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1. PURPOSE

1.1. To ensure that the selection, hiring, induction, appointment and ongoing management of personnel and volunteers align with the CRCA's commitment to safeguarding children and adults at risk.

1.2. This policy outlines a thorough recruitment and human-resource process that considers competence, character, safeguarding suitability, worker screening, training and the responsibilities attached to each role.

2. BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL BASIS

2.1. Matthew 18:6 warns against causing harm to children and those who are vulnerable. Safe recruitment reflects the Church's duty to protect those entrusted to its care and to ensure that people who serve are suitable for their roles.

2.2. The biblical affirmation that every person bears the image of God calls the CRCA to recruit, train and supervise personnel in ways that protect dignity, safety and trust.

3. SCOPE

3.1. This policy applies to recruitment and human-resource activities within the CRCA, including job advertisements, application processes, interviewing, selection, reference checking, screening, appointment, contracts, onboarding, induction, probation, movement of pastors and ministers, volunteer engagement, ongoing training and role review.

3.2. This policy applies to employees, office bearers, pastors, elders, volunteers, contractors and other personnel whose role involves CRCA activities or contact with children, young people, adults at risk or vulnerable people.

4. VALUES

4.1. The CRCA is committed to the following values so that the safety and well-being of all people remain at the forefront of decisions and actions.

4.1.1. **Scriptural teachings - upholding safety and dignity:** central to the Church's teaching is the call to embody love, mercy and justice. Colossians 3:17 calls all things to be done in the name of the Lord Jesus, and Luke 18:16 shows Jesus welcoming children and affirming their place in the kingdom. The responsibilities in this policy are therefore carried out in a way that honours the dignity, voice and safety of each person.

4.1.2. **Zero tolerance:** the CRCA has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse and harmful behaviour. The responsibilities in this policy must never be used to suppress, minimise or ignore concerns about safety, harm or abuse.

4.1.3. **Transparency and accountability:** the CRCA fosters a culture of openness, appropriate information sharing, feedback and accountable action.

4.1.4. **Shared responsibility:** safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and requires the participation of local churches, personnel, members and denominational safeguarding structures.

4.1.5. **Empowerment:** the CRCA supports people to understand their rights, speak up, raise concerns and contribute to the development of safer church environments.

4.1.6. **Integrity:** the CRCA fosters honest, ethical and respectful engagement at all levels of church life.

5. DEFINITIONS

5.1. Terms defined in the National Safeguarding Policy apply to this policy unless this section gives a more specific operational meaning.

5.2. **Child-related role** means a role that involves or may involve contact with children, access to children, supervision of children, child-related decision-making, online contact with children, or access to child-related records.

5.3. **Safer recruitment** means recruitment and appointment practice that considers safeguarding risk before a person starts or continues in a role.

5.4. **Suitability** means the person's assessed fitness to perform a role safely, including character, conduct history, role capability, screening status, referee information, training, declarations and any known safeguarding risk.

5.5. **Screening** means the checks used to assess suitability, including identity confirmation, worker-screening clearances, referee checks, declarations, interview questions, role-specific checks and renewal checks where required.

5.6. **Worker-screening clearance** means the jurisdictional working-with-children, working-with-vulnerable-people or equivalent clearance required for the role and location.

5.7. **Referee check** means a structured check with an appropriate referee to assess conduct, suitability, safeguarding awareness, reliability and any relevant concern.

5.8. **Induction** means the orientation and initial training given to a person before or at commencement of a role so they understand safeguarding expectations, reporting pathways and role boundaries.

5.9. **Adverse information** means information suggesting a person may be unsuitable or may require restriction, additional assessment or escalation before commencing or continuing in a role.

6. POLICY

6.1. The CRCA is dedicated to upholding a high standard in recruitment practices. Every person recruited or appointed must be competent for their role and able to demonstrate an understanding of, and commitment to, CRCA safeguarding principles.

6.2. **Safeguarding embedded in all roles:** role descriptions for personnel and volunteers include safeguarding responsibilities, including the Code of Conduct, reporting expectations, training expectations and role-specific screening requirements.

6.3. **Transparent communication:** advertisements and role information communicate the CRCA's safeguarding commitment and screening requirements.

6.4. **Worker screening:** personnel and volunteers in roles involving direct contact with children, young people or adults at risk hold the worker-screening clearance required in the jurisdiction in which the role is carried out, before commencing that role. People nominated for the office of Elder or Deacon, or to other leadership positions, must not be on the Restricted Persons Register.

6.5. **Role-tier classification:** safeguarding-relevant roles are classified according to the nature, frequency and supervisory level of contact with children, young people or adults at risk. Each tier carries corresponding screening, training and supervision requirements.

6.6. **Movement of pastors, ministers and office bearers:** where a person moves between CRCA churches, denominations or jurisdictions, including from overseas, the receiving Session / Church Council is responsible for ensuring that current worker-screening clearance, role suitability, training status and relevant safeguarding history are checked before the person commences in the receiving role. The Safe Church Administrator may assist with central records, templates and verification processes. The Safe Church Unit may provide safeguarding advice or escalation support where complaint history, statutory pathway issues, safeguarding concerns or risk matters are identified.

6.7. **Fair work and employment obligations:** personnel and volunteer engagement, performance management, conduct processes, complaints and termination are conducted consistently with applicable employment, workplace and volunteer obligations, including the Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth), relevant awards and industrial instruments where applicable. Where this policy and those obligations interact, the more protective lawful requirement applies.

6.8. **Continuous training:** safeguarding induction and ongoing training are integrated with the Learning and Development Policy so that personnel remain informed about safeguarding practice, legal obligations and CRCA expectations.

7. PROCEDURES

7.1. **Job descriptions:** safeguarding responsibilities are stated explicitly in all role descriptions. For roles involving direct contact with children, young people or adults at risk, job descriptions include screening, training, Code of Conduct and reporting expectations.

7.2. **Advertisements:** advertisements for safeguarding-relevant roles include the CRCA's safeguarding commitment, screening expectations and the requirement for role-appropriate training.

7.3. **Screening:** initial screening considers qualifications, experience, suitability for the role, alignment with CRCA values and safeguarding suitability. Background checks, worker-screening clearances, referee checks and other checks are conducted according to role requirements and jurisdictional obligations. Elder and Deacon nominations must be checked against the Restricted Persons Register before the nomination proceeds, and any person recorded on the Register, or any uncertainty, is referred to the Safe Church Administrator (or the Synodical Administrator) before appointment.

7.4. **Worker-screening renewal and expiry:** the Session / Church Council is responsible for ensuring that local personnel and volunteers in in-scope roles hold current worker-screening clearances before they commence and while they continue in those roles. Practical tracking may be delegated locally, including to the Safe Church Representative or another authorised local record-holder. The Safe Church Administrator may maintain central screening templates, renewal schedules, role-tier records and system records to support consistent practice across the CRCA. This denominational administration supports, but does not replace, local church responsibility for clearance currency. An expired, suspended, refused or unverified clearance triggers immediate temporary restriction from in-scope duties until the clearance is renewed, verified or the role is otherwise managed.

7.5. **Interviews:** safeguarding-focused questions are integrated into interviews. Hypothetical safeguarding scenarios may be used to assess the candidate's judgement, boundaries, reporting obligations and approach to children and adults at risk.

7.6. **References:** at least two professional or ministry references are checked. Referees for roles involving direct contact with children, young people or adults at risk are asked directly about safeguarding-relevant conduct, suitability, concerns, gaps in employment or ministry, and reasons for leaving previous roles.

7.7. **Induction:** new personnel and volunteers complete safeguarding induction before or within the timeframe required for their role. In-scope roles must complete the required safeguarding training before commencing duties involving children, young people or adults at risk.

7.8. **Probation and role review:** new employees begin a probation period appropriate to the role. Safeguarding conduct and compliance are monitored during probation. A complaint, concern or screening issue arising during probation triggers an accelerated role review.

7.9. **Movement and transfer:** where a person moves between CRCA churches, denominations or jurisdictions, including from overseas, the receiving Session / Church Council is responsible for ensuring that screening, training and safeguarding history relevant to the receiving role are checked before the person commences. The Safe Church Administrator may assist with central records and templates. The Safe Church Unit may provide safeguarding advice where complaint history, statutory pathway issues, safeguarding concerns or risk matters are identified.

7.10. **Volunteer engagement:** volunteers in roles involving direct contact with children, young people or adults at risk are subject to worker-screening, induction, training, supervision and conduct expectations appropriate to the volunteer context.

7.11. **Records:** the Session / Church Council is responsible for ensuring that local recruitment, screening, declaration and role-allocation records are completed and securely retained for local personnel and

volunteers. The Safe Church Administrator maintains approved templates, central screening records where required, safeguarding training records, role-tier records and standard reference-check resources that support consistent practice across the CRCA.

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

8.1. Role definitions used in this policy are consistent across the CRCA policy suite.

8.2. **Session / Church Council:** oversees local hiring, volunteer engagement and role allocation; ensures local teams understand this policy; and remains responsible for confirming that screening, training, declarations, induction and role requirements are met before a person commences in an in-scope role.

8.3. **Safe Church Representative:** supports local safeguarding checks, training follow-up and role-suitability awareness where authorised locally; helps local personnel understand safeguarding pathways; and assists local leadership with follow-up of screening or training requirements.

8.4. **Safe Church Administrator:** maintains approved screening templates, training records, role-tier records, central screening records where required, standard reference-check resources and administrative systems that support consistent recruitment and safeguarding practice across the CRCA.

8.5. **Safe Church Unit:** provides safeguarding advice and escalation support where recruitment, movement, complaint history, safeguarding concern, statutory pathway or risk matters require denominational safeguarding response or review. The Safe Church Unit does not replace local church responsibility for recruitment, appointment, clearance verification or role allocation.

8.6. **Safe Church Advisory Committee:** monitors and recommends updates to this policy, considers systemic recruitment and screening risks, and ensures the policy remains aligned with safeguarding principles and sector expectations.

8.7. **Personnel and members:** familiarise themselves with this policy, declare safeguarding-relevant matters, cooperate with screening and reference checking, complete required training, and uphold CRCA safeguarding expectations.

9. BREACHES

9.1. Failure to comply with this policy, including failure to complete required screening or training, withholding safeguarding-relevant information, commencing in an in-scope role without clearance, or hindering safe recruitment, may result in action under the Disciplinary and Breach Response Policy. Available responses may include retraining, role review, stand-down from duties, written warning, termination of employment, removal from a volunteer role or other lawful action.

10. RELATED POLICIES

10.1. National Safeguarding Policy. Safeguarding Governance and Leadership Policy. Code of Conduct. Safe Environment and Risk Management Policy. Disciplinary and Breach Response Policy. Complaints Handling Policy. Learning and Development Policy. Information Sharing and Record Keeping Policy. Privacy Policy. Continuous Quality Improvement Policy.

11. MONITORING AND REVIEW

11.1. This policy is reviewed every three years, or earlier where required by legislative change, regulator guidance, audit findings, serious incidents, a substantiated complaint, material safeguarding risk, or a decision of the Safe Church Advisory Committee. Feedback on this policy may be sent to the Safe Church Unit at scu@crca.org.au at any time.

External framework reference: National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

Document	Control	History			
Version	**Approval date**	**Effective date**	**Approved by**	**Author or review lead**	**Summary of changes**
0.1	16/09/2025	16/09/2025	Not approved	Align Safeguarding	Initial consultation draft.
0.2	09/07/2026	09/07/2026	SCAC	Align Safeguarding	Statuary updates
0.3	28/07/2026	28/07/2026	SCAC (SIC)	Align Safeguarding	SCAC feedback
1.0	16/09/2026	16/09/2026	SCAC (SIC)	Align Safeguarding	First approved issue.