

Engadine Congregational Church Safe Ministry Policy¹

Out of a love for God and for others, and as far as it lies within us, Engadine Congregational Church is committed to protecting the safety of all people within its programs, ministries and events. All people, regardless of age, gender, race, culture, disability and family/social background have the right to be respected and valued and have equal rights to the protection of being safe and feeling safe at all times. Given that we live in a country that legislates for people's safety, this policy has been developed to adhere to National and Local legislation. Over and above this, our commitment stems from a desire to reflect the character of our God, who has identified with and shown particular care for the vulnerable. This policy applies to all elders, pastors, deacons, leaders, coordinators, volunteers, and anyone working on behalf of Engadine Congregational Church. The elders of Engadine Congregational Church take responsibility for ensuring that this policy is reviewed regularly and embedded in the life of our church at all levels.

Our policy endeavours to see that:

- all people are respected and valued.
- leaders and programs are safe.
- the risk of abuse, misconduct and the misuse of positional power is minimised.
- all cases of suspected abuse and misconduct are handled thoroughly and sensitively.

We commit to providing ministry that is safe in the following specific ways.

Appropriate leadership

Given the responsibility entrusted to leaders, we at Engadine Congregational Church are committed to providing leadership that is appropriate. The elders will generally be responsible for the recruitment and training of leaders, although they may delegate the responsibility. All relevant leaders must be regular participants at Engadine Congregational Church. We will screen all prospective leaders of children and youth, requiring that they have their State 'Working with Children Check' verified. In addition, we also require that all leaders complete an approved Safe Ministry Training course within their first year of ministry and complete a refresher course every 3 years. Leaders will have committed to our Code of Conduct, behave as followers of Jesus and be

¹ This policy has been developed using material from: Safe Ministry Training (www.safeministrytraining.com.au); the Safe Ministry Resources (www.smr.org.au) Safe Ministry Manual; the National Council of Churches in Australia Safe Church Program (www.ncca.org.au); the Fellowship of Congregational Churches Safe Ministry Training seminars; and the Anglican Church Diocese of Sydney Professional Standards Unit (www.safeministry.org.au).

willing to be held accountable for their behaviour. No-one with a criminal record of child abuse, molestation or similar offences is allowed to be involved in children's or youth ministry at Engadine Congregational Church.

Best practices

At Engadine Congregational Church we are committed to creating a culture where people feel safe to speak out about inappropriate behaviour without fear of being rejected or ridiculed. We are committed to listening and responding appropriately to concerns and complaints about behaviour and safety. Throughout this process we are committed to protecting the confidentiality, dignity, health and well-being of all individuals involved. Any child-related issues will be managed with a focus on the interest of the child and, where necessary, will be reported to the elders and the relevant State Child Protection. We have an appointed Safe Ministry Representative who seeks to oversee this aspect of our church's life and practice – in accordance with the guidelines of the Representative's Job Description.

Safe environments

At Engadine Congregational Church we are committed to ensuring that our programs and events are safe and appropriate for those attending. In this regard, particular consideration will be given to the following specific areas: the type of activities chosen, the venue, safe ratios of supervision, appropriate toileting practices, transportation, work health and safety, parental or guardian permission and confidentiality of records kept.

Date instituted by Engadine Congregational Church Elders: 15 January 2024

Date of last review by Engadine Congregational Church Elders: 15 January 2024

Elders: Roy Arellano – 0450 781 041 (roy@econg.org.au); Greg Jones – 0438 366 803 (info@econg.org.au); James Stone – 0450 313 991 (james@econg.org.au)

Safe Ministry Representative: Jane Rummey – 0410 524 954 (rummey1@optusnet.com.au)

Fellowship of Congregational Churches: (02) 9588 5128; fcccong@bigpond.com

Family and Community Services (FaCS) Child Protection Helpline: 132 111