

## SafePraxeis

*We affirm that all people have the right to be emotionally and physically safe, respected, and have their views and opinions valued at all times.*

Our mandate comes directly from God. God identified classes of vulnerable people who were to be protected and given special care and treatment in society because of their powerlessness (e.g. Ex 22:21-22, Deut 10:17-19, Jer 22:2-4, James 1:27).

Protection of vulnerable people is our responsibility. This policy takes into consideration all vulnerable people in our churches, whether they be children, young people, elderly, those with disabilities, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD), Indigenous and the emotionally and or spiritually vulnerable (i.e. people who are members of Praxeis or attending Praxeis activities).

We also live in a country that legislates for people's safety, particularly in the area of child protection. Our policy has been developed to help us live out our Biblical mandate and our responsibilities under Victoria (VIC), Australia legislation<sup>1</sup>. We acknowledge that we have workers and teams operating all around the world however due to Melbourne being the home base for systems operations, we are choosing to comply with VIC legislation<sup>1</sup>.

Praxeis has zero tolerance of all forms of child abuse (physical, emotional and psychological, neglect, racial, cultural or religious) and we are committed to children's best interests and keeping them safe.

*We aim to create environments where all children regardless of gender, cultural background, religion or disability can encounter the love of Jesus through prayer and the Word in a safe and welcoming space.*

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<sup>1</sup> Legislation includes but is not limited to Child wellbeing and safety act (2005), Working with Children Act (2005), Children, Youth and Families act (2005).

### Our Policy Aims:

- To minimise the risk of abuse, ministry misconduct and the misuse of positional power within Praxeis.
- To ensure that all cases of suspected abuse and ministry misconduct are handled in a consistent, unbiased and thorough manner.
- To ensure that all people are respected and valued, irrespective of their gender, age, country of origin, cultural heritage, socio-economic background or ability.
- To ensure that workers and Praxeis activities are safe.

### Who must comply with this Policy:

This policy applies to the following persons, referred to in this document collectively as “workers”<sup>2</sup>:

- i. Supported workers;
- ii. Volunteer workers;
- iii. Finance and Administration;
- iv. All members of the Board.

### Scope of the Policy:

This Policy covers the following:

- i. Worker screening and selection;
- ii. Standards of behaviour expected of staff and volunteers (Code of Conduct);
- iii. Prevention of harm through creating safe environments;
- iv. Minimisation of harm through procedures for dealing with and reporting allegations of harm;
- v. Risk management processes for high risk activities and special events.

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<sup>2</sup> Whilst Praxeis uses the term ‘workers’ for all people engaging in Praxeis activities, they would be recognised as ‘a person in religious ministry’ who are ‘appointed, ordained or otherwise recognised as a religious or spiritual leader in a religious institution’.

We commit to:

**1. Safe recruitment of workers.**

- We will screen all prospective workers to Praxeis, before they are appointed.
- All workers will have to have a current Working with Children Check or state equivalent.
- All potential workers will have been known to Praxeis for reasonable amount of time as to ascertain the character of the person and will complete an induction and receive professional development through training in Praxeis DNA and values and completing Safe Praxeis training.

**2. Adequate training of workers.**

- We require that all workers complete child safety awareness training as directed by the SafePraxeis team.
- We require that team leaders include promotion and awareness of our SafePraxeis policies and and procedures to their teams.

**3. Continued coaching of workers.**

- We commit to ongoing leadership training, supervision and support for all workers.
- All workers will agree to follow the Praxeis Code of Conduct.

**4. Responding to allegations of harm (abuse) and serious ministry misconduct.**

- All workers will report disclosures of suspicions of child abuse, according to state legislation by using the Praxeis reporting procedures.
- Where a Praxeis worker has an allegation of ministry misconduct made against them, the grievance will be handled in accordance with the Praxeis reporting procedures.

## **5. Emotionally safe environments.**

- We will offer participants, including children, the opportunity to provide input in the programs and the activities in which they participate by fostering and valuing their ideas, and encouraging participation in Praxeis activities, as far as is sensible and practical.
- We will obtain appropriate information relating to those we are engaging with, including children's health and family situation, to ensure that we are able to care for their physical and emotional needs.

## **6. Safe physical environments.**

- New ministry activities will be discussed with a coach and/or regional leader considering and managing potential risks.
- All workers will discharge their duty of care through the use of forms, checklists and templates for establishment and maintenance of safe environments in Praxeis ministry activities.

## **7. Safety Officer and Team.**

- A Safety Officer and team will be appointed to bring Child safety standards and other Safe Church recommendations to Praxeis management for consideration and adoption and oversee the implementation of SafePraxeis policies and procedures.

## 8. Approval for new Ministry/Access Strategies.

- Workers are to prayerfully process new/ expanded ministry/access strategies with their coach or regional leader. National Director to be informed of new ministries and access strategies.

### Consequences for breach of this Policy

- A breach of failure to comply with the Policy or the Code of Conduct may give rise to the following measures:
- Meeting with regional leader of National Director to discuss breach or lack of compliance
- An internal investigation occurring, facilitated by an independent investigator (not affiliated with Praxeis)
- Formal warning being issued
- Report being made to external agencies, i.e. Professional Associations and/or Police
- Close monitoring and live supervision
- Further education being required before recommencing in role
- Any other performance management strategy deemed appropriate
- Immediate suspension
- Immediate termination of Praxeis membership
- Immediate termination.

SafePraxeis Policy v5

Reviewed: October 2020

Approved by Board: 12th November, 2020