



SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROCEDURE

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1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To outline the procedures required to provide a safe environment for ministry in the Diocese of North West Australia ("the Diocese") , in accordance with the Work Health and Safety Act (WA) 2020.

2 SCOPE

- 2.1 This procedure applies to all ministry centres and all programs and activities taking place on church property or on behalf of the Diocese.

3 PROCEDURE

- 3.1 In order to provide a safe physical environment for ministry, all foreseeable risks and hazards need to be identified, assessed and managed.
- 3.2 Some activities or situations present more inherent risks than others and consideration should also be given to the participants' ages, abilities and cultural backgrounds.
- 3.3 Risk assessment and safety management practices shall be part of the planning and delivery of every program, event or activity.
- 3.4 The ministry centre governing group is responsible for the identification, assessment and management of all site and program risks, and the response to and reporting of incidents.
- 3.5 Before a program starts, the Program Leader will:
- conduct a site safety inspection of the area to be used for the program; and
 - apply the "Hierarchy of Control Measures", (ref Appendix 2) where hazards are identified and control measures are communicated to both workers and program participants.

Safe Programs and Environments

- 3.6 First Aid
- At least one person on site will have completed First Aid training (e.g. Provide First Aid) within the last three years.
 - A suitably qualified First Aid person must be on site at all programs, events and activities.

- A suitable, up-to-date, stocked and accessible First Aid kit must be available at all times. Analgesics are not to form part of the kit.
- A record should be kept of any treatment given.

3.7 Supervision

- a) The Program Leader must ensure that there are an adequate number of suitable workers to supervise program participants. To determine whether a worker is suitable, refer to the Worker Selection Procedure.
- b) Precise numbers of workers required for the supervision of a program, event or activity, will be determined by the number and age and development of participants, and:
 - where participants are under 12 years of age, there must always be two suitable adults present and participating in the program/activities.
 - the level of risk inherent in the activity, e.g. programs aimed at younger children may require more assistance and supervision necessitating more workers to be present.
 - when operating high-risk activities such as taking children or young people off-site, swimming, bushwalks, games nights or the like, more workers are required.
 - a ratio 2:8 of suitable workers to participants for 'low risk' activities on site is preferable, whilst a higher ratio of suitable workers is preferable for activities considered to be 'high risk'.
 - Junior workers (under 18 years) are not counted in supervision numbers.

3.8 Buildings and Grounds

Before an activity takes place, a visual inspection of the building and grounds is conducted by the program leader or his/her delegate, checking especially that:

- The access and egress is safe, suitable, correctly operating, and readily accessible by all participants if it becomes necessary to vacate the area;
- there are no trip or choking hazards;
- all surfaces are clean (including the toilets) and dry;
- toilets, toilet paper and soap and hand towels are available;
- there is adequate heating or cooling;
- all floors, ceilings, and walls are in good repair and clear; and
- electrical outlets and cables are not accessible to young children.

3.9 Manual Handling

It is important that safe manual training is provided for workers and those attending programs and that safe manual handling techniques are used when lifting or moving equipment or furniture. In order to significantly reduce the incidence of injuries from pushing, pulling, lifting and carrying, workers should:

- size up the load and the route and assess how heavy or awkward the load is and review any obstacles along the route (e.g. beware of potential hazards that may cause slips, trips or falls);
- get mechanical assistance by placing the load on a trolley;
- make two or more trips and do not try and carry heavy or awkward loads, or multiple items in one go;
- be careful with stairs and always leave one hand free and use the hand-rail;
- don't over-reach, rather, slide objects to you before lifting them; and
- seek help where necessary.

3.10 Lighting

Before an activity takes place, the lighting levels should be reviewed, so that:

- Effective lighting is to be used during all events.
- Faulty lights are not to be used during events.

- Faulty light globes and fittings are to be brought to the notice of the Program Leader and are to be replaced as soon as practicable.

3.11 Sound

Before an activity takes place, the sound levels should be reviewed, so that:

- Consideration is given to auditory comfort when setting volume levels of audio equipment.
- The volume level during events should be kept at less than 85 decibels.

3.12 Sun

Program Leaders will ensure that, where possible:

- shaded areas or temporary shade are provided for outdoor activities; and
- program participants and leaders are encouraged to move to shaded areas.
- Where activities do not allow for shaded areas, program leaders and participants are encouraged to:
 - wear a long-sleeved shirt with a collar;
 - wear a sun protective hat that shades the face, head, ears and neck;
 - use broad spectrum, SPF 30 or higher, water-resistant, sunscreen that is applied generously 20 minutes before going outdoors so that it can be absorbed and reapplied at a minimum of every two hours;
 - use a lip balm containing SPF 30 or higher; and
 - wear sunglasses that are a close fitting, wrap around style.
- Program Leaders for ministry to children or young people are to check the UV Index prior to taking a group into an unshaded area and where the level is above 6, they are to avoid or restrict exposure to the sun between 10am and 4pm. In the event of an incident of sunburn, this is reported to the person-in-charge and an Incident Report Form is completed.
- NOTE: The Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) will give a Maximum UV expected for the day and will indicate the times when Sun Protection is recommended. For example, the expected maximum UV level for the day is 11 (Extreme) Max UV index, and Sun Protection is recommended from 8:40 am to 4:10 pm.

3.13 Air

- Air conditioning
Where air conditioners are installed on church property, it is important that they are regularly serviced to avoid contaminants being released into the air.
- Second-hand smoke
In order to minimise the risk of inhaling of second-hand smoke, smoking is not permitted within 15 metres of a doorway into a church building.
- Pollution emanating from mines
In towns where there are mines, ministry centre workers are to be sensitive to the level of pollutants and dust from the mines being released into the air. When the levels of dust and pollutants are such as to cause respiratory problems, Program leaders are to avoid running programs or holding events outside of the ministry centre buildings.

4 RESPONSIBILITIES

Compliance, monitoring and review

- 4.1 Ministry centre governing groups are responsible for ensuring compliance of this policy within their ministry centre.

Reporting

- 4.2 Ministry centre compliance with this procedure is reported in the quarterly and annual return/report to the Diocese.

Records management

4.3 The Registry maintains all records relevant to administering this policy using its recordkeeping system.

5 DEFINITIONS

5.1 Terms not defined in this document may be in the Diocesan Glossary.

5.2 Program Leader is the person in charge of running a specific program.

6 RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

Faithfulness in Service: a national code for personal behaviour

Safe Ministry Policy

Worker Selection Procedure

7 FEEDBACK

7.1 Church members may provide feedback about this document by emailing registrar@anglicandnwa.org.

8 APPROVAL AND REVIEW DETAILS

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	Diocesan Council
Administrator	Diocesan Registrar
Next Review Date	19/02/2025

9 APPENDICES

1. Safe Environment Audit Checklist
2. Hazard Identification Form

SAFE ENVIRONMENT AUDIT – CHECKLIST

General

Aspect to Audit	Yes	No – risk mitigation actions
Will there be adequate numbers of suitable workers to supervise program participants?		
Do you have access to a telephone in case of an emergency?		
Have all workers been trained (or at least briefed) in safe manual handling?		
Are the program participants protected from extremes of temperature, the sun, sound and air pollution?		
Does the program use a sign-in/sign-out sheet (or roll)?		

Buildings and Grounds

Aspect to Audit	Yes	No – risk mitigation actions
Are all meeting and accommodation facilities clean and free of rubbish?		
Are car parks and outdoor areas clean and free of rubbish and other hazards?"		
Do car parks and outdoor areas have even surfaces and are they free of grease and oil?		
If there is a swimming pool on site, is it compliant with Council regulations?		
Is there an outside play fence (minimum height 1.5 metres) with a child-proof self-closing gate?		
Is the playing space (outside and inside) appropriate for the number of children?		
Are there appropriate surfaces for the program activities, e.g. impact absorbing under play-equipment, paved areas?		
Do you have appropriate shade provided in outside play areas?		
Are there appropriate toilet facilities available for all participants and are they clean and fully stocked?		
Are all floors, aisles, stairs and landings free of slip, trip and fall hazards?		
Are stairs free of worn or broken treads and are the non-skid strips on stairs in good repair?		
Are all handrails in good repair?		

Electrical Power

Aspect to Audit	Yes	No – risk mitigation actions
Are all electrical plugs, sockets and switches in good working order?		
Are all appliances free of frayed or otherwise defective leads?		
Do appliances have access to a power socket free of double adaptors?		
Are all lights adequate and operational?		
Are residual current devices installed and maintained?		

Emergency Response

Is the evacuation procedure clearly displayed?		
Are fire extinguishers appropriate to materials used in their vicinity?		
Are fire extinguishers readily available and properly mounted?		
Are fire extinguishers properly maintained and inspected?		
Are exits and exit signs adequately illuminated?		
Are all exits unobstructed both internally and externally?		

Storage

Are all items being stored clear of traffic areas?		
Where items are stacked for storage, are the stacks stable, with a good solid base?		
Where it is necessary to store flammable items, are they stored correctly?		

First Aid

Are all first aid kits clearly identified?		
Are the first aid kits properly stocked and maintained and operational?		
Are the names of qualified first aiders clearly communicated?		

NOTE: Where hazards are identified during the Safe Environment Audit process, please use the **Hazard Identification Form** and refer to the Hierarchy of Control Measures.

HAZARD IDENTIFICATION FORM

Please refer to the Guidelines overleaf for completing this form.

Ministry Centre:	
Date:	
Venue:	
Ministry Leader:	
Contact details:	

Hazard Details	Control measure implemented
<i>Example:</i> Legs of projector stand protruding into floor space	Engineering control – Place chairs over protruding legs. Administrative control – draw hazard to the attention of children or young people and leaders and request they are cautions when moving near the area.

Office Use:

Person-in-Charge to retain original copy and if an Incident Report is required, post or email the completed form with Incident Report Form to the Registrar.

Report submitted by			
Report submitted to Registrar	Date		
Follow-up action if required			
Person responsible for follow-up		Date Due	

GUIDELINES FOR COMPLETING THE HAZARD IDENTIFICATION FORM AND UNDERSTANDING THE HIERARCHY OF CONTROL MEASURES.

WHAT IS A HAZARD?

A hazard is a source of danger that could result in an accident if undue care is not exercised.

WHERE **Risk Assessment** considers things that might be a risk or go wrong during a ministry activity, **Hazard Identification and Control** measures relate to actual hazards that are present prior to the commencement of a ministry activity.

WHERE a hazard is identified, it is important to decide upon one or more measures that can be used to control or eliminate the hazard. These measures are referred to as **Hierarchy of Control measures**. The table below provides an overview of the elimination or control measures that may be used to address a hazard, along with some descriptions that may be aligned with each measure.

Hierarchy of Control Measures

Elimination or control measures	General Description
Eliminate the hazard	Remove the hazard. Change the activity or stop using it.
Substitute the hazard	Replace the activity, material, or equipment with a less hazardous one.
Isolate the hazard	Isolate the hazard from the person at risk; isolate through distance.
Use engineering controls	Change the physical characteristics of the environment (with additions or subtractions) to remove or reduce the risk.
Use administrative controls	Establish procedures and safe practices.
Use personal protective equipment	Use appropriately designed and properly fitted equipment and clothing.

There are numerous ways to record hazards and control measures that have been implemented. The form on the previous page may be used as one way of keeping written records of hazards and measures used.