LIGHTHOUSE CHURCH: SAFE CHURCHES OVERVIEW 2023

Lighthouse Church (Bridgeman Downs LHBD, Inner city LHIC, Springfield LHSF) as a multisite church has always been a place where people find Christ, discover community and make meaningful connections.

We have always strived to make our churches a safe place for everyone in all areas of people's lives, physically, emotionally, relationally and spiritually.

In accordance with the '**C3 Australia Safe Church Policy and Guidelines**', Lighthouse Church acknowledges that all people have a right to feel and be safe, and to experience life giving, harm free interactions when engaging in Lighthouse activities, events and programs. This initiative will also fulfill the pending legal requirement (which is now law in NSW and VIC) that all workers (unpaid individuals) and volunteers in any religious institution or not-for-profit in QLD receive Safety Training in order for them to continue in a volunteer capacity.

When we say 'safety training' we are not referring to just WHS incidents like physical injuries and trip hazards. We are referring to possible harm in such areas as:

- Emotional and Psychological harm
- Bullying
- Potential harm for children and young people
- Sexual harassment or misconduct

Therefore as part of these guidelines and policies we want to support our church in achieving the following vision:

Lighthouse Safe Churches Vision

"To create a safe and friendly environment where all families, individuals, youth and children are protected and that they can experience life giving, harm free interactions when engaging in Lighthouse Church activities, events and programs."

In order to fulfill this vision and to align with C3 Safe Churches Australia, **all** **staff, team leaders and volunteers** who are serving in some capacity on a team or on a roster are required to undertake Safe Churches Training. All C3 churches across Australia have either undertaken or are in the process of undertaking this training for all of their staff and volunteers.

Training Overview

Below is an outline of how we expect the training will be rolled out.

Training Deliver: For Directors or key leaders - approved online training

Training Delivery: For all staff, team leaders and volunteers - Face to Face/in person

Over the next 6-12 months we will be working on rolling out this face to face training in the following ways:

- It will be face to face training except in special circumstances whereby the person can engage in an approved on-line Safe Churches training program, this will be at a cost of approx $20 per person which the church will pay for
- The training is across all three sites
- The training will be run with approximately 10-12 people per session. We don't want larger groups as it can be inhibiting for attendees to want to ask questions or speak up if the group is too large. It would also extend the length of the training sessions with large groups
- It will be department specific if possible but not essential. Department specific training allows people to consider specific scenarios and ask questions about issues that might arise specifically for their department
- It will be run by either a site pastor, Director (the person who oversees the department eg; Children's Director, YA Director) or by an appointed leader. Basically all leaders that have done the approved online **Safe Churches Training.**
- The training will take approximately 60 minutes to complete
- It will be up to the pastor, director, overseer etc to confirm the best time and place to run the sessions. Again, we want to avoid running these sessions on ZOOM or online as we need maximum engagement in these training sessions.

Sharing the Vision for Safe Churches Training: How to Communicate the need

As previously mentioned, this training has now been mandated and is **compulsory** for all staff, team leaders and volunteers serving in church life. Having said that, we do not want to make this feel like a compliance exercise or a bureaucratic ' tick and flick' process!

"We should be sharing the vision for this in such a way that people feel empowered, protected and affirmed in order to report all concerns about church safety."

What if a volunteer serving on a team does not want to attend the training?

If the need for training is shared in the right way then most people will be happy to attend. Having said that, there may be a small number of people that do not want to undertake the training. Speak with the Site Pastor or myself (Tony Peterson) about this so that we can investigate further.

Some people due to the nature of the information may become uncomfortable with the training as it refers to things like bullying, emotional abuse etc. In these instances the online training may be a better option as it is self paced and can be done over time by themselves.

If a person simply refuses to attend the training or shows a very low commitment to attending the training (repeatedly does not show up for training for no valid reason) then we will need to remove them from serving on team until they do. This will be a **last resort** as we all want and need people to be serving on teams so that they can build the church and release their God given gifts.

Timing of the Roll Out: once our pastors and directors have done the online training we can start to look at dates for each department to communicate and complete the training.

Frequency: The training only needs to be done every 3 years but people can do refresher training if they so desire before then.

Training Register - Site Pastor or Director's Responsibility

We are required to keep accurate and up to date records of all people that attend the training. In some states this is a legal requirement. A training register has been created. It will be the responsibility of the site pastor and director to ensure that all attendees are accurately recorded in the register.

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1twcYfRq3G-1cKEzKuYIZ7bTIyqLXk_2IzEJYCZIvqy8/edit#gid=0

It is suggested that you have a physical copy on hand to record all attendees then add this to the register. Being that we are aiming for 10-12 people per session this shouldn't be too arduous.

Database: Elvanto

You will need to use Elvanto (possibly PCO) in order to accurately confirm who is currently serving in a department in order to invite them to do the training.

Future Training and Onboarding New People

Once all volunteers are trained you will also have new people coming onto team periodically to serve on a roster. **It is essential that they undertake this training** even if they were once serving and came off team they will need to do the initial training before they can serve.

You will need to take them through this training as a one-on-one session or wait (no longer than one school term) and do it in a larger group.

Summary: this training will now be ongoing and regular for all people wanting to serve on a team.