

Safe Church FACILITATOR GUIDE

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Welcome!

We sincerely appreciate your commitment as a facilitator and your dedication to being a role model in fostering a Safe Church culture. Thank you for your willingness in investing your time, effort and skills in our Church communities.

At the heart of Safe Church is our commitment to:

ENSURING ALL PEOPLE EXPERIENCE THE LOVE OF GOD IN SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENTS.

The Safe Church training plays a vital role in raising awareness and equipping individuals to create and uphold this culture within their Congregation or Faith Community.

This guide provides essential information to support you in your role as a Safe Church facilitator. Please take the time to review it carefully and please reach out to the Safe Church Team (details above) if you have any questions.

Modules

Our Safe Church training includes 7 modules. All facilitators are able to deliver modules 3-5, and you would have been approved to deliver Lay modules (1-2) and/or Ministry Agent modules (6-7). The required modules for an individual to complete can be found on page 3 of [C2.1.11 Safe Church Training Procedure](#). Below is the recommended order to deliver the training. Thicker lines indicate suggested longer breaks between sessions.

Module	Overview	Length
1 - SC Introduction (Lay People)	Understanding the Safe Church culture, safeguarding responsibilities and acceptable and unacceptable behaviours.	65mins
2 - SC Foundations (Lay People)	Identifying and responding to disclosures of abuse, neglect, grooming. External reporting required especially for young or vulnerable.	60mins
3 - SC Planning Safe Programs (Lay People & Ministry Agent)	Essential components when planning events – questions to consider and documents to complete. It includes information about online ministry requirements (social media, livestreaming etc).	60mins
4 - SC Managing People & Records (Lay People & Ministry Agent)	Record keeping – what needs to be kept and for how long. Process for new applicants – steps required, resources available. Supporting and managing volunteers.	60mins
5 - SC Person of Concern (Lay People & Ministry Agent)	Identifies who a Person of Concern is and the process to follow if one begins attending Church or a person at Church becomes a Person of Concern.	60mins
6 - SC Foundations (Ministry Agent)	A combination of Introductions (Lay People) and Foundations (Lay People) modules with additional information for Ministry Agent (due to Covenantal Relationship and external reporting requirements).	90mins
7 - SC Mandatory Reporting (Ministry Agent)	Workshop style using scenarios for Ministry Agents to discuss, considering practical steps in responding and reporting.	60mins

Additional training (external and sometimes NDIS Worker's Orientation) is also required, however not offered directly.

renewal



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Resources

Resources for each module are available for download from The Hub. The material can be adapted to meet attendee needs, while maintaining the integrity of the training. Resources can be printed in colour or greyscale.

Module Pack Inclusions	
Facilitator Guide (module specific)	<p>The module-specific guides include:</p> <p>Resource list for the session, broken into required, optional and reference.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required – Please print or have digital access to documents for each person. • Optional – your choice to print (especially depending on delivery of quizzes etc). • Reference – Not used during the training but may be helpful to have if questions arise. <p>Script which is a duplicate of the PowerPoint presenter notes. Intended as a guide, with additional points that may not be included on the slide. Please familiarise yourself prior to delivering the training.</p> <p>Discussion moments (such as ‘pause and reflect’) are indicated in orange. There is flexibility in how these can be run with options such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussing in pairs. • Splitting into small groups (either people nearby or intentionally moving to find a group). • Individual reflection. • Asking a few groups if they would like to share their thoughts with everyone. <p>Square brackets [] or ‘optional’ are hints for you as the facilitator. Some include question prompts, additional information or possible answers. Please use at your discretion.</p> <p>Quiz at the end with the aim to check for understanding and to assist with explaining or reinforcing the correct answers as needed. You could use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions listed on the slide and small groups have a moment to discuss one question and verbally respond. The correct answer will be displayed on the next slide. Repeat for the remaining questions. • Paper quiz for each individual person. Answers could be marked as a group (recommended) or papers collected to be marked at the end. <p>Completion QR code for Ministry Agents only. Available at the end of the quiz. This should be completed by EACH Ministry Agent to confirm they have completed the course. This information can be directly accessed by Presbyteries so they can monitor completion.</p> <p>Information for the Hub and Safe Church contact details are on the last slide. If not providing handouts, we recommend you encourage them (in at least one module) to take a photo of it or write the information down so they can refer to it.</p>
PowerPoint	Includes content on the screen, presenter notes (identical to inclusions in the module specific facilitator guide) and videos embedded. In SC Introduction (Lay) and Foundations (Ministry Agent), there is an optional link to show them the Hub.
Handout	<p>The handouts are intended as a reference document after the training. You may wish to print for the training, email to participants or direct people to the Hub.</p> <p>Key things included in the handouts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe Church contact details at the top. • Codes and links to documents referred to in the training, and for ongoing use. • Module-specific content. • Mandatory reporting QR code and phone numbers so everyone can easily access it.

Quiz Questions	If using the paper quiz, print one per person and consider having pens available). Otherwise not needed as these are included on the PowerPoint slides or participants can scan the QR code to access the online quiz (individually or in groups).
Quiz Answers	If using the paper quiz and marking individually. Otherwise not needed as these are included on the PowerPoint slides or marked automatically if participants use the online quiz.
**Activity	Optional and applicable for Introduction (Lay) / Foundations (Ministry Agent) modules. This activity is to be used in a group, brainstorming what a Safe Church looks like, feels like and sounds like, and noting answers down. Optional to share suggestions with the whole group.
**Scenario	Applicable for Mandatory Reporting (Ministry Agent) module. 1-2 needed per group.

Additional Resources	
Training Register	<p>Used to collect a list of those present (Lay and Ministry Agents) at in-person training sessions (or if training videos are watched as a group). Includes name, Church, module/s completed, date and facilitator name. This can be paper or digital (such as responses from an online form that are checked on arrival at the session) and a copy is to be retained by the facilitator in a secure location.</p> <p>Modules 1-5 – Lay People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A copy/email of register is to be sent to the Church as they manage these records. If people from multiple Churches attend, please respect privacy and only include the names of those attending that Church (e.g. sort the excel sheet by Church and copy relevant rows, or redact/snip rows from a scanned training register). An Excel document containing the Safe Church Coordinator/contact at each Church will be emailed to facilitators by the Safe Church team. This list is not to be duplicated, and the email addresses used purely for the purpose of sending through the training register. <p>Modules 3-7 – Ministry Agents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry Agents should scan the QR code and complete the form (slide at the end of the quiz) for each module so Presbyteries can access these details. A copy of the register may be requested by the Presbytery in exceptional circumstances.
Feedback Forms	Feedback Forms for attendees are available as a digital copy (with printable QR code available) or as a paper version (located in '00 Facilitator Information' on the Hub). The feedback applies to training as a whole rather than module-specific feedback (although people can indicate module-specific comments in their responses). Digital feedback is accessible by the Safe Church team who will review periodically.

Reinforcing our Safe Church culture

As a facilitator, you are a role model in this space. We encourage you to continue modelling our culture, understanding:

- Safe Church is loving God and serving people through upskilling and raising awareness about the safety of others.
- Reporting of any concerns is essential for the safety of all. This includes the small things and near misses.
- The aspects people are asked to do (training, processes, forms, record keeping etc) aim to lower risks of what could go wrong, enabling us to also meet legislative and insurance requirements.
- We want people to be able to serve and volunteer, in the right role for their passions and skills.
- Positive approaches to training will help encourage a culture shift in willingness to learn and be equipped.

Before the session

- Connect with Congregations or Faith Communities to organise specifics of the training session (including availability of space, equipment, technology, refreshments etc).
- If desired, create an online registration form including name, email, Church and modules attending.
- Presbyteries notify of training session through the [Safe Church Training Calendar](#) and directly with Churches.
- Print and organise relevant resources (detailed on the next page) for the number of attendees.
- Familiarise yourself with the content, including the PowerPoint (with facilitator notes, or the module-specific facilitator guide) and required documents. Practice the presentation if needed.

Set-up at the session

- Arrive early to set up the space.
- Set up registration area to either confirm digital registration or record attendees using the training register.
- Set up and test all audio and visual equipment.
- Test the videos (SC Introduction (Lay) or SC Foundations (Ministry Agent) modules).
- As people arrive, establish positive expectations, welcome people to the training and introduce yourself.

Starting the session

- Welcome participants.
- Complete on-site orientation if needed (e.g. location of bathrooms, exits and meeting point for evacuations).
- Share an Acknowledgement of Country or Welcome to Country at the beginning of the first session. Please note an Acknowledgement of Country is included as a video in the SC Introduction (Lay) and Foundations (Ministry Agent) modules.
- Establish training expectations – respectful language, engagement in session, active listening, when people can ask questions (e.g. recommend at the end of a slide), phones on silent, key signal to regain attention etc.

During the session

Engaging attendees:

- Bring a positive tone to the session through words, tone and expressions.
- For discussions, you may suggest people talk with someone different each time, inviting movement around the room.
- During discussions, move about the room. This helps you know what is being discussed and can allow you to provide prompting questions if needed.
- After discussions, you can discern whether to invite 1-2 responses, or simply move on.
- Take short breaks as needed. Encourage people to stand and move.

Responding to questions:

- Ask for questions to be kept for the end of the slide/section.
- Acknowledge if a question will be answered in a different module.
- If specific to one person/situation, suggest they ask the question during a break and continue with the session. This ensures they feel heard, will have an opportunity to ask the question, and helps to stay on-track.
- Answer questions that you are confident with.
- Suggest attendee looks at a document on the handout that connects with this topic.
- Be honest and transparent with questions you are unsure of the answer to, or if it needs an interpretation of the policy that is unclear. Encourage people to contact the Safe Church team via email or phone (details on the final slide, and included in the handout).
- After the training, if you are also interested in the answer, connect with the Safe Church team.

Strategies:

- Keep on-track to ensure you meet general time targets. Including:
 - Keep examples relevant and short.
 - Determine when to move on from discussions or questions that arise.
 - Pause and reflect aimed to be a 2-minute chat to share ideas and consolidate thoughts.
- Determine methods to clearly signal end of discussion times, such as a key word, clear warning to 'finish their sentence', count down from 5 etc.

Dealing with unproductive behaviour:

Difficult behaviour is often unintentional and may occur because people's emotions are high. Some participants may engage in side conversations which are distracting to others. You may also have repetitive negative statements or disrespectful behaviours because someone has a personal agenda. Progressive intervention will most often assist in dealing with these behaviours:

- Move the focus away from the person – using gentle and appropriate humour, a change in activities.
- Restate the training session expectations directly.
- Direct your questions to the individual for clarification, or reflect their statement back to them as a question. E.g. "it *always* happens?"
- Seek help from the group – asking the group for their view of the situation and then moving the group on.
- Address the issues at a break time or at the end of the session.

Ending the session

- Thank the attendees for their engagement and desire in fostering our Safe Church culture.
- Thank the host location and people who have assisted (even in general if you are afraid you will forget someone).
- Provide the feedback form (one per session, not per module) through QR code or paper copy.
- Reinforce contact details for Safe Church, especially for any questions that need a specialised answer.
- As people may leave at different times, ensure these aspects are done after each module (as needed).

After the session

- Email attendance (training register or date, list of names and respective modules completed) to the Church/es.
- Reflect on the session and use the [form](#) to pass along ideas from your perspective.
- Review attendee feedback. Remember this is not aimed at you directly, rather the Safe Church training as a whole, and use it to develop, grow and provide feedback to the Safe Church team as needed.
- Debrief as needed with another facilitator, or the Safe Church team using the details at the top of the first page.

Definitions/Explanations

Elaborations of phrases or acronyms aimed to help your understanding or provide a background for explanations.

Applicant	A person who is interested in becoming a volunteer connected with the Church or Church program. They must go through the screening and approval process prior to being able to volunteer or work in respective roles.
Blue Card	<p>Refers to a Blue Card or Exemption Card (sometimes only Blue Card is mentioned) for a Working with Children check. Exemption Cards are the equivalent check for professions such as teachers, childcare, education or police.</p> <p>Ministry Agents need a Blue Card. Those with a stipend are 'conducting own regulated business as a religious representative' due to the Covenantal Relationship and therefore need a <i>Business</i> Blue Card. Further details in the Foundations (Ministry Agent) handout.</p>

Breach Register	<p>Document designed for internal identification and resolution of actions that do not comply with the requirements of the Safe Church policy (i.e. pre-appointment screening, Safe Church training, annually signed Statement of Personal Commitment/Statement of Commitment (Ministry Agent), valid and linked Blue Card for any child-related roles).</p> <p>If an aspect is not met, it needs addressing, recording in breach register, and the Church Council should be informed. For example, a breach would be a person's Statement of Personal Commitment (SOPC) is out of date, and the action would be the person stopping all volunteering until they have signed a new SOPC.</p> <p>This reflects requirements outlined by the Queensland Government to meet the 8 key mandatory requirements of the risk management strategy (i.e. the Safe Church policy), one of which is a strategy for managing breaches.</p>
Church Management Software	Online software (or application) used to capture information about attendees (name, contact details), groups involved in, events (including attendance), forms to complete, service planning etc. Generally, is subscription based. Examples include UCare, Elvanto, Planning Centre etc.
External Training	Training to be completed annually addressing topics related to safeguarding vulnerable people . Examples can be found on the Hub and periodically in Uniting News. This must be completed annually from the beginning of 2026 (2025 is a year of transition, where people are encouraged to complete it. E.g. if they complete it in October 2025, they won't need to complete it again until October 2026.).
Mandatory Reporting	<p>Refers to required internal and external reporting requirements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are different processes for Lay and Ministry Agents. • Internal reporting ('Speak Up!' QR code/link/phone call). Submitted reports are accessible to review and action through Protecht (see below). • External reporting directly to required government agency. Ministry Agents to complete 'threshold test' to discern if and where an external report needs to be made. This should be done without delay.
POC	Person of Concern. Full definition outlined in ' responding to a person of concern ' procedure or POC module.
Protecht	<p>Online platform used across the Synod for WHS, risk, property, compliance and reporting. Up to 4 people per Congregation/Faith Community will have a log in, generally allocated to Ministry Agent, Church Council Chair, Property Coordinator and Safe Church Coordinator.</p> <p>Through this platform, alerts will be sent to respective people to notify of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports received (abuse, neglect, hazard, property damage etc). • Compliance audits (Safe Church Audit, fire alarm or electrical tests etc). • Property repairs needed. <p>Actions and reports can be updated accordingly as progress is made.</p>
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	People (e.g. childcare, teachers, police officers) can request recognition of some Safe Church modules if equivalent topics were covered in their workplace. The documents C2.1.6 and C2.1.6.1 outline the process.
Records	<p>Records to be kept securely. Digital records can be kept on "the cloud" or alternatively ensure a back up exists (so if something happens to a computer, there is another copy).</p> <p>If a church closes, follow the Presbytery and Congregation Historical Records Advice.</p>
Record Management	Most Churches have systems to manage records from private information to attendance records. If they do not have a system that is secure, they are encouraged to modify their processes (often this is a small change, not a massive overhaul).

Information from forms and events must be kept for the specified periods, not only from a Uniting Church perspective, but due to alignment with legislation requirements.

If you feel confident, you can ask what their current practices are, and if it aligns with the information outlined in 'Managing People & Records', confirm it is acceptable. Otherwise suggest modifications that will help to improve. However, if you do not feel confident (or due to time), please encourage them to connect with the Safe Church team. They will respond, or may pass this along to the Presbytery Support Unit who can support Churches with strategies for managing records that align with the Church's current practices.

SC	Safe Church.
SOC	Statement of Commitment (Ministry Agents or those available for Supply).
SOPC	Statement of Personal Commitment (Lay People).
Speak Up!	<p>Initiative across the Synod for reporting concerns (internally) – illness, injury, abuse, neglect, grooming, boundary violations, hazards, incidents, near misses, property damage.</p> <p>Once a report is made through the QR code or link or via phone, this will start a process where the relevant person at each Congregation/Faith Community will be notified, as well as the Presbytery and/or Synod Office where relevant.</p>
UCare	A subscription-based Church management software that can be used for managing information about people, attendance, events, forms and documents. It has capability to store some records and registers and is great for events. The Synod Office provides some assistance with the platform.
