

**SAMPLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY**

FOREWORD

Leadership in the church demands the highest standards of moral integrity and personal responsibility. It is a gift of the Spirit that can only be effectively exercised in an environment of trust. As the Gospel witness makes abundantly clear, “From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required; and from the one to whom much has been entrusted, even more will be demanded” (Luke 12:48).

Since trust is so fundamental to the well-being of the Christian community, Christian people have the right to expect that those they choose as leaders (both lay and ordained) understand and are committed to standards of behavior that are trustworthy. In receiving the Sacrament of Baptism, we enter into a sacred covenant with God and are adopted into the covenant family of the church (Book of Order, W-2.300; Genesis 17:7; 2 Corinthians 1:21-22). Trust is a key component that exists in this covenant. As the church and the body of Christ we are united with all the people of God in every place and every time (Book of Order, W-2.3005; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13; Ephesians 4:4-6). We are bound to serve and to respect the dignity of every human being (Book of Order, F-1.003 and W- 2.3004; Micah 6:8). When, therefore, this solemn trust is broken through some form of misconduct, particularly sexual, not only is someone’s dignity diminished and her or his wellbeing seriously harmed, but also harm is done to the community of faith. Where there is no trust, there can be no community.

The SAMPLE Presbyterian Church is committed to maintaining a safe environment in which children and youth are nurtured and instructed in the faith and are protected from all types of abuse and neglect. Our goals are to protect children and youth in church programs, to educate workers and care givers concerning abuse issues and to protect staff and volunteers, as well as the church as a whole, from potential wrongful accusations of abuse or neglect. Accordingly, we will not tolerate any form of abuse to children or youth in any of our interactions with them.

We recognize that children and youth are entrusted to the care of adults in many church programs, services and activities, both on and off the campus, as well as in programs operated by others on church property. SAMPLE CHURCH has established this Child and Youth Protection Policy (Policy) to ensure, to the extent reasonably possible, that our children and youth will be free to participate in these programs, services and activities without intimidation, coercion or abuse of any type. The Policy applies to all those who work with children and youth through SAMPLE CHURCH programs both on and off campus, including full-time and part-time church employees as well as volunteers, whether they be church members, visitors or guests.

SAMPLE CHURCH designates _____ to be responsible for oversight and implementation of this Policy.

INTRODUCTION

The Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law (CPSL) was enacted by the Pennsylvania legislature in order to protect children from abuse. To achieve this purpose, the CPSL imposes specific responsibilities on those who have direct contact with children to report suspected or actual child abuse and mandates that certain individuals receive regular training regarding child abuse. Employees and volunteers who fail to report actual or suspected child abuse may be subject to individual, criminal liability. Because the CPSL is designed to encourage reporting of suspected or actual child abuse, it also contains important protections for those who make such reports in good faith.

As a volunteer or employee who has direct contact with children participating in SAMPLE CHURCH programs, services and activities, it is important for you to understand what your responsibilities are as it concerns reporting of actual or suspected child abuse and the need to attend child abuse identification and prevention training.

This Policy incorporates these legal requirements and explains in detail your responsibilities in this regard. As such, you should carefully review the Policy as described in this booklet and keep it as a reference. This Policy is intended to apply broadly; when in doubt, you should err on the side of reporting suspected child abuse. Should you have any questions about your responsibilities or this Policy, please do not hesitate to contact the Head of Staff.

DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this Policy, the following terms have the listed definitions:

Abuse--A non-accidental injury or pattern of injuries to a child or youth. Abuse may include any of the following:

- **Neglect--**Occurs when an adult responsible for the well-being of a child fails to provide for the child. Neglect may include not giving food, clothing, shelter; failure to keep children clean; lack of supervision and withholding medical care.
- **Physical abuse--**A non-accidental injury that happens to a child. Such an injury could include a beating, burn, bruise, bite, welt, strangulation, broken bones or death.
- **Sexual abuse--**The employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement or coercion of a child to engage in or assist another individual to engage in sexually explicit conduct. The behavior may or may not involve touching. Sexual abuse may include the following: *engaging in sexually explicit conversation; verbal sexual suggestions, innuendoes or jokes; leering or ogling; intrusive touching; the use of pornography; looking at the intimate parts of a child for the purpose of sexual gratification or arousal; sexual assault or attempted sexual assault.* Sexual abuse may consist of numerous acts over a long period of time or a single incident. Children can be

victimized from infancy through adolescence. Typically, the perpetrator keeps the child from disclosing the abuse through intimidation, threats and rewards.

- **Emotional abuse--** One or more acts by an adult or other authority figure that endanger the mental health or emotional development of a child including rejection, ignoring, terrorizing, corrupting, constant criticism, mean remarks, insults and giving little or no love, guidance and support.
- **Spiritual abuse--**Using religious references to shame or by guilt to motivate a child into a particular action or behavior.
- **Failure to act--**Any failure to act that causes bodily or mental injury to a child or that causes or permits any of the above described types of abuse to occur may also constitute abuse.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive. Any act or failure to act that causes bodily injury or serious mental injury to a child may constitute child abuse under Pennsylvania law.

Certified adult--A SAMPLE CHURCH employee or volunteer, at least 18 years of age, who has successfully passed the required background checks and completed the required training (or retraining) to qualify under this Policy to work with children and youth.

Certified youth volunteer--A person at least 13 years old but under the age of 18 who has successfully passed the required background checks and completed the required training (or retraining) to qualify under this Policy to work with children and youth, and who gives time and participates in a SAMPLE CHURCH-sponsored activity.

Child Protective Services Law or CPSL--the Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law, 23 Pa. C.S. Chapter 63.

Child / Youth--Under Pennsylvania law, a child is a person under 18 years of age. This term includes both a “child” and a “youth” as these terms are used in this Policy in reference to SAMPLE CHURCH programs, services and activities. When such terms are used elsewhere in this Policy in reference to SAMPLE CHURCH programs, services and activities, “child” means a person 12 years old or younger and “youth” means a person at least 13 years old but under the age of 18.

Church-sponsored activity--Includes any and all gatherings that arise from SAMPLE CHURCH-generated worship, educational, fellowship, administrative, pastoral, mission or recreational events. These events include on-campus and off-campus gatherings.

Employee--A person who works for a salary or wages at SAMPLE CHURCH.

Endangered adult--An individual at least 18 years old who (by reason of mental illness, mental retardation, dementia or other physical or mental incapacity) is incapable of managing or directing the management of the individual's property or providing or directing the provision of self-care.

Independent contractor--A person not employed by SAMPLE CHURCH who provides services to SAMPLE CHURCH pursuant to an express or implied contract.

Lead volunteer--A certified adult who has been designated by the responsible staff person to coordinate/supervise other volunteers involved in a program, activity or event.

Mandated reporter--A person legally required to make a report of suspected child abuse where such person has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is a victim of child abuse. Mandated reporters include:

- Pastors
- Certain professionals licensed by the state of Pennsylvania
- SAMPLE CHURCH employees who have direct contact with children in the course of their employment
- Volunteers who, as part of a SAMPLE CHURCH-sponsored activity, event or program, accept responsibility for a child
- Independent contractors of SAMPLE CHURCH

Reporting checklist--The document attached to this Policy as Attachment A that sets forth how and to whom reports of suspected child abuse shall be made in accordance with this Policy.

Volunteer--A person not employed by SAMPLE CHURCH who donates time providing services in connection with a church-sponsored activity, event or program.

I. POLICY OVERVIEW

A. Purpose

1. This Policy is intended to:
 - Be faithful to our baptismal vows as we seek to welcome and nurture children and youth.
 - Provide a safe and secure environment for children and youth at SAMPLE CHURCH.
 - Protect children and youth from sexual, physical, spiritual and emotional abuse while participating in SAMPLE CHURCH activities.
 - Educate the staff, volunteers and the congregation about the subject of sexual abuse and exploitation of children and youth, the need for policies and procedures to prevent such abuse and exploitation and the legal responsibilities imposed on volunteers and staff who have direct contact with children participating in SAMPLE CHURCH programs, services and activities.
 - Guide SAMPLE CHURCH as an institution in the conduct of its employees and volunteers.
 - Prevent allegations and incidents of abuse to children or youth.
 - Provide a mechanism to deal with reported concerns and subsequent actions.
 - Protect the ministry of SAMPLE CHURCH as carried out through its volunteers, pastors and staff from the possibility of false accusations and litigation.

2. This Policy addresses four principal components of child and youth protection:
 - **Screening** of applicants for employment and volunteer service to identify those who are unsuitable for such employment or service due to a history of behavior potentially detrimental to children and youth.
 - **Training** of employees and volunteers regarding appropriate supervision and chaperoning of children and youth.
 - **Reporting** of allegations and/or concerns regarding child and youth protection issues.
 - **Responding** to allegations and/or concerns regarding child and youth protection issues.

B. Scope and Applicability

All persons, including SAMPLE CHURCH employees and volunteers, interested in participating in children and youth ministries and other programs, services and activities of SAMPLE CHURCH must formally apply to work directly with children and youth and must adhere to this Policy. In addition, the abuse reporting procedures set forth in this Policy apply to all mandated reporters, including all employees and volunteers who interact with children or who work with SAMPLE CHURCH youth or children in SAMPLE CHURCH programs, services and activities presently existing as well as others that may be developed in the future, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Sunday School
- Weekday School
- Children and Youth fellowship programs
- Children and Youth choirs
- Camps, mission trips, etc.
- Confirmation Class
- Vacation Bible Camp
- Child Care
- Tutoring Programs
- Upward Basketball Program
- Middleton Center

C. General Requirements

1. All persons working with children/youth at SAMPLE CHURCH shall abide by the following rules:
 - They shall not verbally, emotionally, physically, spiritually or sexually abuse children or youth.
 - They shall not discipline children or youth by use of physical punishment or by failing to provide the necessities of care.
 - They shall provide proper supervision and exercise sound judgment in providing a safe environment at all times.
 - They shall avoid situations where they would be alone with a child or youth and cannot be observed or monitored by others.
 - Restroom supervision:
 - o They shall, as provided in Section IV of this Policy, always appropriately supervise when children are using bathrooms to ensure their safety.

- They shall use caution and common sense when touching children or youth; accordingly, such persons must:
 - Respect a child or youth's boundaries and never make a child or youth feel uncomfortable or act in ways that impede the child or youth's right to say no.
 - Maintain appropriate hand placement.
 - Avoid physical contact that is inappropriate, including body-to-body embrace, a touch of private areas (those areas covered by a bathing suit) or any type of kiss.
 - They shall discourage children from touching others in an inappropriate manner.
 - They shall be alert to the physical and emotional state of children entering an activity or program and any signs of injury or possible child abuse must be reported promptly in the manner specified in this Policy to the authorities and to the Head of Staff or, if the Head of Staff is unavailable or is the alleged abuser, to the Clerk of Session.
 - They shall only release children to a parent, a guardian or another individual authorized in writing by a parent or guardian.
 - They shall not use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs or be impaired by legally prescribed drugs in the presence of children or youth during church working hours or during church-sponsored activities and trips.
 - They shall not use tobacco products around children and youth.
 - They shall not possess firearms or other weapons around children and youth.
 - They shall not engage in profanity, inappropriate language or jokes or any kind of harassment in the presence of children or youth.
 - They shall not share inappropriate details of their personal lives or ask children or youth to share inappropriate details through any form of communication: written, verbal or electronic.
 - They shall not give gifts to an individual child or youth. Because gift giving can be a form of "buying" silence or loyalty, gift giving must be done on a group basis and then only for specific occasions.
 - They shall immediately report to the Head of Staff any circumstance that adversely affects their ability to work with children and youth in full compliance with this Policy.
2. In addition, those to whom this Policy applies shall comply with all other Policy and/or legal requirements described below including, without limitation, making proper application, attending training sessions offered

by SAMPLE CHURCH on child and youth protection and/or required by law, and signing agreements to comply in all respects with this Policy.

3. An individual may be terminated from employment and/or volunteer service for failure to observe and abide by this Policy. These actions may be taken regardless of the outcome of any investigation if the Head of Staff or the Personnel Committee shall determine that the Policy has not been followed.

D. Electronic and Social Media Communications

SAMPLE CHURCH has a robust website that helps it disseminate its message to members and the general public. Day-to-day communications often involve use of personal communication tools such as emails, text messages, social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.), among others. These communications include public, private, personal and professional messages. The following requirements apply to all such communications among SAMPLE CHURCH pastors, staff, volunteers, youth and children when those communications relate to SAMPLE CHURCH programs, services and activities:

- No person shall post or permit to be posted any confidential information about SAMPLE CHURCH, its programs, services and activities, members or those who participate in its programs, services or activities.
- All communications related to SAMPLE CHURCH activities/events must maintain a professional and appropriate style and adhere to the SAMPLE CHURCH Communications Policy.
- No person shall engage in electronic communications that violate any SAMPLE CHURCH policy or any local, state or federal law.
- In all communications related to SAMPLE CHURCH programs, services and activities or made during SAMPLE CHURCH activities/events, employees and volunteers should avoid the use of statements that reasonably could be viewed as:
 - Derogatory
 - Sexual, lewd, pornographic or obscene
 - Offensive due to the use of profanity
 - Threatening, harassing or bullying
 - Discriminatory
 - Facilitating illegal activities
 - Having the purpose to assist personal, commercial or for-profit ends
 - Expressing political views

- Unauthorized or illegal distribution, reproduction or use of copyrighted materials
- Fraternalization or otherwise crossing the line between professional and personal boundaries
- Suggestive in nature.
- Use/posting by SAMPLE CHURCH of photographic images of children and youth and of their SAMPLE CHURCH-sponsored activities will conform with the following guidelines:
 - SAMPLE CHURCH will honor the request of any parent or legal guardian who asks that her/his child not appear in any church publications or website.
 - SAMPLE CHURCH will obtain written permission from parents and/or guardians before a photo of a child/youth is used electronically or in print.
 - SAMPLE CHURCH will never identify a child or youth by name or address with any photo.
 - SAMPLE CHURCH will not “tag” children and youth in images used on social media.
- No adult volunteer or SAMPLE CHURCH employee may initiate a connection with a child or youth on a social media site except a child or youth of which he/she is a parent or guardian.
- Text messages between SAMPLE CHURCH employees/volunteers and children/youth will be appropriate and strictly related to SAMPLE CHURCH programs, services and activities. Such text messages must maintain an appropriate and professional style and otherwise be in compliance with the requirements of this Policy.
- No individual shall identify or represent her/himself as speaking on behalf of SAMPLE CHURCH without prior approval from the Head of Staff.

E. Policy Oversight and Implementation

The SAMPLE CHURCH Personnel Committee’s role in the oversight and implementation of this Policy includes (a) ensuring appropriate screening, training, certification and recertification of all SAMPLE CHURCH employees, volunteers and others covered by this Policy and (b) ensuring that all who are covered by this Policy receive a copy of the Policy and acknowledge in writing their receipt and understanding of and agreement to comply with the Policy.

The Personnel Committee shall carry out these functions by means of a sub-committee to be known as the Child/Youth Protection Committee (Committee), appointed by the Head of

Staff. The Committee will, among other things, establish and evaluate procedures, review concerns, provide appropriate feedback, monitor compliance, oversee implementation of the Policy and provide interpretation and training.

The members of the Committee shall include (a) a member of the Personnel Committee (who shall serve as chair); (b) a lay member of each of the following: the Children and Family Ministry Council, the Youth Ministry Council and the Music and Fine Arts Council (or any successors to such entities); and (c) such other persons as the Head of Staff may deem necessary for the effective operation of the Committee. The Director of The Weekday School and pastoral/senior staff assigned to support the above-listed entities shall be ex officio members of the Committee. An administrative staff member will be designated the Child and Youth Protection Coordinator and will serve as staff to the Committee.

II. APPLICATION AND SCREENING

A. Application and Screening Process

1. Employees. In addition to consenting to and passing the background checks, including criminal, child abuse and reference checks, employees who have direct contact with children/youth and all mandated reporters employed by SAMPLE CHURCH, must complete a confidential application form (see sample form included in the Appendix to this Policy).
2. Volunteers. All persons (adults and youth) who wish to volunteer to work with children/youth in SAMPLE CHURCH programs, services and activities must complete a confidential application form (see sample form included in the Appendix to this Policy) and consent to and pass background checks, including criminal, child abuse and reference checks.
3. Application review. The Committee will be responsible for receipt, review and verification of applications, and will arrange for reference, child abuse and criminal background checks for volunteers. Applicants who successfully complete reference, child abuse and criminal background checks will be deemed eligible for ministry to children and youth upon completion of the initial training/certification (or, in subsequent years, retraining/recertification) process as provided for in Section III below.
4. Information of concern. If information of a cautionary nature is revealed through a reference, child abuse or criminal background check, the person conducting the check shall note this information in writing for the application file and communicate it to the Head of Staff or her/his designee. The Head of Staff or her/his designee shall consider this information and decide on a course of action. The decision, which will be promptly communicated to the applicant, must be documented in writing,

dated and placed in the applicant's file. In such case, the person's application may be handled in one of the following ways:

- Accepted unconditionally;
 - Accepted with clearly defined restrictions; or
 - Denied.
5. Prohibition on Hiring. Notwithstanding the above, SAMPLE CHURCH will not hire, employ or permit to volunteer in any capacity that involves direct contact with children any individual:
- Who has been verified by the Department of Human Services as named in the statewide database as a perpetrator with respect to a founded report of child abuse;
 - Who has been convicted of any of the disqualifying crimes specified in the CPSL (a list of which is set forth in Appendix G).
6. Materials subject to review. SAMPLE CHURCH reserves the right to review applications and all related materials (including, without limitation, Committee notes on reference checks and interviews and the results of background checks performed) at any time. Renewed child abuse and criminal history clearances will be required every thirty-six (36) months. Additional background, child abuse clearance or reference checks may be requested either randomly or because of some new concern.

B. Confidentiality

Applications and all related materials (including without limitation Committee notes on reference checks and interviews and the results of background checks performed) will be kept by the Head of Staff (or her/his designee) in a secure confidential location. Disclosure of the results of reference and background checks will be limited to those with a "need to know" and otherwise will be kept strictly confidential.

III. SAMPLE CHURCH CERTIFICATION AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

As set forth below, all employees and volunteers who successfully complete the application and screening process as required by Section II.A. above must then be certified by SAMPLE CHURCH before they may begin working with children or youth. Employees and volunteers shall be required to undergo both initial and periodic recertification as set forth below.

Please note that SAMPLE CHURCH's volunteer and employee certification process is distinct from, and in addition to, any required certification, licensure or registration that may be mandated by the state of Pennsylvania as a condition of employment in any profession (*i.e.*, teacher, social worker or therapist). In addition, certain employees, including those who are licensed by the state of Pennsylvania, are required under the CPSL to receive periodic state-approved child abuse training. Although SAMPLE CHURCH will endeavor to advise employees who are subject to state-mandated training requirements about upcoming training

opportunities, registration for and attendance at such state-mandated training sessions shall be the responsibility of the individual employee.

A. Initial SAMPLE CHURCH Certification

All SAMPLE CHURCH employees and volunteers who have direct contact with children or youth, including, but not limited to, those employee and volunteers who are mandated reporters, must be certified by SAMPLE CHURCH before they may begin working with children or youth. This process shall include the following:

- Required attendance at and completion of a SAMPLE CHURCH-approved training session regarding child and youth protection;
- Receipt and review of a copy of this Policy; and
- The signing of relevant documents including an Employee/Volunteer Acknowledgment and Agreement (see sample form included in the Appendix to this Policy), confirming that they have received, read and understood this Policy and agree to comply with it.

B. Periodic Recertification

Every three years after the initial certification, SAMPLE CHURCH employees and volunteers who have been certified in accordance with this Policy must successfully complete a recertification process to continue their work with children/youth. The recertification process shall include the following:

- Updated child abuse and criminal background checks;
- Required attendance and completion of a SAMPLE CHURCH-approved retraining session regarding child and youth protection; and
- Signing an Employee and Volunteer Recommitment Form, reconfirming the employee/volunteer has read and understood this Policy and agrees to comply with it (see sample form included in the Appendix to this Policy).

C. Certification/Recertification Training

SAMPLE CHURCH will offer regular training opportunities so that SAMPLE CHURCH-required initial certifications and re-certifications can be accomplished in timely fashion.

As noted above, certain employees are required periodically to attend state-approved child abuse training sessions in addition to those mandated by SAMPLE CHURCH under this Policy. For such employees, the following additional requirements shall apply:

- Individual employees who are subject to additional training by virtue of state certification, licensure or registration shall, as a condition of continued employment, furnish SAMPLE CHURCH with: 1) proof of attendance at a state-mandated child abuse training session within thirty

days of completion of such training and 2) a copy of any state-issued renewal certification, license or registration within thirty days of receipt.

- Individual employees who are subject to additional training by virtue of employment at SAMPLE CHURCH and who are not state-certified, licensed or registered shall furnish SAMPLE CHURCH with proof of attendance at state-mandated child abuse training sessions within thirty days of completion of such training as a condition of continued employment with SAMPLE CHURCH.

Any employee having questions about the applicability of these additional training requirements should contact his or her supervisor or the Head of Staff for clarification. As noted above, compliance with these additional, state-mandated training requirements shall be the sole responsibility of the individual employee.

IV. SUPERVISION REQUIREMENTS

Those to whom this Policy applies shall comply with the following requirements when supervising children and youth:

A. Two-Adult/Age Policy

At least two certified adults (one of whom will be no less than 25 years old) will supervise all SAMPLE CHURCH programs, services and activities involving children and youth, whether on or off campus. Adults must remain in sight of one another at all times except in an emergency situation. For purposes of the two-adult requirement, spouses count as one certified adult as do a parent and his/her children.

The two-adult requirement can be eased in a situation involving vehicular transportation as it is permissible for one certified adult driver to transport several children and/or youth in a single vehicle in a convoy of vehicles traveling to and from an event.

B. Adult/Child or Youth Ratios

1. For any ministry program with children or youth that is within a contained classroom there shall be at least one certified, appropriately aged adult for every ten children/youth; gender balance is recommended.
2. For any ministry program with children or youth that is held in a gym, or is outside or off campus there shall be at least one certified, appropriately aged adult for every eight children/youth; gender balance is recommended.
3. For overnight trips there shall be at least one certified, appropriately aged adult for every six children/youth; gender balance is required.

C. One-on-One Situations

In those limited situations where it is necessary for an adult to be alone with a child or youth, the adult should notify another adult before and after the period which he/she is alone with the child or youth. Additionally, any such one-on-one contact should be carried out in a public setting or otherwise in plain view of others.

D. Open Door Policy

Doors to rooms in which children and youth involved in church activities are present are to remain open. If noise or fire code restrictions apply, doors may be shut as long as there is clear glass in at least one door and nothing impedes vision through the glass.

E. Use of Church Manses and of Pastors' and Volunteers' Homes

Children and youth are not allowed into any church manse without at least two certified, appropriately aged adults being present. Similarly, children and youth are not allowed into the homes of a pastor or of a volunteer without at least two certified, appropriately aged adults being present. The adult/child and adult/youth ratios set forth in Section IV.B. shall apply.

F. Adult Leadership Event Form

All ministries that engage in activities, events or trips with children or youth are required to complete and submit an Adult Leadership Event Form (see sample form included in the Appendix to this Policy) to the Administrative Assistant to Children and Family Ministry at least 30 days prior to commencement of the activity, event or trip in order to document compliance with this policy. A separate form must be submitted for each activity, event or trip. Failure to submit this form as required may result in cancellation of the activity, event or trip.

G. Use of Private Vehicles

The following policies, which shall apply when private vehicles are being used to transport children and/or youth in connection with church-related activities, are intended to ensure and protect the safety of our children and youth.

1. All vehicle drivers must:
 - Be at least 25 years of age.
 - Be currently certified according to this Policy.
 - Have a valid driver's license and current automobile insurance and provide photocopies of the license and proof of such insurance to the Child/Youth Protection Committee in advance of transporting any children or youth in connection with church-related activities.
 - Have a good driving record, i.e., shall have had no moving violations within 12 months prior to the proposed transport of children/youth, and no convictions or deferred adjudications for driving under the

influence of a controlled substance within ten years prior to the proposed transport of children/youth.

- Authorize SAMPLE CHURCH to check their driving records.
2. No tobacco products shall be used in the vehicles.
 3. No alcoholic beverages shall be allowed in the vehicles.
 4. No firearms or other weapons shall be allowed in the vehicles.
 5. All persons, including the driver, shall wear seat and shoulder belts or be seated in such other age/weight appropriate safety seats (car seats, booster seats, etc.) as required by law.
 6. Nothing shall extend out of the windows.
 7. The maximum number of people in the vehicle shall be the same as the number of adult seats in the vehicle with seat belts.
 8. The driver shall have complete authority over the passengers and full responsibility for the safety of the passengers at all times.
 9. No driver shall drive more than a continuous two hours at any one time without a rest stop, and no one driver shall drive a total of more than eight hours in any one day. A driver making a rest stop shall stop the vehicle and rest for a period of time equal to ten minutes for each hour driven before stopping. Drivers may rest while an alternate driver takes over. On trips of eight hours or more, the driver shall have available an alternate approved driver to relieve the primary driver if necessary.
 10. For at least 12 hours prior to driving the vehicle, no driver shall have consumed any alcoholic beverages.
 11. Drivers shall operate vehicles in compliance with speed limits and traffic laws and consistent with safe driving given the prevailing road conditions.
 12. In the event of an accident, with or without injury, the driver (or another person if the driver is unable to do so) shall report the incident to the proper police authority and to the Head of Staff within 24 hours of its occurrence. If anyone requires medical treatment or hospitalization, the Head of Staff shall be notified by telephone as soon as possible.
 13. In the event of an accident, a Private Vehicle Accident Report Form (see sample form included in the Appendix to this Policy) must be promptly completed and submitted to the Head of Staff or her/his designee.

V. REPORTING ABUSE OR SUSPECTED ABUSE

This Policy and the law make the responsibility for reporting abuse of a child or youth or suspected abuse of a child or youth clear.

A. All SAMPLE CHURCH employees and volunteers who, in the course of employment or volunteer work, come to learn of any occurrence of abuse or a situation that presents reasonable cause to suspect that abuse may have occurred are required to make a report as set forth in this Policy. Such report shall be made promptly after the occurrence in question becomes known, as required by law, first to the authorities and immediately thereafter to the Head of Staff (see Reporting Checklist included in the Appendix to this Policy). All such reports, including the identities of all persons making such reports, shall be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law.

B. Similarly, any report of child/youth abuse made by an individual about his or her care by a parent, guardian, youth, adult, or SAMPLE CHURCH staff employee or volunteer, must be reported promptly, as required by law, first to the authorities and immediately thereafter to the Head of Staff. All such reports shall be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law.

C. In the event that the Head of Staff is unavailable or is the alleged abuser, the report referred to in Section V.A. or V.B. above by a SAMPLE CHURCH employee or volunteer of alleged or suspected abuse shall be made to the Clerk of Session (see Reporting Checklist included in the Appendix to this Policy).

D. The CPSL provides that individuals who make a good faith report of actual or suspected child abuse are immune from any civil or criminal liability that might otherwise result from making the report. In addition, the CPSL imposes criminal liability for willful failure to report actual or suspected child abuse.

VI. RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE OR SUSPECTED ABUSE

In the event of an allegation of abuse to a child or youth or suspected abuse to a child or youth and after completion of the above-mandated reporting, the procedures set forth below must be followed at SAMPLE CHURCH:

A. Every allegation shall be taken seriously. Adequate care, respect and confidentiality shall be offered to alleged victims and perpetrators until the allegation is substantiated or cleared. The identity of any individual who makes a report of alleged or suspected abuse and/or cooperates in a subsequent investigation of such a report in accordance with this Policy shall be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law.

B. The Head of Staff will immediately contact SAMPLE CHURCH legal counsel and, where appropriate, SAMPLE CHURCH's liability insurance carrier.

C. In consultation with the SAMPLE CHURCH's legal counsel the following may be appropriate:

1. The Head of Staff may notify the parent(s) or legal guardian of the alleged victim.
2. The Head of Staff may notify the accused individual.

D. SAMPLE CHURCH employees and volunteers are required to cooperate fully with the investigative authorities, such as the Department of Human Services, Montgomery County Office of Children and Youth and law enforcement officials.

E. With respect to inquiries other than those from investigative authorities (for example, from uninvolved church members or members of the media), SAMPLE CHURCH employees and volunteers will refer any inquiries regarding the situation to the Head of Staff, except that in the event the Head of Staff is unavailable or is the alleged abuser, SAMPLE CHURCH employees and volunteers will refer any such inquiries to the Clerk of Session. The Head of Staff or Clerk of Session, if the Head of Staff is unavailable or is the alleged abuser, shall be the only person authorized to release any information on behalf of SAMPLE CHURCH regarding an abuse allegation except where the law requires others to provide information.

F. Subject to applicable confidentiality laws, the Head of Staff will provide the Session with a report of the incident and of all steps taken afterwards.

G. When appropriate, the Head of Staff will be responsible for arranging a meeting with parents and guardians of SAMPLE CHURCH's children and youth to explain the situation and answer questions. The Head of Staff shall act in accordance with all applicable confidentiality laws at all times, including in any discussion that occurs such a meeting.

H. When appropriate, a brief statement will be prepared and sent to the congregation explaining the situation. That statement should not assign blame, interfere with the victim's privacy, or violate confidentiality concerns.

I. Subject to applicable confidentiality laws, the Head of Staff will inform either the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery or the Executive Presbyter of the alleged abuse and of all steps that have been taken to investigate and report the allegation.

J. The Head of Staff will maintain a log of all actions taken regarding the allegation including telephone calls, personal interactions and any correspondence. This log and all documentation relating to the matter shall be kept in a secure confidential file.

K. The following additional steps may be taken when deemed appropriate:

1. The Head of Staff and/or the Personnel Committee may conduct an internal investigation in addition to that which will be carried out by the authorities.
2. The Head of Staff shall immediately place an accused employee on leave. Such leave may be with or without pay. The Head of Staff shall immediately remove an accused volunteer from service.

3. Additionally, to protect the child or youth from further possible abuse or harassment, SAMPLE CHURCH will prohibit the accused individual access to the alleged victim and other children and youth in SAMPLE CHURCH programs, services and activities.
4. If an employee or volunteer is determined to be a perpetrator with respect to a founded report of child abuse, such individual's employment or volunteer relationship with SAMPLE CHURCH will be immediately terminated.
5. With the exception of a termination of employment that results from a determination that an employee is a perpetrator with respect to a founded report of abuse, an employee has the right to appeal the decision to the Personnel Committee. The Personnel Committee will address the situation with the Session in a timely and appropriate manner.
6. With the exception of a termination of a volunteer relationship that results from a determination that a volunteer is a perpetrator with respect to a founded report of abuse, a volunteer has the right to appeal the decision to the Session, which will address the situation in a timely and appropriate manner.
7. In all cases except those where an allegation of abuse is ultimately determined to be founded (as that term is defined by the CPSL), the Head of Staff will make a determination as to whether the formerly accused individual will be allowed to resume working with/supervising children and youth as an employee or volunteer at SAMPLE CHURCH.

In the event the Head of Staff is unavailable or is the alleged abuser, actions to be taken by the Head of Staff as set forth above in Section VI shall be taken by the Clerk of Session.

VII. ENDANGERED ADULTS

Endangered adults will be accorded the same protections as children and youth under this Policy.

VIII. POLICY REVIEW AND REVISION

The _____ Committee will review this Policy at least annually and recommend revisions to Session as appropriate.

IX. APPENDIX

The following sample forms (and Reporting Checklist) will be used in connection with the Policy:

Attachment A	Reporting Checklist
Attachment B	Employee and Volunteer Ministry Application Form
Attachment C	Employee/Volunteer Acknowledgement and Agreement
Attachment D	Employee and Volunteer Recommitment Form
Attachment E	Adult Leadership Event Form
Attachment F	Private Vehicle Accident Report Form
Attachment G	Disqualifying Crimes

Attachment A

SAMPLE Church Reporting Checklist

How to report suspected child abuse as mandated by Pennsylvania law as of December 2014 (source: 23 Pa. C.S. § 6301, *et seq.* and the Montgomery County, Pennsylvania website)

Following the procedures explained in SAMPLE CHURCH's Child and Youth Protection Policy, any suspected or actual case of child abuse or neglect must immediately be reported first to the authorities, in the manner set forth below, and then to the Head of Staff.

Reporting Child Abuse or Neglect to the Authorities

- An initial report of suspected or actual child abuse or neglect must be made via the **Toll-free PA Child Abuse Hotline (Childline) at 800-932-0313.**
- A written report must be made **within 48 hours** of the initial report to Montgomery County Child Protective Services using the attached form.

When to Also Call 9-1-1

- If you are in immediate danger of injury
- If you suspect a child is in immediate danger of injury or if the abuse or injury is happening right now
- If there is a need to collect evidence or maintain a chain of custody of evidence
- **Please note that calling 9-1-1 does not eliminate the requirement to report the matter to the authorities and to the Head of Staff.**

Reporting Child Abuse to SAMPLE CHURCH

Immediately after an initial report of suspected or actual child abuse or neglect is submitted to the authorities, the person making the report must make a report to the Head of Staff. If the Head of Staff is the alleged abuser, this report must be made the Clerk of Sessions.

**NOTE: CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION – TO BE USED ONLY AS STATED
IN THE SAMPLE CHURCH CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY**

Attachment B

**SAMPLE Church
Child and Youth Protection Policy
Employee and Volunteer Ministry Application Form**

This application is to be completed by all employees and volunteers proposing to work with, supervise and/or have custody of children and/or youth. This form will be completed as a part of the application process required under the SAMPLE Church Child and Youth Protection Policy (the Policy). It is being used to help the church provide a safe and secure environment for those children and youth who participate in our programs, services and activities.

Name: _____ Date: _____
Last, First, Middle

Address: _____
Street, City, State, Zip

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Work Phone: _____

Occupation: _____ Place of Employment: _____

How long at above address? _____. If less than five years, give previous address(es) and number of years at each over past ten years.

SAMPLE CHURCH member: Yes: _____ No: _____

If yes, SAMPLE CHURCH member since: __

List (names and addresses) other churches you attended regularly during the last five years.

What leadership/volunteer experience have you had with children/youth? (Be specific; where possible include dates, place and contacts if not at SAMPLE CHURCH.)

**NOTE: CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION – TO BE USED ONLY AS STATED
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Please list all SAMPLE CHURCH ministries in which you are or have been involved.

Driver's License No.: _____ State: _____

During the past five years, have you been convicted of or pled guilty or nolo contendere (no contest) with respect to any traffic violation(s)? _____

If yes, please describe all such convictions; in addition describe any conviction for a traffic violation resulting in the suspension of your license, whether or not within the past five years.

Do you have any medical training? _____

Are you CPR certified? _____

Personal References: (Must be over 18 years old and not related to you.)

Name: _____

Address _____

Phone: _____ Relationship: _____

Name: _____

Address _____

Phone: _____ Relationship: _____

The following questions are necessary in order to help ensure a safe and secure environment for our children and for the protection of our volunteers and/or paid staff. All information is held strictly confidential.

Please answer these questions, providing an explanation for the circumstances giving rise to any affirmative answer. If you have any concerns regarding the questions, please consult with the Child/Youth Protection Committee:

**NOTE: CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION – TO BE USED ONLY AS STATED
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Have you been convicted of or pled guilty or nolo contendere to a felony or misdemeanor?

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please explain: _____

Have you been adjudicated a delinquent (a juvenile conviction) in connection with any felony or misdemeanor? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please explain: _____

Do you currently use illegal drugs and/or abuse alcohol? ? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please explain: _____

Have you ever been denied participation in supervising children or youth activities in any organization? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please explain: _____

FOR VOLUNTEER APPLICANTS ONLY:

If you are applying to be a volunteer, is there any health-related reason that would keep you from safely working with or cause any potential harm to children or youth? _____

If yes, please explain.

**NOTE: CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION – TO BE USED ONLY AS STATED
IN THE SAMPLE CHURCH CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY**

**Applicant's Certification, Consent to
Reference and Criminal Background Checks and Release**

1. Certification

I hereby certify that the above information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information and belief. I further certify that I have not been nor am I currently involved in any abuse of a minor, nor have I been found to be the perpetrator with respect to a founded report of child abuse. I further certify that I have not been convicted of any of the offenses listed in the CPSL (see Exhibit 1 to this Application).

2. Consent to Reference and Criminal Background Checks

I hereby authorize any references, churches or other organizations listed in this application to furnish to SAMPLE Church any information they may have (including employers' and others' opinions) regarding my character and fitness for working with children or youth, and release all said references, churches and other organizations from liability for damages of whatever kind or nature that might result from releasing such information to SAMPLE CHURCH.

I hereby authorize SAMPLE CHURCH to conduct a criminal background check on me and authorize that any information pertaining to any record of a conviction contained in police files or any similar file maintained about me, whether federal, state or local, be released to SAMPLE CHURCH. In making this authorization, I hereby release any law enforcement agencies, SAMPLE CHURCH and its agents and employees, and any other persons receiving the results of such background checks from any and all liability resulting from such disclosure.

Applicant's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Print Name: _____

Signature of Youth Applicant's Parent/Guardian

Date: _____

Print Name: _____

**NOTE: CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION – TO BE USED ONLY AS STATED
IN THE SAMPLE CHURCH CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY**

Exhibit 1

Disqualifying Crimes

An applicant who has been convicted of one or more of the following crimes under Pennsylvania law or an equivalent crime under Federal law or the law of another state shall be disqualified from employment and/or volunteer service that involves direct contact with children:

- Title 18, Chapter 25 (relating to criminal homicide).
- Title 18, Section 2702 (relating to aggravated assault).
- Title 18, Section 2709.1 (relating to stalking).
- Title 18, Section 2901 (relating to kidnapping).
- Title 18, Section 2902 (relating to unlawful restraint).
- Title 18, Section 3121 (relating to rape).
- Title 18, Section 3122.1 (relating to statutory sexual assault).
- Title 18, Section 3123 (relating to involuntary deviate sexual intercourse).
- Title 18, Section 3124.1 (relating to sexual assault).
- Title 18, Section 3125 (relating to aggravated indecent assault).
- Title 18, Section 3126 (relating to indecent assault).
- Title 18, Section 3127 (relating to indecent exposure).
- Title 18, Section 4302 (relating to incest).
- Title 18, Section 4303 (relating to concealing death of child).
- Title 18, Section 4304 (relating to endangering welfare of children).
- Title 18, Section 4305 (relating to dealing in infant children).
- A felony offense under Title 18, Section 5902(b) (relating to prostitution and related offenses).
- Title 18, Section 5903(c) or (d) (relating to obscene and other sexual materials and performances).
- Title 18, Section 6301 (relating to corruption of minors).
- Title 18, Section 6312 (relating to sexual abuse of children).
- The attempt, solicitation or conspiracy to commit any of the above listed offenses.
- A felony offense under the Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act of April 14, 1972 (Public Law 233, No. 64) committed within the previous five-year period.

**NOTE: CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION – TO BE USED ONLY AS STATED
IN THE SAMPLE CHURCH CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY**

Attachment C

**SAMPLE Church
Child and Youth Protection Policy
Employee/Volunteer Acknowledgment and Agreement**

In furtherance of my application to be certified to work with children and youth at SAMPLE Church (SAMPLE CHURCH) I hereby acknowledge that I have received a copy of the SAMPLE CHURCH Child and Youth Protection Policy (Policy) and that I have had an opportunity to read the Policy, that I understand my obligations under the Policy and that I have completed training regarding child and youth protection. I understand that any violation of the Policy or misrepresentation of information that I have provided in connection with my application to work with children/youth at SAMPLE CHURCH may result in termination of my employment or volunteer service with children/youth.

Intending to be legally bound, I hereby agree to comply in all respects with the Policy.

Applicant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Print Name: _____

Signature of Youth Applicant's Parent/Guardian Date: _____

Print Name: _____

Date Training Was Completed: _____

**NOTE: CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION – TO BE USED ONLY AS STATED
IN THE SAMPLE CHURCH CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY**

Attachment D

**SAMPLE Church
Child and Youth Protection Policy
Employee and Volunteer Recommitment Form**

This renewal of commitment form is to be completed every three years by all employees and those desiring to volunteer for a position involving responsibility for or supervision or custody of children and/or youth at SAMPLE Church. It is being used to help the church provide a safe and secure environment for those children and youth who participate in our programs, services and activities.

Name: _____ Date: _____
Last, First, Middle

Address: _____
Street, City, State, Zip

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____
Cell Phone: _____

Occupation: _____ Place of Employment: _____

Driver's License No.: _____ State: _____

Since the date of your certification/last recertification, have you been convicted of, or pled guilty or nolo contendere (no contest) to any criminal charges that affect your eligibility to work with children and/or youth under this Policy, including a conviction of any crime listed in Exhibit 1 to this Form? If yes, please describe:

Since the date of your certification/last recertification, have you been convicted of, or pled guilty or nolo contendere (no contest) to any traffic violation(s)? _____

If yes, please describe all such conviction(s):

**NOTE: CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION – TO BE USED ONLY AS STATED
IN THE SAMPLE CHURCH CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY**

Do you have any medical training? _____

Are you CPR certified? _____

Is there any health-related reason that would keep you from safely working with or cause any potential harm to children? If yes, please explain.

Please list the SAMPLE CHURCH ministries in which you are currently involved.

Employee and Volunteer Recommitment Statement

I hereby certify that the information I have provided in this Recommitment Form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information and belief. I hereby acknowledge that I have received a copy of the SAMPLE CHURCH Child and Youth Protection Policy (Policy), that I have had an opportunity read the Policy, that I understand my obligations under the Policy and that I have received retraining regarding child and youth protection. I understand that any violation of the Policy or misrepresentation of information that I have provided in connection with my application to work with children/youth of SAMPLE CHURCH or in this Recommitment Form may result in termination of employment or volunteer service with children/youth.

Intending to be legally bound, I hereby agree to comply in all respects with the Policy.

Applicant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Print Name: _____

Date Retraining was Completed: _____

Signature of Youth Applicant's Parent/Guardian Date: _____

Print Name: _____

**NOTE: CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION – TO BE USED ONLY AS STATED
IN THE SAMPLE CHURCH CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY**

**Exhibit 1
Disqualifying Crimes**

An applicant who has been convicted of one or more of the following crimes under Pennsylvania law or an equivalent crime under Federal law or the law of another state shall be disqualified from employment and/or volunteer service that involves direct contact with children:

- Title 18, Chapter 25 (relating to criminal homicide).
- Title 18, Section 2702 (relating to aggravated assault).
- Title 18, Section 2709.1 (relating to stalking).
- Title 18, Section 2901 (relating to kidnapping).
- Title 18, Section 2902 (relating to unlawful restraint).
- Title 18, Section 3121 (relating to rape).
- Title 18, Section 3122.1 (relating to statutory sexual assault).
- Title 18, Section 3123 (relating to involuntary deviate sexual intercourse).
- Title 18, Section 3124.1 (relating to sexual assault).
- Title 18, Section 3125 (relating to aggravated indecent assault).
- Title 18, Section 3126 (relating to indecent assault).
- Title 18, Section 3127 (relating to indecent exposure).
- Title 18, Section 4302 (relating to incest).
- Title 18, Section 4303 (relating to concealing death of child).
- Title 18, Section 4304 (relating to endangering welfare of children).
- Title 18, Section 4305 (relating to dealing in infant children).
- A felony offense under Title 18, Section 5902(b) (relating to prostitution and related offenses).
- Title 18, Section 5903(c) or (d) (relating to obscene and other sexual materials and performances).
- Title 18, Section 6301 (relating to corruption of minors).
- Title 18, Section 6312 (relating to sexual abuse of children).
- The attempt, solicitation or conspiracy to commit any of the above listed offenses.
- A felony offense under the Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act of April 14, 1972 (Public Law 233, No. 64) committed within the previous five-year period.

**NOTE: CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION – TO BE USED ONLY AS STATED
IN THE SAMPLE CHURCH CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY**

Attachment F

**SAMPLE Church
Private Vehicle Accident Report**

Date of accident: _____ Time of accident: _____

Location of accident (be specific): _____

Driver of vehicle from SAMPLE CHURCH: _____

Driver's license #: _____ Vehicle plate: _____

How accident occurred (be specific): _____

Extent of damage to vehicle (be specific): _____

Extent of damage to other vehicle: _____

Other(s) Driver's license #: _____ Vehicle plate: _____

Driver's address: _____

Make of vehicle: _____

Vehicle insurance carrier: _____ Policy number: _____

Insurance agent: _____ Phone #: _____

Name of all passengers and injuries (use back of form), if any: _____

Name(s) of other witnesses:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

**NOTE: CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION – TO BE USED ONLY AS STATED
IN THE SAMPLE CHURCH CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY**

Attachment G

Disqualifying Crimes

An applicant who has been convicted of one or more of the following crimes under Pennsylvania law or an equivalent crime under Federal law or the law of another state shall be disqualified from employment and/or volunteer service that involves direct contact with children:

- Title 18, Chapter 25 (relating to criminal homicide).
- Title 18, Section 2702 (relating to aggravated assault).
- Title 18, Section 2709.1 (relating to stalking).
- Title 18, Section 2901 (relating to kidnapping).
- Title 18, Section 2902 (relating to unlawful restraint).
- Title 18, Section 3121 (relating to rape).
- Title 18, Section 3122.1 (relating to statutory sexual assault).
- Title 18, Section 3123 (relating to involuntary deviate sexual intercourse).
- Title 18, Section 3124.1 (relating to sexual assault).
- Title 18, Section 3125 (relating to aggravated indecent assault).
- Title 18, Section 3126 (relating to indecent assault).
- Title 18, Section 3127 (relating to indecent exposure).
- Title 18, Section 4302 (relating to incest).
- Title 18, Section 4303 (relating to concealing death of child).
- Title 18, Section 4304 (relating to endangering welfare of children).
- Title 18, Section 4305 (relating to dealing in infant children).
- A felony offense under Title 18, Section 5902(b) (relating to prostitution and related offenses).
- Title 18, Section 5903(c) or (d) (relating to obscene and other sexual materials and performances).
- Title 18, Section 6301 (relating to corruption of minors).
- Title 18, Section 6312 (relating to sexual abuse of children).
- The attempt, solicitation or conspiracy to commit any of the above listed offenses.
- A felony offense under the Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act of April 14, 1972 (Public Law 233, No. 64) committed within the previous five-year period.