



Obligations for retired Ministry Agents who are volunteering or available for supply

C/2.1.10.4

Purpose

To provide a structure and outline the obligations required to comply with the [Safe Ministry with Children \(SMC\) Policy](#).

Scope

This applies to all retired ministry agents of the Church who are available for supply or remain 'active' post-retirement in volunteer or paid roles or activities. The information in this document complements the [Overseeing Safe Ministry procedure](#).

Legislative requirements

These obligations comply with requirements of the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000*, the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2020*, and the *Criminal Code (Child Sexual Offences Reform) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2020*. It also aligns with the ten (10) National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, the *Uniting Church in Australia's (UCA) National Child Safe Policy Framework 2022*, the *UCA National Person of Concern Policy Framework 2020* and the *UCA Child Safe Screening National Policy Framework 2020*.

Mandatory Reporting

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

Definitions

1. Threshold as a 'religious representative'

- 1.1. 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.
- 1.2. **The threshold** - Once a volunteer performs the following ministerial functions on **more than seven days** in a calendar year:
 - 1.2.1. Preach and/or lead worship in their own congregation; or
 - 1.2.2. Preach and/or lead worship in any other worship services (including weddings and funerals); or
 - 1.2.3. Preside at the sacraments; or
 - 1.2.4. Perform any systematic pastoral care
- 1.3. **For example**, a person is not a lay preacher as defined under The Uniting Church in Australia Regulation 2.2.3. However, for this example, the person takes on one or more of the above tasks or roles (section 3.1 above) on a regular or ongoing basis as there is no ministry agent in placement at their congregation. In this example, the person has taken on extra tasks, but is not a lay preacher. This person must comply with the additional requirements described above, as they are now considered a 'religious representative'.



2. Child-related role

- 2.1. A person is considered to be 'working or volunteering with children' under state legislation if that person undertakes a volunteer activity as defined below:
 - 2.1.1. The volunteer or lay worker is aged 18 years or over.
 - 2.1.2. Child-related activities are those activities or programs which are provided **only or mainly to** children.
 - 2.1.3. 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.
 - 2.1.4. If your role is not a child-related role, but you start supervising a volunteer under the age of 18.
- 2.2. For example:
 - 2.2.1. You coordinate the property maintenance. You do not usually need a blue card in this role, as this is not a child-related activity.
 - 2.2.2. However, this year you have a volunteer aged 16 that has commenced volunteering, and whom you oversee.
 - 2.2.3. You are now undertaking a child-related role, as you are directly supervising this volunteer's work, and the volunteer is under 18.

3. Worship Leading

- 3.1. Worship leading or preaching is not in itself a child-related activity, as the activity is aimed at the whole congregation, and is not a specifically child-related activity. Therefore, no blue card is required for a volunteer that is rostered to preach or lead worship, providing the volunteer does not preach or lead worship for more than 7 days in a calendar year.
- 3.2. However, if the threshold is met, then the retired ministry agent is deemed to be a 'religious representative' under legislation and must meet additional requirements and obligations in *Section 1*.

Obligations

4. Mandatory Reporting

- 4.1. All retired ministry agents must follow the [mandatory reporting process for lay workers](#), keeping a written record on the [template for complaints and allegations](#). This is the same as the requirement for all volunteers. You **must** make a report to the police in all cases where:
 - 4.1.1. sexual abuse or grooming has occurred,
 - 4.1.2. you suspect that sexual abuse or grooming has occurred,

5. Volunteering in a child-related role

- 5.1. If you are a retired ministry agent volunteering in a role which includes activities with children, you are required to hold a **Volunteer Blue Card**.
- 5.2. You must sign a [Statement of Personal Commitment](#) each year.
- 5.3. You must comply with the [Safe Church Training procedure](#), and complete the following training:
 - 5.3.1. Module 2 – Core SMC Training for Lay Workers Lay Preachers and Volunteers every 12 months
 - 5.3.2. Module 1 – Mandatory Training for Lay Workers Lay Preachers and Volunteers every 2 years
 - 5.3.3. Role specific training every 2 years (check the Safe Church Training procedure for more information)



- 5.4. You should complete at least one hour of external training each year, if you are volunteering in a child-related role.
6. **Volunteering (not a child-related role)**
- 6.1. If you are a retired ministry agent volunteering in a role that is not child-related (see the definition in *Section 2*), then you **do not** need a Blue Card.
- 6.2. You must sign a [Statement of Personal Commitment](#) each year.
- 6.3. You must comply with the [Safe Church Training procedure](#), and complete the following training:
- 6.3.1. Module 1 – Mandatory Training for Lay Workers Lay Preachers and Volunteers every 2 years
- 6.3.2. Role specific training every 2 years (check the [Safe Church Training procedure](#) for more information)
7. **Unpaid preaching or worship leading**
- 7.1. If you are a retired ministry agent volunteering to preach or as a worship leader, you must have a Volunteer Blue Card once you meet the threshold in *Section 3*.
- 7.2. You must sign a [Statement of Personal Commitment](#) each year.
- 7.3. Once you meet the threshold in *Section 3*, you must comply with the [Safe Church Training procedure](#), and complete the following training:
- 7.3.1. Module 1 – Mandatory Training for Lay Workers Lay Preachers and Volunteers every 2 years
- 7.3.2. Role specific training every 2 years (check the [Safe Church Training procedure](#) for more information)
8. **Unpaid pastoral care duties**
- 8.1. If you undertake unpaid pastoral care duties as a retired ministry agent, you must hold a Volunteer Blue Card once you meet the threshold in *Section 1*.
- 8.2. You must sign a [Statement of Personal Commitment](#) each year.
- 8.3. You must comply with the [Safe Church Training procedure](#), and complete the following training:
- 8.3.1. Module 1 – Mandatory Training for Lay Workers Lay Preachers and Volunteers every 2 years
- 8.3.2. Role specific training every 2 years (check the [Safe Church Training procedure](#) for more information)
9. **Occasional paid tasks**
- 9.1. If you undertake occasional paid tasks as a retired ministry agent, once you have met the threshold in *Section 3*, then you must hold a Paid Blue Card or transfer your Volunteer Blue Card to a Paid Blue Card.
- 9.2. You must sign a [Statement of Personal Commitment](#) each year.
- 9.3. You must comply with the [Safe Church Training procedure](#), and complete the following training:
- 9.3.1. Module 1 – Mandatory Training for Lay Workers Lay Preachers and Volunteers every 2 years
- 9.3.2. Role specific training every 2 years (check the [Safe Church Training procedure](#) for more information)
10. **Commence Supply**
- 10.1. If you commence supply, as a retired minister, then you must hold a Business Blue Card for the period that you are providing supply, and you are now defined as a 'ministry agent'. Undertaking a supply role, has the same requirements and obligations as all ministry agents in a placement. Please refer to the [Obligations for Ministry Agents](#) document.
- 10.2. You must enroll in the SMC ministry agent training as soon as possible prior to/upon commencing your supply role.
- 10.3. You must complete and sign a [Ministry Agent Statement of Commitment](#).



10.4. Please follow the [Mandatory Reporting Process for ministry agents](#), keeping a written record on the [template for complaints and allegations](#).

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.

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.

Revisions

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