



Formation for Mission for Trustee Directors POLICY

***Our Mission:** to contribute to a world where the healing, liberating, and life-giving mercy of God is experienced.*

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Outline the expectations and responsibilities of Trustee Directors regarding ongoing Formation.
- Provide guidance to the Trustee Directors to ensure that Formation inspires and informs action to achieve our mission and purpose.

Scope

Trustee Directors (Mercy Partners Board)

Formation Definition

Formation is a transformative process. It helps cultivate a contemporary mission ethos that responds to the signs of the times and supports effective leadership. Rooted in faith and guided by the Holy Spirit, Formation involves theological reflection, dialogue, and discernment.

Expressed within a communal context, Mercy Partners Trustee Directors' Formation is a faith-based journey, grounded in Scripture, Catholic tradition, and charisms of our ministries. It fosters stewardship of the Mercy Partners mission by nurturing each individual's spirituality, while also forming a common spirituality, unique to Mercy Partners – one that contributes *to a world where the healing, liberating, and life-giving mercy of God is experienced*.

Context Statement

Role of the Laity – Vatican II

Lumen Gentium articulates the role of the Trustee Directors of Mercy Partners - the laity are also called to collaborate with bishops and clergy (including those in religious institutes) in the governance of the Church, bringing a richer culture of collaboration at all levels. (LG 4, Paragraphs: 30,31, 37).

Collaboration may be undertaken in many ways. An important consideration is how Trustee Directors lead a Public Juridic Person (PJP) and the ministries within their remit.

Emergence of the Ministerial Public Juridic Persons

Sr Mary Wright IBVM in a powerful speech on *The Development of the Ministerial Public Juridic Persons' Questions and Challenges*, stated:

...the most important aspect of this innovation is the fact that we have an ecclesial structure which invites lay experts to take their rightful place in the leadership of Church ministry. (2018)

Mercy Partners Trustee Directors draw upon Formation to create true '*communio*' in the fulfilment of the core ideal of the Second Vatican Council.

Policy Statement

This policy focuses on the communal component of Mercy Partners Trustee Directors' Formation. In the context of a Ministerial Public Juridic Person, communal Formation creates intentional environments and ongoing opportunities for dialogue based on scripture and the living tradition of the Catholic Church.

In addition, Mercy Partners Trustee Directors are expected to be grounded in the mission and values of Mercy Partners as well as the multi-charisms associated with our ministries.

Mercy Partners Trustee Directors are responsible for ensuring that Catholicity is retained within the ministries and that the ministries take responsibility for ensuring that their founding charisms continue in their mission context.

Formation Principles

The following principles provide a guide for applying the Mercy Partners Trustee Directors' Formation Framework.

Principles	Descriptor
Holistic	Formation engages the whole person – intellectually (<i>head</i>), emotionally/spiritually (<i>heart</i>) and practically (<i>hands</i>) - fostering deep alignment with the mission.
Discernment	Formation involves discerning the voice of God through: • The Mission Discernment process - <i>Prepare, Analyse, Decide, Act (Call to Action)</i>. • Synodal processes, such as <i>Conversations in the Spirit</i>.
Fidelity to Mission	Formation supports individuals and community in aligning with the mission of Mercy Partners – <i>to contribute to the emergence of a world where the healing, liberating, and life-giving mercy of God is experienced</i> .
Spirituality and Theological Reflection	Each Trustee Director has her/his own unique spirituality which may be enriched through engagement with the spiritual traditions and charisms of Mercy Partners.
Dynamic and Contextual	Formation responds to the signs of the times, adapting to evolving roles and contexts – equipping people to respond meaningfully to present-day needs.
Communal	Formation embraces a collaborative approach, with the Mercy Partners Board acting as a Christian community in partnership with the Steward Representatives, its ministries and the wider Catholic Church.

Responsibilities

Who	What
Steward Representatives	• Approve the Formation Policy and Framework. • Receive an annual Formation Report based on the Formation Framework and annual plan. • Review Formation Policy every three-years.
Trustee Directors	• Undertake a self-assessment, within three months of being appointed, of Formation values, knowledge and competencies outlined in the Formation for Mission Framework for Mercy Partners Trustee Directors. • Use the outcomes of the self-assessment to develop a group Formation Plan and undertake its implementation. • Complete the agreed annual communal¹ Formation hours, which is normally at least twelve hours. • Approve the Formation Plan for Board ministries, in accordance with our Formation Framework and agreed compliance targets. • Provide an annual report to the Steward Representatives based on Formation undertaken.

Implementation Process linked to this Policy

Stage 1

- Based on the Formation Framework domains and content examples, an assessment process is developed that ensures Trustee Directors have the necessary information to rank and rate their needs.

Stage 2

- Self-assessment needs are collated as a group summary and presented to the Trustee Directors.
- Trustee Directors work to develop a communal plan and time frames for their Formation commitments.

Stage 3

- Review the agreed Formation Plan – continue with this plan or revise and develop new priorities.

Review and Evaluation

Evaluation is integral to all Formation and forms part of the ongoing review of this policy and the Formation Framework.

Relevant Documents (available within BoardPro)

- Constitution of Mercy Partners Limited
- Canonical Statute Mercy Partners
- Formation for Mission Framework for Trustee Directors
- Mercy Partners Theological Framework (Dr Christiaan Jacobs – Vandegheer, 2016)
- Board Director Key Performance Indicators (Board Directors Handbook)
- Mission Discernment – A Resource for Decision-Making in the Catholic Tradition (Catholic Health Australia, 2012)

Approval and Authorisation					
Version #	Overview of updates	Author	Approved By	Date Approved	Next Review Due
1	Creation of Policy				
2	Tabled at 8 Sept 2022 MP Council meeting with changes	LB	Mercy Partners Council	8 September 2021	8 September 2022
3	Removed reference to Mercy Partners Council and replaced with the Board of Mercy Partners. Removed the heading Policy Details and replaced with Accountabilities and minor punctuation.	LB	Formation Chair	5 October 2022	5 October 2024
4	New Policy for Trustee Directors	CB/JT	Steward/Member Representatives	9 July 2025	9 July 2028

¹ Communal – refers to within the Mercy Partners Trustee Board and ministries communities
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