



Duty of Care (KCO 10)

What is Duty of Care?

Duty of Care is a legal and moral responsibility to ensure the safety of everyone whilst in the care of the Uniting Church. It involves anticipating and avoiding foreseeable harm and minimising harm when it occurs.

Children and young people must be cared for and able to access ministry in an environment that is free from danger and harm. The physical, spiritual and emotional environment must be such that at all times children and young people are affirmed and nurtured in a place where they are safe from physical emotional and spiritual harm.

We do this by following the policy and procedures outlined in Safe Ministry with Children policy and procedures documents, endorsed by The Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod in December 2015.

<https://ucaqld.com.au/synod-services/safe-ministry-with-children/> The Presbytery of South Moreton is committed to providing safe places where people are cared for, nurtured and sustained and commits itself to compliance with requirements of the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 and the Working With Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2011. In conducting KCO, the Presbytery has adopted Safe Ministry with Children Policy, procedures and resources to assist in the achievement of Duty of Care practices.

Duty of Care applies to the organisers of KCO, as well as congregation leaders and helpers and encompasses the safety of the physical environment, the planning of activities, and screening and training of leaders and helpers. It requires that reasonably foreseeable risks are managed, and steps are taken to ensure safety. Part of this commitment is to protect children from any neglect or abuse (physical, sexual, spiritual or emotional). The KCO Organising Team affirms congregations and schools in their commitment to exclusively provide leaders who are able to exercise care and effectively minister to young people. Group Coordinators must ensure leaders are fully informed of their Duty of Care responsibilities and Safe Ministry with Children policy.

All leaders should complete Safe Ministry with Children training, and have a Working with Children Blue Card. Parents who attend KCO with their Children do not have to have a Working with Children Blue Card. In the Safe Ministry with Children training there is an understanding that each person is part of a shared guardianship of children in our care. That means that everyone is responsible for the care of children. Because of the nature of KCO with group leaders taking responsibility for their group, be aware that the KCO Organising Team has limited control over what happens before and after the event. As such, each group is advised to undertake their own risk assessments, ensuring that all of the risks the group and property are exposed to during this time have been thoroughly analysed and addressed prior to the event. This includes travel to and from the venue.

Duty of Care includes:

BEFORE THE EVENT Congregation Coordinators, leaders and the KCO organizing team

- Providing clear behaviour management guidelines that are understood and accepted by the entire group.
- Ensure all leaders are screened according to the requirements of Queensland legislation and that Blue Card details are recorded on an appropriate register at your church.
- Ensure all leaders are aware of the Safe Ministry with Children policy and receive training for the tasks they will be undertaking.
- Ensuring all young people, as well as their parents/guardians, know the name of their group and how to contact their Group Coordinator over the course of the event.
- Ensure the group site/facilities are set up in a safe and appropriate way.
- Ensure all leaders and helpers are aware of the requirements of activities they will be

participating in, their role in those activities and what to do in the event of an emergency.

DURING THE EVENT

- Ensuring young people are supervised appropriately throughout the event.
 - ✓ leadership ratios,
 - ✓ trained and equipped leaders,
 - ✓ adult leaders,
 - ✓ gender balance,

- Ensuring that the behaviour and actions of leaders are always appropriate.
- Abiding by the policy that the event is smoke, drug and alcohol free.
- Ensure that activities are conducted according to the approved plans.
- Ensure that incidents and accidents are responded to and reported appropriately and in line with the expectations of Safe Ministry with Children policy and process

The KCO Team has greater control over the environment during the course of the event, and team members work hard to provide as safe a place as possible with the resources available. However, the responsibility for the safety of children within each group ultimately rests with the Group Coordinator and leaders.

Risk Management

All Group Coordinators must consider risk management as they plan for the event, to ensure the safety of people and property within each group.

A planning template (Planning safe programs) is available on the Synod website <http://ucaqld.com.au/safe-ministry-with-children/safe-programs/>. Assistance is available from the Risk and Insurance team for high risk events you may need help with (insurance@ucaqld.com.au).

Smoking, drugs and alcohol

KCO is a smoke, drug and alcohol free event. Individuals in leadership roles are asked to model appropriate behaviour while participating in the event.

Inappropriate drug-use is unacceptable at this event. Those caught in possession of, or under the influence of, illegal substances will be asked to leave immediately. The police may be contacted if deemed appropriate.

Alcohol is not permitted at this event. It is not appropriate to consume alcohol, or be under the influence of alcohol, at any time while participating in KCO.

Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

All adults have a legal and moral responsibility to report concerns and/or reasonable suspicions of child abuse and neglect. It should be noted that concerns of abuse of a spiritual nature are taken very seriously; this type of abuse is recognised as falling into the category of emotional abuse.

You may become aware of neglect, physical, emotional or sexual abuse, or grooming behaviour during the course of the camp. This awareness may be because you observe certain signs or behaviours, your suspicions are raised, or because you receive a disclosure. You are required to respond immediately to this awareness – the process to be followed is spelled out in ‘Complaints/allegations – CHILD’ (downloaded from the Synod website: <https://ucaqld.com.au/contact-us/report-abuse/>

1. In all instances the immediate safety of the child should be your first concern.
2. Follow the process in ‘Complaints/allegations – CHILD’
3. Document your concerns immediately (not while listening to a disclosure – see below)
4. Report immediately to the Minister (or designated person at camp) – you may be required to notify police – ‘Complaints/allegations – CHILD’ will help you through the process
5. If the suspicion/allegation is about the Minister (designated person), report to Presbytery Chair (or alternative designated person at camp)
6. Synod office is to be notified immediately
7. Keep a copy of the report, for your records – keep it safe and confidential, and respect the privacy and dignity of all parties.

Sometimes a child will make a ‘disclosure’ of abuse. This means that they make a reasonably clear statement that they have been abused or harmed. If this happens, it is

not your place to investigate or question – just listen. Some helpful things to say are:

- I'm pleased you told me
- It's not your fault
- I believe you
- I'm going to have to tell somebody else so they can help to stop the abuse
- Never promise that you will keep it secret or confidential
- Never promise to make it stop
- Follow the process outlined above

Other concerns and complaints of inappropriate behaviours

If there are any other concerns or complaints of inappropriate sexual misconduct between adults present at this Uniting Church event, please contact KCO Presbytery Safe Ministry with Children Coordinator (see contact details at the end of this document). They can assist with the appropriate complaints process.

Uniting Church Queensland Synod requires all adults who have contact with children to hold a current Working with Children Blue Card.

It is the responsibility of each group coordinator to confirm that all proposed leaders and helpers aged 18 and over are adequately screened. This includes evidence (Register) that leaders and helpers hold a current and valid Blue Card and have undertaken Safe Ministry with Children training. To help to comply with these requirements please contact your churches Safe Ministry with Children coordinator.

KCO is not an open community event. Once the official program commences, only authorised individuals may enter the KCO site. Individuals found not wearing a site pass during the KCO program will be asked to leave unless they can show evidence that they are authorised to attend KCO.

Visitors must be clearly identified and will only be allowed on-site for a limited time (before 5.30 Saturday and after 12noon Sunday for the purposes of set up and pull down). Visitors helping at the event must hold a current and valid Blue Card and be included on the Register.

Children need to be signed out at Admin by an appropriate person (parent/guardian) if they need to leave during the course of the program.