



Uniting Church in Australia  
SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA

## Person of Concern Policy Information

### 1. 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, increased child safety legal obligations upon organisations (including churches and faith-based organisations) 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 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.

### 2. 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 admitted to, been convicted of, or has pleaded guilty to a sexual and/or violent offence or offences against one or more child, young person or adult, including stalking another person;
- has engaged in criminal, and/or harmful sexual, and/or violent, behaviour and/or is reasonably suspected of engaging or seeking to engage in harmful sexual and/or violent behaviour toward a child, young person or adult (including stalking another person)
- has been convicted of, pleaded guilty to, or admitted to an offence against a child or young person
- is subject to a finding of reportable conduct in any jurisdiction

- is subject to allegations of a sexual and/or violent offence, sexual and/or violent misconduct, or reportable conduct in any jurisdiction (including stalking another person)
- faces a criminal charge or charges relating to a sexual offence or offences against a child, young person or adult
- is placed on the Register of Sex Offenders in any jurisdiction
- is subject to suspension, negative notice, or refusal of a positive outcome in a child safety screening clearance (e.g. Working with Children Card (Vic), Working with Vulnerable People Check (Tas) etc)
- has a recording of one or more disclosable court outcomes on the National Coordinated Criminal History Check
- is the subject of reasonably held concerns by the governance body of the congregation, faith community, Presbytery or Synod, that the safety of others may be at risk from the person.

### **3. When is this process used?**

When a congregation or other entity learns that a POC is worshipping and/or involved, or wishes to worship and/or 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 that a POC has been identified in a congregation or other entity. This may be done by contacting the Culture of Safety Unit at the Synod.

No POC should be invited into (or allowed to continue in) any congregation or other Church activity or entity 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.

#### 4. 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) 9116 1434 or Culture of Safety Contact:

cultureofsafetycontact@victas.uca.org.au

#### Document review history

Version number	Date	Reason	Developed by	Approved under: <b>SC17.17.4D</b>
POC1V1	07/2016	Part of Keeping Children Safe process (SC17.17.4D)	Culture of Safety Unit	Associate General Secretary
	01/2018/	Update	Culture of Safety Unit	Associate General Secretary
	05/2024	Update to include Reportable Conduct information and new phone number	Culture of Safety Unit	Associate General Secretary
POC2V2	06/2026	Updated to reflect the approval by the Synod Standing Committee on 18/04/2026 of the updated National Person of Concern Policy Framework	Culture of Safety Unit	Synod Standing Committee