



Baptist Churches

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Responding to Allegations or Complaints relating to Serious Misconduct by actions that are deemed to be unsafe.

Scope

This policy covers all staff and volunteers directly employed or actively engaged in the activities of the Baptist Union of Western Australia.

Background

The Baptist Union of Western Australia Inc. has endorsed the Safe Church Policy. The Safe Church Policy established principles and responses for all members of the Baptist Union of Western Australia. This policy is consistent with the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses into Child Sexual Abuse 2017.

Safe Church Policy outlines the procedures for Responding and Reporting allegations of abuse or harm. The Safe Church Policy also specifically details the procedures for responding to allegations or complaints against the Lead or Sole Pastor in a local church.

These procedures clearly demonstrate the intent of the church to respond to such complaints or allegations in a transparent, fair and timely manner. A complaint or allegation against the Lead or Sole Pastor is immediately escalated beyond the local church governance structures and are dealt with by senior staff at the Baptist Ministry Centre.

Principles for the Policy

1. The Baptist Union of Western Australia will ensure that the process for responding to complaints and allegations against senior staff in the Baptist Ministry Centre is consistent with the processes for senior pastors in local congregations.
2. Complaints or allegations will be managed with clear commitment to confidentiality of the details of the complaint.
3. Employment conditions for staff who are covered by this policy will have their employment agreements reference this policy and procedure.
4. At the time of endorsing this policy, the Council will appoint a Council member to a role to assist the Chairperson manage any Complaints or allegations, should this become necessary. If there is no suitably skilled person on the current Council, then the past Chairperson could be invited to fulfil this role.

Application of these principles for responding to complaints or allegations against senior BUWA staff and Council members.

5. A complaint or allegation relating to serious misconduct relating to sexual activities including harm or abuse will be referred immediately to people above the person who is subject to the allegation.
 - 5.1 People who are direct reports to the Director of Ministries (DOM) – the allegation or complaint needs to be made to the DOM who is required to discuss this allegation at the time of receipt with the Chairperson of the Council. The DOM and the Chairperson will be responsible for managing the complaint or allegation consistent with the Safe Church Policy and associated procedures.
 - 5.2 Allegations against the DOM, need to be made directly to the Chairperson of the Council who is required to discuss this the Council member appointed to assist the Chairperson with these sort of allegations. The Chairperson and the second Board member will be responsible for managing the complaint or allegation consistent with the Safe Church Policy and associated procedures.
 - 5.3 Allegations against any Council Member will be made to the Chairperson of the Council who is required to discuss this allegation with the DOM. It is the responsibility of the Chairperson and the DOM to manage the complaint or allegation consistent with the Safe Church Policy and associated procedures.
 - 5.4 Allegations against the Chairperson of the Council will be referred to the Council Member appointed to the position of addressing these issues. This Council Member will discuss with the DOM and together they will manage the complaint or allegation consistent with the Safe Church Policy and associated procedures.

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