



# Health and Safety

for congregations

*Issue resolution*

## How this guide can help you

Where a health and safety issue or concern is raised, all parties must communicate with each other to help resolve it. This guide will help you develop appropriate processes to resolve disputes about safety matters efficiently and effectively.

### In this section you will learn

- Why issue resolution is important
- How to create an issue resolution procedure
- Where to get help

### The practical tools you will find

- A sample issue resolution procedure

## Why is issue resolution important

"If your brother or sister sins against you, go and tell them their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over" Matthew 18:15.

As Jesus understood, and as we all know too, issues can arise between people. In some situations, there may be different opinions relating to a health and safety matter. In the Uniting Church, we seek consensus when making decisions, but sometimes there are different views about potential risks, or a question over what should happen when a hazard is identified. Most issues can be dealt with quickly and efficiently through common sense, but sometimes issues may turn into a dispute which needs further understanding to resolve.

## Why have an issue resolution procedure ?

Every congregation should have procedures in place to deal with safety issues. Sometimes these are not straight-forward to resolve and can lead to relational issues or conflict. Having a process in place can help achieve timely and effective resolution. Any procedures developed should be done so in consultation with staff, volunteers and other workers. Documenting your processes will also foster understanding as everyone will know how such matters will be resolved. The procedure does not need to be complicated or time consuming, and to help we have created a template you can download and complete.

Documentation is also important. If an issue is resolved, details of the issue and the resolution should be set out in a written agreement.

## Commit to action

- Download the sample procedure found **here**.
- Talk with your workers about how you will resolve disputes
- Document your issue resolution procedure
- Keep documentation on agreed actions when resolving a dispute. A template can be found **here**.

## Where to get help

It often helps to seek advice early. If an issue is moving beyond a safety matter, and becoming a relational matter or conflict, Presbytery or the People and Culture team at the Synod can assist.

Email: [people@nswact.uca.org.au](mailto:people@nswact.uca.org.au)

