



# Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy

Version 5.2

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Everyone working with children shares responsibility for their care.

## About this Policy

We are all capable of causing harm whether through deliberate action, misunderstanding, accident, or oversight. The scope of this policy covers our commitment to the safety of children and outlines standards that all staff and volunteers must abide by to ensure no harm is caused to those in our care.

This policy is not just for those overseeing or leading children's programs but is for all areas of church life, all staff, volunteers and members. This policy must be followed whether or not the church assembly has an active children's or youth program.

The purpose of this policy is to provide strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety. Through effective leadership arrangements, Acts Global Churches will provide a safe environment for all its events and activities and that, in particular, children and vulnerable people are safe at all times.

The policy seeks to ensure that children and young people are respected and valued irrespective of their gender, age, country of origin, cultural heritage, social economic background, or ability.

The policy seeks to ensure that the protection of children takes precedence over the reputation of the church or any individual.

The policy covers all states and territories across Australia and is a requirement for all churches regardless of size, location or specific operations.

This policy will be regularly reviewed and updated in line with changes to legislation and best practice procedures.

This current version of the policy, Child Safety and Well Being Policy v5.2 supersedes the previous Child Protection Policy v5.1. The change of name is reflected in the broader of scope of its intent to go beyond just protection, but greater wellbeing for children in Acts Global Churches care.

## Statement of Belief

Acts Global Churches is a Christian religious denomination and has the following statement of belief

### We believe

- › The one true and living God who eternally exists in three persons in unity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- › The Divine inspiration and authority of the Holy Scripture.
- › The original perfection of creation; the inherent corruptness of humanity through the Fall; the necessity of repentance and regeneration by grace and through faith in Christ alone, and the eternal separation from God of the finally unrepentant.
- › The virgin birth, sinless life atoning death, triumphant resurrection, ascension and continuing intercession of our Lord Jesus Christ, His Second Coming, and eternal kingdom reign.
- › The justification and sanctification of believers through the finished work of Christ, their security as they remain in Him, and their future resurrection in an incorruptible body.
- › The Sacrament of Baptism by immersion, and of the Lord's Supper.
- › The baptism of the Holy Spirit for believers with supernatural signs, empowering the Church for its mission in the world.
- › The gifts of the Holy Spirit for the building up of the Church and ministry to the world.
- › Christ's leadership of the Church through the ascension ministries of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, for the unity, maturity and growth of the Church.
- › The privilege and responsibility of wise stewardship of all that God has given, including the practice of tithing to the local church.
- › We believe that the covenant of marriage is the union of a man and a woman who have voluntarily entered into a loving, committed and exclusive relationship for as long as both live.

These beliefs and values are vital to the way we operate and it is expected that all employees and volunteers acknowledge and follow these. They set the tone and culture of our organisation and form a base for our approach to the care we have for people.



## Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

Acts Global Churches believes that all children have the right to feel safe and be safe. Children and young people who are involved in any of our activities should receive the highest possible standard of care and protection. In all our work, we seek to ensure the well-being and development of all children. We are committed to the protection of children, young people, and the vulnerable from all forms of abuse. We are committed to being an agent of healing and justice. What we do, reflects our values that children are important and deserve to be treated with respect and dignity.

Acts Global Churches has a zero tolerance of abuse. We are working hard at developing a culture of safety that ensures children are nurtured and protected when in our care. We have developed policies and implemented procedures for the safety and protection of children and young people.

All employees and volunteers of Acts Global Churches are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing, and empowerment of children.



Acts Global Churches has a zero tolerance of abuse.

## Responsibility of Implementation

Child Protection implementation is not purely the responsibility of the AGC National Administration, or of the local churches children's leader. Child Protection is the responsibility of all members of the organisation, and a child safe culture throughout Acts Global Churches is imperative.

The Acts Global Churches Board and National Leadership provide overall governance for the organisation and are familiar with the policy and procedural responsibilities outlined within this policy.

However the implementation, awareness and culture of child safety and wellbeing within Acts Global Churches, is the responsibility of all employees, volunteers and members. Acts Global Churches continually seeks to improve this culture and build greater awareness to the best practises for ensuring all people are safe and feel safe when in the community of any of our churches.

This policy is not only for the operation of children's programs but for all operations throughout a church, whether they have children involved or not.

The local church Senior Leader and Eldership/Oversight is ultimately responsible for knowing, understanding and implementing the policy at a local level and can not abdicate its responsibility. While administration and implementation may be delegated to staff or leaders, the responsibility rests with the Senior Leader and Eldership/Oversight. The Senior Leader and Eldership/Oversight should be familiar with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, reporting processes and have a standing agenda item at all meetings to discuss relevant child protection matters.

Each local church must have a designated 'Child Safety Officer'. The responsibility of this person is to ensure the local implementation and awareness of child protection practices, as well as be responsible for the administration of documentation related to child protection screening, induction and training. Greater detail on this role is detailed further in this document.

This understanding will be scrutinised during annual AGC internal audits, as detailed toward the end of this document.



## Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

In 2017, the Royal Commission into Institutional Child Abuse handed down findings and recommendations after hearing thousands of hours of interviews, testimonies and investigations into the child abuse that occurred to children whilst under the care of various institutions.

Recommendations 16.31 – 58 apply to all religious institutions, making suggestions/ recommendations to improve child protection and to do everything possible to protect children into the future.

AGC is committed to ensure our organisation is child safe and complies above and beyond state/territories legislation. Further information on the Royal Commission can be found here - [www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au](http://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au)

## Definitions

**‘Abuse’** includes bullying, harassment, discrimination and all forms of physical and emotional abuse. Specific detail is outlined further in this policy

**‘Adult’** Any person aged over 18.

**‘AGC’** means the not-for-profit legal entity, Acts Global Churches Limited.

**‘Allegation’** a complaint, incident or notification of any matter that may be dealt with through the relevant reporting procedures

**‘Children’s Program Worker’** means anyone who has regular contact with children in a child related program at a local church under Acts Global Churches. This could be but not limited to, a children’s church/ministry leader, youth leader. This worker is usually an adult but there may be situations where an under 18 is in a position of responsibility. See screening section of this policy of requirements for both.

**‘Code of Conduct’** an agreed commitment to uphold policies, procedures and practices within the organisation.

**‘Contractor’** means anyone engaged to provide services to Acts Global Churches or the local church.

**‘Children, Child, Young Person’** refers to any person who are less than 18 years of age.

**‘Credentialed Minister’** means anyone who holds a ministry credential through Acts Global Churches. They may or may not be currently employed or volunteering in a role at a local church.

**‘Department Leader’** means a person appointed by the local church leadership team to lead and/or oversee an event/program conducted for children.

**‘Disclosure’** occurs when someone informs a person that they have been subject to abuse, know of abuse, or other sensitive information.

**‘Due Diligence’** the degree of care that a reasonable person would exercise. Due diligence is a legally relevant standard for establishing liability.

**‘Duty of Care’** the moral and legal responsibility that the church has to ensure the safety and well-being of those who participate in any of its activities.

**‘Eldership/Oversight/ Local Leadership Team’** the local church governance body

**‘Employee’** means anyone employed by Acts Global Churches, whether or not the person is employed in connection with any work or activities that relate to children.

**‘Event/program’** means an event or a program, be it regular or

occasional, conducted under the auspices of the local church for children.

**‘Grooming’** is the process by which a person prepares a child, for later abuse. This behaviour is predatory conduct designed to build trust and can take place over weeks, months or even years.

**‘Head of Organisation’** means the person legally responsible for reporting of abuse allegations. In our organisation this is the National Leader.

**‘Local Church’** means any local church operating under the company or as a church in association, of Acts Global Churches.

**‘Location Child Safety Officer’** the person in each local church, named and responsible for the child protection oversight and administration.

**‘Mandatory Reporting’** may vary from state to state. Generally some professions are required by law to report any allegations or reasonable concerns of abuse to the relevant Statutory Authorities. See further information in this policy.

**‘National Child Protection Coordinator’** means the person employed by Acts Global Churches, responsible to assisting in the reporting of any incidents, investigations and advice to local churches.

**‘NLT’** means the National Leadership Team of Acts Global Churches.

**‘Reportable Conduct’** Reportable Conduct is any assault, mistreatment or neglect of a child, or any behaviour that causes psychological harm; any sexual offence, or sexual misconduct committed against, or in the presence of, a child. This relates to employees or volunteers of the organization. See further information in this policy.

**‘Reasonable belief’** is stronger level of knowledge than speculation, rumour or gossip however proof is not required and does not require certainty. Generally it comes from direct observation, notification or reliable sources. See further information in this policy.

**‘Risk Management’** strategies that are developed in response to identified risks to reduce or remove the identified risks.

**‘Screening’** refers to the recruitment practice as part of the appointment process of anyone wanting to volunteer or work within the church. Screening involves Statutory checks of all workers and volunteers and in some cases interviews, reference checks, probation and trial periods, induction, training, and review.

**‘Secure file’** means a written record kept in a locked storage/ filing cabinet and/or an electronic record stored in a password-protected file.

**‘State-based Check’** is a check that involves a national criminal history check and a review of findings of workplace misconduct. Sometime referred to as a Working with Children Check. The result of these checks is a clearance to work with children for a specified period of time.

**‘The applicant’** means a person who is seeking to be appointed to a paid and/or voluntary role which requires him/her to work with children.

**‘Volunteer’** means anyone who is rostered to volunteer in a local church under Acts Global Churches, whether or not the person is volunteering in connection with any work or activities that relate to children.

**‘Vulnerable people’** a person who may be susceptible to abuse or exploitation based on factors such as their age, physical or mental health, isolation, personal hardship or people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.



## National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

The National Principles aim to provide a nationally consistent approach to creating organisational cultures that foster child safety and wellbeing across all sectors in Australia. This will help to keep children and young people safe and reduce future harm in organisational settings.

The National Principles reflect the ten child safe standards recommended by the Royal Commission, with a broader scope that goes beyond child sexual abuse to cover other forms of harm to children and young people.

To learn more about the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations please visit <https://childsafe.humanrights.gov.au>

These 10 principles form an overall framework to all child protection in Acts Global Churches and should be read and understood by pastors, leaders, employees and volunteers.

As required in principle 9, Acts Global Churches will continually review and update all policies to continually improve our expectations regarding these principles. These updates will be reflected in new policy documents or communications from the National Child Protection Team.

#### NATIONAL PRINCIPAL #1

### Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.

This principle provides guidance on the role of organisational leadership and governance in promoting inclusive and welcoming environments for children and young people, a culture of accountability and the ways in which a child safe culture is developed and maintained.

Adoption of this principle shows that the organisation has a commitment to child safety and wellbeing through all levels of the organisation. Governance arrangements are transparent and include a child safety and wellbeing policy, practice guidance, a Code of Conduct and a risk management framework. Governance arrangements vary depending on the type, nature and size of an organisation. Organisational leadership provides an authorising environment for the sharing of information about risks to children and young people.

#### NATIONAL PRINCIPAL #2

### Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

This principle describes an organisational culture that supports children and young people to understand what child safety and wellbeing means. They are informed about their rights and responsibilities in an age appropriate way. They contribute and actively participate in building an organisational culture that is safe for them.

Children and young people know about the organisation's commitment to child safety and wellbeing and access relevant information and programs. They recognise safe environments and understand protective strategies. In such environments, children and young people feel comfortable participating in decisions and communicating their views and concerns. Ultimately, however, the responsibility for child safety and wellbeing in an organisation rests with the organisation and its workers.

Staff and volunteers value and respect children and young people's identity and culture, are comfortable and skilled in engaging with them, understand their developmental needs and build on children and young people's strengths and capacities.

#### NATIONAL PRINCIPAL #3

### Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.

This principle outlines the range of ways an organisation can involve families and the community in its approach to child safety and wellbeing, relevant policies and practices and the provision of accessible information. This will help inform parents and carers about safeguarding children and young people and encourage their feedback and input. They will be empowered to speak up and drive conversations regarding child safety and wellbeing and how and when they can raise issues and concerns.

Families have the primary responsibility for the upbringing of their children, and are aware of their children's primary protective networks. There is wide variety in the structure of families, the role different family members may play in a child's life, their backgrounds and cultures. Families and carers are best placed to advise about their children's needs and capabilities and can inform organisations about practices and environments that are safe for them. In a safe environment, children, young people, family and community members feel that their culture and identity are respected.

#### NATIONAL PRINCIPAL #4

### Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.

This principle examines how recognition of children and young people's diverse circumstances enables an organisation to work in a more child centred way and empowers children and young people to participate more effectively. This builds an organisational culture that acknowledges the strengths and individual characteristics of children, and embraces all children regardless of their abilities, sex, gender, or social, economic or cultural background.

A welcoming organisation is one where all children and young people feel comfortable and where services are provided in culturally safe and inclusive ways. This reduces the risk of discrimination, exclusion, bullying and abuse.

#### NATIONAL PRINCIPAL #5

### People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.

This principle describes recruitment and staff development policies, including appropriate screening, that are a foundation of child safe organisations. This principle also includes induction training, understanding child safety responsibilities and cultural safety concepts, and appropriate supervision of staff and volunteers. Reporting obligations, training in record keeping and information sharing provide staff and volunteers with relevant practice tools to better safeguard children and young people.

#### NATIONAL PRINCIPAL #6

### Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.

This principle provides guidance on how human resource management policies and practices and effective complaints management processes should be accessible, responsive to and understood by children and young people, families, staff and volunteers. Complaint management processes will be linked to the Code of Conduct and provide details about where breaches of the Code have occurred. Training will help staff and volunteers to recognise and respond to neglect, grooming and other forms of harm, provide appropriate support to children and young people in these instances and meet legal requirements. This includes training to assist in responding to different types of complaints, privacy considerations, listening skills, disclosures of harm and reporting obligations.

#### NATIONAL PRINCIPAL #7

### Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training

This principle emphasises the importance of information, ongoing education and training for staff and volunteers. Staff and volunteers build on their knowledge and

skills and evidence-based practice tools through professional seminars and memberships, supervised peer discussions, team training days and access to research and publications. This ensures staff and volunteers develop awareness and insights into their attitudes towards children and young people, and have a contemporary understanding of child development, safety and wellbeing. They are able to identify indicators of child harm, respond effectively to children and young people and their families and support their colleagues. Staff and volunteers are able to respond in culturally appropriate ways to children and young people who disclose or show signs that they are experiencing harm inside or outside the organisation.

Staff and volunteers are trained in the rights of children and young people in relation to record keeping, and the possible uses and audiences for records that may be created.

#### NATIONAL PRINCIPAL #8

### Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.

This principle highlights that reducing the risk of harm in physical and online environments is an important preventative mechanism. Risk management strategies clarify potential risks where adult to child or child to child interactions occur, or where the physical environment is unsafe.

Technological platforms within organisations provide valuable tools in education, communication and help seeking. Risks associated with these platforms are minimised through all necessary means, including: education of children and young people, parents, staff and volunteers about expectations of online behaviour; the application of safety filters; and communication protocols.

#### NATIONAL PRINCIPAL #9

### Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved.

This principle emphasises that child safe organisations seek to continuously improve their delivery of child safe services and their operations. They also conduct reviews to ensure that organisational policies and procedures, including record keeping practices, are being implemented by staff and volunteers. The participation and involvement of staff, volunteers, children and young people, families and community mentors in these reviews will strengthen



the organisation's child safeguarding capacities. This includes the importance of reporting on the finding of reviews, and sharing good practice and learnings on a regular basis. Regular reviews ensure that organisations address new challenges or concerns that arise.

#### **NATIONAL PRINCIPAL #10**

### **Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.**

This principle outlines the importance of organisations having a clearly documented child safety and wellbeing policy. This will ensure that all stakeholders, including organisational staff and volunteers, children and young people and their families and carers, are aware of how the organisation is planning to meet its obligations to create an environment that is safe for children. Partner agencies or organisations funded to provide services to children and young people should demonstrate adherence to child safety and wellbeing policies and practices.

Documenting policies and procedures ensures consistent application of child safe practices across the organisation. It also enables organisations to examine, through review processes, adherence to child safety and wellbeing principles and practices.



## **Victorian Standards**

As at 1st July 2022, Victoria adopted a new set of standards. These new 11 standards set out minimum requirements and outline the actions organisations must take to keep children and young people safe. They provide more clarity for organisations and are more consistent with the 10 Principles throughout the rest of Australia.

For the most part, Victorian standards 2-11 align with National Standards 1-10, with the additional of standard 1.

#### **VICTORIAN STANDARD #1**

### **Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued**

In complying with Child Safe Standard 1, an organisation must, at a minimum, ensure:

- › A child's ability to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights is encouraged and actively supported.
- › Strategies are embedded within the organisation which equip all members to acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal culture and understand its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children and young people.
- › Measures are adopted by the organisation to ensure racism within the organisation is identified, confronted and not tolerated. Any instances of racism are addressed with appropriate consequences.
- › The organisation actively supports and facilitates participation and inclusion within it by Aboriginal children, young people and their families.
- › All of the organisation's policies, procedures, systems and processes together create a culturally safe and inclusive environment and meet the needs of Aboriginal children, young people and their families.

Further information on the Victorian Standards can be found here - <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards>

## Screening Overview

Acts Global Churches requires that all volunteers and employees in a church are suitably screened prior to serving in any area. This requirement is not just for those serving in children's programs but all volunteers. Different screening processes will be required depending on the capacity and area in which they are serving.

**All church pastors (employed or volunteer), staff, eldership/oversight, any 'leader' must go through the same screening process as a children's program worker and attend annual child protection training.**

All components of this process must be documented and information stored securely, and available for presentation at the annual church audit, or when requested by Acts Global Churches National Administration.

Any leader must go through the same screening process as a children's program worker



## Screening Process & Requirements

### All Children's Program Workers, Pastors, Eldership/ Oversight, Staff, & Leaders (employed or volunteer):

1. **Application** - An information pack is suggested that includes the child safety and wellbeing policy and code of conduct, position description, application form itself and any information about the role.
2. **Interview/ Reference Check** - Pre engagement screening including interviews to discuss the role and explore suitability and reference checks where the emphasis is on child safety and wellbeing. The church must ask if they have a history of sexual offences. Failure to do so may mean that you put a child at risk.
3. **Senior Pastor Endorsement** - a documented endorsement from the senior pastor
4. **Code of Conduct** - agreed to and signed the latest AGC Child Safety Code of Conduct
5. **State Based Check** - for all workers according to state based requirements. [See table on page 29.](#)
6. **Induction and Training** - relevant policies and processes detailed with emphasis on child safety responsibilities, record keeping, information sharing, and reporting obligations.
7. **Supervision and Appraisal** - probation and trial period to review suitability to the role focused on child safety and wellbeing.

### All Volunteers – Non Child Related Work

1. **Application** - An information pack is suggested that includes the child safety and wellbeing policy and code of conduct, position description, application form itself and any information about the role.
2. **Interview/ Reference Check** - Pre engagement screening including interviews to discuss the role and explore suitability and reference checks where the emphasis is on child safety and wellbeing. The church must ask if they have a history of sexual offences. Failure to do so may mean that you put a child at risk.
3. **State Based Check** - according to State based requirements. [See table on page 29.](#)
4. (Recommended) **Code of Conduct – Child Safety** – agreed to and signed AGC Child Safety Code of Conduct
5. **Training** - relevant processes and training related to the role they will fulfil.

## Role Specifics

### Children's Program Worker

'Children's Program Worker' means anyone who has regular contact with children in a child related program at a local church under Acts Global Churches.

A Children's Program Worker can be an employee, volunteer or minister. Their employment or volunteering status is irrelevant. If they are working in any child related work, they are considered a Children's Program Worker. Regardless if their function is with preschoolers, primary aged, or youth/teenagers, this classification applies. They are required to follow the screening process as detailed prior

### Volunteer

'Volunteer' means anyone who volunteers in a local church under Acts Global Churches, whether or not the person is volunteering in connection with any work or activities that relate to children. This includes those that serve outside a service, or gathering. This includes and is not limited to childrens, youth, music, tech, host teams, small group leaders, community outreach program workers, maintenance & administration volunteers.

- > Depending on the state based screening guidelines, a volunteer will be required to get the relevant state based Working with Children check.
- > If a volunteer moves to an employed capacity in AGC at anytime, their screening process and stated based screening type must be updated to reflect this
- > A volunteer may or may not be a Children's Program Worker. If they are volunteering as a Children's Program Worker, they must also follow all the additional screening requirements as detailed in this policy.

### Under 18yrs Volunteer (Minor)

- > People may be appointed as a volunteer or children's program worker even under the age of 18. In some situations these volunteers are not required/cannot apply for State compliance/police checks.
- > If serving as a Children's Program Worker, these people must still

fully comply with the AGC Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and receive the same internal screening, induction and training as any adult workers. As soon as a minor, who wishes to work or volunteer, reaches the State or Territory age requirement, they must apply for and supply relevant state checks.

- › For Children’s Program workers who are minors, more attention should be paid to external referees/ references during the application to serve in place of the state based checks. A reference from their school would be recommended.
- › Minors who are volunteering in any child related work, must be fully supervised by a fully screened and trained adult supervisor. If over 16 years old, they can be included in leader ratios

## Credentialed Minister

‘Credentialed Minister’ means anyone who holds a ministry credential through Acts Global Churches, however may not necessarily be currently employed or volunteering in a role at a local church.

It is the responsibility of all credentialed ministers to be familiar with the AGC Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy. Prior to a minister being credentialed it is vital they read and understand the policy and as part of the credentialing process they will be required to provide some responses to evaluate their understanding of the policy.

Senior Pastors in all churches are responsible for ensuring that all credentialed ministers in their church are screened according to Acts Global policy as detailed in this document.

- › Application - as the minister receives all relevant interviews and checks at the point of credential issuing, the local church is not required to conduct these, however ongoing screening requirements still apply
- › Code of Conduct – agreed to and signed the latest AGC Child Safety Code of Conduct
- › State Based Check - for all workers according to State based requirements. **All AGC credentialed ministers regardless of their role or employment capacity MUST have a state based screening check.**
- › Induction and Training- relevant policies and processes detailed with emphasis on child safety responsibilities, record keeping, information sharing, and reporting obligations.
- › Supervision and Appraisal- probation and trial period to review suitability to the role focused on child safety and wellbeing.

## Employees

An employee means anyone employed and paid by Acts Global Churches, whether or not the person is employed in connection with any work or activities that relate to children

- › All employees regardless of their role or employed capacity **MUST** go through the full screening process as outlined in this policy
- › Depending on the state based screening guideline, an employee will get the relevant state based Working with Children’s check, and ensure it is an employee type.
- › If a volunteer moves to an employed capacity in AGC at anytime, their screening process and stated based screening type must be updated to reflect this.

## Contractors

‘Contractor’ means anyone engaged to provide services to AGC or any local church.

- › Any contractor engaged to work with children in any capacity **MUST** have a state based screening check eg. WWCC, Blue Card, NPC. Work should not commence or the contractor allowed on-site until this has been presented.
- › Any contractor engaged to work with children must receive a copy of the AGC Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, Code of Conduct and in agreement to all terms within. They must also supply copies of their own child protection policies, risk management plans and insurances identifying cover for child abuse.
- › Any contractor engaged to work regularly in church facilities, but not in children’s programs **MUST** have a state based screening check eg. WWCC, Blue Card, NPC. ‘Regularly’ would be defined as multiple hours, with scheduled time each week or fortnight.
- › A contractor engaged for services work eg. tradesperson, who is not performing child related work, and is on-site for a limited period of time, does **NOT** require a state based screening check. Depending on the size of the project, time spent on site and possible access to children, it may be determined by the local church to request child protection documentation and agreements from the contractor.

## Parents in Program

Parents that have a participating child within the program in which they are volunteering must still comply with the following.

- › All parents must still fulfil the requirements of a Children’s Program Worker if they volunteering in a program
- › This includes receiving the relevant state based checks, even if there is a Parent of Child clause.

The only exception to the above, is where a visiting parent wishes to sit in the program with their child.

- › The visiting parent cannot perform the role of a Children’s Program Worker, nor be included in the assessment of adult/child ratios and they must always be supervised by a Children’s Program worker.
- › A visiting parent, attending a program to be with their child is seen as a temporary measure, and should it be required on an ongoing basis to assist with the child’s comfort or behaviour, the parent must go through the relevant screening and training requirements of a Children’s Program Worker.
- › Parents are permitted to provide occasional transport to children within a program but they must be a volunteer of the church and have gone through at minimum the base volunteer screening process. They must also follow the transport guidelines outlined in this policy. Transport to/from programs are not the responsibility of AGC and this is up to the parents/ guardian of the child.

## Disability / Care Support Workers

Some children may have employed disability/ care support workers attending a children’s program with them. This may be as a part of NDIS or similar scheme.

This worker must be treated like any other adult and go through a screening process prior to being allowed to attend a program

- › All workers must supply details of their state based check prior to attending the program
- › The agency/ company they work for must supply information acknowledging their employment and specific role in relation to the child they are attending with.
- › A copy of the AGC Child Safety and Wellbeing policy must be supplied to the worker and acknowledged

- › The worker can only act as support to the individual child they are engaged to care for. They cannot perform the role of a Children’s Program Worker, nor be included in the assessment of adult/child ratios and they must always be supervised by a Children’s Program worker.
- › The support worker may only transport the child they are engaged to work with and no other child attending a church program.

## State Based Checks

All states have varying state-based screening systems which include Working With Children’s Checks, Blue Card, Working with Vulnerable People and National Police Checks. It is vital that these are followed and that the local church is listed as an organisation for the check.

Note: All those employed by Acts Global Churches must have an employee check, not a volunteer check. Please ensure those that have moved from a voluntary role to employed have updated checks.

### Who needs a state based check?

State/ Territory	Ministers (In any capacity)	Employees & Volunteers (Working with children)	Employees & Volunteers (Non children’s program worker)	Age (A State Based Check is required)
ACT	✓	✓	✓	16 +
NSW	✓	✓	✗	18 +
NT	✓	✓	✓	15 +
QLD	✓	✓	✗	18 +
SA	✓	✓	✗	14 +
TAS	✓	✓	✓	16 +
VIC	✓	✓	✓	18 +
WA	✓	✓	✗	18 +



## State and Territory Screening Requirements

### ACT Working with Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011 (ACT)

<https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/business-and-work/working-with-vulnerable-people>

The ACT Working with Vulnerable People Background Check requires that individuals engaging in regulated activities or services, including where these are provided to children, must be registered. A statutory Screening Unit within the Office of Regulatory Services, Justice and Community Safety Directorate is responsible for applications for registration. The registration is valid for 3 years and is subject to ongoing monitoring. There are three types of registration administered to individuals under the Working with Vulnerable People Background Check: general registration, which is transferable across all roles and organisations; role-based registration; and conditional registration.

All church volunteers should hold a valid Working with Vulnerable People Card.

### NSW Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 (NSW)

<https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/working-children-check>

The NSW Working with Children Check requires that all people in child related work hold a current NSW WWCC

#### Working With Children

For those in a Children Program Worker role as described within this policy, please follow the standard screening process with the Office of The Children's Guardian. This should include all parents serving as children's program workers, regardless of their own child's attendance in the program. It is quite possible that individual may function in that role without their children present.

Local churches must register as an organisation with NSW Office

of the Childrens Guardain, and perform a WWCC verification prior to allow the employee/ volunteer to work. This verification should be held on file with all WWCC personal files.

<https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/working-children-check/wwcc-information-organisations/help-register-and-verify>

### Non Children's Program Worker

A NSW WWCC is not available to this role, but all other AGC screening process components are required.

## NT Care and Protection of Children Act 2007 (NT)

<https://nt.gov.au/emergency/community-safety/apply-for-a-working-with-children-clearance>

Individuals are required to apply for a Working With Children Check, known as an "Ochre Card" in the NT. The Ochre Card, which is also known as a Clearance Notice is valid for 2 years, and applies to employees and volunteers in child-related employment settings.

All church volunteers should hold a valid Ochre Card

## QLD Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000(Qld)

<https://www.bluecard.qld.gov.au>

Individuals are required to apply for a Working With Children Check, known as a "Blue Card" in Queensland. Valid for 3 years, Blue Cards entitle individuals to engage in child-related occupations/volunteering.

### Working With Children

For those in a Children Program Worker role as described within this policy, please follow the standard screening process with Working With Children QLD. This should include all parents serving as children's program workers, regardless of their own child's attendance in the program. It is quite possible that individual may function in that role without their children present.

### Non Children's Program Worker

A QLD Blue Card is not available to this role, but all other AGC screening process components are required.

## SA Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016

<https://screening.sa.gov.au/home>

The SA Department of Human Services Screen Unit requires that all people in child related work hold a current SA WWCC

Each church is required to register as an organisation and manage their own members application.

Initially your church will need to register at the following link:

<https://www.dcsiscreening.sa.gov.au/OrgRegistration>

### Working With Children

For those in a Children Program Worker role as described within this policy, please follow the standard screening process with the SA Department of Human Services (DHS) Screening Unit. This should include all parents serving as children's program workers, regardless of their own child's attendance in the program. It is quite possible that individual may function in that role without their children present.

### Non Children's Program Worker

A SA WWCC is not available to this role, but all other AGC screening process components are required.

## TAS Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2014

<https://www.service.tas.gov.au/services/education-and-skills/working-with-vulnerable-people-including-children>

Individuals who work or volunteer in child care or other child-related sectors are required to apply for a Working with Children Check. Registrations are valid for 3 years or as determined by the Registrar.

All church volunteers should hold a valid Working with Vulnerable People Card.

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**vic** **Worker Screening Act 2020**

<http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au>

Individuals are required to apply for a Working With Children Check. Valid for 5 years, the check entitles individuals to engage in child-related occupations/volunteering and practical training.

All church volunteers should hold a valid Working with Children's Check.

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**WA** **Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004 (WA)**

<https://workingwithchildren.wa.gov.au>

Individuals are required to apply for a Working With Children Check. Valid for 3 years, the check entitles individuals to engage in child-related occupations/volunteering.

**Working With Children**

For those in a Children Program Worker role as described within this policy, please follow the standard screening process with Working With Children WA. This should include all parents serving as children's program workers, regardless of their own child's attendance in the program. It is quite possible that individual may function in that role without their children present.

**Non Children's Program Worker**

A WA WWCC is not available to this role, but all other AGC screening process components are required



## Code of Conduct

A Child Safety Code of Conduct forms part of the process of on-boarding employees and volunteers and addresses many specifics related to interactions with, and supervision of children.

The Code of Conduct is part of our commitment to providing appropriate duty of care, including health and safety considerations, for children and the vulnerable within in our churches and associated programs. The code reflects Acts Global Churches commitment to creating safe emotional and physical environments to protect all, which is our duty of care.

All Children's Program Workers, Pastors, Eldership/Oversight, Staff and Leaders MUST read, agree to and sign the code prior to commencement of service. All existing employees and volunteers must have a current signed Code of Conduct on file.

For volunteers serving in non-child related areas we would recommend having them complete the Code of Conduct also.

Employees and volunteers who breach this code may be subject to disciplinary action. Breaches by external providers may result in them being asked to cease activity and leave the premises. Serious breaches involving criminal acts will result in a report being made to the appropriate authorities including the police, the statutory child protection authorities, and Acts Global National Office.

The Code of Conduct document is provided as [an appendix](#) to this policy and can be used or serve as a guide for the development of a specific code of conduct for each church. It should be a working document which is reviewed and confirmed regularly.

## Child Safety Officer

All local churches must have a nominated Child Safety Officer. The Child Safety Officer may be the Senior Pastor, a children's department leader, another nominated employee or volunteer, or someone dedicated to compliance.

The role of the Child Safety Officer is to

- › Provide overall attention and priority to Child Safety and Wellbeing in a local church.
- › Be very familiar with the AGC Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and ensuring the church complies with all aspects
- › Manage administration of all state based checks, training and personal interviews, inductions etc. The specifics of the administration may be split between various people however the Child Safety Officer is responsible for the overall oversight
- › Oversee and ensuring all documents for child safety are updated annually, stored correctly and ready for inspection as part of the annual AGC audit, or at any time that it may be required
- › Coordinate annual child protection training and ensure all required attend, following up those that are unable
- › Liaise with Acts Global National Child Protection team with regards to questions, or reporting
- › Handle all incident reporting at a local level

There would be a general expectation that the Child Safety Officer has some additional training/knowledge around child protection and is not purely an administrator.

The role of a Child Safety Officer does not remove the responsibility of the Senior Pastor or Oversight/ Eldership to areas of child protection. This role purely adds and provides support to the church leadership, and is clear to AGC National who is the point of contact.

The name of Child Safety Officer is required to be detailed on the annual church audit every 12months.

## Children's Program Workers

The following details provide further information for Children's Program Workers beyond the basic screening requirements.

### On-boarding

- › For any worker intending to be involved in any children's program, an Application to Work must be completed alongside any screening process. A sample of this application is included in the [appendices](#).
- › Upon receiving an application to work, the Senior Pastor or his/her delegates must interview the individual and discuss the application. This should include assessing both suitability for a role in a children's program and ensuring all items of the screening process are covered.
- › No applicant can serve in children's programs until an application is approved, and approved status from state based checks is received.
- › Once an applicant is approved, they must move onto the Induction and Training processes of this policy.

### Induction

Workers approved to work with children should be inducted into their role and provided with instructions to follow in respect to program best practises, discipline, health and safety, hygiene, dietary issues, evacuation/lock-down procedures and processes for dealing with incidents and allegations.

- › When an applicant is appointed to a Children's Program, the Team Leader will, at the time of commencement, conduct an induction session in which the Team Member will be introduced to co-workers, cover specific policies and procedures relevant to the church's location, size and facilities.
- › They must receive clear information on the process to follow in the event of critical incidents.
- › Documentation of all policies and procedures must be supplied to the worker and acknowledged as received. This would include a copy of this document and any internal church operational procedures.
- › Formal training must be provided to the worker either at this induction or any time prior to any engagement in a children's programs.
- › If a regular training session is not available for some time, a training



Commencing any role within children's programs prior to training, is a breach of this policy.

session during induction would be suitable, with the worker then to complete the full training session at the next scheduled date. This induction training must be as thorough as a full training session and cover all aspects of this policy and internal procedures.

- › Commencing any role within children's programs prior to training, is a breach of this policy.
- › Workers should complete an attendance register or similar to confirm they attended the induction and understand the information and policies taught/ explained.
- › Workers should be assigned to a buddy or leader to shadow for a period of time while they are becoming familiar with programs and procedures. The entire team should be aware of new workers, be available to assist where required and provide answers to questions.

## Training

Workers must be provided with both initial and regular training with particular emphasis on program specifics, health and safety, hygiene, dietary issues, evacuation/lock-down procedures and processes for dealing with incidents and allegations.

- › Each local church must conduct **at least one** annual training session for all workers.
- › Training must be completed by all employees, credentialed ministers, oversight/ eldership, children program workers, and department leaders.
- › The training session may address matters related to local church vision and values, local goals, etc. but the session must address matters related to child protection policies and procedures to ensure that each worker is aware of policy updates, etc.
- › Each training session should be scheduled with all workers and other interested parties invited. Training should be conducted by leaders with specific knowledge and/or experience and/or qualifications in respect of child protection.
- › The list of matters addressed at the training session should be kept on file along with a register of attendance.
- › An attendance register or similar should be documented for each training session to confirm who attended and details of the information and policies taught/ explained.
- › If online training is used for workers, the local church should still conduct a session for workers to discuss matters specific to the church's facilities and programs

## Training Compliance

Acknowledgement of the training delivered should be received from each worker and stored with all child protection documentation. Workers that have not completed up to date training should not be actively serving in children's programs until training is completed.

## Training content and resources

AGC recommends the following programs for child protection and safety training:

### Acts Global Churches

Acts Global offers an online self paced child safety training course & quiz, focused specifically around this policy & general childsafe practises.

Churches using this training should still have an annual meeting of all children's workers, but the focus can be more related to local procedures and specifics. This training course is valid for 12mths <https://actsglobal.thinkific.com/>

### Childsafe

Childsafe offers online training, and an online Safety Management Database. Membership is based on individual church subscription and number of volunteers / employees.

<http://www.childsafe.org.au>

### Safe Church Program

Safe Church Program is an initiative of the National Council of Churches in Australia and consists of the Safe Church Training Agreement (SCTA), Safe Church Network, and the Safe as Churches Conferences.

[www.ncca.org.au/departments/safe-church-program](http://www.ncca.org.au/departments/safe-church-program)

### Human Rights Commission: National Principles

<https://childsafe.humanrights.gov.au/learning-hub/e-learning-modules>

### E Safety Commission: Online E- safety

[www.esafety.gov.au](http://www.esafety.gov.au)

### NSW Office of the Childrens Guardian

<https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/resources>

### VIC Commission for Children and Young People

<https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/resources>



Each local church must conduct at least one Child Protection training session each year.

## Development and supervision

Ongoing development and supervision should be provided to all volunteers particularly to those working with children. This development and supervision should be an opportunity for feedback from both the individual and the leadership they report to.

- › Performance, personal and ministry development reviews should be discussed at regular supervision meetings. Reviews should focus on the development of the employee/ volunteer.
- › Department Leaders are responsible for meeting regularly with all personnel.
- › Appraisal and feedback will be done with the view to empower. All attempts must be made to provide employees and volunteers with the knowledge, skills, abilities, and resources that will improve performance.
- › Employees and volunteers should not be criticised for not improving performance if they have not been supported to do so by leadership.
- › When disputes or concerns occur, Department and Team Leaders must intervene quickly and appropriately when they become aware of inappropriate behaviour or grievance. Informal resolution should be sought prior to entering the formal grievance process.
- › Supervision and review should include regular discussion and feedback into personal conduct, ongoing alignment with AGC Statement of Beliefs and suitability for the role in which the individual fulfils.

## Intimate Relationships

This relates specifically to youth leaders and teenagers that may be, or intend to be, in a personal relationship. All leaders, children's program workers, volunteers are viewed to be in a position of responsibility in relation to working with children. For this reason there needs to be clear policy around relationships between these leaders and children.

- › No leader, regardless of age, should be in a romantic or intimate relationship with any person under 18 years, regardless of the statutory rules in each state or territory eg. Youth leader is 18 years old, wishes to date a 17 year old attending the youth ministry.
- › Should a leader wish to do so, and the relationship is appropriate in other aspects, they must withdraw from youth leadership until both parties are over 18yrs old and no longer attending a program, or the relationship ends.
- › If both people are over 18 years, with one person still 'attending' youth, (eg. Yr12) then the relationship is permitted, however it should be disclosed to and have endorsement from leadership including the Senior Pastor & Child Safety Officer.
- › If a leader breaches this policy, they may be asked to stand down and their involvement/ position will be discussed and re-evaluated.
- › These situations are often specific and vary based on the individuals and circumstances. Should churches have a situation that they wish to discuss/review, please contact the National Child Protection Coordinator. The National Child Protection Coordinator reserves the right to make exceptions to the above policy, based on risk assessment of the circumstances involved.

## Management and storage of records

- › All personal information regarding state based checks, applications for work, code of conduct or any other personal information is confidential and must be handled accordingly.
- › Any hard copy/ printed documents should be stored in a secured office/ filing system, and any electronic storage should be password protected and only available to those that are authorised to do so.
- › All documentation should be easily accessible whenever requested by AGC National Office or any government body that has the rights to request the information.



## Children's Program Operations

### Inclusion

Inclusivity is intentional practice to recognise and address the needs, perspectives and contributions that others from diverse backgrounds can make to a community. This includes people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, people with disabilities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and the vulnerable, including children. Inclusivity protects rights and recognises what cultural safety measures may need to be adopted within each local church to consider the needs of the local community.

A culturally safe environment allows those of diverse cultures to express themselves safely as they access church programs. Cultural Safety is more than an individual worker who is sensitive to the matters of other cultures. Cultural Safety is more than the absence of racism but demonstrated through the representation and inclusion within the organisation. It is a living process- not just a check box list.

Children in particular, come from diverse backgrounds and hence make them more vulnerable to abuse. Every person should be respected and valued irrespective of their age, gender, country of origin, cultural heritage, social economic background or ability, and have the right to access ministry programs. Particular attention to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people must be addressed to provide/promote a culturally safe environment.

Safety must be our priority. Employees and volunteers must be trained and equipped to recognise the various needs of children and understand how to cater for individual needs to ensure all children are included. It is required that all children's programs and services provide support and respond to individual needs so that the church is a safe place for all.

Intentional planning in all programs and activities must provide environments that ensure children and vulnerable people are always safe and feel welcome.

It is every church's responsibility to ensure that their ministry programs and services are adapted in such a way that participation is encouraged from all members of the community including people with diverse needs. Families, children, young people and vulnerable adults should be involved in decision making in all areas that affect them.

Children and young people must have access to information, support and complaints processes in ways that are culturally safe, accessible, and easy to understand.

## Implementation and Environment

It can often be difficult to know how to best implement inclusive practice into children's programs in a church context.

Here are some suggestions to assist –

- › Using images/ photos that are diverse and include multiple cultures
- › Creating an environment that is inclusive of other cultures can be demonstrated through artwork and pictures.
- › The physical environment should reflect Aboriginal culture and the community where you are.
- › Provide an environment that acknowledges the local culture and represents the Traditional peoples: including an acknowledgment to country.
- › Including cultural safety and competency training for all leaders and volunteers.

If you require any assistance or training resources, please reach out to the National Team as new resources are regularly available, and can be provided on request.

## Worker to child ratios

Supervision contributes to protecting children from hazards that may emerge in play and by the equipment used.

All children's programs are required to comply with the legislative requirements for worker-to-child ratios and AGC recommends the highest minimum recommendation when working with mixed age groups.

- › Workers must never work alone or be left alone with children. Children must be supervised by a **minimum of two leaders**.
- › Workers counted in the ratios must be directly involved with the care of children, and not for example in an adjacent room or performing another task.
- › A worker must be over 16 years old, to be included in leader ratios
- › All children must be accounted for at all times.
- › Worker to children ratio should be lower for activities such as off-site events, swimming, and larger combined events. Eg. More workers, less children
- › Camps and off-site events will require a ratio of no less than Worker 1:8 Children
- › Where children with special needs are present then the ratio should decrease in line with the needs and in consultation with parent/ caregivers' recommendations. Eg. A special needs child may need one on one care.

The outlined ratios are **required** as a minimum to run Children's Programs within your church. Please ensure a suitable assessment is conducted and documented prior to setting these for your church.



Camps and off-site trips will require a ratio of no less than 1 worker to every 8 children.

**Birth to 36 months - 1 : 4**



**36 months to preschool age - 1 : 10**



**Over preschool age - 1 : 11**



## Sign In/Out to Programs and Events

Local Church Leadership Teams must ensure that all children are accounted for at all times.

For any children's program, all children must be signed in and signed out at the beginning and the end of the program/event.

- › Various methods can be used for sign in/out. Eg. Electronic system like Planning Centre, Elvanto, Fluro, or a simple paper register is sufficient.
- › Leaders must be aware of how many children are in a program, their names, parent/carer contact details for each, as well as any specific risks (e.g. dietary, allergies, etc.).
- › The records of sign in/out must be kept indefinitely and secured in accordance with privacy rules.
- › The records need to be available to view by Acts Global National Office at any time, or any relevant legal authority requesting the records.
- › It is also important to document which leaders were rostered/involved in the children's program, alongside the sign in/out of the children.
- › It would be appropriate for Youth/High school programs, to have attendance/ sign in marked off by a youth leader rather than parents. It is however vitally important that this record is accurate and done at the point of attendance, rather than post the event.

An example sign in/out sheet is included in [the appendices](#).

## Medical & Permission Forms

It is a requirement for any child attending a program to have an up-to-date medical and permission form completed by a parent or carer.

- › The medical/ permission form should include any dietary needs, allergies, medical information such as ambulance and Medicare details, and emergency contact details.
- › The form should also include permission in relation to photo use, social media contact, transport etc., as detailed in this policy.
- › For higher risk events, or off-site activities, a specific permission form should be sought from parents/ carers which includes both permission to attend the event and medical details.

- › The forms must be kept indefinitely and secured in accordance with privacy rules.
- › Forms, at a minimum should be updated annually.

A sample of this can be found in [the appendices](#).

## First-Aid

For the safe running of all programs, the ability to provide immediate first aid and medical treatment in the event of injury is vital.

- › There should be at least one on-site leader with current first aid & CPR training.
- › A suitable, up-to-date and accessible first aid kit is to be available at all times, to all programs/events.
- › If specialised medical equipment such as defibrillator, oxygen or epipen is available, additional training should be provided to those providing first aid support.
- › Leaders should have clear procedures on when, and at what point, to call an ambulance for medical treatment. The primary concern is the health and care of the patient so if in doubt, call an ambulance.
- › Leaders should have clear procedures in place on communication to parents/carers, senior leadership after an event where first aid was administered.



There should be at least one on-site leader with current first aid & CPR training.

## Toileting Children

It is preferred that parents/carers are responsible for toileting children who are unable to manage themselves. In rare cases, children may require the urgent assistance of a children's program worker, which should be given, when parents are not available.

Where children need to use a toilet, arrangements should be made to:

- › Have parents/carers attend to assist, or in the event of an urgent need, have at least two leaders (where possible, of the same gender as the child) take the child to a toilet.
- › Young children should never be allowed to go to the toilet on their own.
- › Older children may go to a toilet in pairs/groups with the permission of the leader and the name(s) of the child/children and the time of his/her/their departure and return noted.
- › Where possible, separate/dedicated toilets should be allocated to children and not be used by adults whilst a children's program is operating.

## Evacuations and Lock-downs

Local Church Leadership Teams must do all that is possible to ensure the safety of children and workers in the event of evacuations/lock-downs. The local church should assess these strategies periodically and arrange regular training to practise the strategy. Any emergency should be documented as an incident and stored according to the record management requirements of this policy.

### Fire or Other Danger within the Building

In the event of a fire or other danger being identified within the building, emergency services must be called, all parts of the building are to be evacuated and a check completed to ensure that no significant external danger exists, and that all people are accounted for. The local church should have evacuation procedures clearly visible throughout the building and volunteers regularly trained to practise the strategy.

### External Threat and Lock-downs

Consideration needs to be given to ensuring that emergency services are called, that children are secure in locked room/barricaded areas and that all people are accounted for. Best practice procedures for lock-downs are regularly changing so please consider most recent information from authorities in your state.

## Accounting for All Persons

It is critical that in an event of an emergency that the sign in/out records are immediately available to leaders to ensure all children in their care are present and accounted for. Children should remain in the care of leaders until the emergency is declared 'safe' by relevant authorities, and not released to parents until that time.

## Food Safety

All food preparation and storage must follow strict food handling guidelines. Check with local council to ensure specific compliance with local requirements in relation to food handling.

General information is available here - [www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au)

## Inflatables

There is understanding of the benefit, fun and entertainment that inflatables, including jumping castles provide to childrens and youth ministries, as well as special events like community carnivals and outreach events. This equipment has often been a great way to attract and entertain people in the church community.

Despite the benefits, the AGC Board has determined that the risks far outweigh the benefits and have made the decision to put a blanket ban on all inflatable use for AGC churches.

This includes the ownership, operation of, or contracting of an external company to provide, on any Acts Global Churches property:

- › Any jumping castles
- › Obstacles courses
- › Zorb balls
- › Sumo suits
- › Or any inflatable attractions
- › Inflatable decorations are excepted.
- › Please consult the current Inflatables policy for the most up to date details.

A church group is permitted to visit an external 3rd party provider's premises, for such activities, on the conditions -

- › Specific permission from parents/carers is received for the specific date of the event,

- › The 3rd party provides a copy of their insurances,
- › The church team performs a risk assessment in relation to the specific event,
- › The church/leaders do not sign any liability/insurance waiver on behalf of any person. This would be the individual responsibility of the parent/carer.

## Vehicles and Transport

When performing tasks or activities for any Acts Global Church program that requires driving, the safety of the driver must be considered as well as the passengers. When transporting youth and children, specific parent/carer permission must be sought and the driver and vehicle must be approved.

Any person asked to transport people should:

- › Preferably be a fully licensed driver. That is, not provisional license holders. If provisional license holders are used, then this must be communicated to parents and approval gained.
- › Have a registered and insured vehicle. (minimum 3rd party insurance)

If using private transport for children and young people, considerations for the following must be made and appropriately communicated to all involved:

- › Children must not be transported without written parental permission.
- › A log should record who is being transported with details of drivers, passengers, times and route.
- › Details must be planned and communicated to parents including:
  - › Time of departure and arrival times,
  - › Driver (including their mobile number) and vehicle details,
  - › Driving route.
- › Only approved drivers are to be used. A Driver Declaration form must be completed prior to the event, or annually if the program requires regular transporting of young people.
- › When transporting children there must be more than one other person in the car.

- › Seatbelts are required for all passengers and child seats must be used for young children.
- › All drivers must have a zero blood alcohol level and not be under the influence of any drugs or medication that may affect their focus.
- › Drivers must carry a driver's license when driving.
- › Drivers may tow a trailer however they must be fully licensed and not on any provisional restriction.
- › Drivers must not use a mobile phone when driving.
- › All drivers should carry a charged and working phone in the event of an emergency.
- › All drivers agree to drive according to the specified route and if the designated route must be deviated from then these decisions should be communicated to team leaders prior to deviating.

**Below is a checklist that will assist event organisers ensure considerations are met:**

- Minimum requirements for approved drivers are in place.
- Driver Declaration signed and agreed to.
- Parent permission has been given.
- Guidelines for number of passengers are made known to approved drivers, parents, children and young people.
- "Transport buddy" practices are in place – more than one leader or more than one child or young person must be in a car when transporting a child or young person.
- Designated route is specified and communicated to drivers, parents and leadership.

A Driver Application Form document is provided as [an appendix](#) to this policy and can be used, or serve as a guide, for the development of a specific procedure for each church.

## Photography

The following outlines requirements when dealing with photos of children in a church program or event.

- › Photos taken of all children must have explicit permission from a parent or carer prior to the photo being taken. Permission must be sought specifically in relation to its intended use. Eg. Print promotion, on a website, social media etc.
- › Any photos of youth/children's ministry activities should be taken by someone appointed by the Department Leader.
- › Do not photograph any child/young person who has asked not to be photographed.
- › Photography should focus on the activity and not a particular child/young person.
- › Photos should focus on small groups rather than individuals.
- › Do not identify in writing the people in the photograph.
- › All children/young people must be appropriately dressed when photographed.
- › Photos should be removed from personal devices after the event and stored on a church-based site/platform.

## Camps

Camps require a higher level of planning and risk management. The following provides some guidelines around requirements for them.

- › Leaders can only supervise children of the same sex and a minimum of two leaders must be responsible for each dormitory/room.
- › Children cannot be allowed to get into bed with another child or with a leader.
- › Children of the opposite sex cannot share a bedroom.
- › Access to bathrooms, toilets or bunk rooms of the opposite sex is not allowed by leaders or children.
- › Health and Safety rules of the camp being used are to be adhered to.

- › Drugs and alcohol must not be consumed or used by leaders or young people. Children found using will be sent home. Leaders found using will be dismissed from duty.
- › Risk Assessments will be performed prior to events and the event is to be approved by church leadership.
- › Medical and permission forms must be completed by parents/carers for each child attending.

Camps  
require a  
higher level of  
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management.



## Online & Social Media Conduct

Electronic media and communication in its various forms is both an incredible tool to stay connected but also has the potential for inappropriate use that could result in accusations of abuse or grooming. For this reason, the principles listed in this document are recommended for all leaders and volunteers of Acts Global Churches whilst working or volunteering in a ministry capacity.

This policy applies to all online and mobile platforms for sharing content and information, whether hosted by your Church or hosted by others. "Social media" refers to social networking services, short-message services, message boards, wikis, podcasts, image/video sharing sites and other methods for sharing real time information among users. Due to the ever-changing speed of social media, this policy applies to all new social media and digital platforms, whether they are mentioned or not.

Clear guidelines and boundaries must be developed by local churches and communicated in accessible ways to employees, volunteers, parents/carers, and children so that it is understood and implemented according to policy guidelines.

### Online Friendships

- › All leaders are accountable and must abide by the general rule of, 'never being alone with a child'. This includes in the online environment, and should be avoided as far as it is practicable.
- › All employees and volunteers are expected to work and communicate with children in an open and transparent way - other adults should always know about the work you are doing with children.
- › Leaders should not request or follow a child under the age of 16 on their personal social networking sites.
- › Leaders can accept friend requests from a child under the age of 18 but are to keep the communication open and limited.
- › Leaders must advise a Department Leader if they happen to be friends with an under 16 due to previous relationship eg friends of family. These should be declared and documented.



### Personal Content

- › Content on personal posts should always be considered carefully, with the understanding that the content is public and a leader/ worker is in a position of influence and responsibility
- › Do not criticise, or join in negative talk that demeans or defames team members, participants, on social networking sites.
- › Do not post images or videos that include minors on any site.

### Communication

- › Communication or messaging should not occur on sites or apps where the message disappears. Eg Snapchat.
- › Team members should only converse with minors via wall posts and in groups, not through personal chat systems
- › Regularly review communication protocols with youth and children's leaders to ensure precautions are followed.
- › Provide reporting mechanisms for team members to account for communication and report breaches to communication rules. This would include if conversations are initiated by a minor.
- › In the situation of a minor contacting a leader or adult, the conversation must be kept short and recorded.
- › Only current team members over 18 years, should have access to the communication group/ posts. Previous/ no longer attending adults should be removed.

Young people that become leaders usually have long standing online connections with friends and others under 18 years. In these situations, a risk assessment can be made to determine how this should be handled by the local church. Should churches have a situation that they wish to discuss/ review, please contact the National Child Protection Coordinator. The National Child Protection Coordinator reserves the right to make exceptions to the above policy, based on risk assessment of the circumstances involved.

## Organisational/Church - Digital Platforms & Apps

- › Prior to use of any platform or app, Church leadership must investigate the risks in using the platform and the risks must be addressed and mitigated.
- › Church leadership must document what communication platforms are safe for all users and team members and leaders must only use the listed platforms when communicating with team members.
- › Chosen platforms must be communicated to parents/ carers on a regular basis. Parents/ carers should report to department/church leader should a leader/volunteer contact their child by any other means.
- › Team Leaders or other senior leadership should be administrators of pages/sites and monitor them on a regular basis.
- › Pages/sites should be set to the highest level of privacy and all content should only be visible to members and participants respectively.
- › Photos and videos of participants should not be posted to sites/ pages by team members without their authorised consent or that of their caregiver, as per the photographs section of this policy.

## Regular review and audit

It is important to seek out opportunities to ask children, young people and families about what makes them feel safe in your online environments. This should help drive your risk management plans.

- › Focus groups including children and young people should be used to gain insight as to how to protect
- › The team should be included in discussion with regards to implementation and reasonable measures online
- › Regularly audit sites and platforms
- › Review 'permission to use' (images) protocols annually or as required

## Mentoring and Pastoral Care

Mentoring, pastoral care and discipleship are a regular component of church life and often involve meetings and discussions between leaders and children/ young people. These discussions can take place in various environments and contexts. The following outlines specific guidelines that must be followed in relation to mentoring/pastoral care/discipleship.

- › The meeting should be prearranged and parents/carer should be aware of the time and location
- › The mentoring/pastoral care relationship should be between the same gender leader and young person
- › It is preferred that meetings take place in a public setting with other people around eg. café, shopping centre, church offices (with others present)
- › Meeting in a young person's home is allowed but there must someone else at home at the time of the meeting and in a common open room, not a bedroom or room with the door closed
- › The transport section of this policy must be followed in relation to mentoring, and no leader should be picking up a child to go to another location for these meetings.
- › All meetings should be documented including details of location, date, time and stored. The contents of the discussion does not need to be noted, however should there be a disclosure requiring action, this must be followed through. Eg. Risk to safety, abuse, etc.

## Over 18's Attending Youth Programs

Youth programs should have only children/young people and screened employees and volunteers involved.

- › Children turning 18 years old, during the school year, can continue to attend youth as a participant, as they would continue to attend school.
- › Once the year has ended, a person over 18 can no longer attend unless they return as a leader.
- › Those that have turned 18 years old, and have a driver's license are not permitted to provide any transport whilst a participant of the program. If they become a leader, they must follow the transport policy guidelines within this policy.
- › For other matters that can sometimes impact over 18's attending, please see the 'Intimate Relationships' & 'Online & Social Media Conduct' sections of this policy.

## Physical Incidents & Injuries

Incidents which result in any injury should be recorded. Injuries considered minor at the time, may prove later to be more serious. A record of what occurred will assist should a later injury claim ensue.

A record of incidents should be kept and stored in a secure file. The record should identify the date and time of the incident, the person(s) affected by the incident, what happened and what action, if any, followed. Incidents of all kinds should be reported to the Child Safety Officer, and follow any additional internal processes as determined by the local church.

Each Church should have clear procedures in place as to how an injury is handled within their context. It should be clear who should be informed and when.

If there is an injury and there is uncertainty to the medical response required, seek external medical assistance. Eg. Ambulance, Hospital or Doctor. See First Aid section.

Remedial action may be necessary if actions of a similar kind recur or actions involving a particular location, person or activity recur.

An example physical incident form is included in [the appendices](#).

## Activity Risk Assessments

Leaders must assess risks that are involved in any program/event. In conducting the program/event, leaders will ensure that identified risks are, where possible, eliminated or, at least, minimised.

Risk assessments should be documented (see [the appendices](#)).

When planning an event or program, workers must consider what risks may be involved. Events and programs will fall into one of three categories and the assessment of risk will identify which category is appropriate.

### High Risk

Some events and/or programs are considered high risk and are, therefore, unacceptable. These are considered so dangerous as to be uninsurable. No local church may undertake these activities in any circumstances.

### Medium Risk

Some events and/or programs are considered to contain a higher than normal level of risk and may be undertaken with specific and prior approval of our insurer. An additional premium may be charged by the insurer, depending on their prior assessment of the risk.

### Low Risk

Many, if not most, of the church's normal activities fall into this category which are disclosed annually through a local church insurance declaration. Approval is acknowledged by virtue of the insurer's acceptance of our disclosure and subsequent contract to insure.

Leaders will, when planning regular events, consider what risks may be involved. This is ideally done at the commencement of each year for programs/events that are essentially the same week by week. The same assessment may be used, though risks should be reassessed when any relevant factor changes.

Workers will when planning an occasional event/program consider the nature of what is proposed and what risks are inherent ([see appendices](#)).

Risk assessment documents should be retained on file.

Note: This policy should be read in conjunction with the Annual Declaration.

Should you require assistance regarding risk assessment, please contact the National Child Protection team or National Administration Office



## Allegations and Abuse

### Overview

In recent years, the process for handling and reporting of allegations and abuse has significantly changed both within AGC and externally to government agencies. Post the findings from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, a number of states have established new systems and processes of reporting allegations and abuse – referred to as ‘Reportable Conduct Scheme’

To comply with the Reportable Conduct Scheme within required states, our internal policy, detailed herein, applies to ALL states and territories. Regardless of location the handling of these matters will be the same. Depending on the specific state, there will be additional processes required by National Administration.

**The scope of allegations handling and reporting is detailed within this policy however these processes should be worked through with the AGC National Child Protection Coordinator and discussed in detail.**



## What is the ‘Reportable Conduct Scheme’?

Reportable Conduct Scheme’s seek to improve organisation’s responses to allegations of child abuse and neglect by their workers and volunteers.

ACT, NSW, TAS, VIC & WA are currently the only states to have a scheme that include faith based organisations. It is expected other states will follow in the coming years.

### ACT Reportable Conduct Scheme

As of 1st July 2018 the ACT Ombudsman extended the Reportable Conduct Scheme to cover religious organisations. The Reportable Conduct Scheme was introduced to oversee the prevention and reporting of child abuse and misconduct.

There are very specific requirements for this scheme but in summary requires that any allegation with reasonable belief, not proof, to be reported to Ombudsman as part of the investigation process. The reportable conduct scheme does not interfere with reporting obligations to ACT Policing or Child and Youth Protection Services (CYPS). If employers suspect criminal conduct has occurred, they should report to police in the first instance.

In addition to the AGC process, a 17G notification must be submitted to ACT Ombudsman as soon as possible, but no later than 30days after become aware of the conduct. This notification must be done by the ‘employer’ which is Acts Global Churches, National Office Child Protection Coordinator, not the local church or local church minister.

For more information on ACT Reportable Conduct Scheme <https://www.ombudsman.act.gov.au/accountability-and-oversight/reportable-conduct>

### NSW Reportable Conduct Scheme

The NSW Reportable Conduct Scheme has been in effect since 1999 and oversees how organisations investigate and report

on certain conduct (known as ‘reportable allegations’ and ‘reportable convictions’) made against their employees, volunteers or certain contractors who provide services to children.

As of March 2020, the scheme was extended to all religious organisations and their operations.

The NSW Reportable Conduct Scheme is managed by the Office of the Children’s Guardian (OCG) under the Children’s Guardian Act 2019 (CG Act 2019)

For more information on NSW Reportable Conduct Scheme <https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/organisations/reportable-conduct-scheme>

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## TAS Reportable Conduct Scheme

As of 2024, Tasmania is in the process of fully developing a reportable conduct scheme similar to VIC & NSW. It is however active and includes ‘faith based groups’.

It will be administered by the ‘Office of the Independent Regulator’. The Reportable Conduct Scheme is about creating a culture where organisations that engage with children and young people investigate concerns about their wellbeing in a thorough, transparent, safe and childcentred way.

It does this by requiring leaders of specific organisations to:

- › Report concerns of conduct related to child abuse involving a worker in their organisation to the Independent Regulator, and investigate these concerns (or engage an independent investigator to do so).

For more information on the Tasmanian Reportable Conduct Scheme - <https://oir.tas.gov.au>

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## VIC Reportable Conduct Scheme

The Victorian Reportable Conduct Scheme seeks to improve organisation’s responses to allegations of child abuse and neglect by their workers and volunteers. The scheme was established by the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005.

The ‘Commission for Children and Young People’ is responsible for administering the scheme, including to:

- › Support and guide organisations who receive allegations in order to promote fair, effective, timely and appropriate responses
- › Independently oversee, monitor and, where appropriate, make recommendations to improve the responses of those organisations.

The Reportable Conduct Scheme has been designed to ensure that the Commission will be aware of every allegation of certain types of employee misconduct involving children in relevant organisations that exercise care, supervision and authority over children. The Commission will also be able to appropriately share information, including with the Working with Children Check Unit, relevant regulators and Victoria Police, to better prevent and protect children from abuse. Importantly, a finding that a person has engaged in reportable conduct can trigger an assessment of whether that person is suitable to continue to work or volunteer with children. In turn, this may lead the Working with Children Check Unit to revoke a person’s Working with Children Check card.

For more information on Victorian Reportable Conduct Scheme <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/reportable-conduct-scheme>

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## WA Reportable Conduct Scheme

As of 2023, introduced a reportable conduct scheme and extended that to include religious bodies in 2024.

It will be administered by the ‘Ombudsman of Western Australia’.

The Reportable Conduct Scheme (the Scheme) makes Western Australian children safer. The Scheme compels heads of organisations that exercise care, supervision or authority over children to notify allegations of, or convictions for, child abuse by their employees to the Ombudsman and then investigate these allegations. The Ombudsman will monitor, oversee and review these investigations.

The Scheme implements key recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses

to Child Sexual Abuse and provides that child abuse in organisations will be:

- › notified to an impartial and independent body;

- › investigated fully; and
- › dealt with to ensure children are protected from abuse within institutions.

For more information on the Western Australian Reportable Conduct Scheme - [https://www.ombudsman.wa.gov.au/Reportable\\_Conduct/Reportable\\_Conduct.htm](https://www.ombudsman.wa.gov.au/Reportable_Conduct/Reportable_Conduct.htm)

**The Scheme's slightly differ but have similar requirements for reporting and interview process. Refer to Allegation Process Flowchart.**

## What does the Commission/Ombudsman/OCG do with the allegations it receives?

The Commission/Ombudsman/OCG will carefully consider each allegation that it receives under the Reportable Conduct Scheme. Based on the information available, they may decide to:

- › Give the organisation responding to the allegation, support and guidance
- › Check that the organisation is handling the allegation in a timely manner
- › Refer a substantiated allegation to Working With Children Check or a professional accreditation body.

## Who can an allegation be made about under the scheme?

A reportable allegation can be made about any person over 18 years of age who is an employee (including a religious leader), volunteer, contractor or office holder of an organisation covered by the scheme. Allegations can be made about the conduct of people even if:

- › They do not have direct contact with children
- › The conduct occurred outside of their work.

## What types of conduct are reportable?

There are five types of 'reportable conduct'

- › Sexual offences (against, with or in the presence of, a child),
- › Sexual misconduct (against, with or in the presence of, a child),
- › Physical violence (against, with or in the presence of, a child),
- › Behaviour that is likely to cause significant emotional or psychological harm
- › Significant neglect.

## What are sexual offences?

It is an offence to engage in certain sexual behaviours against, with or in front of a child. Many of these behaviours are reportable conduct under the Reportable Conduct Scheme. This includes:

- › Sexual assault,
- › Indecent acts,
- › Possession of child abuse material,
- › 'Grooming' a child in order to commit a sexual offence.

A person does not need to be charged with, or found guilty of, a sexual offence for their behaviour to be reportable conduct.

## What is sexual misconduct?

'Sexual misconduct' captures a broader range of inappropriate behaviours of a sexual nature that are not necessarily criminal. Examples of sexual misconduct include:

- › Developing an intimate relationship with a child, for example, through regular contact with the child without the knowledge or approval of the organisation's management,
- › Inappropriately discussing sex and sexuality with a child,
- › Other overtly sexual acts that could lead an organisation to take disciplinary or other action.

## What is physical violence?

Physical violence includes an act that causes physical injury or pain. Examples of physical violence can include:

- › Hitting/kicking/punching,
- › Pushing/shoving/grabbing/throwing/shaking,
- › Using an object to hit or strike,
- › Using inappropriate restraint/excessive force.

Physical violence does not include lawful behaviour. For example: reasonable steps taken to protect a child from immediate harm, such as taking a child's arm to stop them from going into oncoming traffic, medical treatment given in good faith by an appropriately qualified person, such as a First Aid Officer administering first aid.

Threats of physical violence that do not cause physical injury or pain may be covered by the Reportable Conduct Scheme as behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm (see below).

## What is behaviour that causes emotional or psychological harm to a child?

For behaviour to be reportable under this category:

- › A child must have suffered significant emotional or psychological harm,
- › There must be a clear link between the alleged conduct and the harm suffered. The behaviour must cause emotional or psychological harm that is 'significant'. This is discussed below.

Signs that a child may have been emotionally or psychologically harmed may include:

- › Patterns of out-of-character behaviour,
- › Regression in behaviour,
- › Distress and anxious behaviours,
- › Other physical symptoms, such as self-harm.

Emotional or psychological harm may also occur where an existing mental health disorder has been exacerbated or aggravated. A professional psychological or medical assessment of the child may assist

to determine whether a child has suffered emotional or psychological harm. However, a clinical diagnosis will not be required in every case. For example:

- › The alleged conduct is so serious and/or occurred over such a sustained period, that it can be reasonably inferred that the child has been harmed.
- › Requiring a child to be assessed may unreasonably re-traumatise or otherwise further harm the child.

It is also important to stress that there must be a clear link between the emotional or psychological harm and the alleged conduct. In deciding if there is a clear link, organisations should consider the likelihood that the child would have been harmed, if the alleged conduct had not occurred. Examples of emotional or psychological harm may include:

- › Exposure to violence or threats of violence,
- › Self-destructive behaviour,
- › Antisocial behaviour,
- › Persistent hostility/rejection,
- › Humiliation/belittling,
- › Scapegoating.

It will not be reportable conduct if:

- › A person takes reasonable steps to protect a child from immediate harm
- › A person with responsibility for discipline takes lawful and reasonable disciplinary action, such as sending a child to sit in 'time out' for a period of time, in line with organisational policy
- › An appropriately qualified person gives medical treatment in good faith, such as a First Aid Officer administering first aid.





## What is neglect?

Neglect occurs when a person does not meet their obligations and responsibilities to keep a child safe and well. The neglect:

- › Must be more than minor and insignificant
- › Does not need to have a lasting or permanent effect
- › May be an ongoing situation or a one-off incident, as long as it is not minor in nature.

### Examples of different types of neglect include:

- › Supervisory neglect, which is the absence or inattention of a person which places the child at risk of physical harm or injury, sexual abuse or allows other criminal behaviour towards the child
- › Physical neglect, which is the failure to provide basic physical necessities for a child, such as adequate food, clothing and housing
- › Medical neglect, which is the failure to provide for appropriate medical care for a child, including a failure to acknowledge the seriousness of an illness or condition, or deliberately withholding appropriate care.

## What does 'significant' mean?

The Reportable Conduct Scheme is concerned with significant allegations about worker behaviour or actions towards a child. Accordingly, allegations can only be made about emotional or psychological harm or neglect that is 'significant'. Allegations may be made about serious forms of harm or behaviours that have a lasting or permanent effect, however, this does not always need to be the case. It is enough that the alleged conduct is more than trivial or insignificant to fall within the definition of 'significant' under the Reportable Conduct Scheme.

Local churches MUST consult with the AGC National Child Protection Coordinator who will liaise with the OCG/ Ombudsman/ CCYP to determine if the alleged conduct meets the level required to make a reportable allegation report.

## What is a reasonable belief?

A reportable allegation is made where a person makes an allegation, based on a reasonable belief, that a worker or volunteer has committed reportable conduct or misconduct that may involve reportable conduct. A reasonable belief is more than suspicion. There must be some objective basis for the belief. However, it is not the same as having proof and does not require certainty.

For example, a person is likely to have a reasonable belief if they:

- › Observed the conduct themselves
- › Heard directly from a child that the conduct occurred
- › Received information from another credible source (including another person who witnessed the reportable conduct or misconduct).

**Local Church Leaders, AGC National Child Protection Coordinator or the National Leader/Head of Organisation do not need to agree with or share the belief that the alleged conduct has occurred.**

However, there is no need to notify the Commission about the allegation if it is plainly wrong or had no basis at all in reality.

## Who is the ‘Head of Organisation’?

The head of an organisation is the person who is primarily responsible for an organisation’s compliance with the Reportable Conduct Scheme. The Head of Organisation is not required to conduct all the administration or investigations however they must be aware of any allegations or situation and submit the final report through to the Reportable Conduct Scheme.

In AGC, the head of the organisation is the National Leader. The National Leader will primarily delegate administration and handling to the National Child Protection Coordinator.

## Who is the ‘National Child Protection Coordinator’ ?

The National Child Protection Coordinator will be responsible for all administration and handling of reports from local churches. They will inform the National Leader of all current and ongoing reports and investigations. They will work with Local Church Child Protection Officer to investigate and journey any allegation or situation of abuse regardless of its nature. The National Child Protection Coordinator will also be the first point of contact for advice regarding child protection matters.

## Allegation Process Flowchart

This process is an overview of what is required for any allegation or report of abuse. The Local Child Safety Officer and the National Child Protection Coordinator will work together throughout this entire process.

All allegations must follow this process, however, the time taken for an outcome will depend on the nature of the alleged activity, the involvement of any authorities and any resulting criminal or legal action.

Throughout the process, a local church will ensure the children and families involved get the support they need, within the boundaries of any legal process that may also be in place.

### ALLEGATION RECEIVED

#### Within 48 hours

- › Police are informed (where allegation relates to a criminal activity)
- › Local Child Safety Officer must notify and liaise with National Child Protection Coordinator and complete AGC Allegation/Abuse Incident Form
- › Head of Organisation (National Leader) made aware of allegation

Additional steps for states with reportable conduct schemes:

- › AGC National Leader notifies the local state authority of becoming aware of a reportable allegation.
- › NCPC Follows extra local state processes.

### FORMAL INVESTIGATION BEGINS

National Child Protection Coordinator liaises with the local church throughout the investigation.

#### Formal 30-Day update

- › Update from Police - if the allegation is deemed not to be criminal, the investigation is handed over to the National Child Protection Coordinator or local leadership
- › 30 Day Followup form completed by the local Child Safety Officer

- › 30-Day Update sent to local state authority

### OUTCOME REACHED

- › Disciplinary action taken if required
- › Local procedures updated in light of the outcome.
- › Final documentation of investigation filed with national office.

- › Local state authority notified of outcomes.

## What if there is an Allegation?

If there is an allegation received by a local Child Safety Officer, Team Leader, Senior Pastor or any responsible person in a local church or AGC, due process must be followed to ensure the correct and proper information is gathered and investigation takes place. Local churches MUST contact the National Child Protection Coordinator to discuss the situation.

Please note the time lines related to reporting. Reports must be made to National Office **within 48 hours** of receiving the allegation. This will then be passed to the Reportable Conduct Scheme within 24hrs if required. This 3 day reporting time is required in some states and is critical to the process.

## Investigation Procedure

There are many factors and procedures in correctly conducting an investigation for any allegation. Due to privacy, protection and maintaining the integrity of the evidence, all investigations must be discussed with the National Child Protection Coordinator prior to any questioning or investigation of any parties.

There are also certain reporting requirements which must be followed and specific times throughout a matter being open. This may include the involvement of Police and AGC staff not being involved at all.

**Please do not proceed investigating any matter without discussion with the National Child Protection Coordinator.**

## Criminal Abuse

### What is criminal abuse of a child?

People criminally abusing children and vulnerable people may be involved in any of the following criminal activities by themselves or with others. Harm may be constituted by a single act, omission or circumstance, or accumulate through a series of continuing acts, omissions or circumstances.

Criminal abuse would include, but limited to, the same definitions/ specifics as reportable conduct. An act of criminal abuse is a known fact, not just an allegation.

- > You may become aware of criminal abuse in a number of ways:
- > You observe the abuse happening;
- > The victim tells you about it;
- > Someone else tells you that they have seen or been told about criminal abuse occurring. This person could be an employee or contractor, a victim's family, a visitor, another client of your service, or another manager. You do not have to personally observe a person's potential criminal behaviour; someone else may have told you about it, or reported it to you.

## Reporting crimes to police

Any suspected criminal behaviour should be reported to Police.

If a reportable allegation involves suspected criminal behaviour, both Police, AGC National Office and for reportable conduct schemes, the OCG/ Ombudsman/CCYP, must be notified.

A police investigation into any matter takes priority over a reportable conduct investigation, and may require an organisation's investigation to be put on hold until the police investigation is complete.

The Head of Organisation/ National Child Protection Coordinator and or the Local Child Safety Officer will consult with Victoria Police before beginning an investigation to gain their advice and find out if police are, or will be, conducting an investigation.

If a child is in immediate danger call '000'.

If the matter is not immediately threatening to the child's safety or wellbeing, contact your local Police Station as soon as possible.

## Reportable conduct vs. criminal abuse

Reportable conduct and criminal abuse are very similar in their criteria, however reportable conduct is specifically related to abuse by employees, volunteers and contractors, where criminal abuse is not limited to these people.

If you are ever unsure as to the nature of the allegation please contact the National Child Protection Coordinator to discuss.

If a known case of criminal abuse has occurred, it should be reported to police immediately.

## Abuse of a minor by a minor

Child abuse is not isolated to just adults harming children, but sadly also children harming other children. Both adolescents aged 13-17 years and children younger than this can harm or distress others by their sexual behaviours.

Children aged 10 and over can be held criminally responsible for sexually abusive behaviour in most states and territories (although it is extremely uncommon for children under 15 to face prosecution). Police, child protection, treatment providers and the juvenile justice system will adjust their interventions according to the age and developmental level of the young person.

If you have an allegation or incident within your church, please contact the National Child Protection Coordinator to work through the process with you.

## Grooming

Grooming is the process by which a person prepares a child, for later sexual abuse. This behaviour is predatory conduct designed to build trust and can take place over weeks, months or even years.

Grooming is generally a subtle process and can be hard to notice as many behaviours fall within the normal boundaries of support and friendship.

- › It involves a gradual progression of behaviour that builds on trusting relationships and can be hard to identify.
- › Grooming behaviours often target the vulnerable, needy, and trusting.
- › Children and young people can be groomed, and the process can take place anywhere.
- › Grooming can occur in person or online.
- › Churches and leaders must be aware of the dangers of popular apps and online communication tools that could be used for process of grooming and protect those within their care and community.
- › Boundaries must be established to protect children
- › All efforts should be made to ensure that children's and families

details are protected and that the systems of communication do not open a child up to be abused or groomed when online.

- › All leaders have a role to play in the education of families and children of the risks involved with certain apps or social media platforms.
- › All leaders must ensure their programs and activities are designed to protect and keep children from harm or abuse by ensuring access to children is limited and ratios to children are and enforced in every program.

All leaders have a role to play in the education of families and children of the risks involved with certain apps or social media platforms.



Because the Grooming process is subtle it is often disregarded or not reported.

- › Training must ensure leaders and children can identify behaviours that are not appropriate, and procedures must be established that empower behaviours to be interrupted and reported.
- › Every leader should feel empowered to act even if it is only a feeling.
- › Every child should be aware of what is deemed inappropriate behaviour and be aware of how to report it.
- › If you see something, do something!

#### Behaviours to be enforced and avoided as a leader include:

- › Befriending a child online
- › Showing favouritism to one child or a family or vulnerable person
- › Giving gifts
- › Sharing secrets with a child or threatening a child to keep a secret
- › Being alone with a child physically or online
- › Seeking physical affection from a child
- › Playing games with a child that involves close contact eg wrestling, tickling
- › Exposing a child to nudity or sexual images and material
- › Talking about sex, sexuality or physical development with a child.

#### Breaches and reporting

- › A worker accused or suspected of abuse will be stood down during any investigation, either internal or external.
- › Grooming is a criminal offense and can incur a penalty of imprisonment.
- › Grooming behaviour can be reported under the Reportable Conduct Scheme.
- › A person does not have to have committed a sexual offense against a child to be reported.

## Mandatory Reporting

Some professionals such as doctors, nurses, police and school teachers are legally obliged to report suspected child abuse. In addition, any person who believes on reasonable grounds that a child needs protection can make a report to the Child Protection Service. It is the Child Protection worker's job to assess and, where necessary further investigate, if a child or young person is at risk of harm.

In most states & territories, religious workers, leaders and ministers are considered mandatory reporters. Acts Global Churches would expect that all our employees & volunteers would act as mandatory reporters, should they become aware of any reportable issues related to a child or young person. This reporting includes anything disclosed in private or 'confessional' situations.

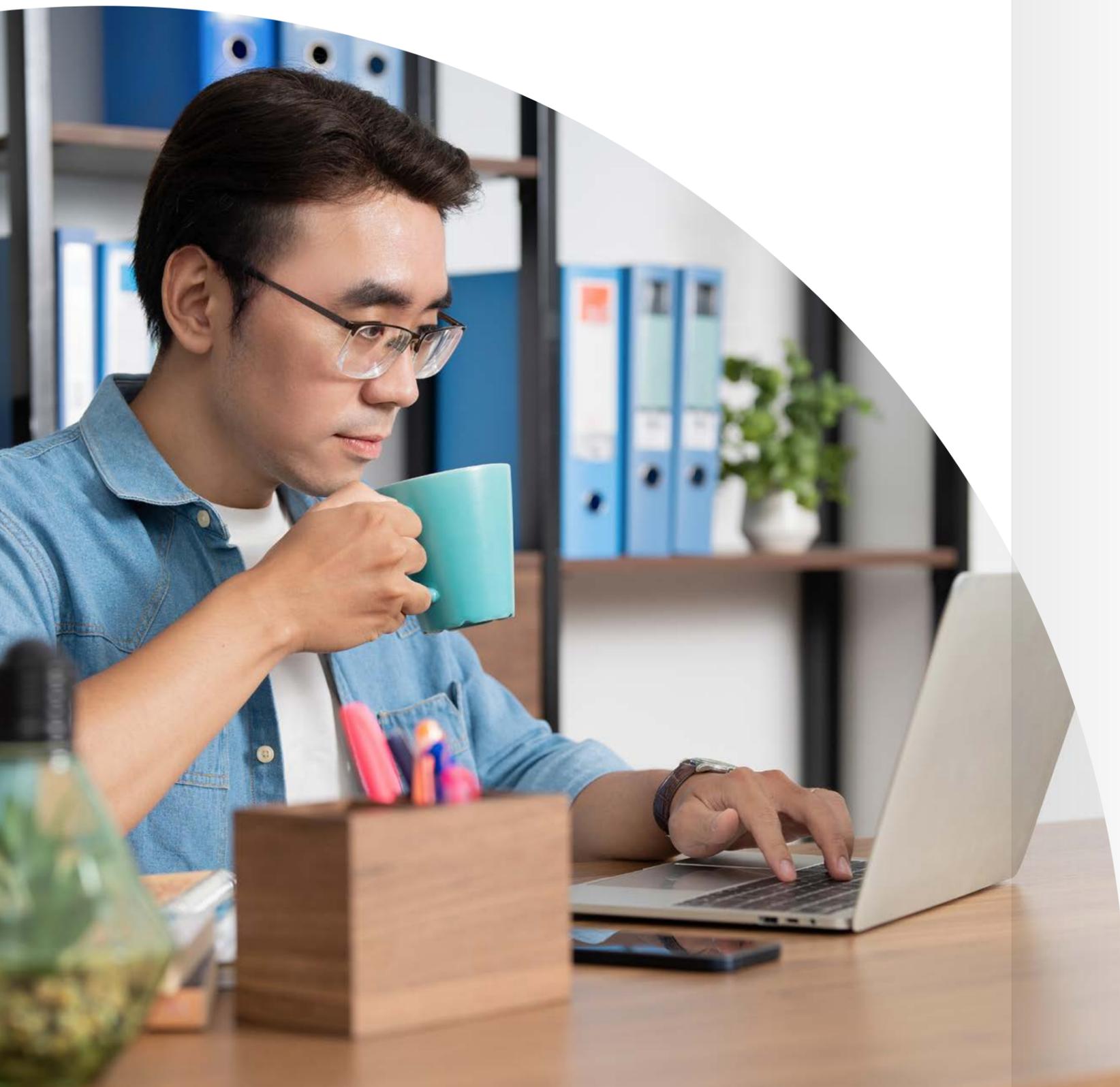
Reports should be made by phone to Child Protection Agencies or Police: <https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/reporting-abuse-and-neglect>

### State/Territory Child Protection contact numbers

Australian Capital Territory	1300 556 729
New South Wales	13 21 11
Northern Territory	1800 700 250
Queensland	1800 177 135
South Australia	13 14 78
Tasmania	1800 000 123
Victoria	13 12 78
Western Australia	1800 273 889

Most states also have online options for making reports and guides to determine the reporting type required. Check the above website or your states child reporting website for more details. The threshold is reached when a reasonable person would suspect that abuse and/or neglect is occurring/has occurred and the safety and wellbeing of a child/children is/was compromised. Suspicion may be based on direct or indirect disclosure, observation (e.g. injuries to a child, bruising, etc.) and the absence of a reasonable explanation, behaviour and/or language that is inconsistent with reasonable disclosure.

Acts Global Churches would request that a copy of any mandatory reports made by a church is sent to [childprotection@actsglobal.church](mailto:childprotection@actsglobal.church). All records and details are maintain with upmost privacy and security.



## Failure to Disclose

Any adult who forms a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under 16 has an obligation to report that information to police. Failure to disclose the information to police is a criminal offence.

### What is a 'reasonable belief'?

A 'reasonable belief' is not the same as having proof. A 'reasonable belief' is formed if a reasonable person in the same position would have formed the belief on the same grounds.

For example, a 'reasonable belief' might be formed when:

- > A child states that they have been sexually abused,
- > A child states that they know someone who has been sexually abused (sometimes the child may be talking about themselves),
- > Someone who knows a child states that the child has been sexually abused,
- > Professional observations of the child's behaviour or development leads a professional to form a belief that the child has been sexually abused,
- > Signs of sexual abuse leads to a belief that the child has been sexually abused.

### Are there any excuses for not reporting child sexual abuse to police?

A person will not be guilty of the offence if he or she has a reasonable excuse for not disclosing the information. A reasonable excuse includes:

- > Fear for safety,
- > Where the information has already been disclosed.

In many states, failure to disclose can result in significant criminal prosecution and even jail time. AGC has the expectation that any employee, volunteer, parent or contractor over the age of 18, regardless of state law, would report a case of abuse to Police.

## Failure to Protect

In some states and territories, if you are an employee or volunteer in a position of authority, and you become aware that an adult associated with your organisation (such as a worker or volunteer) poses a risk of sexual abuse to a child who is under the care, authority or supervision of the organisation, you must take all reasonable steps to remove or reduce the risk. If you fail to take reasonable steps in these circumstances, this may amount to a criminal offence.

## Persons of Interest

Acts Global Churches is committed to actively ensuring that every person attending our churches feel safe. While we understand and acknowledge the power of God's grace to see change in a person's life, we also have a responsibility to ensure our churches are safe places for vulnerable people.

This component of the policy deals specifically with people who are known or suspected to have committed abuse towards children or young people.

Persons of Interest in the past, has often been termed 'Known Offenders', however risk management should extend beyond only those that have historical offences.

A person of interest is not limited to those with criminal convictions or police charges, but can be extended to a person with a reportable allegation or historical inappropriate behaviour towards children.

Persons of interest do not have to be adults and may include people under 18 years of age.

Abuse and allegations of abuse include but are not limited to

- › Sexual offences (against, with or in the presence of, a child),
- › Sexual misconduct (against, with or in the presence of, a child),
- › Physical violence (against, with or in the presence of, a child),

- › Behaviour that is likely to cause significant emotional or psychological harm
- › Significant neglect.

If it is found that a person attending an AGC church has a history of abuse (including an allegation), regardless of how long ago it was committed, towards children or young people, it **MUST** be reported to the senior pastor and the National Child Protection Coordinator.

### Sources for determining a person of interest

- › The person themselves,
- › Friends or relatives of the person,
- › A victim or a person who makes an allegation,
- › Friends or relatives of a victim or a person who makes an allegation,
- › Public sources such as newspapers, court reports or other media,
- › Private information from third parties,
- › Contact from Police, parole boards, community service or Department of Corrective Services, reportable conduct schemes
- › Previous church leadership,
- › A declined Working with Children Check.

All sources need to be carefully checked. No action should be based on rumour or innuendo.

A person of interest, after a thorough risk assessment may be permitted to attend an AGC Church, but generally not permitted to serve as a volunteer or be employed. Some exceptions may be allowed in extenuating circumstances, which must have detailed risk assessment, disclosure from the individual, and be formally approved by the National Child Protection Coordinator.

Once a person is deemed to be a person of interest, regardless of the circumstances of the offence or the time elapsed since the offence occurred, their names should be recorded locally and by the Acts Global Church National Office. This register is confidential and kept in a highly secure location. Senior Leadership in churches and the National Child Protection Team should be the only ones to have access to this information.

A determination must be made on a 'case by case' course of action by the Senior Leadership and National Child Protection Coordinator, as to

the level of risk presented by a known abuse offender to children or young people.

Our belief is that a person who has either admitted to, or been found to be, a 'known' abuse offender and is repentant, will understand the need for child protection measures and boundaries.

## Risk Assessment

Should a person of interest wish to attend the church in any capacity there is reason to conduct a risk assessment to evaluate the person's suitability to attend.

The risk assessment must take into consideration a number of factors:

- › Whether there has been a finding about an allegation of abuse,
- › The nature of any position (including non-child related position) in which the person of interest (individual) might be employed or engaged
- › The type of contact that any position has with children
- › The supervision which will be available
- › The nature and frequency of the event or events from which the report arose
- › Whether there have been any other allegations or concerns about the person's conduct in relation to children
- › Presence of victims in the congregation and the effect that the presence of the individual may have on those victims including the possibility that the individual needs to be asked to attend a different congregation
- › The level of understanding and willingness of the individual to cooperate regarding the requirement for the church to protect children and other vulnerable people
- › Any additional information which may be relevant in assessing risk

Risk assessments are conducted by the Senior Pastor, in conjunction with the National Child Protection Coordinator before any determination is carried out as to the supervision requirements or agreement to be put in place.

## Supervision

If a determination is made that a person of interest is able to attend the local church, conditions must be agreed to in writing by the individual and the church's Senior Pastor & the National Child Protection Coordinator.

The conditions must include;

- › Which services and activities the individual may and may not attend
- › The buildings and rooms into which the individual may go
- › The times the individual can be on church premises
- › Who the individual may/may not associate with at church
- › The supervision and accountability which has been put in place

There should be at least two persons who undertake the task of being supervisors for each individual. Whilst the Senior Pastor can undertake the task, it is preferable to have other persons so it frees the Senior Pastor up to mentor the supervisors.

Supervisors need to:

- › Be recognised as appropriately gifted, experienced and respected congregation or church leaders
- › Understand the nature of offenders
- › Be prepared and available to meet with the individual at regularly
- › Attend church services and activities at the same time as the person
- › Be of an appropriate gender in relation to the individual
- › Report regularly to the Senior Pastor/ AGC National Child Protection Coordinator on the progress of the individual

Supervisors should be aware of the boundaries that have been set and agreed upon. There should be a system in place to ensure that the individual is monitored at all times during church services and church activities.

Where there is a change in the level of risk because of the individual's re-offending or failure to comply with the arrangements, there needs to be a careful re-evaluation, re-negotiation and variation of the boundaries and, if necessary, the agreement.

If an individual is non-compliant and not willing to fulfil the requirement of an agreement or supervision, exclusion from the church may be the only option. This is done in consultation with the Senior Pastor and the National Child Protection Coordinator.

## Agreement

A written agreement MUST be produced and signed off by the person of interest, Senior Pastor and National Child Protection Coordinator. This agreement should outline the steps and specific requirements that will be in place for that individual.

The agreement will be held in a secure file with upmost privacy maintained.

An agreement must be discussed, reviewed and resigned by all parties every 12 months.

A template agreement is found the in appendices of this policy.

## Feedback

Acts Global Churches administration welcomes any feedback, comment or discussion in relation to this child protection policy. Please contact us at anytime at [childprotection@actsglobal.church](mailto:childprotection@actsglobal.church)

## Annual Audit

As part of Government compliances and the national Acts Global Church child safety and wellbeing policy, all churches will be annually audited on the following key points: -

- › Identifying the church's Child Safety Officer.
- › Copies and a full church register of all employee and volunteer state based checks (WWCC, Blue Card, etc)
- › Training Register for all required to complete annual training and details of training sessions
- › Sign in sheets for children's and youth programs.
- › Medical & Permission Forms.
- › Signed Code of Conducts for at minimum all employees, church pastors/elders/oversight & child program workers.
- › Critical incident file – Outlining any physical or abuse incidents.
- › Clear understanding from leadership of the requirements of running children's programs, acknowledged in oversight/eldership minutes.
- › Details around procedures for handling complaints and abuse.
- › Additional items as detailed annually in the church audit scope provided prior to the audit.

## Appendix List

The follow forms are guides for the various requirements throughout this policy. They may be adapted for a local churches context and specifics.

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ACTS GLOBAL CHURCHES

## Volunteer Application Form

Version 5.2

### Personal details

Which area(s) are you applying to work in?

---

Name in Full:

---

Preferred Name:

---

Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss:

Date of Birth:

---

Occupation:

---

Home Address:

Postcode:

---

Postal Address:

Postcode:

---

Contact Phone:

Email:

---

Working With Childrens Check #:

Expiry:

---

### Emergency contact details

Name:

---

Relationship:

Contact Phone:

---

### Referee details

Before your application can be approved, please give details of two people who have agreed to be your referees. Neither should be a family member, and one should be from another organisation.

\*Referee's are not essential for people that are well know to the church. Referee's however should be checked for under 18yrs volunteers intending to work as childrens program workers.

#### Referee Contact #1

Name in Full:

---

Contact Phone:

Email:

---

## Referee Contact #2

Name in Full:

---

Contact Phone:

Email:

---

## All about you

Why do you want to volunteer to work with children (if applicable)?

---

---

---

---

What experience do you have working with children (if applicable)?

---

---

---

---

---

Please list any relevant qualifications and/or training that you have attained (including first aid).

---

---

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---

---

Is there any medical condition, relevant information or limitation that may affect your ability to fully participate as a volunteer? (Please give details)

---

---

---

---

Have you been interviewed, questioned or charged by Police, child protection services, or reportable conduct schemes in relation to any offence involving children, or any other matters? (If yes, please explain circumstances)

---

---

---

---

---

Have you ever been removed/stepped down from a role/position in any organisation?  
(If yes, please explain)

---

---

---

---

Have you ever been denied a Working With Childrens Check in any state of Australia or Country overseas?  
(If yes, please explain)

---

---

---

---

---

Have you ever had any allegation made against you regarding child abuse of any kind?  
(If yes, please explain)

Have you ever had any allegation made against you regarding sexual abuse of any kind?  
(If yes, please explain)

## Declaration

### Volunteers declaration

I confirm all the information on this application is correct according to my knowledge. If accepted, I agree to complete the training required and will act in accordance with the AGC Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy:

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

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

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

### Parent / Guardian declaration

If the applicant is under 18 years of age a parent/ guardian will need to sign in addition to the applicant:

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

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

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

### Leadership declaration

I confirm; that the above noted applicant has been interviewed; that all the information provided on this application has been verified and is correct according to the best of my knowledge; and that the applicant has been accepted to volunteer in our church:

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

Leader Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

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

# Child Safety Code of Conduct



Version 5.2

## Purpose

This Code of Conduct is part of our commitment to providing appropriate duty of care, including health and safety considerations, for the vulnerable in our churches. The code of conduct is to be agreed to, and signed off by all employees, leaders and volunteers as required within the Child Safety and Wellbeing policy.

## I understand and agree that I MUST:

- Work within the requirements and procedures as laid out in the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.
- Ensure that all children and young people are looked after in a responsible way when in our care.
- Prioritise the well-being and safety of all young people and that it is our duty of care to protect and guard them from any danger or abuse.
- Be a positive role model to children and young people in all their conduct with them.
- Take all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse.
- Treat everyone with respect and dignity, including those of different race, ethnicity, gender, age, social class, physical ability, or attributes to ensure equity is upheld.
- Listen to children and respond to them appropriately.
- Respect the privacy of children and their families, and only disclosing information to the people who have a need to know.
- Promote the cultural safety, participation, and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.
- Promote the safety, participation, and empowerment of children with a disability
- Comply with our guidelines on physical contact with children according to the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.
- Comply with our guidelines on online contact and communication with children according to the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.
- Ensure that adults are not left alone with a child in the physical and online environments, according to the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.
- Report any abuse noticed or disclosed.
- Respond quickly, fairly and transparently to any serious complaints made by a child, young person or their parent/guardian
- Report or act on any breaches of this code, complaints, or concerns.
- Consent to this form to be kept by our church. Understand that this information will be kept in a confidential file and used only for screening and disciplinary purposes.
- If unclear as to any of the statements in this document or the Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy, seek clarification from a team leader or church leader before signing.
- Accept the leadership of the Senior Pastor and the leaders in position under whom I will be working.
- Understand that if a complaint be levelled against me while engaged in any church activity, relevant authorities including police, child protective services & reportable conduct schemes, may be required to investigate, and I will be asked to stand down until cleared.
- Acknowledge that the church and its leaders will make every reasonable effort to minimise exposure to known risks, all hazards and dangers associated with activities. Understand that incidents may occur that could not be foreseen or may be beyond the control of the church, its leaders, and staff.
- Understand to commence service that attendance to an induction and child safety training will be required
- Agree to a 3-month probation where suitability to continue service will be reviewed.

## I understand and agree that I MUST NOT:

- Develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be viewed as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children).
- Exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical.
- Initiate, or encourage, unnecessary physical contact with children or do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves e.g. Go to the toilet or change clothes.
- Engage in rough physical games eg, Wrestling.
- Kiss, cuddle or tickle a child or do anything that is potentially sexual. This could be viewed as grooming.
- Touch any area of the body that would normally be covered by swimming gear.
- Photograph or video children, or possess photos or video, of children without parental consent. This includes uploading to any social media platforms
- Seek friendship from children on any online platform. (see Online sections of the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy for further information)
- Have any private online/digital contact with a child. All communication must be done through approved church methods.
- Have unauthorised contact with children and young people by phone: text or audio calling.
- Exchange personal contact details with children such as phone number, social networking sites, or email addresses.
- Belittle or use demeaning language around children. Avoid yelling at children.
- Use physical punishment including man handling, hitting, shaking or pushing. (It is reasonable to assume that physical restraint may be required where children are in danger of being hurt or hurting others.)
- Do anything in any way that may be, or perceived to be, inappropriate towards or in the presence of any children or young people

## Reporting abuse or suspicious behaviour

It is the responsibility of all employees and volunteers to report suspicious behaviour or suspected abuse to the proper authority.

Notwithstanding a person's right to make a direct report to child protection services. In most cases it will be proper to report suspicions to the senior leadership, department leader or the child protection officer unless they are the subject of the allegation.

## I understand and agree that I MUST:

- Report on the following:
  - Concerns of abuse, physical, neglect, sexual, emotional or spiritual.
  - Any disclosure, or awareness of inappropriate behaviour or abuse of a child/young person, whether on the part of a church worker or other person. Sexual offences must be reported to the police.
  - Conduct that may place a child or young person at risk of harm
- Take all allegations of abuse seriously.
  - Never ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse.
  - If there is immediate danger to a child any staff or volunteer can call 000 to make a report
  - Report any child safety concerns to the nominated Child Safety Officer in your church
  - If an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe.

- If disclosure is made:
- No worker will ask a child to repeat a story or insist a child tells more than he or she is willing to do
  - The worker will treat the matter in a sensitive and confidential manner
  - No worker will attempt to counsel in areas where he or she is not qualified
  - The worker will offer reassurance and friendship in a positive way.
  - The worker will complete a report form and bring it to the notice of the appropriate church leadership
- Follow AGC reporting processes and inform Acts Global Churches Child Protection Team, prior to any investigation beginning.

## Reportable conduct

If it is believed there is a good reason to suspect an employee or a church member has committed physical or sexual abuse on a child or adolescent, the church will report the matter to the correct legal authority and report to Acts Global Churches National Child Protection Coordinator.

A worker accused or suspected of abuse will be stood down from their position until they are cleared

- I understand that my involvement within an Acts Global church may be covered by a reportable conduct scheme and require reporting in the event of an allegation**

## Breaches

All employees and volunteers are expected to report any breaches of this code to the Child Safety Officer or Senior Pastor in their church.

Staff and volunteers who breach this code will be subject to disciplinary action. Breaches by external providers may result in them being asked to cease activity and leave the premises. Serious breaches involving criminal acts will result in a report being made to the appropriate authorities including the police, the statutory child protection authorities, and Acts Global Child Protection Team.

- I understand that a breach in the Code of Conduct or Child and Wellbeing Policy may result in me being temporarily or permanently stood down from serving in my capacity and potentially subject to external reporting.**

## Declaration of commitment

- I understand that it is everyone's responsibility to care for the welfare of the young and vulnerable and agree to abide by the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.
- I have read the Code of Conduct and agree to abide by its guidelines.

Full name

---

Signature

Date

---





# Driver Application Form

Version 5.2

## Applicant's details

Driver Full Name:

---

Email:

Mobile:

---

WWCC Number:

Drivers licence number:

---

Renewal date:

---

List type of vehicles licensed to drive (car, heavy vehicle, bus, etc):

---

I have attached a photocopy of current driver's license to this completed form.

## Driving History

**Your ability to transport passengers may be affected by your history.**

Are there any restrictions or endorsements on your licence? Eg. 'P' Plates  Yes  No

---

If Yes, please supply details:

---

Have you had any vehicle accidents in which you were the driver in the past five years?  Yes  No

---

If Yes, please supply details:

---

Have you been convicted of any traffic offences in the past five years?  Yes  No

---

If Yes, please supply details:

---

## Your vehicle details

Who is the registered owner of the vehicle?

---

Is the vehicle registration current?  Yes  No (You cannot use this vehicle)

---

Make and Model of Vehicle

Registration Number

---

## Insurance

All approved drivers using private vehicles must have insurance coverage.

---

Is the vehicle insured?  Yes  No (You cannot use this vehicle)

---

Company Insured with:

Level of Cover:

---

## Agreement

- I have read and are familiar with the Vehicles and Transport section of the AGC Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy
- I confirm that the information I have supplied on this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.
- If any of these details change, I agree to notify Church Leadership
- I have completed all screening requirements for the organisation, in relation to my suitability to work with children
- I have received a copy of the driver protocols and agree to abide by the standards outlined.
- I will drive carefully and follow all road rules.
- I will provide a registered, insured and roadworthy vehicle (if private vehicle is being used)
- I will ensure that all passengers wear a seat belt.
- I will not drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs or permit smoking within the vehicle.
- I will log details of all trips conducted for the church, including details of the trip and those travelling
- The information provided on this form is correct and indicates my commitment to the safety and welfare of all those for whom I am responsible.

Name

---

Signed

Date

---

## Application Approval (Office use only)

Application Received on:

Application Processed by:

---

Outcome of Application:  Application approved  Application not approved

---

# Sign-In/Out Sheet



Version 5.2

## Event Details

Church name:	Program/activity:
Location:	Date:
Leader:	Signature:

Childs First Name	Childs Last Name	Time In	Signature	Time out	Parent / Carer Signature
Leader First Name	Leader Last Name				



# Medical & Permission Form

Version 5.2

## Personal Details

Childs Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ D.O.B: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Suburb: \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

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

### Parent/Guardian #1

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

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

### Parent/Guardian #2

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

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

Is there any custody arrangement with your child? (please provide details):

## Emergency Contact (other than parents listed above)

Emergency Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

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

## Medical Information

Doctors Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Medicare No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Health Care Card No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Private Health Insurance:  YES  NO Ambulance Subscriber:  YES  NO

Health Insurance Provider: \_\_\_\_\_ Subscription No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Member No.: \_\_\_\_\_

The following information is supplied (in confidence) to assist the leaders in the event of an incident.

## Does your son/daughter suffer from any on the following?

### Allergies

Does your child have any allergic reaction to any type of drug, food, pollen, animal or anaesthetic?

YES  NO

Anaphylaxis:  YES  NO

Does your child require an EpiPen?  YES  NO

Further details:

### Asthma

Asthma:  YES  NO

Severe (Been hospitalised before)  YES  NO

### Medical conditions

Cardiac Condition

Diabetes

Blood Pressure condition

Sleepwalking

Phobias / Anxiety Disorders

Fits / Epilepsy / Blackouts

Recent Surgery

Chronic Fatigue

Travel Sickness / Vertigo

ADD / ADHD / Asperger's

Recent Illness

Thyroid Condition

Drug / Medical Reactions

Permission to give Panadol

Severe headache / Migraine

Additional Details?

### Dietary Requirements

Vegetarian

Gluten Free

Lactose Free

Anaphylaxis

Vegan

Celiac

Fructose Free

Dairy Free

Additional Details?

## Other

Other Medication required?  YES  NO

---

Other information:

## Medical Authorisation

- Should I/we be unavailable in the case of an emergency involving my/our child. I/We hereby authorise the Leaders to arrange for such Medical or Surgical treatment, and the administration of medication such as analgesics, as may be deemed necessary. I/We indemnify AGC against all cost arising from such action, including Ambulance charges.

## Photo release

As a Church we would like to publish photos from our nights onto social media and use them to promote.

- I give permission to take/use photos of my child.

## Drivers release

Due to occasionally being offsite we will need to transport children to and from the venue, in these events we hire a bus but occasionally we need to transport a small proportion by car. Leaders will always abide by the law and have licenses ranging from probationary to full licences.

- I give permission to drive my child to and from an event in a car.  
 I give permission for my child to be driven by a probationary driver.

## Parent / Guardian Authorisation

**Please note that by signing this you agree that all the above information is correct.**

Name:

Relationship to Child:

---

Signature:

Date:

---



ACTS GLOBAL CHURCHES

## Risk Assessment Template

Version 5.2

Church activities and operations can potentially encompass a wide range of possible risk exposures. It is important that each year an Annual Risk Assessment is completed for the church property and that for each activity you run you do an Individual Risk Assessment. Risk looks at two aspects 1. the likelihood of something happening and, 2. the impact (should the risk actually be taken).

### Identifying risks is done by observation and judgment

- > Walk through church grounds and/or property or event site.
- > Maintain records of near misses, incident, accident, injury and illness related to church activities and events.
- > Examine manufacturer's instructions for items to be used in the activity/event.
- > Use specialist risk practitioners where necessary.
- > Ask the National Office for advice.

Risks are not related purely to physical injury or harm, but also abuse of a child. Consideration of risk needs to be assessed with events like camps, overnight events, travel, online gaming or platforms and any other irregular activities.

Name of Activity:

Date:

Where is the Event/Activity taking place?

Person Completing Risk Assessment:

Signed



## Safety procedures in event of a safety incident

Please outline general procedure as specific to the event:

Risk Assessment Conducted by: Name:

Date:

Position:

Signed:

## Risk assessment table

Using this table enables assessment of likelihood and consequence, which can then be translated into levels of risk. Areas of high risk should be given first priority for elimination or control in the workplace.

		LIKELIHOOD			
		Very Likely	Likely	Unlikley	Highly Unlikely
CONSEQUENCES	Fatality	High Risk	High Risk	High Risk	Medium Risk
	Major Injuries	High Risk	High Risk	Medium Risk	Medium Risk
	Minor Injuries	High Risk	Medium Risk	Medium Risk	Low Risk
	Negligible Injuries	Medium Risk	Medium Risk	Low Risk	Low Risk

## Definitions of consequences

**Fatality** – The incident has caused death.

**Major injury** – A serious damage to health which may be irreversible, requiring medical attention and ongoing treatment

**Minor injury** – A reversible health damage that may require medical attention but limited ongoing treatment. This is less likely to involve significant time off work.

**Negligible injuries** – First aid only with little or no lost time. Unlikely to involve more than one day off work.

## Definitions of likelihood (chance of each situation or events occurring)

**Very likely** – exposed to hazard continuously

**Likely** – Exposed to hazard occasionally

**Unlikely** – Could happen but only rarely

**Highly Unlikely** – Could happen, but probably never will

## What Happens Now?

Once the Risk Assessment has been completed it needs to be presented to your Risk Management Committee, they will then make a decision. They may also need to refer the activity to The National Office for further scrutiny by our Insurer. An assessment will result in one of three outcomes:

1. The activity is approved
2. The activity is approved but there is an insurance premium to pay
3. The activity is not approved

## Outcome from Risk Management Committee

Event approved       Event referred to insurer       Event not approved

---

Name:

Position:

Signature:

Date:

---



ACTS GLOBAL CHURCHES

## Physical Incident Report

Version 5.2

### Incident

Date and time:

---

Injured Person/s:

---

Location:

---

Program:

Leader Responsible for Program:

---

Number of participants in attendance:

Age range of participants:

---

Number of Team Members:

---

### Details of the incident

Specific location:

---

Details of the incident:

Who was involved?

---

Who witnessed the incident?

---

Is the location/equipment/point of injury safe for others? (provide details)

## Leaders

Primary Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Second contact person (in case this is needed): \_\_\_\_\_

## Details of Injured person(s)

Name	Injury	Treatment Provided	Parent/ Guardian Name, Contact Number. Details of contact regarding the incident

## Emergency services response

Which emergency services were called?

- Ambulance
- Fire
- Police
- Other (please specify)

What response has occurred?

## Church Leadership Communication

Ensure that all relevant Church Leadership have been contacted where required

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Officer
- Department Leader
- Senior Pastor
- Acts Global Child Protection Coordinator

## Ongoing Response

Detail action taken to avoid future similar incidents:

Detail follow up to Individual/ Parents/ Guardian:

How are the Program Leader/s coping?

How are the rest of the team handling the situation?

Is this a situation where individual counselling is likely to be of assistance?

How many do you think will need some immediate individual counselling?

Did any of the other participants need to be taken home/leave due to trauma of observing the event?

If so please provide details:

Completed by: Name:

Position:

Signed:

Date:



ACTS GLOBAL CHURCHES

## Abuse Allegation Report Form

Version 5.2

### Details of person submitting this form

First Name:

Last Name:

---

Phone:

Email:

---

### Details of church

Church Name:

---

Address:

---

---

Town/Suburb:

---

State:

Postcode:

---

### Details of the allegation(s)

Full Name of accused:

---

Former names or aliases (if known):

---

Date of birth:

---

Age of accused at time of alleged abuse:

---

Was the allegation(s) reported to you by another person?  Yes  No

---

When was it reported to you?

---

Person reporting the allegation? Name:

DOB:

---

Relationship to the accused:

---

How did they become aware of the allegation?

When did they become aware of the allegation?

Were they the victim?  Yes  No

Name of alleged victim (if known):

DOB (if known):

Age of victim at time of alleged abuse:

In what context did the alleged abuse occur?

- In the course of church activities
- Outside the course of church activities
- Historical
- Unknown

Is the accused currently an employee or volunteer in the church?  Yes  No

Has the accused ever been an employee or volunteer in the church/ or any Acts Global Church? (Provide details)

7. Allegation type

- Sexual offence
- Sexual misconduct
- Physical abuse
- Neglect
- Behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child
- Other

8. Provide details of the allegation: (Include as much detail as possible, including dates, times, the specifics of the abuse)

Have you or your local church reported the matter to police?  Yes  No (if no, skip this section)

---

When was the police report made?

---

What is the police reference number?

---

What police station was the report made to?

---

## Child Protective Services Mandatory Report

Have you or your local church reported the matter to Child Protective Services?  Yes  No (if no, skip this section)

---

When was the report made?

---

What is the reference number?

---

What office was the report made to?

---

## Next Steps

Please email through any supporting documentation to [childprotection@actsglobal.church](mailto:childprotection@actsglobal.church)

Please ensure you consult the Acts Global Churches Child Protection Coordinator before beginning ANY investigation process or formal reporting. This process is important and will often involve reportable conduct reporting to relevant agencies.

**If a child is in immediate danger, please contact police urgently on 000**



ACTS GLOBAL CHURCHES

## 30 Day Reporting Follow-up Form

Version 5.2

**NOTE:** This must be completed in discussion with National Child Protection Coordinator

### Details of person submitting this form

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

### Details of church

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_

Town/Suburb: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

### Allegation details

Person allegation is against: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of alleged victim (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

Further details related to the allegation since initial report made:

## Further information

### If sexual offence:

- Rape or sexual assault
- Grooming or encouraging a child to engage in sexual activity
- Offence relating to child abuse material
- Sexual activity in the presence of a child
- Other

### If physical violence:

- Hitting/kicking/punching
- Pushing/shoving/grabbing/throwing/shaking
- Use of object
- Inappropriate restraint/excess force
- Other

### If significant neglect:

- Clothing or food
- Medical care
- Shelter
- Supervision
- Provision of drugs/alcohol
- Other

### If sexual misconduct:

- Crossing professional boundaries
- Sexually explicit comments
- Other sexual behaviour

### If psychological harm:

- Exposure to violence or threats of violence
- Self destructive behaviour
- Antisocial behaviour
- Persistent hostility/rejection
- Humiliation/belittling
- Scapegoating
- Other

Other/further details:

## Actions proposed or taken

Do you propose to take or have you taken any action toward the employee/volunteer?

- No action proposed or taken
- Action proposed
- Action taken
- Unsure

Please provide reasons why you intend to take action or not:

Conditional: What action do you propose to take or have you taken toward the employee/volunteer?

- Stood down and unable to work/ volunteer until further notice
- Stood down indefinitely
- Unable to attend any church activities
- Limitations on work practices or activities - provide details:

- Written warning
- Education or training
- Other:

Has the employee made a submission or provided a response about the allegation or action taken?  Yes  No

Have you advised any other regulator or government funder of the allegation?  Yes  No

if yes, which regulator have you advised?

Does the person require person of interest agreement?  Yes  No

### Any other information

Is there any other information you would like to provide?

### Supporting Documentation

Please email a copy of the investigation risk management plan and any other documents you think relevant to [childprotection@actsglobal.church](mailto:childprotection@actsglobal.church)



# Persons of Interest Supervision Agreement

Version 5.2

Church Name:

---

Person of Interest Full Name:

---

Date of Birth:

Current Age:

---

Age at time of offence:

---

Details of the Offences/ Allegation:

Date/s of Offence/s:

---

Where it Occurred:

---

Relationship to the Victim:

---

Age of victim at time of offence:

---

What context did the person meet the victim:

---

Criminal Conviction?  YES  NO

---

Details of the Allegation, Charge, Conviction & Sentencing:

If only an allegation, provide details as to the resulting investigation of the incident:

Are they registered on a Sexual Offenders Register?  YES  NO

---

Provide details of restrictions placed as part of the registration:

## Risk Assessment

- Has there been an admission to the incident, and cooperation with the authorities and local church leadership?
- Has there been an open disclosure of the details of the offence to Church Leadership?
- At church gatherings, can close contact with minors can be avoided by appropriate supervision and attendance restrictions?
- Is there a willingness to submit to this agreement and fully comply with any restrictions and conditions of attendance to the church?
- Is local church leadership comfortable with the time period since the last offence until now?
- Have local church leadership consulted with the National Child Protection Coordinator?

## Gatherings They May Attend

- Worship Service - (Provide details of day and time)
- Youth Program (if person under 18) (Provide details of day and time)
- Small Group (Provide details of location & group leader)
- Prayer Meeting (Provide details of location & group leader)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Person of Interest must not arrive more than 30 mins before start time, and leave within 30mins of finish time, or leave if nominated supervisors are leaving.)

## Restrictions & Condition of Attendance

1. There is to be no one-on-one contact with children of any kind.
2. You may not attend events designed specifically for children or families of children, unless under 18 years and approved by the National Child Protection Coordinator
3. You are unable to serve in any voluntary capacity involving children. And are only able to serve in any other voluntary capacity if you are able to obtain relevant state clearances and specific approval by the National Child Protection Coordinator.
4. You are only to access the main auditorium, foyer and toilets in the foyer at any gathering
5. You may only enter where your specific gathering is being conducted, and any relevant toilet facilities.
6. May only attend where a nominated supervisor is in attendance, or after reporting to the lead pastor in the event no supervisors are in attendance. If it is not possible for appropriate supervision to be put in place, you must not attend that gathering.
7. When attending you must identify to one of your nominated supervisors where you will be sitting. They will monitor your seating position and may ask you to change seats if necessary. Please sit with others of similar age to yourself.
8. The church leadership, may need to disclose your requirement to be supervised to other leaders or volunteers in the church who will have responsibility for events or activities.

**This agreement is required to be updated every 12mths**

Additional specific restrictions/exclusions

### Nominate supervisors

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

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

Date for next review of agreement: \_\_\_\_\_

### Agreement

I (name) \_\_\_\_\_ agree to the terms of this agreement on my attendance and being part of (Church Name) \_\_\_\_\_

#### Signed by Person of interest

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

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

#### Signed by Senior Pastor

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

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

#### Authorised for ACTS Global Churches by National Child Protection Coordinator

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

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





**ACTS GLOBAL CHURCHES  
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