

NO PETS POLICY

Date	09/09/2022
Policy Number	BCOC:4-02
Status	Version 1
Approved by Board on	18/10/2022
Scheduled review date	10/2024

Introduction

At Berwick Church of Christ, we seek to protect and provide a safe environment for Staff, Volunteers and Participants who attend the Church for any reason.

Purpose

This Policy ensures that all people can feel safe and welcome at church.

Church attendance is a community activity, where all are welcome, which means we may not know from week to week who will be present. We need to consider pet allergies, fear of animals (regardless of severity, source, or how benign any given animal may be), and the fact that many animals do not do well with other animals in the same space, which means that the wisest, most considerate course of action is to leave pets at home.

Scope

This policy applies to everyone who wishes to bring a pet onto the Church premises.

Definitions

In addition to the General Definitions (which are available at www.berwickchurch.org.au/policies), the following definitions are relevant to this Policy:

“Assistance Animal:” is a trained support animal, designed to facilitate the participation of people with a disability in accessing various aspects of personal and public life. In accordance with the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)* (“DDA”), Section 9, an Assistance Animal is a Dog or other animal;

- (a) accredited under a law of a State or Territory that provides for the accreditation of animals trained to assist a persons with a disability to alleviate the effect of the disability; or
- (b) accredited by an animal training organisation prescribed by the regulations for the purposes of this paragraph; or
- (c) trained:
 - (i) to assist a person with a disability to alleviate the effect of the disability; and
 - (ii) to meet standards of hygiene and behaviour that are appropriate for an animal in a public place.

“Pet” means any animal defined in the Kingdom Animalia, including but not limited to dogs, cats, birds, rodents, fish, turtles, or any other animal that is kept for pleasure and does not meet the definition of an Assistance Animal.

Policy

Pets are **not permitted** in any of the Church’s buildings or at any activities held on the Church property without the express permission of a Pastor, giving consideration to the safety and wellbeing of Staff, Volunteers and Participants.

Assistance Animals must be kept on their leash/harness at all times, under the control of their owner and are not to sit on any chairs or furniture.

Assistance Animals are not allowed to enter areas that are off limits to the general public, e.g. kitchens, food preparation areas and food storage areas.

Anyone bringing an Assistance Animal must provide documented proof that the animal is qualified, accredited, and serving the person they are with.

It is our preference that people do not bring pets onto the Church property. If a Pet is brought on the property, it must remain outside of any building, be appropriately restrained in a manner that is not a danger to itself, any person or other animal in its vicinity, not create a nuisance or disturb the public peace.

Any mess made by the Assistance Animal/Pet is the owners responsibility to clean up to a standard as if it had not been on the property in the first place.

Safety Contact Person

Name:	Karen Fletcher
Phone number:	0438 886 337
Email:	karenf@bcoc.com.au
Other contact details:	Church Office: 9702 1011 (Mondays to Thursdays)

Applicable Legislation, References and Other Policies

Item	Link
Assistance Dogs Australia	https://www.assistedogs.org.au/
Assistance animals and the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)	https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/disability-rights/projects/assistance-animals-and-disability-discrimination-act-1992-cth
Dogs in Casey	https://www.casey.vic.gov.au/dogs-casey
Domestic Animals Act 1994	https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/domestic-animals-act-1994/079
Victorian Equal Opportunities & Human Rights Commission	www.humanrights.vic.gov.au/
BCOC – Policies	All policies and forms are located at www.berwickchurch.org.au/policies .