



Grievance and Complaints Policy

Statement

Mosaic Baptist Church believes that all people are created in the image of God and are immeasurably valuable regardless of race, age or gender. We believe that God extends love and grace to all persons, and that we are called to likewise love and respect others. The Church does not tolerate any abuse, exploitation, harm, harassment or misconduct toward any person, as this behaviour is destructive to God's people and violates the love we know in Jesus Christ.

The Church (also called **we** or **us**) means Belconnen Baptist Church, Inc. operating as Mosaic Baptist Church.

We rely on our members, adherents, volunteers, employees, contractors and advisors of the Church to conduct our functions and activities as our representatives and through them we interact with many persons in many ways.

The Church is committed to calling to account anyone who abuses, grooms, exploits, harms, harasses or engages in any misconduct towards another. The Church recognises that this behaviour occurs when power is used to take advantage of the vulnerability of another.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- Every individual, member, adherent, volunteer, employee, contractor and advisor of the Church; and
- Every individual with whom one or more of the abovementioned persons interact, and includes complaints and allegations by and about our representatives.

In the event of an inconsistency between this policy, to the extent they are inconsistent and:

- Any other complaints and allegations policy, this policy prevails;
- The Policy for Allegations Brought Against Accredited and Recognised Ministers for the Association of Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT (the Association), the Associations policy prevails in relation to Accredited and Recognised Ministers;
- Any legislative requirements, the legislative requirements prevail.

Principals

1. We are committed to ensuring that when a complaint or allegation is raised all people involved are afforded compassion and dignity.
2. All individuals have a right to raise complaints and allegations regarding the behaviour, or suspicion of behaviour, of any individual member, adherent, volunteer, employee, contractor and advisor of the Church.

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3. All complaints and allegations raised will be taken seriously and actioned appropriately by us.
4. We will respond diligently to all reports of suspected or actual harm.
5. All complaints and allegations will be responded to by applying the principles of procedural fairness at all times.
6. Where a complaint or allegation which includes an aspect of criminal conduct or suspicion of criminal conduct, the person making the complaint will:
 - a. Be encouraged by the Church to approach the relevant statutory authorities, including police; and
 - b. Be advised that the Church has the practice of informing the relevant authorities, including police.
7. We recognise that complaints and allegations are traumatic for all of the Church community but most of all for the people directly involved and will offer support to all people directly affected by the complaint.
8. We will not tolerate reprisals against any persons making complaints and action will be taken against any person who is found to engage in such behaviour.
9. The Church will not tolerate complaints or allegations raised vexatiously.
10. We expect the highest standard of care and ethical behaviour from those individuals charged with responding to complaints and allegations for us.
11. All parties will be given the opportunity to tell their story in a safe and trusting environment.
12. All personal information (including sensitive information) of all individuals disclosed as part of the complaint or allegation or the ensuring process will be handled by us in accordance with our Privacy Policy.

Definitions

Term	Meaning
allegation	means a claim of a fact by one party against another which, until proven, remains merely an assertion and includes but is not limited to an allegation of physical or emotional harm, spiritual abuse, grooming, sexual abuse and/or behaviour considered to be inappropriate by the person making the allegation.
complaint	means a written expression of dissatisfaction or concern made to the Church in relation to an activity, function, action or inaction of the Church where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected and includes but is not limited to a complaint of physical or emotional harm, spiritual abuse, grooming, sexual abuse and/or behaviour considered to be inappropriate by the person making the complaint.
grooming	refers to the process of an adult using their power to establish a special trusting friendship to force a child to engage in sexual activity. Grooming includes the conditioning of parents, other adults and church leaders to consider the relationship with the child to be “normal” (not sexualised). The grooming of a child is a predatory act essential to the subsequent crime of child sexual abuse and the two elements are inextricably linked.
Relevant statutory authority	includes the police, government agencies and government instrumentalities who must be notified when certain complaints are made known to a third party.

Reference & Related Documents

- Privacy Policy
- Safe Church Policy
- Policy for Allegations Brought Against Accredited and Recognised Ministers for the Association of Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT (the Association)
- Procedures for Handling Allegations against Accredited and Recognised Ministers approved by the Association on 8th August 2017. The Church chooses to use these procedures as a guidance when handling allegations against non-Accredited or Recognised Ministers and other staff and volunteers.

Procedure for lodging a Complaint under the Mosaic Baptist Grievance and Complaints Policy.

All individuals have a right to raise complaints and allegations regarding the behaviour, or suspicion of behaviour, of any individual member, adherent, volunteer, employee, contractor and advisor of the Church.

Complaints or allegations may be made in person or writing (including email) to:

- any member of the **Safe Church Concerns Team** comprising:
 - Pastor James Ramsay at james.ramsay@mosaicbaptist.org.au
 - Mandy Gray at mandy.gray@mosaicbaptist.org.au
 - Bronwyn Parsons at Bronwyn.parsons@mosaicbaptist.org.au
- A member of the pastoral team;
- The Board at board.secretary@mosaicbaptist.org.au

All complaints and allegations will be handled in accordance with the Grievance and Complaints Policy dated 12 April 2019.