

# PCANZ LOCAL CHURCH CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER MANUAL



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### **Disclaimer:**

This document is intended as a resource for the Church. The Book of Order and its subordinate standards contain the Church's official rules and directions. Any perceived conflict between the information contained in this resource and the Church's Book of Order and subordinate standards is entirely unintentional. Furthermore, the New Zealand law supersedes any rules or directions that may be perceived as conflicting.

Kia ora

Thank you for agreeing to take on the very important role of Child Protection Officer in your church. This is a relatively simple but very important role to ensure that key aspects of our Child Protection Policy (CPP) are being implemented at a local church level.

### Who is suitable to be a church Child Protection Officer?

This might seem like an odd thing to be reading if you have already been assigned this role but it is helpful information for a church and hopefully reassuring for you!

#### What isn't required

The role requires no formal qualifications and no specific working backgrounds. A social work qualification or experience in children's or youth ministry might be advantageous but they are not necessary to perform this role well.

#### What is required

- The Child Protection Officer must be appointed onto the church council or equivalent decision-making body
- they will require a level of confidence and initiative to ensure that the key aspects of the Child Protection Policy are being carried out in all levels of church life
- they will require basic administration and communication skills, such as being able to engage with occasional email communication from PCANZ and Presbytery around their role and communicate with other members of the church council and youth and children's ministry team
- they must be willing to attend to all the tasks detailed in this manual including personally attending the PCANZ WOF training
- they must abide by the principles of confidentiality stipulated in the PCANZ Book of Order and the Child Protection Policy

### Your role outlined:

The Child Protection Officer role is summarised in the PCANZ Child Protection Policy as follows:

#### *Congregation Child Protection Officers*

*Each church council must appoint a Child Protection Officer who is responsible to ensure that the Church's Child Protection Policy is implemented within the congregation.*

*The Child Protection Officer is a person within the church council who is responsible for the safeguarding of children. This person is responsible for ensuring that child protection is a key focus within the Church, both at a strategic level and on a day to day basis.*

#### *Responsibilities include:*

- 1. Ensuring safe recruitment (including police vetting)*

- II. *Ensuring all volunteers and employees who work with children or young people are trained in the PCANZ Safety Warrant of Fitness*
- III. *Ensuring all volunteers and employees who work with children or young people are following safe working practices*
- IV. *Ensuring any suspected child abuse is reported appropriately*

*PCANZ CPP Section 7b*

This manual will expand on these key points.

### Who specifically needs to comply with the PCANZ Child Protection Policy?

- 1) All organisations who come under the auspices of the PCANZ who work with or have a responsibility for children or young people in some capacity must comply with this policy.**

Section 6 of the CPP states:

*This Policy applies to every part of the Church including, but not limited to, ministers, lay workers, church councils, presbyteries, Presbyterian campsites, the Assembly, synods, trusts and other bodies that oversee, work with and/or care for people under the age of 18. This Policy must be applied when people in the Church have responsibility for children and young people.*

- 2) All voluntary or paid workers who work with and/or have responsibility for children or young people under the auspices of the PCANZ are implicated in the specific training, recruitment, police vetting, health, safety and ethical practices, and reporting of child abuse stipulated in the PCANZ Child Protection Policy.**

Section 2 of the CPP states:

*"This policy outlines what is expected of all parts of the church including voluntary or paid workers who work with or have responsibility for children or young people"*

People specifically required to comply with the Training and Police Vetting Requirements etc of the PCANZ Child Protection Policy include but are not limited to:

- any members of a mainly music (or similar) team who interact with children or young people as part of the ministry, including those amazing people who serve morning tea if they interact with the children present in any way
- anyone involved in a church's children's or youth ministry where they interact with children or young people
- anyone who helps run a church playgroup where they interact with children
- a choir or music director who works with children or young people as part of a PCANZ ministry
- anyone who mentors or disciples a child or young person
- someone who acts as a security guard for a youth event where they are interacting with young people
- the key leaders of all-age ministry services and gatherings where children, young people and adults interact together as part of the ministry of the church, including homegroups
- any volunteers and staff responsible for any breakout ministry activities that happen for children and young people in the context of an all age ministry gathering, including homegroups

People **not** specifically required to comply with the Training and Police Vetting Requirements etc of the PCANZ Child Protection Policy:

- those attending a Sunday worship service who are not working with or have a responsibility for children or young people, even if children or young people are present in the service
- Anyone attending or leading a home group for adults where the hosts children are present but are not part of the homegroup proceedings

We understand that current New Zealand law and the PCANZ Child Protection Policy require far more people to be trained and vetted than ever before. The object of the policy isn't to subject a lot of wonderful volunteers to unnecessary paperwork and training, it is to ensure that we are doing all we can to keep children and young people safe in our care. Sadly, even recent history shows us that one mishap with a child or young person in our care can undo decades of a church's goodwill in the community.

## I. Ensuring safe recruitment (including police vetting)

As the Congregation Child Protection Officer your role is to:

1. Ensure that the PCANZ Child Protection Policy recruitment procedure is being followed whenever a new volunteer or employee is being considered for a role working with children or young people.
1. Ensure that existing volunteers or employees have a current police vetting report and renew them every three years.

More information:

Safe recruitment procedures are explained in detail in Appendix 1 of the PCANZ Child Protection Policy and the PCANZ Safety Warrant of Fitness Training Session Three - Recognising, Reporting and Responding to Abuse and Safe Recruitment video and manual.

Further helpful information on recruitment can be found in:

- Section 3 of the PCANZ Conditions of Service Manual  
[https://www.presbyterian.org.nz/sites/default/files/for\\_parishes/Conditions%20of%20Service%20Manual%20-%202019%20Mar.pdf](https://www.presbyterian.org.nz/sites/default/files/for_parishes/Conditions%20of%20Service%20Manual%20-%202019%20Mar.pdf)
- The PCANZ employment guide for staff working with young people  
<http://pym.org.nz/employment/employment-guide/>

#### **Action steps for the Church Child Protection Officer:**

- The Child Protection Officer will meet with the key leader of any children's or youth ministry, or anyone who has the responsibility of recruiting volunteers or employees to children's or youth ministry roles, and ensure they understand and will follow the recruitment process outlined in the Child Protection Policy.
- The Child Protection Officer will also ensure that the Church's governing body understand the recruitment process and highlight their role in the final approval of all volunteers and employees appointed to work with children or young people.
- Note: The Child protection Officer does not necessarily need to be personally involved in each of the recruitment steps.
- The Child Protection Officer will request that a database is made with all current staff and volunteers who work with children or young people detailing their police check status; in particular when their last check was done. The database will be referred to regularly to ensure that all current volunteers and staff renew their police vetting at the appropriate time. Practically this could be done by setting calendar reminders when police vetting checks need to be renewed.
- Note: The Child Protection Officer doesn't necessarily have to execute the processes described above, these can be delegated, however they must be carried out.

**FAQ's (for more FAQ's go to <http://safetywof.org.nz/faqs/>)**

**Q:** Do we need to temporarily stand down existing volunteers or employees if they do not have a current police vetting check?

**A:** In this transition year of 2019 when we are introducing the PCANZ Child Protection Policy we will allow all current volunteers and employees to continue in their roles provided a police vetting request is in process at the PCANZ National office for them. From 2020 onwards these volunteers and employees will need to be temporarily stood down until their police vetting reports come through clear.

**Q:** What if we don't have enough vetted and trained leaders available on a given week? Can we call upon an unvetted and untrained adult to help us?

**A:** This should be the exception and not the norm. When you use an untrained and unvetted adult you run the risk that they may have an offence that would disqualify them from working with children or young people and they may not know how to respond adequately in the event of an emergency or ethical situation. Certainly this person should not be left unsupervised with children or young people.

**Q:** What if someone refuses to go through the police vetting process?

**A:** Ensure that this person clearly understands the police vetting process (see Appendix 1&6 of the CPP), it's possible that they have a misunderstanding about what the process entails, what it reveals and to whom. If they still refuse after this they must be stood down from their children's or youth ministry role immediately.

**Q:** Do we need to do a police vetting check if someone already has a one with another organisation?

**A:** Unfortunately we are required to do our own police vetting checks, we can't just use the reports from other agencies.

## II. [Ensuring all volunteers and employees who work with children or young people are trained](#)

As the Congregation Child Protection Officer your role is to ensure that all volunteers and staff who work with children or young people are trained in the following:

- 1. The PCANZ Safety Warrant of Fitness Training released in 2019 or later** (incorporating the Child Protection Policy released in December 2018) within the first 12 months of appointment and every three years thereafter.

**2. A review the church's health and safety policies and procedures including the PCANZ Child Protection Policy at least annually.**

**3. Optional additional training**

Your church may decide to do further training regarding key issues arising from our churches CPP such as a more in-depth training regarding child abuse from training providers like

Shine <https://www.2shine.org.nz/how-shine-helps/training>

or Child Matters <http://www.childmatters.org.nz/22/child-protection-training>

These additional trainings can not be used as a replacement for all or parts of the WOF training.

**More information**

1. The PCANZ Safety WOF Training is a video-based training and can be done in a local church and can be facilitated by anyone in the church at any time the church chooses (we suggest either the Child Protection Officer, the key children's or youth ministry leader, or the Minister as the facilitator, but others in the congregation can also perform this role). The training is broken up into three sessions:
  - Session 1 - Introduction to the PCANZ Child Protection Policy and Ethical Practice
  - Session 2 - Health and Safety
  - Session 3 - Recognising, Recording and Responding to Abuse + Safe Recruitment

All videos, manuals and other information for the PCAZN Safety WOF training can be found at <http://safetywof.org.nz>

**Action steps for the Church Child Protection Officer:**

- Work with children's and youth ministry team leaders to ensure all relevant personnel have gone through the WOF training. We suggest you ensure there is a database regularly updated with when relevant personnel have been through this training, and ensure there are steps in place so that retraining will happen every three years.
- Liaise with the Church Health and Safety Officer and the children's and youth ministry team leaders to ensure relevant personnel are reviewing the churches health and safety policies, ideally as a team, discussing any relevant implications for their ministries.

**FAQs (for more FAQ's go to <http://safetywof.org.nz/faqs/>)**

**Q:** If leaders went through the PCANZ Safety WOF Training in 2018 or earlier do they need to go through the training earlier than three years time?

**A:** These leaders just need to read the CPP and go through Session 3 of the 2019 (or later) video based WOF training.

**Q:** Our church does not have a comprehensive list of health and safety policies. What should we do?

**A:** The orange Policies and Procedures Manual included in the WOF training contains some general church policies and many policies relevant to children's and youth ministry. Further church policies can be found at <https://www.icbnz.org/health-and-safety.html>

### III. Ensuring all volunteers and employees who work with children or young people are following safe working practices

All ministries within the church in which children or young people are involved need to:

- Fill in RAMs, hazard and, if necessary, incident forms for all their activities and send these to the church Health and Safety Officer.
- Ensure there is at least one person trained in First aid present at all church and ministry activities and that there is a First aid kit on hand.
- Have all volunteers or staff working with children or young people regularly debrief their ministry activities reflecting on health and safety, ethical practice.

Action steps for the Church Child Protection Officer:

- Liaise with the church Health and Safety Officer to ensure relevant personnel understand how to fill in RAMs, hazard and incident forms and ensure they are being written, used to shape ministry activities, and submitted to the Safety Officer
- Liaise with ministry team leaders to ensure there is a trained first aider present at all church our ministry activities and a first aid kit on hand.
- Ensure team leaders of relevant ministries are regularly debriefing ministry activities around safety and ethical practice. It may be helpful for you to sit in on a few of these debriefings over the year.

More information

### **First aid training**

At every children's or youth event or activity your church organises there must be at least one person with a first aid qualification. Therefore we recommend that at least two of your leaders in a particular ministry are trained as first aiders. We recommend a one-day first aid course as a minimum covering the following:

- Scene assessment
- Safety
- CPR
- Chest pain (e.g. heart attack)
- Dislocations
- How to use an AED (automated external defibrillator)
- Broken bones
- Burns
- Soft tissue injury
- Asthma
- Stroke
- Seizures
- Bleeding

These courses are available from:

The Red Cross <https://www.redcross.org.nz/first-aid/courses/>

St Johns <http://www.stjohn.org.nz/First-Aid/First-Aid-Course-Overview/First-Aid-Level-1-/>

There are also private accredited first-aid trainers who can offer group trainings, often these are more economical. Please contact PCANZ PYM/Children and Family or your regional youth coordinator for more information about these.

## IV. Ensuring any suspected child abuse is reported appropriately

- All volunteers and staff working with children and young people must understand that any suspected child abuse must be reported to Oranga Tamariki or the Police and the church Child Protection Officer is informed.
- Any allegations of child abuse against church staff or volunteers must first be reported to Oranga Tamariki or the Police. Then follow Chapter 15 of the Book of Order which outlines the process for dealing with complaints against ministers and leaders in the church.

Action steps for the Church Child Protection Officer:

- Ensure that members of your children's and youth ministry team know how to recognise signs of abuse and report and support accordingly. These topics are listed in Appendix 5 - section (a) of the PCANZ Child Protection Policy and are covered in the Safety WOF Training in the Recognising, Reporting and Responding to Abuse session.
- Ensure that all members of your children's and youth ministry teams understand the process for reporting concerns regarding child abuse outlined in Appendix 5 – section (b).
- Ensure that all members of your children's and youth ministry teams understand the importance of confidentiality and appropriately informing the family in this process outlined in Appendix 5 - section (d).
- Ensure any allegations of child abuse against church staff or volunteers is reported to Oranga Tamariki or the Police and ensure that church leadership follows the correct process as outlined in chapter 15 of the Book of Order.

- V. Ensuring that child protection is a key focus within the Church, both at a strategic level and on a day to day basis.

Action steps for the Church Child Protection Officer:

- Ensure Church leadership read through the PCANZ Child Protection Policy at least annually in detail, discussing its implication for ministries for children and young people and wider church life.
- Ensure the safety of children and young people, including the reporting of and responding to child abuse, is a monthly agenda item for our leadership team meetings.

## Child Protection Policy Check List for Local Churches

This is a separate document which can be downloaded alongside this manual from the Resource section at <http://safetywof.org.nz>

This checklist provides a summary list of the actions a local church must take to comply with the PCANZ Child Protection Policy.

We have recommended to Presbytery Child Protection Officers that they request this form to be filled out by the Church Child Protection Officer and submitted to the Presbytery at least once a year and use it as a tool to gauge the compliance of a church regarding the PCANZ child protection policy.