

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MINISTERING PERSONS POLICY

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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 This policy defines the governance applied for the conduct of Ministering persons involved with, engaged or acting on behalf of the Churches of Christ in Queensland (CofCQ) and the Church and Community Engagement service as a division of Churches of Christ in Queensland.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 As our name implies “Churches of Christ” is founded on the teachings and values of Jesus Christ who calls on every one of us to individually be a light in the place

Risk Rating: HIGH

we are in, and collectively to be the light of the world through the expression of love. Our Mission is “Bringing the light of Christ into communities”.

- 2.2 Jesus calls upon us to be united in this effort and to work together as one body, and this is not just something we do, but rather a way of life. Flowing from this understanding of who we are and what we stand for as an organisation, is a commitment to our values:
- Unconditional love
 - Continual Innovation
 - Mutual trust
 - Wise Stewardship
 - Safety
- 2.3 This Code of Conduct is anchored in our core values, to provide detail and guidance on the high standards expected in the practice of Ministering persons.
- 2.4 Churches of Christ in Queensland is a large and diverse organisation made up of people from many cultures and backgrounds. We value and celebrate difference, high quality care and services, relying on all individuals and teams to align their behaviour with this Code.
- 2.5 This Code applies to all Ministering persons employed or otherwise engaged by the organisation. Together we aspire to create working and living environments that reflect our core values and support our mission, “Bringing the light of Christ into Communities”.

<input type="checkbox"/> All			
<input type="checkbox"/> Children Youth and Families	<input type="checkbox"/> Seniors Living	<input type="checkbox"/> Housing Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Integrated Communities
<input type="checkbox"/> Centenary Development Foundation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Church and Community Engagement	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Council of Churches

3. POLICY STATEMENT

Basis for Code

3.1 Locally Governed Congregations

CofCQ honours the history that has given local congregations freedom to decide how to function as the body of Christ in their own contexts.

The primary place for the accountability of Christians to each other, and of Ministers to congregations, is within the life and structure of each individual congregation.

While that is the case, it is recognised that in certain circumstances, given the relationship of Ministering Persons and those to whom they exercise ministry, it is

appropriate that a proper independent standard of accountability in respect of Ministering Persons be established. That is the principal purpose of this Code.

3.2 Ministers

For the purpose of this Code it is accepted that a Minister is a person who is: entrusted by God with the leadership and care of His people; trusted by the community to be a person of Christian values who can be relied upon to uphold Christian and ethical standards; trusted by the Church Body:

- to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ;
- to live a life that bears witness to and is consistent with Christian principles;
- to officiate at certain Church Body or ministry functions; and
- to minister to people, in all circumstances and to represent in a particular way Jesus, the Church and the Church Body.

3.3 Ministering Persons

The Community, the Church and Church Bodies are entitled to expect that Ministering Persons will at all times exercise ministry in a professional and ethical manner. On that basis Ministering Persons recognise:

- that they owe a duty of care to those to whom they minister, including the safeguarding and protection of children and vulnerable people;
- their behaviour may damage a congregation, as well as the good standing and reputation of the ministry, Church Bodies, the Conference and the Church universal; and
- they are to be accountable to the Leadership of the Church Body by whom they are employed or engaged.

3.4 The Responsibilities of being a Ministering Person

A Church Body is entitled to expect:

- Ministering Persons will live with Honesty and Integrity;
- Ministering Persons will observe the fact that the relationship of a Ministering Person to those to whom a Ministering Person ministers, is a particular relationship which requires the Ministering Person to refrain from exploiting the position of care and trust enjoyed by Ministering Persons;
- that every aspect of the Ministering Person's life will bear witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ;
- that Ministering Persons will hold themselves accountable to the Leadership of the Church Body by whom they are employed or engaged; and
- that Ministering Persons will not engage in Misconduct.
- that Ministering Persons will report all concerns regarding the abuse of children in accordance with the CofCQ Safe Church Policy.

- that historical or undischarged bankruptcy or new bankruptcy claims be disclosed to church leadership and the Ministry Ethics Unit (MEU) and appropriate measures put in place for financial integrity within the church.

General principles underlying this Code of Conduct

3.5 The Infinite Value of People

Every human being ought to be treated with the respect and dignity implicit in God's action in Jesus, regardless of ethnicity, gender, age, beliefs and social, political or economic status.

3.6 Natural Justice

Any investigation under this Code must observe the principles of natural justice. On that basis:

- each Respondent is innocent until proven otherwise;
- each Respondent has the right to be informed in writing of:
 - any allegation against them;
 - the name of the person making the allegation (unless the disclosure of that name would inhibit natural justice and fairness);
 - the facts and circumstances which comprise the allegation; and
- each Respondent must be given an adequate opportunity to answer each allegation.

Subscribers to the Code

- 3.7 Any Ministering Person may bind themselves to this Code by signing and submitting the 'Subscription Notice' form in Appendix A and by so doing acknowledges and agrees to the rights and the obligations of all persons referred to in it.
- 3.8 The Ministering Person agrees that by subscribing the Ministering Person is subject to the Code and any Sanctions imposed under it.
- 3.9 A Subscriber shall cease to be subject to this Code upon signing and submitting a 'Withdrawal Notice' form in Appendix B.
- 3.10 Notwithstanding the giving of a Withdrawal Notice a Subscriber shall remain bound to observe, comply with and otherwise carry out all obligations under the Code, including the obligation to comply with any Sanctions imposed under it arising out of any Complaint about any breach of this Code occurring before the Withdrawal Notice is received by the Ministry Ethics Unit (MEU) Coordinator of CofCQ.
- 3.11 For the avoidance of doubt this Code shall apply and may be carried into effect in respect of any Complaint about any breach of this Code alleged to have occurred before the Withdrawal Notice is received by the MEU Coordinator of CofCQ.
- 3.12 Notice of the receipt (and effect) of a Withdrawal Notice from any person may be Published by CofCQ.

- 3.13 Where a person gives a reason or reasons for withdrawal in a Withdrawal Notice the reason(s) may be Published. This provision will have effect despite the receipt of a Withdrawal Notice.

Complaint grounds

3.14 Grounds on which a complaint may be made

A Complaint may be made where the situation in question relates to any matter detailed in the section of this Code entitled 'The Responsibilities of being a Ministering Person' in respect of a person who, at the time of the alleged breach of this Code was a Subscriber to this Code, or who at the date the Complaint is made is a Subscriber to this Code.

3.15 Other allegations not constituting Actionable Complaints

Where allegations are made by a person ('Concerned Person') which do not constitute an Actionable Complaint but, nevertheless, in the reasonable view of the MEU Coordinator constitute inappropriate behaviour of a Ministering Person, the MEU Coordinator may:

- confer with the Ministering Person in respect of that inappropriate behaviour;
- confer with the leadership of the Retaining Body of the Ministering Person;
- appoint an appropriate independent person to mediate between the Ministering Person and the Concerned Person where the Ministering Person and the Concerned Person consent to that course; and
- if the Concerned Person refuses to confer with the MEU Coordinator or any person appointed by the MEU Coordinator for that purpose or declines to engage in mediation, the MEU Coordinator may raise the matter in respect of which the complaint is made with the Leadership of the Retaining Body of the Ministering Person.

Sanctions

3.16 Each Ministering Person agrees that:

- the MEU may make findings, orders and directions in the terms set out in the version of the policy document known as the 'Complaints Investigation Guide' which is in effect at the time of the receipt by the MEU of a Complaint;
- if the MEU makes any findings, orders or directions in accordance with this Code the Ministering Person agrees to be bound by, and to comply with, the terms of any such findings, orders or directions;
- if the MEU directs that a Ministering Person's name (including findings or orders made) be included on the Ministers Disqualified from Service List, that information can be shared with prospective employing ministries and Churches of Christ in Australia.

Risk Rating: HIGH

3.17 Provisions for Amendment

This Code may be amended from time to time by the MEU and this Code, as amended, will be binding on all Subscribers to it thirty (30) days after any amendment of it is published by CofCQ. The publishing of any amendment shall be effected in such manner as CofCQ determines is reasonably likely to bring the amendment to the notice to the Subscribers.

4. PRINCIPLES

Responsible, Accountable, Consulted and Informed (RACI)

4.1 This policy is supported by roles and responsibilities in adherence to the following:

Policy Risk Rating	Accountable	Responsible	Consulted	Informed
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Board/Council	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CEO	Director Church and Community Engagement, Practice Lead – Leadership and Formation.	All Ministering Persons

4.2 The Council for Churches of Christ in Queensland is responsible for the Code defined in this policy, and for the endorsement of the Code and policy provisions.

4.3 This Code of Conduct is established by Churches of Christ in Queensland ('CofCQ').

4.4 The Director of Church and Community Engagement is responsible for ensuring that the policy is reviewed and maintained to accurately reflect all regulatory requirements, industry best practice and values and strategies of the organisation.

4.5 Ministering Persons are responsible for reporting all concerns regarding the abuse of children or vulnerable people in accordance with the CofCQ Safe Church Policy.

Accountable Person

- is the owner and is accountable for the controlled document; and
- other than minor formatting and editing (known as admin changes), must approve all changes.

Responsible Person

- encourages a culture of good governance through the purpose or intent of a controlled document towards the culture of this organisation;
- ensures effective processes, reporting and management strategies are in place across Churches of Christ in Queensland;

Risk Rating: HIGH

- ensure risk-rated reviews are conducted in accordance with this Document Management Policy and the Policy Writing Information Sheet;
- ensures robust processes are in place to monitor compliance legislative requirements and obligations; and
- identifies risks and opportunities that can support continuous improvement opportunities.

Consulted Person/s

- identify areas within the organisation that policies and other controlled documents should be developed or reviewed for presentation to those accountable and responsible;
- evaluate and review Governing Principles and Benchmarks, providing suggestion where necessary, to the consultation process for improvements;
- provide peer support and facilitate communication between Senior Managers;
- ensure quality practice is applied through regular review;
- inform the Executive Group of any issues, within the context of the Document Management Policy, which may impact on the organisation;
- review the actions taken or proposed for significant systems improvements made by the consultation team; and
- identifies risks and opportunities that can support continuous improvement opportunities.

Informed Persons

- are identified by the term Workforce and include: Employees, Volunteers, Contractors, Students and Consultants; and
- are expected to remain informed and knowledgeable of all policies related to their own areas of work within the organisation.

Compliance, Monitoring and Review

- 4.6 The Director of Church and Community Engagement is responsible for ensuring this policy:
- aligns with relevant legislation, government policy and/or Churches of Christ in Queensland requirements, strategies and values;
 - is implemented and monitored to ensure that it reflects the changing policy environment, and identifies and addresses emerging issues related to the conduct of Ministering persons; and
 - is reviewed to evaluate its continuing effectiveness in governing the conduct of Ministering persons.

Risk Rating: HIGH

- 4.7 The Council for Churches of Christ in Queensland is responsible for:
- reviewing, contributing to and endorsing the Code and provisions of this policy in the event that amendments or additions are made to ensure the ongoing effectiveness of the policy.
- 4.8 This policy is mandatory and binding upon
- the Board of Churches of Christ in Queensland;
 - CEO;
 - Executive, Senior Leadership and all other Managers; and
 - Workforce.

Breaches to this policy may result in investigation, disciplinary action and reporting to the Executive/Board.

Reporting and Records Management

- 4.9 Conduct issues are to be reported to the Chair of the Ministry Ethics Unit. Suspected breaches will be investigated under the provisions of this policy, and Ministry Ethics Unit Complaints Investigation Guide
- 4.10 Justices of the Peace (JP) and Commissioners for Declarations, employees who have these qualifications are able to witness documents, in line with their approved civil role.
- 4.11 Staff must maintain all records relevant to administering this policy in a recognised Churches of Christ in Queensland record keeping system.

5. DEFINITIONS AND TERMINOLOGY

Term	Definition
Accountable	The person who has ultimate ownership of a policy. Ownership cannot be transferred.
Actionale Complaint	As per the definition of same in the Constitution
Church	The Christian Church universal
Church Body	As the case may be, a Church of Christ or a Conference Body
Church of Christ	Any congregation affiliated with the Conference
Churches of Christ in Queensland	The body corporate detailed in the Constitution
Code	The code of Conduct for Ministering Persons (this document)
CofCQ	Churches of Christ in Queensland

Risk Rating: HIGH

Complainant	A person who makes a Complaint
Complaint	A complaint in writing that any Ministering Person has acted in a manner which may constitute a breach of the responsibilities of a Ministering Person (as detailed in this Code).
Complaints Investigation Guide	The document of the same name and its successors as issued by Churches of Christ in Queensland.
Conference	The Conference of Churches of Christ in Queensland and has the meaning set out in the Constitution.
Conference Body	The Conference Council, any Agency, committee, sub-committee or other group of persons established pursuant to the Constitution or by Conference or its representatives on whom some authority or power is conferred by Conference.
Conference Council	The body of the same name defined in the Constitution.
Constitution	The Constitution of Churches of Christ in Queensland.
Consulted	The people who contribute valuable subject matter expertise to the development/review of the policy.
Destructive Compulsive Behaviour	A recurring compulsion by an individual to engage in some specific activity despite harmful consequences to an individual's health, mental state or social life.
Financial Dishonesty	A lack of honesty or Integrity in matters of finance, and in relation to Church Body finance it includes the retention or usage of Church Body funds by the Subscriber in a manner which may bring about pecuniary advantage to the Subscriber that is unauthorised by either the Leadership of the Church Body or the Church Body itself.
Gospel of Jesus Christ	Includes affirmation of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the inspiration of the Old and New Testaments (ii) the revelation of one God in three persons: Father, Son and the Holy Spirit (iii) the incarnation of God in the person of Jesus Christ (iv) Jesus' life and teaching as a perfect example of divine character (v) the death of Jesus as a perfect sin offering for redemption and forgiveness (vi) the bodily resurrection of Jesus (vii) Jesus' supreme authority as Lord over all (viii) the person and work of the Holy Spirit (ix) the need of salvation and the forgiveness of sins (x) the invitation and requirement of faith and repentance for salvation (xi) the practices of baptism and communion

Risk Rating: HIGH

	(xii) the acceptance that the Church is a divine institution.
Honesty	Being free from deceit or fraud.
Inappropriate Business Dealings	Business activity undertaken by the Ministering Person which is in addition to their respective ministry role, with members of the Ministering Persons Church Body, which is not approved by either the Leadership of the Church Body or the Church Body itself.
Inappropriate Sexual Behaviour	<p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) any acts of voyeurism, (ii) indecent exposure, (iii) indecent suggestions in respect of sex, (iv) the use of obscene language of a sexual nature, (v) intimate conversation with respect to matters concerning sex other than in a counselling or similar role undertaken in an appropriate pastoral context, (vi) Destructive Compulsive Behaviour in relation to pornography, (vii) sexual activity outside the bonds of Marriage. <p>(each of (i) to (vii) individually and together constitute "Inappropriate Actions") and for the purpose of determining what constitutes Inappropriate Sexual Behaviour regard must be had to the circumstances in which the Inappropriate Actions occurred, any person the subject of any Inappropriate Actions, and the relationship of the Ministering Person to any person the subject of any Inappropriate Actions.</p>
Informed	The people expected to remain informed and knowledgeable of the policy.
Institution	Means Churches of Christ in Queensland group of entities as defined by the term Organisation as well as any affiliated member churches.
Integrity	Adherence to moral and ethical principles in line with expectations reasonably construed from community and Church expectations and/or Biblical teachings.
Leadership	Any person (or persons) authorised by a Church Body to exercise any administrative oversight or control or who take responsibility for the administration of a Church Body.
Minister	A religious practitioner (as defined in the Fringe Benefits Tax Assessment Act 1986) generally with theological training, employed by a Church Body or a Church of Christ.
Ministering Person	A Minister, any person who undertakes the role of Minister on a voluntary basis, and any other person employed to undertake, or engaged to undertake, Pastoral Duties.
Ministers Disqualified from Service List	A secure and confidential list kept by Churches of Christ in Australia where the names and details of Ministering Persons who have been disqualified from service are noted.

Risk Rating: HIGH

Ministry Ethics Unit	A committee of the Conference Council whose role is to oversee the Council's ministry ethics (professional standards) involving affiliated church leadership and Ministering Persons.
Ministry Ethics Unit Coordinator	The person appointed by Conference Council or the Ministry Ethics Unit to fulfil such a role, or where no appointment has been made, means the Chair of the Ministry Ethics Unit as appointed by Conference Council or its duly appointed representatives.
Misconduct	Each and all of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) any Inappropriate Sexual Behaviour; (ii) any Inappropriate Business Dealings; (iii) any act which constitutes a crime under relevant Commonwealth or Queensland statutes; (iv) any act of deceit; (v) any act which constitutes Sexual Harassment; (vi) any act of Financial Dishonesty; (vii) any breach of trust in respect of the property of the Retaining Body; and (viii) any bullying, intimidatory act or act of physical violence against a person; (ix) the failure to hold an appropriate and current Queensland State Government 'Working With Children Check'; (x) any breach of any fiduciary duty owed by a Ministering Person or any actions on the part of a Ministering Person which seriously conflict with the interests of the Retaining Body; (xi) any act which is likely to discredit or bring into disrepute the Church or a Church Body.
Organisation	Means Churches of Christ in Queensland Group of Entities including Churches of Christ in Queensland, Churches of Christ Housing Services Limited and all Churches of Christ subsidiary entities.
Pastoral Duties	Duties associated with the spiritual care of the members of the congregation of a Church of Christ. The following are examples of pastoral duties: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) communication of religious beliefs; (ii) teaching and counselling adherents and members of the surrounding community; (iii) providing adherents and members of the surrounding community with spiritual guidance and support; and (iv) meeting with and visiting adherents, the sick, the poor, or persons otherwise in need of emotional and spiritual support.
Published	Published by letter or written announcement either sent to the Church Bodies via post or email, or posted on the church leader's web site of Churches of Christ in Queensland.

Risk Rating: HIGH

RACI	A matrix describing the participation by various roles in completing tasks or deliverables in support of business processes.
Remunerated	Remunerated regularly with an amount which is other than nominal.
Respondent	A person against whom a Complaint is made.
Responsible	The person who is implements the process and monitors compliance.
Retaining Body	A Church Body by which a Ministering Person is Remunerated, or if the Ministering Person is not Remunerated it is the Church Body through which the volunteer activity is being undertaken.
Sexual Harassment	Any sexual advances, requests for sexual favours or sexual conduct that could reasonably be judged as unwelcome, inappropriate, offensive, humiliating or intimidating by the person the subject of the behaviour.
Subject Matter Expert	The person/s with definitive sources of knowledge who contribute their expertise to enhance organisational efficiency.
Subscriber	Any person who acknowledges themselves bound by the provisions of this Code.
Subscription Notice	The form which is provided in the appendices of this Code.
Withdrawal Notice	The form which is provided in the appendices of this Code.
Working with Children Check	A check of the same name and its successors, and any other future governmental accreditation requirements recognised by Conference Council as being applicable to Ministering Persons, issued by the Queensland State Governments Commission for Children, Young People and Child Guardian, its successors or any other governmental department.

6. RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

Category	Related Reference Document(s)
Related Churches of Christ in Queensland Policies	Endorsement and Ordination of Ministering Persons Policy Safe Church Policy Code of Conduct Policy
Related Legislation, Industry Standards and Care Standards	Aged Care Act 1997 Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 Approved Provider Principles 2014 Disability Discrimination Act 1992 National Child Safe Standards Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Guidelines on Criminal offences

Risk Rating: HIGH

	<p>Fair Work Act 2009</p> <p>Privacy Act 1988</p> <p>Criminal Code Act 1899</p> <p>Sex Discrimination Act 1984</p> <p>Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003</p> <p>Work Health and Safety Act 2011</p>
<p>Related Churches of Christ in Queensland Procedures, Supporting Documents and references</p>	<p>Ministry Ethics Unit Complaints Investigation Guide</p> <p>Conflict of Interest Policy</p> <p>Other CofCQld Church Resources</p> <p>Governance Principles (found in Governance Entities Index on StaffLink)</p>

7. FEEDBACK

- 7.1 Churches of Christ in Queensland workforce and consumers may provide feedback about this document by one of the following mechanisms:
- internal workforce is invited to open a Quality Support Ticket by selecting 'Enquiry' from the available options; and
 - consumers are invited to provide Feedback via the Churches of Christ in Queensland website.

Risk Rating: HIGH

8. APPENDIX

To the Churches of Christ in Queensland:

Subscription to Code of Conduct

I _____ certify that :

(print full name)

I have read the Churches of Christ in Queensland's 'Code of Conduct for Ministering Persons' and I agree to be bound by it as a Subscriber.

I understand that disciplinary measures and legal steps will be taken by the Church Body if I am found to be in breach of the Code of Conduct. This will include reporting to the relevant authorities.

I have never been disqualified or dis-endorsed as a leader.

I have not done anything likely to reflect adversely on my character or whether I am a fit and proper person, and I am not aware of any matter or circumstance that might affect my suitability to be appointed as a leader, or I have disclosed such to the Ministry Ethics Unit and to the leadership that I am accountable to.

I consent to Churches of Christ in Queensland making inquiries of, and exchanging information with other internal and external organisations as to whether any matter in respect of alleged misconduct relates to me.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Witness Signature: _____

Witness Name: _____

Witness Address: _____

Date: _____

Email completed forms to: churchsupport@cofcqld.com.au

Or post to: Director Church and Community Engagement, Churches of Christ in Queensland,
PO Box 508, Kenmore Qld 4069

Risk Rating: HIGH

9. REVIEW AND APPROVAL DETAILS

Approval and Review	Details		
Policy Author and Position	Churches of Christ Council		
Accountability (endorsed)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Board/Council <input type="checkbox"/> CEO		
Responsibility (approved)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CEO <input type="checkbox"/> Executive Group		
Consulted	No.	Name	Date
	1	Council of CofCQ	2.09.2022
	2	Tim McMenamin	2.09.2022
	3	Craig Sadler	2.09.2022
Informed	The workforce of the organisation known as Churches of Christ in Queensland.		
Date Endorsed	02.09.2022		
Next Review Date (calculate from the date endorsed and risk category)	02.09.2023		

Signatories	Please sign here
Accountable Owner/Endorser	
Name: Rue Masunungure	
Responsible Approver	
Name: Gary Edwards	

Revision History	Details
Previous Endorsed Date	NA
Amendment History	Code of conduct transferred to a policy for Church and Community Engagement group, bankruptcy clause added to The Responsibility of being a Ministering Person section of the policy. Included definition for Gospel of Jesus Christ.
Notes (if any)	Endorsed by the Council of CofCQ.