



Continuing Ministerial Development Guidelines

Introduction and Purpose

Continuing Ministerial Development (CMD) is the name of the development process designed to ensure ministers Accredited and Recognised by the Baptist Association of NSW & ACT meet relevant government and Association compliance requirements. CMD seeks to ensure a basic level of ongoing development in Accredited and Recognised ministers and the safety of those in our church communities, whilst providing the opportunity for ministers to process and reflecting on the many ways in which God is continuing to grow, stretch and use them in the building of his kingdom.

Annual CMD engagement is a requirement of ongoing Accreditation and Recognition (see page 21 of the *Affirmation of Ministry Guidelines 2022*).

The CMD process is managed by the CMD Administrator at the direction of the Pastoral Affirmations Team Leader and the CMD Panel. The role of the CMD team is to support ministers in meeting requirements and grace is a guiding principle in managing the process. It is hoped that ministers will be able to view CMD as a constructive activity that promotes the flourishing of ministry, supporting personal growth, learning and ongoing development.

Ministers unsure of their ability to complete annual CMD requirements are invited to contact the CMD team to discuss.

Baptist Church Membership and Approved Ministry Roles

The CMD process is designed to support the monitoring of several Accreditation and Recognition requirements as outlined in the *Affirmation of Ministry Guidelines 2022*. This includes:

1. Remaining a member of an affiliated (or equivalent) Baptist Church (see 2.5 and 9.b. in the *Affirmation of Ministry Guidelines 2022*)
2. Serving within an approved ministry (see 6.2 and 9.f. in the *Affirmation of Ministry Guidelines 2022*). Note that ministers are entitled to a 2 year leave of absence from serving within an approved ministry, typically utilised when taking study leave or simply requiring a break from ministry. In addition, there is flexibility for pastors who are struggling with mental illness, poor health, financial pressures or other circumstances. It is important to note that while on a leave of absence from serving in an approved ministry role, certain aspects of CMD must still be upheld as a matter of compliance.
3. Completing a minimum of 6 hours of supervision per year with a qualified supervisor approved by the Association during the first three years following Accreditation or Recognition (see stage 6, step 2 in the *Affirmation of Ministry Guidelines 2022*). The CMD Administrator can be contacted to receive the list of approved supervisors and/or discuss supervision cost subsidies for those accredited ministers required to undertake supervision.



The CMD Process

The CMD process is ever evolving as improvements are implemented. The annual process begins with an email, typically sent in January each year, inviting ministers to pay the annual CMD administration fee for the year ahead. Upon payment, ministers are provided a link through which a CMD report can be completed (or finalised for those who choose to report in pieces throughout the year).

Key aspects of the report include:

1. Updating basic personal and ministry information
2. Agreeing to operate within Policies and Procedures of the Standards Unit, including a reaffirmation of the acceptance of the Code of Ethics and Conduct
3. Providing evidence of growth in key areas of development by recording activities, providing reflections and setting goals. There are three areas of development overseen and three options for providing evidence within the report.

CMD Development Areas

The following are the key ministry development areas and some examples of various activities that can be included:

Personal and Spiritual Formation

- Supervision
- Mentoring/Coaching/Spiritual Direction
- Counselling/Therapy/Prayer Ministry
- Reflection on Current Ministry roles
- Retreats (spiritual, individual, Pastoral Renewal)
- Personal reading on personal spiritual formation
- Spiritual formation courses
- Marriage enrichment courses
- Short-term mission trips

Professional and Academic Formation

- Seminars, Training courses, Conferences
- Post-graduate studies
- Distance study or other appropriate secular institutions
- Professional reading reflecting on academic learning
- Involvement in a professional area or body
- Involvement in pastoral/church reviews, observation or evaluation
- Write an article for a journal
- Present a paper at a conference
- Teaching and/or designing workshop/lectures (if not your primary ministry)

Denominational Involvement

- Attendance at Assemblies and the Gathering Annual Conference
- Attendance at Pastors and Leaders Conference
- Membership and involvement on a committee
- Involvement in regional pastors networks



- Involvement in District Association meetings
- Involvement with Church Consultation
- Involvement in training others for ministry
- Mentoring a student or church leader
- Outside main ministry involvement (e.g. chaplaincy, community work, schools)
- Preaching in other Baptist churches

CMD Reporting Options

When completing the CMD report, in addition to providing basic information, ministers have three options to choose from in reflecting on and providing evidence of development.

OPTION 1

Record and reflect on a minimum of 10 hours of activities in each of the three key areas of engagement (30 hours per year in total, 10 hours per year per key area).

OPTION 2

Find a mentor/supervisor to reflect with on involvement in the 3 key areas and submit 5 references. The mentor/supervisor can provide the first reference, with a further 4 references coming from people relevant to the areas of development.

OPTION 3

Ministers who are currently serving in non-pastoral roles and would prefer an alternative to the standard reporting options can choose this option. The categories of eligible ministers are:

- Chaplains (including Defence Force, Police, Ambulance)
- Baptist Agency staff (including Morling College Staff, BaptistCare staff, BaptistCare Chaplains and Baptist Association staff)
- Baptist Mission Australia Field Staff
- Mission Agency staff (BMA, BWAA, other approved mission agencies)

Requirements for Option 3:

- A written statement from a work supervisor stating that the Accredited Minister is fulfilling the requirements for professional development for the position they hold
- A written statement from the pastor of the church they attend confirming their involvement
- A personal written statement outlining their involvement with the Association throughout the year

WWCC & CSS Compliance

The CMD report also addresses provision of a Working With Children Check (WWCC) and completing Creating Safe Spaces (CSS) training. In NSW, the *Child Protection (Working with Children) Regulation 2013* states that any work carried out as a minister or spiritual officer of a religious organisation is required to maintain a current WWCC. As someone undertaking work as an Accredited or Recognised minister of the Baptist Association, maintaining your WWCC is a legal requirement. There is a similar requirement for ministers serving in the ACT to have a Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) card.

Similarly, regulation of the Child Safe Standards under the Children's Guardian Act commenced from 1st February 2023 and applies to religious bodies, including the Baptist Association. Child Safe Standards 5 and 7 require Accredited and Recognised ministers to hold WWCCs and to undertake child safe training such as CSS. CSS has been specifically designed for Accredited and Recognised ministers, and for volunteers in Baptist churches to implement safe church practices in our NSW & ACT Baptist context. CSS has two components, including online learning modules and an interactive workshop. Both components can be done fully online, such that location is not, in itself, a barrier.

While it is acknowledged that some ministers serve in roles that do not typically involve children, WWCC and CSS training remain legal requirements. As children may on occasion still enter such workplaces, and since ministers carry their ministerial status outside of their immediate workplace, the Association supports these requirements as necessary in promoting community transparency and safety.

Retired Accredited Ministers

Ministers who have retired from full time and/or paid work but are seeking to retain their Accreditation may do so by continuing to meet CMD requirements. Such Accredited Ministers may complete the OPTION 1 CMD report with half the number of reporting hours (5 for each development area, 15 hours total each year).

Language Barriers

Ministers are encouraged to be aware of local ministers from non-English speaking backgrounds who may struggle with the CMD process due to language challenges, assisting them where possible. Ministers can also be referred to the Intercultural Lead at the Association for support.

Parental Leave

Ministers who are on extended parental leave (for example, as the primary carer for a 6 month leave period) can request additional flexibility in meeting CMD requirements, as outlined below. This is at the discretion of the Affirmation Oversight Team. Ministers on extended leave in response to a new adoption/foster care arrangement may also qualify.

1. If the leave period includes the standard reporting window (January-March), the minister may be given an extension on their reporting due date to the month following the end of the leave period. In addition, the CMD fee is waived.



2. When reporting on a year in which parental leave was taken for a significant period (e.g. approaching 6 months or more), the professional formation and denominational involvement components of CMD may be waived.
3. Where professional supervision is a requirement (e.g. minimum of 6 sessions a year for the first 3 years following Accreditation/Recognition), the requirement may be delayed such that no supervision is required when not working in a role that can be the focus of supervision.

A valid WWCC and CSS Certificate must always be maintained, including when on parental leave.

Confidentiality

The information provided through CMD reports, in particular, development reflections and references, are treated as confidential. Only necessary information, for example, relating to matters of compliance, will be shared by the CMD Administrator with Association staff.