

Compliance and Legal Issues

Introduction

As a church committed to "courageous influence in the Kingdom of God," we approach compliance and legal responsibilities as an expression of our value of Personal Impact - using all God has given us with excellence and integrity (1 Peter 4:11). This framework guides how we honor both our spiritual calling and our community obligations, enabling us to "create discipleship communities across Australia and Nepal" with wisdom and authenticity.

Governance and Spirit-Led Stewardship

Our approach to governance reflects our Ministry Philosophy that "the Spirit and structure are important." We believe that proper stewardship of legal and ethical responsibilities creates a foundation for Spirit-led ministry, allowing us to:

- Lead with authenticity, integrity, and humility
- Build strong connections based on shared values and responsibilities
- Honor all people as being in the image of their Creator
- Prioritise God's presence over performance

Compliance as Ministry Excellence

As we pursue our vision of "creating discipleship communities across Australia and Nepal," excellence in compliance demonstrates our commitment to lead with "authenticity, integrity and humility." This framework encompasses three key areas:

1. Governance Standards

- ACNC Compliance requirements ensuring transparent and accountable operations
- Australian Christian Churches standards maintaining our denominational integrity
- Local and state regulatory requirements supporting our community presence

2. People Protection

- Safer Churches framework reflecting our value that "People Matter"
- Working With Children compliance ensuring safe ministry environments
- Privacy and data protection honoring individual dignity
- Risk management practices demonstrating care for our church family

3. Mission Integrity

- External Conduct Standards for The Horizon Project
- International partnership protocols
- Financial accountability measures
- Cross-cultural engagement guidelines

These standards enable us to "bring heaven to earth everywhere we see brokenness today" while maintaining the highest levels of integrity in our operations. They provide the foundation for sustainable ministry growth and enable our locations to have maximum Kingdom impact in their communities.

Practical Implementation

"We outwork this in humility and community" (Philippians 2:3) through:

1. Connected and Accountable Leadership

- Clear reporting structures
- Regular compliance reviews
- Documented procedures
- Integration with Safer Churches policies

2. Courageous Conversations

- Open discussion of compliance requirements
- Clear communication channels
- Regular training and updates

- Proactive issue resolution

3. Spirit-Led Administration

- Balancing compliance with ministry needs
- Empowering local leadership
- Supporting growth and development
- Maintaining regulatory requirements

Key Focus Areas

ACNC Compliance

- Submit an Annual Information Statement (AIS) within six months of the reporting period.
- Maintain accurate records of activities and finances for at least seven years.
- Notify the ACNC of changes to Responsible People, governing documents, or details within 28 days.
- Adhere to ACNC Governance Standards for accountability, transparency, and lawful operations.
- Comply with External Conduct Standards for international activities and resource use.
- Fulfill financial reporting requirements based on charity size (Large: Audited financial reports)
- Ensure ethical fundraising and compliance with state and ACNC guidelines.
- Maintain transparency by keeping the ACNC Charity Register up to date and providing public information.
- Adhere to other legal obligations, including taxation, employment, and WHS laws.

The Horizon Project Standards

- External Conduct Standards compliance for international missions
- Risk management framework for cross-cultural engagement
- Partnership protocols reflecting our commitment to "bring heaven to earth"
- Integration with our value of Personal Impact in global ministry

Safer Churches Integration

As detailed in our Safer Churches section (Section 10), this encompasses:

- Comprehensive child protection framework
- Safe ministry practices for all programs and activities
- Regular training and screening protocols
- Clear reporting procedures for concerns

Financial Integrity

Drawing from Section 02, this includes:

- Transparent financial management systems
- Clear processes for handling tithes and offerings
- Proper stewardship of resources
- Regular auditing and accountability

Property and Asset Management

As outlined in Section 08:

- Building safety and maintenance
- Asset protection and risk management
- Maintaining an up-to-date asset register [here](#)
- Insurance coverage and compliance
- Facility usage guidelines

Employment and Volunteer Management

Based on Section 02:

- Fair employment practices
- Clear role descriptions and expectations
- Professional development opportunities
- Support for ministry growth

WHS Compliance

Detailed in Section 09:

- Comprehensive safety protocols
- Regular training and updates
- Incident reporting procedures
- Emergency response planning

Cultural Safety and Inclusion

Drawing from Section 07:

- Respectful engagement with diverse communities
- Cultural competency training
- Inclusive practices and policies
- Community engagement guidelines

Technology and Data Protection

- Secure information management
- Privacy protection
- Digital safety protocols
- Responsible communication practices

Ministry Operations

- Program safety and risk management
- Event planning and execution
- Community service standards
- Ministry effectiveness evaluation

Each of these areas reflects our commitment to being "locationally motivated, centrally supported, and unified in our vision, values, and mission." Through proper compliance, we create safe spaces where "everyday people are called to have an eternal impact for an extraordinary God."

For detailed procedures and requirements in each area, refer to the relevant sections of this handbook.

Summary

Our commitment to compliance and legal requirements flows from our value of Humble Growth and our belief that "we approach situations humbly seeking to submit to, and learn from one another as we grow." Through these frameworks, we create safe, accountable spaces where "everyday people are called to have an eternal impact for an extraordinary God."

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