

WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY CONSULTATION PROCEDURE

Date	01/05/2024
Policy Number	BCOC5-02
Status	Approved
Approved on	07/08/2024
Scheduled review date	August 2027

Purpose

Berwick Church of Christ (the Church) recognises that to ensure a safe workplace, and to promote effective and efficient communication between elders, staff, and volunteers, and in accordance with the state work health and safety legislation, *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)* (OHS Act 2004), consultation must occur regularly between elders, staff and volunteers regarding safety.

Scope

This procedure relates to the Church's consultation and participation process in place for all staff and volunteers, including contractors. It outlines the Church's agreed process for consultation and participation and specifies what must be consulted on as per the OHS Act 2004.

This procedure applies to all staff, volunteers and persons undertaking work on behalf of the Church, including contractors, work experience / placements and interns.

Definitions

Please refer to the General Definitions document.

Responsibilities

Elders and Pastors

- Discuss and implement the process for consultation as requested.
- Communicating issues regarding work, health and safety (WHS) throughout the workplace and to necessary stakeholders.
- Discuss all safety issues within the workplace with relevant staff and/or volunteers.
- Ensure regular contractors are included in the consultation process.
- Ensure specific consultation mechanisms are implemented as requested (e.g. Health and Safety Committee).

All Staff and Volunteers Must

- Actively take part in the agreed consultation and participation process.
- Report any issues or hazards identified in the workplace to Staff or the Safety Contact Person as soon as possible.

Procedure

Berwick Church of Christ is committed to sharing information with staff and volunteers, giving everyone an opportunity to express their views or raise issues and contribute to the Church's decision-making process.

Consultation occurs in reference to, but not limited to, the following subjects / topics:

- When identifying hazards and assessing risks to health and safety arising from the work carried out or to be carried out by the Church.
- When making decisions about ways to eliminate or minimise those risks.
- When making decisions about the adequacy of facilities for the welfare of staff and volunteers.
- When proposing changes that may affect the health or safety of staff and volunteers.
- When making decisions about the procedures for:
 - consulting with staff or volunteers, or resolving work health or safety issues at the workplace;
 - monitoring the health of staff or volunteers, or providing information and training for staff and volunteers; and
 - monitoring the conditions at any workplace under the management or control of the Church.

Berwick Church Of Christ's Agreed Method of Consultation Is:

1. Staff Team Meetings

The Church conducts weekly staff meetings, which all staff are required to attend. On a regular basis, at these meetings, matters regarding WHS are presented, discussed and actions noted. All staff are encouraged to participate in WHS matters concerning workplace safety.

2. Weekly Newsletter

The Church sends out weekly newsletters to staff, volunteers, partners, and congregation members. A different WHS topic is covered once a month and any other significant WHS matters are covered as needed.

3. Electronic Communication

Staff and volunteers are updated on ad-hoc WHS matters and provided information and alerts via our Intranet Platform – Elvanto, by email and in urgent situations, SMS correspondence. All WHS policies and procedures are uploaded to a dedicated WHS section in Google Drive and are accessible on the website.

4. Governance Committee Meeting

The Governance Committee is established and meets once a month. The Governance Committee is a mechanism for distributing information between the Board of Elders and the Church. It facilitates cooperation in developing policies and assists to develop WHS standards, procedures, and rules.

5. Policy Consultation Method

Where a new policy is being implemented or an existing policy is being reviewed, the following consultation method will be used:

1. Ministry Forum meeting discussing:
 - a. Details about the new policy.
 - b. Any initial feedback received from Pastors.
2. Governance Committee meeting discussing:
 - a. Feedback received from Ministry Forum.
 - b. If required, Policy amended.
3. All Staff will then be emailed:
 - a. A copy of the policy.
 - b. Brief description of the policy and why it is being implemented.
 - c. Who to provide feedback to.
 - d. Consultation period and timeline.
4. At the end of the consultation period for the draft policy, any feedback from staff will be discussed and considered by the Governance Committee. If it is deemed appropriate, final changes will be made to the draft policy.
5. Once the final version is approved by the Elders, the policy is published on the website.
6. Electronic communication is used to inform all staff and volunteers of the new policy and where appropriate, sign off by staff.
7. Details of the new policy will also be communicated via the weekly newsletter.

Raising Concerns

We encourage all staff and volunteers within the Church and 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](#).

Review Statement

This procedure 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 procedure, please email policies@bcoc.com.au.

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 Fridays)

Applicable Legislation, References and Other Policies

Item	Description
<i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Cth)</i>	Federal Legislative duties and responsibilities of organisations.
<i>Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)</i>	The <i>Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)</i> (OH&S Act) is the main workplace health and safety law in Victoria. Click on the following links to access the current Victorian OH&S Act, OH&S regulations as well as other relevant legislation .
<i>BCOC Policies</i>	All Church policies can be obtained from the website link, www.berwickchurch.org.au/policies