

2. Northside Community Church Procedure for Staff and Volunteers

Adopted by the Elders on 9th February, 2021. Last updated 18 July 2023.

Purpose

The *Procedure for Staff and Volunteers* sets out a procedure for the thorough recruitment, screening, training and resourcing of all staff and volunteers, particularly those engaged in Child-related Work (within the meaning of the **WWCC Legislation**) or Regulated Activity (within the meaning of **WWVP Legislation**).

Scope

Part 1 of the Procedure applies to Recruitment and Screening of all staff and volunteers within the Church.

Part 2 of the Procedure applies to the Induction of all staff and volunteers.

Part 3 of the Procedure applies to Training and Resourcing of all staff and volunteers.

Part 4 of the Procedure applies to Recordkeeping and Review of documents related to staff and volunteers.

This Procedure should be read in conjunction with the Safe Church Policy and:

- *Screening Check Questionnaires*
- *Safe Church Register*
- *Code of Conduct*
- *Privacy Policy*

Safe Church Roles and Responsibilities at Northside

Elders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve Safe Church policies • Monitor compliance with safe church policies, including through reviewing dashboards • Manage risk through ensuring that key safe church risks are appropriately identified and mitigated
Safe Church Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversee the Safe Church program, including Safe Church Policy and procedures • Oversee the management of Safe Church/Child Protection concerns/reports (or refer operational or ministry concerns to the appropriate forum) • Communicate to the Church to support the above goals as required, in conjunction with the Senior Pastor.
Senior Pastor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure compliance with safe church policies • Ensure that every staff member have position descriptions and satisfactorily passes screening requirements (<i>see Cat 1(a) or 1(b), Procedure for Staff and Volunteers</i>) and receives induction (<i>Part 2, Procedure for Staff and Volunteers</i>) • Ensure records of above are maintained • Ensure questionnaires and reference checks are reviewed/conducted
Central Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure compliance with safe church policies • Ensure that every staff member and volunteer under their management have position descriptions and satisfactorily passes screening requirements (<i>see Cat 1(a) or 1(b), Procedure for Staff and Volunteers</i>) and receives induction (<i>Part 2, Procedure for Staff and Volunteers</i>) • Ensure records of above are maintained • Ensure questionnaires and reference checks are reviewed/conducted

Business Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain Safe Church Register and risk assessments and prepare reports as required • Ensure access to template and Safe Church documents (reference and interview questions, position description templates, policies and procedures) • Coordinate safe training opportunities • Store any documentation not automatically held in Elvanto for record keeping.
Ministry Leads (those directly engaging volunteers, e.g. Worship Leader, Turramurra children's pastor)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop position descriptions for their volunteers • Ensure that every volunteer satisfactorily passes screening requirements (<i>see Cat 2(a), Procedure for Staff and Volunteers</i>) and receives induction (<i>Part 2, Procedure for Staff and Volunteers</i>) • Review questionnaires and conduct reference checks • Maintain records of above • Prepare risk assessments

Part 1 – Recruitment and Screening

In accordance with the Child Safe Policy, the Church will undertake appropriate screening processes for all staff and volunteers. If, during the course of screening, any Safe Church concerns are raised, the person conducting the screening is to notify their manager and the Safe Church Team before proceeding with appointing a staff member, contractor or volunteer.

Safe Church concerns include but are not limited to:

- a “yes” response to the screening questionnaire or essential Safe Ministry reference questions;
- a point of concern raised through the reference or interview process;
- anomalies arising from the WWCC and Police check documents; and
- a proposed volunteer engaged in child-related work has not been a regular attendee of the Church for at least 6 months.

Category 1(a) - Pastoral staff and staff in leadership roles and/or engaged in child-related work or work with vulnerable adults

The screening process for pastoral staff applies:

- to any staff member, who undertakes pastoral work in or on behalf of the church. (This typically includes any role that includes the word ‘Pastor’ or ‘Minister’ but may include other roles);
- to any staff member in a leadership role (ie/ considered a ‘spiritual officer’ of the church);
- to any staff member engaged in child-related work or, in the ACT, work with vulnerable people; and
- in addition to any requirements of the Fresh Hope Endorsement Review Group or the Church’s Constitution.

1. Prior to recruitment:

- a) the **position description** will be reviewed and updated if necessary;
- b) the position will be advertised appropriately; and
- c) the position description and/or advertisement will state that any offer of employment is subject to applicants:
 - agreeing to abide by, and upholding, the *Code of Conduct*;
 - completing a *Screening Check Questionnaire*;
 - undergoing a National Police Criminal Record Check; and
 - being eligible for, or holding a current clearance in accordance with **WWCC Legislation** or **WWVP Legislation**.
 - In addition, for pastoral staff,
 - providing evidence of Endorsement by Fresh Hope (or an application to be Endorsed); and
 - agreeing to abide by and uphold the *Ministering Persons Code of Conduct*.
- d) provide evidence that they have completed Creating Safe Spaces training within the past 3 years, or complete the online component and commit to attend face-to-face training within 9 months.

2. Applicants for the position will submit a written application including a resume and an outline of their willingness to commit to the mission and values of the Church.

3. Shortlisted applicants will:

- a) complete a *Screening Check Questionnaire*;
- b) be interviewed by **Church Leadership** or committee appointed by the Church members;

- c) undertake a National Police Criminal Record Check;
 - d) provide evidence of a current clearance in accordance with **WWCC Legislation** or **WWVP Legislation**; and
 - e) provide a minimum of two references.
4. Successful applicants will:
- a) sign and agree to abide by the *Code of Conduct*;
 - b) participate in an induction process to enable them to safely fulfil their position, including being given a copy of the *Safe Church Policy* and all Procedures and guidelines; and
 - c) (in addition, for Pastoral Staff) provide evidence that they are an Endorsed Minister by Fresh Hope (or have applied to be Endorsed).

Category 1(b) - Staff who are not in leadership roles or engaged in child-related work or work with vulnerable adults

The screening process for staff who are not engaged in child-related work or work with vulnerable adults applies:

- to any staff member to whom the screening process in Category 1(a) does not apply; and
- in addition to any requirements under the Church's Constitution.

1. Prior to recruitment:

- a) the **position description** will be reviewed and updated if necessary;
- b) the position will be advertised appropriately and in accordance with any constitutional requirements; and
- c) the position description and/or advertisement will state that any offer of employment is subject to applicants:
 - agreeing to abide by, and upholding, the *Code of Conduct*;
 - completing a *Screening Check Questionnaire*;
 - undergoing a National Police Criminal Record Check
- d) provide evidence that they have completed Creating Safe Spaces training within the past 3 years, or complete the online component and commit to attend face-to-face training within 9 months.

2. Applicants for the position will:

- a) submit a written application including an outline of their willingness to commit to the mission and values of the Church and hold to the Christian faith; and
- b) submit their Curriculum Vitae, ensuring that information relevant to the particular position is included.

3. Shortlisted applicants will:

- a) complete a *Screening Check Questionnaire*;
- b) be interviewed by **Church Leadership** or committee appointed by the Church members;
- c) provide a minimum of two references.

4. Successful applicants will:

- a) sign and agree to abide by the *Code of Conduct*; and
- b) Participate in an induction process to enable them to safely fulfil their position, including being given a copy of the *Safe Church Policy* and relevant procedures and guidelines.

Category 2(a) - Volunteers in leadership roles, engaged in child-related work and/or engaged in work with vulnerable adults*

The screening process for volunteers engaged in child-related work or work with vulnerable adults applies to:

- any church leader, deacon or elder (ie/ 'spiritual officer');
- any volunteer involved in ministry to children and/or young people (this may include children's ministry, playgroup, creche, youth ministry, families ministry);
- any volunteer engaged in a role that includes leadership of a ministry area in which children or young people are also part of the ministry team (this may include worship leader, sound/AV leader, discipleship leader, outreach leader etc); and
- any volunteer engaged in ministry to vulnerable adults.*

1. Prior to being appointed, a potential volunteer will:

- a) have attended the Church for a minimum of 6 months;
- b) be provided with a current position description;
- c) complete a Screening Check Questionnaire;
- d) be interviewed by an impartial Ministry Leader;
- e) provide a minimum of two references;
- f) sign and agree to abide by the Code of Conduct
- g) provide evidence that that have completed Creating Safe Spaces training within the past 3 years, or complete the online component and commit to attend face-to-face training within 9 months;
- h) provide evidence that they hold a current clearance in accordance with WWCC Legislation* or WWVP Legislation (unless the volunteer is aged under 18).
- i) participate in an induction process to enable them to safely fulfil their position, including being given a copy of the Safe Church Policy and relevant procedures and guidelines.

2. Prior to the volunteer commencing in the role the Ministry Leader will

- a) Verify the WWCC number* (if in NSW and over 18 years of age)
- b) Provide an induction process to enable them to safely fulfil their position, including providing a copy of the *Safe Church Policy* and relevant procedures and guidelines.

*In NSW, the WWCC clearance is only required if the person is engaged in 'child-related work'. In religious organisations, this includes leadership roles (those considered to be spiritual officers) but does not include roles involving ministry to vulnerable adults. A volunteer who is involved in ministry to vulnerable adults but not considered a 'spiritual officer' or involved in child-related work should not be required to obtain a WWCC clearance but should still complete CSS training.

Category 2(b) - Volunteers not in leadership roles or engaged in child-related work nor work with vulnerable adults

The screening process for volunteers not-engaged in child-related work or work with vulnerable adults applies to

- any volunteer who is **not** a Church Leader, Ministry Leader, engaged in child-related work or engaged in work with vulnerable adults. (This may include volunteers on the offering, cleaning or maintenance roster).

1. Prior to being appointed, a potential volunteer will:

- a) be provided with a current **position description**;
- b) complete a *Screening Check Questionnaire*;
- c) provide a minimum of two references (if practicable/appropriate);
- d) be interviewed by an impartial (if practicable) Ministry Leader;
- e) sign and agree to abide by the *Code of Conduct*; and
- f) participate in an induction process to enable them to safely fulfil their position, including being given a copy of the *Safe Church Policy* and relevant procedures and guidelines.

2. Prior to the volunteer commencing in the role the Ministry Leader will provide an induction process to enable them to safely fulfil their position, including providing a copy of the *Safe Church Policy* and relevant procedures and guidelines.

Category 3(a) – Supervised volunteers aged under 18

1. The screening process for supervised volunteers aged under 18 applies to:
 - volunteers who are engaged in junior, trainee, support or helping roles which require that the volunteer is supervised at all times.

Where a volunteer is engaged in a trainee, support or helping role but is aged over 18 they will need to be screened in accordance with category 2 as appropriate in order to meet legal requirements.

*The Church may determine that specific 16 or 17-year-olds have sufficient maturity to volunteer without direct supervision, despite being under 18 years of age. These volunteers will be screened and trained in accordance with category 2, including Creating Safe Spaces training. **However, note that there should always be at least one adult leader on-site and participating in the program.***

Please see the *Guidelines for Activities with Children and Young People* for more details on the differences between junior/trainee volunteers and volunteers.'

2. Prior to being appointed, a potential volunteer will:
 - a) be provided with a current position description;
 - b) complete a *Screening Check Questionnaire*;
 - c) be interviewed by an impartial (if practicable) Ministry Leader;
 - d) sign and agree to abide by the *Code of Conduct*; and
 - e) participate in an induction process to enable them to safely fulfil their position, including being given a copy of the *Safe Church Policy* and relevant procedures and guidelines.
3. Prior to the volunteer commencing in the role the Safe Church Team (or Ministry Leader) will:
 - a) obtain written parent/guardian consent for the volunteer to undertake the role suggested if the volunteer is under 16 years old (we also recommend getting parent/guardian consent for 16 and 17-year-olds wherever possible);
 - b) provide an induction process to enable them to safely fulfil their position, including being given a copy of the *Safe Church Policy* and Procedures; and
 - c) provide an additional briefing on child protection responsibilities and practices, including the procedures and guidelines relevant to their area of ministry.

Supervised volunteers aged under 18 involved in child-related work (3(b))

In addition to the requirements listed above, if their role includes working with children or young people, prior to being appointed, a potential volunteer will:

- a) have attended the Church for a minimum of 6 months;
- b) provide a minimum of two references;
- c) provide evidence that they have completed Creating Safe Spaces training within the past 3 years, or complete the online component and commit to attend face-to-face training within 9 months, if their role includes working with children or young people.

<i>Please see category definitions for further detail</i>	Application & Screening questionnaire	Ministering Persons Code of Conduct	Fresh Hope Endorsement	Interview, reference checks, induction	Code of Conduct	WWCC*/WWVP	CSSCCS	Police Check
1(a): Pastoral Staff	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
1(a): Staff engaged in leadership, child-related work or work with vulnerable adults	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
1(b): Other Staff (not engaged in leadership, child-related work or work with vulnerable adults)	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
2(a): Volunteers in leadership, child-related work or work with vulnerable adults	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
2(b): Other Volunteers (not engaged in leadership, child-related work or work with vulnerable adults)	Yes	No	No	Yes*	Yes	No	No	No
3(a): Supervised volunteers under 18	Yes (use under 18 screening)	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No

3(b): Volunteers aged 16 or 17 in child-related work	Yes (use under 18 screening)	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
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*refer to the detailed description in the policy regarding reference checks

Part 2 – Induction

- 2.1 All staff and volunteers will be provided with an induction appropriate to their role. This induction will include:
- a) an overview of general site health and safety expectations;
 - b) operating procedures that apply to relevant equipment;
 - c) the content of the *Code of Conduct* and expectations and appropriate behaviours for staff and volunteers as set out in the *Safe Church Policy*;
 - d) the role description and any reporting structure;
 - e) expectations regarding Creating Safe Spaces training, if appropriate
 - f) an overview of the *Procedures for Handling Complaints against Staff and Volunteers, Conflict Resolution and Responding to Child Protection Concerns*;
 - g) who to contact in the event of any conflict, concerns or complaints; and
 - h) any Guidelines appropriate to their ministry area.
- 2.2 A record of the induction (including the name of the person giving the induction, the date of the induction and the topics covered) will be kept.

Part 3 – Training and Resourcing

3.1 Creating Safe Spaces Training

- a) All staff and volunteers engaged in leadership and/or child-related work and/or work with vulnerable adults will:
 - complete Creating Safe Spaces training (or other SCTA approved face-to-face training) at least once every three years; or
 - if they have not attended such training prior to appointment, will complete the online component of the training prior to commencement and commit to attend the face-to-face component within 9 months of commencement.
- b) The Safe Church Team will ensure that information about staff and volunteer attendance at Creating Safe Spaces Training is recorded in the *Safe Church Register*.

3.2 Other training

Church Leadership (or Ministry Leaders) will arrange ongoing staff and volunteer training as required. (This may include in-house training, attendance at conferences such as Collective, Code of Conduct training days and/or attendance at external training opportunities.)

3.3 Resourcing

Church Leadership will ensure that Church programs are adequately resourced with staff and volunteers and have the required equipment for the safe and effective running of the program.

3.4 Supervision

Church Leadership will provide ongoing support and supervision for all staff and volunteers, to ensure they feel valued, respected and fairly-treated, including:

- a) up to date *Safe Church Policy*, guidelines and procedures;
- b) formal or informal support mechanisms, so that staff and volunteers have a clear understanding of who to go to for support and what type of support is available to them (for example, team meetings, counselling, prayer); and

- c) an annual process of position review to provide an opportunity for mutual feedback and encouragement.

Part 4 – Recordkeeping and Review

4.1 Recordkeeping

For each staff member or volunteer, the following items should be recorded and kept for a minimum of 45 years.

- a) their written application for the position (if applicable);
- b) their completed *Screening Check Questionnaire*;
- c) all notes relating to the interview and reference checks (if applicable);
- d) notes confirming the content and date of their induction;
- e) signed *Code of Conduct*;
- f) signed *Ministering Persons Code of Conduct* (if required);
- g) a copy of the *National Police Criminal Record Check* (if required);
- h) evidence of verification of their current WWCC or WWVP (if required);
- i) evidence of the date of completion of Creating Safe Spaces training (or equivalent SCTA approved training with a face-to-face component); and
- j) records of all other relevant training, incidents, annual reviews, etc

Any items which contain sensitive information (such as *Screening Questionnaires*, *Safe Church Concerns Forms*, investigation notes and reports) must be kept in a manner which protects confidentiality and will only be accessed by a limited number of authorised persons (for example, the current Senior Pastor).

4.2 Safe Church Register

The church must maintain a *Safe Church Register* which records a summary of necessary screening and training for all staff and volunteers.

4.3 Review

- a) Pastoral Staff should engage in eight sessions of Professional Supervision each year in addition to other review processes.
- b) Staff should participate in a formal review process each year. This process should:
 - review the position description and make any necessary amendments;
 - provide an opportunity for mutual feedback and encouragement;
 - identify opportunities for training and development in the following twelve months; and
 - consider involving a committee comprising members of the governance body and any other church members who may be appropriate.
- c) Volunteer positions should be reviewed at least annually to identify areas for support or development and to amend role descriptions where appropriate.