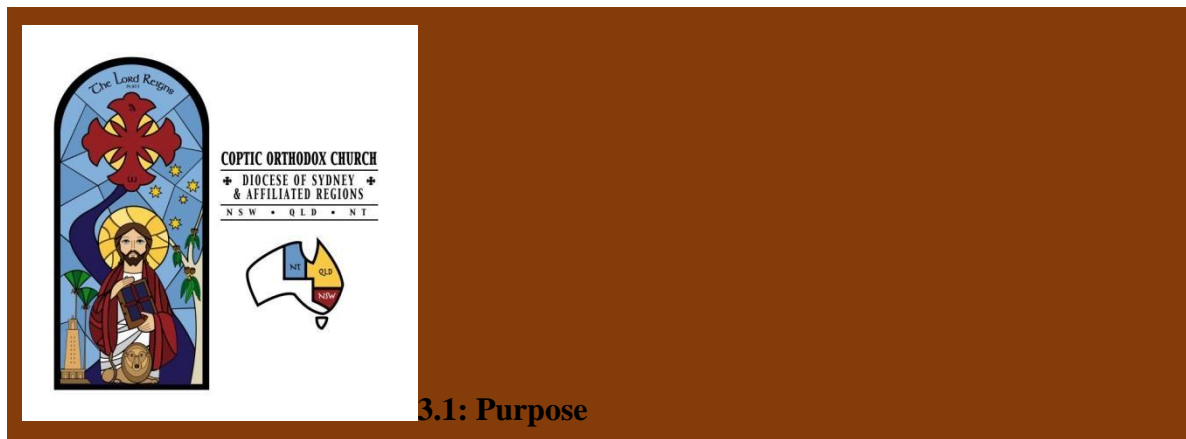


1. The Sydney Family Council policy:



3.1.1: The Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria, Diocese of Sydney and affiliated regions (**the Church**) commits itself to the education, betterment, care, protection and safety of all people with whom it comes into contact.

3.1.2: This Policy / Procedure document is intended to detail the Church's expectations and requirements with respect to the Sydney Family Council for Personal Affairs (**the Council**).

3.1.3: Specifically, this Policy / Procedure document provides guidance on how any conflict between congregation members (such as marital issues) may be reconciled.

3.1.4: In the event that a conflict cannot be reconciled, the principles within this Policy / Procedure document may assist the Sydney Family Council in implementing separation, divorce or annulment of the marriage according to the laws and canons which had been set by the highest authority of the Church – The Holy Synod-.

3.1.5: The Church may also impose punishment or ramifications upon a party that has engaged in wrongdoing according to the Church laws and canons.

3.2: Scope

3.2.1: This Policy / Procedure document applies, so far as reasonably practicable, to all congregation members and all kinds of interpersonal conflicts they may encounter (such as marital or relationship conflicts between husband and wife).

3.2.2: This Policy / Procedure document does not pertain to:

3.2.2.1: Professional conflict management (for example, conflicts of interests) or

3.2.2.2: Interpersonal conflicts between congregation members and priests.

3.3: Definitions

3.3.1: The Church means the Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria, Diocese of Sydney and affiliated regions (relevantly including Queensland, Northern Territories, the Kingdom of Thailand and Singapore.) and its congregations within these regions.

3.3.2: Clerical Council means the authoritative body within the Church which is vested with the power and responsibility for managing and resolving interpersonal conflicts. The Clerical Council is essentially the Church Court and can make a determination on particular matters. The Clerical Council comprises both: the Diocesan Family council (Sydney Family Council= SFC) and the Regional Council.

3.3.3: Congregation member means any person who is a member or attendee of the Coptic Orthodox Church, Diocese of Sydney and its Affiliated Regions, and may include a person engaged in any of the following capacities:

3.3.3.1: As an employee

3.3.3.2: As a contractor or sub-contractor

3.3.3.3: As a volunteer

3.3.3.4: As a person undertaking practical training or education, or

3.3.3.5: Otherwise engaged to perform duties on behalf, and with the authority of the Church.

3.3.4: Disciplinary action means steps taken against a congregation member, husband, or wife by the Church for improper or unauthorised conduct. In the event that a husband or wife or a congregation member is found to have engaged in misconduct, they may be subjected to punishment by the Church in the form of a caution, a written warning, suspension or termination of their engagement with the Church according to the church laws and canons.

3.3.5: Regional Clerical Council (RCC) means the Regional division of the Clerical Council. It is the highest authority for managing interpersonal conflicts and is above the Diocesan Family Council (Sydney Family Council **SFC**) in the applicable hierarchy.

3.3.6: Interpersonal conflict refers to a conflict between congregation members regarding their relationship with each other.

3.3.7: Reasonably Practicable means that which is, or was at a particular time, reasonably able to be done, taking into account and weighing up all relevant matters. For guidance on how to determine what is reasonably practicable in a particular situation, see the Safe Work Australia guide '*How to determine what is reasonably practicable to meet a health and safety duty*'.

3.3.8: Diocesan Family Council (Sydney Family Council SFC) means the Diocesan division of the Clerical Council. In the hierarchy of the Clerical Council, the **SFC** is subservient and below the Regional Clerical council **RCC**.

3.3.9: The Bishop means the Bishop of the diocese of Sydney.

3.3.10: The Council means the members who are forming the applicable Clerical Council (SFC or RCC).

3.3.11: The Secretary means the secretary of the applicable Clerical Council (SFC or RCC).

3.3.12: Private Investigators (PI), means the private investigators that one of the parties can use to prove his point, and the SFC may or may not accept their reports.

3.4: Policy / Procedure Principles

3.4.1: The Council

3.4.1.1: Any conflict shall be primarily addressed and managed by the Sydney Family Council (SFC).

3.4.1.2: The Council shall meet at least once a month.

3.4.1.3: Although the Bishop shall generally attend Council meetings, the Bishop may give permission for the members of the Council to meet without his presence.

3.4.1.4: The Council may seek monetary contributions from congregation members involved in a conflict to assist in covering the expenses of the Council (for example, for stationary, electricity and the other facilities).

3.4.2: Lodging an interpersonal conflict

3.4.2.1: If an interpersonal conflict emerges between congregation members, one of the individuals involved should complete an application form (attached) providing details of:

3.4.2.1.1: The persons involved, and their contacts.

3.4.2.1.2: The nature of the conflict, its reasons, and its history.

3.4.2.1.3: Any relevant supporting evidence or information. (This might include PI reports or any other evidence). The Sydney Family Council will only accept sources of material and evidence which is strictly consistent with the Civil and Criminal State and Federal laws of Australia.

3.4.2.1.4: The Sydney Family Council requires the parties to execute medical authorities to receive personal health information from their General Practitioner.

3.4.2.2: The completed application form should be provided to the Secretary of the SFC or any member of the Council.

3.4.2.3: By lodging the Application Form, the relevant congregation members authorise the Council to discuss the matter with other relevant parties. However, the Council shall endeavour to resolve the matter in a confidential and compassionate manner.

3.4.3: Resolution Process:

3.4.3.1: Upon receipt of an Application Form, the Council shall:

3.4.3.1.1: (through the Secretary or their nominated delegate) call each person involved separately to listen to their perspective on any issues relevant to the conflict, and

3.4.3.1.2: Endeavour to minimise any potential discomfort to the individuals involved by making suitable arrangements (such as conducting investigations in a timely manner, providing comfort breaks and access to facilities).

3.4.3.2: The Council may make contact with the persons involved in the conflict on many occasions during the investigation process to verify or ascertain relevant information.

3.4.3.3: The Council shall endeavour to meet with the individuals involved and shall not unnecessarily discuss any conflict with a relative or family member.

3.4.3.4: The Council may arrange to meet or discuss with persons involved in the conflict collectively in the interests of seeking an amicable resolution. The purpose of this meetings is to confront the relevant issues and seek to obtain the truth with regards to the issues.

3.4.3.5: The Council may seek written advice from the priest which the person (or persons) involved is praying with and belonging to.

3.4.3.6: The Council may also seek the help or assistance of professionals (such as specialist counsellors, or Lawyers, etc ...).

3.4.3.7: The council may appoint Sub Committee in the Affiliated Regions (Queens Land, Northern Territories, Kingdom of Thailand, Singapore, or any other country which under the Diocese) from the Priests of the Coptic Orthodox Churches belongs to the Diocese of Sydney and its Affiliated Regions).

3.4.3.8: Should the conflict not be resolved consensually between the parties, the Sydney Family Council may make a decision or recommendations according to the Church canons and laws and SFC must inform the parties in writing with any decision imposed by the Council based in the available evidence and information.

3.4.3.9: Any decision made by the Council shall be recorded in writing and executed with the Church seal and the signature of the Bishop.

3.4.3.10: The Council shall retain the records of each decision. However, these records shall be kept in a secure location and shall only be accessible to authorised representatives of the Council or by individuals with the permission of the Council.

3.4.3.11: The Sydney Family Council SFC must inform Regional Clerical Council RCC in writing of any decisions made with respect to interpersonal conflicts involving congregation members.

3.4.3.12: In the event that a punishment is implemented by the Council with respect to a congregation member, the Council shall inform the priests of that member's congregation.

3.5: Appeals or Review:

3.5.1: If a congregation member, the subject of a conflict, is not satisfied or content with the decision of the Sydney Family Council SFC, they may request that the Regional Clerical Council RCC review the decision, in that case the Secretary of the Regional Clerical Council RCC must in the Sydney Family Council SFM and the SFM will write as summery report about the case.

3.5.2: Upon receiving a request for review of a decision, the Regional Clerical Council RCC shall review the decision of the Sydney Family Council SFC. After considering the relevant evidence and information, the Regional Clerical Council RCC may:

3.5.2.1: Affirm the decision of the Sydney Family Council SFC, or

3.5.2.2: Revoke the decision of the Sydney Family Council and substitute an alternative decision.

3.6: Key Principles:

3.6.1: In seeking to resolve a conflict, the Sydney Family Council SFC shall implement the principles of procedural fairness whereby individuals involved are afforded the opportunity to:

3.6.1.1: Put forward their perspective of relevant issues, and

3.6.1.2: Be informed of the relevant issues, and

3.6.1.3: Invited to respond to any proposed decision or action prior to any final determination being made.