

Encounter Baptist Church Ministry Leaders' Code of Conduct:

The expectations outlined within this document applies to ministry leaders and volunteers across all areas of the church's ministry from missional communities, youth and children's ministries, worship and creative ministries. It applies to anyone within a ministry context who holds a position of power/authority or a perceived position of power and authority.

As leaders at Encounter Baptist Church, we acknowledge that everyone who attends a ministry of our church needs to be confident that they will be cared for, nurtured and encouraged as they grow and at the same time, protected from spiritual, physical and emotional harm. **Therefore, we commit to the following ministry standards:**

A. We minister out of a relationship with God.

Maintain a healthy relationship with God by:

- joining regularly in the life and ministry of the Church.
- studying the Scriptures in private and in groups.
- praying regularly in private and in fellowship with and for the people and ministry of the Church.
- giving of our time and finances to the work of the Church, as an expression of your gratitude to God.

B. We serve others in the context of healthy relationships

We will engage in healthy friendships with those to whom we minister by:

- loving and caring for our families; paying attention to the effect of ministry on them.
- treating others with respect; teach and exercise authority respectfully.
- upholding confidential information; do not disclose to anyone (including spouse), any confidential information without the consent of the person providing the information. (There is an exception where there is a legal obligation or a duty of care issue.)
- being a team player; cooperating with other ministry leaders, there will be areas that overlap and someone else may have the advice that you need.
- using words that build up; do not ridicule or embarrass people.
- avoiding professionally counselling people with whom we have personal relationships.
- making alternative arrangements for pastoral ministry for any person if you begin to develop a romantic relationship with them.

C. As Christian Leaders we will:

- be accountable to our team, watch out for each other and protect each other's integrity, e.g. when ministering to children have a buddy system in place (never alone with one child).
- obey the law, other than any law that is contrary to the Scriptures.
- not take property belonging to others, including intellectual property (copyright) and knowingly making false, misleading or deceptive statements.
- not engage in bullying, emotional abuse, harassment, physical abuse, sexual abuse or spiritual abuse of any person, including your family.
- not act violently or intentionally provoke violence when engaged in civil disobedience.
- be responsible in our use of addictive substances and services (e.g. prescriptions/ alcohol).
- not use any prohibited substance.
- act with sexual purity. Sexuality is a gift from God. We will express our sexuality in healthy and God directed ways.
- act with financial integrity.
- have in place systems for accountability and transparency in financial matters.
- not engage in tax evasion
- not seek personal advantage or financial gain from your position, other than in wages, recognised allowances and deductions.
- disclose to the church leadership if we are or have been investigated for any criminal offences.

What happens when this Code of Conduct is breached?

A. Occasional/minor violations

Everyone sins and is forgiven (1 John 1:8-9). It stands to reason then, that everyone will breach the covenant. When this happens in an area that is not a breach of civil or criminal law, simply cease the conduct. If this is difficult, the person should see their team leader about receiving help (e.g. counselling). In some cases it may be necessary to step a person aside from their duties whilst this takes place. Deal with such matters confidentially.

B. Unknown violations

Not all leaders will understand 'unacceptable' behaviours. Even after explaining the covenant some may be unaware they are exhibiting unacceptable behaviours. Leaders need to be open to correction and humble enough to modify behaviours so as not to discredit the gospel. As above, stepping a person aside their duties may be necessary.

C. Constant violations

There are breaches that are not a breach of civil or criminal law. Where a leader has been made aware of their behaviour and yet refuses to change: a) the Ministry Coordinator meets the person and for behaviour review meetings. Communicate required behaviour changes. (Up to 3 meetings) b) if the behaviour continues, a small group of church leaders are to arrange a meeting to address the behaviour. Stepping aside is appropriate at this point. c) if the behaviour/s continues beyond this meeting, then respectfully, and upholding confidentially, the person will be stood down for a set period. They will be offered help in changing their behaviour via counselling if they are willing. NB: Written notes of all meetings to be carefully taken and a copy given to all parties. After having used the above process, you may still need support, please call the Baptist Union. for assistance.

D. Breaches of the law or allegations of abuse.

Allegations of abuse or serious misconduct are to be referred to the Safe Church Concerns Person (Elsie Loh) who will refer the matter to the appropriate authorities including the Professional Standards Worker at the BUV.

Declaration:

Ministry Team: _____

I, _____, have read and understood this code of conduct and will agree to abide by it as a ministry leader/helper/volunteer.

Signed: _____

Witness: _____

Date: _____