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**SAFE CHURCH**

**Policies Procedures & Practices**

76-84 Flinders Avenue

(PO Box 326) Lara VIC 3212

5291 5197

[office@lifeway.org.au](mailto:office@lifeway.org.au)

www.lifeway.org.au

**Lifeway Christian Church Safe Church Staff & Volunteer Pack**

Thank you for your commitment as a Staff or Volunteer at Lifeway Christian Church. Lifeway Christian Church has adopted a Safe Church model as recommended by the Baptist Union of Victoria and the Child Safe Standards of Victoria. We are committed to applying their guidelines to ensure compliance. In the pages that follow you will find:

**Part A: Please read all enclosed documents, this booklet is for you to keep**

* Applying for a Working with Children Check - Applicant Guide (compulsory - action required)
* Applying for Police Check (ministry leaders)
* Lifeway Christian Church Statement of Commitment to Child safety, Young People, and all Vulnerable People.
* Staff & Volunteer Code of Conduct for Lifeway Christian Church Child Safe Standards
* Lifeway Christian Church Working with Children and Youth Policy
* Lifeway Christian Church Risk Management Policy
* Child Safety Reporting Process for Lifeway Christian Church as per Commission for Children, Young People and Vulnerable People.

**Part B: Please complete and return to the Lifeway Office Administrator**

* Safe ministry check -Ministry Application Form
* Code of Conduct
* Lifeway Christian Church Program Experience
* Lifeway Christian Church Staff & Volunteer Declaration

**\*It is a requirement that Staff & Volunteers in a position of a leader/coordinator attend a Creating Safe Spaces Workshop within their first year of ministry.** You can check for upcoming Workshops at www.buv.com.au. After attending a full workshop, attendance at a refresher workshop is required every 3 years.

**Application Procedure**

*\*Applicants need to have been worshipping at our church for 6 months (can be less at the discretion of Lifeway Christian Church Leadership Team). For some positions, applicants may be required to be a partner of* *Lifeway Christian Church. For ministry leaders positions Lifeway Christian Church requires Police Check to be done.*

* Apply for WWCC and provide application number to Lifeway Office
* Receive WWCC card; to be copied by Office Administrator and card number recorded
* Apply for Police Check (Ministry Leaders)
* Read Part A documents in their entirety
* Complete all forms and declarations in Part B - return to Lifeway Office
* Attend applicant interview
* Referees will be checked
* Safe Church team will make decision of suitability
* Recommended to Lifeway Christian ChurchLeadership for acceptance
* Attendance at a Creating Safe Spaces workshop within first year, with a refresher course every 3 years (leaders/coordinators)

**Lifeway Christian Church**

**Safe Church Staff and Volunteer Pack**

**PART A**

**TO BE READ IN ITS ENTIRETY**

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**Actions Required**

1. Go to [https://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/individuals/applicants/how-to-apply](http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au) and complete the online application.

You will need an email address and proof of identity documents.

Be sure to list Lifeway Christian Churchas an organization for your child related work.

Our postal address is: (PO Box 326) Lara VIC 3212

Please ensure to use the postal address, not the street address or manse.

1. Finalize your check by lodging it at the nearest Australia Post outlet.
2. Once you receive your card it needs to be cited by the Lifeway Christian ChurchOffice Administrator.
3. If at any point you require assistance, please contact the Lifeway Christian ChurchOffice Administrator.

**Applying for Police Check**

Lifeway Christian Church has appointed Australia Post as a body to do all police checks.

Police check application can be done online or in-store. Once it’s been submitted and processed by the police agency, you'll receive a certificate with your result. Lifeway Christian Church requires a copy of Police Check.

**Actions Required**

1. Go to <https://auspost.com.au/police-checks> and complete the online application or ask for the form at any Australia Post branch.

To apply for a police check you’ll need 4 types of identification, fallow the guide.

1. Once you receive your check it needs to be cited by the Lifeway Christian ChurchOffice Administrator.
2. If at any point you require assistance, please contact the Lifeway Christian ChurchOffice Administrator.

**Lifeway Christian Church Statement of Commitment to Child Safety, Young People and Vulnerable People**

***(Where this policy refers to Child/Children this includes Young People and Vulnerable People)***

Lifeway Christian Churchis committed to protecting the safety of all people within its programs, ministries, and events.

We affirm that all people, regardless of age, gender, race, culture, disability and family or social backgrounds, have equal rights to be emotionally and physically safe; respected; and have their views and opinions valued, at all times. We also live in a country that legislates for people’s safety.

God calls His body to minister to vulnerable people. God identified classes of vulnerable people who were to be protected and given special care and treatment in society because of their powerlessness.   
*(Exodus 22:21-22, Deuteronomy 10:17-19, Jeremiah 22 2-4, James 1:27)*

Our policy has been developed to help us live out our Biblical mandate and our responsibilities under Australian legislation. This policy applies to all staff, including senior leadership, managers, coordinators, paid staff, Staff & Volunteers, or anyone working on behalf of Lifeway Christian Church.

This Safe Church Policies Procedures & Practices was approved by the Lifeway Christian Church Leadership on the 24th of October 2017. The Leadership group comprises of the Pastor/s, Governing Elders and Business Operations Group and other ministry groups that have direct involvement when working with children, young people and vulnerable people.

### Purpose

To protect children, young people and vulnerable adults who receive Lifeway Christian Church services.

All children, young people and vulnerable adults who come to Lifeway Christian Church have a right to feel and to be safe. The welfare of the children, young people and vulnerable adults in our care will always be paramount and we have a zero tolerance to any abuse. We aim to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe and have fun.

This policy was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of the management, staff and volunteers to child safety and to provide an outline of the policies and practices we have developed to keep everyone safe from any harm, including abuse.

The policy identifies the requirements of the Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2005 and the Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Act 2015 as set out by the State Government of Victoria.

**Our policy aims to:**

* Minimize the risk of abuse, ministry misconduct and the misuse of positional power
* Ensure that all cases of suspected abuse and ministry misconduct are handled thoroughly
* Ensure that Staff & Volunteers and programs are safe
* Ensure that all people are respected and valued

### Lifeway Christian Church commits to:

All children who come to Lifeway Christian Church have a right to feel and be safe. The welfare of the children in our care will always be paramount and we have zero tolerance to child abuse. We aim to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe and have fun.

This Statement of Commitment was developed by the Governing Elders of Lifeway Christian Church and will be further developed and implemented across our programs in collaboration with all our staff, volunteers and the children who use our services and their parents.

It applies to all staff, volunteers, children and individuals involved in the life of our church.

*This Child Safe Statement of Commitment was approved by the Lifeway Christian Church Governance elders at a meeting held on 13th December 2016 is due to be reviewed every 12 months.*

Lifeway Christian Church is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children, young people and vulnerable people and will endeavor to provide a safe and supportive environment by the following safeguarding measures:

**Safe recruitment of Staff & Volunteers**

* We will screen all prospective Staff & Volunteers in our ministries before they are appointed

(i.e., WWCC / recruitment processes / training / induction / supervision / reviews)

* We will have a minimum church attendance policy for all prospective Staff & Volunteers

**Adequate training of Staff & Volunteers.**

* We require that all Staff & Volunteers in leadership/coordinators positions attend a Creating Safe Spaces Workshop
* Church workshop within their first year of ministry and attend a refresher workshop every 3 years
* We require all Staff & Volunteers to attend ministry-specific training as required

**Continued supervision of Staff & Volunteers.**

* We commit to ongoing Staff & Volunteer training, supervision and support for Staff & Volunteers
* All Staff & Volunteers will agree to follow our Staff & Volunteers Code of Conduct

**Responding to allegations of harm (abuse) and serious ministry misconduct.**

* All Staff & Volunteers will report disclosures or suspicions of child abuse, according to our procedure.
* We will ensure procedures are clear and appropriate in how to respond to allegations of abuse.
* Where an allegation of misconduct is made against a person in the organization in relation to a child, we will priorities support to the child. We will seek appropriate support for the person implicated but protect the safety of the child as the paramount consideration.

**(Please refer to the Child Safety Reporting Process document)**

* Where a Leader has an allegation of ministry misconduct made against them, we will provide support to alleged victims and perpetrators and seek appropriate denominational help for a just and fair resolution.

**Safe environments in our ministry program**

* We will serve as servants of Christ, commit to the good news of Jesus and lead in spiritually non-abusive ways.
* We will afford participants a say in the programs and the activities in which they participate by fostering and valuing their ideas and encouraging participation.
* We will obtain appropriate information relating to the program participants, including children’s health and family situation, to ensure that we are able to care for their physical and emotional needs.
* All Staff & Volunteers will discharge their duty of care using forms, checklists and templates for establishment and maintenance of safe environments in our church.
* We will work ongoingly toward the very best practice procedures to maintain a safe environment across our programs (OHS, Fire Safety, Building Safety, Incident and Emergency Procedures)
* Ministry Coordinators are to complete a written ministry approval process annually i.e.: Annual Reports.

**Responding to other disclosures**

* We will understand the process of responding to disclosures of abuse and harm, including self- harm and suicide ideation.
* We will ensure that appropriate training takes place to recognize and respond to indicators of abuse and neglect and receive support for all involved in the disclosure (including the Staff & Volunteers).
* We understand that responding to abuse is not limited to children, it also includes adults within our programs who may be vulnerable at any given time where abuse could be present and that everyone understands the most appropriate steps to take in supporting our vulnerable people within our community.

**Provide an open safe environment**

* We will afford participants a say in the programs and the activities in which they participate by fostering and valuing their ideas and encouraging participation. We will be accountable and transparent.
* We will create a child-friendly environment, allowing people to raise their concerns in an appropriate manner. We will obtain appropriate information relating to the program participants, including children’s health and family situation, to ensure that we are able to care for their physical and emotional needs.

**Understand and value diversity**

* We will be mindful in our approach for all programs to be inclusive of all people.
* This includes adapting programs for anyone with a disability to receive access to various programs, as well as provide adequate training for leaders.
* We will be sensitive to those from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds and those within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait communities with our programs, information, support and services. We will also uphold respect for all cultures and encourage the participation of all people and recognize their unique contribution to our community.

### Scope

This Church Safe Policy was approved by the Lifeway Christian Church Governance Elders meeting held on ­­­­­­27th July 2021. It should be regularly reviewed every 12 months.

It applies to all leadership, staff, volunteers, children, and individuals involved in Lifeway Christian Church.

**Definitions**

**Abuse:** Abuse and neglect includes but not limited to physical abuse; emotional abuse; family violence; sexual abuse; grooming; neglect

**Child:** A person who is under the age of 18 years (The Commission for Children and Young People Act 2012, Victoria).

**Disclosure:** A disclosure occurs when someone informs a person in authority/leadership (or trusted adult) within Lifeway Christian Church that they have been subject to abuse or knows of abuse. A disclosure may or may not be an allegation or a notifiable circumstance, but it is the responsibility of the person in authority to take any appropriate action.

**Safe Environment:** Showing duty of care to those we are responsible for, by taking all necessary steps to ensure their safety, including but not limited to their spiritual, physical and sexual safety, working to prevent the risk of emotional abuse (including bullying) or neglect.

**Safe Church Leaders and Staff & Volunteers:** Hasbeen through the recruitment process, understands responsibilities, is supervised and is an accountable team player.

**Safe Church Program:** All risks have been assessed and events thought and planned.

**Vulnerable Person:** a person who may be considered susceptible to abuse or exploitation based on factors such as their health status (physical and mental), age, grief, previous experience of abuse, social isolation or financial hardship. In this sense vulnerability can be temporary or permanent.

**CHILD SAFE STANDARDS – Staff and Volunteers Code of Conduct**

**Relationship with God**

Maintaining a relationship with God through prayer and other spiritual disciplines is essential, understanding that it is out of our relationship with God that we are able to minister to others. This includes praying for our team, for the protection of our ministry and those in our care; attending a worship service and a connect group of our church as often as possible.

Staff & Volunteers will always seek to promote and encourage positive behavior and self-esteem in children and young people (Gal 5:22-25).

Staff and volunteers are responsible for keeping a professional role with children. This means establishing and maintaining clear boundaries which serve to protect everyone from misunderstandings. This Code of Conduct sets out the behavior which Lifeway Christian Church expects from all people associated with or representing it.

**Purpose**

Following this Code of Conduct will help to protect children and young people from abuse and inappropriate behavior from adults. It will also help staff and volunteers to maintain the standard of behavior expected of them. Having a Code of Conduct that everyone adheres to also protects the organization because opportunities for harm are actively reduced.

**Upholding this Code of Conduct**

All staff and volunteers are expected to report any breaches of this code to the Safe Church Concerns Person under the Safe Church Policies Procedures & Practices put in place by Lifeway Christian Church.

Staff and volunteers who breach this Code of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary procedures, including any breaches involving external workers or volunteers.

All allegations of child abuse will be reported to statutory authorities, such as police or child protection. A report will also be made to the Governance Elders of Lifeway Christian Church, but this will not replace or negate the obligation to report to statutory authorities.

Lifeway Christian Church condemns all forms of child abuse, discrimination and sexual exploitation. We are committed to creating and maintaining an environment which promotes safety for people involved in our programs including all children, people with a disability, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

It is the policy of Lifeway Christian Church that any employee or volunteer of the church who is issued with an Interim Negative Notice will cease working with children until the matter is resolved by the Department of Justice. Any employee or volunteer of the church who is issued with an Interim Negative Notice, or whose WWCC is suspended or revoked, will cease working with children and also enter into a discussion regarding Persons of Concern process.

Although some volunteer roles which do not need a WWCC may be possible to continue”.  The BUV’s recommendation is that ALL volunteers of any type need a WWCC, and thus should not continue in any leadership or volunteer role if they fail a WWCC, due to molestation insurance and other legislation.

**As a Staff Member or Volunteer of Lifeway Christian Church I will:**

* Conduct myself in a manner that is consistent with the values of Lifeway Christian Church.
* Treat all children, young people and vulnerable people with respect, regardless of race; color; sex; language; religion; political or other opinion; national, ethnic or social origin; property, disability, birth or other status.
* Provide a welcoming, inclusive and safe environment for all people, including children, young people, vulnerable people, their parents/carers, staff and volunteers.
* Follow and report any concerns of child abuse in accordance with the Lifeway Christian Church’s child protection policy and procedures.
* Keep all information regarding child protection concerns confidential, only discussing information with relevant and appropriate people according to the reporting procedures.
* Respect cultural differences.
* Encourage open communication between all children, young people, parents, staff and volunteers, and allow children and young people to participate in the decisions that affect them.
* Be transparent in my actions and whereabouts.
* Take responsibility for being accountable and not placing myself in positions where there is a risk of allegations being made. Wherever possible, I will ensure that another adult is present when I am working with or near children.
* Self-assess my behavior, actions, language and relationships with children.
* Report any concerns or suspicions regarding abuse by a fellow worker, volunteer, contractor or visitor, according to the Lifeway Christian Church child safety reporting process.
* Comply with all relevant Australian and local legislation.
* Immediately disclose any information of charges, convictions of abuse and policy non- compliance in accordance with appropriate procedures. This includes disclosing any charges or convictions made against oneself or others.
* Avoid favoritism.
* Ensure any contact with children and young people is appropriate and in the parameters of the program or event.
* Always ensure language is appropriate and not offensive or discriminatory.
* Provide examples of good conduct in daily activities.
* Challenge unacceptable behavior.
* Encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behavior they do not like.
* Recognize that special caution is required when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people.

**As a Staff Member or Volunteer of Lifeway Christian Church I will not:**

* Engage in behavior that is intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children or young people, in person or on social media.
* Use inappropriate, offensive, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning, culturally inappropriate or discriminatory language when speaking with a child or young person.
* Allow allegations, suspected abuse, risk of harm or disclosures go unreported.
* Do things of a personal nature that a child can do for him/herself, such as assistance with toileting or changing clothes. If this is necessary, for example for a child with a disability, I will inform another leader first and be as open as possible in my behavior.
* Hit or physically assault children. This includes refraining from physical punishment/discipline of children.
* Develop inappropriate relationships with children or young people.
* Conduct a sexual relationship with a child or young person or indulge in any form of sexual contact with a child or young person.
* Seek to make contact and/or spend time with any child that I come into contact within my role as a representative of Lifeway Christian Church outside of the designated times and activities set for performing my role as a representative of Lifeway Christian Church.
* Condone or participate in behavior of children that is illegal, unsafe or abusive.
* Act in a way that shows unfair and differential treatment of children and young people.
* Release or discuss any personal confidential information about suspected or proven child abuse or protection cases other than with the Safe Church Concerns Person and other parties as designated by them and according to reporting procedures.
* Use any computer, mobile phone, or video and digital camera to exploit or harass children.
* Make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of children and young people.
* Act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive.
* Make inappropriate promises to children and young people, particularly in relation to confidentiality.
* Jump to conclusions about others.
* Exaggerate or trivialize child abuse issues.
* Rely on your reputation or that of the organization to protect you.

I am responsible for my own actions and utilize Child Safe standards and best practices to avoid actions and behaviors that could be in breach of this Code of Conduct and the Church Safe Policies of Lifeway Christian Church.

I have read the Lifeway’s Church Safe Policy and Code of Conduct and discussed its contents with a relevant leader of Lifeway Christian Church. I am aware that Lifeway Christian Church always expects me to uphold at all times the standards of behavior described in the Code of Conduct above.

I also understand that disciplinary measures and legal steps will be taken if I am found to be in breach of the Code of Conduct. I understand that in making that report, Lifeway Christian Church may have to inform other authorities, in a confidential manner to meet obligations under Australian law.

**Working with Children and Youth Policy**

**Purpose:**

The Australian government has introduced the “Working with Children Card”. This card is to be held by all staff or Staff & Volunteers working with people under the age of 18, for the protection of all people, regardless of their age. This policy is to protect the young from experiencing inappropriate behavior and to protect adults from being unfairly accused.

**Policy:**

To ensure all activities with children and youth are age appropriate and the safety of children and youth is to be maintained.

**Procedures:**

* If Staff member or Volunteer is over the age of 18, BEFORE commencing in a leadership role in an area which involves people under the age of 18, a Staff member or Volunteer must have applied for a Working with Children Check (WWCC) Card or equivalent (e.g., VIT registration)
* Staff & Volunteers who are responsible for the supervision of children and youth require a valid Working with Children Card (or equivalent), regardless of their role.
* If a person receives an ‘interim negative notice’ or a ‘negative notice’ in regard to their Working with Children Card, they will immediately step down from their role until the issue is resolved in compliance with legislation.
* When a Junior Staff member or Volunteer turns 18 years of age, they are required to apply for a Working with Children Card.
* Junior leaders (under the age of 18) are accountable to senior leaders in all areas.
* Staff & Volunteers are to ensure that all activities carried out are age appropriate.
* Staff & Volunteers must provide their WWCC application number, whilst awaiting the arrival of their WWCC card, to the Office Administrator.
* Staff & Volunteers must provide their WWCC card number and legal surname and original card for citing by the Office Administrator.

**Ramifications:**

Failure to comply with this policy could result in a fine or criminal charge, as well as disciplinary action being taken under the relevant Disciplinary Action and Dismissal Policy.

**Risk Management Policy**

**Purpose:**

The church recognizes that risk management is an integral part of good management practice. Occupational Health and Safety rests mainly on prevention and as such, risk assessment is vital in all areas of operation.

**Policy:**

The church is to evaluate potential benefits alongside potential risks as a routine part of all planning processes. Identified risks will be planned for and managed as far as is reasonably practical.

**Procedures:**

Risk Assessment should be undertaken: If not done before - When any new work is planned - When a significant change occurs - After an incident - At regular predetermined intervals

There are six basic steps in the risk management process:

1. **Establish the context**

What is the work process? What will we be doing? What are we planning to achieve?

1. **Identify hazards**

What are the hazards?

1. **Analyse risks that may result because of the hazard**

Analysing the risk involves the determination of:

* Consequences – the outcome of an incident
* Exposure – interaction with the hazard
* Probability – likelihood that consequences will occur once an individual is exposed

1. **Evaluate the risks**

Determine the priority of the treatment of the risk

1. **Treat the risks**

In many cases, it will be necessary to use more than one control measure to manage exposure to risk. In some cases, lesser control measures will need to be put in place until a permanent solution can be achieved. Whatever control measures are being chosen, the “hierarchy of control measures” must be taken into account. Work down the list, with protective gear as the least desirable choice.

* Eliminating the hazard is the first choice. The ideal solution is to get rid of the hazard completely.
* Substituting a less hazardous material, process or equipment
* Redesigning the equipment or work process
* Isolating the hazard through engineering – separating the user from the hazard
* Administrative controls to minimise exposure to risk through use of procedures or instructions.
* Personal Protective Gear is used as a last resort when exposure to risk cannot be minimised by other means. This measure does not control the hazard at the source but relies on behavior modification for its success. The success of this control is dependent on the correct personal protective gear being chosen, worn correctly, used correctly and maintained in good condition. When personal protective gear fails, immediate injury may result for the user.

1. **Review and Monitor the risks**

The final step in this process is to monitor and review the effectiveness of measures. Questions to be asked include:

* Have chosen control measures been implemented as planned?
* Are the measures being correctly used?
* Have the changes made to control exposure to the assessed risks resulted in what was intended?
* Has exposure to the assessed risk been eliminated or adequately reduced?
* Have the implemented control measures resulted in the introduction of new problems?
* Have the implemented control measures resulted in the worsening of any existing problems?

This step should be carried out in conjunction with all previous steps.

**Risk Analysis**

**Types of Risks**

Potential child safety risks that could occur within your programs, events and services.

**Accidental Harm**

* + Poor physical environment leading to injury
  + Poor supervision
  + High-risk activity

**Physical Abuse**

* + Physical punishment
  + Pushing, shoving
  + Punching, slapping, biting, kicking

**Psychological/emotional Abuse**

* + Bullying
  + Threatening language
  + Shaming
  + Intentional ignoring and isolating

**Neglect**

* + Lack of supervision
  + Not providing adequate nourishment
  + Not providing adequate clothing or shelter
  + Not meeting the specific physical or cognitive needs of children

**Cultural/Spiritual Abuse**

* + Lack of cultural respect/racial or cultural vilification or discrimination
  + Lack of support to enable a child to be aware of and express their cultural identity
  + Use of positional power and control and using prayer/scripture as a means of manipulation

**Sexual Abuse**

* + Sexual abuse, assault and exploitation
  + Grooming (physical or psychological actions which involve manipulative cultivation of relationships with children, young people and vulnerable adults).
  + Inappropriate touching
  + Inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature
  + Crossing professional boundaries

**Online Abuse**

* + Abusive texts and emails
  + Hurtful messages, images or videos
  + Intimidated others online
  + Grooming – sending a child offensive, confronting or obscene content (or asking for inappropriate photos)
  + Singling a child out for a ‘special’ relationship

**Ways to Manage Risks**

Considerations of safety risks within various procedural processes and physical safety and what should be in place to control/minimise these risks

**Safe Recruitment and management of leaders**

* + Reference checks
  + Working with Children Check
  + Police Check
  + Interview and inductions
  + Probation period
  + Leadership application
  + Adequate ratios
  + Child safety training
  + Refresher training
  + Child Protection/ Safe Church Policies Procedures & Practices
  + Code of Conduct signed

**Consent/Permission**

* + Relevant consent forms completed by a parent/guardian
  + Video/photography consent form been given
  + Emergency contacts made available to core leaders
  + Dietary requirements and allergies noted

**Safe environment**

* + First Aid kit
  + Appointed first aid officers
  + Risk Assessment completed
  + Identified risks managed
  + Record keeping/privacy policies

**Transportation of children and young people**

* + Permission given or private arrangements made with parent/guardian
  + Ensure that no leader is left alone with a child or young person
  + Road safety rules and provisional license holders restriction

**Electronic communications to children and young people**

* + Electronic communications/ Social media policies
  + Social media guidelines
  + Privacy/confidentiality policies
  + Code of conduct

**Responding to abuse disclosure/allegations of misconduct**

* + Child safety training
  + Refresher Training
  + Child protection/ Safe Church Policies Procedures & Practices
  + Responding to disclosures guidelines
  + Identified risks managed
  + Record keeping/privacy policies
  + Risk assessment completed
  + Code of conduct
  + Misconduct policies
  + Complaints and grievance procedures

**Ramifications:**

Every person has a responsibility to follow this policy before commencing a particular ministry, activity or initiative as well as when altering any existing ministry or activity. At all times: “Prevention is better than Cure”

**The Child Safety Reporting Process for Lifeway Christian Church as per Commission for Children, Young People and Vulnerable People**

**Who can report?** Parent, Child, Staff Member, Volunteer

**What to report?** Any child safety concerns, including:

* Disclosure of abuse or harm
* Allegation, suspicion or observation
* Breach of Code of Conduct
* Environmental safety issues

**Call 000 if any individual is in immediate danger.**

**How to report?** Face to face verbal report, letter, email, telephone call, meeting

**Who to report to?** Child Safe Representative, Church Administrator, Church Secretary, Pastor, Children’s Ministry Leader, Youth Worker

**What happens next?** The responsible person who has received the report will:

* Offer support to the child, the parents, the person reporting
* Initiate internal process to ensure the safety of the child, clarify the nature of the report and commence disciplinary actions (if required)
* Decide, in accordance with legal requirements and duty of care, whether the matter should be reported to Police or Child Protection and, if required, make a report to CCYP as soon as possible

**Outcome:** Following investigation an outcome will be decided. The relevant staff, Staff & Volunteers, parents and child will be notified of the outcome and policies and procedures will be updated where necessary.

**All leaders and volunteers are required by the Code of Conduct to report all concerns of abuse towards children and vulnerable adults (including sexual abuse), according to the above process. The Safe Church Concerns person will assist the person with the concern to fulfil all mandatory reporting obligations.**

**Training in understanding the Code of Conduct and reporting procedure is part of the induction process for all staff and volunteers.**

If you have completed your WWCC application and read this document in its entirety, please proceed to Part B of your pack to complete the required paperwork

**Children’s Code of Conduct**

We all have the right to feel safe and be safe at all times.

We know that you will understand the need for this Code of Conduct which serves to protect everyone. Please speak with the Team Leader if you have any concerns about this program.

This Code of Conduct applies to all children who attend.

1. We will play SAFELY and be GENTLE
2. We will SHARE and PLAY together
3. We will be FRIENDLY to others
4. We will RESPECT all people
5. We will always ASK a leader if we need help
6. We will have FUN

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**Lifeway Christian Church**

**Safe Church**

**Staff and Volunteer Pack**

**PART B**

**TO BE COMPLETED AND RETURNED**

**Ministry Application Form**

*Please give this completed form to the Safe Church Concerns Person*

**Personal Details**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Surname | Christian Names  Male  Female |
| Date of Birth | Address |
| Mobile Phone | Email |
| Home Phone | No. of years at Lifeway Christian Church |

**Ministry you are applying for: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**What role in ministry are you applying for:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Consent:**

I consent to all the information contained in my application to be kept by our church. I understand this

information will be kept in a confidential file and used only for screening and disciplinary purposes.

**Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Please circle either “yes” or “no” for each question.**

If the answer to any of the following questions is “yes”, please give details on a separate page if necessary.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Do you have any health problem(s) which may affect you working or volunteering for the  church? | Yes / No |
| 2. Have you ever been charged with and/or convicted of a criminal offence? | Yes / No |
| 1. Have you ever engaged in any of the following conduct, even though never having been charged?    * Sexual contact with someone under your care other than your spouse (such as parishioner, client, patient, student, employee or subordinate)    * Sexual contact with a person under the age of consent    * Illegal use, production, sale or distribution of pornographic materials    * Conduct likely to cause harm to people, or to put them at risk of harm | Yes / No |
| 4. Has there been anything in your past that may hinder you in this position that you are applying for? | Yes / No |
| 5. To your knowledge, have you ever been the subject of an allegation of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct? | Yes / No |
| 6. Have you ever had an apprehended violence order, order for protection or the like issued against you as a result of allegations of violence, abuse, likely harm, harassment, stalking etc? | Yes / No |
| 7. Have you ever had permission to undertake paid or voluntary work with children or other vulnerable people refused, suspended or withdrawn in Australia or any other country? | Yes / No |
| 8. Has a child or dependent young person in your care (as a parent or in any other capacity) ever been removed from your care, or been the subject of a risk assessment by the authorities? | Yes / No |
| 9. Has your driver’s license ever been revoked or suspended? | Yes / No |
| 10.Have you a history of alcohol abuse or a history of substance abuse including prescription, over-the-counter, recreational or illegal drugs? | Yes / No |
| 11.Have you done anything in the past or present that may result in allegations being made  against you of child abuse?  *Abuse includes: bullying, emotional abuse, harassment: neglect; physical abuse; or sexual abuse.* | Yes / No |
| 12. Have you ever done anything in the past or present that may result in allegations being made against you of bullying or any form of harassment of adults? | Yes / No |

**Record of previous church membership** (**if in the congregation less than 3 years)**

List church organizations, churches, congregations of which you have been associated **within the last 5 years**. (attach separate page if necessary)

Name of Church

Location

When (Month/Year)

Positions Held

**Character References (please complete if you have been at Lifeway for less than 3 years)**

Please provide two (2) referees. Referees must be over eighteen years of age and able to give a report on your good character and suitability for ministry. Referee must not be a family member.

**Referee 1:** Name Phone

State your relationship with this person

**Referee 2:** Name Phone

State your relationship with this person

**Evidence of Criminal History Check and/or Working with Children Check**

I have provided the following **Police Check Ref No. \_** \_Yes  No  N/A 

**Working with Children No.** Yes  No  N/A 

**Consent to Hold Information**

I consent to the information contained in this application including the subsequent pages to be kept

by our church.

I understand that this information will be kept in a confidential file and used only for screening and disciplinary purposes.

**Declaration**

I,

Do solemnly and sincerely declare that:

1. The information I have provided in this application and the information contained in any documents accompanying this application are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.
2. I understand that any material misstatement in or omission from this questionnaire may render me unfit to hold a particular or any office in the Church.

Applicant’s signature Date Declared

**Endorsement by Ministry Leader**

Name of Ministry Leader

Ministry title

Signature Date:

Note: Please seek legal advice if you are uncertain about signing this document

**CODE OF CONDUCT**

**As a Staff Member or Volunteer of Lifeway Christian Church I will:**

* Conduct myself in a manner that is consistent with the values of Lifeway Christian Church.
* Treat all children, young people and vulnerable people with respect, regardless of race; color; sex; language; religion; political or other opinion; national, ethnic or social origin; property, disability, birth or other status.
* Provide a welcoming, inclusive and safe environment for all people, including children, young people, vulnerable people, their parents/carers, staff and volunteers.
* Follow and report any concerns of child abuse in accordance with the Lifeway Christian Church’s child protection policy and procedures.
* Keep all information regarding child protection concerns confidential, only discussing information with relevant and appropriate people according to the reporting procedures.
* Respect cultural differences.
* Encourage open communication between all children, young people, parents, staff and volunteers, and allow children and young people to participate in the decisions that affect them.
* Be transparent in my actions and whereabouts.
* Take responsibility for being accountable and not placing myself in positions where there is a risk of allegations being made. Wherever possible, I will ensure that another adult is present when I am working with or near children.
* Self-assess my behavior, actions, language and relationships with children.
* Report any concerns or suspicions regarding abuse by a fellow worker, volunteer, contractor or visitor, according to the Lifeway Christian Church child safety reporting process.
* Comply with all relevant Australian and local legislation.
* Immediately disclose any information of charges, convictions of abuse and policy non- compliance in accordance with appropriate procedures. This includes disclosing any charges or convictions made against oneself or others.
* Avoid favoritism.
* Ensure any contact with children and young people is appropriate and in the parameters of the program or event.
* Always ensure language is appropriate and not offensive or discriminatory.
* Provide examples of good conduct in daily activities.
* Challenge unacceptable behavior.
* Encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behavior they do not like.
* Recognize that special caution is required when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people.

**As a Staff Member or Volunteer of Lifeway Christian Church I will not:**

* Engage in behavior that is intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children or young people, in person or on social media.
* Use inappropriate, offensive, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning, culturally inappropriate or discriminatory language when speaking with a child or young person.
* Allow allegations, suspected abuse, risk of harm or disclosures go unreported.
* Do things of a personal nature that a child can do for him/herself, such as assistance with toileting or changing clothes. If this is necessary, for example for a child with a disability, I will inform another leader first and be as open as possible in my behavior.
* Hit or physically assault children. This includes refraining from physical punishment/discipline of children.
* Develop inappropriate relationships with children or young people.
* Conduct a sexual relationship with a child or young person or indulge in any form of sexual contact with a child or young person.
* Seek to make contact and/or spend time with any child that I come into contact within my role as a representative of Lifeway Christian Church outside of the designated times and activities set for performing my role as a representative of Lifeway Christian Church.
* Condone or participate in behavior of children that is illegal, unsafe or abusive.
* Act in a way that shows unfair and differential treatment of children and young people.
* Release or discuss any personal confidential information about suspected or proven child abuse or protection cases other than with the Safe Church Concerns Person and other parties as designated by them and according to reporting procedures.
* Use any computer, mobile phone, or video and digital camera to exploit or harass children.
* Make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of children and young people.
* Act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive.
* Make inappropriate promises to children and young people, particularly in relation to confidentiality.
* Jump to conclusions about others.
* Exaggerate or trivialize child abuse issues.
* Rely on your reputation or that of the organization to protect you.

I am responsible for my own actions and utilize Child Safe standards and best practices to avoid actions and behaviors that could be in breach of this Code of Conduct and the Church Safe Policies of Lifeway Christian Church.

I have read the Lifeway’s Church Safe Policy and Code of Conduct and discussed its contents with a relevant leader of Lifeway Christian Church. I am aware that Lifeway Christian Church always expects me to uphold at all times the standards of behavior described in the Code of Conduct above.

I also understand that disciplinary measures and legal steps will be taken if I am found to be in breach of the Code of Conduct. I understand that in making that report, Lifeway Christian Church may have to inform other authorities, in a confidential manner to meet obligations under Australian law.

Name: Witness Name:

Signature: Witness Signature:

Date: / / Witness Date: /

**Lifeway Christian Church Program experience:**

How long have you been attending Lifeway Christian Church?

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **<3 months** | **3-6 months** | **6-12 months** | **>12 months** |

How are you currently involved in Lifeway Christian Church?

|  |
| --- |
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |

Please describe any Lifeway Christian or other church community groups you have previously been involved with?

|  |
| --- |
|  |
|  |
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|  |

Please indicate any previous training, information and / or qualifications you have that are relevant:

|  |
| --- |
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|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Are you willing to undertake specific training for this role? | **Yes** | **No** |
| Do you have a current first aid certificate? | **Yes** | **No** |

**Lifeway Christian** **Church Staff & Volunteer Declaration:**

I declare I have received, read, understood and agree to the following documents in Pack A, *(please tick)*:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Applying for a Working with Children Check - Applicant Guide (compulsory - action required) |  |
| Applying for a Police Check – as required |  |
| Lifeway Christian Church Statement of Commitment to Child safety, Young People and all Vulnerable People. |  |
| Staff & Volunteer Code of Conduct for Lifeway Christian Church Child Safe Standards |  |
| Lifeway Christian Church Working with Children and Youth Policy |  |
| Lifeway Christian Church Risk Management Policy |  |
| Child Safety Reporting Process for Lifeway Christian Church as per Commission for Children, Young People and Vulnerable People. |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** | **Signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** | **Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |

A close up of a logo

Description automatically generated

**Lifeway Christian Church**

**Forms**

* Incident/Accident or Concern Report Form
* Risk of Significant Harm Form
* Risk assessment form
* Photo / Video Permission Form

**Incident/Accident or Concern Report Form**

**SECTION A – The Details**

Date (of report) Person making report

Person writing report Date of Incident:

PERSON(s) INVOLVED









**Personnel informed:**

* Safe Church Concerns Person
* Congregational Ministry Leader
* Senior Pastor
* Governance Elder
* Other

**Type of Incident/concern**

* injury
* behavior
* disclosure\*
* property damage
* environment/safety
* other (specify)

\*NB: If disclosure of abuse – please also complete the Risk of Significant Harm Form

**SECTION B – The Incident**

**Details of incident/concern**

**Action Taken**

**Outcomes (if known)**

**SECTION C – Follow up/Analysis**

Follow up comments:

The type of incident is:

* first report □ subsequent report

Have appropriate steps been taken? □ Yes □ No

**If No what needs to be done?**

Print Name: Signed:

Reported to (Personnel informed)

Print Name: Signed:

**Risk of Significant Harm Form**

This information is to be kept strictly confidential and not to be used for any other reason except for the purpose of reporting the Risk of Significant Harm.

Appropriate record keeping procedures are to be observed when filing this report.

***The provision of information to the Statutory Authorities for the protection of a child or young person is not a breach of confidentiality****.*

Date of Disclosure: Time of Disclosure:

Name of person writing report

**Details of person making report**

Full Name: Contact Number(s): Email Address: Role/title:

**Child or Young Person Details**

Full Name: Date of Birth: Address: (if known)

Contact Number:

**Parent/Carer/Guardian Details**

Full Name:

Address: (if known)

Contact Number:

Is he/she aware of the disclosure? Yes □ No □

Does this disclosure involve a family member? Yes □ No □ Comments:

**Alleged Perpetrator Details (if known)**

Complete as much information that you know

Full Name:

Address: (if known)

Contact Number: Does the child know this person? Yes □ No □ If yes, provide the details of the relationship

Is this person involved in the Lifeway Christian Church? Yes □ No □

If yes, in what capacity?

**Disclosure Details**

Please provide details of the concern, allegation or complaint.

Include dates/times and location of incident(s) as disclosed (if known).

Does the child/young person know this disclosure is being documented?

Yes □ No □

Child Safe Action Taken

Does this disclosure refer to Lifeway Christian Church worker misconduct?

Yes □ No □ Has this been referred to the designated Safe Church Concerns Person?

Yes □ No □

***If no, explain why***

***If yes, please provide details of the referral***

Date of referral: Time of referral:

Referred to: Position/Title/Role: Contact Number: Email address:

Child Protection Action Taken

Does this disclosure require a report to Statutory Authorities? Yes □ No □

***If no, explain why***

***If yes, please provide details of the report***

* Police 000
* Lara Police 5282 1241
* Victorian Department of Health and Human Services

1800 075 599 or 131 278 (after hours emergency)

For advice contact: “Child First” organization

Date of report: Time of report:

Please include advice or guidance given by the State Child Protection Authorities and attach any correspondence to this report

**Follow up action required**

Please provide details of follow up action to take place

**Form Completed**

Full name: Role: Signature: Date: *(Also to be signed by the Safe Church Concerns Person/ Coordinator of program)*

Full name: Role: Signature: Date:

**This form should be handed to the Safe Church Concerns Person, or equivalent, and be kept securely for record keeping and follow-up purposes.**

**Photo/video Permission Form**

Purpose of photo/video

How photo will be used

How long it will be used for

I, , the parent/guardian of

acknowledge that the above information has been explained to me, and I give my permission for photos/videos to been taken accordingly.

I acknowledge that if I find the images to have been taken inappropriately, I can take concerns or complaints to the Safe Church Concerns Person or the senior pastor.

Signed\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Risk Assessment Form**

Ministry Leaders should undertake Risk Assessment for the ministry activities they are involved in.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Tasks** | **Risks/Hazards** | **Likelihood** | **Consequence** | **Risk Rating** | **Proposed Control Measures** | **Responsibility** |
| ***List each of the tasks for the activity*** | ***List the risks/hazards associated with each task*** | ***(L1-L5)*** | ***(C1-C5)*** | ***(L/M/H)*** | ***Nominate Control Measures*** | ***Nominate the person responsible.*** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity Name and Description:** |  | | |
| **Activity Location:** |  | **Activity Date:** |  |
| **Ministry / Dept. Responsible:** |  | **Person Responsible:** |  |
| **Assessors:** |  | **Assessment date:** |  |

**RISK LIKELIHOOD & CONSEQUENCE FACTORS AND VALUES**

**LIKELIHOOD FACTORS CONSEQUENCE FACTORS**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***Factors*** | | ***Values*** |
| **C5** | **Extreme** | Death; high financial loss; sustained national media coverage |
| **C4** | **Major** | Extreme / permanent Injuries (significant hospitalisation); major financial loss; major negative state media |
| **C3** | **Moderate** | Medical treatment required (may involve hospitalisation); moderate financial loss; some state media, sustained local media |
| **C2** | **Minor** | First Aid treatment on site; minor financial loss; one off digital media, TV or newspaper coverage |
| **C1** | **Insignificant** | No injuries or treatment; low or no financial loss; one off local media coverage |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***Factors*** | | ***Values*** |
| **L5** | **Almost certain** | The hazard /risk is expected to occur in most circumstances. |
| **L4** | **Likely** | The hazard / risk will probably occur in most circumstances (more than 50% of time). |
| **L3** | **Possible** | The hazard / risk should occur at some time (less than 50% of time). |
| **L2** | **Unlikely** | The hazard / risk could occur at some time, usually in exceptional circumstances. |
| **L1** | **Rare** | The hazard / risk is possible but is not expected to occur. |

**RISK MATRIX**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | | **Consequence** | | | | |
| **Likelihood** |  | **C1 Insignificant** | **C2 Minor** | **C3**  **Moderate** | **C4 Major** | **C5 Extreme** |
| **L1 Almost certain** | **Medium** | **Medium** | **High** | **High** | **High** |
| **L2 Likely** | **Low** | **Medium** | **Medium** | **High** | **High** |
| **L3 Possible** | **Low** | **Medium** | **Medium** | **High** | **High** |
| **L4 Unlikely** | **Low** | **Low** | **Medium** | **Medium** | **High** |
| **L5 Rare** | **Low** | **Low** | **Low** | **Medium** | **Medium** |

**RISK ESCALATION & COMMUNICATION OPTIONS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***Risk Rating*** | ***Escalation and Communication*** |
| **High** | Immediate escalation to church leadership (Governance Elders); active remediation activities in place; regular frequent (weekly) monitoring |
| **Medium** | Church management team advised; active mitigation plans in place; regular (monthly) monitoring as part of existing meetings |
| **Low** | Local management team monitoring; lower priority remediation activities |

