

Police Vetting Policy

Date approved: November 2021

Review date: November 2024

Invercargill Central Baptist church has a commitment to the health and safety of those who are vulnerable. While not legally obliged by the Vulnerable Children's Act 2014, this policy reflects the best practice commitments of this legislation. The Baptist Union is an Approved Agency of the Police Vetting Service.

1. All volunteers and staff who are working with children and young people (under the age of 18), either as part of a ministry team or in a support role that has been delegated by the ministry leader, must have a police check before being approved for the role.
2. Any volunteer in other designated roles within the church who while not directly working with children will have access to children will be encouraged to have a police check, as this is considered best practise. If the volunteer is unwilling to have such a check done, restrictions may be placed on what the volunteer can do within the particular ministry by the ministry leader, in consultation with the volunteer.
3. This police check will be renewed – if the person is still in the role – every 3 years.
4. Each pastoral leader is responsible to:
 - 4.1. Ensure relevant volunteers are police vetted.
 - 4.2. Ensure a copy of the ID requested on the form is given to the church office.
 - 4.3. The form and ID is given to the office to send to the Baptist Union office.
5. When requesting a police check, the applicant is to be informed of the process and how the information will be handled.
 - 5.1. If the police check is clear ('no result'), the result will be noted on the church database, which can be accessed by all pastoral staff, and the form and a copy of the identification will be destroyed.
 - 5.2. If the police check contains convictions ('positive result'), the form and a copy of the identification will be destroyed.
6. When information of convictions comes back to the lead pastor, the following process is to be followed:
 - 6.1. The applicant will be informed and given the opportunity to respond and informed of the right to challenge the information.
 - 6.2. The lead pastor will ask the applicant whether or not they approve of the elders or other pastoral staff being informed of the nature of the conviction.
 - 6.3. The lead pastor (and, if approved by the applicant, elders/pastor overseeing the ministry) will consider if the person is suitable for the role, taking into account;
 - 6.3.1. The nature of the conviction (see [8]);
 - 6.3.2. How long ago the conviction was;
 - 6.3.3. Background information;
 - 6.3.4. Demonstration of current character and understanding of safety issues; and
 - 6.3.5. References from those who can attest to the person's character and background.
7. If the likely response is that the applicant will not be able to begin or continue in the role, the applicant:
 - 7.1. Should be informed and given the opportunity to give background information that might be relevant to the final decision.
 - 7.2. Be part of discussion around the appropriate process for the termination of their involvement, such as informing others.

7.3. A written record will be kept of all discussions, agreements and outcomes.

If the applicant is found to have a conviction for an offense listed under Schedule 2 of the Vulnerable Children's Act 2014, they will not be able to work with children and young people. If the applicant with such a conviction is in another designated role, which has access to children, the lead pastor will consider this using the serious offending policy and process in (6) to determine the suitability of the appointment.