

Pam Claphaw is the co-ordinator of the Professional Standards Unit for Churches of Christ in NSW. She is experienced in dealing with very personal, sensitive and highly confidential matters. Pam is a good listener who is available to speak with you about any concerns you might have.

Contact Pam Claphaw of the Professional Standards Unit:

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Professional Standards Unit

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Professional Standards Unit

safe

Churches should be safe places. Each adult or child, who participates in the activities of a local church needs to be confident that their experience will be positive, healthy and safe.

The Australian community expects those who minister within churches to be people of integrity. To ensure this each minister within the Churches of Christ in NSW is required to sign a Code of Conduct. **A Professional Standards Unit (PSU)** exists to educate churches and ministers and to manage this Code.

Making a Complaint About a Minister

Any person who has a complaint about the conduct of a minister, has the right to bring this complaint to the PSU. Complaints must be received in writing and personally signed. They need to be specific and detail the nature of the allegation. Any complaint should be marked Private and Confidential and mailed to the PSU Co-ordinator, PO Box 1024 Auburn NSW 1835.

Advice can be sought by e-mail or telephone if further information is needed. A request can be made for help to write a complaint. All communication is treated confidentially.

The Complaint Process

When a written and signed complaint is received, the PSU Co-ordinator will make personal contact with the complainant. A support person can be made available to assist throughout the whole process. Someone appointed by the PSU will investigate the complaint and, if appropriate, a Hearing Committee will be convened. The Hearing Committee will consist of 3 to 5 people (men and women, minister and non-ministers) who

have specialised expertise and training in this area. They will want to hear from the person making the complaint and also from the person against whom the allegation is being made.

The person making the allegation will not be required, unless desired, to speak in front of the person they are complaining about. The person making the complaint is entitled, if desired, to have a support person and their spouse in attendance.

What if someone makes an allegation about me?

When an allegation is made against someone ministering within NSW Churches of Christ the minister will be contacted personally and a copy of the written allegation will be sent. Churches of Christ operate under the principle that a person is innocent until proven guilty. A support person can be arranged to assist throughout the process.

Someone appointed by the PSU will meet with the minister to hear his/her response to the allegation. If a Hearing Committee is convened the minister is entitled to have a support person and his/her spouse in attendance if desired.

What Happens Next?

Following the decision of the Hearing Committee pastoral support is made available to both parties, their families and the local church.

Churches of Christ in NSW are committed to making churches safe places. For further information please contact the PSU at psu@freshhope.org.au or the state office on (02) 8719 2600

places