



Safe Church Training Procedure

C/2.1.11

Purpose

This procedure provides a structure and outlines the training requirements to comply with the [Safe Ministry with Children \(SMC\) Policy](#).

Scope

This procedure applies to all lay workers, lay preachers, volunteers, ministry agents, and SMC Training Facilitators within the Queensland synod, including those working with children.

Legislative requirements

This training procedures complies 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*.

1. Training requirements:

- 1.1. Staff and volunteers receive annual external training and information on matters involving children and vulnerable persons including how to recognise indicators of harm including harm caused by other children or vulnerable persons.
- 1.2. Staff and volunteers are trained and supported to effectively implement the organisation's Safeguarding Vulnerable person's policy. The organisation provides regular opportunities to educate and train staff on safeguarding policies and procedures and evidence-based practice.
- 1.3. The organisation has a Code of Conduct which provides clear guidelines for staff and volunteers on expected behavioural standards and responsibilities at all times and in all situations.
- 1.4. Staff and volunteers are attuned to signs of harm in the vulnerable cohort they work or interact with.
- 1.5. Training: Staff and volunteers have a good knowledge of the different ways children and vulnerable persons express concerns or distress and disclose harm.
- 1.6. Staff and volunteers identify & mitigate risks in the online, offline, onsite and offsite environments, including the structural and physical environmental risks (buildings) taking into consideration rights around privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.

Mandatory Reporting

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

Definitions

2. Child-related role

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. The volunteer or lay worker is aged 18 years or over.
- 2.2. Child-related activities are those activities or programs which are provided only or mainly to children.
 - 2.2.1. Note that worship services and other activities aimed at only or mainly adults or families, are not child-related activities, with the exception of some tasks that meet the threshold of a 'religious representative' defined in *Section 5*.
- 2.3. If your role is not a child-related role, but you start supervising a volunteer under the age of 18. For example:
 - 2.3.1. You coordinate the property maintenance. You do not usually need a blue card in this role, as this is not a child-related activity.
 - 2.3.2. However, this year you have a volunteer aged 16 that has commenced volunteering, and whom you oversee.
 - 2.3.3. You are now undertaking a child-related role, as you are directly supervising this volunteer's work, and the volunteer is under 18.

3. Volunteer

A person is considered to be a volunteer, for child-related activities, if that person is aged over 18 years, and undertakes a volunteer activity on a regular basis, such that:

- 3.1. The person undertakes a volunteer task, on more than 7 calendar days per year; or
- 3.2. The person is scheduled to undertake a volunteer activity or task on a regular basis, ie is part of a roster for that volunteer task or activity

4. Junior Volunteer

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.

5. Threshold as a 'religious representative'

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 Lay Training specific to this role. This requirement remains the same for congregations which do not offer child-related activities.

- 5.1. The threshold - Once a volunteer performs the following ministerial functions **on more than seven days in a calendar year**:
 - 5.1.1. Preach and/or lead worship in their own congregation; or
 - 5.1.2. Preach and/or lead worship in any other worship services (including weddings and funerals);
or
 - 5.1.3. Preside at the sacraments; or
 - 5.1.4. Perform any systematic pastoral care
- 5.2. 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'.

6. External Training

- 6.1. All people in a child-related role should complete **at least** one hour of external training per year, additional to the offered SMC training.



- 6.2. External training must cover topics relevant to safeguarding vulnerable people and is to be recorded on the LMS [edUCate](#):
 - 6.2.1. For example, regular online training sessions are advertised via Weekly Wrap and Uniting News and offered in partnership with UCA Redress Ltd and the National Safe Church Unit and meet this requirement.
 - 6.2.2. Online training sessions usually run for one hour each, and cover topics such as Domestic and Family Violence, safeguarding children, Trauma Informed Practice, Managing Vicarious Trauma

Training requirements for ministry agents

7. SMC Training

- 7.1. The following training sessions must be completed **annually** by each ministry agent:
 - 7.1.1. Module 2 – SMC face-to-face Ministry Agent Training
- 7.2. All ministry agents should complete at least one hour of external training each year, additional to Code of Ethics training (*see Section 6*).
- 7.3. The following training sessions must be completed upon/prior to appointment and then **every 2 years** by each ministry agent:
 - 7.3.1. Module 1 - SMC Ministry Agent Training
 - 7.3.2. Module 7 - Responding to a Person of Concern (POC)
 - 7.3.3. Module 12 – Providing Safe Online Ministry
 - 7.3.4. Module 13 – Practising Shared Guardianship (Preventing Abuse)

Training requirements for lay workers and volunteers in child-related roles

8. SMC Training

- 8.1. All lay workers and volunteers (aged over 18 years), must complete the following training sessions every 12 months:
 - 8.1.1. Module 2 – Core Training for Lay Preachers, Lay Workers and Volunteers
- 8.2. All lay workers and volunteers in child-related roles should complete at least one hour of external training each year (*see Section 6*).
- 8.3. The following training sessions must be completed upon/prior to appointment and then **every 2 years** by each lay worker and volunteer:
 - 8.3.1. Module 1 – Mandatory SMC Training for Lay Workers Lay Preachers and Volunteers
 - 8.3.2. Role specific: Check the training matrix attached to this document and ensure that you complete all training required for your role.

9. Junior Volunteers

- 9.1. From the age of **15 years onwards**, all junior volunteers deemed to have the **appropriate level** of maturity and ability may complete Module 1 – Mandatory Training for Lay Preachers, Lay Workers and Volunteers. This training should be completed every 2 years.

Role specific training (child-related roles)

10. Lay Preachers

- 10.1. All lay preachers must complete the following upon/prior to appointment and then every 12 months:
 - 10.1.1. Module 2 – Core Training for Lay Preachers, Lay Workers and Volunteers
- 10.2. All lay preachers should complete at least one hour of external training each year (*see Section 6*).



- 10.3. Complete the following SMC Training for Lay Workers Lay Preachers and Volunteers every two years:
- 10.3.1. Module 1 – Mandatory SMC Training for Lay Workers Lay Preachers and Volunteers
 - 10.3.2. Module 4 – Planning Safe Programs
 - 10.3.3. Module 5 – Managing People
 - 10.3.4. Module 6 – Record Keeping
 - 10.3.5. Module 12 – Providing Safe Online Ministry
 - 10.3.6. Module 13 – Practising Shared Guardianship (Preventing Abuse)

11. Church Councils and Presbytery Committees

- 11.1. All lay members must complete the following upon/prior to appointment and then every 12 months:
- 11.1.1. Module 2 – Core Training for Lay Preachers, Lay Workers and Volunteers
- 11.2. All lay members should complete at least one hour of external training each year (*see Section 6*).
- 11.3. All lay members must complete the following additional role specific training upon appointment and then every two (2) years:
- 11.3.1. Module 1 – Mandatory Training for Lay Preachers, Lay Workers and Volunteers
 - 11.3.2. Module 13 – Practising Shared Guardianship (Preventing Abuse)
 - 11.3.3. Module 12 – Providing Safe Online Ministry
 - 11.3.4. Module 6 - Record-keeping
 - 11.3.5. Module 5 – Managing People
 - 11.3.6. Module 4 - Planning Safe Programs
- 11.4. In addition to training detailed in 11.1, 11.2 and 11.3, all lay Chairpersons must complete the following role specific training upon appointment and then every two (2) years:
- 11.4.1. Module 7 - Responding to a Person of Concern

12. Training Facilitators – Lay/Volunteer Training

- 12.1. Training Facilitators must complete the following training sessions every 12 months:
- 12.1.1. Module 2 – Core Training for Lay Preachers, Lay Workers and Volunteers
- 12.2. All Training Facilitators **must** complete at least one hour of external training each year (*see Section 6*).
- 12.3. Training facilitators must complete all training updates required for their role, as directed by the Safe Church Assurance and Support Officer. For example, a new lay/volunteer course, or a change of legislation.
- 12.4. Once appointed, all SMC Training Facilitators need to go through SMC Training Facilitator training every 3 years to maintain currency.

13. Training Facilitators – Ministry Agent Training

- 13.1. Training Facilitators must complete the following training sessions every 12 months:
- 13.1.1. Module 2 – SMC face-to-face Ministry Agent Training
 - 13.1.2. Code of Ethics Training
- 13.2. All Training Facilitators **must** complete at least one hour of external training each year (*see Section 6*), additional to Code of Ethics training.
- 13.3. Training facilitators must complete all training updates required for their role, as directed by the Safe Church Assurance and Support Officer. For example, a new ministry agent training course, or a change of legislation.
- 13.4. Once appointed, all Training Facilitators must complete SMC Training Facilitator training every 3 years to maintain currency.



Training requirements for lay workers and volunteer roles (not child-related)

14. Volunteer and lay training

- 14.1. The following training sessions must be completed upon/prior to appointment and then every 2 years by each lay worker and volunteer:
- 14.1.1. Module 1 – Mandatory SMC Training for Lay Workers Lay Preachers and Volunteers
 - 14.1.2. Role specific: Check the training matrix attached to this document and ensure that you complete all training required for your role.

15. Junior Volunteers

- 15.1. From the age of **15 years onwards**, all junior volunteers deemed to have the **appropriate level** of maturity and ability may complete Module 1 – Mandatory Training for Lay Preachers, Lay Workers and Volunteers. This training should be completed every 2 years.

Role specific training (not child-related)

16. Lay religious representative

- 16.1. These obligations relate to *Section 5*. Where the threshold in 5.1 has been met, the following training **must** be completed at once, and then every 2 years:
- 16.1.1. Module 1 – Mandatory SMC Training for Lay Workers Lay Preachers and Volunteers
 - 16.1.2. Module 2 – Core SMC Training for Lay Workers Lay Preachers and Volunteers
 - 16.1.3. Role specific: Check the training matrix attached to this document and ensure that you complete all training required for your role.

17. Church Councils

- 17.1. For Church Councils deciding not to offer child-related activities, refer to the document [Obligations for Church Council not offering child-related activities](#).
- 17.2. All lay members must complete the following training upon appointment and then every 2 years:
- 17.2.1. Module 1 – Mandatory Training for Lay Preachers, Lay Workers and Volunteers
 - 17.2.2. Module 5 – Managing People
 - 17.2.3. Module 4 - Planning Safe Programs
- 17.3. In addition to training detailed in 17.2, all lay Chairpersons must complete the following role specific training upon appointment and then every two (2) years:
- 17.3.1. Module 7 - Responding to a Person of Concern

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

Document number		C/2.1.11			
Version	Approval date	Approved by	Effective date	Policy owner	Policy contact
1.0	15.07.2022	Strategic Risk Manager	30.07.2022	Executive Director Strategic Resources and Assurance	Safe Church Assurance and Support Officer
Next scheduled review		30.07.2027			

THIS DOCUMENT IS UNCONTROLLED WHEN PRINTED.



Training Matrix

Church Roles	Module 1: Mandatory Training for Lay Preachers Lay Workers & Volunteers	Module 2: Core Training for Lay Preachers Lay Workers & Volunteers	Module 3: Overseeing Safe Ministry	Module 4: Planning Safe Programs	Module 5: Managing People	Module 6: Record-keeping	Module 7: Responding to a Person of Concern	Module 12: Providing Safe Online Ministry	Module 13: Practising Shared Guardianship	Module 14: Refresher Training	External Training
*Pastoral Care Coordinator	✓										
Lay Pastor/ Lay Preacher	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Boys/Girls Brigade Leader	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓		✓
Safe Ministry with Children Coordinator	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Team Leader (not child-related role)	✓			✓	✓						
Youth Coordinator	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
Worship Coordinator (not child-related role)	✓			✓	✓						
Children's Church Coordinator	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
Creche Coordinator	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓		✓
Volunteer's Coordinator (not child-related role)	✓				✓						
Compliance Officer	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Event Coordinator (not child-related role)	✓			✓							
Property Coordinator (not child-related role)	✓										
Safety Coordinator/WHS Officer	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Admin Officer (not child-related role)	✓					✓					
Person of concern monitor	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓		✓
Mainly Music Coordinator	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓		✓
Playgroup Coordinator	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓		✓
<u>Other</u> : eg Front Door Welcomer, Morning Tea/Caterer, Op Shop Volunteer	✓										

*The role of Pastoral care Coordinator varies widely across the Synod. For specific advice, please contact the Safe Church Assurance and Support Officer.

	Training to be completed upon/prior to appointment, and then every 12 months
	Training to be completed upon/prior to appointment, and then every 2 years
	External training – a minimum of one hour to be completed every 12 months.