



## Person of Concern information

LAST UPDATED 16 JANUARY 2018

### Person of Concern information

The Church strives to be a safe place for all people. In light of the national Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and community expectations, the Synod Standing Committee has adopted a range of Safe Church policies.

One of these is the *Policy and intervention for Persons of Concern*. This gives guidance for managing the risk posed by having a known sex offender in a congregation. This Policy and Intervention are put in place only in consultation with the Synod General Secretary and the Synod's Culture of Safety unit.

### Who is a Person of Concern (POC)?

A POC is a person who wishes to establish, maintain or foster a relationship with any Uniting Church congregation, community of faith, agency, event or fresh expressions ministry AND:

- Has pleaded guilty to, been convicted of, or has admitted to a sexual criminal offence
- Has been found (through due diligence checks related to recruitment/screening) to have sexually offended or is known by legal fact on the public record to have sexually offended
- Is currently charged with a sexual offence
- Is a registered sex offender pursuant to the Sex Offenders Registration Act 2004 (VIC) or Sex Offenders Registrations (Amended) Regulation Act 2007(TAS)
- Is a person who has received a Negative Notice (for a Category A [Vic] or Schedule 1 [Tas] offence) upon application for a Working with Children Check/Registration.

Where there are reasonable concerns that a person is behaving or has behaved in a sexually abusive or inappropriate manner the policy must also be applied. People receiving Negative Notices under Category B or C (Vic) or Schedule 2 (Tas) must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis with the determination made by the General Secretary as to whether a Safety Agreement is required.

### When is this process used?

When a congregation or other entity learns that a POC is worshipping and involved, or wishes to worship and become involved, in the life of the congregation or other entity, the

POC Policy **must be initiated**. This is intended to protect children and the whole church community, as well as the POC.

The Synod General Secretary **MUST** be informed immediately a POC has been identified in a congregation or other entity.

No POC should be invited into (or allowed to continue in) any congregation or other Church activity until a Safety Agreement or Interim Safety Arrangement has been implemented. It is the responsibility of the presbytery minister and Synod General Secretary to enter into a Safety Agreement.

### **What to do?**

If you believe you have a POC in your congregation, you are **required** to contact the General Secretary immediately. You may do so by contacting the Synod's Culture of Safety Unit on (03) 9251 9288 or [Culture of Safety Contact <cultureofsafetycontact@victas.uca.org.au>](mailto:cultureofsafetycontact@victas.uca.org.au)

Document Review History				
Version Number	Date	Reason	Developed by	Approved under SC17.17.4D
POC1v1	07.2016	Part of Keeping Children Safe process (SC17.17.4D)	Culture of Safety Unit	Associate General Secretary
POCv2	01.2018	Update	Culture of Safety Unit	Associate General Secretary
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