



## Obligations of lay workers and volunteers not in child-related roles

C/2.1.10.2

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### Purpose

This document outlines the specific obligations held by all lay workers and volunteers of the Church where no child-related activities are occurring.

### Scope

This information applies to all lay workers and volunteers of the Church where no child-related activities are occurring. The information in this document complements the [Overseeing Safe Ministry procedure](#).

### Mandatory Reporting

The [Mandatory Reporting Process for Ministry Agents](#), and the [Mandatory Reporting Process for Lay Workers and Volunteers](#), outlines the steps to take to ensure you are fulfilling your duty of care, by reporting incidents of suspected abuse, grooming or neglect. A copy of each of these documents is available on the [synod website](#).

### Definitions

#### 1. Child-related role

- 1.1. A person is considered to be 'working or volunteering with children' under state legislation if that person undertakes a paid or volunteer activity as defined below:
  - 1.1.1. The volunteer or lay worker is aged 18 years or over.
  - 1.1.2. Child-related activities are those activities or programs which are provided **only or mainly to** children.
  - 1.1.3. Note that worship services and other activities aimed at only or mainly families, are not child-related activities, with the exception of some tasks that meet the threshold of a 'religious representative' defined below.
- 1.2. If your role is not a child-related role, but you start supervising a volunteer under the age of 18. For example:
  - 1.2.1. You coordinate the property maintenance. You do not usually need a blue card in this role, as this is not a child-related activity.
  - 1.2.2. However, this year you have a volunteer aged 16 that has commenced volunteering, and whom you oversee.
  - 1.2.3. You are now undertaking a child-related role, as you are directly supervising this volunteer's work, and the volunteer is under 18.
  - 1.2.4. You must now meet the obligations required for all volunteers in a child-related role.

For more information refer to the document [Obligations of lay workers and volunteers in child-related roles](#).



## 2. Volunteer

- 2.1. A person is considered to be a volunteer if that person is aged over 18 years, and undertakes a volunteer activity on a regular basis, such that:
- 2.1.1. The person undertakes a volunteer task, on more than 7 calendar days per year; or
  - 2.1.2. The person is scheduled to undertake a volunteer activity or task on a regular basis, i.e. is part of a roster for that volunteer task or activity

## 3. Threshold as a 'religious representative'

- 3.1. Under the Act, all persons considered to be a 'religious representative' must hold a valid linked Blue Card or Exemption Card. Therefore, once the following threshold has been reached, the person is required to hold a Blue Card or Exemption Card and must complete additional SMC Lay Training. This requirement remains the same for congregations which do not offer child-related activities.
- 3.2. The threshold - Once a volunteer performs the following ministerial functions on **more than** seven days in a calendar year:
- 3.2.1. Preach and/or lead worship in their own congregation; or
  - 3.2.2. Preach and/or lead worship in any other worship services (including weddings and funerals); or
  - 3.2.3. Preside at the sacraments; or
  - 3.2.4. Perform any systematic pastoral care
- 3.3. For example:
- 3.3.1. A person is not a lay preacher as defined under *The Uniting Church in Australia Regulation 2.2.3*.
  - 3.3.2. However, the person takes on one or more of the above tasks or roles (*section 3.2*) on a regular or ongoing basis as there is no ministry agent in placement at their congregation.
  - 3.3.3. This person **must** comply with the additional requirements in *Section 3.1*, as they are now considered a 'religious representative'.

## 4. Junior Volunteers

A child or young person aged between 12 years and 18 years may undertake a volunteer activity as a junior volunteer after participating in a pre-appointment screening process suitable for their age, maturity, and ability.

## Obligations

### 5. Mandatory Reporting

- 5.1. All lay workers and volunteers (aged over 18 years) **must** report all suspected abuse, neglect or grooming. Follow the [Mandatory reporting Process for Lay Workers Lay Preachers and Volunteers](#), keeping a written record on the [template for complaints and allegations](#).

### 6. Training

- 6.1. All lay workers and volunteers must comply with the [Safe Church Training procedure](#), and complete the following training:
- 6.1.1. Module 1 – Mandatory Training for Lay Workers Lay Preachers and Volunteers every 2 years
  - 6.1.2. Role specific training every 2 years (check the Safe Church Training procedure for more information)
- 6.2. From the age of **15 years onwards**, all junior volunteers deemed to have the **appropriate level** of maturity and ability may complete:
- 6.2.1. Module 1 – Mandatory Training for Lay Preachers, Lay Workers and Volunteers. This training should be completed every 2 years.



7. Governance

7.1. You must complete and sign a [Statement of Personal Commitment](#) every year.

8. Ongoing Support

8.1. Participate in a [New Starter Check-In](#) for all new volunteers

8.2. Participate in an [Annual Well-Being Check-In](#) each year

### Exceptions which ***do*** require a Blue Card

Refer to *Section 1* and *Section 3* of this document, for examples of situations where a blue card is required.

### Information and support

Information and support can be obtained from the Safe Church Assurance and Support Officer on 0491 491 227 or [safeministrywithchildren@ucaqld.com.au](mailto:safeministrywithchildren@ucaqld.com.au)

Most training materials are now available online, using the Synod's Learning management System (LMS) edUcate. For information or support to access online training, please contact the [Learning Team](#): 07 3377 9990 or [learning@ucaqld.com.au](mailto:learning@ucaqld.com.au)

### Revisions

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3.0	08.07.2022	Strategic Risk Manager	08.07.2022	ED Strategic Resources and Assurance	Safe Church Assurance and Support Officer
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