

02.01

Church Worker Service Policy

Theological Foundation

The Lutheran Church of Australia (hereafter called the church), has a responsibility to ensure that those serving God in his church are protected, cared for and supported. The church is entrusted to care for all people serving it in a fitting and orderly manner (Luke 16: 10–12, 1 Peter 5:1–3). We are able to use systems of the world and management practices to assist in maintaining good order (Romans 13:1-8; Exodus 18:17–26). As a church we are free to use the benefits of sound administration to support the work of the church (1 Corinthians 12:28). Jesus himself spent time instructing the disciples for the roles they would take on so that they had a clear understanding of the work to which they were called. St Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians spent some time ensuring that there was an understanding that individuals make up a whole and that, collectively, we all constitute the body Christ (Corinthians 12:1–31). Additionally, there are distinct ways to serve, and, while individuals may perform different roles, all service is equally important.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline a framework and structure for all church worker service policies and procedures. The aim of this policy is to create an environment whereby all church workers of the church are supported by clear service (employment, appointment or call) related policies and subsequent procedures and/or guidelines. This will enable church workers to start well, stay well, grow and finish well. This in turn supports the church's strategic direction to ensure that church workers are enabled to Go and Grow (Strategic Priority 3).

Relevant to

This policy applies to:

- all church workers
- all entities of the church.

Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to:

1. articulate and support the commitment of the church to develop and disseminate appropriate policies, and resulting procedures and guidelines, to ensure that church workers and the entities in which they serve have a clear and shared understanding of their respective responsibilities in relation to the care, support and management of church workers
2. enable church entities to be equipped to provide appropriate care and support of their church workers as they undertake mission and ministry (including ministry support)
3. allow for consultation with church entities through the Church Worker Support Department in partnership with District Church Councils and relevant governing bodies
4. support church entities to be places where church workers are valued and supported in an appropriate manner.

Policy Statement

The church is committed to supporting its entities to have effective management and supervisory structures and processes in place, which provide appropriate protection, care and support for all church workers.

The church will develop clear, concise and appropriate policies, procedures and/or guidelines and support their implementation across the church, which results in church worker service being supported and managed effectively and efficiently. This includes, but is not limited to, matters such as:

- employee recruitment and selection, the call process for pastors and identification and selection of volunteers
- service documentation
- induction and orientation to role and place of service
- remuneration (including taxation and superannuation requirements)
- leave
- vocational development and training
- performance development review and planning
- performance management
- termination of employment.

The Church Worker and Human Resource Policies Index will ultimately provide a comprehensive list of policies, standards and protocols, procedures, and guidelines.

Where there is alignment with the intent of the Church Worker Service Policy, and subsidiary policies, there is no need to revoke existing policies of church entities.

Definitions

Church worker – includes a pastor, lay worker, other employee and/or volunteer serving in any entity of the church.

Pastor – any person ordained into the holy ministry of the church, according to the rites and practice of the church, who has been received into the ministry of the church, according to the provisions in the constitution of the church, and is named on the Roll of Pastors.

Lay worker – a lay person serving a church entity named on the Roll of Lay Workers in accordance with the provisions of section 8.9 of the bylaws of the church, and may be an employee or volunteer as described below.

Employee – includes any non-ordained (lay) person serving in a paid capacity in any entity of the church.

Volunteer – includes any person serving in an unpaid capacity in any entity of the church. This includes all persons serving on worship service rosters, in congregational leadership, and in governance such as bodies, boards, commissions and committees.

Procedural Principles

The application of this policy will require:

- the Church Worker Support Department to consult with stakeholders affected by policies subsumed by this overarching policy framework and provide evidence of such consultation to the General Church Council (GCC)
- District Church Councils and other boards to engage appropriately in such consultation
- church entities to work within approved policies, procedures and/or guidelines once policies are endorsed by the GCC.

The application of this policy will lead to:

- a shared, agreed and consistent understanding of requirements and expectations for the care, support, protection and management of church workers across the church
- the GCC being confident that church workers are receiving appropriate care, support and protection.

Responsible Person/s

- GCC is responsible for overseeing compliance with this policy across the church.
- District Church Councils (DCC) are responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy within their respective districts, to monitor compliance and report to GCC.
- Church entities' councils or other governing bodies are responsible for the implementation of this policy and related procedures, and they are responsible to report compliance to their respective district.
- The Church Worker Support Department is responsible for disseminating all policy and procedure information to GCC, DCC and church entities, assisting with interpretation, implementation and compliance reporting.

Document Controls

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