



W A G G A W A G G A  
EVANGELICAL CHURCH

# WWEC Code of Conduct for Paid Pastoral Staff

## INTRODUCTION

WWEC value the social, relational and interpersonal safety and well being of our people. We value the role of leaders and mentors in the lives of our members by promoting transparent, accountable relationships that promote trust and confidence in our church and our programs. The Code of Conduct is underpinned by a belief that everyone should be treated with respect and dignity. WWEC commits to a standard of ethical behaviour that brings honour and glory to God.

The personal behaviour and relationships of pastoral staff have a significant impact on the Church and the community because they are a model to others. Pastors, in their role, are held to a higher level of accountability;

*'Here is a trustworthy saying: Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task. Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?). He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and the devil's trap.'*

*1 Timothy 3: 1-7.*

Note - this Code of Conduct is not exhaustive, and does not foresee every set of circumstances that may arise across the variety of Church events and activities. It should be viewed, as an educative guide to the principles that help inform what is appropriate conduct with WWEC members. The Code of Conduct should be used in conjunction with WWEC Policies and Procedures.

The following section applies to paid pastoral staff ONLY. Pastoral Staff are required to read and sign their agreement to comply with this code, at the time of employment with WWEC.

In Paid Pastoral positions we

### **DO....**

- Observe the law, other than any law that is contrary to the Bible, or law that unjustly prohibits the practice of religion or prohibits civil disobedience.
- Love and care for our family and pay particular attention to the effect of our ministry on your family relationships. Ensure that our behaviour in family relationships is consistent with this Code.
- Monitor our consumption of alcohol and other mind altering or addictive substances or products to ensure our wellbeing and that of others. Seek professional help if the use of these substances or products adversely affects our ministry, personal wellbeing or relationships.

- Pay debts and family support obligations.
- Avoid situations of conflict between our personal financial interest and our pastoral ministry responsibilities.
- Ensure clear transaction and account boundaries between our personal and church finances.
- Fully disclose and publicly account for all church monies handled.
- Act in the best interests of those to whom you are ministering. Recognise potential conflict of interest and take steps to resolve.
- When on leave or unable to fulfil responsibilities through illness or any other reason, make alternative arrangements for pastoral ministry.
- Ensure the WWEC member volunteers, for whom you are responsible, are provided with a safe working environment, opportunities to maintain and enhance their ministry skills and personal encouragement, support and regular feedback.
- Ensure WWEC members have access to the WWEC Policies, Procedures and WWEC Code of Conduct.
- Comply with all relevant WWEC policy, procedures and guidelines.
- Ensure that proper systems for the safety and welfare of children participating in pastoral ministry are implemented and maintained. This includes ensuring all those WWEC members who have responsibility and who work with children comply with all civil and church screening and selection requirements, and receive regular training in child protection.
- Value confidentiality. Pastoral staff use discernment in managing confidential information.

#### **DO NOT.....**

- Use prohibited substances (any substance banned by law for use by adults).
- Partake in gambling.
- Engage in any form of abuse (bullying, emotional abuse, harassment, physical abuse, sexual abuse or spiritual abuse). These forms of abuse are defined in Appendix A.
- Knowingly use offensive language.
- View, possess, produce or distribute restricted material (publications, films or computer games that have been classified as Category 1 or 2 restricted, X or RC classification by the Office of Film and Literature Classification).
- Partake in sexual activity outside of marriage. This includes; not sexually abusing a child or adult, engaging in prostitution, visiting brothels or other places associated with the sex industry (without a legitimate purpose), viewing or possessing any form of child pornography or restricted material.
- Partake in tax evasion.
- Seek personal advantage or financial gain for yourself or your family from your position or from a pastoral relationship (beyond your recognised allowances and deductions).
- Take property belonging to others, including intellectual property.
- Knowingly make statements that are false, misleading or deceptive.
- Undertake any pastoral ministry when you are impaired by alcohol or other mind-altering or addictive substance.
- Discriminate between people.
- Disclose confidential information received in pastoral ministry to your spouse, family, friends, colleagues or any other person without the consent of the person providing the information, except in line with WWEC procedures, where the information is publicly known or allowed by law or is in the public interest (including but not limited to the wider WWEC family).

## Appendix A: Definitions of Abusive Behaviour

Type	Definition
<b>Physical Assault</b>	<p>An assault can occur when a person intentionally or recklessly (ie. knows the assault is possible but ignores the risk):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- applies physical force against a child without lawful justification or excuse - such as hitting, striking, kicking, punching or dragging a child (actual physical force); or</li> <li>- causes a child to apprehend the immediate and unlawful use of physical force against them– such as threatening to physically harm a child through words and/or gestures and regardless of whether the person actually intends to apply any force (apprehension of physical force).</li> </ul> <p>A physical assault is not serious where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- it only involves minor force; and</li> <li>- it did not, and was not ever likely to, result in serious injury.</li> </ul> <p>A physical assault is serious where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- it results in the child being injured, beyond a type of injury like a minor scratch, bruise or graze; or</li> <li>- it had the potential to result in a serious injury; or</li> <li>- the injury suffered may be minor, but the assault is associated with aggravating circumstances (in this regard, aggravating circumstances might include associated inhumane or demeaning behaviour by the employee, for example kicking a child, pulling a child by grabbing the child around the neck).</li> </ul>
<b>Emotional &amp; Psychological Harm</b>	<p>Behaviour that causes significant psychological or emotional harm is conduct that is intentional or reckless (without reasonable excuse), obviously or very clearly unreasonable and which results in significant emotional harm or trauma to a child.</p> <p>For a reportable allegation involving psychological harm, the following elements must be present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- an obviously or very clearly unreasonable or serious act or series of acts that the employee knew or ought to have known was unacceptable, and</li> <li>- evidence of psychological harm to the child that is more than transient, including displaying patterns of ‘out of character behaviour’, regression in behaviour, distress, anxiety, physical symptoms or self-harm, and</li> <li>- an alleged causal link between the employee’s conduct and the significant emotional or psychological harm to the child.</li> </ul>
<b>Sexual Offence</b>	<p>A sexual offence is an offence of a sexual nature under a law of NSW, another state/territory, or the Commonwealth committed against, with or in the presence of a child, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sexual touching of a child</li> <li>- a child grooming offence;</li> <li>- production, dissemination or possession of child abuse material.</li> </ul> <p>An alleged sexual offence does not have to be the subject of criminal investigation or</p>

Type	Definition
	charges for it to be categorised as a reportable allegation of a sexual offence.
<b>Sexual Misconduct</b>	<p>Any conduct with, towards or in the presence of a child that is sexual in nature (but is not a sexual offence) and provides the following (non-exhaustive) examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Descriptions of sexual acts without a legitimate reason to provide the descriptions</li> <li>- Sexual comments, conversation or communications;</li> <li>- Comments to a child that express a desire to act in a sexual manner towards the child, or another child</li> </ul> <p>Note - crossing professional boundaries comes within the scope of the scheme to the extent that the alleged conduct meets the definition of sexual misconduct. That is, conduct with, towards or in the presence of a child that is sexual in nature (but is not a sexual offence)</p>
<b>Spiritual Abuse</b>	Controlling or coercive behaviour, aiming to manipulate or pressure individuals, through the misuse of scripture.
<b>Ill-treatment</b>	<p>Conduct towards a child that is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- unreasonable; and</li> <li>- seriously inappropriate, improper, inhumane or cruel.</li> </ul> <p>Ill-treatment can include a range of conduct such as making excessive or degrading demands of a child; a pattern of hostile or degrading comments or behaviour towards a child; and using inappropriate forms of behaviour management towards a child.</p>
<b>Neglect</b>	<p>A significant failure – by a person with parental responsibility for the child, or an authorised carer or an employee if the child is in the employee’s care – to provide adequate and proper food, supervision, nursing, clothing, medical aid or lodging for the child that causes or is likely to cause harm to the child.</p> <p>Neglect can be an ongoing situation of repeated failure by a caregiver to meet a child’s physical or psychological needs, or a single significant incident where a caregiver fails to fulfil a duty or obligation, resulting in actual harm to a child or where the failure is likely to cause harm. Examples of neglect include failing to protect a child from abuse and exposing a child to a harmful environment.</p>
<b>Harassment</b>	<p>Unwelcome conduct, whether intended or not, in relation to another person where the person feels with good reason in all circumstances offended, belittled or threatened. Such behaviour may consist of a single incident or several incidents over a period of time. It includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- making an unwelcome physical contact with a person</li> <li>- making gestures or using language that could reasonably give offence including continual and unwarranted shouting</li> <li>- making unjustified or unnecessary comments about a person’s capabilities or attributes</li> <li>- putting an open display pictures, posters, graffiti or written materials that could reasonably give offence</li> <li>- making unwelcome communication with a person in any form (eg phone calls, emails, text messages, social networking), and</li> <li>- stalking a person</li> </ul>

Type	Definition
<b>Bullying</b>	The repeated seeking out or targeting of a person to cause them distress and humiliation or to exploit them, this may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- exclusion from a peer group</li><li>- intimidation</li><li>- extortion</li></ul>