
West Virginia North District

Sexual Abuse & Misconduct Policy

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Purpose & Definitions:

POLICY: Sexual Misconduct

BIBLE REFERENCES:

Romans 14:7-13, I Corinthians 10:31-33, Ephesians 5:1-18, Philippians 4:8-9, I Peter 1:13-17, II Peter 1:3-11....

MANUAL REFERENCES

P# 33.3, P# 34.1, P# 37...

This policy is to provide guidelines and a tool that should be used by the district and the local church in assigning workers to lead our people (Children, Youth, and Adults) in district/local church sponsored activities. This tool will help us to be prepared in reducing the risk of an allegation, or occurrence, of sexual misconduct. We understand the delicate nature of this topic, however, it is our responsibility and mandate to provide a safe environment for our people to learn and to grow in Christ.

We owe nothing less to our people than to take every possible precaution in caring for them. We must protect and preserve the integrity of our workers who give their time selflessly without regard for their own schedules, in order to minister to our people. The safety of our people and our workers compel us to offer these guidelines.

We are providing forms that we recommend you use with your groups for local and district sponsored activities. We realize that children and youth groups will require more "paper work" than adult groups.

We commend those churches that already have existing guidelines. It is our prayer that you will use these resources in adopting a comprehensive plan. Preparedness paves the way for better stewardship.

As a precaution, compare your insurance policies to be sure all stipulations are covered by your adopted policy.

PURPOSE

In following the instructions of our Lord Jesus Christ to "let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these" (Matthew 19:14), it is the purpose of the members and staff of **CHURCH NAME** to provide a safe and secure environment for preschoolers, children, youth, and mentally handicapped and adult persons entrusted to our care. We do this to encourage those preschoolers, children, youth, and their families to come to a saving relationship with Jesus Christ, and to grow in their relationship with him.

A safe and secure environment includes a formal, written policy to help prevent the occurrence of sexual misconduct. The following policy and procedures are for the protection of our preschoolers, children, youth, adult employees, volunteers and our entire church family at **CHURCH NAME**.

SCOPE

This policy shall apply to all current and future workers, compensated and/or volunteer, who will have the responsibility of supervising the activities of preschoolers, children, youth, mentally handicapped and adult persons.

DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy the following definitions shall apply:

- "Preschooler", "child", "children," "youth," and "minor" shall be defined as any individual under the age of 18, or whose mental capacity is that of a minor.
- "Adult" shall be defined as any individual at least 18 years of age.
- "Worker" shall be defined as any adult who serves as a volunteer and/or in a paid position, given the responsibility of working with or caring for minors.
- "Teenage Worker" shall be defined as any worker at least 14 years old, but under the age of 18, enlisted to assist with the care of minors.
- "Child Abuse" shall be defined as verbal, physical, emotional, or sexual abuse of a preschooler, child, youth, or minor.

WHAT IS CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE?

Child sexual abuse is any sexual activity with a child - whether in the home by a caretaker, in a day care situation, in a foster/residential setting, or in any other setting, including on the street by a person known or unknown to the child. The abuser may be an adult, an adolescent or another child, provided the child is at least four years older than the victim.

Child sexual abuse may be violent or nonviolent. All child sexual abuse is an exploitation of a child's vulnerability and powerlessness in which the abuser is fully responsible for the action.

Child sexual abuse is criminal behavior that involves children in sexual behaviors for which they are not personally, socially, and developmentally ready.

Child sexual abuse includes behaviors that involve touching and non-touching aspects.

Policies:

WORKER ENLISTMENT

All paid employees of **[CHURCH NAME]** will be required to complete an Employment Application.

Whether a paid employee or a volunteer, each worker desiring to work with minors also will be required to complete a Child/Youth Worker Application Form that is specifically designed for workers who will be working with minors.

After an application is received and prior to employment or volunteer service, personal references will be checked. It is suggested that, at minimum, personal references are contacted and a written memorandum is made of the contents of those telephone conversations, and that previous employment and church service references be contacted in writing or via e-mail.

Any prospective worker that has prior incidents of sexual misconduct will not be allowed to serve in any capacity where they would have contact with minors.

Criminal background checks will be performed on each applicant after they have signed the Request for Criminal Background Check form and prior to being enlisted as a worker. Annual criminal background checks will be performed on workers, randomly or as deemed necessary. Only qualified representatives of **[CHURCH NAME]** will have access to the criminal background check reports. Written recommendations will be given by these individuals as to the qualifications of applicants and kept in a permanent file.

At the applicant's request, **[CHURCH NAME]** shall allow the applicant to review his/her criminal history record and transcript at the church, but in no event shall the church allow the applicant to retain and/or copy his/her transcript. Criminal background check reports should not be kept more than 30 days after receipt.

No volunteer will be allowed to work with minors until they have been a member of the church for a minimum of sixty days or a regular attendee for a minimum of six months.

When an employee or volunteer is engaged to work with minors, they will be photographed and the picture kept in the person's employment file. Photographs will be updated every two years or as deemed necessary.

WORKER TRAINING

Each new worker will be given the legal definition of child abuse in writing, as well as the policy of the church on reporting child abuse. New workers also will be required to view child abuse prevention materials to help them gain an appreciation for the reality of the concern. This will help workers identify child abuse in the future if they see the signs.

VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

Employees, teachers of minors, and volunteers of activities or programs for minors of **[CHURCH NAME]** will be required to complete a Child/Youth Worker Application Form providing personal and confidential information necessary to perform security background checks and reference checks on each individual worker. While this process understandably trespasses into the privacy of our lives, the security of our children outweighs the personal invasion inherent with such investigation and disclosures. All personal information voluntarily disclosed, the results of all security background and reference checks, or the refusal of any person to participate in a program or activity in lieu of such disclosure requirements will be maintained in the strictest of confidence.

Whether disclosed voluntarily or by result of the security background check, any conviction for the following items will automatically disqualify a volunteer from participating in the leadership, sponsorship, or supervising of any activities or programs with minors:

- Criminal homicide
- Aggressive assault
- Crimes related to the possession, use, or sale of drugs or controlled substances
- Sexual abuse
- Sexual assault (rape)
- Aggravated sexual assault
- Injury to a child
- Incest
- Indecency with a child
- Inducing sexual conduct or sexual performance of a child
- Possession or promotion of child pornography
- The sale, distribution, or display of harmful materials to a minor
- Employment harmful to children
- Abandonment or endangerment of a child
- Kidnapping or unlawful restraint
- Public lewdness or indecent exposure; and
- Enticing a child.

All charges for these crimes, or charges or convictions for any other crimes not listed above will be reviewed by the senior leadership of the church. Only these individuals may view information obtained on the criminal history record transcript.

SPECIFIC ACTS OF OMISSIONS IN VIOLATION OF THE POLICY

The following acts or omissions are violations of this policy and will not be tolerated or accepted during any church activity or program, and are to be immediately reported to the designated program staff after the safety of the child, children, youth, or minor involved has been ensured:

- Any direct observations or evidence of sexual activity in the presence of or in association with a minor
- Any display or demonstration of sexual activity, abuse, insinuation of abuse, or evidences of abusive conduct toward a minor
- Sexual advances or sexual activity of any kind between any person and a minor
- Infliction of or physical abusive behavior or bodily injury to a minor
- Physical neglect of a minor, including failure to provide adequate supervision in relation to the activities of **CHURCH NAME**
- Mental or emotional injury to a minor caused or exacerbated by a worker
- The presence or possession of obscene or pornographic materials at any function of **CHURCH NAME**
- The presence, possession, or being under the influence of any illegal or illicit drugs
- The consumption of or being under the influence of illegal or illicit drugs or alcohol while leading or participating in a function for minors at **CHURCH NAME**

WORKER SUPERVISION

Church staff members and volunteer directors will supervise activities on an ongoing basis and make unannounced visits into class or other program sites from time to time. Supervisors shall complete a log to show which rooms, activities, time, and date the class or activity was visited.

An identification system shall be adopted so that the adults who drop off a child are the same adults who pick up the child. Permission slips will be available for adults to sign, authorizing the release of the child(ren) to other adults. In counseling sessions with minors, parental permission shall be obtained prior to a minister meeting privately with a minor or the two-adult rule shall be used in that instance. Prior permission may be granted by parents to cover a particular time period (i.e., a school year) for their child to receive counseling from a particular minister.

OCCASIONAL VOLUNTEER WORKERS

Those who only volunteer occasionally also must go through the entire volunteer screening process. There are to be no exceptions to this rule.

Teenagers under the age of 18 wanting to serve as teen workers in a capacity with activities, studies, or programs for preschoolers or children will need to complete a Teen Volunteer Information Form and go through training. The only step in the process they are exempt from is the criminal background check.

SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- A door without windows shall remain open at all times.
- The church will adopt the “two-adult” rule, which means no adult shall be left alone with a child, and requires a reasonable ratio of adult workers to be maintained in each situation involving the supervision of children.
- A “check in/check out” procedure for all nursery children will be followed.
- All volunteers and paid workers with minors will be instructed as to the church’s policies and procedures concerning this matter.
- No minors will be permitted access to **CHURCH NAME** facilities without adults present.

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION REPORTING

Any person having cause to believe that a child’s physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect shall report their belief in accordance with this procedure. Non-accusatory reports (reports that identify the victim of abuse or neglect whether or not the person responsible for the abuse or neglect is known) shall be made to the local state law enforcement agency.

- 1] The church should fully comply with the child abuse reporting statute.
- 2] The church also should immediately contact its insurance company and attorney to report the occurrence.
- 3] In instances where child abuse is confirmed and a member of the ministerial staff is the perpetrator, the immediate supervisor should be contacted and advised.
- 4] This procedure is not only required as a condition of a job or volunteer position, but also is required by law.
- 5] Upon the first suspicion of an instance of child abuse, the following steps should be taken.

- A] Do not treat the suspicion as frivolous.
 - B] Commence the investigation immediately and conclude it as soon as possible.
 - i] If a sponsor or volunteer of minors suspects a case of child abuse, he or she is required by law to report his/her suspicions within 24 hours to the WV Child Protective Services. It is the policy of the **CHURCH NAME** that it also be reported immediately to the senior pastor.
 - ii] The minister receiving the initial report will be responsible for confirming the facts reported and the condition of the child, on the same day on which the first report was made. This individual must utilize the Risk Reduction Checklist to complete the church/ staff responsibilities involved with the occurrence.
 - iii] Data concerning the child's name, address, and other pertinent information will be obtained through discussions with the initial reporter and other staff members. The name and address of the person responsible for the care of the child, if available, also needs to be obtained.
 - C] Maintain confidentiality of the investigation as much as possible. Emphasize confidentiality of the victim and any accused person. On the same day that the case is first reported verbally to WV Child Protective Services, the report will be documented on a Child Abuse Report Form. A copy of this form must be sent to WV Child Protective Services
 - D] Cooperate fully with Law Enforcement
 - E] Suspend any accused person from the performance of duties involving children until the investigation has been completed.
 - F] Inform the victim and the victim's family of the steps that are being taken, and continue to keep them advised of the status of the investigation. If child abuse is confirmed, ask the victim and the victim's family what action they would like to take in the matter, and fully cooperate to address their request within the bounds of a legal and prudent response. (Church legal counsel should assist in this determination.)
 - G] In instances where child abuse is confirmed, the church should immediately dismiss the worker from their position.
 - H] In instances where evidence is inconclusive, the church must take action depending on the strength of the evidence available and after consideration of the victim's family's request.
 - I] Keep the congregation informed of the investigation with respect to matters that are not confidential, so that the congregation will hear about the investigation from within the church rather than from the news media.
- 6] Promptly take steps to plan for a response to the media and attempt to speak to the media only through one contact person. This is imperative so that the church can emphasize its position on child abuse, concern for the victim, and the extensive steps the church is taking to address the present occurrence and to reduce the risk and provide a safe environment for other children.

Every allegation of sexual offense or molestation should be investigated promptly and thoroughly by officials and reported to the church insurance company immediately. If an allegation is factual, the relationship with the worker should be terminated immediately. It is unlikely the problem will ever be resolved by relying on the promises of the employee or volunteer to reform. Failure to take remedial action will make a claim hard to defend.

CONCLUSION

Churches need to be prepared. This is the legal reason for creating safety policies, but there's a deeper, more significant reason - to protect the children. Policies are only printed expressions of the value placed on children. If the only reason for safety policies is to protect the organization, the church has missed Jesus' passion for children.

Some people think that our congregations are too small to worry about these safety problems or that our church "knows" everyone. Remember that it is much easier to make plans and develop safety policies as a means of prevention, rather than wait until they are needed as a reaction to an abuse case.

Some churches tend to take the biblical concept of trusting God to an extreme. They think nothing bad can happen to Christians. Although Jesus does promise many things about His care and provision for us, we must not be unwise regarding children's safety. When Jesus sent His disciples out on their first missionary venture, He sent them out in pairs and told them they were like sheep among wolves. He also told them that bad things would happen to them, but He would be with them. (Matthew 10:16-19)

There is no automatic protection from evil for Christians. We are to watch and be ready. Accidents will always happen. There will always be unforeseen circumstances that need to be handled. Therefore, churches should build sturdy safety-policy fire blocks into the walls of its ministry to protect children.

CHURCH NAME desires to be a church that cares through the implementation of the above policy. Adoption of these provisions will enable **CHURCH NAME** to provide a more safe and secure environment for each individual of our church family and its guests.

Forms:

Forms Explanation

The following forms are provided as an example of useable forms for local churches. They are not intended to be legal advice to a local church. Please consult your local church insurance provider for required information necessary.

Worker Application:

It is the goal of **CHURCH NAME** to provide a safe and secure environment for all children, teens, adults and workers who are involved in church activities. To facilitate this goal, it is necessary to gather pertinent information from those who desire employment or offer volunteer services to our children and youth programs. The information is requested 1) for insurance purposes, and 2) as a means of protecting the welfare of those who are involved in church activities and these are the only purposes for which this information will be used.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Date of Birth: _____ SSN: _____

Have you ever used any name(s) other than the one above? If yes, please list:

Current Address: _____ Length of time: _____

Previous Address: _____

Current phone number: (home) _____ (Work) _____

Do you have a valid driver's license?

No Yes License number: _____ State: _____

Do you have a CDL?

No Yes License number: _____ State: _____

Position(s) applying/volunteering for: _____

Current Employer: _____ How long? _____

Previous Employers (last 5 years): _____

Is there any reason that you should not work with or around children? No Yes

Explain: _____

Have you ever been the subject of a child abuse investigation? No Yes

If yes, please provide details: _____

Have you ever been convicted or pleaded guilty to a criminal offense? No Yes

If yes, please provide details: _____

Please list your educational background:

Name	Graduate?	Year	Degree/course of study
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High School: _____

College: _____

Other: _____

Please provide the following church information:

What, if any, church affiliation do you have? _____

How long have you attended that church? _____ Are you a member? No Yes

Please list other churches you have been affiliated with: _____

Have you ever worked with children or youth before? No Yes List where: _____

Please list 3 references:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ How long have you known this person? _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ How long have you known this person? _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ How long have you known this person? _____

I affirm that all the information provided is true and accurate. I hereby give **CHURCH NAME** permission to perform an investigation of my past employment, education, and background, and release from liability all persons, companies, or corporations supplying such information. I also release the church from any liability that might result from making such an investigation. I understand that any false statements or implications made by me on this application or other required documentation shall be considered sufficient cause for denial of employment or discharge.

Worker's Signature

Date

Please attach a photocopy of both the front and back of your valid driver's license.

Teen Volunteer Application:

It is the goal of **CHURCH NAME** to provide a safe and secure environment for all children, teens, and workers who are involved in church activities. To facilitate this goal, it is necessary to gather pertinent information from those who desire employment or offer volunteer services to our children and youth programs. The information is requested 1) for insurance purposes, and 2) as a means of protecting the welfare of those who are involved in church activities and these are the only purposes for which this information will be used.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Date of Birth: _____ SSN: _____

Current Address: _____

Phone number: _____

What School do you attend: _____

Position(s) applying/volunteering for: _____

If you have been employed or worked as a volunteer please describe: _____

_____ How long? _____

Is there any reason that you should not work with or around children? No Yes

Explain: _____

Have you ever been the subject of a child abuse investigation? No Yes

If yes, please provide details: _____

Have you ever been convicted or pleaded guilty to a criminal offense? No Yes

If yes, please provide details: _____

Please provide the following church information:

What, if any, church affiliation do you have? _____

How long have you attended that church? _____ Are you a member? No Yes

Please list other churches you have been affiliated with: _____

Have you ever worked with children or youth before? No Yes List where: _____

Please list 3 references:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ How long have you known this person? _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ How long have you known this person? _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ How long have you known this person? _____

I affirm that all the information provided is true and accurate. I hereby give **CHURCH NAME** permission to perform an investigation of my past employment, education, and background, and release from liability all persons, companies, or corporations supplying such information. I also release the church from any liability that might result from making such an investigation. I understand that any false statements or implications made by me on this application or other required documentation shall be considered sufficient cause for denial of employment or discharge.

Worker's Signature

Date

Name of parent or legal guardian: _____

Parent/guardian address: _____

Parent/guardian phone: _____

I hereby give my child permission to serve as a volunteer working with children as described above.

Signature of parent/guardian: _____ Date: _____

Driver Registration:

It is the goal of **CHURCH NAME** to provide a safe and secure environment for all visitors, attendees, and members. The information is requested 1) for insurance purposes, and 2) as a means of protecting the welfare of those who ride as passengers in our church vehicles and these are the only purposes for which this information will be used.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Date of Birth: _____ SSN: _____

Have you ever used any name(s) other than the one above? If yes, please list:

Current Address: _____ Length of time: _____

Previous Address: _____

Current phone number: (home) _____ (Work) _____

Do you have a valid driver's license?

No Yes License number: _____ State: _____

Do you have a CDL?

No Yes License number: _____ State: _____

Have you ever provided transportation for any other organization(s)? No Yes

If yes, please list organizations and dates: _____

What types of vehicles can you drive? _____

Has your license ever been suspended? No Yes

Have you had any traffic violations or accidents in the last 3 years? No Yes

If yes to either, please give details of each: _____

Do you take any medications regularly? No Yes If yes, please explain: _____

Have you read the **CHURCH NAME** vehicle policy and agree to follow them? No Yes If no, will you agree to familiarize yourself with the policies before driving any of **CHURCH's** vehicles? No Yes

Is there any reason that you should not work with or around children? No Yes

Explain: _____

Have you ever been the subject of a child abuse investigation? No Yes

If yes, please provide details: _____

Have you ever been convicted or pleaded guilty to a criminal offense? No Yes

If yes, please provide details: _____

I affirm that all the information provided is true and accurate.

Driver's Signature

Date

Please attach a photocopy of both the front and back of your valid driver's license.

Parent/ Guardian Consent:

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Below are details for an outing that we are planning and would like to have your permission for your child to participate. Please be sure to complete this form (including your signature) and return it. We will be unable to allow any child to participate who does not have a signed consent form from their parent or legal guardian.

Who: _____

What: _____

When: _____

Where: _____

Why: _____

Questions? Please contact: _____

Other Information: _____

PLACE CHURCH CONTACT INFORMATION HERE

Child's Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Age: ___ Gender: ___ Phone number: _____

Address: _____

I, _____, (printed name of parent/guardian) being the parent or legal guardian of

_____, (printed name of minor) have been informed of the activity described above and sponsored by **CHURCH NAME** and hereby give my consent for my child to participate in this activity.

I understand that all reasonable safety precautions will be taken by the leaders of this activity and that the possibility of an unforeseen hazard does exist. I further agree not to hold **CHURCH NAME**, its leaders, employees, and volunteer staff liable for damages, losses, diseases, or injuries incurred by the minor listed on this form.

I also understand that my child is to be excluded from the following activities:

Signature of parent/guardian: _____ Date: _____

Quizzing Consent:

Dear Parent or Guardian,

We are delighted that your child has chosen to participate in **CHURCH's** Teen quizzing program this year.

The intent of this form is to secure your permission for your child to attend the meets. Please initial each of the meets that your child will be permitted to participate in. Transportation will be provided in one of **CHURCH's** vans or, in the event that it make sense economically, in one of the leader's vehicles. Please contact **QUIZ COACH (PHONE)** if you have any comments, questions, or concerns.

CHURCH CONTACT INFORMATION

Child's Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Age: ____ Gender: ____ Phone number: _____

Address: _____

Include Dates of Events to include

I, _____, (printed name of parent/guardian) being the parent or legal guardian of

_____, (printed name of minor) have been informed of the activity described above and sponsored by **CHURCH NAME** and hereby give my consent for my child to participate in this activity.

I understand that all reasonable safety precautions will be taken by the leaders of this activity and that the possibility of an unforeseen hazard does exist. I further agree not to hold **CHURCH NAME**, its leaders, employees, and volunteer staff liable for damages, losses, diseases, or injuries incurred by the minor listed on this form.

I also understand that my child is to be excluded from the following activities:

Signature of parent/guardian: _____ Date: _____

Consent to Treat a Minor:

This form is to be completed annually and taken on each outing.

Child's Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Age: _____ Gender: _____ Phone number: _____

Address: _____

Insurance information

Insurance Company: _____

Insurance Company Phone: _____

Subscriber Number: _____ Group Number: _____

Relationship of child to subscriber: _____

I, _____, (printed name of parent/guardian) being the parent or legal guardian of

_____, (printed name of minor) do consent to any x-ray, anesthetic, medical, surgical, or dental diagnosis or treatment that may be deemed necessary for my minor child. Further, I understand that all efforts will be made to contact me prior to treatment. In the event that I cannot be reached in an emergency, I give permission to the activity leader to make the decisions necessary for treatment. Should there be no activity leader available, I give permission to the attending physician to treat my minor child. I further understand that the doctors, dentists, and other providers attending to my child will take all reasonable safety precautions during their care.

Further, as parent or legal guardian I am responsible for the health care decisions for my minor child and agree that my insurance plan is the primary plan to pay for the dental, medical, hospital care or treatment that is given to my child. Any policy of the church or organization sponsoring this event will be used as the secondary coverage.

Signature of parent/guardian: _____ Date: _____

Accident/ Incident Report:

Date of Incident: _____ Prepared by (Name Printed): _____

Is this an: Accident Incident Allegation Other (Specify): _____

Name(s) of Child(ren)/Youth: _____

How was this incident brought to your attention? _____

Adults witnessing or present at the time of the incident: _____

Person reporting the incident: _____

Date, time, and exact location of the incident: _____

Description of the incident as witnessed or reported (continue on back if needed): _____

Did anyone else witness the incident? No Yes - List Names: _____

Instruct witnesses to complete witness form.

Were there injuries? No Yes - Were the injuries visible? No Yes - Please describe: _____

Were the injuries treated? No Yes - How were they treated? _____

Who treated the injuries? _____

Were Parents/guardians notified? No Yes - Date/Time: _____

Is this an incident requiring mandatory notice to the authorities? No Yes

Were any authorities notified? No Yes - Who? _____ When? _____

Were the coordinator, pastor, or other church leaders notified? No Yes
Who? _____ When? _____

Was the insurance company notified? No Yes - When? _____

Please provide any other pertinent information (continue on back if needed): _____

Signature: _____ Position: _____

Incident Witness Report:

As a witness to an accident or incident, everything that you heard or saw is important. Please describe in as much detail as possible what you saw or heard.

If you are aware of anyone else who may have witnessed or possesses and information regarding this incident/accident, please list their names below:

Name (printed): _____ Signature: _____

Position held (if any): _____ Date: _____

Thank you for your assistance

Request for Criminal Background Check:

I hereby request _____ (*agency*) to release any information which pertains to any record of convictions contained in its files or in any criminal file maintained on me whether local, state, or national. I hereby release the stated agency from any and all liability resulting from such disclosure.

Name (printed) _____

Signature: _____

Maiden name (if applicable): _____

Print any and all aliases: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Place of birth: _____

Today's date: _____ SSN: _____

Record sent to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Participant Covenant Statement:

The congregation of the Church is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, youth, and volunteers who participate in ministries and activities sponsored by the church. The following policy statements reflect our congregation's commitment to preserving this church as a holy place of safety and protection for all who would enter and as a place in which all people can experience the love of God through relationships with others.

1. No adult who has been convicted of child abuse (either sexual abuse, physical abuse, or emotional abuse) should volunteer to work with children or youth in any church-sponsored activity.
2. Adult survivors of child abuse need the love and support of our congregation. Any adult survivor who desires to volunteer in some capacity to work with children or youth is encouraged to discuss his/her willingness with one of our church's ministers before accepting an assignment.
3. All adult volunteers involved with children or youth of our church must have been members of the congregation for at least six months before beginning a volunteer assignment.
4. Adult volunteers with children and youth shall observe the "Two-Adult Rule" at all times so that no adult is ever alone with children or youth.
5. Adult volunteers with children and youth shall attend regular training and educational events provided by the church to keep volunteers informed of church policies and state laws regarding child abuse.
6. Adult volunteers shall immediately report to their supervisor any behavior that seems abusive or inappropriate.

Please answer each of the following questions: (circle yes or no)

1. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to observe and abide by all church policies regarding working in ministries with children and youth? Yes No
2. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to observe the "Two-Adult Rule" at all times? Yes No
3. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to abide by the six-month rule before beginning a volunteer assignment? Yes No
4. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to participate in training and education events provided by the church related to your volunteer assignment? Yes No
5. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to promptly report abusive or inappropriate behavior to your supervisor? Yes No
6. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to discuss with a minister of this congregation your experience, if any, as a survivor of child abuse? Yes No
(Answering yes to this question does not automatically disqualify you from volunteering with children or youth.)
7. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to inform a minister of this congregation if you have ever been convicted of child abuse? Yes No

I have read this **Participant Covenant**, and I agree to observe and abide by the policies set forth above.

Signature of Applicant with Date
Print full name

Additional Forms May Be Added Here: