



## CHURCH SAFE

### PURPOSE

The Church aims to honour God and care for people through our ministries. We aim to be intentional in establishing a welcoming, safe and respectful culture for our community and those we serve in our ministries.

We want to equip our staff and Volunteers in ministry roles to engage in safe behaviours and safe environments, and to have confidence to serve in a way that protects all participants as well as our staff and Volunteers.

Through this Policy we seek to:

- Hold out the biblical call to godliness, care for others, and faithfulness in service.
- Provide a framework to inform the provision of safe environments and ministries for all, and in particular for children, youth and Vulnerable People.
- Meet our legal obligations in relation to:
  - Work Health and Safety (for staff and volunteers);
  - Staff and Volunteers engaged in child-related work; and
  - Reporting matters, including child sexual abuse, sexual misconduct, and reportable conduct involving a child, to government authorities.

More detail regarding the practical working out of this policy is available in the relevant procedures and guidelines (see Associated Documents).

### SCOPE

The policy applies to:

- All Church Leadership, staff and Volunteers.
- All people who are involved in or attend the Church and its ministries.

### POLICY STATEMENT

- The Church is committed to establishing practices and providing training and resources to ensure as best we can the provision of Safe Ministries, within Safe Environments, with Safe People.
- The Church is committed to establishing practices to appropriately identify and manage risks, and to have appropriate practices in place to handle conflicts, complaints and concerns when they arise.

### POLICY DETAILS

#### 1. SAFE MINISTRIES

- 1.1 The Church expects all ministry teams to be intentional about establishing a welcoming, safe and respectful culture and atmosphere within their ministry, for leaders, helpers and participants.
- 1.2 Consideration must be given to ensure that care is taken for the spiritual, emotional and physical health and safety of those we have contact with, in particular children, youth and Vulnerable People.
- 1.3 The Church requires all staff, Ministry Leaders and Volunteers to exercise duty of care through the use of forms, risk assessments and relevant procedures/guidelines to ensure safe ministry environments.
- 1.4 Staff, Church Leadership, Ministry Leaders and Volunteers will be accountable and transparent in the running of all aspects of ministry.
- 1.5 The Church Leadership will ensure appropriate supervision and oversight of all Children's Ministry programmes, and staff, Ministry Leaders, and Volunteers involved in Children's Ministry.



## 2. SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

- 2.1 The Church will comply with Work, Health and Safety legislated requirements for staff and Volunteers.
- 2.2 The Church, Church Leadership and Ministry Leaders will abide by procedures and guidelines set out for the assessment and provision of safe environments for work and ministry.

## 3. SAFE PEOPLE – STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

### 3.1 Selection, Screening and Induction of Staff and Volunteers

- a) The Church will engage in fair and transparent selection processes for all staff and Volunteers.
- b) The Church will carry out appropriate screening processes for all staff and Volunteers. This includes:
  - i) All Staff: where deemed appropriate, will be required to obtain a National Police Clearance.
  - ii) Pastoral Staff, Church Eldership and any staff or Church Leadership involved in financial matters (such as Treasurer roles) are to obtain a National Police Clearance (for paid staff) or Volunteer National Police Clearance (for Volunteers).
  - iii) Church Deacons: to obtain a Volunteer National Police Certificate when they are nominated, and renewed whenever they are re-elected into their Deacon leadership position.
  - iv) Children's Ministry: to prioritise the safety of children and youth, additional screening measures will be in place for staff and Volunteers involved in Children's Ministry, including:
    - o Prospective leaders and helpers are church members or progressing towards membership, or they have been regular church attendees for at least six months. Any exception is at the discretion of Church Elders, after careful consideration.
    - o Prospective leaders and helpers will be asked to complete and submit a Volunteer Application Form – Children's Ministry, which includes a questionnaire and disclosure statement. The Church Eldership will be responsible for the screening and approval of said Application Forms.
    - o to hold a current Working With Children (WWC) card. This must be applied for/obtained prior to their involvement with children.
- c) The Church will provide appropriate induction for all staff and Volunteers.

### 3.2 Training and Resourcing of Staff and Volunteers

- a) The Church will ensure that staff and Volunteers develop the knowledge and skills to create safe spaces for everyone, particularly children, youth and Vulnerable People. This will be provided through ministry induction, and Basso Church Safe Training.
- b) Basso Church Safe Training will be provided annually. Training will be required of staff, Church Leadership, Ministry Leaders and Volunteers in Children's Ministry. Attendance is required prior to commencing in the staff/Volunteer role, with training renewed every two (2) years. People joining staff/ministry prior to a training opportunity will complete a Church Safe Training booklet, with the commitment of attending the next in-person training session.
- c) The Church will support staff and Volunteers with adequate training and resources to carry out their ministry roles.

### 3.3 Standards of Behaviour for Staff and Volunteers

- a) The Church will expect all staff and Volunteers to uphold the Code of Conduct appropriate for their ministry.
- b) All staff, ministry leaders and Volunteers will be required to read and abide by the Church Safe Procedures and Guidelines.
- c) All staff and Volunteers involved in Children's Ministry will be required to read and abide by the *Code of Conduct-Children's Ministry*, and the relevant handbook for the Children's Ministry they are involved in.

## 4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 The Church will ensure appropriate and reasonable precautions are adopted to address risks identified as part of risk assessments. For specific ministries, these assessments will be undertaken by Ministry Leaders.
- 4.2 Overall responsibility for Church risk management and assessments will be with the Church Administration, reporting to the Senior Pastor and Risk Management Committee.



## 5. CONFLICT, COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS

### 5.1 Handling matters of conflict, complaint and concerns

- a) The Church will respond promptly with a clear process to each concern raised about the behaviour of its staff, Church Leadership, Volunteers and members of the congregation, in relation to grievances, and allegations of abuse and misconduct.
- b) The Church will provide supervision of and pastoral accountability to any person of concern in the congregation who is known to have abused a child or another Vulnerable Person.
- c) Any matter of concern that falls under the Reportable Conduct Scheme and/or Mandatory Reporting requirements will be handled in accordance with the applicable Western Australian legislation.

### 5.2 Safe Ministry Representative

The Church will have at least one (1) Safe Ministry Representative, who is a contact point for people within Church to raise concerns, report an incident or complaint, specifically regarding abuse or suspected abuse.

## 6. RECORD KEEPING

6.1 The Church will hold records of Working With Children (WWC) cards, and of all allegations of abuse and other safety concerns.

6.2 The Church will endeavour to have safeguards and procedures in place to ensure records are securely stored and any personal information is protected.

## ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- o *Briefing Memo [August 2022, January 2024]*
- o *Church Safe Procedures and Guidelines [February 2024]*
- o *Volunteer Application Form- Children’s Ministry [January 2024]*
- o *Code of Conduct for Staff and Ministry Leaders [November 2023]*
- o *Code of Conduct-Children’s Ministry [January 2024 – still to do]*
- o Church Safe Forms: *Incident Report Form; Ouch Report Form; Matter of Concern Form*

## LEGISLATION

- o [The Work Health and Safety Act 2020 WA](#)
- o [The Working with Children \(Screening\) Act 2004 \(WWC Act\)](#)
- o [Parliamentary Commissioner Amendment \(Reportable Conduct\) Act 2022](#)
- o [Children and Community Services Act 2004 \(covers Mandatory Reporting\)](#)

## DEFINITIONS

**Church:** refers to Church of Christ Bassendean (inc.) trading as Basso Church;

**Church Leadership:** Elders and Deacons of the Church;

**Children’s Ministry:** refers to any activity or program where any of the participants are under 18 and not accompanied by parents or carers authorised by the parents.

**Ministry Leaders:** refers to staff or Volunteers who are responsible as the leader of a particular ministry or auxiliary of the Church.

**Volunteer:** refers to anyone who performs a service or function on behalf of the Church without pay.

**Vulnerable Person:** refers to one unable to take care of themselves, or unable to protect themselves against harm or exploitation by reason of age, illness, trauma or disability, or any other reason, and includes those that suffer disadvantage such as social and financial hardship. *[Definition provided by Australian Government].*

<b>Adopted at Board Meeting:</b>	February 2024	<b>Review by:</b>	1 year: Start of 2024
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*Church of Christ Bassendean (Inc.) trading as Basso Church. Referred to in this document as "Basso Church" or "Church"*