

Description

Open communication and constructive feedback are regarded as essential elements of a satisfying and productive work and team environment.

Sydney Presbytery encourages those who work and participate in the ministry of the Presbytery to resolve any issues or concerns that they may have at the earliest opportunity with each other, or failing that, seek further counsel.

The preferred process aims to resolve conflict and issues in trusted relationships and open conversations, without necessarily referring to an external organisation for assistance in the first instance.

Applicability

This policy should be referred to and help guide Staff and Committee members of the Presbytery.

This policy does not circumvent any legislation, Safe Church Practices, Child Safety and other reporting requirements.

Policy

The Presbytery will establish mechanisms to promote fast and efficient resolution of work and ministry issues. In order to establish these mechanisms, it is required that:

1. Both parties will seek respectful relationships to resolve any conflict or grievance open to reasonable expectations of resolution.
2. The matter would be discussed with either the Executive Minister or an Executive member of the Standing Committee. If a person feels uncomfortable in doing this they should document their reasons and suggest an alternative.
3. Should a formal avenue for handling the matter be pursued, documentation will be required.
4. No person should feel intimidated or unfairly treated in any respect if they utilise this policy or its mechanisms to resolve an issue.

Non adherence to Policy

Should an applicable person not follow this policy, the Presbytery will;

1. Seek to refer that person to this policy and to resolve the conflict or grievance according with the guidelines.
2. Seek to council that person according to the terms of placement, position description or terms of reference of the Council that person may serve.
3. Refer the matter for further review by Synod / HR or the discipline process of the Synod.
4. Or document why alternate practice(s) to those outlined within this policy was not followed, to ensure procedural fairness.

If a person perceives the Presbytery is in non-adherence to this policy they should;

1. Follow the mechanisms within this policy.
2. Escalate to the Standing Committee Executive, Chair or Synod / HR.

If a matter is in relation to abuse or the potential risk of abuse they should:

1. Follow the overarching processes of reporting to the relevant external law enforcement bodies and the fulfil the reporting guidelines of the Synod and Assembly. Records must be kept in accordance with legislation.
2. That person should report then to the Secretary of the Presbytery and seek counsel from their supervisor/mentor where applicable.

For further information please refer to:

- The Fair Work Act 2009¹;
- Fair Work – Best Practice Guide Effective Dispute Resolution;²
- Regulations of the Uniting Church (issued by the Assembly);
- The Code of Ethics for Ministers; the Code of Ethics for Lay Ministers/Persons; and
- The Human Resources representatives of the Synod.

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2021C00421/Download>

² <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/tools-and-resources/best-practice-guides/effective-dispute-resolution>

Document Control

Update Prepared by	Ian Goff
Date issued	24 May 2022
Endorsed by	Kent Crawford
Tabled	Standing Committee 28 April 2022
Version N#	.02
Edits from prior version	Minor Confirmed additional reference materials are current and added links to source
Policy N#	HR11