

# Child Safe Guidelines for Western Australia

## Document A – Child Safety within the Church

The church in Western Australia supports the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Children are a valued part of our gatherings, and it is important that they feel safe, happy, heard, and supported.

For these Guidelines, the term “church” is used to refer to our ministry and broader fellowship as a collective. This is consistent with the scriptural meaning of “church” a body or gathering of people united by faith. Whilst commonly referred to as the Ministry and Fellowship, “church” has been used to reflect the combined responsibility of both in the context of this matter. It is also to help recognise and retain the sanctity of our individual fellowship and relationship with God.

The term “church-related” refers to any function or responsibility that falls within the ministry’s responsibility or control.

“Responders” refers to individuals selected from the WA ministry and others who may be called upon to assist in responding to allegations and supporting case management. They are not counsellors or investigators. Their role is to assist in receiving child safety concerns and to respond in accordance with these Guidelines and protect the safety and wellbeing of children.

The term “we” or “our” refers to either the church generally or responders specifically, depending on the context in which it appears.

These Guidelines are intended to help foster a safe, caring environment where everyone, feels at ease and supported by:

- Raising awareness about child safety.
- Offering access to helpful resources, training, and clear reporting channels.
- Assessing areas of risk at all ministry-organised meetings and conventions.
- Being open, approachable, and willing to assist.
- Taking all concerns seriously and acting appropriately within scope.
- Supporting those who have been harmed or affected.

## A Shared Responsibility to Child Safety

Everyone in the church plays a vital role in ensuring meetings are welcoming and safe for all. A united approach allows us to work together towards a safe and caring environment for all who meet. We all should:

- Be aware of the importance of child safety.
- Report known or suspected abuse to relevant authorities.
- Take children's concerns seriously and respond supportively.
- Learn to recognise the signs of abuse and risk.
- Communicate any areas of risk or concern.

The church holds worship meetings and gospel services for people of all ages. We do not offer child-specific programs; we do not require (nor encourage) children to be separated from their parents or guardians. Children remain in the care of their parents or guardians at all meetings and conventions. However, the church accepts its legal and moral obligation to ensure attendees can worship safely, and that all risks to attendees’ safety and that of children are appropriately mitigated.

A unique and valued aspect of the church is that ministry workers are welcomed into the homes of those in the fellowship. This is not a requirement or obligation of those in the church but occurs where there is personal invitation from homeowners and in a spirit of trust and hospitality. We recognise that this practice brings an added responsibility of care, and it has been considered in developing these Guidelines.

## Child Safe Conduct

We believe the Scriptures offer a complete and guiding example for conduct. These Guidelines seek to honour this by helping protect children and the vulnerable within the church.

All ministry workers in WA are trained in child safe practices including identifying and reporting child sexual abuse. It is recommended that elders and their spouses to complete child safety training. Please make contact for recommended options.

The safety of children depends on us all. Together, we help foster an environment of safety, and genuine care. For more information, refer to Document B – *Safe Conduct within the Church*.

## Guiding Principles for Child Safety

1. To be guided by the Word of God and the example of Christ – that any discussions conducted or actions taken, are with love, compassion and impartiality.
2. To comply with regulations — adhering to Western Australian legislation, reporting requirements, applicable recommendations from the *Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse* (“*Royal Commission*”) and the *National Child Safe Standards*.
3. To promote child safety — raise awareness and encourage vigilance to help all to feel safe and comfortable when attending the meetings.
4. To respect privacy – that in all actions and communications, every effort will be made to maintain the complete privacy of the survivors, those accused and others directly affected.
5. To consider survivors — supporting those who have experienced harm through compassion and care.
6. To uphold procedural fairness and proportionate response – respecting the rights of all affected and following consistent due process.
7. To consider risk and sensitivity within a present meeting context.

## Guideline Review

*Child Safe Guidelines for Western Australia – Document A: Child Safety within the Church* replaces the *WA Child Safe Policy*.

This document outlines the church’s current approach to safeguarding children across ministry-organised meetings, and reflects alignment with Western Australian legislation, relevant standards, and the recommendations of the *Royal Commission*.

These Guidelines have been reviewed by external lawyers with expertise in child safeguarding and are subject to biennial review.

**Last reviewed: October 2025**

## Ministry – Training and Assessment

We greatly appreciate those who serve in the ministry and are grateful for their commitment. We warmly welcome visiting ministry workers and value their time and willingness to come and share with us.

Western Australian **ministry workers** are required to:

- Hold a current Working with Children Check (WWCC) card.
- Undertake regular 12-monthly child safe training, complete compliance checks, and participate in scheduled reviews of these Guidelines.
- New ministry workers in WA complete training through Safe Ministry Australia and/or Ministry Safe USA, prior to their commencement in ministry in this State.

As part of the endeavours to promote child safety, **visiting workers** will be obliged to:

- Review and understand the child safety roles and responsibilities and reporting obligations in these Guidelines.
- Provide to the WA Overseer either prior to arrival or promptly upon arrival:
  - Any available current Working with Children Check (WWCC), police clearance, or equivalent clearance certification from their state or country of residence
  - A current child safe training certificate from one of the following recognized providers:
    - Ministry Safe (USA), or
    - Another internationally equivalent child safety training provider

## Reporting Concerns

Anyone with concerns are encouraged to report to the relevant authorities. Where possible and appropriate, the church responders will respond to concerns involving ministry workers, elders or ministry organised meetings. When concerns fall outside these areas or the capacity to assist, support and guidance towards appropriate authorities and services will be provided, including those listed in the side bar in this document.

Concerns are taken seriously, and every endeavour will be made to protect the privacy, rights, and wellbeing of all involved. This approach is guided by fair processes and in consultation with relevant authorities where necessary. Refer to [Document C – Reporting within the Church](#)

## Managing Risk

Child safety is a key part of the church’s approach to risk management for meetings and conventions.

Each person contributes to creating safe environments – for example, by speaking up constructively about potential risks in meeting settings. This shared responsibility is outlined further in the Roles and Responsibilities listed in *Document B – Safe Conduct within the Church*.

In some circumstances, keeping meetings safe also involves addressing the risk of an individual continuing to attend meetings. In line with Recommendation 16.57 of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (“Royal Commission”), any risk posed by an individual with a substantiated CSA complaint or conviction, must be assessed and managed by the church. While we acknowledge the potential for individual reform and recognise that risk may change over time, the safety and wellbeing of children remain the church’s priority. Accordingly, the current risk posed by an individual will be considered, and response being proportionate when determining whether that individual can continue to participate in meetings.

## Meeting Together

People from all walks of life, cultures, ages and backgrounds are welcome in the public meetings and subsequent fellowship.

While the personal importance of worship, including in fellowship at meetings is respected, practical safety must also be considered. Where required, every meeting decision or arrangement is made with child and survivor safety and proximity in mind.

If an assessment is made that in-person attendance by a particular individual poses a risk to children, alternative options—such as fellowship with agreed volunteers or remote listening to ministry-led meetings—may be offered to support spiritual connection in a safe and respectful manner.

In the event that the person suspected of presenting a risk is unwilling to comply with the proposed safe fellowship precautions, or having expressed willingness to comply with them, fails to do so, they will be asked to refrain from meetings.

## Resources and Contacts

- [Identifying child abuse and neglect](#)
- [Report child abuse | Western Australian Government](#)
- [Child Protection](#)
- [Mandatory Reporting of Child Sexual Abuse in WA](#)
- [Recommendations | Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse](#)
- [Child safe organisations](#)
- [Child Protection Online Training Courses | Bravehearts](#)
- [Webinars for parents and carers | eSafety Commissioner](#)
- [Child Safe Training](#)

## Support Services

- **1800 Respect**
  - website: [www.1800respect.org.au](http://www.1800respect.org.au)
  - phone: 1800 737 732
- **Bravehearts**
  - website: [www.bravehearts.org.au](http://www.bravehearts.org.au)
  - phone: 1800 272 831
- **Lifeline**
  - website: [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)
  - phone: 131 114
- **Men’s Line Australia**
  - website: [www.mensline.org.au](http://www.mensline.org.au)
  - phone: 1300 789 978

## Church Contacts

- WA overseer: [wa.cs.docs.2025@gmail.com](mailto:wa.cs.docs.2025@gmail.com)
- Any WA Worker
- Training Options: [training.cs2025@gmail.com](mailto:training.cs2025@gmail.com)

## Related Documents

- *Document B – Safe Conduct within the Church*
- *Document C – Reporting within the Church*
- [WA Concerns Form](#)