PENINSULA CITY CHURCH

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Reviewed by Board on: Dec 12, 2023

Next review: May 2024

Policy Statement

1. All people, regardless of their age, gender, race, religious beliefs, disability, sexual orientation, or family or social background, have equal rights to protection from abuse, neglect or exploitation.
2. Peninsula City Church commits to promoting and protecting the welfare and human rights of people that interact with, or are affected by, our work - particularly those that may be at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation. We have no tolerance for abuse, neglect or exploitation. We will take a survivor-centric approach in all that we do.
3. All staff, volunteers, partners and third parties of Peninsula City Church share responsibility for protecting everyone from abuse, neglect or exploitation. Beyond this, particular people have specific responsibilities, and they must carry out their duties without exception.
4. Peninsula City Church has a process for managing incidents that must be followed when one arises.

Purpose

5. The purpose of this policy is to:
    a. Help protect people that interact with, or are affected by, Peninsula City Church
    b. Define the key terms we use when talking about protecting people or safeguarding.
    c. Set out and develop the way Peninsula City Church manages safeguarding risks.
    d. Set out the specific roles and responsibilities of persons working in and with Peninsula City Church.
    e. Facilitate the safe management of incidents.
    f. To support a positive and effective internal culture towards safeguarding.

Definitions

6. ‘Safeguarding’ means protecting the welfare and human rights of people that interact with, or are affected by, Peninsula City Church, particularly those that might be at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation. This refers to any responsibility or measure undertaken to protect a person from harm.
7. ‘Abuse, neglect or exploitation’ means all forms of physical and mental abuse, exploitation, coercion or ill-treatment. This might include, for example:
    a. Sexual harassment, bullying or abuse;
    b. Sexual criminal offences and serious sexual criminal offences;

c. Threats of, or actual violence, verbal, emotional or social abuse;
d. Cultural or identity abuse, such as racial, sexual or gender-based discrimination or hate crime;
e. Coercion and exploitation;
f. Abuse of power.

8. 'Reasonable grounds to suspect' is a situation where a person has some information that leads them to believe that abuse, neglect or exploitation has taken place, is taking place, or may take place. It comes with a low burden of proof (in fact, no proof is needed at all), but is based on some information. Questions that may help a person to determine whether they have 'reasonable grounds to suspect' might include:
    a. Could you explain to another person why you suspect something? This helps to make sure that your suspicion is based on information, even if you have no proof.
    b. Would an objective other person, with the same information as you, come to the same conclusion? This helps to make sure that your suspicion is as objective as possible.
9. A 'survivor-centric approach' means considering and lawfully prioritising the needs, right and wishes of survivors.

Roles and responsibilities

10. While the responsibility to protect people is shared by all who work at or with Peninsula City Church, some individuals have specific obligations with which they must comply.
11. The members of the board of Peninsula City Church are responsible for:
    a. Protecting all people that interact with, or are affected by, Peninsula City Church;
    b. Ensuring that there are appropriate and effective ways for Peninsula City Church to do this;
    c. Ensuring that Peninsula City Church observes all relevant laws relating to safeguarding;
    d. Ensuring that Peninsula City Church takes a survivor-centric approach.
12. The Senior Pastor of Peninsula City Church must:

a. Ensure Peninsula City Church has effective and appropriate ways to manage safeguarding and legal compliance;
b. Ensure that, within the charity's approach, reasonable steps are taken to protect people;
c. Ensure that reports to external parties are made where required.

13. The Pastoral team (Relevant department) must:

a. Manage reports of abuse, neglect or exploitation;
b. Ensure that all staff, contractors, and volunteers are aware of relevant laws, policies and procedures, and Peninsula City Church Code of Conduct;
c. Ensure that all staff, contractors and volunteers are aware of their obligations to report suspected incidents of abuse, neglect or exploitation;
d. Manage reports of abuse, neglect or exploitation;
e. Provide support for staff, contractors and volunteers in undertaking their responsibilities.

14. All leaders of Peninsula City Church must:

a. Promote a positive culture towards safeguarding;
b. Implement this policy in their area of responsibility;

c. Ensure that the risks of incidents have been considered in their area of responsibility;
d. Ensure that there are appropriate controls in place to prevent, detect and respond to incidents;
e. Facilitate the reporting of any suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation;
f. Take a survivor-centric approach to potential incidents and ensure that any incident is dealt with transparently and accountably.

15. All Staff and Volunteers of Peninsula City Church must:

a. Familiarise themselves with the relevant laws, the Code of Conduct, policies and procedures for safeguarding;
b. Comply with all requirements;
c. Report any incident to the appropriate authority when it is reasonable to suspect that a person's safety or welfare is at risk
d. Report any suspicion that a person's safety or welfare may be at risk to the appropriate authority; and
e. Provide an environment that is supportive of everyone's emotional and physical safety.

16. All partners and contractors of Peninsula City Church must:

a. Implement the provisions of this policy and Peninsula City Church procedures in their dealings with Peninsula City Church;
b. Report any suspicion that an incident may have taken place, is taking place, or could take place.

Managing safeguarding risk

17. The way Peninsula City Church manages the risks of safeguarding will be:

c. Holistic. Peninsula City Church and its stakeholders will work to prevent, detect and take action on incidents.
d. Risk-based and proportionate. Peninsula City Church will regularly assess the risks to people in its operations and develop proportionate controls to mitigate those risks.
e. Survivor-centric. Peninsula City Church will put survivors at the heart of its approach to safeguarding.
f. Lawful. Peninsula City Church will ensure that it understands and complies with the law in everything it does, in all jurisdictions in which it works.

18. Peninsula City Church will manage the risk of safeguarding by:

g. Having up-to-date and documented risk assessments;
h. Maintaining records of Peninsula City Church's legal obligations for safeguarding and workplace health and safety in all the jurisdictions in which it operates;
i. Having an action plan that sets out how it will manage safeguarding;
j. Adhering to this Safeguarding Policy and its Code of Conduct;
k. Doing due diligence checks of staff, volunteers and third parties;
l. Implementing policies, procedures and systems that introduce controls to reduce the likelihood and consequence of incidents;

m. Conducting awareness-raising for stakeholders on risks, expectations, and individual responsibilities;
n. Maintaining two reporting processes: the confidential reporting process, and the overt reporting process;
o. Having an incident response plan;
p. Monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness and proportionality of its safeguarding approach.

Managing incidents

19. Harassment, abuse, neglect and exploitation are all serious misconduct and Peninsula City Church reserves the right to:

q. Take disciplinary action against those it believes are responsible, which may include dismissal;
r. Take civil legal action;
s. Report the matter to law enforcement.

Reporting suspected incidents

20. All staff, volunteers and third parties must, as soon as practicable, report any suspicion that an incident has taken place, may be taking place, or could take place.

21. They may do this through direct reporting to:

t. Any member of the board;
u. The Senior Pastor;
v. The Pastoral team
w. Their department leader.

22. If a person wants to report confidentially, including with anonymity, they may use the confidential reporting system, which is: **[*insert details*]**

23. If a person believes that another person is at risk of immediate harm or the victim of a criminal offence, they must dial 000.

Responding to suspected incidents

24. All suspected, perceived, potential or actual incidents will be managed through the incident response plan.

External reporting

25. Peninsula City Church will:

x. Report any suspicion of a criminal offence to the police or the relevant criminal judicial body;
y. Meet all donor requirements regarding the reporting of incidents;
z. Report any qualifying matter to the ACNC.

Privacy and data protection

13. All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved unless there is a risk to someone's safety. Peninsula City Church will protect personal information.
14. Peninsula City Church's Privacy Policy applies.