

## Application

ACSQ is committed to promoting and supporting a safe environment for all, including:

- Recognising that all people are equal;
- Ensuring that all people feel welcomed, respected and safe from abuse;
- Following best practice in protecting those experiencing domestic abuse;
- Refusing to condone any form of abuse;
- Understanding that family and domestic violence affects different people in different ways and ensuring that there is no 'one size fits all' approach;
- Promoting a culture of healthy relationships; and;
- Enabling concerns to be raised and responded to clearly and consistently

ACSQ is additionally committed to a work environment free from any form of violence and supports those staff who are affected by domestic and family violence.

Within this policy violence and abuse are used interchangeably.

This policy is specifically designed to cover domestic and family violence from a parish perspective and excludes Diocesan Operations, Anglicare and individual schools (other than licenced chaplains) which each have their own policies and procedures covering domestic and family violence.

This policy is to be reviewed at least one in every three years.

## Domestic and Family Violence

Domestic and Family Violence includes, but is not limited to, emotional, social, economic, psychological, spiritual, physical and sexual abuse. Such behaviour often seeks to control, humiliate, dominate or instil fear.

Domestic and Family Violence is unacceptable whether in the home, at work or in church.

The primary focus of this policy is abusive or intimidating behaviour inflicted by an adult against a current or former spouse or partner. For sexual abuse involving children, please refer to the Professional Standards Canon.

Domestic abuse requires a serious and realistic response:

- All forms of domestic abuse cause damage to the people impacted and are wrong;
- Domestic abuse can occur in all communities, including churches;
- Domestic abuse, if witnessed or overheard by a child, is a form of child abuse by the perpetrator of the abusive behaviour;
- Working in partnership with vulnerable adults and children, statutory authorities and specialist agencies is essential in promoting the welfare of any child or adult suffering abuse;
- Clergy and lay ministers need to obtain advice from those with professional expertise when faced with situations of domestic abuse; and
- Where mistakes in caring for people in difficult situations are made, an apology should be offered.

## Faithfulness in Service

We uphold Faithfulness in Service as our Code of Conduct for clergy and church volunteers, specifically its affirmations in section 6:

- Abuse of power is at the heart of many relationship problems in the Church and in the community. In essence, abuse is one person's misuse of power over another. Sometimes abuse will be a one-off event and at other times it will be a pattern of behaviour (6.2)
- It is important for clergy and church workers to be good citizens and to obey the laws of the community, except where those laws conflict with Christian convictions (6.4)
- You are not to abuse your spouse, children or other members of your family (6.6)

## Ensure Safety First

Steps to be considered when receiving a disclosure of domestic or family violence include:

- Ensure that those who have experienced domestic abuse can find safety and informed help as a first priority.
- Ensure that any disclosures of abuse are taken seriously and not dismissed.
- Work with the appropriate statutory authorities during an investigation into domestic and family violence, including when allegations are made against a member of the church community.
- Respect the need for confidentiality within the bounds of good Safe Ministry practice.

## Support for a Person Impacted by Domestic and Family Violence

A person impacted by domestic and family violence has the right to choose whether, when and to whom they disclose information about being affected by domestic and family violence. Information disclosed in relation to domestic and family violence will be kept confidential except where there is a legal obligation for the Diocese to report the abuse.

If you are to receive a report of domestic or family violence, the following general rules should be followed:

- Listen to the person with acceptance
- Assure the person it's not their fault
- Be honest about your ability to help
- Reassure normal confidentiality will be maintained except where that is legislatively not possible

Ensure the safety of the person impacted:

- Call the police on 000 if there is an immediate risk of harm
- Contact Child Protection on 1800 811 810 if children are involved

Give the person impacted details of community support available, including:

- DV Connect (1800 811 811) – a 24/7 Queensland service offering professional non-judgemental telephone support. DV Connect can assist with counselling, interventions, transport and emergency accommodation.
- Flourish Program (1300 361 008) – a 24/7 service that offers a free independent counselling service for all clergy, staff and their immediate families. This service can assist with both work and personal matters.
- Queensland Sexual Assault Helpline (1800 010 120) – offer telephone support 7:30am to 11:30pm 7 days a week for anyone that has experienced sexual assault or abuse. This service can also be used by anyone who is concerned or suspects someone they care about might have been assaulted or abused.
- 1800 Respect (1800 737 732) – a 24/7 national number for family violence, domestic violence and sexual assault counselling and advice.
- Daisy App – Daisy is an app developed by 1800RESPECT to connect people experiencing violence or abuse to services in their local area. Daisy can be downloaded for free from iTunes or Google Play. Once the app is on a phone, the user can use it to search for support services in the local area. Choose the type of service (for example 'Legal services' or 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services') and select the state or territory to find the closest services. Service websites can be visited from within the app, which means these sites won't show up in browser histories. This can help protect privacy, especially if another person has access to the phone. Each listing includes information about opening times, how to get in touch and the services they offer.
- Better Relationships (1300 114 397) – Anglicare's mental health and family wellbeing services. Services include counselling, life planning and skills training.

- Relationship Australia (1300 364 277) – Provides relationship support services in Australia, including counselling, family dispute resolution and a range of family and community support programs.
- Kids Helpline (1800 551 800) – a 24/7 service offering telephone and online counselling for young people aged 5 to 25.
- Lifeline (13 11 14) – 24/7 service for access to crisis support and suicide prevention.
- Immigrant Women's Support Service (07 3846 3490) – Offering a free confidential, practical and emotional support to immigrant women from non-English speaking backgrounds and their children who have experienced domestic and/or sexual violence. The service operates Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm.
- Zig Zag Young Women's Resource Centre (07 3843 1823) – Offering support to young women aged 16 to 25 years old, including medium term housing and counselling.

## Clergy and Licensed Lay Ministers Impacted by Domestic and Family Violence

Clergy and licensed lay ministers are offered the same support as any member of staff or the greater Anglican congregation. Impacted clergy and licensed lay persons are encouraged to communicate with their responsible Bishop either directly or through the Archbishop's nominated contact officer, to consider how best to manage the situation to ensure the safety of those impacted. The Archbishop's nominated contact officer will be a female member of the clergy.

## Clergy and Licensed Lay Ministers as Perpetrators

There is a zero tolerance for domestic abuse perpetrated by clergy and licensed lay ministers. Any accusation may be dealt with under the Parishes Regulation Canon, Tribunal Canon or the Benefices Avoidance Canon and an adverse finding may result in suspension from duties, loss of office and emoluments or deposition from holy orders.

## Other Church Leaders as Perpetrators

There is zero tolerance for domestic violence perpetrated by any officer within a Parish or the wider ACSQ community.

Under the Parishes Regulation Canon (PAR-1-2013), the Archbishop-in-Council may remove from office any Churchwarden, Parish Councillor, Parish Treasurer, or Parish Nominator for non-compliance with the provisions of the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese or for any other cause which may to him seem sufficient.

Parish Priests who become aware of an allegation of domestic and family abuse against an office holder or member of their Parish are encouraged to talk to their bishop about an appropriate response.

## Parish Workers as Perpetrators

While there is zero tolerance for domestic violence, any action against an employee should only occur with input from the Diocesan Human Resources Team.

## Parish Workers as Impacted by Domestic and Family Violence

These staff members are subject to (or protected by) the same Diocesan Operations' protections as other employees.