

## Procedure for Conflict Resolution PEP-12

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Adopted by NewDay Church Leadership Board on 13/11/2022.

The ***Procedure for Conflict Resolution*** sets out a process for resolving conflict between two or more staff, volunteers, members or attendees of the Church in a pastoral and restorative manner.

This Procedure is **not** designed to:

- resolve issues relating to domestic violence, family law matters before the Family Law Court (or similar body);
- resolve complaints or concerns relating to abuse (including Child Sexual Abuse or Sexual Misconduct involving a Child) or other serious breaches of the *Code of Conduct* that are to be resolved in accordance with the *Complaint Handling Procedure*; or
- replace any process set out in the Charters and Procedures of NewDay Church.

### SCOPE

The Procedure applies to all staff, volunteers, members and attendees of the Church.

The Procedure should be read in conjunction with the Safe Church Policy and:

- *Volunteers, Leaders and Staff Covenant*
- *Procedure for Handling Complaints against Staff or Volunteers*
- *Procedure for Responding to Child Protection Concerns*

### When does this procedure apply?

- a) a disagreement between two or more staff, volunteers, members or attendees of the Church;
- b) a perceived offence caused by a staff member, volunteer, member or attendee to another;
- c) a perception by one person that they have been bullied by a staff member, volunteer, member or attendee;
- d) dissatisfaction with the manner in which a staff member or volunteer has fulfilled their ministry role including minor breaches to the *Volunteers, Leaders and Staff Covenant*

### Raising an issue

Anyone may raise an issue with a person directly (see Pathway 1) or with Church Leadership and the Safe Church Team in order to seek assistance in resolving the issue (see Pathway 2).

If the concern relates to a member of the Church Leadership or the Safe Church Team, the person should raise their concern with another member of the Church Leadership or Safe Church Team.

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### Key Principles

In raising an issue, all parties are to be guided by the following key principles:

- Seeking to glorify God in our responses to each other.
- Striving to seek unity despite disagreement.
- Seeking to be Christ-like in our reactions to each other.
- Extending grace to each other.
- Focusing on forgiveness and restoration of relationships where appropriate.

### Pathway 1 – Personal Approach

This approach may be useful for addressing personal disagreements and perceived offences. This pathway will not be appropriate where there are concerns about significant power imbalances.

- a) Where an issue arises and the parties can address their concerns without involving others, they can express their concerns with a view to resolving their differences in accordance with Matthew 18:15-17.
- b) The person initiating this pathway should consider seeking counsel from a wise and unbiased senior leader (from within the church community or externally) or receiving conflict coaching before approaching the other person.

### Pathway 2 – Locally-assisted Approach

Pathway 2 may be implemented if Pathway 1 has been unsuccessful or not utilised in restoring the relationship.

If an issue is brought to the Church Leadership:

- Church Leadership are to provide support to all parties.
- Where the Church Leadership considers the issue to be sufficiently serious, they are to appoint a suitably skilled person to assist in resolving the conflict (from within the church or outside)
- Conflicts of interest should be avoided where possible.

Where all parties involved in the matter are willing to work towards restoring relationships, the person selected to assist in resolving the conflict will:

- value confidentiality at all times;
- meet with each person separately to ensure they are given a chance to tell their story in private, working through their underlying concerns in moving towards resolution;
- clearly communicate the resolution process to each party;

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- hold a meeting to identify common ground, work through the issues and determine an agreed course of action;
- follow up to ensure solutions are being implemented; and
- monitor the situation and follow up as required.

At any stage throughout the process, the person selected to assist may contact Churches of Christ NSW/ACT for assistance.

### **Escalation to *Procedure for Handling Complaints against Staff or Volunteers***

If the conflict is unable to be resolved, it may be necessary to escalate the matter in accordance with the *Procedure for Handling Complaints Against Staff and Volunteers*.

There may be several reasons this is required, including:

- the inquiry into the issue identifies that the complaint would more appropriately be characterised as a serious breach of the *Volunteers, Leaders and Staff Covenant* (such as child protection concerns); or
- the subject of the concern (staff member or volunteer) is not willing to participate in Pathway 1 or 2.