



Seventh-day
Adventist Church

Adsafe

South Pacific

Appendix A:

Church Code of Conduct Employees and Volunteers

An outline of appropriate conduct for employees and volunteers working in child related roles or making leadership decisions on behalf of children in a church or affiliated entity context

Aims

The aim of the code of conduct is to create a safe culture by outlining the expected behaviour and practices of a child and vulnerable person safe community and inviting staff to commit to this behaviour and practices.

Scope

This code applies to you if you are:

- employed to work in ministry either directly or indirectly with children and vulnerable persons within a church or affiliated entity.
- a member of a decision making body that provides oversight of the services for children or vulnerable persons in a church or affiliated entity.
- working in child related roles in a church or affiliated entity

How does the code help me as a Church employee or volunteer?

It provides a clear outline of appropriate conduct so you:

- can be sure of what conduct is expected
- can make adjustments to your conduct if needed
- can identify areas for improvement
- can ensure your conduct supports a safe environment

How does the code help the members of the community?

The code provides assurance to the members of the community generally and particularly parents with responsibility for the protection of children that the church or affiliated entity has a commitment to creating a safe environment for children and vulnerable persons.



How does the code help the leaders of the community?

The leadership of a church or affiliated entity has a sacred God given duty to protect the vulnerable including our children within our community. This value is also a high priority within the wider community as evident by child protection legislation and an organisation's duty of care. The code provides this leadership team with comfort that those working in the team have committed themselves to contributing, in their conduct, to an environment that is safe for all. If there are people who don't meet this standard of conduct, the code also assists the leaders to identify them and pinpoint what support and training may be needed to improve.

What happens if a person breaches the Code of Conduct?

As a Christian community, made up of individuals who have committed themselves as disciples of Christ, we should not be unaware of Christ's daily direction to us in our lives. This includes times when the Holy Spirit draws to our attention conduct that may have hurt others. Sometimes this process is done through others who observe and have a concern about our conduct. With this in mind, breaches of the Code of Conduct will be handled like any other complaints raised in the church or affiliated entity, informed by best practice approaches to addressing child and vulnerable person protection allegations.

1. Alleged criminal conduct will be reported to authorities.
2. Alleged breaches will be investigated and if sustained may result in:
 - a) church disciplinary action and / or
 - b) further training and / or
 - c) closer supervision and / or
 - d) being required to sign or resign the code of conduct and / or
 - e) no longer be able to work with children in the church
3. Serious alleged breaches will be reported to AdSAFE, the church child and vulnerable person protection service, and may be independently investigated. If sustained the person may no longer be able to work with children in the church and the result may be reported to the appropriate government working with children screening agency.

How will Code of Conduct breaches be handled?

The following principles will be used in handling an alleged breach:

1. The breach will be considered as an allegation that needs investigation
2. The alleged breach will be kept confidential
3. The person subject of the allegation will be told the detail of the allegation, given some time to prepare a response and be given an opportunity to give a response all before a decision is made.

In handling alleged poor conduct the church is committed to balance the following competing needs:

1. The needs of the complainant to be heard and for confidentiality, justice, restitution and closure.
2. The needs of the wider community for the prosecution of the investigation to deliver a finding and for the timely implementation of the recommendations from the investigation
3. The needs of the person subject of the allegation for procedural fairness, confidentiality and closure.