



# CITY ON A HILL

## SAFE MINISTRY POLICY

### PURPOSE

This policy expresses our commitment to fulfil City on a Hill's biblical, pastoral, and moral responsibilities and legal obligations, with the goal that all people at our churches are spiritually, emotionally, and physically safe.

In the Bible, we are given this command: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength; and love your neighbour as yourself" (Deut 6:5, Matt 22:37, Luke 10:27). God calls us to love and minister to vulnerable and marginalised people – these are people who need special care, protection and support.

City on a Hill has zero tolerance for any type of abuse of any person, particularly abuse of children and vulnerable adults. Towards this we seek to build this culture and maintain safe churches by:

- fostering relationships between churches, and those of the wider community, based on the teachings of Jesus Christ,
- providing a safe and secure environment where all people are, and feel, respected,
- having clear and well-communicated processes that empower all people, including children and other vulnerable people,
- providing responsible and loving Christian leadership and ministry built on Scripture,
- minimising the risk of misconduct and abuse and the misuse of positional power,
- ensuring that all complaints of misconduct and all other grievances are handled in a consistent, unbiased, fair and thorough manner, and
- fulfilling our biblical, pastoral, legal and moral obligations.

### SCOPE

This policy outlines our commitments, responsibilities and procedures for Safe Ministry in our churches. It applies to everyone in ministry and administrative roles within City on a Hill, and includes all staff, volunteers and attendees.



City on a Hill churches that operate under the authority of an Anglican Diocese are also subject to the Safe Ministry and Professional Standards legislation, procedures and codes of conduct of that Anglican Diocese.

## POLICY STATEMENTS

City on a Hill is committed to the spiritual, emotional and physical safety and well-being of all people participating in the life and ministries of our Movement.

- We acknowledge that all people in our churches have a right to feel and be safe in their interactions and experiences in all our ministry, programs and activities.
- We are committed to thorough and effective governance for Safe Ministry to children and vulnerable people at a City on a Hill.
- As a minimum, we will comply with all relevant secular legislation and child safe standards according to the jurisdiction in which a City on a Hill church is located. We will apply a higher standard where appropriate.
- City on a Hill welcomes reports of concern on any matter, regardless of the level of evidence, including complaints, allegations of misconduct (against staff, volunteers or attendees), breaches of a Code of Conduct or other policies, health and safety issues, reports of harm to children, privacy breaches, disclosures of abuse or any other matter and commits to address the concerns according to the relevant City on a Hill procedure.
- We commit ourselves to the welfare of all people through our codes of conduct, policies, guidelines, procedures and related safe ministry documentation, which includes:
  - guidance for safe physical and online environments where people are listened to and feel safe as they develop faith and a connection with God and others.
  - safe and effective recruitment, ongoing training, supervision, support, and resourcing.
  - appropriate and timely responses to all complaints of alleged misconduct and all other concerns.
  - pastoral care in responding to those who have been abused within City on a Hill.
  - safe and appropriate ministry to persons of concern, whilst ensuring the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable or abused people.

In relation to children and young people (0-17 years) we acknowledge:

- the importance of participation and empowerment of children and young people by involving them in relation to decisions that impact them, including inviting feedback as part of our services,
- the primary role of parents and caregivers as well as the role of children in child protection and will engage caregivers, and invite feedback as part of our procedures and interactions,



- the shared responsibility of the whole community for child safety and welfare, including caregivers and our staff and volunteers, and as such we will promote the role of parents and caregivers and the wider community in the shared responsibility of child safety,
- the importance of our complaints process being child focussed,
- the need for sensitivity to, and consideration of the needs of children with particular needs (for example, those with a disability or from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds),
- the importance of providing for and promoting a child safe culture in both physical and online settings, and
- the importance of promoting caring attitudes and responses towards children or young people, so that the need for appropriate nurture, care and protection is understood, risks to a **child's wellbeing** are quickly identified, and any necessary support, protection or care is promptly provided including child focused responses to allegations of risk of harm.

We will engage in continuous improvement of our codes of conduct, policies, guidelines, procedures and other safe ministry documentation.

We will proactively manage risk and we have risk management strategies in place to identify, assess and minimise risks.

It is a serious breach of this policy for any worker in our church to contravene this policy, any related procedure, or any regulation in law, in relation to the safety and protection of children and vulnerable people.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All people in roles, offices and positions within City on a Hill:

- must take all reasonable and practicable steps to prevent or avoid risks of any abuse or harm, to anyone participating in a City on a Hill ministry,
- must report any abuse committed or alleged to have been committed by staff or volunteers,
- must agree to adhere to City on a Hill code of conduct,
- must abide by the relevant policies, procedures and safe ministry documentation, and
- must take part in required screening and training for their role.



## CODES OF CONDUCT

Our Code of Conduct have these underlying intentions and commitments:

- to encourage people to seek to act at all times in a manner that faithfully represents the ethos and beliefs of City on a Hill,
- to ensure clear expectations and their alignment with the vision and commitments of City on a Hill,
- to ensure the safety and well-being of children, teenagers, adults in our church, and
- to detail the standards of conduct expected by various persons associated with our church in relation to the performance of their duties and their behaviours.

## SAFE MINISTRY IMPLEMENTATION DOCUMENTATION

Safe Ministry implementation documentation includes safe ministry terminology, policies, procedures, forms and other ministry area specific documentation. Key terms are defined in the [Safe Ministry Terminology](#) document.

### Acknowledgement

City on a Hill partnered with Creating Safer Communities (CSC) to assist in the development of our Safe Ministry Framework and is used by permission and for the purpose of people protection in City on a Hill churches.