

Code of Conduct

For Reach Australia staff team and network volunteers (people who are appointed by Reach Australia and serve in various roles across the network as defined below).

In his letter to the church in Colossae, the Apostle Paul writes, “We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light.” Colossians 1:9-12 (NIV)

This too is our prayer for the Reach Australia staff team, volunteers and for everyone involved in the churches in the network and particularly for those who have been placed in positions of leadership in them. In praying for and desiring that all those associated with Reach Australia either as staff or volunteers live lives worthy of the Lord and pleasing to him in every way, it is appropriate as a network to set out expectations of what that looks like.

1. Purpose of this code of conduct

To set clear expectations within the Reach Australia network regarding appropriate behaviour and conduct so that it is consistent with the Bible and uphold the public reputation of Jesus and his gospel, of the network and the churches that make it up. The Code of Conduct is meant for the Reach Australia staff team and network volunteers as they represent the Reach Australia network. In this Code of Conduct all staff and network volunteers are seen to be involved in Christian ministry.

This Code of Conduct does not attempt to describe the totality of the behaviour of those in Christian ministry, but rather applies Biblical principles to particular issues relating to the nature of their ministry in any staff or voluntary role with Reach Australia and in their denominational and church setting. The Bible makes it clear that behaviours such as murder, adultery, theft etc. are unacceptable to God. This Code of Conduct presupposes godly behaviour required of all Christian people as per Paul’s lists in Galatians 5:14-26; Ephesians 4:25-32; or Colossians 3:5-9.

Reach Australia may amend or vary this Code of Conduct, at its discretion, from time to time.

2. Scope

This Code of Conduct applies to all Reach Australia staff and network volunteers (as they represent the Reach Australia network).

3. Responsibilities

All Reach Australia staff and network volunteers (as they represent the Reach Australia network) should be familiar with, assent to, and ensure behaviour inconsistent with this Code of Conduct is not tolerated or covered up. If you are unclear as to what the Code of Conduct means or how it might apply to you should consult the Reach Australia Executive Director (scott@reachaustralia.com.au) for clarification.

4. The code of conduct

We minister out of a healthy relationship with God:

Therefore

1. I will take care to keep spiritually healthy by:
 - a. Joining regularly in the life and ministry of a church.
 - b. Studying the Scriptures regularly in private and with others.
 - c. Praying regularly in private and in fellowship.

We serve others in the context of healthy relationships:

Therefore...

2. With my family I will:
 - a. Carefully attend to the responsibilities of love and leadership that I have to my spouse (if married), children (if any) and wider family.
 - b. Ensure that my behaviour within my family or domestic setting does not constitute family or domestic abuse in any form.
 - c. Pay attention to the effect of my ministry on my family relationships.
3. With my ministry and role relationships I will:
 - a. Rightly honour those who work in fellowship with me in the ministry of the gospel.
 - b. Seek to ensure that arrogance, belligerence, quick-temper, malice, envy, or slander do not mark my relationships with, or conversations about, ministry colleagues, whether in my service with Reach Australia, in my own church or in wider Christian networks.
 - c. Except where abuse is involved, seek to resolve disagreements with other staff

members or ministry colleagues through personal contact firstly - with all gentleness - and then, should resolution not be reached this way, through the grievance or complaints procedure of either Reach Australia network or my church or my denomination, depending upon the context.

d. Be a team player, cooperating, where appropriate, with other ministry leaders.

e. Be accountable to my team, watching out for others and protecting each other's integrity.

f. Be aware of the positional power that is associated with a leadership/ministry/pastoral role and take care to avoid any abuse or manipulation of those I lead.

g. Treat others with respect - teaching and exercising authority respectfully.

h. Be careful with the power given in ministry relationships. I will not engage in any behaviour that involves the misuse of power, including but not limited to bullying, emotional abuse, financial abuse, harassment, physical abuse, sexual abuse, sexual harassment or spiritual abuse. I will work hard at creating a culture where this is clearly not tolerated and will take action to deal with such behaviour should it become evident.

i. Value confidentiality of personal information, only disclosing this information where necessary: for example, where there is a legal obligation or duty of care.

j. Be careful with my words, using words that build up, aiming to speak the truth in love.

k. In the event of a person, encountered as part of my ministry or role with Reach Australia or in my church, disclosing that they have been abused in childhood or more recently, or are at risk of suffering or harm, I will follow the Reach Australia or church policy in relation to offering care or referral to other professionals.

l. If I become aware of any reportable criminal offence, I will report it to the relevant civil authorities in accordance with the applicable Commonwealth, State or Territory laws.

4. (1) With the opposite sex I will:

a. Model relationships with the opposite sex that are above reproach in both appearance and reality.

b. Be aware of the potential for inappropriate emotional or romantic involvement, and especially with those with whom I work or for whom I have pastoral responsibility. I will avoid behaviour and situations, both online and in person, that may nurture this type of relationship. (Special care needs to be given to home visits, travelling companions in cars, private meetings and visibility and accessibility in offices.)

4. (2) I will also:

a. Be aware of the potential for inappropriate emotional or romantic involvement with a person of the same sex, and especially with those with whom I work or for whom I have pastoral responsibility. I will avoid behaviour and situations, both online

and in person, that may nurture this type of relationship.

5. In regard to working with children I will:

- a. Ensure I have a current Working With Children Check or the equivalent in my state or territory.
- b. Adhere to my church's child protection policy and Reach Australia's child protection policy.

6. In regard to alcohol and drugs I will:

- a. Only drink alcohol in moderation, should I choose to drink at all.
- b. Give due consideration to the appropriateness of the consumption of alcohol in the presence of others.
- c. Never take prohibited substances or misuse prescription medication.

7. In regard to money I will:

- a. Be content with what I have and guard against greed.
- b. Not seek inappropriate personal advantage or financial gain from my position, other than in wages, recognised allowances and deductions.
- c. Be scrupulous in the handling of any money associated with Reach Australia activities.
- d. Take great care in receiving gifts from members of the network that arise by virtue of my ministry or role with Reach Australia and abide by any Reach Australia policy that applies in this regard.
- e. Abide by the policy worked out with the leadership of my church with regard to honoraria/payment for ministry work, weddings, preaching etc. in addition to any ministry wages and allowances.
- f. Take proper care to be a faithful steward of my finances and to fulfil any obligations with regard to taxation and Centrelink matters.

8. In regard to the law I will:

- a. Obey the law, in so far as that law is not contrary to the Bible and does not unjustly prohibit the expression of faith in Christ.
- b. Disclose to the Reach Australia Executive Director or a member of the Reach Australia Board and my church leadership team if I am being investigated for, or charged with, any criminal offence.

9. In regard to the wider community/society I will:

- a. Seek to be in good standing with neighbors and the community at large, as much as it is up to me.
- b. Be careful and discreet in my use of social media and abide by any Reach

Australia social media policy.

10. I will also:

- a. Affirm and uphold the Reach Australia Doctrinal Statement.
- b. Commit to upholding a biblical expression of sex and sexuality, maintaining a commitment to faithfulness in heterosexual marriage, and chastity in singleness (with integrity in dating relationships).
- c. Not take property belonging to others, including intellectual property (copyright), seeking to give appropriate and lawful honor to the work of others.
- d. Be aware that to minister effectively for the long term I need to care for myself. This includes consideration for: recreation and rest, including taking appropriate leave and exercise.
- e. Avoid viewing or possessing pornographic or other restricted material. Where pornography or sexual fantasizing is a problem, I affirm as of first importance honesty and openness and resolve to take practical initiatives. I commit to seeking appropriate accountability with staff peers or supervisors, seek counselling where needed, and to make responsible use, for example, of any internet filtering mechanisms that may help.

11. In relation to this code of Conduct

- a. If I become aware of serious or persistent breaches of the Code of Conduct, by myself or any other Reach Australia staff or network volunteer, I will report it to an appropriate person. An appropriate person would be the Executive Director or a Member of the Board.
- b. I agree to participate in appropriate disciplinary or grievance processes established by Reach Australia to address any alleged breach of this Code of Conduct.
- c. I agree to abide by this Code of Conduct.

Definitions:

Abuse means the following conduct: bullying, emotional abuse, financial abuse, harassment, physical abuse, sexual abuse; or spiritual abuse and in relation to a child also includes neglect.

Bullying means behaviour directed to a person or persons which: is repeated, is unreasonable (being behaviour that a reasonable person, having considered the circumstances, would see as unreasonable, including behaviour that is victimising, humiliating, intimidating or threatening), and creates a risk to their health and safety. Cyberbullying is a form of bullying which involves the use of information and communication technologies.

Emotional abuse means acts or omissions that have caused, or could cause emotional harm or lead to serious behavioral or cognitive disorders.

Family or domestic abuse is a pattern of behaviour, based on exerting power and control over another, causing fear and intimidation. It occurs between people who have or have had a family or domestic relationship. It can include, but is not limited to emotional, physical, sexual or financial abuse.

Financial abuse means when another person unreasonably manipulates financial decisions, or controls access to money or other property without a person's consent.

Harassment means unwelcome conduct, whether intended or not, in relation to another person where the person feels with good reason in all the circumstances offended, belittled or threatened.

Neglect of a child means the failure to provide the basic necessities of life where a child's health and development are placed at risk of harm.

Network Volunteers: means people who are appointed by Reach Australia and serve in various roles across the network, including but not limited to, assessment of church planters, coaching of church leaders, volunteering at Reach Australia events/conferences and serving on the Reach Australia Board or Consultancy Group.

Physical abuse means any intentional or reckless act, use of force or threat to use force causing injury to, or involving unwelcome physical contact with, another person. It does not include lawful discipline by a parent or guardian.

Reach Australia: means Reaching Australia For Christ Ltd.

Reach Australia Staff: means those people directly employed by Reach Australia e.g. the Executive Director, etc.

Sexual abuse of an adult means sexual assault, sexual exploitation or sexual harassment of an adult.

Sexual abuse of a child means the use of a child by another person for his or her own sexual stimulation or gratification or for that of others.

Spiritual abuse means the mistreatment of a person by actions or threats when justified by appeal to God, faith or religion. It includes: using a position of spiritual authority to dominate or manipulate another person or group, using a position of spiritual authority to seek inappropriate deference from others, isolating a person from friends and family members, and using biblical or religious terminology to justify abuse.

Other definitions: For definitions of other terms used in this Code of Conduct, please contact the Reach Australia Office.

Approvals

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Revision History

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