

## ALCOHOL, SMOKING AND DRUG POLICY

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Revised & Approved by Board on	15/07/2024
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### Introduction

Berwick Church of Christ acknowledges that the use of drugs and alcohol may impair an individual's capacity to perform their job safely and competently with respect to staff, contractors, and volunteers. The use of drugs and alcohol or smoking may result in the risk of injury or a threat to anyone in the Church. The Church has an obligation under work health and safety legislation to provide a safe work environment.

### Purpose

This policy aims to ensure all staff, contractors, and volunteers, can undertake their duties in a safe and responsible manner and reduce the risk of performance and behaviour impairment due to the consumption of alcohol, smoking, and drugs.

### Scope

This policy applies to all staff, contractors, and volunteers of the Church.

### Definitions

Please refer to the General Definitions document.

In addition to the General Definitions, the following definitions are relevant to this policy.

**“Driver”** means a person who is driving or has control of the vehicle or vessel.

**“Smoking”** is defined as the act of lighting, smoking or carrying a lighted or smouldering cigar, cigarette or pipe of any kind. This includes electronic nicotine delivery systems or electronic smoking devices such as e-cigarettes, e-pipes, e-hookahs and e-cigars.

**“Vehicle”** and **“vehicles”** means motor cars, minibuses, buses, and trailers used for transporting people and things. The Road Safety Act 1986 (Vic) states the definition of a vehicle.

**“Vessel”** and **“vessels”** means boats or watercraft. The Marine Safety Act 2010 (Vic) states the definition of a vessel.

### Responsibilities

#### Elders and Senior Leadership will:

- Ensure that all staff, contractors, and volunteers are made aware and understand this policy and procedure.
- Identify in what circumstances staff, contractors, and volunteers would be required to undergo drug and/or alcohol testing.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers are inducted into this procedure and their obligations.
- Ensure that any concerns or issues are addressed promptly and expediently to ensure the health and safety of all staff and volunteers and in accordance with this procedure.
- Provide support to staff and volunteers where appropriate.

#### Staff, Contractors, and Volunteers will:

- Not attend work if affected by alcohol or drugs (including the following day after consumption of alcohol/drugs if there is still an effect on the person).
- Comply with the Church's smoke-free environment procedure.

- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety, as well as the health and safety of others.
- Follow this policy and other WHS procedures and instructions.
- Report health and safety hazards and any injury, illness, hazard, or unsafe work practice to the Senior Leadership, including reporting other staff or volunteers who may be impaired by alcohol/drugs and have alcohol/drugs at work.

## Procedure

### Identifying Impairment

Reasonable grounds to suspect staff, contractors, or volunteers under the influence of drugs and alcohol is known as 'observable impairment' and may include (but are not limited to) where the member of staff, contractor, or volunteer:

- Is unable to coordinate their actions;
- Has red or bloodshot eyes, or dilated pupils;
- Smells of alcohol or drugs (e.g. marijuana);
- Acts contrary to their normal behaviour;
- Is not behaving in a professional and competent manner and in accordance with the Church's standards; or
- Otherwise appears to be impaired or affected by drugs or alcohol.

There may be other reasonable grounds to assume impairment that is not observable, such as reports, or information obtained about the use of drugs or alcohol.

### Procedure For Managing Impairment

Observable impairment is reasonable grounds to believe that a member of staff or a volunteer may not be able to safely perform the inherent requirements of their role.

If a member of staff, contractor or a volunteer identifies observable impairment in others, or believes they themselves may be impaired, they must report this to the Senior Leadership immediately by speaking to them directly or by phone.

Senior Leadership may take one, or a combination, of the following actions (but is not limited to these actions):

- Direct the member of staff, contractor, or volunteer to go home. Suitable arrangements for safe transport will be made.
- Direct the member of staff, contractor, or volunteer to undertake a drug and alcohol test with a testing agency at a provider nominated by the Church. Senior Leadership may accompany the worker to undertake the test.
- Direct the member of staff, contractor, or volunteer to attend a medical examination with a doctor nominated by the Church, to determine whether they are fit to perform their duties safely. The medical examination may include a drug and/or alcohol test, such as a breath test, blood test, urine test or saliva test. The Senior Leadership may accompany the worker to the medical examination.
- If the member of staff, contractor, or volunteer refuses to attend a medical examination, they will be directed to go home. Refusal to undertake a drug and alcohol test, refusal to attend a medical examination, refusal to go home, or providing false information constitutes a breach of this procedure and may result in action being taken against the member of staff, contractor, or volunteer, including action as set out below under 'Breach of this Procedure'.
- At the earliest practicable occasion after the member of staff or volunteer returns to work, the Senior Leadership must discuss the impact of the impairment with the member of staff, contractor, or volunteer concerned and offer assistance to ensure it doesn't occur again. Such assistance may include arranging professional counselling. The Senior Leadership to also refer to the 'Breach of this Procedure' below.

### Use Of Prescription or Over-The-Counter Drugs

Staff, contractors, or volunteers taking prescription drugs which may result in impairment, as described above, should advise their Pastor or Leader so that suitable arrangements can be made to ensure that they are able to work in a safe and productive manner.

### Alcohol

- Alcohol is not to be consumed or brought onto the Church property by anyone.
- At any official Church event held offsite, alcohol is not to be consumed by staff or volunteers who are leading and/or serving at that event. Any exceptions to this must be approved by Senior Leadership.
- Any offsite event not approved by Senior Leadership is not considered an official Church event.
- Whenever alcohol is consumed at an official Church event held offsite, staff and volunteers (who are not leading or serving) must:
  - Comply with the Church's Code of Conduct, policies, and procedures.
  - Consume alcohol responsibly and not become inebriated.
  - Not take illegal drugs.
  - Have a pre-planned safe method of transport arranged to get home.

The Pastor/Leader of this official Church event must ensure that:

- Where practicable, staff and volunteers are reminded of this policy and procedure.
- A Leader is present to provide supervision of alcohol services and consumption, and to provide support if required.
- Non-alcoholic drinks will be available.
- Food will be made available where alcohol is provided.
- Alcohol will not be provided to anyone under the age of 18.
- Alcohol will not be provided to anyone who is drinking excessively or is (or appears to be) intoxicated.
- Information about alternative public transport arrangements is provided.

### Smoking

The Church is a smoke-free environment. Smoking or e-cigarettes (vaping) are not permitted anywhere on or in the Church premises, workplaces or whilst driving a vehicle / vessel as an official Driver, including Official Church Events whether onsite or offsite.

### Drugs

The possession of illicit drugs or equipment related to the use, manufacture, or purchase/sale of illicit drugs at the Church, an Official Church Event, a Church sponsored or related function, while on the premises, or whilst driving a vehicle / vessel under the Transport Safety Policy, will be grounds for immediate dismissal.

### Vehicles and Machinery

- No machinery, vehicle, or vessel is to be operated or used by any member of staff, contractor or volunteer who is under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. This also applies to driving to and from the Church.
- The Church will not accept liability for damages to a vehicle, injury to a person or damage/injury to any third party incurred if the driver of the vehicle / vessel is in breach of this procedure or of the law. The driver concerned will be personally liable for all costs and liabilities in such circumstances.
- All Drivers must complete the Driver's Declaration Form and electronically sign the Driver's Declaration and Driver's Commitment. The Driver's Commitment is as follows:

*"As a driver, for and on behalf of Berwick Church of Christ, I recognise the detrimental effects that drugs and alcohol may have on the safety of driving a vehicle or vessel and the general health and wellbeing of individuals.*

*I will ensure that every time I undertake driving of any vehicle or vessel and in particular bus safety work, as defined under section 3 of the Bus Safety Act 2009 (Vic):*

- *I will have no drugs or alcohol present in my blood or breath immediately before, or while undertaking driving*
- *I will inform my treating health practitioner or pharmacist of my policy obligations when being prescribed medications.*
- *I am not impaired by drugs or medication(s)."*

### Breach of this Procedure

- If a member of staff or a volunteer is found to have breached this procedure, including being under the influence of alcohol or drugs whilst at Church, they may be subjected to disciplinary action. The type and severity of the disciplinary action will depend upon the circumstances of the case and the seriousness of

the breach. In serious cases, this may include termination of employment or removal from their voluntary position.

- Contractors of the Church who are found to have breached this procedure may have their contracts with the Church terminated or not renewed.
- In circumstances where a member of staff or volunteer's behaviour or conduct may involve a breach of any Australian Law, the Church may notify the police or other relevant government authority.

## Related Policies

See the Transport Safety Policy and Driver's Declaration Form distributed alongside this Policy and others on the church website – [www.berwickchurch.org.au/policies](http://www.berwickchurch.org.au/policies).

## Raising Concerns

We encourage all staff and volunteers within the Church and in our congregation to report any concerns they have about safety and wellbeing. We are committed to handling all concerns seriously, legally and in a child-focused way (if concerning children).

If you have any concerns about safety at the Church, we strongly encourage you to share your concern with one of our Pastors or the Safety Contact Person and fill in our [Reporting Concerns Form](#).

## Policy Review Statement

This policy will be reviewed regularly as a part of the ongoing review and continuous improvement cycle of all Church policies and procedures.

If you have any feedback you would like to make about this policy, please email [policies@bcoc.com.au](mailto:policies@bcoc.com.au).

## Safety Contact Person

Name:	<b>Karen Fletcher</b>
Phone number:	<b>(03) 9702 1011</b>
Email:	<b>karenf@bcoc.com.au</b>
Other contact details:	<b>Church Office: 9702 1011 (Mondays to Thursdays)</b>

## Applicable Legislation, References and Other Policies

Item	Description
Victorian Road Laws	Go to Vic Roads: <a href="http://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au">www.vicroads.vic.gov.au</a>
Bus Safety Act 2009 & Bus Safety Regulations 2010	The Bus Safety Act 2009 and the Bus Safety Regulations 2010 are designed to promote an improved safety culture across bus operations and apply to all commercial and non-commercial operations.
Marine Safety Act 2010 (Vic) & Marine Safety Regulations 2012 (Vic)	The Marine Safety Act 2010 (Vic) and the Marine Safety Regulations 2012 (Vic) are designed to improve safety on Victorian waterways and ensure a safe environment for recreational and commercial boating.
BCOC Policies	All Church policies can be obtained from the website link, <a href="http://www.berwickchurch.org.au/policies">www.berwickchurch.org.au/policies</a>
Australian Government Department of Health - Alcohol Contacts	<a href="https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/alcohol/alcohol-contacts">https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/alcohol/alcohol-contacts</a>
DrinkWise	<a href="https://drinkwise.org.au/drinking-and-you/support-services/#">https://drinkwise.org.au/drinking-and-you/support-services/#</a>
Health Direct	<a href="https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/drug-and-alcohol-rehabilitation">https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/drug-and-alcohol-rehabilitation</a>