

Grievance Policy

SCOPE

This Policy outlines the process to be followed when there is a grievance within or received by Generation City Church (GCC). In this document, all complaints, disputes and/or conflict situations are termed a 'grievance' between parties, including but not limited to the following:

- A perceived offence has been caused between members of the GCC church congregation
- A complaint has been received by GCC involving a GCC Leader, staff member or volunteer or in relation to a GCC activity, event or Ministry Department
- Dissatisfaction with the way a church worker (paid or volunteer) has fulfilled their ministry role.

GCC reserves the right to not become involved in any external conflicts that are unrelated to our operational business.

OUR COMMITMENT

Our commitment is to provide a process for church leaders to address grievances within the church in a godly, loving, transparent, accountable and procedurally fair manner. This process is not applicable where there is a serious breach of a relevant Code of Conduct for ACC credential holders. Any complaint or grievance against any of the GCC Senior Leadership team shall be referred in writing to the Senior Pastor or Management Board Secretary and managed in accordance with Sections 2.11 and 2.12 of the *Constitution of Generation City Church Limited*. In cases where a child or young person discloses abuse or crimes are alleged, the police and/or appropriate authorities will be notified and the appropriate process followed.

In implementing this Policy, we apply the overarching principles of:

- Seeking to glorify God and grow Christ-like in our responses
- Biblically faithful responses to conflict
- Love and respect for each other
- Focusing on restoration of relationships, and
- Seeking help where needed to resolve grievances

*This Policy has been adapted from Safe Ministry Resources Sample process for resolving misunderstandings and conflicts.
It may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time*

Document no	GCCP011	Version	1
Author	Susan Tang	Approved by Senior Pastor	Sep 2018
Responsible person	Ps Jonathan Nicholson	Scheduled review date	Jan 2028

A PATHWAYS APPROACH

The nature of misunderstandings and conflicts (grievances) means that it is necessary to respond sensitively and with care for all parties involved. In some conflict situations, the assistance of a neutral third party may be necessary to help each party understand the key issues and ways forward. The processes must serve people, not the other way around. Generation City Church commits to a case-by-case approach to the management of grievances with view to the resolution of substantive issues and where possible, appropriate restoration of relationships between all parties

If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.

Romans 12:18 NKJV

Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone.

Romans 12:18 NLT.

The pathway employed will depend upon:

- a. the nature of the grievance
- b. the positions/roles of the parties involved, and
- c. the skills and/or capacity of the GCC leader to address the situation

PATHWAYS OUTLINED

1. Personal approach

This approach may be useful for addressing personal disagreements and perceived offences where there are not perceived significant power imbalances. In the first instance where a grievance arises between one person and another leader/s or other church person/s and they feel able to address their concern, they are to go to the other person and express their concern with a view to resolving their differences. Peace making principles of glorifying God, serving each other and growing in Christ-likeness should be the focus in the attempts to resolve matters with the personal approach. It may also be wise for the person who is initiating the personal approach to do some preparation in terms of seeking counsel from a wise and unbiased senior leader or external person or engaging in some conflict coaching before approaching the other party/ies.

2. Locally assisted approach

This approach may be useful for personal grievances where a personal approach has not been successful in restoring the relationship, or where perceived bullying behaviour has occurred, or where there is dissatisfaction with the performance of a leader or worker. This approach is to be assisted by the Pastoral Team of GCC, a GCC leader skilled in conflict resolution or the Safer Churches Coordinator.

NOTE: If possible, the person should not have a direct supervisory role over any party and all conflicts of interest are to be declared and managed.

- a. Where a person feels they require guidance to approach the other party in view of resolving their differences in private, a church leader who is not a stakeholder in the grievance can offer advice. In general, the church leader to address grievances will be the church's Senior Pastor and/or the Senior leadership group (Board) or their delegate.
- b. Where the church leader is required or requested to assist those impacted and where parties involved in the grievance are willing to work towards restoring relationships, the church leader is to:
 - Meet with each party separately to ensure that all parties are given a chance to tell their story in private and determine the issues for resolution. These meetings must begin in prayer to remain focused on glorifying God, submitted to His will, reflecting His character in love, mercy and forgiveness and seeking His infinite wisdom. Each party should have the opportunity to have a support person present
 - Encourage each party to take personal responsibility for their own contribution to the conflict where applicable. This facilitates personal reflection upon areas that may require personal responsibility for aspects of the conflict
 - Clearly communicate the process to be used to each party during resolution meetings
 - Hold meeting/s with the parties together to work through the issues and determine the course of action and desired outcome. Promote personal responsibility and ownership for the solutions, including meditation on applicable Bible verses to encourage growth
 - Follow up and ensure that the agreed actions are implemented, and
 - Monitor the situation and check with the parties to ensure they are moving forward from the past situation.

At any stage throughout the process, the church leader may contact the church's Senior Pastor for assistance or resourcing.

3. Externally assisted approach (External conflict resolution)

Where the grievance:

- Has escalated beyond the ability or capacity of the church leader to resolve the substantive and/or relational issues, and
- Where the Senior Church leadership decide the need for independent help in moving towards addressing the grievance, or
- Involves allegations of serious misconduct or repeated bullying, or
- Involves serious concerns about workplace performance where the church worker is a paid staff member

then the church Senior Leadership should contact a suitably qualified person to implement an externally assisted approach, e.g. our Apostolic Reference Team.

COMPLAINTS FROM EXTERNAL PARTIES

The following process should be used to manage any complaints or grievances that are received from a member of the public or an individual who does not currently attend GCC.

Public

Any complaint, request for information about church business or staff/member details or grievance that is received from a member of the public or an individual who does not currently attend GCC is to be:

- Noted in the church diary
- Requested in writing (allegations or concerns regarding child abuse or from a child are not required to be in writing) and forwarded to the Safer Churches Coordinator who will manage in consultation with the Senior Leadership
- All WHS and safety related issues are to be contained/removed as necessary, recorded on a GCC Incident/Hazard Report Form and forwarded to the WHS Coordinator

Contractors

Contractors are required to complete a GCC Incident/Hazard Report form and immediately notify the WHS Coordinator or Executive Pastor if an incident occurs or there is a safety concern whilst being engaged by Generation City Church. Any contractor who receives any NSW WorkCover notice whilst engaged by Generation City Church is to immediately contact the WHS Coordinator or Executive Pastor before proceeding or continuing with the contracted task.