

Newark Presbytery Child Protection Policy

Statement

Newark Presbytery (NP) and its members are committed to the safety, welfare and protection of all children and youth participating in the activities and programs of the NP (and those endorsed by NP). To this end, the Vision Accountability Board (VAB) hereby adopts reasonable policies and procedures in order to minimize the possibility that any child or youth (meaning all those 17 years of age and younger) will be subjected to physical or emotional abuse or neglect by NP staff, paid childcare workers, or volunteers while engaged in NP programs or activities. The policies and procedures adopted seek to balance the security and welfare of the children and the legitimate expectations of privacy of staff and volunteers.

Standards of Conduct

- Paid or volunteer adults shall not touch or interact with children or youth in any way that is sexually stimulating, emotionally demeaning, or exploitative. Common expressions of affection and affirmation (hugs and pats on the back) or physical care (diaper changes or first aid) are appropriate in this or any community of caring Christians. Staff and volunteers must be careful that physical expressions of affection are not excessive or imposed upon another individual.
- Paid and volunteer adults and youth working with children and youth are also tasked with guarding the physical and emotional safety of those in their care and to be aware of signs indicating neglect of the child's well-being.
- Those people working with children or youth should work in pairs. Whenever possible, two adults should be present with the children at all activities. NP recommends that staff and volunteers transport children and youth in groups rather than alone. In ordinary circumstances, an unaccompanied adult should not drive a single child in a NP sponsored activity without the permission of the child's parent or guardian.
- All volunteers for ongoing assignments shall have completed an approved Volunteer Application form (See Implementation segment below for details).

Implementation

To implement this Child Protection Policy (CPP),

- A CPP statement must be provided to and signed by all employees and volunteers participating in any NP program or activity involving children and/or youth.
- In general, volunteer applications will be accepted only after six months of active involvement as members of a NP church.
- Exceptions to this volunteer application policy may be made at the discretion of the VAB or a body authorized by the VAB to cover short-term involvement in children's activities such as service projects, special events, etc. In these cases, a new member will be paired with a vetted member or staff person.

- Applications will be submitted through the ministry team chair responsible for the particular program in which the volunteer wishes to participate. The completed application will be forwarded to the CPP Review Team as designated by the VAB.
- The NP members and staff will be made aware of the CPP.

Administration

The VAB is responsible for the oversight and security of the program. All documentation associated with the CPP and volunteer applications, and all documentation concerning potential allegations of physical or emotional abuse or neglect will be held in confidence by the VAB and the Stated Clerk. All documentation will be kept in locked storage in the NP office and applications will be kept on file for a 5-year period past the active service of the volunteer.

The VAB is responsible for review and subsequent approval or disapproval of each volunteer application. If the VAB disapproves an application, the VAB will also determine if any additional actions are necessary beyond the notification to the applicant. Upon completion of each application review, the VAB will notify the applicant of its decision. Reference checks, police background checks and child abuse checks shall be made when deemed necessary. The VAB may delegate this responsibility to an appropriate Presbytery committee.

Member Awareness

- Initially, a copy of the CPP and the volunteer application will be made available to the NP members on the web site, and a copy of the CPP will be available at every presbytery meeting.
- The NP members will be informed and reminded of this policy annually.
- All volunteers (as defined in the implementation section) will be required to complete the application form as well as receive and regularly review the CPP.

Procedures for Handling Misconduct Allegations

The issues of sexual and/or emotional abuse or neglect involving a minor, whether perceived or actual, need to be dealt with immediately, effectively, and with great discretion. New Jersey law requires that allegations of abuse or neglect of children be reported immediately to proper authorities. In Essex County that report is made to the Department of Permanency and Child Protection (DCP&P) at (877) 652-2874. It is the responsibility of the Stated Clerk to see that such report has been made. The Stated Clerk must also report to the VAB.

The intended procedure is to report any allegation of abuse or neglect to the Stated Clerk and VAB. If the alleged offender is the Stated Clerk, the report should be made to the VAB.

Adopted by the Vision Accountability Board on April 23, 2016.

CONFIDENTIAL

Application for Children and Youth Work Volunteer
Newark Presbytery

Form date: _____

PERSONAL

Name _____ Daytime telephone _____

Address _____
Street city zip code

In which Children/Youth Program (s) are you seeking to become involved?

What skills or interests would you bring to the Children/Youth program?

What experience with children/youth have you had the in last 5 years?

Organization	Program	Dates	contact(include phone number)
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Have you at any time ever:

- Been arrested for any reason _____yes ____no
- Been convicted of, or pleaded no contest to, any crime involving children? _____yes ____no
- Been convicted of, or pleaded no contest to, a moving violation in the last 3 years? _____yes ____no
- Engaged in, or been accused of, any act of child molestation and/or exploitation, abuse or neglect? _____yes ____no

Are you aware of:

- Having any traits or tendencies that could pose a threat to children, youth or others? _____yes ____no
- Any reason why you should not work with children, youth or others? _____yes ____no

If the answer to any of these questions is yes, please explain in detail on an attached sheet.

Church Activity

What church or churches have you regularly attended in the past 5 years?

Church name	Pastor's name/ phone number	Years attended
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_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

References (other than family members)

	Name/ Relationship	Address	Phone
1)	_____	_____	_____
2)	_____	_____	_____

Applicant verification and release:

I recognize that the Newark Presbytery is relying upon the accuracy of the information contained herein. Accordingly, I attest and affirm that all the information that I have provided is completely true and correct.

I authorize Newark Presbytery to contact any person or entity listed in this application and I further authorize any such person or entity to provide Newark Presbytery with information, opinions, and impressions relating to my background or qualifications. I further authorize Newark Presbytery to conduct a criminal background investigation and /or child abuse investigation if the check is deemed necessary.

I voluntarily release Newark Presbytery and any such organization or entity listed herein by me from liability involving the communication of information relating to my background or qualifications.

I have carefully read the _____ Child Protection Policy.

Signature_____

Date_____

Witness_____

Date_____