

Code of Conduct

Volunteers at CMS run programs¹

Codes of Conduct

There are three (3) codes of conduct, dependent on a person's role in CMS.

These are:

1. **CMS Pastoral Workers / Office Holders:** Missionaries, Missionaries in training, Short-Term Workers, St Andrew's Hall staff and residents, CMS staff with pastoral responsibilities, members of Branch and Federal Candidate Committees, Co-Mission Partners (Branch), CMS Medical Advisors and Branch Short Term Trip participants;;
2. **CMS Non-Pastoral Workers / Office Holders:** CMS staff without pastoral responsibilities, Board and Committee members and Office Volunteers;
3. **CMS Volunteers:** Volunteers at CMS run programs (e.g. Summer Conferences and Children's programs).

CMS acknowledges that some of these people may also be subject to denominational codes of conduct due to their ordination and/or licencing by their denomination. In such cases CMS will report misconduct allegations to the relevant church authority.

Enquiries and Complaints.

Telephone: 1800 070 511, Email: helpline@smr.org.au.

Safe Ministry Resources (SMR) is the independent organisation contracted by CMS to deal with safe ministry.

¹ CMS runs programs including summer conferences, children's programs and camps.

Definitions

bullying means: When people repeatedly and intentionally use words or actions against someone or a group of people to cause distress and risk to their wellbeing. These actions are usually done by people who have more influence or power over someone else, or who want to make someone else feel less powerful or helpless.

<https://www.humanrights.gov.au/what-bullying-violence-harassment-and-bullying-fact-sheet>

child: Anyone under the age of 18.

child abuse: All forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, spiritual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.

<https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/what-child-abuse-and-neglect>

discrimination: The prejudicial treatment of a person based on factors such as age, disability, race, gender identity, sex, language, religion, politics, national or social origin, property, birth, or other status.

<https://www.humanrights.gov.au/employers/good-practice-good-business-factsheets/quick-guide-australian-discrimination-laws>

domestic abuse: Violent, threatening or other behaviour by a person that coerces or controls a member of the person's family or causes the family member to be fearful. A child is exposed to domestic abuse if they see, hear or otherwise experience the effects of the abuse. [Family Law Act 4\(1\)](#)

civil authorities: Within Australia, the police and the relevant State or Territory government child protection authority. Outside of Australia, the police and any equivalent child protection authorities.

emotional abuse: Abuse that occurs when a person is subjected to behaviour or actions (often repeatedly) aimed at preventing or controlling their behaviour, with the intent to cause them emotional harm or fear through manipulation, isolation or intimidation. <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/lookup/4102.0main+features602014#Whatis>

financial abuse: When another person manipulates financial decisions, or controls access to money or other property without a person's consent. <https://www.moneysmart.gov.au/life-events-and-you/families/financial-abuse>

grooming: The manipulative cultivation of a relationship in order to initiate or cloak sexual abuse of an adult or a child. In the case of child sexual abuse, an offender may groom not only the child, but also those who exercise authority over the child, including the child's parents or guardians, and clergy and church workers.

harassment: Unwanted behaviour that offends, humiliates or intimidates a person, and targets them on the basis of a characteristic such as gender, race or ethnicity. <https://www.employmentlawhandbook.com.au/what-is-the-difference-between-workplace-bullying-and-harassment/>

marriage: Refers to a Christian view of marriage, being a heterosexual lifelong union, formally solemnized, between a man and a woman.²

pastoral ministry: Individual pastoral ministry carried out one-to-one. It includes spiritual direction, or pastoral counselling arising out of bereavement, divorce or other life crises.

physical abuse: Any intentional or reckless act, use of force or threat to use force causing injury to, or involving unwelcome physical contact with, another person.

restricted material: Publications, films, and computer games that have been classified as Category 1 or 2 restricted, X or RC classification by the Office of Film and Literature Classification; and any other images or sounds not subject to classification by the Office of Film and Literature Classification (for example, internet material) that are considered with good reason within the Church as being offensive on the grounds of violence, sex, language, drug abuse or nudity.

sexual abuse of an adult: Sexual assault, sexual exploitation or sexual harassment of an adult.

² "Formally solemnized" is understood to include "culturally recognised" for Australian Aboriginals.

sexual abuse of a child: The involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared, or else that violates the laws or social taboos of society. Children can be sexually abused by both adults and other children who are – by virtue of their age or stage of development – in a position of responsibility, trust or power over the victim.

<https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/what-child-abuse-and-neglect>

sexual harassment: Sexual harassment is any unwanted or unwelcome sexual behaviour, which makes a person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated. Sexual harassment is not interaction, flirtation or friendship which is mutual or consensual. Sexual harassment is a type of sex discrimination. <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/sex-discrimination/guides/sexual-harassment#sh>

spiritual abuse: The denial or use of spiritual or religious beliefs and practices to control and dominate a person. Spiritual abuse can impact on a person's self-esteem and confidence, making them feel guilty, damage their spiritual experiences and isolate them. <https://www.whiteribbon.org.au/understand-domestic-violence/types-of-abuse/spiritual-abuse/>

supervisor: Your supervisor is the line manager of the ministry or role you are involved in.

technological abuse: Encompasses a wide range of behaviours by perpetrators using communications technology to control, abuse, harass, punish and humiliate. <https://coagvawsummit.pmc.gov.au/technology-facilitated-abuse>

transgender: Noting or relating to a person whose gender identity does not correspond to that person's biological sex assigned by birth.

vilification: Doing something in public based on the race, colour, national or ethnic origin of a person or group of people which is likely to offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate. <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/race-discrimination/publications/know-your-rights-racial-discrimination-and-vilification>

vulnerable person: A child, being an individual under the age of 18 or an individual aged 18 years and above who may be unable to take care of themselves against harm or exploitation by reason of an illness, trauma or disability or any other reason. <https://www.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/publications/commonly-asked-questions-grant-recipients-wwvp.pdf>

The Code of Conduct

Volunteers at any CMS run programs (e.g. Summer Conferences and Children's programs), will abide by the following standards

PREAMBLE

Applying this code of conduct

You must personally be committed to applying this code. This will require an ongoing commitment from you that should deepen and grow as you become more familiar with the context in which you volunteer. Applying this code in your context may best be done in consultation with colleagues/other volunteers working in the same or similar location.

This is an important document. Please ask God, by his Holy Spirit, to enable you to apply it to your personal behaviour, mission work and service. As a result, and under God, may the light of Christ so shine through your life, that people will be drawn into saving relationships with our Lord Jesus Christ.

STANDARDS

1. Abide by all CMS policies, procedures and directives including completing all screening requirements, having a current WWCC clearance and undertaking regular safe ministry training.
2. Work collegially, caring for other team members, protecting their integrity, upholding the team and CMS, and resolving misunderstandings expeditiously.
3. Be aware of cultural differences and behave respectfully toward others being careful not to cause offence.
4. Recognise the limits of your skills and experience. Do not undertake any form of ministry or role that is beyond your competence or for which you have not been employed or trained. If in doubt seek advice from your supervisor.
5. Do not engage in abuse or harassment of anyone (child or adult). This includes bullying, emotional abuse, harassment, discrimination, sexual harassment, vilification, physical abuse, sexual abuse, sexual grooming, spiritual abuse, domestic abuse, financial abuse and technological abuse.
6. Do not act violently or intentionally provoke violence: this includes violence if you are engaged in civil disobedience.
7. Do not knowingly make statements that are false, defamatory, misleading or deceptive.
8. Uphold confidentiality and respect people's privacy, e.g. not to disclose confidential information received without the consent of the person providing the information, except where the information is known publicly; or as required or allowed by law; or that which is in the public interest (such as to avoid risk of serious injury or harm to any person).
9. Do not take property belonging to others, including intellectual property.
10. Act in the best interests of all children and vulnerable people, promoting their wellbeing and rights (spiritual, emotional and physical health and safety).
11. Communicate to all people (children and adults) with sensitivity and care:
 - a. consider the appropriateness and impact of your words and actions in communication;
 - b. avoid using language that may be misunderstood or threatens, belittles, humiliates or causes unnecessary offence;
 - c. do not use swear words, language which has sexual connotations, or language which denigrates a racial, religious or other group;
 - d. when using technology for communication, apply the same principles as you would in any other form of communication. This includes communicating to children via technology only with the full knowledge and permission of parents and caregivers, and to do so as a team as far as is practicable;

- e. Follow team guidelines for communication.
12. Act with sexual integrity. This includes:
- a. not engaging in sex outside of marriage or disgraceful sexualised behaviour;
 - b. not engaging in prostitution;
 - c. not visiting brothels and other places associated with the sex industry without a legitimate purpose;
 - d. not viewing, possessing, producing or distributing restricted material containing sex or nudity without a legitimate purpose;
 - e. not viewing, possessing, producing or distributing any form of child abuse or child exploitation material.
 - f. not engaging in sexual grooming, (acts aimed at preparing a group or a person to conceal the sexualisation of a relationship);
 - g. avoiding situations where you are vulnerable to temptation or where your conduct may be construed as a breach of the standards of sexual conduct in this Code.
 - h. not engaging in transgender behaviour
13. If you begin to develop romantic feelings towards a team member or person within the ministry context:
- a. acknowledge to yourself the impact your feelings may have on the team you are working in;
 - b. disclose the matter to a team leader to ensure accountability and prevent misunderstandings.
14. Dress modestly and appropriately to the context.
15. Be responsible in your use of alcohol and other mind altering or addictive substances or services, considering the effect of such use on you and others. You are not to undertake any ministry when you are impaired by alcohol or any other mind-altering or addictive substances. You are not to use any illegal substance.
16. When exercising ministry to and interacting with children:
- a. listen to and take them seriously when they disclose that they or someone else is at risk of harm, and report it to your supervisor and appropriate civil authorities;
 - b. be transparent and accountable in your interactions with children and interact only with the knowledge and permission of CMS, who are operating the program with parental (care-giver) consent;
 - c. do not discriminate between children, which includes avoiding special relationships, i.e. do not have favourites;
 - d. make sure that children are appropriately supervised at all times;
 - e. avoid being alone with a child or group of children; any individual or small group ministry/activity is to occur in the presence of adults, in a public location with high visibility;
 - f. you are not to administer corporal punishment to children (apart from your own children, and then this must be within the bounds of the law);
 - g. take care with your physical touch of a child, that this is not confusing to the child and is not able to be misconstrued as being inappropriate, intimate or sexualised touch;
 - h. make sure that no children's activity includes secret initiation rites and ceremonies, nudity or engagement in sexualised conduct;
 - i. no child is to be offered access to restricted materials containing anything sexual or nudity;
 - j. no child is to be offered drugs or alcohol, except wine in the context of a Holy Communion service and only then with parental permission.
17. Disclose and be publicly accountable for all CMS related monies or other non-private monies which you handle.
18. Do not seek personal advantage or financial gain for yourself or your family from your position or role within CMS.
19. Do not penalise, discriminate or take action against another CMS worker or volunteer because of any action taken in good faith under this Code, and do not procedurally delay or obstruct any process that is related to managing allegations of misconduct against a CMS worker or volunteer.

REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

Mandatory Reporting

If you are in Australia, and if there is a reasonable suspicion that a child or vulnerable person is at risk of harm from abuse you must report your concern to your supervisor and to the relevant state or territory civil authority.

If you are outside of Australia, and if there is a reasonable suspicion that an Australian child or vulnerable person is at risk of harm or abuse; or if there is a reasonable suspicion that an Australian citizen is perpetrating abuse, you must report your concern to your supervisor and to the relevant state or territory civil authority. In addition, you must abide by the legal requirements relating to child protection in your jurisdiction.

Serious Breaches of this code

If you believe that a breach of this code constitutes a possible criminal offence you must report your concern to your supervisor and the relevant state or territory police.

Reporting other breaches of this code

Alleged breaches of this code, other than the serious breaches listed above, should be reported to your supervisor. Your supervisor is responsible to report the alleged breach to the relevant authority within CMS. If for any reason you are unable to address your concern to your supervisor, you may address your concern directly to the relevant authority within CMS. The relevant authorities are as follows:

- a. Concerns relating to a CMS missionary on location should be addressed to the International Director.
- b. Concerns relating to a CMS missionary on Home Assignment should be addressed to the relevant Branch General Secretary (BGS).
- c. Concerns relating to a Regional Mission Director (RMD), the Director of Training & Development (DTD), the CMS-A Finance Director, CMS-A appointed pastoral visitors, St Andrews Hall staff, CMS-A Office staff or volunteers, should be addressed to the International Director.
- d. Concerns relating to a Branch staff or volunteers should be addressed to the relevant Branch General Secretary.
- e. Concerns relating to the Branch General Secretary should be addressed to Chairperson of the relevant Branch.
- f. Concerns relating to the International Director should be addressed to the Chairperson of the CMS-A Board.
- g. Concerns relating to a Location Partner, although not subject to this code, should be addressed to the International Director, having initially consulted with the relevant RMD.
- h. Concerns relating to the Chairperson of the CMS-A Board should be sent to the Deputy Chair of the CMS-A Board.
- i. Concerns relating to a member of the CMS-A Board should be sent to the Chairperson of the CMS-A Board.
- j. Concerns relating to the Chairperson of a Branch should be sent to the Deputy Chair of the Branch.
- k. Concerns relating to a member of a Branch Board/Council should be sent to the Chairperson of the Branch Board/Council.

Making a Complaint

If you feel aggrieved by the behaviour of another person who is subject to a CMS Code of Conduct, you may report your grievance to the relevant authority within CMS as listed above. Such a report will be deemed to be a complaint.

A complaint should constitute either a verbal communication, an email communication, or a written communication in a sealed envelope marked "private and confidential", that provides a clear account of the breach, with as many dates and details as you can recall.

A verbal communication will be documented by the relevant authority and form the basis of the complaint.

Refer to the [CMS Complaint Procedure](#)

If you require independent advice, please contact Safe Ministry Resources.

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