



Practice Update

Information for the Local Church Minister as Chair of the Nominating Committee

About Nominating Committee Screening and in particular screening of potential appointees

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What's Changed?

With the implementation of the recent Role Requirement Guidelines in late 2020 there is a requirement that all potential appointees being considered by the Nominating Committee be screened with Adsafe. (Role Requirement Guidelines, (11.1.9) This is to be done by the Adsafe Responsible Officer (Church Minister) prior to the commencement of the work of the Nominating Committee.

Background

The Nominating Committee's role is to "study the needs of the church and inquire into the fitness of members to serve in the different offices". (Church Manual – 2016, Page 110). The Church Manual further states, "In making their selections, the committee may counsel with others who are well informed." (Church Manual – 2016, Page 112).

To this end Adsafe has required in the Role Requirement Guidelines two screening processes that are considered present best practice as it relates to Child Protection, (1) Screening of names against a database of known offenders and (2) the checking of referees for person new to the church or new to a role. This is in addition to the legal requirement of a Working With Child Check which is required after appointment. This Practice update addresses process (1) above. For further information on the other screening mechanisms see the Role Requirement Guidelines.

Adsafe was set-up by the church as a service for the protection of children and vulnerable persons across the South Pacific Division. Two of Adsafe's tasks which relate to screening is to:

1. "develop policies and screening procedures that mitigate against the risk of abuse;"
2. "establish and administer a register of persons of concern and known offenders;" (Adsafe Ltd Constitution, Page 3)

The Role Requirement Guidelines establishes these screening procedures in an effort to mitigate against the risk of abuse.

The Process

The process involves

1. Preparing a list of potential appointees to submit to Adsafe
2. Submitting the list
3. Receiving the response

Preparing the list

The list could potentially be the list of presently attending church members. For transparency it should be made known to the church that screening is part of the Nominating Committees processes. For further information on how to do this see the next section.

I might be easier to get an electronic list of church members from the church clerk and remove the names of those who you don't wish to screen. Copy these into the request form below.

Submitting the list

Email the list as an attachment to sc@adsafe.org.au. The Adsafe Risk Management and Investigation team will screen the names and contact you with the result.



Receiving the Response

Risk Management and Investigation team will make contact with you hopefully indicating that all the names are clear. If not they will inform you of any name to which there is heightened Child or Vulnerable Person Protection Risks and provide advice on how to proceed.

What about Privacy?

The privacy of any individual is important to Adsafesafe. In creating safe environment for people to worship privacy and confidentiality is a important principle. This includes for known offenders. The process of finding suitable persons to fill roles in the church and particularly child related roles is a very important task.

Respecting a person privacy often involves transparency. To this end Adsafesafe recommends that potential appointees be informed of what the process entails. This includes informing potential appointees:

1. that names will be screened with Adsafesafe
2. who are new to the church or new to a role that referees will be checked
3. to child related roles that (1) a WWCC, (2) training and (3) signing a code of conduct will be required prior their name being presented to the Business meeting.

The Role Requirement Guidelines provide further detail in the process for (2) and (3). This practice update specifically addresses how to handle the screening of names with Adsafesafe.

A more transparent process for screening names

The church membership needs to be informed about the commencement of the Nominating Committee work in the church and that prospective appointees names will be screened with Adsafesafe. This could be done in a number of ways

During Church Announcements

Words to the effect:

“The Nominating Committee process for the selection of people to serve our Church community for the new Church Year is about to begin. Part of our selection process is the screening of prospective appointees with Adsafesafe for the purposes of Child Protection and to identify any heightened child related risk. If you are a member and would not like your name to be screened please let me know before <deadline>. Please see the Church Bulletin for a link to Adsafesafe’s Privacy Policy”

Bulletin Announcement

Words to the effect:

“The Nominating Committee process for the selection of people to serve our Church community for the new Church Year is about to begin. Part of our selection process is the screening of prospective appointees with Adsafesafe for the purposes of Child Protection and to identify any heightened child related risk. If you are a member and would not like your name to be screened please let <Pastor’s Name> know via <contact method> before <deadline>. If you would like to view Adsafesafe’s privacy policy please scan the following QR code. ”



It may be wise to use both these methods twice before the deadline

