

State Chaplaincy Board Code of Ethics

Accountability

Accredited Duty and Relief Chaplains are committed to the maintenance of high standards of professional conduct and competence when advancing the welfare of inmates in the Queensland Corrections system. We are accountable for our ministry whatever it's setting, and this accountability is expressed in relationships to clients, colleagues, Corrections Centre staff, prospective Chaplains and our respective faith communities. In addition, we are accountable through the acceptance and practice of the requirements of these Ethical Principles and Conduct Guidelines.

Queensland Corrective Services Code of Conduct

In addition, Queensland Corrective Services has its own Code of Conduct which highlights many of the principles expressed in this Code, but also some principles and requirements that are unique to the Corrective Services environment. This document is available on the QCS Web site.

Pastoral Care

In the interpretation of the Chaplaincy Board, Pastoral Care is a tradition of unconditional care, with strong elements of respect, dignity, confidentiality, forgiveness, reconciliation, hope and wholeness. Pastoral Care is offered on a personal basis without imposition or intrusion and it is offered in an ecumenical spirit.

General Ethical Principles

Chaplains respect the essential humanity, worth and dignity of all people and promote this value in their work.

Chaplains respect the privacy and confidentiality of inmates.

Chaplains recognise and respect the diversity among people and oppose discrimination and oppressive behaviour.

Chaplains understand that in this context a Pastoral Care ministry involves working for the well-being and wholeness of inmates, and that this work is based on faith perspectives. Expressions of the forgiving love of a caring God, whilst completely appropriate, do not justify unreasonable pressure for faith commitment or church affiliation.

Chaplains will take steps to maintain and develop their competence and arrange for on going and appropriate professional supervision.

Chaplains are part of respective faith communities and accept responsibility for maintaining good relationships and continuing worship in these communities.

Corrections Chaplains will work co-operatively within the regulations and requirements of the Corrections Centre/s in which they work. In particular, Chaplains will abide by all of the security requirements.

Conduct Guidelines

Professional Relationships

- We use our knowledge and associations for the benefit of people we serve, not for personal advantage.
- We ensure that the relationship between Chaplain and inmate is as far as possible a respectful and equal relationship.
- We do not malign colleagues, other professionals or Correctional Centre staff.
- We are loyal to the policies of the Chaplaincy Board and comply with the requirements of Queensland Corrective Services.
- We recognise that our ministry is a Pastoral Care ministry. This includes services, memorials, sacraments, Bible studies and spiritual guidance, but we do not presume to offer other services.

Client Relationships

- We make only realistic statements about what inmates may expect from the pastoral care process and its outcomes.
- We show sensitive regard for the moral, social, religious and cultural standards of inmates.
- We avoid imposing our beliefs on others, although we may express them when appropriate in the pastoral care context.
- We only see those inmates that are comfortable about seeing us.
- We recognise the risk of dependencies in our relationships with inmates and we avoid close personal relationships which could impair our judgement and compromise the integrity of our work.
- We avoid any kind of harassment, abusive words or actions, or exploitative coercion of inmates.
- We show an awareness of the community's expectations of persons in such a position of trust.
- All forms of sexual behaviour or harassment with inmates or staff are unethical, even if an inmate consents to this. Sexual behaviour is defined as, but not limited to, all forms of overt and covert seductive speech, gestures, as well as physical contact of a sexual nature. Harassment is defined as, but not limited to, repeated comments, gestures or physical contacts of a sexual nature

Confidentiality

- We treat all communications with inmates with professional confidence.
- We maintain inmates' confidentiality, except as mandated by law, to prevent a clear and immediate danger to someone.

- We recognise that we have an obligation to report evidence of abuse, harassment, cruelty of others or evidence of self-harming behaviour.
- When current or former inmate stories are retold, their identity is thoroughly disguised.
- All records kept on inmates are stored or disposed of in a manner that assures security and confidentiality.

Responsibility to Self

- We have a responsibility to maintain personal effectiveness, resilience and the ability to help inmates.
- We will monitor our own functioning and seek help or withdraw from this work when personal resources are too depleted.
- We will plan regular and suitable pastoral care supervision and professional development, and will use this to develop pastoral skills, monitor performance and increase our sense of accountability.
- We do not offer personal or contact information to inmates or about to be released inmates.
- We will ensure that each one of us is covered by a professional indemnity through the church community we represent as a Corrections Chaplain.