

**SPRINGWOOD**  
CHURCH of CHRIST



# Handbook for Staff & Volunteers



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Dear Staff Member/Volunteer,

Firstly, thanks for getting involved in meeting the needs of the community through the activities and ministries of Springwood Church of Christ.

This booklet has been put together to ensure that you have a thorough understanding of the requirements regarding code of conduct, child protection, workplace health and safety and other issues relating to your paid or unpaid employment.

We value your efforts, but we also want to make sure that you're safe at all times, so we are aiming to equip you with all the knowledge you need to carry out your tasks.

Thanks again for all that you are doing.

May God richly bless your ministry in this place.

***Dale White***

***Senior Pastor***

***Springwood Church of Christ***

***N.B. The current Church policies relating to any aspects of employment should be read in conjunction with this Handbook and take precedence over this Handbook.***



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## Mission, Vision and Values

# Mission

Make disciples who make disciples.

# Vision

To be a loving inter-generational community of Jesus followers, led by the Holy Spirit, anchored in Scripture, bold to share our faith.

SPRINGWOOD  
CHURCH of CHRIST



# Our Values

## Gospel

Proclaiming the good news of Jesus in our services, in our daily lives and across cultures.

*Mk 1:14, Eph 6:19*

## Generosity

Because God has been so generous to us, we give generously with our time and finances.

*Ps 36:8, Jam 2:16*

## Growth

Growing in number and spiritual maturity, with more and more people hungering for deeper spiritual lives.

*Acts 2:47, 1 Pet 2:2*

## Gatherings

Gathering in large and small groups to pray, worship God and encourage one another.

*Heb 10:25*

## Grace

Because God treats us better than we deserve, we love and welcome all people.

*Acts 15:11*

## Godliness

Living holy lives of obedience to God.

*Titus 2:12*

## Gifts

All believers are called to minister in God's Kingdom with the gifts He provides.

*1 Cor 12:4-5*



## Volunteer Rights & Responsibilities

### As a volunteer you have the right to:

- Receive up to date information regarding Springwood Church of Christ (Church) programs to choose from a range of available volunteer options.
- Have your personal information dealt with in accordance with the principles of the Privacy Act.
- Be interviewed and engaged in accordance with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation.
- Have a clearly communicated job description, with reasonable and agreed upon working hours.
- Have access to orientation, information / education sessions, and any necessary training.
- Be recognised as a valued team member.
- Be supported and supervised in your role.
- A healthy and safe working environment.
- Be protected by appropriate insurance.
- Have access to the Ministry Team Leader to discuss any concerns, questions or make relevant suggestions and feedback.
- Say no if you feel you are being exploited.
- Request a change in your Church involvement.
- Withdraw from the Church volunteer program.

### Your responsibilities are to:

- Fulfil your role responsibly and ethically as outlined and agreed by signing the Volunteer Service Agreement.
- Be reliable and punctual.
- Be accountable.



- Be committed to the organisation.
- Follow mandatory reporting requirements for any information that causes you to believe on reasonable grounds that a child has been sexually abused or is being abused by another adult.
- Respect confidentiality.
- Undertake training as required.
- Value and support other team members.
- Acknowledge your responsibility to report to the Church any circumstances in which a participant is placing him/herself or others at risk.
- Wear appropriate and modest dress.
- Use appropriate language that is respectful, encouraging and positive.
- Initiate contact with the Team Leader or Co-ordinator to discuss any questions or concerns you may have.
- Notify the Church immediately of any change to your address, phone numbers or email.
- Notify the Church of any changes in your circumstances that will affect your role/commitment eg. Health, family, holidays.
- Give two weeks' notice before you leave the organisation whenever possible.

**It is also a requirement of your role that you refrain from:**

- Accepting payments for work/assistance undertaken within your role (unless otherwise agreed as part of the engagement).
- Any romantic relationship with a child.
- Accepting from, or giving gifts (both monetary or tangible) to, participants unless approved by the team leader.
- Providing advice to participants outside of the specific nature of your role.



- Interfering in family or personal situations.
- Becoming involved in the management of participant's financial affairs.
- Taking photographs or videos of a child or young person while participating in activities unless expressed permission has been granted by parent/guardian.
- Being alone with a child and/or out of view from others unless it is absolutely necessary due to safety or emergency situation. This includes not being in one-on-one online video chats.

## Code of Conduct

Staff and Volunteers must commit to:

- Work within the mission, vision, values and safety policies and procedures at all times
- Treat people with respect and dignity regardless of age, gender, religious affiliation, sexual orientation or personal circumstances
- Act with courtesy, consideration and good judgement, in all interpersonal relationships
- Take reasonable care for one's own health and safety
- Demonstrate appropriate personal and professional boundaries
- Respect the authority of church leadership and act in accordance with their directions
- Create a safe environment that promotes and enables participation and is inclusive for all children and families
- Avoid any perpetration of verbal, emotional, physical or sexual abuse or harassment
- Not engage in any physical touching with participants or other staff/volunteers unless with explicit permission. Appropriate physical contact may include attending to children for injury management or assisting with toileting of younger children.
- Identify hazards and mitigate risks to all people's safety and wellbeing as required by risk assessment and safety management plans





- Respond to and report all concerns or complaints of child harm or abuse promptly, including mandatory reporting to authorities of suspected sexual abuse
- Complete training as required, and if working with children, possess a current “Working with Children Check’ (Blue Card) in accordance with legal requirements
- Record incidents that occur and report any concerns to the Safe Ministry Contacts

Any breach of this Code of Conduct may lead to disciplinary action or result in the suspension and/or termination of the staff member/volunteer.

## Insurance

As soon as a volunteer registers with Springwood Church of Christ, they are covered for Personal Accident – Voluntary Workers Insurance. Personal accident insurance covers volunteers for out-of-pocket expenses following accidental injury and various benefits for bodily injury, disability or death while carrying out their work on behalf of the Church.

Volunteers must take reasonable precautions to prevent or minimise the risk of injury to third parties or damage to their property and must comply with safety requirements. Public Liability insurance is arranged in the event of someone taking legal action, alleging injury or damage to their property because a volunteer has been negligent. Volunteers are covered by the above insurances only whilst they are acting within the parameters of their role. Therefore, volunteers must only engage in “approved tasks” ie. those which have been negotiated with the supervisor/Ministry Team Leader and part of their designated role. To ensure the designation of volunteer is clear, all volunteers who work outside of the Sunday service roster (ie. during the week or for events) must sign in and out at church reception to ensure their time of volunteering is clear and they are covered by insurance.

Paid workers are covered by the church’s WorkCover policy and receive their delegation of responsibilities and tasks via a signed contract and job description.



## Work-related Out of Pocket Expenses

If agreed upon by the Ministry Team Leader prior to incurring such work-related costs, a reimbursement can be provided where funding is available e.g. travel and kilometre allowance, training costs etc. See Appendix A – Reimbursement of Expenses form.

## Privacy and Confidentiality

In the course of providing our ministries and services, personal and sensitive information is collected, held and maintained by the Church.

Privacy is important to us and we are committed to protecting the personal information we collect, in monitoring its use and maintaining privacy. All personal and sensitive information collected will be treated in strict confidence and in compliance with Privacy Law. The general principle of confidentiality is that information is only passed on when permission is given, and that the person involved knows the context in which it will be shared. There are times when personal information collected may be disclosed without the person's consent: This may occur:

- When the church is legally required to disclose information that has been collected;
- When harm may result to a person or persons through failure to disclose the information collected.

The Church's privacy policy outlines the way in which information is collected, used, protected and disclosed. Workers in the course of their participation may be involved in personal and confidential information. They need to understand the conditions set out below and agree to be bound by them.

Workers shall:

- Not divulge any personal or sensitive information to any third party, during, or at any time after working with the Church.



- Not release any private information on media outlets including social media forums.
- Upon ceasing employment, return all documents and property of the church.
- Understand that any breach of privacy or confidentiality is a serious act of misconduct that may result in disciplinary action or termination of services.

## Performance Review

It is an essential part of managing a workforce to review the performance of workers. This provides feedback and assistance to help workers develop in their role and to also assist the organisation to better involve its staff and volunteers. Performance will be reviewed by the Ministry Team Leader.

Depending on the role and issues at hand, this may take the form of an informal conversation through to a formal written process.

## Complaints and Concerns

All complaints, concerns or allegations raised about any person, the church facilities or program/ministries should be recorded and addressed promptly following the church's Incident Response process. The complaint can be documented in writing using the Incident Report form or when it involves a person, the Complaints and Allegations Form.

Workers have the responsibility to seek to resolve a complaint or conflict with another person, first by approaching the other person involved from a position of meekness, humility, forgiveness and patience.

Complaints and allegations relating to children should be immediately escalated to the Safe Ministry Contacts and then to the Senior Pastor and Chair of the Board. See Disclosures section below.



## Safe Church Policy

Springwood Church of Christ has a Safe Church Policy and this is available, along with all the other necessary safety forms, on our website – [www.scofc.org.au/safechurch](http://www.scofc.org.au/safechurch).

Your **Safe Ministry Contacts** are:

Leanne Thomson	<a href="mailto:safety@echurch.org.au">safety@echurch.org.au</a>	0430 107 634
Dale White	<a href="mailto:dalew@echurch.org.au">dalew@echurch.org.au</a>	0419 756 469
Justine Cadena	<a href="mailto:safeguarding@cofcqld.com.au">safeguarding@cofcqld.com.au</a>	0423 479 649

## Bullying & Harassment

Springwood Church of Christ is committed to providing a safe, tolerant, respectful and courteous environment for staff and volunteers.

Bullying is repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed towards an individual, team member or group that victimises, threatens, humiliates or undermines in a way that makes someone feel uncomfortable or unsafe.

It includes, but is not limited to, verbal abuse, excluding people, constantly belittling someone's opinions, threats, verbal intimidation, leaving offensive text messages etc. It can be face-to-face, by telephone, email, social networking or even via a third party.

Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual advances, unwelcome comments about physical appearance, sexually offensive comments, stories, jokes, pictures or other media.

The Church is committed to ensuring that all matters of bullying and harassment are investigated and dealt with appropriately.

If you believe that you have been subjected to bullying or have witnessed someone else being bullied, please report this immediately to your Ministry Team Leader and complete a Complaints & Allegations Form or Incident Report form. If you have been the subject of sexual harassment or have witnessed someone else being harassed, please immediately notify your



Ministry Team Leader. All complaints will be dealt with according to the Incident Response Process.

## Child Protection

All people working in a child-related ministry area must be aware of the specific commitment that Springwood Church of Christ has to Child Protection. The church recognises that the welfare of the child is paramount and is everyone's responsibility. A 'child' covers anybody under the age of 18.

All team members have a duty of care to ensure that all children and vulnerable people in their care are kept safe from harm and from all reasonably foreseeable risk of injury.

The Elders want to encourage the building of relationships with children without putting leaders and children in compromising situations.

Our policy and procedures ensure that all staff and volunteers working with children are screened and appropriately trained. Underneath our overarching Safe Church Policy is the Child and Youth Risk Implementation Strategy which is reviewed and approved by the Board on an annual basis.

We use the Safe Ministry Check system for our Blue Card register and to ensure all those working with children are appropriately trained and screened.

**Child abuse** is the mistreatment of a child, defined as an action or inaction that causes injury, death, emotional harm or risk of harm to a child. The four different categories of abuse include physical, sexual, emotional and neglect.

Child abuse and neglect can have both short and long term impacts for children. Child abuse can cause different types of harm. Harm is the detrimental effect or impact of the action or inaction on the child. Types of harm include physical, emotional or psychological harm.



## Disclosures of Child Abuse/Harm

Any person can take action to notify a relevant State authority if they believe that a child or young person's safety is at risk.

From 1/7/2021, all adults have a duty to report to the authorities if they have any information that causes the adult volunteer/staff member to believe on reasonable grounds that a child has been **sexually abused** or is being abused by another adult. Failure to report is a criminal offence which may result in up to 3 years imprisonment.

What are reasonable grounds to suspect abuse or harm or risk of abuse or harm?

- A child or young person tells you that they have been harmed;
- Someone else, such as a child, parent or volunteer tells you that harm has occurred or is likely to occur;
- A child or young person tells you they know someone who has been harmed (may be referring to themselves);
- You see significant changes in the behaviour of the child or new unexplained injuries; or
- You see the harm happening.

Disclosure is defined as the reporting by a participant of any abuse or harm (i.e. physical, sexual, emotional, neglect) that has taken place involving themselves or another participant of the program. If a disclosure is made to you then you have a moral and legal obligation to the following guidelines:

- Remain calm, listen attentively
- Reassure them
- Do not, under any circumstances, promise the participant that you will not tell anyone.
- During the disclosure, try to avoid offering advice (you are not expected to be a counsellor), and do not ask leading questions. Just listen and assure the participant that you believe them.
- Take notes and report the disclosure to the Ministry Team leader as soon as possible after it takes place. This may include suspicion of harm or potential risk of harm to a child.



- Complete a Concern Reporting Form available from the website or your Ministry Team Leader or Safe Ministry Contact.
- Do not investigate the matter yourself.
- Do not discuss the disclosure with any other staff/volunteers or participants.

A person who makes a report will be protected from any civil or criminal liability. However, staff or volunteers making knowingly false, malicious or vexatious reports will not be protected by this immunity and may risk action for defamation.

The Concern Reporting Form is available in the blue Safety folder in Reception or from the church website. This can be given directly to a Safe Ministry Contact.

If anyone is in immediate danger, call the police 000. Any complaint relating to children should be immediately escalated to the Safe Ministry Contact, Senior Pastor and Chair of the Board. A disclosure relating to the abuse of a child must also be reported to Police Link and the police report number should be recorded. The church leadership team will work through the full Incident Response Process and follow up on a reasonable course of action.

If the alleged perpetrator is a person connected to the church and the concern relates to a child, the CofCQ Safeguarding Response Group must also be contacted within 48 hours by the Senior Pastor or Chair of the Board. If the alleged perpetrator is the Senior Pastor or another Ministering Person endorsed by CofCQ, the complaint or disclosure can be made directly to the CofCQ Ministry Ethics Unit.

Springwood Church of Christ will ensure that any staff or volunteer involved in any child protection incident is provided with opportunities for support and debriefing.

## Driving Children in Vehicles

As part of the church youth programs or camps, it may be necessary for young people to be transported to off-site venues from time to time. All



adults transporting other people's children in their own vehicle on behalf of the church, have to become a verified/approved driver which includes holding a valid Blue Card. This does not include private and personal arrangements made between parents of children to and from the church or activities off-site.

To become a verified/approved driver, the Driver Information Form (available on website) is to be completed and signed off by the Youth/Senior Pastor. No fewer than two leaders/adults must be present when driving children and must ensure that at least one leader is of the same gender as the final child being dropped off.

## Social Media

We understand and acknowledge that part of our communication with each other is in the world of online communities. However, in acknowledging this, we are also very aware of the dangers and concerns, surrounding the online communities and we will endeavour to protect both participants and staff/volunteers by enforcing the following guidelines:

- Anything you publish on the internet is public and permanent, so it is inappropriate to comment on personal disagreements with others, the ministries of the Church or the Church itself.
- Language and photographs that you post on your personal social media accounts must be beyond reproach. Content posted on individual social media accounts should reflect staff or volunteers role as a positive Christian role-model to children and young people in schools, local churches and the wider community.
- Any official church related events, pictures or updates promoted to participants on social media will be posted by the ministry coordinator or person designated by them. Photos of children and young people should only be posted on the team social media accounts if written parental and church consent has been obtained. Names of children and young people should not be used in the description of the pictures.
- Staff/Volunteers must set an example to participants through the appropriate use of online communities.
- Staff/Volunteers should endeavour to keep most of their communication with young people in a group chat or public setting on a church page (not private messaging).





- Staff/Volunteers should not engage in one-on-one video chats at any time with children.
- Staff/volunteers should promote the church's social media accounts, so that children and young people from schools or youth group can follow it and keep in touch with the work of the team. Children and young people can contact the team in this way.
- If staff/volunteer are working with young people with whom they are already connected to on social media (for example through family friendships), this must be disclosed to their Team Leader as soon as possible.
- Staff/Volunteers should include another adult in an email or online message when directly communicating with a young person.
- These guidelines should be applied and adhered to after the completion of your time as staff or a volunteer, when relating to children and young people that you met during your time in this capacity at Springwood Church of Christ.

## Workplace Health and Safety

All staff and volunteers are responsible for working in a manner which ensures their personal safety and the safety of others.

As a staff/volunteer, you are required to:

- Comply with the Workplace Health and Safety guidelines
- Immediately report any incidents, accidents or hazards to your Supervisor.
- Become familiar with the emergency evacuation procedures where you work and attend practice fire drills or any other relevant training.
- Use equipment supplied by the Church in a safe manner and as per instructions provided by the organisation/supplier.

## Hazard Reporting

Hazard is described as anything with the potential to cause injury or illness.

Examples include: chemicals, wet floors, torn carpet, excessive noise, damaged equipment. Please identify any hazards and report them to your Ministry Team Leader. As per Church policy, regular inspections are carried out on the Church property to identify potential hazards.



## Personal Protective Equipment

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is any garment or attire that is worn to reduce exposure to hazards. Examples include gloves, aprons, protective eye and ear wear, steel-capped boots and certain types of shirts or trousers. There are certain work tasks that require PPE to be worn correctly before starting, for example, gardening, building maintenance, working in the kitchen.

Appropriate footwear e.g. kitchen use requires non-slip closed footwear, manual and outdoor work requires covered footwear. Open toed footwear may be appropriate for some ministry roles but please check with your Ministry Team Leader.

## Manual Lifting

One of the easiest ways to injure yourself in the workplace is to attempt to lift an object that's either too heavy or awkward. The back and neck injuries that can result from poor lifting techniques can be painful and long-lasting, so please always use the following lift strategies:

1. Assess the load. Use all available mechanical lifting aids such as trolleys, whenever possible. If you think the load will be too heavy to carry comfortably, ask for assistance from a team member.
2. Get close to the load.
3. Set your feet apart for balance and relax your knees.
4. Lower your head over the load and get a firm grip.
5. Keep your back upright and straighten your legs.
6. Lift then turn before walking.
7. Keep the load close to your body.

When in doubt, check with your Ministry Team Leader before doing any lifting that may result in an injury.

## Food Safety

Staff and volunteers that are required to prepare and serve food as part of their duties must complete food safety education such as an online food



handling course or provide evidence of having completed external training. However, where the food being served is not potentially hazardous (e.g. typical snack or morning tea type food or a BBQ) there is no requirement to have specific training.

Where food is prepared by people at home and provided to the church to either give away or as part of a 'bring and share' type event, there are no requirements for training or for the facilities where the food is being prepared under the Food Safety Act 2006.

Springwood Church of Christ does not hold a Food Business Licence. This means that meals that are prepared/cooked at the church and consumed in a sit-down meal must only occur up to 12 times per year. In this case, workers are required to abide by the regulations set in relation to food handling as directed by the certified food handler which should be present.

## Chemical Safety

Where working involves the use of dangerous chemicals, it is important to be aware of what you should do when using them, especially if your duties involve the use of cleaning products.

If using chemical products always:

- Handle chemicals with care
- Follow any relevant Material Safety Data Sheets (located with the chemicals)
- Read the label carefully before use
- Only use chemicals stored in a correctly labelled container
- Be conscious to never pour, mix or dispose of chemicals unless you have been instructed on how to do it by an authorised person
- Use relevant Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

## First Aid

Each ministry area should have at least one leader/volunteer who is First Aid qualified in attendance. First Aid kits are available on site at each of the kitchens and are indicated on the Evacuation plan maps. First Aid kits are



checked and restocked on a regular basis. A list of qualified First Aiders is kept on the front of the Kits.

A First Aid kit must be taken off-site if the ministry/program is being run elsewhere.

## Incidents and Accidents

An incident is defined as an undesired event which resulted or could have resulted in harm, damage or loss. In the event of an accident or incident, please inform the Ministry Team Leader as soon as possible. All incidents must be documented on an Incident Report Form preferably at the time of the incident or within 24 hours. The leader will be able to supply you with these forms or it is available on the website. All incidents will be investigated and appropriate measures put in place following the outcomes of this investigation.

The Church has an Emergency Response Plan in the event of a serious or critical incident. This is available on the website including a quick reference guide to Emergency Contacts and Referring Agencies.

Do not, under any circumstances talk to the media if a serious incident has occurred.

Some examples of serious incidents include:

- Death of a participant
- A lost participant
- A significantly injured or unwell participant (requiring emergency services to be called)
- A natural tragedy (bushfire, flood, storm)
- Significant violent activity
- Sexual assault both physical or verbal
- Suicidal participant, attempted or actual
- Any occurrence of abuse or disclosure of abuse occurs
- Any occurrence of self harm
- Food poisoning
- Possibility of spinal, back or head injury



- Eye damage occurs
- Unconscious participant
- Inappropriate physical contact between participants
- Substance abuse

Please contact the Ministry Team Leader immediately in the event of any of these incidents. If that person is not available, then the Safe Ministry Contacts.

### **Fire Safety**

An annual Fire Safety Management checklist is completed by the Property Officer. An annual fire drill is conducted and the location of evacuation points and general evacuation procedures is discussed. See below.

### **Emergency Evacuation Procedures**

In the event of an emergency on site at the Church, please follow the instructions given by the authorised Fire Warden (if one is present) or the Ministry Team Leader. Please familiarise yourself with the evacuation exits, routes and assembly area by reading the Evacuation Procedures located on all the walls of the church. Do not re-enter the building until given permission.



# EVACUATION PROCEDURE



## **STAGE 1:- Removal of people from the immediate Danger Area**

Occupants and staff in the immediate danger area are to assemble a safe distance away from the fire and smoke. When the area has been evacuated all doors and windows should be closed to contain fire.

## **STAGE 2:- Removal to a Safe Area**

If the severity of the smoke or fire warrants further evacuation, occupants should be moved through fire/smoke doors to a safe area.

**STAGE 3:- Complete Evacuation of Entire Complex** Should the emergency necessitate evacuation of the whole building, the Manager or the Fire Service will direct occupants from the safe place to the **ASSEMBLY AREA**.

## **STAGE 4:- Roll Call**

To be conducted as soon as possible and to ensure all Persons are accounted for. All persons to remain at the assembly area until instructed to return to building.