



Managing People

C/2.1.2

Purpose

Guidance for Church Councils on recruiting and supporting individuals capable of demonstrating the values and behaviour necessary to represent and serve the Church safely as both paid workers and volunteers. Outlines specific obligations to comply with the [Safe Church Policy](#), [Privacy Policy](#), and the Synod [Wide Blue Card Policy](#).

Scope

Applies to all lay workers (paid and volunteer) in congregations, faith communities, and presbyteries of the Church.

Inclusion and support

Please let us know how we can work together better, to ensure everyone can connect, contribute, and belong. Ph 07 3377 9983 or safechurch@ucaqld.com.au.

Increasing accessibility

1. Promoting a shared understanding

- 1.1. Any applicant may request to have a support person, or cultural or linguistic representative present for the application process. The discussion or interview should not proceed without this support person present.
- 1.2. For individuals with English as their second language, those with communication barriers such as hearing impairments, and individuals from diverse cultural or linguistic backgrounds, a translator service or person may be necessary to facilitate shared understanding during discussions. Ensure that the translator is suitable and available for the task
- 1.3. Prior written approval of the full costs associated with the use of a Translator service, must be obtained from the Church Council prior to using a Translator service. If the use of a Translator Service is approved by the Church Council, ensure that the service is available at the requested time, as an appointment may be required, and failure to book a suitable appointment time may result in additional costs.
- 1.4. All applicants aged under 18 years should have a parent, guardian or carer present during any discussions, and parental consent must be obtained prior to proceeding with any interview or discussion.
- 1.5. It's crucial to ensure that the application process itself does not act as a barrier and does not deter potential volunteers from participating. Consider the appropriateness of gender and culture, and provide alternatives to written communication, such as in-person conversations or online services like Zoom.
- 1.6. Make sure to obtain consent before taking notes during the discussion, and ensure that all parties present sign a copy of the discussion notes, which should then be kept on file.

2. Junior Worker role

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



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- 2.2. Junior Workers or Junior Leaders are not required to adhere to the Mandatory Reporting Process for Lay Workers, Lay Preachers, and Volunteers. They are not responsible for reporting suspected abuse, neglect, boundary violations, or grooming, especially if they are minors themselves. However, Junior Leaders should report any concerns to the activity or team leader if they notice something is not right.
- 2.3. The responsibilities and prerequisites of volunteer positions may restrict some adults from serving the Church or their community. The flexibility provided by the junior worker (or 'Church Helper') role may be utilised for adult volunteers who would otherwise be excluded from volunteering. All adult volunteers assuming a Junior Worker role must possess a valid linked blue card if they are working with children. Junior Workers must receive a copy of the Statement of Personal Commitment to complete and sign annually.

3. Annual Assessment of Junior Workers and Junior Leaders

- 3.1. When Junior Leaders and Junior Workers reach the age of 15 years, assess whether they have the necessary level of maturity and capability to complete Safe Church Training safely. It is suggested that this evaluation be conducted as part of the Annual Well-Being Check-in.

Selection Process – new volunteer

4. Suitability

- 4.1. Each stage of the application process should be approached with prayerful consideration of the applicant's gifts and skills, their suitability for the role, and the Church's needs.
- 4.2. Before any person can work or volunteer, screening processes must occur, prior to appointment by the Church Council. This includes:
 - 4.2.1. [Written](#) or verbal application and declaration
 - 4.2.2. [Interview](#)/conversation
 - 4.2.3. [Referee checks](#) with two referees
 - 4.2.4. Linked blue card or exemption card (if working or volunteering with children, or holding a Church Council position)
 - 4.2.5. Suitability to apply for a blue card or exemption card (if working or volunteering with anyone vulnerable)
 - 4.2.6. Appointment to the role by the Church Council
 - 4.2.7. Complete and sign a [Statement of Personal Commitment](#)

Procedure

5. Assess the application

- 5.1. Upon receiving the application, assess whether additional information is needed from the applicant to clarify the details provided.
- 5.2. If receiving a verbal application, obtain permission to take notes during the discussion. Use the Volunteer Application Form or the [Junior Volunteer and Church Helper Application Form](#) as a guide to ask questions and facilitate the discussion to obtain the relevant information. A verbal application or expression of interest is to be treated as a valid application to become a volunteer.
- 5.3. For junior applicants ensure that the parent, guardian, or carer has given consent, and is available to participate in the interview process. For junior applicants that are adults, ensure that a guardian, carer or support person is present if appropriate.
- 5.4. An outcome in relation to the application must be provided to the applicant.

6. Interview the applicant

- 6.1. A template (Volunteer Record of Interview) to use for conducting an interview with a potential volunteer has been developed as a guide. Advise the applicant that you will be taking notes throughout the discussion.



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7. Speak with referees

- 7.1. A template (Volunteer Record of Referee Checks) to use for conducting an interview with a referee has been developed as a guide. Follow the prompts in this guide when speaking with each referee. There is space in this document to write notes regarding your discussion with each referee.

8. Additional steps for roles working or volunteering with children

- 8.1. Individuals with a negative notice or who are excluded or disqualified from obtaining a Blue Card check in any state or territory of Australia are prohibited from working or volunteering with children or vulnerable people. For further details, please refer to the Blue Card requirements for Lay Preachers and Lay Workers.
- 8.2. If the person receives a negative notice, follow the Responding to a Person of Concern procedure. The person **will not** be approved to work or volunteer with children, **nor** with anyone vulnerable.
- 8.3. Determine if the applicant is suitable to work with children and able to complete the tasks required. List any supportive measures to be put in place. Refer to [Sample Role Descriptions](#) for suitable tasks and duties.

9. Additional steps for roles working or volunteering with anyone vulnerable

- 9.1. All individuals wishing to volunteer with vulnerable individuals must fill out and sign the 'Applicant Declaration' in the Volunteer Application Form, confirming their suitability to work with vulnerable individuals, including children. Approval for volunteering must not be granted until this declaration is completed and signed.
- 9.2. All workers (paid and volunteer) seeking roles, with adults and young people with disabilities, must complete the free [Worker Orientation](#) training module available from the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. Register for a free eLearning account and record all training in the Register of Volunteers.
- 9.3. Determine if the applicant is suitable to work with anyone vulnerable and able to complete the tasks required. List any supportive measures to be put in place.

10. Determine the outcome of the application and interview process

- 10.1. Confirm your determination with the church council members who will formally include the approval or otherwise of the appointment in Church Council meeting minutes.
- 10.2. If an applicant has received a negative notice or declared reasons why they are not suitable to work or volunteer with anyone vulnerable, the Church Council must be provided with the information in order to make a determination whether further action is required. The Church Council may make a determination that:
 - 10.2.1. The person may be a [Person of Concern](#)
 - 10.2.2. The person may be suitable to volunteer in other activities or programs where there are no children, or vulnerable persons
 - 10.2.3. The person may not be suitable to work or volunteer for the Church
- 10.3. If an applicant is deemed unsuitable for the role, this should be communicated in a sensitive way (with pastoral follow-up) and other more suitable roles or ways to serve or use their gifts suggested, if appropriate.
- 10.4. Advise the applicant of the decision.
- 10.5. Provide a copy of the Statement of Personal Commitment (SOPC) for the person to complete and sign.
- 10.6. Give the original application and attachments to the Church Council Secretary marked 'CONFIDENTIAL' for document storage.



11. Letter of appointment

- 11.1. Provide the applicant/new worker with a letter of appointment. A [Sample Letter of Appointment](#) is available as a guide.

Alternate Selection Processes

12. Nominated and appointed volunteer

- 12.1. Sometimes people are nominated and then appointed to roles, for example, in the case of Church Council membership.

13. Volunteer responding to a need

- 13.1. Sometimes a prayerful request for support is communicated, and a person may then feel prayerfully compelled to respond to this request.

Procedure for alternate selection process

14. Complete the screening process

- 14.1. Ensure that the person meets the requirements in *Sections 8 and 9*, if the role requires a Blue Card, as is the case for all Church Council positions.
- 14.2. It is still a requirement that screening, and support occur. The following processes must occur:
- 14.2.1. Complete the [New Starter Check-In](#) process to record a discussion of the person's gifts, motivation to serve the Church and community, their skills and past experience that they bring to the position, and their commitment to Safe Church. Include any information about support to help them grow their skills in their new role.
- 14.2.2. Note the date of the discussion on the Register of Workers (RoW) and keep a record of the discussion, using the New Starter Check-In document.
- 14.3. Follow *Sections 10 and 11* above to complete the screening process.

Ongoing support processes

15. Supported and valued

- 15.1. The process of ongoing support includes the following events and resources:
- 15.1.1. New Starter Check-in
- 15.1.2. [Annual Well-Being Check-in](#)
- 15.1.3. Corrective action
- 15.2. Regular communication and support should occur with all workers. The New Starter Check-in and Annual Well-Being Check-In processes have been designed as point in time tools to facilitate communication and support.
- 15.3. Maintaining accurate training records as a people manager, is important. All workers must have current training. Some roles require training to be completed annually.

New Starter Check-in – new volunteer

16. Process

- 16.1. The New Starter Check-in follows a simple interview process. The tool provides a list of questions to be asked of the new worker. Both the worker and the person conducting the interview sign the form on completion.
- 16.2. Note the inclusion of a parent, support person, cultural or linguistic representative on the form. Ensure that all parties in attendance sign the form.



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- 16.3. Once complete, the form must be provided to the church council secretary to be stored along with the worker's other documents, and the RoW updated.

Annual Well-Being Check-in

17. Description

- 17.1. This process can be formal or informal.
- 17.2. This process can occur as a group check-in with workers at least annually. Workers can identify other areas which they would like to grow their gifts, change roles, or seek other ways to serve the Church and community.
- 17.3. Record the date of the Annual Well-Being Check-in in the RoW.

18. Process

- 18.1. This discussion aims to gather information about the worker's experiences – both positive and negative, how they contribute to ministry and areas for further development.
- 18.2. A shared plan can be developed so that any agreed goals to enhance the worker's ability to fulfil their role can be achieved in the next 12 months
- 18.3. An Annual Well-Being Check-in must be completed for each worker every 12 months and recorded in the RoW.

19. Additional resources

- 19.1. A Liturgy for commissioning leaders, can be utilised as a way to recognise worker contributions each year.

Corrective action

20. Process

- 20.1. When performance, conduct or behavioural issues arise, follow the [Responding to Complaints and Concerns](#) process.
- 20.2. Follow the [Mandatory Reporting process for Lay Preachers and Lay Workers](#) ensuring you are meeting your legal obligations and fulfilling your duty of care to report any breaches or boundary violations, as well as any suspected abuse, neglect or grooming.

Information and support

Information and support can be obtained from the Safe Church Assurance and Support Officer on 07 3377 9983 or safechurch@ucaqld.com.au

[Safe Church training](#) can be completed online, using the Synod learning platform, [edUCate](#). Please contact the Learning and Development Team at learning@ucaqld.com.au or 07 3377 9734, for more information or to obtain this access.

Revisions

Document number		C/2.1.2			
Version	Approval date	Approved by	Effective date	Policy owner	Policy contact
5.0	16.05.2024	General Manager Risk and Safeguarding	16.05.2024	General Manager Risk and Safeguarding	Safe Church, Assurance and Support Officer
Next scheduled review		16.05.2026			