

Confidentiality Policy

Policy Statement

At Community Church Warragul (CCW), we value the trust placed in us by our congregation, staff, volunteers, and the wider community. As part of our commitment to fostering a safe, respectful, and caring environment, we recognise the importance of handling all personal, sensitive, and organisational information with the utmost integrity and discretion.

Purpose

This Confidentiality Policy outlines the expectations and responsibilities of all individuals who serve or work within our church. It ensures that private information—whether related to pastoral care, ministry involvement, personnel matters, or operational activities—is protected in accordance with ethical standards and, where applicable, legal obligations. Maintaining confidentiality is essential not only for protecting individuals' privacy and dignity but also for upholding the reputation and integrity of the church.

Definitions

Confidential Information: Includes all personal, sensitive, proprietary, or privileged information relating to individuals, church operations, finances, ministry matters, or other areas that are not intended for public disclosure.

Disclosure: The act of making information known or available to others, whether intentional or accidental.

Authorised Person: A person approved by the Senior Pastor or church leadership to access specific confidential information.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, ministry leaders, and board members, and it serves as a guide for how confidential information should be managed, stored, and shared.

Roles and Responsibilities

Disclosure of confidential information is strictly prohibited unless it is:

1. A legitimate business purpose as provided for in this policy; or
2. Required by Australian law; or
3. With the written informed and voluntary consent of the person to whom the confidential information relates together with the approval of the Senior Pastor

Staff

- Must safeguard all confidential information obtained through their work duties.
- Must not discuss confidential matters in public or unsecured settings.
- Must securely store physical and digital documents.
- Are required to report any suspected breach of confidentiality to the Senior Pastor immediately.

Volunteers

- Are expected to maintain confidentiality of all information encountered during their service.
- May only use confidential information for church-related purposes.
- Are responsible for the security of documents and materials in their care.

Ministry Leaders

- Must model and uphold confidentiality within their teams.
- Must ensure that sensitive matters are only shared with authorised individuals.
- Are responsible for training team members on confidentiality expectations.

Board Members

- Must maintain confidentiality regarding strategic, financial, and operational matters.
- Must ensure all board documents are stored and disposed of securely.
- Must refrain from disclosing any board-related discussions outside of authorised forums.

Staff, volunteers, ministry leaders and board members remain bound by these responsibilities during and after their employment or voluntary engagements cease.

Procedure

1. Staff and volunteers must sign the Confidentiality Declaration before commencing in their role.
2. Confidential information must be accessed only as necessary to fulfil church duties.
3. All physical and electronic records must be stored securely, with access limited to authorised individuals.
4. If a breach or suspected breach occurs, it must be reported immediately to the Senior Pastor.
5. Upon cessation of involvement with the church, individuals must return or delete any confidential materials.

CCW may require an individual to provide evidence to its satisfaction that this has taken place.

Breach of Policy

Furthermore, any breach of this policy will be investigated and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment (for staff), and the cessation of any further voluntary engagement. CCW also reserves its right to take any legal action it deems appropriate.

Confidentiality Declaration

I, _____ (full name), acknowledge that I have read, understood, and agree to comply with the Confidentiality Policy of Community Church Warragul.

Signed: _____

Name (print): _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____