

SAFE CHURCH POLICY

Refer at end for definitions and references

REVISION HISTORY

Author	Version	Revision	Date
<i>This document was Adapted from NCCA sample/ VH</i>	1.0	Accepted by the Church Board 9 th February 2019	9 th February 2019

New Peninsula Baptist Church (NPBC) is committed to protecting the safety of **all people** within its programs, ministries and events.

Our policy has been developed to uphold this commitment to safeguard and to adhere to National and Local legislation.

All people, regardless of age, gender, race, culture, disability and family/social background have equal rights to this protection.

All people (including children) have the right to be respected and valued as well as feel emotionally, physically and spiritually safe at all times.

Our child protection policy:

This Policy applies to all staff, including senior leadership, managers and coordinators, paid staff, volunteers, students or anyone working on behalf of New Peninsula Baptist Church.

The purpose of this policy:

- To protect all children, young people and vulnerable people who receive New Peninsula Baptist Church services.
- To provide all staff, leaders and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.

NPBC believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

Our Policy aims to:

- Minimise the risk of abuse, misconduct and the misuse of positional power.
- Ensure that all cases of suspected abuse and misconduct are handled thoroughly.
- Ensure that leaders and programs are safe.
- Ensure that all people are respected and valued.

Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

NPBC is committed to ministering to children, young people and adults by providing a church environment that is physically, emotionally and spiritually safe.

NPBC is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children, young people and adults and will endeavour to provide a safe and supportive environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults by the following safeguarding measures: recruitment processes selection, WWCC, Training, Induction, Supervision and reviews.

The following values reflect the culture that we are committed to promoting within NPBC:

- Due diligence

- Integrity
- Duty of care
- Transparency
- Inclusivity
- Collaborative Ministry
- Christian ethics and Gospel principles

WE RECOGNISE THAT:

- The welfare of the child is paramount, and is everyone's responsibility as outlined in the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children Agreement.
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other organisations/agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

WE COMMIT TO:

- **Screening all prospective leaders** in our ministries, before they are appointed (i.e. WWCC, Police check)
- **Adequate training of Ministry leaders, volunteers and staff.**
We require that all staff, as well as leaders and volunteers working with children and youth under 18 years attend a Safe Church Training Workshop within 12 months of commencing with their role, and a refresher course each 3 years.
- **Having a clear code of conduct.**
We will adopt and implement a Code of Conduct for all leaders, staff and volunteers, including boundaries of behaviour and expectations of interactions with children. All leaders, staff and volunteers will agree to follow our Code of Conduct.
- **Continued supervision of leaders, staff and volunteers**
We commit to ongoing training, supervision and support for leaders, staff and volunteers
- **Responding to allegations of risk of harm, abuse, or serious misconduct**
All leaders/staff/volunteers will report disclosures or suspicions of abuse of any kind, according to our procedures. We will listen to and believe children who raise concerns. We will ensure that procedures are clear and appropriate in responding to allegations of abuse.
Where a leader has an allegation of misconduct made against them, we will provide support to alleged victims and perpetrators and seek appropriate help from the BUV Professional Standards Worker for a just and fair resolution.
- **Providing an open, safe environment**
We will afford participants a say in the programs and the activities in which they participate by fostering and valuing their ideas and encouraging participation. We will be accountable and transparent.
We will create a child-friendly environment, allowing people to raise their concerns in an appropriate manner. We will obtain appropriate information relating to the program participants, including children's health and family situation, to ensure that we are able to care for their physical and emotional needs.

DEFINITIONS

Abuse: abuse and neglect includes but is not limited to:

- *Physical abuse*
- *Emotional Abuse*
- *Family violence*
- *Sexual Abuse*
- *Grooming*
- *Neglect*
- *Bullying*
- *Spiritual*
- *Financial*

Child a person who is under the age of 18 years.

Disclosure: a disclosure occurs when someone informs a person in authority/staff member (or a trusted adult) within the New Peninsula Baptist Church that they have been subject to abuse or know of abuse. A disclosure may or may not be an allegation or a notifiable circumstance, but it is the responsibility of the person in authority to investigate and take any appropriate action.

Leader: has been through a recruitment process, understands responsibilities, is supervised and is an accountable team player.

Safe Environment: discharges duty of care by taking steps to keep all those in our care safe, including spiritual, physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, bullying or neglect.

Safe Program: all risks have been assessed and events thought through and planned.

Senior Staff Member: staff members approved annually by NPBC Church Board

Vulnerable Person: a person who may be considered to be susceptible to abuse or exploitation based on factors such as their health status (physical or mental), age, grief, previous experience of abuse, social isolation or financial hardship. In this sense vulnerability can be temporary or permanent.

SCTA: Safe Church Training Agreement under the National Council of Churches in Australia – Safe Church Program.

Reference :

Children, Young Persons and their Families act 1997, Tasmania; The commission for children and young people Act 2012, Victoria

Child safe standards <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safety/being-a-child-safe-organisation/the-child-safe-standards/>

Legal Framework

This Policy reflects legislation and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:

National Legislation

- National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children “Protecting Children is Everyone’s Business” 2009 – 2020 (Commonwealth of Australia)

State Legislation

- *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (Vic.)

Working With Children Checks

- *Working With Children Act 2005* (Vic.)