

**Christian Conventions of Western Australia Inc**

**(“CCOWA”)**

ABN 38 223 904 915

## **Code of Conduct**

### **For Committee Members, Leaders and Volunteers**

#### **1. Scope**

This Code applies to all Team Members who are in influential, supervisory, leadership or Committee roles whether engaged with CCOWA as employees or as volunteers (excluding Support People)

#### **2. Rationale & Purpose**

The New Testament teaches that the grace of God that has appeared in our Lord Jesus Christ brings salvation, and is received by faith, and not based on any works that we do (Romans 3:22-25; 5:6-8; Ephesians 2:8-9, Titus 2:11). This same full, free, gracious and unmerited salvation is also the beginning of a transformed life because the grace of God liberates us into a life in union with Christ in which we do good works prepared beforehand for us to walk in (Ephesians 2:10).

It is this same grace that teaches us to say ‘no’ to ungodliness and to live transparent lives of confession and repentance (Titus 2:12, James 5:16, 1 Timothy 4:15). This Code focuses on behaviour and doctrine; however, CCOWA also acknowledges the importance of motives and intentions.

The Bible holds high expectations for ministry People and Bible teachers in their conduct and doctrine. In 1 Timothy 4:16, a Christian leader must have particular conduct (‘life’) and teaching (‘doctrine’).<sup>1</sup> While this is addressed to church leaders, they are to have this conduct and doctrine because they are examples to the rest of God’s people, modelling to them what life in Christ looks like. For this reason, urgent care must be taken as team members’ conduct and doctrine directly impact the salvation of those with whom they interact. The structure of this Code is based on 1 Timothy 4:16, addressing both conduct and doctrine.

Engagement and ongoing involvement with CCOWA are dependent on godliness of conduct and on doctrine as defined in this Code.

#### **3. Conduct Expectations for Team Members**

##### **Watch your life closely (1 Timothy 4:16)**

A person’s character and conduct qualify him or her for Christian ministry in CCOWA. A Christian leader’s life must be consistent with passages like 1 Timothy 3:1-13, 4:11-16, 6:11-16, 2 Timothy 3:10-4:5, Titus 1:5-9, Galatians 5:16-26, and Romans 12-15. Accordingly, all team members must watch their lives closely to model a life pleasing to God.

CCOWA desires all team members to be servant-hearted, constrained by the love of Christ, growing and being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. As such, their behaviour will be above reproach and adorn the gospel they proclaim.

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<sup>1</sup> The Bible has high expectations for Christian People because they influence people by their teaching and conduct. This is apparent in passages like 1 Timothy 3:1-13, Ephesians 4:11-13, 2 Peter 2:1-3, 1 Corinthians 3:15 and 1 Timothy 4:16.

Team members shall:

### **Foundational Ministry Conduct**

- 3.1** Read the Bible and pray personally, seeking to live a godly life, always thankful to God for his love and grace in sending His son to die in their place.
- 3.2** Love and care for family; their behaviour in family relationships is to be consistent with this Code.
- 3.3** Regularly attend an evangelical congregation of God's people.
- 3.4** Engage in evangelism for the salvation of the rebellious and lost.
- 3.5** Wait for the return of Jesus Christ.
- 3.6** Guard and pass on the gospel and Biblical truth to the next generation of disciples making disciples, by teaching the Bible text accurately, courageously and respectfully.
- 3.7** Teach theology and Christian ethics in a manner consistent with this Code.

### **Interpersonal Conduct**

- 3.8** Treat people with respect. Make every effort to ensure that arrogance, belligerence, quick-temper, malice, envy, and slander do not mark relationships with, or conversations about, other people.
- 3.9** Act with sexual purity and integrity.<sup>2</sup> This includes:
  - 3.9.1** being exclusively faithful within monogamous heterosexual marriage,
  - 3.9.2** being celibate when not in a monogamous heterosexual marriage,
  - 3.9.3** not engaging in inappropriate sexual behaviour, and
  - 3.9.4** not viewing, possessing, producing or distributing pornography, Restricted Material or any form of child Abuse or exploitation.
- 3.10** Not knowingly make statements that are false, misleading, deceptive or defamatory.
- 3.11** Not use Sexist, threatening or foul language.
- 3.12** Not engage in any Racism. Express the welcome of the Lord Jesus to people of all ethnic and linguistic backgrounds.
- 3.13** Be mindful that a power disparity does naturally exist in ministry relationships and therefore do not knowingly use this disparity to take advantage of another. Power disparities may include age, theological training and knowledge, life experience and wisdom, respect and honour for Bible teachers, sex, wealth, ethnic background and social status. Allow freedom of response to the gospel.
- 3.14** Not use coercion, misrepresentation or manipulation in order to gain financial support.
- 3.15** Not steal property belonging to others, including intellectual property.
- 3.16** Not gamble. That is, frequent betting which may lead to addiction or significant financial loss.
- 3.17** Not engage in Abuse. Prohibited behaviours include Bullying, Grooming, Harassment, intimidation, Neglect, Vilification and violence.
- 3.18** Not enter into a romantic relationship or marriage with a non-Christian.
- 3.19** Dress appropriately.

### **Other Conduct**

- 3.20** 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.
- 3.21** In principle, team members are to work with no alcohol in their body. Do not undertake a CCOWA activity if impaired by medication, by alcohol, or by mind-altering or addictive substances.
- 3.22** Be responsible and moderate in the use of alcohol.

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<sup>2</sup> Bible passages for 3.9 include Genesis 2:19b-25, 1 Timothy 3:2, 1 Corinthians 7:2, 1 Corinthians 7:8-9, 1 Corinthians 7:39, 1 Timothy 2:9, 1 Corinthians 6:15, Matthew 5:27-28, Matthew 19:14, Ephesians 6:4.

- 3.23** Do not use, possess, or distribute any illegal substances or engage in illicit drug use.
- 3.24** Abide by all CCOWA policies and procedures.

## **4. Doctrinal Expectations for Team Members**

### **Watch your doctrine closely (1 Timothy 4:16)**

Those teaching the Bible in CCOWA must watch their doctrine closely. CCOWA believes in “The divine inspiration and infallibility of Holy Scripture as originally given and its supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.” This statement on the infallibility of Scripture is the founding and guiding principle for all other statements in the Doctrinal Basis, and the doctrine statements in this Section. Team members are required to believe and uphold the theology of, and live consistently with both:

- 4.1** The CCOWA Doctrinal Basis as set out in the Constitution, which currently says:
- 4.1.1** The divine inspiration and infallibility of Holy Scripture as originally given and its supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.
  - 4.1.2** The unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit in the Godhead.
  - 4.1.3** The universal sinfulness and guilt of humanity since the Fall, rendering mankind subject to God's wrath and condemnation.
  - 4.1.4** The conception of Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God, by the Holy Spirit and His birth by the virgin Mary.
  - 4.1.5** Redemption from the guilt, penalty and power of sin only through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ, as our representative and substitute.
  - 4.1.6** The Lordship and victory of Jesus Christ over Satan, sin, death and the world in His resurrection, with flesh, bones and all things pertaining to a human body, from the dead.
  - 4.1.7** Salvation from judgement received by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, according to Scripture alone, and to the glory of God alone.
  - 4.1.8** The necessity of the work of the Holy Spirit to make the death of Christ effective in the individual sinner, granting them repentance towards God, and true faith in Jesus Christ.
  - 4.1.9** The continuing indwelling work of the Holy Spirit in the believer.
  - 4.1.10** The expectation of the personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - 4.1.11** The holy, universal and apostolic Church, which is the body of Christ and to which all believers belong.
- 4.2** and the following additional doctrinal statements derived from the Bible <sup>3</sup>:
- 4.2.1** God's saving gospel, that Jesus Christ is Lord through His penal substitutionary atoning death and bodily resurrection, is of first importance, to be proclaimed to all the world.

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<sup>3</sup> The doctrinal statements 4.2.1 to 4.2.9 are derived from passages in the Bible in the passages that follow. This list is indicative, not exhaustive.

Statement 4.2.1 - 1 Corinthians 15:1-6, 1 Corinthians 1;17-25, Romans 1:1-5, Romans 3:21-26, Romans 10:9-15, Mark 10:45.

Statement 4.2.2 - 1 Corinthians 8:4-6, John 1:1-18, 20:28, John 14:16-17, 26, John 5:19-23, 14:31, Romans 8:9-11.

Statement 4.2.3 - Romans 3:19-26, Ephesians 2:1-10, Luke 19:9-14, Galatians 2:15-16.

Statement 4.2.4 - Acts 20:21, Mark 1:14-15, 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10, Titus 2:11-14, James 2:18-19, Romans 6:12-14, Galatians 5:19-25.

Statement 4.2.5 - Acts 10:40-42, John 5:22-29, 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9, Matthew 25:46, John 3:36, Revelation 21:1-8.

Statement 4.2.6 - 2 Peter 1:19-21, 2 Timothy 3:15-17, John 10:35, 1 Thessalonians 4:1-2, 1 Corinthians 14:37-38, John 16:13-14.

Statement 4.2.7 - Genesis 1:26-27, 5:1-3, James 3:9-10, Psalm 139:13-16, Galatians 3:28-29, Psalm 104:27-30.

Statement 4.2.8 - Genesis 1:26-28, Genesis 2:15-25, 1 Corinthians 11:2-16, 1 Timothy 5:1-2, Titus 2:1-8, Romans 16:1-16, Philippians 4:2-3, 1 Timothy 2:8-15.

Statement 4.2.9 - Matthew 19:4-9, Genesis 1:26-28, Genesis 2:20-24, Ephesians 5:21-33, 1 Corinthians 7:1-9, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11.

- 4.2.2** There is only one God, eternally existing as three equally fully divine persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; the Holy Spirit is eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son. And these three persons relate accordingly in love.
- 4.2.3** Sinners can only be justified by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ Jesus alone.
- 4.2.4** Conversion, involving repentance and faith, is essential to salvation and is necessarily followed by a life of trusting Jesus and turning from sin to obeying the Lord Jesus in the power of the Spirit.
- 4.2.5** The Lord Jesus has been appointed by God as the judge of the living and the dead. At His return those who have persevered in repentance and faith will receive eternal life, but those who have continued in their rejection of God will be condemned to the pain of eternal exclusion in hell from the blessed presence of God.
- 4.2.6** The Bible, being inspired by the Holy Spirit, is a completely trustworthy and coherent revelation of God and His purposes. It is sufficiently clear and comprehensive for us to know God and to live lives that please Him.
- 4.2.7** All people are created in and bear the image of God, and so every person - regardless of ethnicity, sex, age or ability - is worthy of being treated with dignity and respect from conception to the natural end of life.
- 4.2.8** God created humanity, biologically male and female, equal in worth, for His glory. God's good purpose is that men and women in their similarities and differences, being interdependent and not interchangeable, serve Him together in complementary, and mutually cooperative, and mutually enriching ways.
- 4.2.9** Marriage, as prescribed in the Bible, is exclusively between one man and one woman, is intended<sup>4</sup> by God until parted by death, and is the only right place for the expression of human sexual relations.

This Section 4 of the Code of Conduct and Doctrine will only be changed by the Management Committee if the following conditions are satisfied:

- a. The Management Committee provides at least two months' notice of each recommended change and the process set out below in 4.b to the Chairperson (appointed at the time under the CCOWA Constitution), members of the Management Committee, and
- b. Written agreement or disagreement is received at least two weeks before the nominated Annual General Meeting with at least half of the Management Committee agreeing in writing with each change.

## 5. Implementation

All Team members are responsible for meeting the standards in this Code and for ensuring behaviours inconsistent with this Code are not tolerated or covered up. All concerns or allegations of breaches of this Code are required to be treated compassionately and non-judgmentally, and must be reported to the Chairperson as set out below.

The following alleged breaches must also be reported to the Management Committee as soon as possible:

- Constant Breaches or Misconduct (Section 5.2)
- Serious Breaches or Serious Misconduct (Section 5.3)
- Breaches of the Law or Allegations of Abuse (Section 5.4)
- Misconduct or Serious Misconduct (Section 6 Definitions)

Breaches of this Code will be categorised in Sections 5.1 - 5.4, aligning the alleged breach behaviour with a commensurate process.

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<sup>4</sup> 'Intended' is chosen to allow for situations where a team member's marriage may break down, and still believe in the biblical ideal of God's intent for marriage.

## 5.1 Minor Breaches

Any minor breach not covered in other categories listed above

Minor breaches will be addressed by a Convention Chairperson, through a conversation between the person and the Convention Chairperson to bring about a behavioural change consistent with the Code. Where a particular sin is a problem, commit to seeking appropriate accountability with staff peers or Convention Chairperson and seek counselling where needed, using resources and help available. It is crucial to deal with such matters confidentially and sensitively. The team member needs to be open to correction and humble enough to modify behaviours. The team member should change his/her conduct. If this is difficult, the person should inform his/her Supervisor to receive help and direction.

## 5.2 Constant Breaches or Misconduct

Constant Breaches or Misconduct include behaviours listed in, but are not limited to, the Definition of Misconduct, where a person has been made aware of his/her behaviour and refuses or is unable to change, or the behaviour is determined to be in this category in the opinion of a Convention Chairperson or the CCOWA Chairperson.

If a team member has committed an alleged Constant Breach or Misconduct, then there may be disciplinary consequences.

## 5.3 Serious Breaches or Serious Misconduct

Serious breaches or Serious Misconduct include behaviours listed in, but are not limited to, the Definition of Serious Misconduct or the behaviour is determined to be in this category in the opinion of a Convention Chairperson or the CCOWA Chairperson. Not upholding the Doctrinal Basis or Doctrine Section (Section 4) will be treated as Serious Misconduct.

If a team member has committed a Serious Breach or Serious Misconduct, then there will be disciplinary consequences.

## 5.4 Breaches of the Law or Allegations of Abuse

Breaches of the law or allegations of Abuse are to be referred to the appropriate government authorities including the Police (where required and as appropriate). Convention Chairpersons must immediately inform the CCOWA Chairperson of such allegations and referrals.

### **Other Implementation Principles**

It may be necessary to step a person down from certain duties or suspend that person while repentance and/or counselling and/or an investigation takes place. This enables CCOWA to manage risk and duty of care to all people involved.

Failure to meet the standards of this Code may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment/engagement.

## 6. Definitions

### **Refer Schedule One**

Approved by the Management Committee 01/12/2024