbs 22:1).

Care must be exercised when Ministers express a personal opinion on controversial matters. They must distinguish expressing an opinion from speaking on behalf of a local church or the Movement (1 Corinthians 7:12).

Staffing and volunteers: There is a need for transparency and Godly motivation in any employment or ministry offer extended to a Minister, staff member, or volunteer serving in another church². The offer must only be made with the prior knowledge and agreement of the Senior Minister of the church where they currently serve. It is inappropriate that an approach be made to a Minister or staff member serving in a church that is geographically local. It is additionally inappropriate for a Minister or staff member serving in a pastoral team to seek a position in a neighbouring church without the endorsement of their Senior Minister.

After retirement or resignation from a ministry, the Minister must terminate existing pastoral relationships to allow their successor to assume responsibility. Friendships may continue as long as the end of the pastoral relationship is mutually recognised. Any request for a continuing pastoral relationship must only occur with the permission of the new Senior Minister or the person who has overall pastoral oversight.

It is unethical to be employed by a church, to build up that ministry, and then resign or be dismissed and then start a new work incorporating former church members without the prior knowledge and consent of the former Senior Minister. It is also unethical for a Minister to do anything to encourage a member of another church to join his or her church/ministry.

Prohibited

A Minister must not be abusive in any way toward others (1 Timothy 3:2-5; Titus 1:7).

The misuse of authority can be a particular temptation in leadership and must be avoided. Ministers must not attempt to use the gifts of the Holy Spirit to manipulate or coerce a person. This includes attempting to use healing for financial gain; attributing miracles for personal glory; or using a word of knowledge to control an individual; or using prophecy to change church membership or to enlist support for a ministry. Accountability in all areas of ministry is essential.

² Obviously, this would apply to churches inside and outside our Movement.

3. Sexual Behaviour

Sexuality is a gift from God and integral to human nature. Ministers must value this gift by maintaining chastity in singleness and faithfulness in marriage (Proverbs 5:18, 6:32; 1 Corinthians 7:2). Homosexual behaviour is forbidden by Scripture (Romans 1:24-25).³

Caution

Children: Being especially vulnerable, children are entitled to be safe and protected. Ministry to children needs to be characterised by absolute trustworthiness. The Senior Minister and leadership of the local church are responsible to implement the appropriate **Child Protection Policy** for their State or Territory.⁴

Physical contact: Caution must always be exercised when initiating or receiving physical contact including gestures of comfort that may be unwanted or misinterpreted.

Pastoral conversations: A Minister must be careful in pastoral conversations when a person talks about sexual problems. Consideration must always be given to whether it is appropriate to refer a person to a suitable counsellor.

Ministry to people in the sex industry requires clear boundaries, a high level of accountability and mixed gender peer support (Proverbs 5:21).

Pastoral relationships: It is only in the rarest of circumstances that a pastoral relationship can legitimately develop into a romantic relationship. If two single people meet in a pastoral setting (not a counselling relationship), and there is mutual attraction, then it is important for both parties to acknowledge that the nature of the relationship is changing. Once mutually recognised and acknowledged, it is the responsibility of the Minister to disclose this to the Senior Minister or their supervisor, and to arrange for someone else to assume pastoral responsibility for that person.⁵

Prohibited

All inappropriate sexual behaviour is forbidden. A Minister must not have a sexual relationship with a member of the church or anyone who is receiving, or has recently received, pastoral ministry. It is never acceptable to blame the person who has received counselling or ministry.

Sexual innuendo or compliments of a sexual nature are always inappropriate.

A Minister must not view pornographic material or go to places of commercialised sex such as strip clubs or visit a brothel (Matthew 5:28; 2 Peter 2:14a; Proverbs 5:3-6; 1 Corinthians 6:18-20; Ephesians 5:12).⁶ Additionally, they must avoid chat rooms or internet sites of a sexual nature.

³ Assemblies of God Policies 13.4.2 Homosexuality and Lesbianism.

⁴ Assemblies of God Policies 13.4.9 Protection of Children.

⁵ As a suggestion: before any dating or physical contact, there should be a gap of three months for a member of a church or youth group, and no less than a year if there was any counselling ministry. Mental health professions would consider this the minimum time required and even then, it is not generally accepted as appropriate behaviour.

⁶ Assemblies of God Policies 13.4.6 Pornography.

4. Financial Matters

A Minister must set an example and have integrity in all their financial dealings. This would include the timely payment of debts, the effective management of finances, as well as providing for their family (Romans 13:7-8). Failure to do so will have a significant impact on the church and the perceptions of the wider community.

The Senior Minister and the leadership of the local church have responsibility for the sound management of church and ministry finances. They may or may not be involved in actual transactions, but must ensure the implementation of a proper system for financial integrity and accountability. All church and ministry accounts should be independently audited.

Caution

Conflicts of interest: It is important to avoid any potential conflict between personal finances and pastoral responsibilities. If there is anything that could lead to a conflict of interest, then it must be immediately disclosed to the Board or Elders. It is important to disclose to the Senior Minister or Board or Eldership any personal gift or bequest (2 Corinthians 8:21; James 2:1, 2-4).

A leader must avoid borrowing money from, or lending money to, a person with whom there is a pastoral relationship.

Particular care must be exercised in the appointment of a spouse or family member to a paid position in the church or ministry. It must be done only with careful consultation with the Board or Eldership.

Taxation: A Minister must exercise caution with tax minimisation strategies and must not improperly use fringe benefit allowances.

Prohibited

A Minister must not seek additional personal advantage or financial gain because of a pastoral role. Naturally, this includes any benefit to a spouse and/or immediate member of his or her family. Various professions forbid dual relationships (2 Timothy 2:4). For example, a doctor cannot enter into a business relationship with a patient. A Minister must disclose to their Board or Eldership any situation that could be viewed as a dual relationship, including business agreements.

A Minister must never borrow or take church funds without proper authorisation. A Minister must not seek financial support from people in a previous church or ministry unless there is authorisation by the current Senior Minister, Eldership, or Board. On termination of employment with a church (ministry or agency), a Minister must not expect a payment that is excessive, illegal or by private arrangement. In cases of dispute, the matter must be referred to the State President or their appointee.

5. Confidentiality⁷

Trust is essential in pastoral ministry. Those involved in pastoral care must note that both formal interviews and casual conversations in a ministry context are pastoral encounters where confidences are shared and confidential information received. This information must not be disclosed, and must be treated with the utmost care. Exceptions include when disclosure is required by law (subpoena or

⁷ Assemblies of God Policies 13.4.4 Pastoral Confidentiality; 13.4.10 Confidentiality Guidelines.

abuse notifications), there are concerns for the safety of the person or others, or when the information is in the public domain.

Caution

Pastoral records: Pastoral notes and records are important, but caution must be taken with securing them. Any record of a pastoral counselling session is considered a health record, which is governed by national legislation. Computer records must be password protected and access limited to authorised persons. Paper records must be locked up and access limited to authorised personnel.

Particular care must be exercised in the publication of personal information in church directories, newsletters, rosters, and websites, etc. This also extends to publishing voices and images of individuals.

Confidentiality should be preserved in peer supervision or in mentoring relationships. All care should be taken to avoid disclosing those being discussed. Preachers should be careful with sermon illustrations, in teaching and especially in publications (Proverbs 11:13).

Prohibited

A Minister must not disclose confidential pastoral conversations except if required by law or if there is a concern for the safety of the person or another person (James 5:16).

6. Ministerial Development

It is important to continue to develop ministry skills through a variety of means including education, professional supervision, peer support, mentoring, and a regular ministry review (Proverbs 27:17). It is expected that Ministers will regularly attend District, State, and National Conferences and special events, and undertake ongoing professional development (Romans 13:7). This includes an expectation the Ministers demonstrate a loyalty the Movement and its vision, values, and mission.

The Implementation of the Code

If questions arise with areas of “**Caution,**” the individual Minister must talk to a supervisor, mentor, consult with peers, and if necessary pursue voluntary counselling.

With any breach of the Code of Conduct in a “**Prohibited**” area the Minister in breach must notify the State President (or the person fulfilling those duties at that time) within 7 days (24 hours if civil or criminal action is involved). See **National By-laws, Article 8**. The State President will implement the **Grievance Policy of the Assemblies of God in Australia** upon notification.

Failure to notify in accordance with the paragraph above will itself be a “**Prohibited**” breach of the code.

Acknowledgements.

This code has drawn on the following codes of conduct, ethical statements, and ministerial guidelines:

Faithfulness in Service: A national code for personal behaviour and the practice of pastoral ministry by clergy and church workers (General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia Child Protection Committee, Draft - 2004)

Code of Professional Ethics for the practice of Pastoral Ministry: A guide for church workers and their communities (General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia Child Protection Committee, Draft - 2003)

The Code of Good Practice: (Anglican Church of Australia Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn, 2005)

Code of Ethics applicable to ministers of Churches of Christ and The protocol for investigating complaints on matters pertaining to Sexuality: (Churches of Christ in Australia adopted 1997 and amended for Churches of Christ in Queensland 1998-1999)

Pentecostal Ministerial Ethics: Pastor Harry Leesment (1988)

Statement of Moral Integrity: Pastor Rick Warren.

A Statement of Restoration and Re-instatement of Disciplined Ministers.

New South Wales Registration Board Guidelines for Psychologists.

Revised: April 2010 to comply with the 2009 revision of the United Constitution

**MACKAY CHRISTIAN FAMILY
YOUTH & CHILDREN'S WORKERS CODE OF CONDUCT**

I agree to be bound by the rules for working with children at MCF and to be obedient to the Senior Minister or his nominees in relation to such work. I have read MCF's policy and related procedures and agree to be bound by them and any changes made to them from time to time.

I agree to refrain from UN-Biblical conduct in the performance of my services on behalf of the Church.

I agree that under no circumstance shall I ask any other person to assist myself or any other person, in any capacity whatsoever, while ministering with children at MCF, without prior clearance from the Church leadership.

I agree that under no circumstance, while ministering to children and young people at MCF, will I be alone or unobservable with any child, who is not my own, without the permission of Church leadership.

I acknowledge that as a worker in the youth and children's departments of Mackay Christian Family Church that my life and the manner in which I live it, is an example to all young people. I therefore commit to seeking to live my life in a godly and biblical manner, both publically and privately.

I will seek to be a role model in character, conduct and dress.

I have read, understood and am prepared to abide by the Code of Conduct for Volunteers developed by Mackay Christian Family Church to promote the protection and safety of children and located in the relevant policy – Child Protection.

Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Witness _____ Date _____

**MACKAY CHRISTIAN FAMILY
STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT**

PERSONAL LIFE

I will Endeavour to manage my personal life in a healthy fashion and to seek appropriate assistance for my own personal problems or conflicts.

You may find that a mentor or professional supervisor will be helpful for personal growth and keeping accountability. Finding a way to deal with personal, ministry and work related conflicts is needed in order to keep a healthy attitude towards staff, church management and the families they work with.

Many churches have been split and many workers have burnt out long before they should have due to personal problems and hurts that were never dealt with.

ROLE MODEL

I will demonstrate the excitement of following Jesus and Endeavour to be an example of Christ and his truth.

Leaders are representatives of God and should conduct their public and private lives knowing that they reflect the person of the Lord Jesus to others. You need to balance time spent in personal life, family life, secular jobs, and your own personal relationship with the Lord. You need to cultivate a deep relationship with the Lord and to prepare thoroughly when sharing the Word of God.

COUNSELLING

I will provide help only for those problems or issues that are within the boundaries appropriate to my competence.

You need to know when you are dealing with problems that are beyond your level of competence and know when to refer on to those qualified to do so.

RELATIONSHIPS

I will establish and maintain appropriate professional and Christian relationship boundaries.

It is sin for you to have a sexual relationship with any person other than with your married partner, even if the relationship is considered legally permitted or mutually consensual. Additionally for a leader to flirt or use your position for enticing behaviour, or making advances or requests for sexual favours is absolutely forbidden by those in Christian Ministry. A healthy relationship amongst peers is necessary for personal growth and development.

PORNOGRAPHY

I am committed to stand against pornography and will not use it in any form. This includes material from adult bookstores, adult rated videos, pornographic websites and live pornographic shows.

The most recent studies available suggest that 50% of the people in churches are looking at and/or could be addicted to internet pornography. It is the single most potent attack on the church and causes destruction to young minds, leaders, churches and marriages. Surfing the internet for pornographic sites is the easiest form of pornography to find and the most destructive.

SAFETY AND PROTECTION

I am committed to preventing child abuse and being an agent of healing and justice. I will therefore ensure that children are nurtured and protected from spiritual, emotional, physical and sexual abuse.

It is your responsibility to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all the young people and children in your care and to safeguard them from any danger of abuse. You must also safeguard yourself from allegations that can arise from careless and unwise behaviour.

RECORD KEEPING AND CONFIDENCES

All records of children and families I work with will be stored or disposed of in a manner that preserves security and confidentiality.

All communications and counseling records must be treated in a confidential and respectful way. The things that are shared in confidence are not to be disclosed except where there is concern for the safety and wellbeing of the person concerned or if there is any one else at risk.

LOYALTY

I will not publicly air problems when it is obviously going to be detrimental to the future of the church, nor be openly hostile or critical of others in the ministry of my church (past or present).

Only those who are insecure in their ministry will think that putting down another pastor will enhance his position or ministry in the eyes of others. The fact is that such conversation does exactly the opposite. Unrepented acts of immorality or teaching of unbiblical doctrine is the exception.

FINANCES

I will be an example of honesty in all my financial dealings and Endeavour to pay my bills on time and give honest and accurate records with my income tax returns.

You are to be an example of honesty in your financial dealings and avoid questionable activities or practices such as dubious moneymaking schemes, and hold the highest levels of integrity and public trust.

SUPPORT FOR THOSE IN MINISTRY

I will support others in ministry to the best of my ability in my intent, in my words, and in my actions, both private and public.

We are all fellow soldiers in the same battle and should not therefore, act in any way that would damage or destroy others or their ministry. Rather, we should do all in our power to network for mutual support and help. If they commit sin or fall into error, you must deal with these instances in the correct Biblical way.

Name: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____ / _____ / _____

No.	Action	Yes	No	Comments																										
1.	Are Blue Cards current for the following? (Attach register summaries)																													
	1. Church Board members																													
	2. Employees																													
	3. Volunteers																													
6.	Overnight stay: Campsite Staff, Service providers, Volunteers																													
	7. Sports coaches, tutors etc																													
2.	Have all staff and volunteers been provided with the Child Protection Code of Conduct?																													
3.	Have all job applications been checked to ensure child protection?																													
4.	Have all visitors to Church programs used the sign in/sign out procedure?																													
5.	Have all employees and volunteers received the Church's Child Protection training? (Attach details of this training).																													
6.	Is the Church's Child Protection Policy (Summary) posted on the Church's Internet website?																													
7.	Is the Church's Child Protection Policy found in the General Staff Handbook (for all employees)?																													
8.	Is the Church's Child Protection Policy (Summary) found in the Departmental Handbooks?																													
9.	Has specific child protection training been provided to:																													
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Department</th> <th>When</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Children's Ministry</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Youth</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Service Team Managers</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pastors</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other Volunteers</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Department	When	Children's Ministry		Youth		Service Team Managers		Pastors		Other Volunteers																		
	Department	When																												
	Children's Ministry																													
	Youth																													
	Service Team Managers																													
	Pastors																													
	Other Volunteers																													
10.	Have any reports re suspected harm to a child or inappropriate behaviour towards a child (for this year) been properly lodged?																													
11.	Have Child Protection risk management strategies been included in plans for excursions, camps and special events (eg concerts)																													
12.	Have the following registers been maintained?																													
	1. Blue Card status (volunteers/staff);																													
	2. Camp (Excursion/trip) personnel;																													
	3. Permission/approvals for student photos/digital images;																													
	4. Child Protection Incidents; and																													
	5. Complaints and disclosures of harm.																													

CHECKLISTS

CRIMINAL HISTORY CHECKS FOR

THE ISSUE OF WORKING WITH CHILDREN BLUE CARDS

AND THE ISSUE OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

WHO?	PAID OR VOLUNTEER BLUE CARD NOTIFICATION	CODE OF CONDUCT	FORM 1
New staff (Permanent)	✓	✓	✓
Existing staff (Permanent and Casual)	✓	✓	✓
New volunteers (Permanent and Casual)	✓	✓	✓
Existing Volunteers	✓	✓	✓
Church Board Members	✓	✓	X
Overnight Stay (Campsite staff, service providers, volunteers)	✓	X	X
Homestay Providers	✓	X	X

NOTES

1. Re the minimum length of service or engagement required for a Paid Employee Blue Card Application Form; it is to be required only for paid employment which occurs on a regular and systematic basis over a period of at least one month. Volunteers are required to complete a Volunteer Blue Card Application Form.
2. Volunteers who are under 18 years of age are not required to undergo a 'Working with children check'.
3. A summary file/register of Suitability Notice Registration numbers for relevant staff needs to be kept as per the spreadsheet provided at <http://www.bluecard.qld.gov.au/index.html>

Documentation re suitability notices should be filed in the Blue Card Folder found in the Church Managers Office

4. All Blue Card application Forms can be accessed at <http://www.bluecard.qld.gov.au/index.html>
5. The Church will have the policy: NO CARD - NO WORK

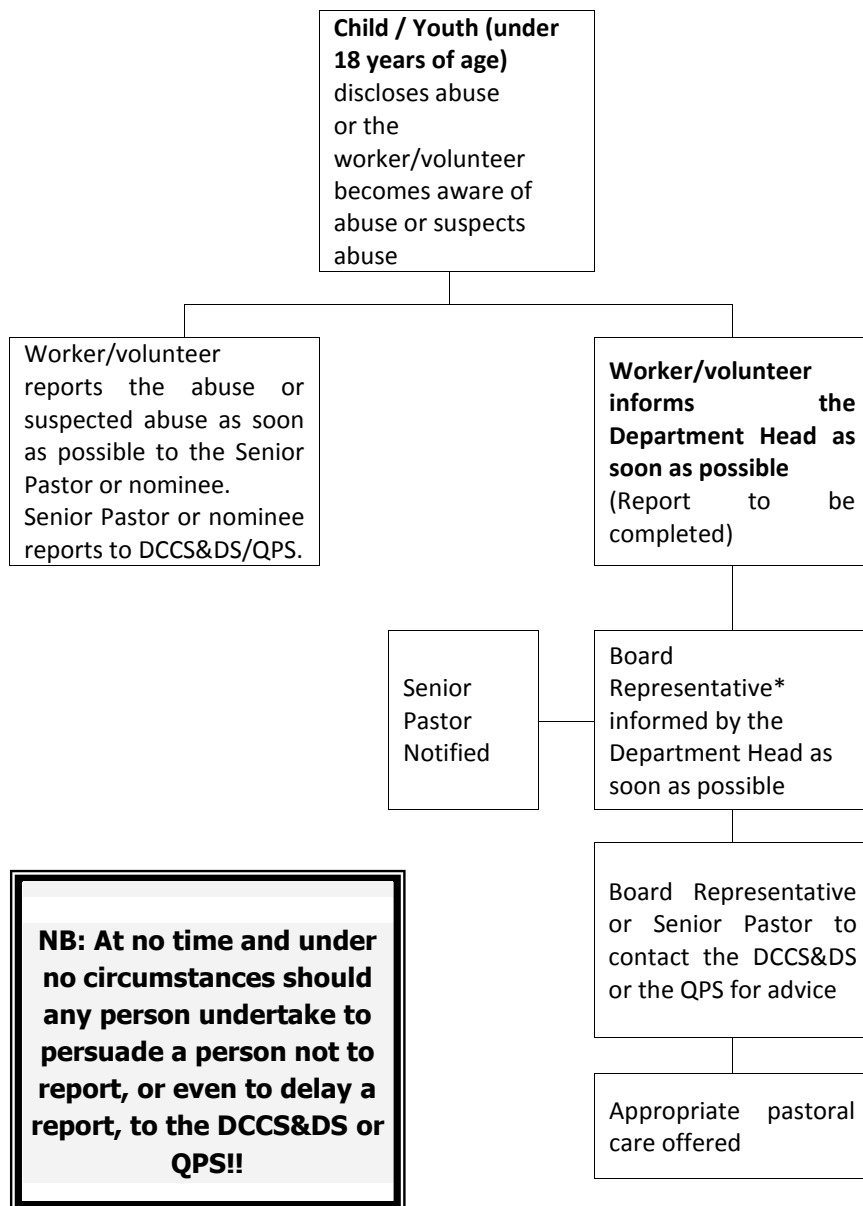
8. SEXUAL ABUSE NOTIFICATION PROCEDURE

When the victim is under eighteen years of age

The following diagram outlines the procedure to be followed when someone in the church becomes aware of sexual abuse or suspects sexual abuse involving a child or youth under 18 years of age.

Please note: If the alleged perpetrator is a church worker/volunteer/Pastor please go to the appropriate reporting protocol in the Child Protection Policy.

Sexual Abuse Notification Procedure – Victim Under 18 Years



*Board Representatives for Mackay Christian Family Church are Maurice Coppo and Katharine MacDonald

QPS – Qld Police Services

DCCS&DS – Department of Community Child Safety and Disability Services 1800 811 810

If the victim is now 18 years of age and over

In the case of a person 18 years of age or over who has disclosed their own childhood abuse, an attempt ought to be made to counsel them to see the wisdom of reporting their situation to the police. This has a two-fold result. It will give the opportunity to begin the process of closure for the victim, but it will also alert the authorities to the identity of the alleged perpetrator and appropriate action to protect other children, or even to solve other cases where abuse has occurred, will be taken.

While reports concerning people who are 18 or over ought not to be made without their consent, the worker/volunteer/pastor who has become aware of the situation may well have cause to believe that other children under the age of 18 could be at continued risk from the alleged perpetrator.

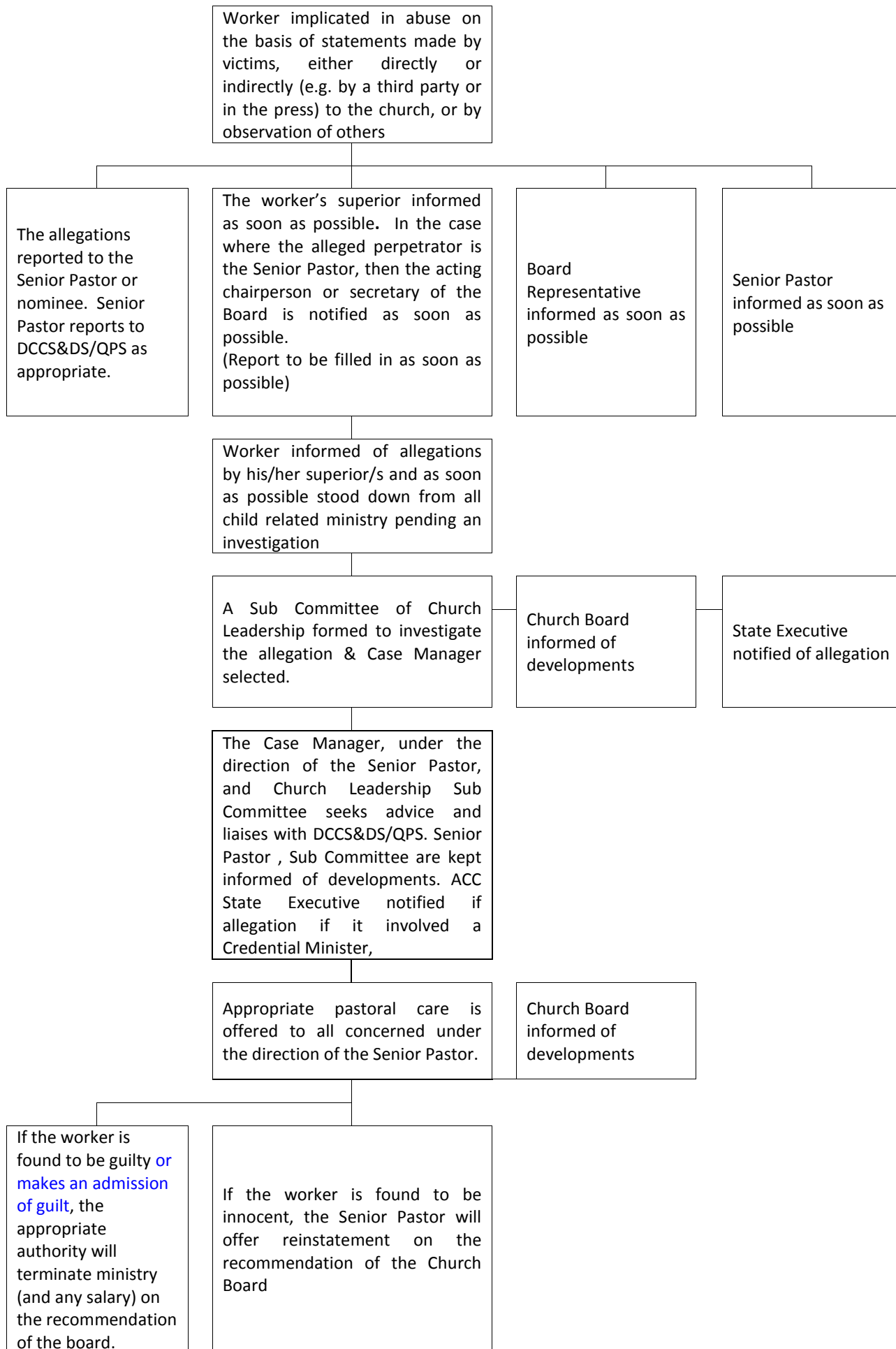
If that is the case, then the procedure above for reporting such suspicions to Senior Pastor or nominee must be followed AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

When the alleged perpetrator is a church worker/volunteer/Pastor

Although any accused person is essentially innocent until proven guilty, it is a requirement of the Church that the worker/volunteer/Pastor (designated by the term “worker” in the following table) should be **as soon as possible stood down from all child related ministries** pending an investigation. In the case of a paid staff member, salary will continue during this time of investigation. To expedite proceedings the process outlined in the following diagram should be adopted.

If the alleged perpetrator is a pastor or a person holding any Assemblies of God credential, then the State Executive must also be informed of the allegations.

When the alleged perpetrator is a church worker/volunteer/Pastor



9. MANAGING BREACHES

Plan for Managing Breaches

Purpose

This plan outlines the steps to be taken following a breach of the child and youth risk management strategy in order to address the breach in a fair and supportive manner.

Definition

A breach is any action or inaction by any member of the organisation, including children and young people, that fails to comply with any part of the strategy.

This includes any breach in relation to:

- statement of commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children and the protection of children from harm
- code of conduct for interacting with children and young people;
- procedures for recruiting, selecting, training and managing paid employees and volunteers
- policies and procedures for handling disclosures or suspicions of harm, including reporting guidelines
- policies and procedures for implementing and reviewing the children and youth risk management strategy and maintaining an employee register
- risk management plans for high risk activities and special events, And
- strategies for communication and support.

All stakeholders are to be made aware of the actions or inactions that form a breach as well as the potential outcomes of breaching the child and youth risk management strategy.

Who must comply with this plan?

- employees, volunteers and contractors
- committee members
- work experience students/students on placement
- parents and carers
- children and young people

Processes to manage a breach of the child and youth risk management strategy

Breaches will be managed in a fair, unbiased and supportive manner.

The following will occur:

- all people concerned will be advised of the process
- all people concerned will be able to provide their version of events
- the details of the breach, including the versions of all parties and the outcome will be recorded
- matters discussed in relation to the breach will be kept confidential, and
- an appropriate outcome will be decided.

Suitable outcomes for breaches

Depending on the nature of the breach, outcomes may include:

- emphasising the relevant component of the child and youth risk management strategy, for example, the code of conduct
- providing closer supervision
- further education and training
- mediating between those involved in the incident (where appropriate)
- disciplinary procedures if necessary, or
- reviewing current policies and procedures and developing new policies and procedures if necessary.

Training material for employees and volunteers

What to do when a disclosure is made

In the event that you receive a disclosure, you might find the following suggestions of assistance:

Remain calm

You may be the first person to whom the disclosure has been made.

Your reaction may determine whether the person making the disclosure trusts you with the information.

It is important that you:

- do not react in a shocked or critical way, and
- tell the person you are glad they have told you.

Find a private place to talk

Privacy may help the person making the disclosure feel more comfortable and less concerned about telling you what they have to say, especially if they are a child or young person.

- Do not promise to keep a secret.

When presented with a disclosure of harm, don't say, "I won't tell" and do not promise to keep secrets.

Listen

You should:

- reassure the person they have done the right thing by telling you
- say you need to tell someone else who can help them, and
- reassure them you will only tell someone who will make them safe.

Believe the person

It is not up to you to judge whether a child, young person or anyone else is telling the truth – always act on the basis that what you have been told is the truth.

Don't ask leading questions

Leading questions are those that tend to suggest an answer, for example:

- "Did 'X' touch you?"
- "Did they touch you where your underwear goes?"

Don't put words in the person's mouth

Ask open questions such as:

- "Tell me what happened"
- "What happened then?"

It is not your role to investigate

It is not your role to investigate allegations of harm.

Only ask enough questions to confirm the need to report the matter to the Department of Communities Child Safety and Disability Services or the Queensland Police Service.

The safety of the child or young person is paramount.

Unnecessary questions or interviews could cause distress, confusion and may interfere with any subsequent investigation authorities undertake.

Take detailed notes

At the first opportunity after a disclosure has been made, make notes about what occurred.

Include information such as:

- Dates, times, location, and who was present.

Include a detailed description of:

- exactly what the person disclosing said, using “I said,” “they said,” statements
- the questions you asked
- any comments you made, and
- your actions following the disclosure.

If you are taking notes as the disclosure is occurring, explain why you are doing it and why it is important, ie. to ensure an accurate record for any subsequent investigation.

If the disclosure is being made by a child or young person, remember to explain this to them in a way that is appropriate for their age and understanding.

Any reports or documentation of disclosures of harm must be kept confidential and secure, with access strictly limited and on a ‘need to know basis’.