

## RISK CHECKLIST – CHURCHES

### COMMUNITY MEALS

A number of churches engage in ministry to the wider community by the provision of meals, often to those who may be homeless, suffer economic hardship or who need the companionship of others.

This checklist sets out topics for consideration in conducting a risk analysis of the activity.

#### Food

- Where will food supplies be sourced? Is this sustainable?
- What facilities exist for keeping food on-site? Do they comply with standards for storage?
- Do we have existing food handling/preparation standards in place? How do we ensure compliance?
- How do we ensure that we have enough food for expected numbers of diners?
- Do we cater for people who may have allergies? How do we communicate our approach to this topic?
- How do we ensure the nutritional value of the food we serve?
- What are the consequences of providing surplus food to “take away”?
- What are the consequences of providing tea and coffee making facilities (hot liquids)?
- What issues are associated with washing dishes?
- Are appropriate waste disposal facilities available?
- What access restrictions apply to food preparation areas, particularly in relation to guests and children?

#### Premises

- Is the activity included in the existing church insurance coverage?
- What issues are associated with the set-up of the venue?
- Are there slip, trip or fall hazards, e.g. electrical leads?
- Have we assigned responsibility for control of venue heating and cooling?
- Who is able to operate technical equipment such as a sound system?
- What issues are associated with venue clear-up?
- Do we have appropriate toilet and washing facilities? Are these checked during the event?
- Do guests have access to other parts of a complex?
- Has the potential for theft of equipment, food or belongings been considered?
- Have we catered for people with physical disabilities?

The information provided is of a general nature only and may not identify all matters that need to be included in the design of effective controls for the subject area. Professional advice should be obtained on individual circumstances.

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- Are first aid kits available? Are trained first aid practitioners on duty?
- Have all Work Health and Safety matters been addressed, e.g. manual handling of chairs and tables?
- What emergency evacuation processes are in place? Are volunteers trained in the procedures?

### Guests

- Do you have a policy for dealing with “Persons of interest”? Note that your church should have an existing policy in relation to “Persons of interest” that needs to be followed.
- Have you considered how you will cater for guests who are minors?
- Do you have a policy on animals (e.g. guests’ pets) on the premises?

### Volunteers

- What volunteer induction and training processes are in place?
- What has been done to maintain privacy of volunteers, particularly those who have “relationship building” responsibilities?
- How do you assess the capability and maturity of volunteers?
- Have all volunteers been subject to police checks?
- What are the consequences of having children among the volunteers?
- What practices do you have for allocating volunteers to required tasks?

### Security

- Guests may have different behavioural norms; have you considered the implications of differing behaviours? What boundaries (and possible sanctions) have been established?
- How do larger numbers of guests impact on normal dynamics of the activity? Have these been catered for?
- What is the policy of dealing with requests for money? What is the policy of dealing with requests for other services?
- What is the venue smoking policy? Do you cater in some way for those who want to smoke?
- What is the policy for dealing with guests who might be drug or alcohol affected? What is the policy for dealing with guests who bring substances to the venue to use / consume or possibly deal?
- What are the implications of conflicts between guests? Between volunteers and guests? Between volunteers?
- How do you deal with guests who might be experiencing psychotic episodes?

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- What emergency contact arrangements do you have in place; have you advised local police of the activity?
- What incident reporting processes do you have in place?

### Other services

- What are the implications of offering other services to guests, e.g. a church or chapel service?
- Do you offer counselling services? If your church has a counselling service then existing policies should be complied with.
- Do you offer food parcels to guests who have a need?
- Do you source fresh food for distribution to guests e.g. bread, fruit?

### People Movement

- What are the risks associated with guests entering or leaving the venue?
- Do you provide transport assistance to guests?
  - If a church bus is used, are existing controls complied with, e.g. licencing of drivers, police checks, etc.?
  - If private vehicle use is contemplated, what are the risks? What are the insurance implications?
- Do you have appropriate traffic management protocols in place for guests and volunteers moving around the venue, e.g. servers, cleaners, kitchen access, etc.?

### Funding

- Is the ministry supported by sustainable funding sources? Is there proper accounting for the activity?
- What cash handling protocols exist for the activity?