



mountpleasant
baptist church

SAFE CHURCH MANUAL

**POLICY, GUIDELINES AND
PROCEDURES**



Mount Pleasant Baptist Church

Safe Church Manual

Policy, Guidelines and Procedures

Version 1.0 May 2017

Our Safe Church Policy, Guidelines and Procedures

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- Western Australia Police Information Release Centre
- National Council of Churches in Australia Safe Church Training Agreement
- Baptist Insurance Services Risk Management Guide for Churches
- Work, Health and Safety Act 2011

Our Safe Church Policy

Mount Pleasant Baptist Church (MPBC) is committed to providing and maintaining a safe, healthy and productive environment for workers and other persons involved in its congregations and associated activities. There are both theological and legislative obligations to ensure people are valued, treated well and provided with a safe and healthy church environment.

The MPBC Safe Church Policy has been developed to ensure that all leaders, participants and programs are safe, and that all people are respected and valued irrespective of gender, age, country of origin, cultural heritage, socio-economic background or ability.

To achieve this MPBC will have guidelines and procedures in place to ensure both people and programs are safe. Set out below is a summary of our direction under three headings:

1. Safe People
2. Safe Ministry Programs
3. Policy Oversight and Management

Safe People

- All prospective Senior Church Leadership, Ministry Leaders and staff will be carefully recruited and screened. The standard Recruitment and Selection process in the MPBC Personnel Manual will be followed.
- All Senior Church Leadership, Ministry Leaders, and staff involved in child-related ministry or financial matters will be required to apply for a National Police Certificate. Where deemed appropriate all other staff will be required to apply for a Volunteer National Police Certificate.
- All prospective volunteers in leadership positions will be carefully selected and asked to complete a Volunteers Registration Form and where deemed appropriate, to apply for a Volunteer National Police Certificate.
- All Ministry Leaders, staff and volunteers taking part in ministries involving children and youth will be required to obtain a Western Australia Working with Children Check, and a Volunteer National Police Certificate (or a National Police Certificate).
- All Ministry Leaders, staff and volunteers will be required to read and abide by the MPBC Safe Church Policy, Guidelines and Procedures Manual.
- MPBC commits to ongoing leadership training, supervision and support for all leaders.
- MPBC will respond promptly with a clear process to each concern raised about the behavior of its Ministry Leaders, staff, volunteers and members of the congregation, in relation to grievances, and allegations of abuse and misconduct.

- MPBC will provide supervision of and pastoral accountability to any person of concern in the congregation who is known to have abused a child or another vulnerable person.

Safe Ministry Programs

- MPBC will manage the physical and emotional risks associated with all church ministry programs and events, as far as is practical and reasonably possible, to ensure safety for all participants and leaders.
- MPBC will require all those in ministry leadership to be nurturing and affirming in their ministry interactions, to demonstrate good leadership practices and to serve with integrity.
- MPBC will require all Ministry Leaders to exercise duty of care through the use of forms, checklists and risk analysis to ensure safe ministry environments, which will include processes for the reporting of all incidents and concerns. A similar process will exist for every short term or one-off event, and for every new program under consideration.

Policy Oversight and Management

- MPBC will appoint a Safe Church Administrator to oversee the MPBC Safe Church Policy, its implementation and on-going development.
- MPBC will regularly assess the effectiveness of its Safe Church policy and procedures, and ensure the church family are aware of it and kept up to date with revisions.
- All leaders and members of the congregation will have opportunity and process to contribute to and comment on Safe Church policy and procedure.

Part 1: Safe People

Our hearts are to welcome all people and make our church a safe place for everyone. Our intent is to live out our ministry roles with integrity and passion exhibiting the fruit of the Spirit of Christ – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control.

It is essential that the congregation is kept safe and secure, and has confidence in the people who lead in the church. Those who lead, in either a paid or voluntary capacity, must have other people's best interests at heart and fully understand their positions of power, trust and influence. MPBC will do all that is reasonably practicable to ensure we have safe leaders in all positions of leadership.

MPBC will have appropriate procedures in place for recruitment, supervision, training and support of all leaders, whether paid or voluntary, as well as processes for dealing with ministry misconduct, sexual harassment and abuse, and people of concern in the church. Set out below are our procedures under six key headings:

1. Recruitment

Staff

A thorough recruitment, screening and selection of leaders is crucial for Safe Church ministry. Recruitment and screening is the responsibility of the senior leadership of the church and all appointments should be made by the Board or Senior/Executive Pastor as appropriate.

- The Senior Pastor and Executive Pastor are to be appointed by the Board and Church Family consistent with the Church Constitution, and all Ministry Leaders along with supporting staff are to be appointed by the Senior Pastor and Executive Pastor.
- All staff appointments at MPBC are to be made in accordance with the Recruitment and Selection process detailed in the current Human Resource Manual. The Manual contains further information on induction procedure, conditions of employment, leave policy, employee health and safety, and performance management which should be referred to by all new staff.
- All staff appointments will be screened through police clearance checks. The following groups of people will require a National Police Certificate (NPC):
 - Senior Leadership
 - Ministry Leaders
 - Those holding positions in finance
 - Those holding positions in youth or child-related ministries
- Other staff serving in ministry areas outside of their job description will be required to apply for a Volunteer National Police Certificate.

- All staff working directly with children or young people will require a Western Australia Working with Children Check.
- All staff will have a clear written job description and be given an annual review, following procedure outlined in the Human Resource Manual.

Volunteers

Volunteers are people who perform services or functions for the church for no financial reward. To run effectively many ministries of the church rely on volunteer helpers performing a wide range of tasks. They are a precious resource worthy of help, protection and guidance from the church, but as leaders in the church they too need to be carefully recruited, screened and supervised to ensure those in their care remain safe.

MPBC has three categories of volunteers

- Volunteers in leadership roles (e.g. Youth Clarity Leaders, Care Ministry Team Leaders)
- Volunteers in child-related ministries (e.g. MPK helpers, Youth Clarity leaders)
- Volunteers in ministries involving vulnerable adults (e.g. Seniors, Flourish)

All prospective volunteers at MPBC will be required to:

- Be approved by the Ministry Leader responsible for the area of ministry in which they will be serving. The Ministry Leader needs to ensure that the volunteer is capable of performing the assigned tasks well and safely.
- Have been a regular part of the MPBC congregation for a set period of time before volunteering. Three to six months is considered best practice, but this is to be at the discretion of MPBC and the relevant Ministry Leader who need to have sufficient understanding of their personal qualities, spiritual qualities and other capabilities to ensure they are suitable for the role they are to fill.
- Complete the relevant forms and checks. In all the above categories volunteers will be asked to fill in the appropriate Volunteer Registration Form, apply for a Western Australian Working with Children Check (if working with minors under 18) and a Volunteer National Police Certificate.
[Appendix B: Forms – **Volunteer Registration Form**]
[Appendix C: Documents – **Working with Children Check Policy and Volunteer National Police Certificate Policy**]
[Accompanying **Ministry Volunteer Manuals**]
- Agree to background referencing being undertaken by MPBC with at least two people in their immediate past.
- Undergo any training, induction or initial supervision required for the role, and be prepared to accept the authority and decisions of the Ministry Leader (or their representative). The role, task and expectations of the position, along with guidelines for appropriate behavior for leaders in the ministry area, should be clearly stated.

- Read and agree to abide by the MPBC Safe Church Manual: Policy, Guidelines and Procedures, and any relevant Codes of Conduct for the ministry area in which they are serving.
- Be aware of the processes that exist for reporting incidents and concerns.
[Appendix B: Form – **Incident Response Form**]
- Be open to regular review of their volunteer position to ensure effectiveness, and to offer an opportunity to discuss ongoing availability in the role.

2. Good Leadership Practices

Leadership behaviour, or people's perception of that behaviour, can present a risk to the Church. Leaders are role models and their personal conduct should be beyond reproach - they must set a good example at all times, and not just when in their ministry role. Demonstrating Christian behaviour, ethics and compliance with the church's moral code are extremely important to avoid providing conflicting messages to those in their care. Leaders have the power to influence people and their behaviour, but this power must not be abused.

MPBC requires all leaders, both paid and voluntary, to agree to follow good leadership practices:

- Leaders need to take care of their own physical, mental and spiritual well-being. They should maintain a healthy relationship with God through prayer, bible study, fellowship in the church, and giving of time and talents to the work of the church as an expression of gratitude to God.
- Appropriate boundaries are important. Leaders need to be sure they know when they need to act as a leader as opposed to a friend, and be able to guard against fulfilling their own inter-relational needs with those to whom they minister.
- Leaders need to be aware of the influence they have on others – people notice how leaders conduct themselves in regards to issues of integrity and accountability in all matters. This includes how they behave, their standards of dress, their use of words and language, their own family relationships and financial dealings. It covers their sensitivity and confidentiality when dealing with personal information, how they view and use electronic communication, their use of social media and the internet, and their attitudes to intellectual copyright.
[Appendix A: **Guidelines for Safe Ministry**]
- Be diligent in exercising ministry and ensuring the safety and welfare of those in their care. They should be welcoming and affirming of others as individuals, and sensitive and respectful towards family and cultural traditions different from their own. Activities should be carefully chosen ensuring adequate supervision given age, gender, ability and cultural appropriateness.

3. Supervision and Support for Leaders

While thorough recruitment practices are essential, ongoing supervision, support and review of leaders are important aspects of due diligence. It is equally important that all leaders have a clear understanding of who they can go to for support, what type of support is available to them, and how to identify the most appropriate additional support.

A Ministry Leader is responsible for all programs and workers (paid and voluntary) in their ministry area, to ensure they operate according to the Personnel and Safe Church Manuals, receive appropriate training and supervision in their roles, and are resourced with the appropriate tools and equipment to perform their role. They are also the first port of call when a worker needs support, further help in their role, or has concerns regarding people or the environment in which they minister.

The Senior Leadership oversees the Ministry Leaders and plays an important role in supporting and encouraging them through regular meetings and communication. Senior Leadership also provides a link to, and is in regular communication with, the Board.

Developing and training leaders ensures healthy teams. This can be done through regular team meetings, praying and planning together as well as more formal training in relevant knowledge and skills.

4. Ministry Misconduct

MPBC has guidelines in place to deal with allegations of misconduct, sexual harassment or criminal activity against anyone in a leadership position in the Church. These guidelines will be clearly communicated to all staff and volunteers, and all allegations will be followed up and investigated. These guidelines are as follows:

- All allegations against leaders, paid or voluntary, must be made in writing to the relevant Ministry Leader, Senior Pastor or Executive Pastor, via the Incident Response Form.
*[Appendix B: Forms – **Incident Response Form**]*
- Occasional minor violations should be handled with love and gentleness. The Senior Pastor or relevant Ministry Leader should speak with the person(s) involved in order to resolve and seek to stop the wrong conduct, and if this is not successful the person may be asked to step aside from their position.

1 John 1:8-9 says: "If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

- When an allegation is more serious or frequent but not a breach of civil or criminal law, the Senior Pastor or relevant Ministry Leader should meet with the person for a series of behavior review meetings and communicate the behavioral changes required. If this is not successful a small group of church leaders will arrange a meeting to address the behavior, and the person will step aside from the position for a set period, during which counselling will be offered to help behavioral change.
- If deemed necessary a neutral mediator may be appointed to deal with the reported allegation(s). All relevant available evidence, both supporting and refuting the allegation, must be considered and reasonable inquiries and assessment of disputed facts undertaken. A course of action will then be determined based on the evidence gathered by the mediator, and the severity of the allegation

Matthew 18:15-17 says: "If your brother or sister sins go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector."

- Allegations of abuse, serious misconduct or when a crime is committed need to be reported to BCWA and the police as soon as possible.
- In all misconduct cases, strict confidentiality must be maintained, and written notes of all meetings carefully taken.
- Contact with the media following serious incident or misconduct matters should only be by the Senior Pastor or Executive Pastor.

5. Managing Harassment and Abuse

MPBC will not tolerate any form of harassment or abuse from its leadership, staff or congregation. Any concerns made to leadership at any level will be referred to the senior church leadership (if it involves one of these key leadership positions it will be referred to the Chairman of the Board of MPBC) and should be reported using an Incident Response Form. At all times MPBC will respond appropriately to every concern raised, and will do everything possible to provide a safe environment in order to reduce the chance of incidents occurring.

*[Appendix B: Forms – **Incident Response Form**]*

This covers all incidences of sexual or physical abuse, harassment or bullying, discrimination, the abuse of power, and the misuse of electronic communication or social media that can harm, offend, intimidate or humiliate another person

Leaders should be aware of the signs of abuse and harassment in all areas of vulnerable people – children, the physically and mentally impaired, the elderly, and even personal boundary violations within a congregation by leaders. The

key areas of abuse leaders need to be aware of include neglect, physical abuse, emotional and psychological abuse, sexual abuse, and witnessing domestic violence.

[Appendix 3: Documents: **Types and Indicators of Abuse**]

Leaders should note that most reported incidences of harassment and abuse occur in the context of a relationship of trust, as exists in a church family.

Reporting child abuse

There are reasonable grounds to report abuse if:

- A child tells you they have been or are at risk of being abused.
[Appendix A: Guidelines for Safe Ministry; **Safe Disclosures**]
- Being made aware that a child who has been or is at risk of being abused.
- You have concerns that the child may have been or is at risk of being abused based on their physical appearance or behavior.

Report all suspected or actual child abuse to a Ministry Leader or senior church leadership using an Incident Response Form. In the case of suspected abuse simply report your reasonable suspicions or concerns of abuse, including the grounds for your concern.

[Appendix B: Forms – **Incident Response Form**]

Once a report of harassment, abuse or other concerns has been made and an Incident Response Form completed, senior church leadership will take appropriate action depending on its nature and level of severity:

- In Western Australia mandatory reporting requirements do not apply to everyone. It is a legal requirement for doctors, nurses, midwives, teachers and police officers to report all reasonable beliefs of child sexual abuse to the Department for Child Protection (DCP). However anyone who has reasonable grounds for suspecting a child or young person is at risk of being neglected or physically, sexually or emotionally abused, is encouraged to report their concerns to the Department (www.dcp.wa.gov.au). Although church leaders are not mandated to report in WA, MPBC will report under Safe Church policy when there are reasonable grounds to suspect child abuse is occurring. After initial completion of an Incident Response Form, Senior Church Leadership will consult with and obtain advice from BCWA and DCP on the circumstances of the incident, before making a full report to DCP if advised to. MPBC will ensure that the matter is kept as confidential as possible and appropriate pastoral support will be provided to those involved.
- If a child or young person is in need of immediate assistance, or the reported allegations are of a criminal nature, MPBC will contact Western Australia Police (13 14 44 or 000 for life-threatening emergencies).

- In the case of potential suicide or self-harming concerns local mental health services will be contacted.
- For less serious concerns the guidelines under Point 4: Ministry Misconduct will be followed.
- For electronic communication and the issues of cyber-bullying, social networking and grooming on the internet, MPBC has developed a set of protocols for leaders to ensure the safe use of electronic communication with program participants.

*[Appendix A: Guidelines for Safe Ministry - **Safe Electronic Communication**]*

It is hoped that in all cases some feedback can be given to the reporter about the initial action taken. The matter should be kept as confidential as possible with all Incident Response Forms kept securely.

MPBC is aware that those involved in any incident of this nature will need continued support. Leaders who hear disclosures or witness abuse also need support and as a minimum should debrief with the Safe Church Assistant and senior church leadership. Additional counselling support may be necessary.

Protective behaviours

Identifying and responding to abuse and the risk of abuse is only one aspect of protecting people. People can learn confidence and self-awareness to protect themselves; physically, emotionally and spiritually. Listening to the views of children, youth and vulnerable adults and involving them in decision-making enables them to better contribute to their own protection and can offer valuable insights into different strengths and weaknesses, risks and dangers in an organization. Leaders are encouraged to aid this process by

- Giving people a say in decisions that affect them to show that their opinions are valued and where appropriate implemented.
- Fostering respectful relationships where people are mindful of personal behaviours and the impact of their behaviour on others.
- Encouraging people to trust their feelings and develop a keen natural sense of when something is amiss. Having the confidence to say 'no' to wrong behavior, and learning strategies to remove oneself from the situation safely.
- Fostering an environment of transparency and confidentiality, where all members of the congregation are aware of the incident reporting procedure and know who to speak to if they feel uncomfortable or threatened in any way.
- Establishing easily accessible support networks for vulnerable people.
- Providing guidelines for safe interactions and dealing with difficult situations.

*[Appendix A: **Guidelines for Safe Ministry**]*

6. People of Concern

From time to time MPBC will face the situation where a person of concern (past sexual offences, or allegation of past or current sexual offence, or an adverse current risk assessment) has been worshipping and been involved, or wishes to worship and be involved, in the church. The restorative nature of the gospel means that no-one is outside the reaches of God's love, but while demonstrating compassion the church does need to follow procedures to rightly protect the church community.

- The Senior Church Leadership (in consultation with BCWA as considered appropriate) is to conduct a meeting(s) with the 'person of concern.'
- The level of risk in the situation of the 'person of concern' being involved in the activities of the MPBC will be discussed. If deemed appropriate to continue an agreement regarding accountability and safety will be drawn up between the 'person of concern' and MPBC, establishing risk-minimizing terms and conditions by which the 'person of concern' may participate in the life of the church.
- Anyone convicted of abuse will never be allowed to work in any way with children, youth or vulnerable adults.
- An accountability group will be selected and trained to provide ongoing monitoring, support and review.

Part 2: Safe Ministry Programs

MPBC has a responsibility to provide safe ministry environments for its workers, for all who enter the facility and participate in the activities provided, and those who come under its care in an external environment.

1. Safety in Programs

Safe programs are transparent and accountable in relation to both procedures and relationships, and take place in safe physical and emotional environments. Careful consideration should be given to the choice of programs and activities, ensuring that they are age, gender and ability appropriate and can be provided with adequate supervision.

Our recommended procedures:

- **Permission to Proceed** - every ministry should be approved by the senior leadership of the church prior to it commencing. This is done through a Ministry Approval Form which requires consideration of safety issues in regard to the team of leaders, the program itself and the environment in which it will be held.

*[Appendix B: Forms – **Ministry Approval Form**]*

- **Managing Event and Program Risks** – every activity has its hazards and risks, some are avoidable while others need to be appropriately managed with mitigation strategies. Ministry Leaders are encouraged, wherever possible, to review annually all programs under their responsibility, to ensure the safety of all activities undertaken, and identify any new risks that need to be dealt with. One-off events or short-term programs should be considered in a similar manner.
- **Age Specific Issues with Children and Youth** – all age groups have different needs, so the following should be considered where appropriate:
 - A Participant Registration Form should be completed by each new attendee and signed by the parent/guardian. Such forms should be revised at the beginning of each calendar year to ensure details are kept up to date. They should then be kept securely, but also be readily accessible to leaders when programs are running.

*[Appendix B: Forms – **Participant Registration Form**]*

*[Accompanying Manuals – **Ministry Volunteer Manuals**]*

- Details of the advertised program should be sent home to parents/guardians for the coming term/semester or event as appropriate. Where a change is unavoidable, parents should be notified.
- A registration system for each program involving children/youth under 18 years. This ensures the leader knows which children are present, and clarifies who is responsible for the children and when that responsibility

begins and ends. Registration systems for different ministries will be documented in their own Codes of Conduct/Volunteer Manual.

- Permission notes are required for all off-site activities for under 18-year-olds. This should include information on the nature of the activity, the location, the timings involved and method of transport.

*[Appendix B: Forms – **Excursion Parental Permission Form**]*

- For all events where children are in the Church's care without their parents being present (youth camps, holiday programs, children's and youth ministry, Perth Children's Prayer etc) leaders will be required to hold a Working with Children's Card and a National Police Certificate (employee/volunteer as appropriate). For high risk activities and camps all persons attending should have a signed liability release/indemnity form from each parent/guardian. A liability release form does not actually indemnify MPBC against an accident or being liable, but it protects any individual leader where all due care has been taken.

*[Appendix B: **Guidelines for Youth Camp planning**]*

- MPBC will formulate appropriate emergency procedures for both on-site and off-site situations when parents need to be contacted immediately.
- For all Church events where children and parents participate together (Family Camp, Home Group weekends away, Church picnics etc.), the event leader and associate leaders will be required to hold a Working with Children's Card and National Police Certificate (employee/volunteer as appropriate) and will need to ensure a Safety policy is in place and communicated to participants, along with a reminder that children remain the responsibility of the parents for the duration of the event. Leaders will also need to ensure adequate supervision of activities at all times.

2. Physical Environments

Providing safe physical environments is essential for all ministry leaders, staff and volunteers, and for those who attend any activity or program in any MPBC venue. Therefore it is the responsibility of program coordinators and Ministry Leaders to ensure that all risks have been considered and plans implemented for minimizing them.

We consider the physical environment under the following headings:

Health and Safety

Churches come under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011, which covers all leaders, volunteers and congregations and requires them to take all reasonable care not to adversely affect the health and safety of others. The Act requires:

- The appointment of a Church Safety Officer, agreed by staff and Ministry Leaders.
- The church to provide frequent opportunities to address health and safety concerns expressed by staff, volunteers or the congregations.
- Health and safety policies must now include physical and psychological safety.
- All serious events and dangerous incidents must be reported within a prescribed period.

Our recommended procedures:

- The Facility is maintained in a state of good repair by the Facilities Manager, in conjunction with the Executive Pastor and Safe Church Administrator.
- General Emergency Procedures will be known by all staff and Emergency Evacuation Maps displayed throughout the Facility.
*[Accompanying manual: **General Emergency Procedures**]*
- There will be an annual Housekeeping/Hazard Review done by the Facilities Manager, or their representative, of both the interior and exterior of the Facility, as found in the MPBC Human Resource Manual. Areas of risk will be identified and managed.
- A Church Safe Administrator will be appointed to whom all incidents will be reported on the Incident Response Form, and who will be responsible for recording these and implementing effective control measures
*[Appendix B: Forms – **Incident Response Form**]*
- Appropriate first aid equipment and personnel will be in place for all activities.
- Safe food handling and hygiene practices will be employed.
- Safe manual handling, lifting and moving techniques will be encouraged.
- Information on safe handling of hazardous substances will be provided where appropriate.
- Safe visual and auditory care will be provided for workers and those attending programs as part of the church.
- Those undertaking off-site activities (for example home groups, camps) are encouraged to consider aspects of establishing a safe environment.
- All new ministries will complete a Ministry Approval Form before being allowed to commence. This will ensure that all proper checks and risk analyses have been considered to provide best duty of care for those being ministered to.
*[Appendix B: Forms – **Ministry Approval Form**]*
- All Ministry Leaders will be encouraged to review and evaluate annually all ministries under their responsibility to ensure they are relevant and being well run in a safe environment.

First Aid

First Aid is the emergency care of injured or sick persons. It aims to preserve life, promote recovery, and prevent the injury or illness becoming worse.

Our recommended procedures:

- At any event or program at least 1 on-site leader or adult should have current first aid training. During office hours at MPBC we endeavor to ensure that there is a First Aider on site.
- A suitable, up-to-date and accessible First Aid kit is to be available at all times. The checking and restocking of the First Aid kits is the responsibility of the Facilities Manager. They should not contain any pain relief or other medication. First Aid kits are at the following locations in the Facility: at the back of the Auditorium, Function Room, Hall, Commercial Kitchen, Children's Area, Green Room and Office kitchen. In addition the Youth Ministry has 2 portable First Aid kits used for camps and excursions.
- A list of trained first aiders will be kept at Reception and be known by the Facilities Manager, the Ministry Leaders and other key staff members.
- There should be a designated room or area in the Facility where First Aid can be administered in a quiet and private environment, which is easily accessible by ambulance stretcher if necessary. This is currently the Cry Room at the back of the Auditorium, accessed by the western corridor.
- Parents of children up to 18 will be required to inform the relevant leaders of any special medical requirements or health problems that may arise during programs, via the appropriate Participant Registration Form, completed at the commencement of each year/season/camp. Any shorter term issues or medical requirements should be communicated to the relevant leader in writing before the particular program session commences.

*[Appendix B: Forms – **Participant Registration Form**]*

*[Accompanying Manuals – **Ministry Volunteer Manuals**]*

- Leaders must ensure that they have full understanding of any medication or health maintenance regime that needs to be provided to any young person under 18 years.
- All medication administered during programmed activities, when parents are not present, must be the responsibility of a qualified First Aider.
- Non-prescribed pain relief medication like Panadol or aspirin, will not be given to any young person under 18 years without seeking the parent's permission in person, by telephone or in writing.

Transportation

Negligent driving can have painful emotional and legal consequences. The community expects that staff and volunteers who transport other people on behalf of the church, will be responsible careful drivers who observe the legal speed limits and road laws.

Our recommended procedures:

- All drivers involved in authorized Church activities should hold a valid current drivers license and be responsible and road rule-abiding.
- No leader is to provide transport if there is any possibility that he/she may be driving whilst under the influence of alcohol, drugs or prescribed medication which may cause drowsiness or otherwise affect their driving ability or judgement.
- When using bus transport there should always be at least one adult leader in addition to the driver.
- Drivers on provisional licenses are not permitted to:
 - Transport children or young people without prior consent from a parent/guardian, except in cases of emergency.
 - Tow trailers to camps or outside events.
- Drivers within the Youth Ministry are required to read and abide by further guidelines set out in the Mount Pleasant Youth Volunteer Manual [*Accompanying Manual - Youth Volunteer Manual*]

Food

Food needs to be handled correctly, as the bacteria it naturally contains, can cause food poisoning if it is allowed to become contaminated.

Our recommended procedures:

- Food Safety Guidelines to be displayed in the kitchen and followed by all users.
[*Appendix C: Documents – Food Safety Guidelines*]
- All persons using the commercial kitchen at MPBC should where possible undertake the Australia and New Zealand Food Authority Training Program, to ensure correct food handling procedures and the safe operation of equipment. MPBC will maintain a record of all persons holding this qualification.
- Ensure that each event serving food has a Coordinator overseeing the preparation and serving of food, who will ensure that other workers understand the importance of food safety and good preparation procedures.
- Sale of food on a regular basis is not allowed on the premises without permission from the local council. However the occasional sale of food or requesting a gold coin donation is acceptable.

Supervision (particularly with Children and Vulnerable Adults)

To exercise proper duty of care it is essential not only to have the right kind of leader, but also to have adequate numbers of leaders to supervise programs, especially where children and vulnerable adults are concerned. The precise number of leaders is hard to determine and is dependent on the size of the group, their age and the risk level of the activity. It is important to ensure that there are enough leaders to cope with any incidents that may occur during the program.

Our recommended procedures:

- All Ministry Leaders are required to exercise a duty of care and abide by the guidelines in the Safe Church Manual to ensure a safe ministry environment.
- For safe supervision of children/young people, there must be an adequate number of adult leaders, with a minimum of 2 adults in attendance for all ministry activities, including small groups.
- Distinction needs to be made between adult leaders and youth leaders (under 18 years), who are not to be counted in supervision figures. Youth leaders need to be supervised at all times and not left in charge of activities involving children, in the absence of an adult.
- No leader should be alone, or one-on-one, with a child or young person. Individual or small group ministry, prayer or counselling must occur in the presence of more than one adult, in a public place or a location with visibility.
- Children must not be allowed access to unsupervised rooms, and when there are no children's programs taking place (as in between and after the services) it is always the responsibility of the parents to care for their children.
- For toileting of young children the guidelines in the MPK Volunteer Manual (p.15) must be followed.
*[Accompanying Manual - **MPK Volunteer Manual**]*
- Where possible child/youth programs should have both male and female leaders to provide support for both boys and girls.
- Appropriate physical contact is important for the healthy development of children. However it is inappropriate to initiate physical contact with children or vulnerable adults (apart from in an emergency), as some may not be comfortable with the contact, and it may be misunderstood either by the child or other people present. Great care must be taken when comforting anyone in distress to ensure all physical contact is of a nonsexual nature.
*[Appendix A: Guidelines for Safe Ministry – **Safe Touches**]*
- Discipline is important in providing a safe environment for all children, but in no way should this include physical contact with the child. The only time

physical restraint is appropriate is when protecting others from harm.
[Appendix A: Guidelines for Safe Ministry – **Safe Discipline**]

- In relation to camps or overnight activities, leaders should not sleep in the same room as children. This is to reduce the risk of any potential child abuse and the possibility of false allegations of child abuse.

Church Programs in the Home

MPBC will do everything in its powers to ensure that activities and programs that take place in the private homes of its members, and through its pastoral care ministry, will be safe for all those taking part.

Our recommended procedures:

- MPBC will only appoint Care Ministry and Practical Care Team members, and Home Group Leaders after careful consideration and checking.
- Care Ministry and Practical Care Team members, in their role of pastoral visiting and help to the community, will be required to hold a Volunteer National Police Certificate. Team leaders will be required to also hold a Working with Children's Card, and where Care Ministry situations involve care or help for children or young people, they will ensure only team members holding a valid Working with Children's card. are used.
[Appendix C: Documents – **Working with Children Check Policy and Procedure, Volunteer National Police Certificate Policy and Procedure**]
- Home Group leaders will be provided with guidelines as to their responsibilities for ensuring a safe environment for the group.
[Appendix A: Guidelines for Safe Ministry – **Safe Home Groups**]

3. Emotional Environments

Physical safety is only part of what must be considered for safe programs. People's emotions can also be harmed. In fact many more people leave the church due to the emotional harm done to them (intentionally or unintentionally) rather than through physical injury.

Ensuring a safe emotional environment is about putting other people's needs above our own agenda. It is about respecting and valuing individuals, their backgrounds, their personality, their hopes, dreams and fears. It is fostering a welcoming and caring ministry space, where people feel safe to share their ideas without being ridiculed.

Our recommended procedures:

- Obtaining information about people is essential for the church to be equipped to care for them physically and emotionally. For regular members of its congregation MPBC does this through The HUB Application Form, and through Participant Registration Forms for various ministries and

events. In doing so MPBC is aware of the principles of the National Privacy Act 2000:

- MPBC will only collect personal information that is necessary to the church's ministry.
- The individuals concerned will be advised of its intended use.
- Personal information will be stored securely and not divulged without the consent of the individual involved. This includes all documentation relating to Working with Children's Checks, National Police Certificate and Volunteer National Police Certificate.
- Once the information is no longer required or is outdated it will be destroyed.
- The use of photos and video footage of Church programs requires consent from those involved, and in the case of children consent from the parents/guardian. They should be informed of the purpose and intended distribution of the material. A permission question can be included as part of Participant Registration Forms and Camp Forms.
- Leaders need to be mindful of diversity. People will come to church programs with a variety of social and cultural norms and a wide range of differing expectations, which need to be taken into account when planning programs.
- Leaders should consider the impact of their words and actions before they speak or act. Words should not be offensive, derogatory or abusive and actions should not have a negative impact or lead to misinterpretation. Be aware of the power of the role model and non-verbal communication messages. The behavior of leaders is closely observed and credibility easily damaged by inconsistencies between words and actions.
- Leaders need to be transparent in the way they act. If a leader is required to speak with a program participant individually, it is wise to do so privately in a public setting. Move away from the group but still be visible, and where possible inform another leader of your intentions.
- Leaders should carefully and graciously respond to the needs of each individual in the program. When a person is distressed, it is important not to pre-determine how much physical contact they need. Ask permission to sit with, pray for or counsel another person, and be aware of their need for personal space (Look for non-verbal cues of distress, especially in children who may have difficulty putting how they feel into words.

*[Appendix A: Guidelines for Safe Ministry - **Safe Touches**]*

4. Responding to Incidents and Accidents

While our intent is to do all we can to prevent incidents occurring, people do have accidents and emergencies do happen. At these times the health and safety of the person(s) is of paramount concern. All incidents should be reported to the Safe Church Administrator so that Ministry Leaders and the Executive Pastor can be kept informed and can act to reduce hazards and, where possible, prevent incidents recurring.

Our recommended procedures:

- The MPBC Emergency Procedures Manual contains the procedure to follow when dealing with any critical incidents that may occur.
[Accompanying manual – **MPBC General Emergency Procedures Manual**]
- MPBC will ensure that all other incidents that have been identified in this manual, whether they require medical attention or not, are reported on an Incident Response Form and processed through the relevant Ministry Leader to the Executive Pastor and Safe Church Administrator. Where necessary parents/carers of children, youth and vulnerable adults will be informed by the relevant Ministry Leader of what occurred and what action has been taken.
[Appendix B: Forms – **Incident Response Form**]
- Records will be kept of all documentation pertaining to incidents associated with the venue and MPBC activities.

Appendices

Appendix A: Guidelines for Safe Ministry – Safe Touches

Some leaders have developed such anxiety about being wrongly accused of inappropriate touch of a child or vulnerable adult, that they will not touch a distressed person. It is important to find the correct balance between 'no touch' and 'prolonged touch.' The following guidelines should be followed:

- Some people do not like physical contact. Always ask permission before initiating personal contact e.g. Would a hug help? Can I pray for you? May I lay hands on you?
- Only non-intimate touch is acceptable. You are only to touch neutral or 'safe' zones. The preferable area for touch is from the shoulder to the elbow on the outside of the arm. Another area is across the shoulders and top of the back e.g. a hug around the shoulders is more appropriate than a frontal hug and should last no more than 30 seconds.
- Use an open position – create a 'triangle of safety' by standing or sitting side on, rather than in front of the person. This triangle enables the leader to be close enough to provide physical comfort, but not so close that the person can drape themselves on them. It enables the leader to have more effective control of the situation.
- Be out in the open – avoid initiating touch when not in the full view of others. Being alone with a person places a leader at risk of accusations of misconduct which could be difficult to rebut.
- Have a third person present where possible. This is especially important when ministering to a member of the opposite gender.
- Where possible share information with the Ministry Leader or another leader. Inform them of what is happening and how long it is likely to take. This gives added protection should any unforeseen problems arise.
- With children, touch should always be child-initiated. Allow a brief contact time, but then remove the child, leaving them close by so as not to imply that you are rejecting them. With chronic 'huggers' give them a job requiring them to hold something in both hands. With children and youth 'high fives', a brief handshake or a gentle fist bump are a great way to greet them and to show encouragement.

Appendix A: Guidelines for Safe Ministry – Safe Discipline

To keep programs safe and running smoothly inappropriate or dangerous behaviour in children needs to be managed correctly. The following guidelines should be followed:

- Respectful relationships should be encouraged and where appropriate children can be given a voice in helping to decide on the 'rules' as to what is acceptable behavior, which can then be discussed with the children and communicated to the parents.
- If a young child misbehaves, a leader should make eye contact and give firm but gentle verbal correction which is respectful and age appropriate. If this is unsuccessful refer the child to the MPK Team Leader or relevant Ministry Leader. A short period of 'time out' may also be appropriate for those over three years of age, but this must be in a place where they are visible.
- Where a child is unresponsive or responds unsatisfactorily to reasonable requests to comply with a standard of behaviour, the matter should be reported to the parents by the relevant Ministry Leader. They should explain why the child needs to be removed and what has been done to help the child to exhibit appropriate behavior.
- In extreme cases children may be precluded from activities for a period of time, until an undertaking is given, appropriate to age, to behave within the acceptable limits. In this case the parents should be informed and included in the negotiations to restore the child to the activities.
- At no time is physical punishment or the threat of physical punishment permissible, even if parental approval has been given.

Appendix A: Guidelines for Safe Ministry – Safe Electronic Communication

Pastoral care and general communication are an integral part of youth and children's ministry and are to be encouraged. Electronic communication (mobile phone, email, social networking sites, SMS etc.) is now part of everyday life for young people and children, so to connect with them effectively leaders need to use it. However it is also widely used by those seeking to harm children and young people, and to step over relational boundaries. The Church needs to be mindful of how its leaders use electronic communication, especially in relation to children and youth.

The following guidelines will encourage the safe use of electronic communication.

• General Electronic Communication

- Safe ministry happens in teams. Electronic communication can be done in the same context through group emails, SMS from the team etc. Any personal emails should be cc'd to the relevant Ministry Leader.
- Where possible and practical, teams should inform parents, or even seek parental permission, before communicating in any electronic form. This will be included on the initial Participant Registration Form.
- Leaders must not knowingly transmit, retrieve or store any communication that is of an unacceptable nature.
- Leaders must not send any electronic communication that attempts to hide the identity of the sender or represent the sender as someone else.

• Telephone Communication

- Wherever possible use the home phone line and ensure the parents of the child are aware that you are speaking with their child.
- Mobile phone use should be kept to a minimum and restricted to purpose only communication (e.g. 'meet at this place at this time'), and never used for long calls. If a child initiates a mobile phone call or SMS that requires a long conversation, either suggest a face to face meeting or transfer the call to a home phone.
- Video calls by phone or internet are not appropriate for any leader to engage in.

• Email Communication

- All emails to children or young people should have a Church email address copied (cc'd) into them. Each Ministry Leader may need to create a separate email account for this to avoid their personal emails being clogged up.
- Emails should generally be restricted to purpose only emails (e.g. 'meet at this place') or general conversations (e.g. 'how was the excursion

today?') Pastoral care or deeper conversations regarding more personal issues should take place in face to face meetings.

- As far as possible save all emails to and from children and young people.

- **Social Networking Sites (Facebook, Myspace etc.)**

- Internal mail should be restricted to purpose only messages.
- Writing on 'walls' should be kept to a minimum and be only of a broad nature or light conversation.
- Do not give out any personal details of children or young people on 'walls'.

- **Internet Chat Rooms/Programs (MSN, ICQ etc.)**

- Leaders should not enter into a closed conversation with a child or young person. If invited to a conversation the leader should bring in a third party.
- Leaders should use discernment and wisdom when having a multi-person conversation. All conversation should be above reproach.

- **Photography**

- Any photos of children's or youth ministry activities should be taken by someone appointed by the Ministry Leader and should focus on the activity or small group rather than individuals. All subjects should be appropriately dressed.
- Photography of children or young people should have parental consent where possible. Do not photograph any child or young person who has asked not to be photographed.
- Leaders should not take photos of children or young people on their mobile phone, and should not allow children or young people to take mobile phone photos of any leaders.
- When using a photograph in print or on the internet do not identify the person/people in the photograph, and ensure parental permission has been obtained. This is now included on the initial Participant Registration Form.
- If a leader finds a photo of a children's or youth activity posted online by a young person, gently ask if they have permission from everyone in the photograph to post it. If not, ask them to either seek permission or remove the photograph.

- **Copyright**

It is common to want to use others' material (prose, poetry, pictures, DVD clips, music etc.), including internet and web-based material, for the benefit of Church services, events and publications. However the ownership of all intellectual property must be respected and formal permission sought for its use from the material's owner or publisher/producer. The source of the material must then be acknowledged when it is used.

Appendix A: Guidelines for Safe Ministry – Safe Disclosures

If a child (or vulnerable adult) does make a disclosure of sexual abuse to you it means that they have high respect for you and trust you. It is therefore important to respond appropriately and complete an Incident Response Form (see Appendix B: Forms – **Incident Response Form.**)

The following guidelines should be followed:

Do

- Listen carefully and write down, in the child's own words, exactly what is said. This will eliminate inaccuracies that can occur with verbal transfer of information.
- Keep it brief as this is not the only time the child will have to share their story. Explain that the information will need to be shared.
- Reassure the child that you believe them, that it is not their fault and that telling you was the right thing to do.
- Inform – let them know what will happen next and who you will tell to help them.

Don't

- Investigate the disclosure or ask leading questions. You are recording what is said and not trying to prove it.
- Dismiss it, as children rarely lie about such matters.
- Make promises you cannot keep, such as promising not to tell anyone or that you are able to stop the abuse. Understand that there are levels of confidentiality and at times duty of care requires reporting to others.
- Leave the child in a distressed state. Seek help and professional input where necessary.
- Share the information widely. Tell only the relevant Ministry Leader and Safe Church Administrator, to whom you pass on the completed Incident Response Form.

Appendix A: Guidelines for Safe Ministry – Safe Home Groups

On a weekly basis church activities and programs take place in private homes of church members. Leaders of such groups have a responsibility to ensure that those who participate remain safe. The following guidelines should be followed:

- Consider the safety of the physical environment. Identify and manage potential hazards for different age groups that might not normally be in that home e.g. easily reached ornaments and small children, steps or trip hazards for elderly participants.
- Where home group meetings include the whole family, the care and well-being of the children and the nature of their activities, should be formally agreed on and accepted by all parents involved.
- In all cases the children remain the responsibility of the parents.
- In the case that a person is asked to specifically take responsibility for the care of the children, they are required to hold a Working with Children's Card and a Volunteer National Police Certificate.
- In the situation where a Home Group may go away for the weekend together, MPBC will require the group leader to hold a Working with Children's Card and a Volunteer National Police Certificate. They will also need to ensure a Safety policy is in place and communicated to participants, along with a reminder that children remain the responsibility of the parents for the duration of the event.

Appendix B: Safe Church Forms

- MPBC Volunteer Registration Form
- Ministry Approval Form
- Participant Registration Form
- Excursion Parental Permission Form
- Approved Driver Application Form
- Incident Response Form
- Guidelines for Youth Camp planning

See also separate documents and forms of:

- MPK Volunteer Manual and Application Form
- Youth Volunteer Manual and Application Form
- MPBC General Emergency Procedures Manual
- MPBC Personnel Manual
- Young Adults Code of Conduct
- Creative Ministries Code of Conduct
- Care Ministry Code of Conduct
- Women in the Word Creche Guidelines

Appendix C: Documents – Types and Indicators of Child Abuse

Type of Abuse	Definition	Indicators in Children	Indicators in parents/caregivers
Neglect	Failure to provide a child with the basic necessities of life to the extent that the child’s health and development is, or is likely to be, significantly harmed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor standards of hygiene • Untreated physical problems • Always appearing hungry • Inappropriately dressed for weather conditions • Extended stays at school, public places, others’ homes • Extreme longing for adult affection • Self-comforting behaviour • Delay in developmental milestones • Low weight for age, failure to thrive • Extreme anxiety about being abandoned • Child not adequately supervised for their age 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unable or unwilling to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing, medical attention, safe home conditions • Leaving the child without adequate supervision • Abandonment of child • Withholding physical contact or stimulation for prolonged periods • Unable or unwilling to provide psychological nurturing
Physical Abuse	Significant harm from an injury, inflicted intentionally or as the inadvertent consequence of physical punishment or aggressive treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unexplained bruising, especially to face, head , neck • Explanation of injury is not consistent with injury • Abdominal pain caused by damage to internal organs • Bone fractures • Burns and scalds • Drowsiness, vomiting, fits or retinal haemorrhages • Aggression or withdrawal • Inappropriate clothes for weather conditions • Discomfort with physical contact and emotional problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explanation of injury is not consistent with the injury • A parent or caregiver says that they fear injuring their child • Family history of violence or their own maltreatment as a child • Frequent visits with child to health or other services with unexplained or suspicious injuries
Emotional & Psychological Abuse	Sustained, repetitive, inappropriate ill treatment of a child or young person through threatening, isolating, neglecting, discrediting, misleading, disregarding, ignoring and inappropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passive and aggressive behavioural extremes • Habit disorders • Feelings of worthlessness about life and themselves • Extreme attention-seeking behaviour • Inability to value others • Lack of trust in people and expectations • Lack of interpersonal skills necessary for adequate functioning • Bullying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constant criticism, belittling or teasing • Ignoring or withholding praise and attention • Excessive or unreasonable demands • Persistent hostility and severe verbal abuse • Rejection and scapegoating • Belief that a particular child is bad or evil

	encouragement causing damage to child's intellectual faculties and processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disruptiveness • Persistent running away from home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using inappropriate physical or social isolation as punishment • Domestic violence
Sexual Abuse	When a person uses power or authority over a child to involve the child in any sexual activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or child's friend telling you about it, even indirectly • Describing sexual acts, sexual knowledge or behaviour inappropriate to age • Excessive seductiveness • Going to bed fully clothed • Regressive behaviour • Sexually transmitted diseases, adolescent pregnancy • Bruising or bleeding in genital area • Bruising to breasts, buttocks, lower abdomen or thighs • Self-destructive behaviour, suicide attempts, self-mutilation • Anorexia or over-eating • Child being in contact with known sex offender, or having inappropriate friendship with an adult • Unexplained accumulation of money and gifts • Persistent running away from home • Unusual aversion to physical contact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exposing a child to prostitution, pornography or the sexual behaviour of others • Previous conviction or suspicion of child sexual abuse • Coercing a child to engage in sexual behaviour with other children • Verbal threats of sexual abuse • Denial of adolescent's pregnancy by family
Witnessing Domestic Violence	Any abusive behaviour used by one partner or family member in a relationship to gain and maintain control of another's life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows aggressive behaviour • Develops phobias and insomnia • Shows symptoms of depression or anxiety • Has diminished self-esteem • Demonstrates poor academic performance and problem-solving skills • Has reduced social competence skills, low levels of empathy • Shows emotional distress • Has physical complaints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appear afraid of or always anxious to please partner • Controlling partner • Frequent unexplained or excused bruising or physical injury • Low self-esteem, anxious or depressed, change of personality • Dresses in clothing designed to hide bruises or scars • Limited access to resources (finances, phone, car) • Talks about partner's temper, jealousy or possessiveness

Appendix C: Documents - Working with Children Check Policy

Working with Children (WWC) checks are required by law for people in child-related work, but are only one measure that responsible employers and volunteer organizations can put in place to ensure employees, volunteers and students are suitable to work with children.

A WWC card (www.workingwithchildren.wa.gov.au) is required for all MPBC staff and volunteers, doing paid or unpaid work, in connection with any category of child-related work, if their duties involve, or are likely to involve, contact with a child. (see following table: MPBC Requirements for WWCC, NPC and VNPC).

The WWC check considers criminal records to see if people have charges or convictions that indicate they may harm a child. National criminal record information is routinely collected from sources in Australia (but not overseas) and is assessed as part of a WWC check. This includes information about offence convictions, 'spent' convictions, pending charges and non-conviction charges.

When a WWC Check is applied for, the applicant gives ongoing consent to the collection, use and disclosure of information about themselves (including criminal records) that is relevant to whether they should be issued with a WWC Card. This includes the initial checking based on the application and, if issued with a WWC Card, checking on an ongoing basis until it expires. If at any time a re-assessment is triggered, the WWC Screening Unit can request and consider information from a number of sources as to the risk of harm should the applicant continue to engage in child-related work. In such cases MPBC will follow the advice of the WWC Screening Unit as to that person's continued involvement in child-related ministries.

Complying with the Working with Children (WWC) Check

In regards to the WWC Card (WWCC), the responsibilities of MPBC are as follows:

- Ensure that all employees and volunteers in child or youth-related work have applied for, or currently hold a valid WWC card.
- Advise all applicants that involvement in child or youth-related work is dependent on a successful WWC Check.
- Ensure that all employees and volunteers renew their WWC card prior to it expiring, if they are continuing in child-related work.
- Keep records to demonstrate compliance with WWC legislation, and be able to supply this information for a WWC Screening Unit audit when required. This includes:
 - Validating WWC cards of MPBC employees and volunteers every 3 months if possible.
 - Checking the validity of WWCC (www.checkwwc.wa.gov.au) for new employees/ volunteers who have an existing card.

- Notify the WWC screening unit in writing, if any employee or volunteer informs MPBC of a relevant change in their criminal record which makes it inappropriate for them to continue in child-related work.
- Do not engage a person in child/youth-related work if they have been convicted of an offence, issued with a negative notice, or withdrawn their WWC check application. In cases of a negative notice senior church leadership will be informed and the 'People of Concern' section of this manual will be brought into play.

How to Apply

- Obtain a WWC Check application form from MPBC or Australia Post outlets.
- Complete application form using full name (matching ID documents).
- MPBC Safe Church Assistant, relevant Ministry Leader or other key MPBC staff member will complete parts 5 & 6 and sign part 7 of the application form, verifying that the information provided is correct and the person is in child or youth-related work.
- Where possible MPBC will keep a record of all completed applications with the application form number.
- Applicant lodges their WWC Check application form at an authorised Australia Post outlet, providing 100 points of identification (including a photograph and proof of current address) and paying the required fee (currently \$82.00 for paid employees and \$11.00 for volunteers).
- The WWCC will be issued directly to the applicant. MPBC will receive a letter from the WWC Screening unit recording the WWCC number and expiry date.
- MPBC Safe Church Assistant will update the WWCC details on the HUB and file the paperwork confidentially.

Renewal of WWCC

WWCC expire after three years. Card holders must re-apply to continue child or youth-related work.

- Card holders will receive a reminder email from the Department of Child Protection 3 months prior to their WWCC expiry.
- Card holders should re-apply at least one month before expiry.
- Online renewals are possible if personal details have not changed and use of the previous photograph is acceptable. Online renewals require details of an authorised representative from MPBC – their name, position title, email address, and the MPBC phone number, street and postal address. In most cases this will be the Ministry Leader in the area the applicant serves in or the Safe Church Assistant.
- Renewals can also be done by completing a new form and following the process above. Expired cards require a new form to renew.
- MPBC will endeavour to follow up on expired WWCC of employees and volunteers to ensure cards are renewed where necessary.

Appendix C: Documents - Volunteer National Police Certificate Policy

A Volunteer National Police Certificate (VNPC) lists an individual's criminal and WA traffic court outcomes and pending charges that are deemed disclosable at the time of application. MPBC apply for these certificates through Baptist Churches WA, who are a registered volunteer organisation with WA Police. The Certificate can be used for any volunteering role within Western Australia.

Who should apply for a VNPC?

- Staff who volunteer in areas of ministry outside of their job description, but are not required to have a National Police Certificate (NPC).
- All volunteers at MPBC who are involved with child or youth-related work, or who are a Care Ministry team member will be asked to apply for a VNPC. Volunteers in other positions of leadership, training or serving may be asked to apply for a VNPC but this will be at the discretion of the relevant Ministry Leader.
- Table below shows: MPBC Requirements for WWCC, NPC/VNPC.

How to apply

- MPBC will provide the VNPC Application form via email and give instruction on its completion.
- Applicant needs to provide photocopies of 100 points of identification as mentioned on the reverse of the form, and pay the required fee of \$20 to MPBC.
- MPBC Safe Church Assistant or relevant Ministry Leader is to check all information on the application is correct before signing and dating it.
- Each month MPBC Safe Church Assistant will mail completed applications and copies of ID documents to BCWA (PO Box 57, Burswood WA6100). BCWA is responsible for keeping these documents securely for 24 months.
- On receipt of the result from BCWA the MPBC Safe Church Assistant will enter the outcome, the application number and date of approval in the HUB. The VNPC has no expiry date as it is only valid at the date of issue. MPBC recommends that they are renewed every three years.
- The VNPC will then be forwarded to the applicant for safe keeping. MPBC will not keep a copy.
- Any VNPC that lists disclosable court outcomes or pending charges will be referred to senior church leadership and procedures laid out in the MPBC Safe Church Manual regarding 'people of concern' will be followed. The applicant will not be permitted to serve in child or youth-related areas.
- For lesser traffic offences the relevant Ministry Leader will be informed, and if the role does not involve transportation the applicant will still be permitted to serve.

Appendix C: Documents - National Police Certificate Policy

A National Police Certificate (NPC) is a document that lists an individual's disclosable criminal and (WA) traffic court outcomes, along with pending charges sourced from the databases of all Australian police jurisdictions. Certain convictions, such as spent or juvenile convictions, may not be disclosed on a NPC in accordance with the legislation and policies of the various police jurisdictions. Applications for a WA Police NPC also include a request to spend any eligible WA convictions. If an application to have a conviction declared spent is successful, it limits the disclosure of that conviction and they are not listed on a NPC.

Who should apply for a NPC?

- MPBC requires, and will pay the necessary fee for senior church leadership, Ministry Leaders and all paid employees in child or youth-related or financial positions to apply for a NPC (Table below shows: MPBC Requirements for WWCC, NPC/VNPC)

How to apply

- Application forms are available at participating Australia Post outlets or online (www.police.wa.gov.au).
- Once complete, present the form along with the application fee of \$52.60 and 100 points of identification to any participating Australia Post outlet.
- An application for a NPC can take up to 15 working days to process. Once complete, your NPC will be posted to the address nominated on the application form.
- A NPC is only officially current as of the date of issue. The police do not impose a period of validity. MPBC recommends renewal every 5 years.
- MPBC volunteers who hold a valid NPC may present a copy of this instead of applying for a VNPC.

Table: MPBC Requirements for WWCC, NPC and VNPC

Ministry Area	Position	Working with Children Check (WWCC)	National Police Certificate (NPC)	Volunteer National Police Certificate (VNPC)
MPBC Employees	Ministry Leaders (ML)	Yes	Yes	No
	Employees in child-related work	Yes, higher fee	Yes	No
	Finance employees	No	Yes	No
	Other staff	Yes (if appropriate)	No	Yes (if appropriate)
MPBCC	Head of College	Yes	Yes	No
	Lecturers	Yes	No	Yes (if appropriate)
	Short course trainers/facilitators	At discretion of ML	No	At discretion of ML
MPBC Board	Members	No	No	Yes
Children & Families	MPK leaders, assistant leaders, helpers	Yes	No	Yes
	Playgroup Coordinator	Yes	No	Yes
	Auskick coordinator, coaches, canteen	Yes (if from MPBC)	No	Yes (if from MPBC)
Youth	Core Leaders Uth Clarity Group Leaders	Yes	No	Yes
	Camp helpers Bus drivers/transport providers	At discretion of ML Yes, if staying overnight	No	At discretion of ML
	Baptist Basketball coordinator, coaches, managers (if participants under 18 years)	Yes	No	Yes
Young Adults	SALT Clarity Leaders	No	No	Yes
Community Ministries	Care Ministry team members (Extra Care, Visitation)	No	No	Yes
	Practical Care Team	Team leaders only	No	Yes
	Home Group Leaders	No	No	No
	Seniors coordinator, Craft Connection coordinator	No	No	At discretion of ML
	Flourish Support Group	Coordinator only	No	Yes
Creative Ministries	Leaders of Gumption, Aerial, Soul to Sole	Yes	No	Yes
	Facilitators Audio Visual volunteers Worship Leaders	At discretion of ML	No	At discretion of ML
New Comers	Foyer Manager, Support Group coordinators Ushers, Greeters, Car-parkers Info Point volunteers	At discretion of ML	No	At discretion of ML
Missional Links	Mission Trip participants	Yes, if child-related	No	At discretion of ML
	Bread Run Ministry	Yes	No	Yes

Appendix C: Documents – Food Safety Guidelines

Preparing Food

- Use separate utensils, including cutting boards and knives for raw food and cooked food. If this is not possible, thoroughly wash and sanitize equipment before using it.
- Wash all fruit and vegetables in clean water before using them.
- Don't use food from damaged packaging.
- Don't let raw food come into contact with cooked food to avoid cross contamination.

Handling Food

- Cooked or ready to eat food shouldn't be handled with bare hands. Use tongs, spatulas, spoons, or disposable gloves.
- Raw food to be cooked can be handled with bare hands.
- Change disposable gloves every hour, when they tear or when you change tasks.

Cooking and Heating

- Thaw frozen food before cooking, in microwave or refrigerator.
- Never put thawed food back in the freezer.
- Cook thawed food immediately after thawing.
- Cook all foods completely, especially red meat, fish and chicken.
- Reheating: bring to boil and simmer for a minimum of 5 minutes before serving (or microwave using the manufacturer's guidelines).

Storing Food

- Temperature: meat, dairy or fish not already processed by heat are high risk foods. Store at the correct temperature, frozen at -15°C or cooler, or refrigerated at 5°C or cooler.
- Time: Don't keep food in storage for too long. Record dates. Apply the "first in – first out" rule. Food should not be out of refrigeration for very long – 4 hours maximum.

Displaying Food

- Wrap or cover food on display. Tag or label food trays.
- Refrigerated displays 5°C or cooler and hot displays 60°C or hotter.
- Don't use hot display equipment to reheat food.

Transporting Food

- Keep cold by using insulated containers/cool boxes with ice or cold blocks.
- Food which is to be served hot should be transported cold and heated at the event.

Appendix D: Definitions

- MPBC – Mount Pleasant Baptist Church
- BCWA – Baptist Churches Western Australia
- MPK – Mount Pleasant Kids
- Safe Church Assistant – appointed by senior leadership to manage and administer the implementation of our Safe Church Policy, Guidelines & Procedures, reporting to the Executive Pastor.
- Senior church leadership – includes the Senior Pastor and the Executive Pastor
- Ministry Leader – a person who is responsible for a Ministry Area and reports to the Executive Pastor. They are responsible for overseeing their ministry area and ensuring all programs and events operate according to Safe Church procedures
- Leader – any person over 18 years of age who is appointed by a Ministry Leader to perform any work or activities in a church program as part of a ministry team
- Youth Leader – any person under the age of 18 who is appointed by a Ministry Leader to perform any work or activities in a church program as part of a ministry team.
- Volunteer – any person who performs services or functions for the Church for no financial reward.
- Program – a set of activities and events authorized and delivered by MPBC
- Child – a person under 12 years of age
- Young person or youth – a person between 12 and 18 years
- Vulnerable adult – person in need of special care, support or protection because of age, illness, disability or risk of abuse or neglect.
- Incident – an event that is without apparent cause, unintentional and unexpected that gives rise to personal injury or damage to property.
- Critical Incident – an emergency situation or set of circumstances, far beyond what is normally expected, that have the potential to result in physical or psychological outcomes ranging from mild trauma to fatalities.
- Risk Management - conscious series of steps used to identify potential risks in programs and activities.
- Stored as Confidential – documents to be stored in a locked cabinet which may only be accessed by authorized Church staff.



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