

# Safe PBC Manual

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# 1 Purpose and introduction

This document outlines the policies, procedures and guidelines applicable to the operation of Parramatta Baptist Church (PBC).

The overarching premise of this document is that the safety of all people involved with PBC is paramount. We are committed to safe ministry practice which is God-honouring, person-valuing, respectful, and free from harm and abuse. Safe ministry is more than simply a risk management exercise or fulfilment of our legal obligations. Rather safe ministry is first of all an outworking of what James 1:27 calls true religion – caring for the vulnerable (widows and orphans), and an expression of what is required of all people, that is “to seek justice, love, mercy and walk humbly before our God” (Micah 6:8).

## 1.1 Safe Church Policy

We affirm that all people have the right to be emotionally and physically safe, respected, and have their views and opinions valued at all times. We also live in a country that legislates for people's safety.

God calls his body to minister to vulnerable people. God identified classes of vulnerable people who were to be protected and given special care and treatment in society because of their powerlessness (Exodus 22:21-22, Deuteronomy 10:17-19, Jeremiah 22:2-4, James 1:27).

Our policy (Attachment 1) has been developed to help us live out our Biblical mandate and our responsibilities under Australian legislation. The aims of the policy are:

- To minimise the risk of abuse, ministry misconduct and misuse of positional power within the church
- To ensure that leaders and programs are safe
- To ensure that all cases of suspected abuse (whether at PBC or external) and ministry misconduct are handled in a consistent, unbiased and thorough manner
- To ensure that all people are respected and valued, irrespective of their gender, age, country of origin, cultural heritage, socio-economic background or ability
- To minimise the risk of injuries on our church property and through our church activities.

The relevant documents that accompany the policy are shown below.

### 1.1.1 Procedures

- P01-01 Procedure for Responding to Child Protection Concerns
- P01-02 Procedure for Handling Complaints against Staff and Volunteers
- P01-02A Baptist Association Procedures for Handling Allegations (August 2017)
- P01-03 Reporting concerns (information sheet)

### 1.1.2 Forms

- P01-F01 Safe Church Concerns Report Form

### 1.1.3 Supplementary/model/reference documents

- 01-Model-Safe-Church-Policy-31012020.docx

- 02-Model-Procedure-for-Staff-and-Volunteers-31012020.docx
- 03-Model-Procedure-for-Conflict-Resolution-31012020.docx
- 04-Model-Procedure-for-Handling-Complaints-against-Staff-and-Volunteers-31012020.docx
- 05-Model-Procedure-for-Responding-to-Child-Protection-Concerns-ACT-31012020.docx
- 05-Model-Procedure-for-Responding-to-Child-Protection-Concerns-NSW-31012020.docx
- 06-Model-Code-of-Conduct-31012020.docx
- 07-Model-Safe-Church-Concerns-Form-31012020.docx
- 08-Model-Screening-Questionnaires-31012020.docx
- 09-Model-Safe-Church-Register-31012020.docx
- 09-Model-Safe-Church-Register-church-name-year-07022020.xlsx
- 10-Model-Safe-Church-Ministry-Information-Form-31012020.docx
- 11-Model-Safe-Church-Team-Role-Description-31012020.docx
- 12-Model-WHS-Team-Role-Description-31012020.docx
- 13-Guidelines-for-Activities-with-Children-and-Young-People-31012020.docx
- 14-Model-Communication-to-Third-Parties-31012020.docx
- 15-Model-communication-to-Affiliated-Entities-31012020.docx
- 16-An-Australian-Baptist-response-to-Persons-Of-Concern.pdf
- 16-Persons-of-Concern-Declaration-31012020.docx
- 17-Letter-to-Churches-re-Use-of-the-Title-Pastor-04102018.pdf
- NSW-ACT-Baptist-Churches-Code-of-Ethics-and-Conduct.pdf

## 1.2 Compliance requirements

We agree to comply with the Safe Church Minimum Compliance Requirements set out by the Baptist Association of Churches of NSW/ACT (Baptist Association). Those requirements (as at March 2018) and how we meet them are set out below.

Baptist Association Requirement	PBC response
1. Appoint a Safe Church Team (preferably including at least one male and one female) to assist the church with Safe Church compliance requirements and to ensure that any reports of harm are reported appropriately.	The Safe Church Team consists of Kathy Bates (Senior Pastor), Shayne Evans (Secretary) and Valdi Gravitis (Operations Manager).
2. Appoint a WHS team to oversee the implementation of Safe Physical Environments (including emergency procedures, risk assessments, privacy policy and safe food handling). The WHS team & paid pastors should complete the online Baptist Insurance Services WHS training.	The WHS team consists of Valdi Gravitis (Operations Manager).  All paid staff have completed the training.

<b>Baptist Association Requirement</b>	<b>PBC response</b>
3. Ensure that the church has adopted an appropriate Safe Church Policy which is accessible to the congregation.	We have a Safe Church Policy (Attachment 1) and a copy is posted in the foyer of the church.
4. Ensure that the church has formal procedures to recruit, screen, appoint, induct and review all paid and volunteer workers.	We have appropriate processes (see Sections 5 and 6 of this document).
5. Ensure that your church collects and verifies online a WWCC number for all staff members and volunteers prior to them engaging in child related work. A register of WWCC numbers should be kept for management and audit purposes.	Everyone over the age of 18 that is identified as working or volunteering in child related roles has a WWCC that is verified by a member of the Safe Church team and the details are stored in our church management database system.
6. Ensure that all those engaged in child related work, including ministry leaders, pastors, elders and deacons attend a Creating Safe Spaces (CSS) workshop (or another face to face workshop endorsed by the SCTA) once every 3 years. All those engaged in child related work should complete the online module of CSS prior to commencing in this role and should complete the face to face component within 9 months of commencing. A register of CSS workshop attendance should be kept for management and audit purposes.	<p>We meet this requirement; attendance is verified by a member of the Safe Church team and the information is stored in our church management database system.</p> <p>Additionally, we have extended it to include those who minister with vulnerable people, and we require the office bearers of the church (deacons and pastoral team) to attend Creating Safe Spaces training.</p>
7. Ensure that all volunteers sign and agree to the church volunteer code of conduct.	All volunteers are required to sign our Code of Conduct and the details are stored in our church management database system.

<b>Baptist Association Requirement</b>	<b>PBC response</b>
8. Ensure that permission/consent forms are received from parents/guardians for all children's and youth ministry programs, and that records (permission forms, attendance records, incident reports) are preserved for a minimum of 45 years.	We meet this requirement, our records are stored either as paper, electronic scans or within our church management database system.
9. Ensure that the church conducts a National Police Check for all paid pastoral staff members prior to commencement of employment.	This check has been incorporated into our recruitment process in September 2019 (see Section 6).
10. Ensure that all paid pastoral staff members sign the Baptist Association Code of Conduct.	We meet this requirement (see Section 6).
11. Ensure that the church has a formal grievance/complaints policy and procedure to manage any complaints received against staff or volunteers.	We meet this requirement (see Section 6).
12. Ensure that the church leadership has adopted and follows the Australian Baptist Ministries endorsed process to manage Persons of Concern or Known Sexual Offenders in the congregation.	We meet this requirement (see Section 4.3).
13. Ensure that all associated agencies (schools, child care, OOSH, foodbank etc) and any third party groups who hire church facilities and who provide services to children or young people (dance groups, tutoring etc) report to the church on an annual basis that they are committed to adhere to the Child Safe Standards.	The only relevant association at present is with Integricare. As a childcare centre they are mandatory reporters under the legislation. As of September 2019 we require an annual statement from them to the effect that they are committed to adhere to the Child Safe Standards.

## 2 Relationship with the Baptist Association

Parramatta Baptist Church is a member of the Baptist Association of Churches of NSW/ACT (Baptist Association).

The Association provides benefits in the form of skills, resources and relationships that contribute to the health and effectiveness of all member churches and affiliated groups. The Association is built on the natural give and take of interdependent relationships and provides economies of scale in many ministry areas.

The commonality across NSW & ACT allows for an amplified impact locally, regionally, nationally and internationally in a way that could not be achieved by a single church. Affiliated groups, through the Association, have contributed to international mission, local community aid and development, international aid and development, political and corporate gospel influence and much more.

Partnering together allows for greater support and development opportunities in almost all key areas including youth, children and family, administration, leadership and many others.

This support and development draws on expertise that many churches would not normally have access to and reduces duplication of tasks and workload in many churches. These combined resources cover many of the more technical areas of ministry such as human resources, taxation, licencing, standards, OHS and more.

Association activities also provide security and assurance across many areas including insurance for churches and ministries, affiliation processes, accreditation and recognition of ministers, assistance in creating safe churches and ministries and support during difficult times in church life.

### 3 Privacy

Under the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth), Parramatta Baptist Church is a small business operator, and therefore exempt from the application of the Australian Privacy Principles.

Also, Parramatta Baptist Church does not have an establishment in the EU, offer goods and services in the EU, nor monitor the behaviour of individuals in the EU. We are therefore exempt from the EU General Data Protection Regulation ("GDPR").

However, we believe in transparency and as a result this is our privacy statement:

1. Parramatta Baptist Church collects information about people during the course of their association with the church. The primary purpose of collecting this information is for reasons relating to administration, duty of care and pastoral care.
2. On occasions, names, addresses, phone numbers, email addresses or prayer points may be published in the church directory, weekly bulletins, promotional material, newsletters, rosters, the website, magazines, minutes of meetings or training programs.
3. Photographs and or video (with or without sound) may be published on our website and/or social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and YouTube.
4. We may disclose your details as necessary on a confidential basis to our Staff, Pastors, Deacons and leaders only for the purposes of church business or where the law requires the Church to do so.



5. Some of the information we collect is to satisfy our legal obligations, particularly to enable us to discharge our duty of care with children and young people.
6. Certain laws governing or relating to the operation of churches require that certain information is collected. These include Child Protection laws.
7. The church may from time to time disclose information to others for administrative and duty of care purposes. This may include disclosing information to other churches, outside organisations which run camps/excursions and people providing services/ministry to the church, including those involved in our Pastoral Care program.
8. We will not disclose your personal information to third parties for their own purposes without your consent.
9. By continuing to attend this Church, you consent to us using your information as detailed above.

## 4 Safe Programs

We run all our programs within our Safe Church framework. The Safe Church Policy and Procedures apply to all programs. Any concerns that arise will be reported in accordance with the policy and procedures. See Section 1.1.

### 4.1 Risk Management

Currently PBC does not have our own Risk Management Policy. Instead we adopt the Baptist Insurance Services (BIS) Church Risk Management document (Attachment 2). Additionally, we have a risk assessment tool that all programs must complete either on an annual or per event basis (depending on the nature of the program/event). The risk assessment is reviewed by the Operations Manager with the responsible person.

Copies of the Risk Assessments are stored electronically in the WHS folder.

### 4.2 Evacuation and Lockdown Policy

PBC recognises its moral and legal responsibility to ensure a safety plan and procedure in the event of:

- an emergency occurring that requires evacuation of Church buildings
- an emergency (external threat) to its occupants necessitating a lock-down to ensure a safe environment for its church community.

#### 4.2.1 Evacuation Plan

The primary objectives of the evacuation plan are to ensure that:

- Everyone leaves the building safely
- A procedure to safely evacuate individuals who cannot negotiate a safe exit without help is in place
- Emergency Evacuation Personnel are selected from among building occupants, with duties to ensure plan objectives are met.

For the purpose of the Plan, the following are emergencies for which a total or partial evacuation of a building is necessary:

- Fire
- Explosion
- Bomb threats

- Release of hazardous chemical substances, in quantities or toxicity, which threaten human health
- Building Air contamination.

The plan will be updated and exercised by conducting evacuation drills at least annually at all three Sunday services. The results are recorded and improvements made to the plan as warranted.

#### 4.2.2 Emergency Lockdown Plan

This Plan has been prepared to ensure orderly and complete lockdown of Church buildings whenever an emergency occurs. The primary objectives of the plan are to ensure that:

- Everyone remains secured and safe in the building
- Building occupants are accounted for after the lockdown has been given the all clear
- Emergency Lockdown Personnel are selected from among building occupants, with functions to ensure plan objectives are met.

For the purpose of this Plan, the following are emergencies for which a total or partial Lockdown of a building is necessary:

- Robbery
- Firearms
- Violent community member
- Suspicious person/s.

The plan will be updated as required and reviewed annually with the evacuation plan.

#### 4.2.3 Procedures

The plans are included at Attachment 3, they are:

- P02-01 Emergency Evacuation Plan
- P02-02 Emergency Lockdown Plan.

### 4.3 Persons of Concern

The situation may arise where a person of concern has been worshipping and been involved, or wishes to worship and be involved, in our church. While demonstrating genuine compassion and justice, we must take steps to protect the whole church community.

The Senior Pastor will follow the Australian Baptist process (Attachment 4) as endorsed by the Baptist Association. A person of concern declaration will be completed and approved by the Diaconate.

This process aims to ensure that all reasonable measures have been put in place to ensure safe ministry occurs with persons of concern. Australian Baptists are committed to safe ministry, i.e. God honouring, abuse free, harm free, person valuing and respectful ministry as per agreed national standards.

## 5 Safe volunteers

We have adopted the Baptist Association procedure for recruitment and screening of Staff and Volunteers. Refer to Attachment 5, Procedure for Staff and Volunteers.

### 5.1 Recruitment

Recruitment is not the same as screening. Recruitment is searching for a number of people who may fill a position whereas screening is choosing the most suitable person from those recruited.

Recruitment of volunteers is generally done by making requests of the congregation at large, or specifically to individuals or groups relevant to the role.

### 5.2 Screening

As we have different pathways of service and ministry there are some differences in the screening procedures. There are also common screening steps that apply to all positions.

### 5.3 Training

You will be appropriately trained for any role that you are placed in.

#### 5.3.1 Creating Safe Spaces training

All people engaged in child related work, including volunteers, ministry leaders, pastors, elders and deacons must attend a Creating Safe Spaces (CSS) workshop (or another face to face workshop endorsed by the SCTA) once every 3 years.

They should complete the online module of CSS prior to commencing in the role and should complete the face to face component within 9 months of commencing.

### 5.4 Code of Conduct

All volunteers (and staff) must sign the Code of Conduct and agree to abide by it.

### 5.5 Reporting Concerns

It is important for all concerns to be reported and responded to appropriately.

#### 5.5.1 If you suspect that there is a risk of harm or abuse to a person of any age

If someone tells you about abuse occurring, or you suspect abuse or risk of harm, report your concerns to the Safe Church team leader. They will determine further steps that may include a mandatory report to a child protection agency, accessing other appropriate help, pastoral care and support.

#### 5.5.2 If you are concerned about the conduct of a leader or a pastor

Should you have unresolvable conflict, grievances or allegations of misconduct, report these to the pastoral team leaders, who will follow the procedures arising from our Safe Church Policy.

Should your concern be with the pastoral team leader(s), report your concern to the Church Secretary who will follow the procedures arising from the Safe Church Policy. The matter will be investigated and resolution sought. In the case of serious allegations,

advice will be sought from the Manager – Ministry Standards, Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT.

### 5.5.3 If you are concerned about safety in the physical environment

Don't ignore a safety hazard. If you cannot make it safe, report it to the nearest team leader. If it is not urgent/unsafe, report it to the Operations Manager for investigation during the week.

## 5.6 Handling allegations and grievances

If you are made aware of an allegation or grievance, you must report it to your Ministry Leader (or to Kathy Bates if it concerns your Ministry Leader). It will be treated in accordance with the Safe Church Policy. All allegations and grievances should be treated as confidential.

# 6 Staff

## 6.1 Recruitment

We have adopted the Baptist Association procedure for recruitment and screening of Staff and Volunteers. Refer to Attachment 5, Procedure for Staff and Volunteers.

Aside from that, we currently do not have a documented recruitment process for all positions, but we follow a consistent process tailored to whether we are calling a pastor or support staff.

The main difference is that the congregation appoints pastors through a recommendation from the diaconate who receive a recommendation from a search committee. Students and non-pastoral staff are appointed by the diaconate.

The Baptist Association steps in managing the call process are generally followed, except that we do not mandate an MoU with each pastor.

As of September 2019 we also require a National Police Check for all paid pastoral staff members prior to commencement of employment.

## 6.2 Induction

The responsible Ministry Leader will undertake the induction process with new staff.

## 6.3 Employee Policy

The PBC Employee policy (refer Attachment 5) provides an overview of staff rights and obligations. It does not seek to nullify any rights or obligations imposed by relevant Federal or State bodies. It includes:

- Expectations regarding the conduct of employees
- Professional development
- Accountability and support of employees
- Leave entitlements
- Remuneration of employees.

## 6.4 Grievances

As per 5.5 and 5.6.

## **6.5 Termination**

No current policy.

## **6.6 Return to work**

The Return to Work Policy is included in Attachment 5.

## **7 Pastoral team leaders**

*[this section is under development]*

### **7.1 Relationship with diaconate**

### **7.2 Reporting/accountability**

The Senior Pastors report directly to the diaconate.

### **7.3 Appraisals**

## **8 Diaconate**

### **8.1 Recruitment**

### **8.2 Induction**

### **8.3 Skills matrix**

## **9 WHS**

Work Health and Safety is the responsibility of all staff, volunteers and contractors. If something appears unsafe you must:

- a) Make it safe if you are able to do so – this may involve fixing the issue or cordoning off the area
- b) If unable to make safe report it to your supervisor
- c) Report it (and actions taken) to the WHS Team (Operations Manager).

### **9.1 Training**

All paid staff must complete the online Baptist Insurance Services WHS training, and refresh that every three years.

Additional activity specific training must be provided where required by a policy or where deemed required by the WHS Team.

### **9.2 Implementation**

WHS issues are a standing agenda item at monthly team meetings and diaconate meetings. The WHS Team Leader will maintain a WHS issues register and report on it monthly.

WHS specific policies and procedures are drafted as required and are to be reviewed every three years. The current policies and procedures are listed below and included at Attachment 6.

### 9.2.1 Policies

- P03 Electrical Safety Policy
- P04 Food Preparation and Storage Policy
- P05 Baptistery Use Policy
- P06 Office Safety Policy
- P07 Buildings and Grounds Repair and Maintenance Policy
- P09 Hazardous Substances Policy
- P10 Manual Handling Policy
- P11 Working at Height Policy
- P12 First Aid Policy

### 9.2.2 Procedures

- P11-01 Use of Ladders

## 10 Finances

Finance is the domain of the Treasurer, with assistance primarily from the Operations Manager.

There is currently a project underway to document the Financial policies, procedures and guidelines; and to transition the Treasurers role away from transactional business (e.g. paying bills) to a more executive role in setting policy, budgets, reviewing spend and advising.

### 10.1 Prevention of crime

Large sums of cash are not to be kept on premises overnight. Offerings are not to be left in the church between morning and evening services. Offerings are to be kept in the lock box during the services and between morning services. The Process for collecting the Offering (see Attachment 7) is to be followed.

### 10.2 Budgets

Annual budgets are set by the Treasurer.

### 10.3 Reporting

The treasurer will report monthly to the diaconate on expenditure versus budget.

### 10.4 Salaries & remuneration

Refer to PBC Employee policy (Attachment 5).

## 11 Property

### 11.1 Conditions of use (Baptist Property Trust)

Our property is held in Trust for PBC by the Baptist Property Trust.

### 11.2 Hire

As a general rule, Parramatta Baptist does not hire out its facilities. The facilities are made available only for ministries connected with the Church and for use by members for

special events such as weddings. It is expected that when the facilities are used, they are left clean and ready for use.

Applications for use of the facilities must comply with the:

- Conditions of Use for Church Property (Attachment 8)

and where applicable:

- Part 2 of the Baptist Insurance Hire Agreement (Attachment 8A).

### **11.3 Equipment usage**

All equipment usage is to be in accordance with Section 9.

Any breakages/problems are to be reported to the Operations Manager.

### **11.4 Loaning equipment**

PBC equipment is not available for loan.

### **11.5 Contract workers**

Refer to P07 Building and Grounds Maintenance Policy (see Attachment 6)

## **12 Partnerships**

We have a number of key partnerships.

### **12.1 Integricare**

Integricare run the Early Learning Centre on our Northmead site.

### **12.2 PCC**

Parramatta City Church are a church plant from PBC into the heart of Parramatta. They were planted in September 2017 and we still have strong ties with them.

### **12.3 HOVC**

Hope for Orphans & Vulnerable Children (HOVC) is a community development program in Kisoro, Uganda. We strive to help and empower kids, their families and the broader community who are living in extreme poverty.

## Attachments

1	<p>P01 Safe Church Policy</p> <p>Code of Conduct</p> <p>P01-01 Procedure for Responding to Child Protection Concerns</p> <p>P01-02 Procedure for Handling Complaints against Staff and Volunteers</p> <p>P01-02A BA Procedures for Handling Allegations</p> <p>P01-F01 Safe Church Concerns Form</p> <p>P01A Reporting Concerns Factsheet</p> <p>BA Safe Church documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 01 Model Safe Church Policy</li> <li>• 02 Model Procedure for Staff and Volunteers</li> <li>• 03 Model Procedure for Conflict Resolution</li> <li>• 04 Model Procedure for Handling Complaints against Staff and Volunteers</li> <li>• 05 Model Procedure for Responding to Child Protection Concerns NSW</li> <li>• 06 Model Code of Conduct</li> <li>• 07 Model Safe Church Concerns Form</li> <li>• 08 Model Screening Questionnaires</li> <li>• 09 Model Safe Church Register</li> <li>• 09 Model Safe Church Register (xlsx)</li> <li>• 10 Model Safe Church Ministry Information Form</li> <li>• 11 Model Safe Church Team Role Description</li> <li>• 12 Model WHS Team Role Description</li> <li>• 13 Guidelines for Activities with Children and Young People</li> <li>• 14 Model Communication to Third Parties</li> <li>• 15 Model communication to Affiliated Entities</li> <li>• 16 An Australian Baptist response to Persons Of Concern</li> <li>• 16 Persons of Concern Declaration</li> <li>• 17 Letter to Churches re Use of the Title Pastor</li> <li>• NSW ACT Baptist Churches Code of Ethics and Conduct</li> </ul>
2	Baptist Insurance Services (BIS) Church Risk Management document
3	<p>Emergency plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• P02-01 Emergency Evacuation Plan</li> <li>• P02-02 Emergency Lockdown Plan</li> </ul>
4	<p>An Australian Baptist Response to Persons of Concern</p> <p>Persons of Concern Declaration</p>



5	<p>PBC Employee policy</p> <p>Procedure for Staff and Volunteers</p> <p>Return to Work Policy</p> <p>Screening Questionnaires</p>
6	<p>WHS policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• P03 Electrical Safety Policy</li> <li>• P04 Food Preparation and Storage Policy</li> <li>• P05 Baptistry Use Policy</li> <li>• P06 Office Safety Policy</li> <li>• P07 Buildings and Grounds Repair and Maintenance Policy</li> <li>• P09 Hazardous Substances Policy</li> <li>• P10 Manual Handling Policy</li> <li>• P11 Working at Height Policy</li> <li>• P12 First Aid Policy</li> </ul> <p>WHS procedures:</p> <p>P11-01 Use of Ladders</p>
7	<p>Process for collecting the Offering</p>
8	<p>Conditions of Use for Church Property</p> <p>Baptist Insurance Hire Agreement</p>