



**Churches
of Christ**

Building Communities
of Hope & Compassion

SUPERVISION

...MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

*Let us think of ways to motivate one another
to acts of love and good works. (Heb.10:24 NLT)*

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churchesofchrist.org.au/supervision

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WHAT IS SUPERVISION?

Churches of Christ Vic/Tas (CCVT) is committed to doing better at building Communities of Hope and Compassion and developing Leaders to lead them. We know we will be doing better when each affiliated community is a safe place for everybody to grow in their discipleship of Jesus, and in their relationships with one another. The Supervision of People in Ministry in CCVT is a vital element in developing safe places. CCVT hopes to support those in ministry to meet with the increasing demands of their role and better support their diverse communities so that together they can be a sign, witness, and foretaste of the Kingdom of God.

Supervision is a joint endeavour in which a minister, with the help of a Supervisor, develops themselves in relation to their ministry and wider context, attends to the people they minister to and, by developing their own practice, feeds back into the knowledge and effectiveness of the wider CCVT Movement. To better understand the meaning behind the word Supervision, we delve deeper into each phrase below.

Supervision is a joint endeavour...

It is vital to recognise that Supervision is not a passive activity for the Supervisee, it involves both parties working in partnership, together facing the challenges of ministry, in service of the Supervisee and the wider mission.

...in which a minister develops themselves in relation to their ministry and wider context...

A key element of Supervision is to allow a minister to reflect on practise, learn, and be held and supported in that process.

...attends to the people they minister to...

Supervision always involves the community the Supervisee ministers in, otherwise it becomes an activity in counselling. Done well, Supervision is a time where the Supervisee can stand back and reflect on their community and the people they minister to so as to understand and serve them better.

...feeds back into the knowledge and effectiveness of the wider CCVT Movement.

Supervision should be a source of organisational learning. It is important to note that Supervision is not a process where the more experienced shape the practise, behaviour, and understanding of the novice, but rather a place where the Supervisor and Supervisee are standing side by side to together face the challenges of ministry. Supervision can be an effective tool to support an organisational culture which aims to constantly learn and develop.

Supervision starts with the premise that we acknowledge God is active in the minister and the life of the church. CCVT believes that healthy ministry requires those in ministry to continue in community with one another, it is the type of work that cannot be met with in isolation. A humble posture and a commitment to lifelong learning is required. Supervision lends itself to the practice of discernment, firstly about God's activity in both the minister and the church, and secondly in terms of our response—this will vary from situation to situation. In Supervision, we will learn, we will be challenged, we will be supported, and we will discover and face the risks of entering into the mystery of God's call and where it leads us. Whatever the circumstance, Supervision is to be one place where joy and pain can be freely expressed, but also a space of resurrection, redemption, and healing.

Supervision is not...

...mentoring or coaching if these merely focus on skills development and general progress. Sometimes a mentor or coach may also become your supervisor, provided they are still able to meet the requirements in this Supervision document. As a Minister, your Senior Minister cannot be your Supervisor. Senior Ministers are required to take their Associate Ministers through a coaching programme as detailed in our website churchesofchrist.org.au/coaching. This is separate to Supervision. In addition to a supervisor, we commend all who choose to have a coach, who can train ministers up in particular skills, or a mentor who can deal with matters of the heart and care for ministers.

Given that coaching is a useful addition to supervision, it may be possible to have the same person perform both functions, as long as the Supervision focus is not lost in the discussions. The CCVT Coaching Manual (available on the CCVT website) is an essential component to the Endorsement pathway for ministers, as well as the Internship program, and it may be a useful guide for the coaching component of such discussions, whereas those already Endorsed may include focused coaching in their annual Professional Development Plan.

Vital keys for supervision:

- To oversee the progress of the minister.
- To promote safe practices.
- To counsel their supervisee towards ethical understandings.
- To ensure they are in a healthy place.

CCVT SUPERVISION PATHWAYS

CCVT aims to enable those in ministry to access Supervision through **three** primary pathways, Registered Supervision, Accredited Supervision, and also Senior Ministers and others qualified in counselling and similar fields who will be considered as suitable for Supervision at the discretion of the Leadership team at CCVT (see below).

REGISTERED SUPERVISION

Registered Supervision is Supervision practised by an experienced Minister/professional who has completed a lower level of training. Training will be provided through CCVT and those who have received training will enter a pool of Supervisors available to CCVT People in Ministry.

To access this form of Supervision, People in Ministry can contact Greg Illingworth (gillingworth@churchesofchrist.org.au) or any of the leadership team.

Registered Supervisors within CCVT are required to fulfil the following requirements:

- Appropriate training (either provided by CCVT or approved by CCVT)
- Uphold the ethical responsibilities outlined in the CCVT *Practice of Ministry, Code of Ethics Policy* (or equivalent future policy) when engaged in the Supervisory relationship
- Establish a Supervision covenant with their Supervisee and maintain a record of their Supervision for the duration of the Supervisory relationship
- Provide their names and any CCVT Supervisory relationships they are engaged in to CCVT, so that CCVT can provide appropriate support and resources
- Provide feedback about the Supervision program to CCVT at review times

ACCREDITED SUPERVISION

Accredited Supervision is a specialist area of Supervision that applies to Supervisors that have been training through an accredited body. Stirling Theological College offers a postgraduate unit—The Art of Supervision—which seeks to equip practicing ministers to work as Supervisors for ordination candidates and ministers-in-formation and to develop further the capacity of a Supervisor to reflect theologically.

This approach is one that reflects more of a ‘professional’ nature, creating a pool of ‘experts’ in the area of Supervision, managed by Stirling. Supervisors who are trained through credited bodies such as Stirling may be eligible for payment their Supervision. To access this form of Supervision, contact Stirling directly or have a conversation with CCVT staff. CCVT will work

with Stirling to connect People in Ministry with Accredited Supervisors and support those in Accredited Supervisory Relationships.

APPROVED COUNSELLING

Sometimes a Minister can benefit from the processing of particular issues of safe and healthy ministry practice by dealing with significant life hurdles and the approaches taken to dealing with them. Whether the help needed addresses personal or professional matters, or those focused on the past or the present, targeted and specialised help is important to pursue when needed. It is, however, recommended that this not be a long-term arrangement in place of other supervision (even if the counselling needs to continue beyond the short term) because it runs the risk of concentrating the focus on single issues at the expense of other matters. The holistic approach to addressing healthy, safe and ethical ministry therefore necessitates that approved arrangements for any particular year are renegotiated with the CCVT Leadership team in the interests of optimum ministry practice.

GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Supervision is supported and highlighted in several CCVT policies as a priority for providing care and accountability for People in Ministry. This includes the following policies (click for documents):

-  [Safe Places Policy](#)
-  [Guide to Employment of Ministers](#)
-  [Code of Ethics for Ministers](#)
-  [Accreditation and Endorsement of People in Ministry Policy](#)
-  [Affinity:2](#)

Supervision is a required practice within CCVT, with the implementation and accountability sitting with both the Minister and their Employer.

HOW TO GET THE BEST OUT OF SUPERVISION AGREEMENT

Supervisory relationships begin with an agreement which includes specific items of enabling the Supervisor and Supervisee to feel sufficiently safe and to have complete clarity around their roles, and the boundaries of the relationship. If there is a mismatch in expectations, the Supervisory relationship can become a token relationship with no real benefits.

Such an agreement will include basic elements like meeting frequency, duration, and place, as well as agreed upon standards for the relationship.

We encourage Supervisors and Supervisees to use the agreement below as an annually-approved guide for their Supervisory relationship and add any specifics they require. (Remember that the agreement is in addition to the minister's annual professional development plan and the coaching required to progress toward ministry Endorsement).

Please complete this document, making copies for the supervisor and supervisee, and also sending a copy to the CCVT Leadership team.

Supervision Agreement

SUPERVISOR'S ROLE

Supervisors have a complex and enriching role, and perform a variety of functions. They provide support and counsel, they guide the learning, development and reflective practice of their Supervisee, and they oversee their Supervisee's ministry to provide additional support and safeguarding for communities.

The task of a Supervisor is to allow their Supervisee to feel held, valued, and understood so that they will be able to be open to review and challenge as well as able to value themselves and their own abilities. Supervisors can seek assistance and clarification from the CCVT Leadership team, as needed.

An effective Supervisor has the knowledge, experience, integrity and skill to:

- Maintain 'professionalism' to assist in creating a safe space to work on the issues the Supervisee faces;
- Help those in ministry identify things that are happening in their practice that they might not see or understand;
- Recognise when the Supervisor does not have the level of skill to assist those in ministry appropriately, and so offer an appropriate referral to a person who has the needed skills;
- Respect the processes and diversities of learning modes;
- Recognise where cultural expectations may be affecting ministry practice; and
- Name under what circumstances a Supervision relationship needs to be ended.

SUPERVISEE'S ROLE

It is important to remember to be proactive in the Supervisory relationship. It is all too easy to slide into dependency and just accept the type of Supervision you receive once a support system is set up. To ensure that Supervisees receive the Supervision they require, they need to take responsibility in an ongoing way for contracting and negotiating how their Supervision will operate, what it will focus on and how the process will be monitored and reviewed. Assistance and clarification can be sought from the CCVT Leadership team, as needed.

It is the responsibility of the Supervisee to include the following in the Supervision conversation:

- Identify ministry practice issues they need help with;
- Become increasingly able to share freely;
- Clarify the style of feedback they respond to best;
- Be open to feedback;
- Monitor tendencies to justify, explain, or defend;
- Develop the ability to clarify what feedback is useful;
- Remember that what happens in response to Supervision is their responsibility;
- Remember that the purpose of the whole undertaking is to enhance the ministry they offer; and
- Discern God's presence and purpose.

SUPERVISION RESOURCES

There are many helpful resources available on supervision, we highly recommend Rick Lewis's book - *Mentoring Matters* (2009) published by Monarch books.

[Supervision Agreement](#)