



Changes from previous published version are highlighted in yellow (yellow highlights).

Purpose

This risk assessment tool is specifically created to enable a Church Council and Presbytery to determine whether a person who is identified at higher risk from the effects of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), due to existing health conditions and/or their personal circumstances, can undertake voluntary work on behalf of the congregation. The COVID-19 virus is highly transmissible from person-to-person and readily spreads to close contacts of infected individuals.

The UCAQ is committed to providing a safe workplace for its employees, contractors, visitors, students and volunteers. To meet this commitment the UCAQ will:

- meet its obligations under the *Workplace Health and Safety Act*,
- abide by the relevant Public Health Directions issued by the Queensland Chief Health Officer,
- follow National COVID-19 safe workplace principles; and
- commit to continuous improvement.

A vulnerable worker cannot commence work within the church until the risk assessment has been approved by the Church Council.

Scope

The information provided by the vulnerable person and where provided, treating medical practitioner, will be used only for the duration of the response to COVID-19. It will be used to determine and approve a vulnerable person to perform work (paid or voluntary) by Church Council or Presbytery representatives and in the management of the person's safety and wellbeing in accordance with work health and safety obligations. Information will be retained in accordance with the *Privacy Act*.

Congregation on duty of care

A person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of workers engaged, or caused to be engaged by the organisation while the workers are at the workplace and ensure that the health and safety of others is not put at risk by the work being carried out.

This includes ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the health of workers and conditions at the workplace are monitored for the purpose of preventing illness or injury of workers from the conduct of the business.

Definitions

Term	Meaning
Person conducting business undertaking (PCBU)	Section 5 of Work Health and Safety Act 2011 defines a PCBU as being conducted when a person conducts a business or undertaking alone or with others regardless as to whether it is for profit or gain. (S5 (1)). For the purposes of The Uniting Church, all Presbyteries are considered a PCBU and all Congregations with a paid Ministry Agent or worker are considered a PCBU. Congregations run solely by volunteers are not a PCBU but the Presbytery is their overseeing PCBU.
Worker	Section 7 of Work Health and Safety Act 2011 defines a person as a worker if they are carrying out work in any capacity for the PCBU. It includes employees, contractors and subcontractors, labour hire workers, work experience students and volunteers (S7 (1)).
Workplace	Section 8 of Work Health and Safety Act 2011 defines a workplace as a place where work is carried out for a PCBU and includes a place where a worker goes, or is likely to be, while at work (S8 (1)).
Volunteer	A person who, in a church activity, is rostered for a duty, involved in running the activity, and/or directed to perform specific tasks other than to join in communally.

Worker (paid or volunteer)

Full name

Phone

Location/Congregation

Ministry area

Supervisor name

Supervisor phone

Worker assessment

The worker	
Does the worker identify with any of the following?	
Over 70 years of age.	Yes No
Over 65 years of age who have existing health conditions or comorbidities.	Yes No
First Nations People over the age of 50 who have existing health conditions or comorbidities.	Yes No
Are significantly immunocompromised or taking immunosuppression therapy;	Yes No
Have chronic medical condition, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kidney disease• Coronary heart disease or congestive heart failure• Chronic lung disease including moderate to severe asthma, cystic fibrosis, bronchiectasis, suppurative lung disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease or chronic emphysema• Poorly controlled diabetes• Poorly controlled hypertension• Cancer• Genetic immune deficiencies• Chronic liver disease.	Yes No
If ticked YES to any of the above, the person is considered a vulnerable person to COVID-19	

The work	
Does your worker work in any of the following conditions?	
Working outside of their place of residence.	Yes No
Where social/physical distancing requirements are difficult to meet.	Yes No
Working with other vulnerable clients/workers.	Yes No
Frequent exposure/access to the community/crowded areas.	Yes No
Mode of transit to and from work is via public transport.	Yes No
Undertakes cleaning.	Yes No
Works alone.	Yes No
If the worker is deemed to be a vulnerable worker and is placed in any of the above work situations, the vulnerable worker requires a detailed plan on how they will be cared for and the risks managed.	

To be completed by the ministry leader or activity supervisor

Considerations

What is the work the vulnerable worker is required to complete? *Include information about the type of work they will be performing (cleaning, customer service, gardening, greeting, teaching etc.)*

Detail contact vulnerable worker may have with others. *Consider how the volunteer gets to work (e.g. takes public transport), are they working alongside other volunteers, are they serving customers, members of the community.*

Vulnerable person information – completed by manager / ministry agent and vulnerable person together

Agreed mitigating strategies to reduce the level of harm. *(For example – working from home or telecommuting, change in duties, paid special leave, online worship, telephone pastoral care)*

Note any additional documentation considered as part of this review.

Review date of mitigating strategies

Proposed work plan agreed to by (form must be signed)

Worker signature Date

Supervisor signature Date

Church council approval Yes No Date

Approver name

Approver position

Approver signature

If approved, please detail any additional control measures that are considered necessary for the vulnerable worker to fulfill their role safely.

If not approved, please provide information as to why the request has not been approved.

Once the review has been completed, a copy of the work plan is to be provided to the worker and their supervisor (if applicable). A copy is to be forwarded to the Presbytery office and the original retained by the Church Council.

All information is to be retained in accordance with the Synod-wide [Privacy Policy](#).

Risks and Mitigation Strategy

Risks and mitigations							
Risks What could go wrong during these activities?	Likelihood Check the 'descriptors'	Consequence Check the 'descriptors'	Initial Risk level Check the 'risk matrix'	How to reduce risk Check the 'actions to take' 'mitigations'	Likelihood after controls Check the 'descriptors'	Consequence after controls Check the 'descriptors'	Revised Risk Level (with mitigations in place)
Worker contracts COVID-19	Possible	Major	High	Activity cannot proceed without additional risk management procedures including regular cleaning, respecting physical distancing and minimizing face to face contact should still be in place to reduce the risk of infection.	Unlikely	Major	Medium
Vulnerable worker contracts COVID-19	Possible	Severe	High	Activity cannot proceed without additional risk management procedures including regular cleaning, respecting physical distancing and minimizing face to face contact should still be in place to reduce the risk of infection.	Unlikely	Severe	High
Worker working alone is injured.	Possible	Major	High	Worker to regularly contact work supervisor to confirm okay.	Possible	Moderate	Medium

Worker injured whilst performing task (falls/ strains/cuts)	Possible	Major	High	Workers to receive training in work procedures before commencing their duties. Site to be regularly checked for trip hazards.	Possible	Moderate	Medium
List other activities or hazards that may face the worker. Add additional rows as required							

Risk assessment descriptors

Likelihood descriptors		
1	Rare	May occur only in exceptional circumstances. It is theoretically possible but increasingly unlikely.
2	Unlikely	Is not likely to occur in normal circumstances. You have heard of it happening somewhere once.
3	Possible	Could occur at some time. You have heard of it happening occasionally.
4	Likely	Will probably occur in some circumstances. It might happen on a handful of occasions.
5	Frequent	Can be expected to occur with some frequency. It is not a surprise when it happens.

Consequence descriptors		
1	Negligible	<p>Worker: Very little impact to the health, emotional wellbeing or safety of the worker. There may be an initial feeling of concern or worry, temporarily upset, and/or very minor or no injury.</p> <p>Organisation: Little or no reputational impact. It does not make the news or social media.</p>
2	Minor	<p>Worker: Minor impact on the health, emotional wellbeing or safety of the worker. There may be some minor anxiety, requiring first aid, follow-up and/or support.</p> <p>Organisation: Low reputational impact. There is only very limited news or social media coverage.</p>
3	Moderate	<p>Worker: Moderate impact on the health, emotional or physical wellbeing or safety of the worker. The worker may feeling moderate anxiety, requiring follow-up support and/or medical treatment.</p> <p>Organisation: May have some reputational impact. This may include public embarrassment and moderate news or social media coverage.</p>
4	Major	<p>Worker: Significant impact on the health, emotional wellbeing or safety of the worker, with the worker feeling overwhelmed, requiring police intervention, paramedic or comparable medical/hospital treatment. The worker might be traumatised.</p> <p>Organisation: May have major reputational impact. This may include public embarrassment, high news profile and third-party actions.</p>
5	Severe	<p>Worker: Hospital admission is required, or significant, severe medical impact (including death) or affect on the emotional wellbeing or safety of the worker.</p> <p>Organisation: May have very severe reputational impact. This may include public embarrassment, high widespread multiple news reports and third- party actions. A fatality or permanent harm to one or more people.</p>

Likelihood	Consequence				
	Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major	Severe
Frequent	Medium	Medium	High	Extreme	Extreme
Likely	Medium	Medium	High	High	Extreme
Possible	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High
Unlikely	Low	Low	Low	Medium	High
Rare	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium

	Extreme risk	Worker's role must not proceed as planned. Final approval must be provided by the Presbytery Standing Committee after steps are taken to reduce the risk. Identify and plan additional risk mitigation measures then contact the Church Council for guidance and to request approval to submit to Presbytery. If approved, risk mitigation measures must be documented and a review of effectiveness of mitigations should be undertaken regularly.
	High risk	Worker's role can only proceed if more risk control steps are taken to reduce risk. All steps taken must be documented and a review of effectiveness of the mitigations should be undertaken regularly. Final approval must be provided by the Church Council after steps are taken to reduce the risk.
	Medium risk	Worker's role can proceed with risk mitigation steps in place. All steps taken must be documented and a review of effectiveness of the mitigations should happen after the event. In the event of the risk manifesting, the circumstances should be subject to review.
	Low risk	Worker's role can proceed. Routine management procedures should still be in place to minimise the risk of even a minor incident occurring.

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Office use only	Version	Approval date	Approved by	Effective date	Policy owner	Policy contact
	3.0	11.08.2020	General Secretary	11.08.2020	COVID Coordinador	COVID Coordinador
Next scheduled review		11.08.2021				