

This Leaders' code of conduct (code) outlines ministry appropriate boundaries, rather than assuming that people know the boundaries. It applies to all church leaders/workers - both volunteer and paid.

As the leaders of this church we acknowledge that everyone who attends our churches needs to be confident that they will be cared for, nurtured and encouraged as they grow and at the same time, protected from spiritual, physical, & emotional harm. *Therefore we commit to the following ministry standards:*

**a. We minister out of a relationship with God by:**

- joining regularly in the life and ministry of the Church.
- studying the Scriptures in private and in groups.
- praying regularly in private and in fellowship with and for the people and ministry of the Church.
- giving of our time and finances to the work of the Church, as an expression of your gratitude to God.

**b. We serve others in the context of healthy relationships by:**

- loving and caring for our families; paying attention to the effect of ministry on them.
- treating others with respect; teach and exercise authority respectfully.
- upholding confidentiality; do not disclose to anyone (including spouse), any confidential information without the consent of the person providing the information. (There is an exception where there is a legal obligation or a duty of care issue.)
- being a team player; cooperating with other ministry leaders, there will be areas that overlap and someone else may have the advice that you need.
- using words that build up; do not ridicule or embarrass people.
- avoiding ongoing counselling of people with whom we have pastoral (ministry) relationships.
- making alternative arrangements for pastoral ministry for any person with whom we may develop an appropriate romantic relationship.

**c. As Christian Leaders we will:**

- be accountable to our team, watch out for each other and protect each other's integrity, e.g. never alone with one child or vulnerable adult.
- act in the best interests of those we serve.
- report our concerns about serious misconduct and/or abuse according to church procedure.
- treat every program participant equally, 'no

favourites'.

- communicate with integrity, including accountable and wise use of electronic communication.
- acknowledge when we are out of our depth, do not possess the required skill set in difficult pastoral situations, such as helping a victim of abuse, or a person who needs professional counselling, and seek help from a supervisor or denominational leader.
- not take property belonging to others, including intellectual property (copyright)
- not knowingly making false, misleading deceptive, or defamatory statements.
- not engage in bullying, emotional abuse, harassment, physical abuse, sexual abuse, sexual misconduct, sexual grooming or spiritual abuse of any person, including your own family.
- not act violently or intentionally provoke violence when engaged in civil disobedience.
- be responsible in our use of addictive substances and services (e.g. prescriptions/ alcohol).
- not use any prohibited substance.
- act with sexual purity. Sexuality is a gift from God. We will express our sexuality in healthy and God directed ways. For example; sexual intimacy within the confines of the marriage relationship, do not view pornography and romantic interactions will be meaningfully consensual with power imbalances transparently managed.
- act with financial integrity, including having accountable and transparent systems in place for in financial matters.
- not seek personal advantage or financial gain from your position, other than in wages, recognised allowances and deductions.
- disclose to the church leadership if we are or have been investigated for any criminal offences or have any knowledge of serious criminal activity.

## When the code is breached

i) Minor: Everyone is capable of sin but can repent and be forgiven (1 John 1:8-9). It stands to reason then, that the code can be breached. When this happens in an area that is not a breach of civil or criminal law, simply cease the conduct. If this is difficult, the person should see their team leader or supervisor about receiving help (eg. counselling). In some cases it may be necessary to step a person aside from their duties whilst this takes place. It is crucial to deal with such matters confidentially and sensitively.

ii) Unknown: Not all leaders will understand 'unacceptable' behaviours. Even after explaining the code some may be unaware they are exhibiting unacceptable behaviours. Leaders need to be open to correction and humble enough to modify behaviours so as to not discredit the gospel. As above, stepping a person aside from their duties may be necessary.

iii) Constant: There are breaches that are not a breach of civil or criminal law, but still unacceptable behaviour in a ministry context. Where a leader has been made aware of their behaviour and yet refuses to change:

- a) the ministry coordinator meets with the person for behaviour review meetings. Communicate required behaviour change (no more than 3 meetings).
- b) If behaviour continues, a small group of church leaders are to arrange a meeting to address the behaviour. Stepping aside is appropriate at this point.
- c) If the behaviour/s continues beyond this meeting, then respectfully, and upholding confidentiality, the person will be stood down for a set period. They will be offered help in changing their behaviour via counselling if they are willing.

NB. Written notes of all meetings to be carefully taken and a copy given to all parties.

iv) Breaches of the law or allegations of abuse: Allegations of abuse or serious misconduct are to be referred to the appropriate government authorities, in line with Baptist Association processes.