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**Risk Management Guide**

**Our Commitment**

* We will serve participants as servants of Christ, commit to the good news of Jesus and lead in spiritually non-abusive ways.
* We will afford participants a say in the programs and the activities in which they participate by fostering and valuing their ideas, and encouraging participation.
* We will obtain appropriate information relating to the program participants, including children’s health and family situation, to ensure that we are able to care for their physical and emotional needs.
* All leaders will discharge their duty of care through the use of forms, checklists and templates for establishment and maintenance of safe environments in our church.
* A Safety team will be appointed to establish and maintain: WHS, fire safety, building safety, first aid, food safety, safe transport, incident and emergency procedures.
* Ministry Coordinators are to complete a written ministry approval process annually.

Team leaders should work with the Health & Safety Team to ensure that all individual programs risks have been considered and risk management steps implemented.

Use this information and the tables as a guide to assist in preparing your Approval for Ministry. Where deciding upon activities for your ministry it may be useful to ask yourself the following:

* + Could this be classified as a high risk activity?
	+ Is there a high likelihood for damage or trauma (physical, emotional and/or spiritual)?
	+ Does the benefit of this activity outweigh the possible risks that may be involved?
	+ Can the activity be changed to reduce the possible risks?
	+ Are there critical incident and emergency procedures in place if required?
	+ Does the ministry or church have suitably trained and qualified people to address critical incidents or emergencies?
	+ Would the activities be covered by your insurance?

**What is Risk?**

Risk is the exposure to the possibility of such things as economic or financial loss or gain, physical damage, injury or delay, as a consequence of pursuing or not pursuing a particular course of action. The concept of risk includes the; perception that something could happen, likelihood of it occurring and consequence if it does occur.

These risks might include: workplace/church health and safety (include hazards), financial and administrative, property, delivery of services, public liability, litigation and/or public relations.

**What is Risk Management?**

Risk management is the process of managing your church’s exposure to potential liabilities. It does this by identifying risks in order to prevent them or reduce them, and by providing funds to meet any liability if it occurs.

It can be a useful exercise to do a risk assessment for your ministry/program at least annually. This does not replace a Hazard Identification. The Risk Assessment looks at what might happen, whereas Hazard Identification looks at what is present at the venue at a specific time.

Considers five key areas:

* + How likely is this risk?
	+ What is the consequence should it occur?
	+ What is the overall level of risk?
	+ What does this level of risk require to be managed appropriately?
	+ How adequately are we managing this risk?



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SMR can also provide customisation of the **Safe Ministry Framework** for your church or denomination.

**Disclaimer**: This publication is not legal advice. The ideas and procedures herein are based on nationally recognised good practice advice for Safe Ministry and have been written with due regard to Australian legislation March 2020.
Legal advice may need to be sought when responding to individual incidents.