

B. CHOOSING THE RIGHT STAFF

To minimise the risk of abuse to a child/young person the church should adopt a careful selection process otherwise known as a safer recruitment approach. The screening procedure for employees/volunteers working with children/young people should include the following elements:

- (a) Local church officers must be appointed through the process outlined in the Church Manual. The process of church family voting on officers provides a protective and transparent process for securing the right people to work with our children and adults at risk. See Church Manual:
http://www.adventist.org/fileadmin/adventist.org/files/articles/information/ChurchManual_2010.pdf
- (b) Employees for formal roles will follow recruitment processes. This involves face-to-face interviews, verbal and written reference checks, identity verification, induction and supervision. Safeguarding should be discussed at the interview and a suitable training programme provided for the successful applicant. The applicant should be given a copy of the organisation's safeguarding policy and understand how to report a concern. They shall be required to complete an information form (see Appendix 4: Self-Declaration Form, p.17) and provide references (see Appendix 5: Request for Reference and Appendix 6: Reference Form, p.19).
- (c) Those applying for roles that will bring them into contact with children and adults at risk will be required to apply for a Disclosure check (i.e. DBS/PVG/AccessNI) and complete a Self-Declaration Form prior to appointment. Requests for references should include the job description with the reference request. (see Appendix 4, p.17).
- (d) First-time employees should be subject to a probationary period of six months. Job descriptions and outlines of work should be reviewed bi-annually or when the job changes significantly.
- (e) All volunteers who carry out responsibilities that bring them into contact with children or adults at risk are required to have a disclosure check in order to fulfil their role.
- (f) Where the conference/mission runs specific courses for those working with children or adults at risk, course directors should ensure that applicants meet all the safeguarding requirements. Should any concerns arise regarding their suitability, these should be addressed with the individual and their line manager or local pastor as appropriate. If an individual has a blemished disclosure, a risk assessment should be carried out and /or if there is a cause for concern the safeguarding procedures outlined in Appendix 9 should be followed.
- (g) Employees and volunteers with a known history of sexual abuse and/or violence towards children/young people should never again be allowed to work with minors, even after participating in rehabilitation programmes. Those barred from working with adults at risk must not be allowed to do so.
- (h) Where employees/volunteers are subsequently found to have had a history of sexual offending and/or violence and have failed to disclose it, they shall be immediately removed from their appointment. Any disputes within safeguarding should be referred to the next level of authority.