

St. Paul's United Church of Christ

Safe Church Policy

Revisions:

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Statement of Policy

As a community of Christian faith, St. Paul's UCC is committed to creating and maintaining programs, facilities and a community in which members, friends, staff and volunteers can worship, learn and work together in an atmosphere free from all forms of discrimination, harassment, exploitation or intimidation. The congregation of St. Paul's UCC supports the principles of the Code of Conduct, which include individual responsibility to fulfill the highest standards of personal conduct toward others and to lead and guide the congregation in fulfillment of the standards set by our Christian faith. St. Paul's UCC strongly opposes and prohibits "sexual exploitation," "sexual harassment" or any form of exploitation or abuse of others regardless of age, sex, sexual orientation, sexual identification or mental capacity. It is the intention of our congregation to affirmatively nurture good behavior, and to prevent and correct behavior that is contrary to this policy and, as necessary, discipline those persons who violate this policy.

Every member of the congregation, whether "authorized clergy," leader, lay staff, volunteer or parent/guardian, has a role to lead those who look to them individually for guidance, to monitor their behavior and redirect them if they cross boundaries of safe conduct. Our congregation shall nurture good conduct as demonstrated by personal behaviors that are consistent with our Christian values.

Ministers -- Ministerial Conduct

Consistent with our understanding of the priesthood of all believers, all "authorized clergy," employees, elected and appointed lay leaders, and authorized volunteers are Ministers to the congregation. It is especially important that every Minister to the church be adequately prepared and educated for the ministry in which they serve others, and to understand the ways in which their use or misuse of authority may impact others. Each Minister is obligated to demonstrate and encourage safe conduct by being attentive to self-care, continuing education, maintenance of personal boundaries, and support of those who are vulnerable, or in need of support or refuge. Every Minister should seek to protect vulnerable individuals of every kind and to comply with state laws as may be their statutory obligation. (Ministry Standards—Appendix B)

Each Minister shall acquire knowledge of the details of this policy and related procedures in order to:

1. Prevent "sexual exploitation" or "sexual harassment" of parishioners, employees or others by anyone engaged in ministry on behalf of St. Paul's UCC
2. Prevent abuse or exploitation of "vulnerable adults," to include financial exploitation.
3. Prevent abuse or mistreatment of children to include abuse of one child by another.
4. Demonstrate appropriate physical contact or verbal interaction as defined in this policy and prevent or re-direct inappropriate interaction or physical contact by others.
5. Enforce standards for contact between employees, staff and children outside of scheduled programs.
6. Communicate to others and practice safe conduct guidelines regarding electronic communications and social media.
7. Manage risk of one-on-one contact between adults and children.
8. Recognize the importance, and act upon observations or allegations of behavior outside policy boundaries to include personal interactions, use of social media and use of church computers.

9. Understand and accept obligations and know how to report suspected abuse of children or other “vulnerable adults” as required by this policy or as required by the State of Pennsylvania, and cooperate with investigations as may follow.
10. Recognize circumstances of “sexual harassment” and the obligation and means to report to church leadership.
11. Understand how, by their action or inaction, they individually pose a risk to the church in the form of legal liability or loss of reputation.

Every Minister shall refrain from using a position of power or authority to exploit an advantage over any other person, adult or child.

Ministers who are “authorized clergy” and serving the congregation in any capacity (active, retired, employee, volunteer) shall hold themselves to a higher standard of care with respect to their personal conduct and relationships with the congregation, church staff and volunteers, whether pastoral, administrative or personal in nature. Utmost care and good faith are expected.

Screening & Selection

Prior to beginning their duties as Ministers, each candidate for employment and volunteers who work with children or “vulnerable adults” shall be subject to the following qualifying steps:

Volunteers Application & Qualification –

Volunteers who apply for an unpaid position as a volunteer who work with or have direct contact with children will be required to **submit the following:**

1. Complete an application and provide a disclosure of any criminal convictions. An affirmative response is required to every question; no answers may be omitted. Falsification of any aspect of the application shall be grounds for immediate dismissal. (Appendix D – Applications & Forms)
2. Provide a minimum of three references of which two are not immediate relatives.
3. Background certifications (must be renewed every 60 months or 5 years)--all individuals 18 years of age or older must provide the following:
 - A) Criminal history records are obtained through the PA State Police at no cost for volunteers and can be requested online at www.psp.pa.gov/Pages/Request-a-Criminal-History-Record.aspx (Appendix D – Applications & Forms).
 - B) Provide Child Abuse Clearance obtained (no cost for volunteers) through the PA Department of Human Services online at keepkidssafe.pa.gov (Appendix D – Applications & Forms). Background checks conducted for other organizations are valid so long as the original is provided for the purpose of making a copy.
 - C) Federal Criminal History report from the FBI, which shall include submission of the individual's fingerprints to the Pennsylvania State Police. (The church will provide reimbursement for the expense of FBI background checks made for St. Paul's applications with the submission of receipts.) **Note: *only the Pennsylvania Criminal History report and the Certification from the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (but not the FBI report) will be required for a volunteer if the following 3 conditions apply:***

- I) The volunteer position is in fact truly unpaid;
 - II) The prospective volunteer has been a Pennsylvania resident for a period of no less than 10 years immediately prior to the application for a volunteer position; and
 - III) The prospective volunteer swears or affirms in writing that he/she is not disqualified from service under the provisions of the law.
4. Upon selection, sign an acknowledgement of these policies and procedures and fulfill all training obligations within one month after assuming duties.
 5. Consistory, Personnel, authorized clergy and ministry Chairs that work with children are required to participate in a 3 hour Mandated Reporter Training program at www.reportabusepa.pitt.edu. Mandated reporter training shall be taken every 36 months (three years).

By completing this paperwork assume the role and responsibility of being a mandatory reporter (Appendix C – Definitions).

Volunteers shall be active members of the church, or otherwise affiliated with the church, for no less than six months before being permitted to work in specifically child oriented programs. The **only exceptions** to this policy are for **one time**, annual, on site, non-overnight events where the individual comes from another church with similar programs or where the individual will be working directly with another adult who has fulfilled the volunteer requirements.

At their discretion, the corresponding Ministry Chair, Pastor or Consistory appointee may directly contact and interview references to assess suitability and document responses. (Interview & Reference Questions, Appendix D –Applications & Forms)

Employment Application & Qualification --

All candidates for employment 14 years or older shall:

1. Complete an application reciting work history, education, 7 years of residence history and disclosure of criminal convictions. An affirmative response is required to every question; no answers may be omitted. Falsification of any aspect of the application shall be grounds for immediate dismissal. (Appendix D – Applications & Forms)
2. Provide a minimum of three references, which shall include both work-related and personal.
3. Provide the following background check information for all individuals having contact with children (*assuming the individual becomes employed, the same certifications will be required every 60 months or 5 years*):
 - A) Criminal history record obtained through the PA State website at www.psp.pa.gov/Pages/Request-a-Criminal-History-Record.aspx (Appendix D – Applications & Forms).
 - B) Provide Child Abuse Clearance obtained through the PA Department of Human Services' website at keepkidssafe.pa.gov (Appendix D – Applications & Forms).
 - C) Federal Criminal History report from the FBI, which shall include submission of the individual's fingerprints to the Pennsylvania State Police
4. Upon selection, sign an acknowledgement of these policies and procedures and fulfill all training obligations within one month after assuming duties. All mandated reporters

(Appendix C – Definitions) are required to participate in a 3 hour Mandated Reporter Training program at www.reportabusepa.pitt.edu.

The Pastor or Consistory President and Personnel Team shall each interview in person every candidate for employment. Each shall employ behavioral interviewing techniques such as the example provided in Interview & Reference Questions Appendix D to assess suitability for working with children, and specifically discuss the church's commitment to protecting children and other vulnerable persons from abuse.

The Pastor, Personnel Team Member or Consistory appointee shall directly contact and interview at least three references for each employment candidate, a combination of both professional and personal references, and ask standardized questions to assess suitability and document responses. (Appendix D – Interview & Reference Questions)

An employer or individual who intentionally fails to require an applicant for employment or volunteer service to submit the required certifications commits a misdemeanor of the 3rd degree.

Approval Procedure --

A group of at least 3 unrelated individuals generally comprised of the Personnel Team, or Consistory, shall review each background check and agree that the applicant is eligible for employment as Minister, employee or volunteer. In situations where there is a potential for concern, the Pastor is to be included in deliberations.

If the clearances reveal that an individual has committed child abuse within the five years immediately preceding, the individual cannot be hired or selected as a volunteer, regardless of whether the individual's clearances show a conviction related to the report or any other history.

The individual is also disqualified from employment or from being selected as a volunteer if the clearances reveal that the individual has committed certain crimes under Pennsylvania law, federal law, or the law of another state. These crimes include, but are not limited to: criminal homicide, aggravated assault, stalking, kidnapping, rape and other sexual assault offenses, statutory sexual assault, indecent exposure, incest, child trafficking, prostitution, obscenity, corruption of minors, sexual abuse of children, and certain felonies under Pennsylvania's Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act. Employers and volunteer supervisors should carefully review the list of disqualifying offenses. (Appendix E)

Following the review, each committee member shall complete the Background Investigation Results document (Appendix D, pgs. 4-5 of Authorized Children & Youth Volunteer/Employee Disclosure Form) which will become part of the applicant's or employee's permanent personnel file.

Confidentiality –

At all times, the privacy and security rights of individuals are to be protected with utmost care. The Personnel Chair shall assure that physical means and processes are in place to protect individual rights. **Note:** Prior adult convictions for a crime are a matter of public record. Therefore, there can be no expectation of secrecy in regard to a prior conviction.

Grandfathering Not Permitted –

Each board member, employee or volunteer now serving and regardless of length of service must be willing to set an example for all others who follow in their ministry. Therefore, at the time this policy is first adopted, all incumbent board members, employees and all incumbent volunteers who work with children shall execute and sign applications and submit to a background check as is required for candidate employees and volunteers. This includes that Consistory, Personnel, authorized clergy and ministry Chairs that work with children are required to participate in a 3 hour Mandated Reporter Training program at www.reportabusepa.pitt.edu. Mandated reporter training shall be taken every 36 months (three years). *All employees must be in compliance by Dec. 31, 2015. All volunteers authorized by 8/25/2015 for working with children must be in compliance by July 1, 2016. All volunteers after 8/25/2015 seeking to work with children must be in compliance before serving.*

Record Retention –

Volunteer applications shall be retained in the same manner as employee applications with due regard for the safety of private information such as Social Security numbers. The individual record shall include:

- Employee or volunteer application including disclosure of criminal convictions, references and signed acknowledgement of these policies and procedures.
- Criminal history record results obtained through the PA State Police <http://epatch.state.pa.us> (Appendix D – Applications & Forms).
- Child Abuse Clearance results obtained through the PA Department of Human Services www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home (Appendix D – Applications & Forms).
- FBI Criminal History Report results if applicable.

These records are to be maintained for 30 years beyond the time of employment or service. The statute of limitations for injury to children is normally the age of majority (age 18) **plus** the term of the State's injury statute.

Training

The mission of St. Paul's UCC is first to prevent abuse of children and other "vulnerable adults." We wish to identify and nurture safe conduct and must lead and guide through adequate training. It is difficult to comprehend that those among us, our friends and family, would commit such acts willingly. Nevertheless, persons who have been presented with no behavior standards and who do not understand boundaries may unwittingly engage in behaviors that may be perceived as predatory. Their personal reputations and that of St. Paul's UCC are then at risk.

To fulfill our leadership obligation to our Ministers, each new employee and new volunteer shall complete a specific program of training within 30 days of assuming duties. Fulfillment of training requirements shall be documented by the Personnel Team and respective program Director (Christian Education; Youth Choir; Day Care; Pre-School, etc.).

Training shall be repeated every three years. Records shall be maintained by the Personnel Team in cooperation with the Program Directors. Training records shall be audited every six months ensuring that all volunteers are current in their training.

Abuse prevention curriculum shall include:

1. Organization level
 - Review of expected conduct and boundaries defined in this policy. (Code of Conduct)
 - Review of standards applicable to ministry (Ministry Standards)
 - Explanation of procedures for reporting violations of standards of conduct and suspected child abuse.
 - Explanation of individual statutory reporting obligations
 - Identifying and managing high-risk situations such as bathroom use, transition times, and free times
 - Physical security procedures
2. Abuse prevention education:
 - Effects of sexual abuse.
 - Types of child molesters.
 - Characteristics of abusers.
 - How child molesters operate: access, privacy, and control.
 - Protecting oneself from false allegations.
 - Examples of child-on-child sexual abuse, even among young children.
 - Characteristics of children more likely to act out sexually.
 - Characteristics of children more likely to be abused.
 - High-risk activities and circumstances.
 - Specific monitoring and supervision activities to prevent child-on-child sexual activity.
 - How to respond to incidents of sexual activity between children.

The primary training vehicle will be the *Armatus* training suite by Praesidium, Inc. available through the United Church of Christ Insurance Board at no cost.

Ministry program directors shall assure that each volunteer has mastered requirements and provide additional supervision and guidance as required to assure required conduct.

Monitoring & Supervision

Each Minister who is in a position of leadership shall regularly supervise and provide leadership in the fulfillment of our congregation's **Code of Conduct** (Appendix A) and **Ministry Standards** (Appendix B).

Our intent is to sustain relationships which encourage employees and volunteers to meet our abuse prevention objectives while being mutually supportive as a team. All must be comfortable in reporting repeated violations of the **Code of Conduct** or **Ministry Standards** to leadership. The objective of monitoring is, first, to protect children and vulnerable adults, then to protect staff from false allegations, and to protect the reputation of St. Paul's UCC and its ministries.

In support of a practice of "progressive discipline," violations of the **Code of Conduct** and **Ministry Standards** are to be recorded in personnel files. Concurrently, employees and

volunteers are to understand that their job descriptions include the obligation to observe and report patterns of behavior that violate the **Code of Conduct** or **Ministry Standards**.

Ministry program directors, e.g., Director of Christian Education; Nursery, etc. shall continuously monitor performance using a variety of techniques such as:

1. Scheduled visits;
2. Unannounced random visits at unpredictable times;
3. Planned interviews or surveys of children, employees, and volunteers;
4. Meeting regularly with individual employees and volunteers;
5. Group supervision meetings;
6. Reviewing site documentation (e.g. progress notes, incident logs, etc.).

Committee chairs and the office administrator shall:

1. Monitor computer use and internet use as needed.
2. Utilize filtering, firewalls and encryption technology to the extent practicable

Internal Feedback Systems

In ordinary administrative matters we expect employees and volunteers to address concerns with their immediate supervisors. However, situations affecting the health and welfare of children and “vulnerable adults” require the employee or volunteer (mandated reporter) to make a report directly to **CHILDLINE: 800-932-0313**. In the case of vulnerable adults aged 60 and over call the PA Elder Abuse Hotline at 1-800-490-8505 to contact the local Agency on Aging. In either case, the employee or volunteer should also immediately advise the Ministers in leadership who can act upon concerns.

When any employee or volunteer observes violations of the **Code of Conduct**, whether committed by an employee, volunteer or other person, or observes any other circumstance they find suspicious or feel is inappropriate, or may rise to the level of “suspected abuse,” they have a **right and duty to report** it directly to the Director of the particular ministry to which the observation applies. Respective Directors are identified in Appendix F – Leadership & Reporting Roster. Please note that if the observer believes that there is sufficient evidence of abuse they shall act as the mandatory reporter and call CHILDLINE: 800-932-0313. The observer must still, without delay, report the incident to church authorities as indicated.

If for any reason, the observer believes that the primary contact has failed to respond or has not given credibility to the observer, the latter may contact the church pastor or Personnel Chair to report the observation. **The observer or victim shall be permitted to report violations of policy or circumstances of abuse confidentially and their anonymity will be protected.**

The Personnel Team and Pastor, while respecting and protecting the confidentiality wishes of the observer or victim, if any, shall ascertain with reasonable certainty the relationship of the observer to the incident and the credibility of the information being provided. The Personnel Chair shall initiate (1) investigation of the facts, (2) corrective action or (3) reporting as may be required by statute.

As part of the training, respective Ministry Team Leaders shall identify themselves and the Pastor or Personnel Chair as a contact for reporting violations or suspicious circumstances or activity. The office administrator shall update the Leadership & Reporting Roster (Appendix F) as needed. The Personnel Team is responsible to inform the office administrator of changes in the leadership and reporting.

Congregational Awareness

We are dedicated to a policy of open communication and education for the benefit of the children, parents, “vulnerable adults” and guardians we serve. They are entitled to know what to expect of our ministries, the Ministers who serve them, and to know the related policies and procedures created to protect the respective ministry constituencies. Constituencies include the children, the parents, the “vulnerable adults,” the guardians, and the Ministers.

This entire policy shall be posted on the St. Paul’s UCC website, www.stpaulsbirdsboro.org. The webmaster will keep it up to date at the direction of the Personnel Chair. Ministry Leaders will be responsible for the dissemination of the policy within their ministries/programs.

At the time children or “vulnerable adults” are enrolled in St. Paul’s UCC ongoing, multi-day programs or events the responsible Ministry Team shall make available to parents or legal guardians:

1. A copy of the St. Paul’s UCC Code of Conduct and Ministry Standards as either an electronic file or hard-copy depending on preference.
2. Information regarding the means to report violations of policy or suspicions of abuse.
3. Information regarding their personal obligation to report suspected abuse as it may exist under the laws of the State of Pennsylvania.
4. An invitation to visit programs in progress at any time at their convenience.

Children and “vulnerable adults” shall be provided an orientation covering the following subjects:

1. Age-appropriate information about boundaries (with reference to the Code of Conduct);
2. How to protect themselves from abuse; and
3. How to report boundary violations or incidents of abuse.

The orientation shall be provided:

1. As a group at the opening of a class or program, multi-day ongoing event or league; and
2. Annually when a program, event or league is perpetual.

Parent/guardians shall be invited to receive the same “abuse prevention” training as provided to Ministers to be taken at their option.

Parents/guardians shall be encouraged to report violations of policy, boundaries or suspected abuse to the Team Leader of the respective ministry at which an incident has occurred or to the Personnel Chair. Alternatively, they may report incidents to the Pastor. As stated earlier under “Internal Feedback Systems” the observer or victim shall be permitted to report violations of policy or circumstances of abuse confidentially and their anonymity will be protected.

If for any reason, a parent/guardian believes that the primary contacts have failed to respond or have not given credibility to the parent's/guardian's concerns, the latter may contact the Pastor or Personnel Chair to report those concerns.

If the parent/guardian believes there is sufficient evidence of abuse they have a right to directly call CHILDLINE: 800-932-0313.

Responding

St. Paul's UCC is committed to prompt, professional and measured response to all circumstances, which may range from violations of these policies and procedures to suspicions or allegations of abuse. We are committed to (1) seriously consider the concerns of victims; (2) undertake a fair investigation of policy violations; (3) protect the confidentiality of parties involved in an investigation; (4) report to as required and cooperate fully with public authorities; and (5) communicate fully with the congregation within the bounds of individual rights to confidentiality.

Fulfillment of this commitment requires every Minister to assume responsibility as part of their respective duties, whether "authorized clergy," employee or volunteer.

Responsibility of Employees and Volunteers –

Each employee or volunteer is obligated to fulfill the Code of Conduct and Ministry Standards both by living the standard and helping others to do the same. Each is obligated to guide and gently correct others as they would in a circumstance of high personal risk. When another person, regardless of status, rank or power, repeats a violation of the Code of Conduct or Ministry Standards, the employee/volunteer observer must report the violation to his/her own immediate supervisor, or the next level of authority if necessary.

Responsibility of Authorized Clergy, Lay Leaders & Supervisory Employees (Leaders) --

St. Paul's UCC expects that Ministers, and Leaders especially, will relate to each other in a cordial and professional manner and in matters of safe conduct will support, encourage and mentor each other.

Each person in a ministry leadership capacity is required to fulfill the standards for **Monitoring & Supervision** along with the **Code of Conduct and Ministry Standards**. Church Leaders shall foster safe conduct by example and by correcting, mentoring and counseling, followed by "progressive discipline." Whether upon direct observation or as a result of reports from others, each church leader shall take affirmative steps to correct behavior or enforce policies. Each leader shall document by notes in an individual file formal actions taken to counsel and correct individuals to include verbal warnings or written notices.

At such time as verbal warnings are found to be ineffective and a written notice is required in order to correct behavior, each leader shall do so with the advice and approval from the Personnel Team. A Leader may proceed to the Pastor or Consistory President if he/she feels there is a conflict of interest created by another relationship such as family ties.

At such time as written warnings are deemed unsuccessful, and termination from ministry, employment or volunteer status is required, a termination letter shall be issued only with the authority of the Personnel Team and Consistory and over the signature of the Pastor.

A Leader may be expected to recuse (disqualify) him/herself from the reporting and disciplinary process in situations where there appears to be a conflict as a result of family ties or outside-of-church relationships, but may not do so when he/she is a “mandatory reporter” as prescribed by Pennsylvania law.

Responsibility of Mandatory Reporters – (See Appendix C – Definitions)

Regardless of procedures outlined herein, each person who is considered a “mandatory reporter” under the statutes of Pennsylvania shall in good faith report: reportable “abuse” as defined by Pennsylvania. Example: “Physical, sexual, or mental abuse inflicted by a person responsible for a child’s health, welfare or care, or by a person given access to such child by such responsible person.”

St. Paul’s UCC requires compliance with Pennsylvania law pertaining to child abuse in accordance with Act 153. That is, **in cases of child abuse the mandatory reporter must report directly to CHILDLINE: 800-932-0313**. Without delay, the mandatory reporter must also immediately advise the Pastor or minister in leadership who will then inform the Pastor, unless there is a conflict of interest in which case the Personnel Chair shall be contacted. The Pastor will report to the Personnel Chair or Consistory of what has transpired. The State requires that within 48 hours of calling CHILDLINE the mandatory reporter must also complete a written report of suspected child abuse (Form CY47) which is provided in Appendix D. In the case of vulnerable adults aged 60 and over call the PA Elder Abuse Hotline at 1-800-490-8505 to contact the local Agency on Aging.

Nothing in this policy shall be considered a restraint of an individual’s statutory obligation to report to authorities. Furthermore, no person shall be restrained from reporting an incident on the basis that (s)he is not a “mandatory reporter.”

Other Reportable Abuse –

While the State has defined abuse for the purpose of child protection statutes and mandatory reporting, other kinds of abuse occur which are outside the bounds of the Code of Conduct but may not be so severe as to require mandatory reporting to the State. St. Paul’s UCC requires an internal response to such instances by reporting to church leadership to assure that appropriate steps are taken to correct the problem. (Appendix F – Leadership and Reporting Roster) The following circumstances constitute reportable abuses which require response to include counseling, correction, progressive discipline and termination.

1. Child-on-child sexual activity;
2. Dangerous behaviors (hazing, truth or dare, drinking, etc.);
3. Bullying, whether child-on-child or adult-on-child;
4. Suspected exploitation of a “vulnerable adult,” physically, mentally or financially.

All such activity shall be reported by Employees/Volunteers or Leaders in the same manner as any violation of the Code of Conduct or Ministry Standards with the exception that the reporter need NOT call the CHILDLINE child abuse hotline. In the event of out-of-program circumstances where there is not an identifiable direct Ministry supervisor, reports shall be made to the Personnel Chair or the Pastor.

Other Disciplinary Processes –

Other behaviors not necessarily involving children or “vulnerable adults,” or which may not be considered strictly illegal, are subject to other disciplinary practices as may be set out in governing documents of the congregation or of the denomination. Behaviors subject to other adjudication may include but are not limited to:

1. “Sexual harassment,” whether among employees or volunteers;
2. Clergy professional boundary violations;
3. “Sexual exploitation”;
4. Sexual relationships between a Minister and a minor even though permitted by law.

All such activity shall be reported by Employees/Volunteers or Leaders in the same manner as any violation of the Code of Conduct or Ministry Standards. In the event of out-of-program circumstances where there is not an identifiable direct Ministry Supervisor, reports shall be made to the Personnel Chair or the Pastor.

Cooperation with Investigations –

St. Paul’s UCC expects and requires the cooperation of all Ministers and other employees in the investigation of violations of the Code of Conduct, Ministry Standards or other misconduct, including a complainant, witness, and the accused offender. We may interview these individuals privately and take oral and/or written statements from them. Any person who fails to cooperate with such an investigation or to provide complete and truthful information may be subject to disciplinary action.

Notification of Parent/guardians –

A minor child may be party to an incident either as an initiator or as the victim. Whether a child is initiator or victim may not be clear in all circumstances, such as a child-on-child incident. And violation of policy does not necessarily create a victim. While notification of parent/guardians of such circumstances may be warranted, utmost care in communication is required.

Therefore, a Minister having knowledge of an incident which warrants communication to a parent/guardian shall consult with the Pastor or minister in leadership. While communicating with a parent/guardian, and **being mindful of the importance of timely communication**, care shall be given to assessing:

1. The specific facts;
2. Whether a disciplinary or termination process is required;
3. Whether a child should be dismissed from a program (requiring notification of other parents/guardians);
4. Whether “mandatory reporting” is a factor;
5. Who shall and in what manner communicate with the parent/guardian;
6. Whether the Pastor should be involved in the communication;
7. Tentative remedial steps to prevent a further incident.

Notification of parent/guardians shall not be delayed when immediate medical care is required. An incident report shall be completed by the observer and the individual communicating with the parent/guardian. The report shall be filed with the Personnel Team (Appendix D—St. Paul’s UCC Incident Report).

Victim Needs –

In the event of cases of reportable abuse, the policy of St. Paul’s UCC is to be responsive to the needs of victims within the constraints or obligations imposed under insurance contracts. In general, we will attend to the immediate needs of victims by providing support and pastoral care.

Responding to Media --

Media publicity following an incident of abuse or exploitation may be detrimental to the reputations of individuals, the congregation and St. Paul's UCC. Without intending ever to evade the media, contacts with media must be managed and conducted only by a person specifically designated by the Consistory to represent the church. No other person(s) may speak on behalf of the church. Unless designated differently by the Consistory in a particular circumstance, the exclusive spokesperson for the church shall be the Pastor or Consistory President.

Prior to speaking to media, the Pastor, Consistory President or Consistory appointee shall contact and consult with The Pennsylvania Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ Legal Counsel, to obtain an understanding of appropriate statements or admissions and issues of privacy that may apply to the situation.

Administrative Practices

Reporting to Leadership--

Each ministry of St. Paul's UCC is directly responsible to the Consistory to report activities and developments which may have a bearing on the well-being of a member of the congregation or its constituents, or the reputation of the church, its ministries and its congregation. The Team Leader of each ministry shall report directly to the Consistory President incidences of suspicious or inappropriate interactions (adult-child; child-child; adult-vulnerable adult), sexual activity between children, and allegations of abuse or violations of professional boundaries. It is the Consistory President's responsibility to assure that the Pastor and Personnel Chair have also been fully apprised of the situation.

As a general guideline, violations of the Code of Conduct that involve congregants but do not involve church employees, staff volunteers or ministry leaders are to be reported to the minister in leadership. Instances that DO involve violations by church employees, staff volunteers or ministry leaders should be reported to the Personnel Team or Pastor if there is a conflict of interest.

Ministry Standards –

Ministries subject to this standard shall include: music, education, counseling, pre-school, day care, Sunday school, nursery, sports, mission activity in which children or "vulnerable adults" are constituents, or off-site activity in which children participate.

No uniquely new ministry or program may be created in the name of St. Paul's UCC without the expressed documented consent of the Consistory, after consideration of the benefits to the church, intended constituents of the program, financial viability, and the risks attendant to the activity and methods to be employed to manage risk.

When ministry is subject to State regulation (for example, day care, pre-school) such regulations shall constitute minimum requirements. Without creating unnecessary duplication, Ministry Standards shall apply in addition to regulatory requirements.

Prior to use of church facilities by an outside organization (lessees) to conduct activities equivalent to those sited above, and whether or not rent or contributions are provided to St. Paul's UCC (lessor), there shall be an evaluation of whether the organization has established sufficient standards to be regarded as a competent partner in ministry. A lease or use agreement shall be required with the organization, which lease shall cite fulfillment of the organization's written or statutory standards as a condition of continued occupancy of church property. The use agreement shall contain terms requiring that "lessee hold harmless, defend and indemnify lessor for claims arising out of its occupancy of and activities on lessor's property" (or equivalent language). The organization shall be required to demonstrate maintenance of insurance, to include personal property, workers compensation, general liability and professional liability coverages that may apply to the activity (for example, sexual misconduct liability, professional counseling liability, educators professional liability).

Monitoring Compliance with Standards —

The success and strength of this policy is not created by its words, but by the actions of our Ministers who must carry it out. While the policy generally prescribes safe conduct, Ministers are called upon to document that they are engaged in achieving the objectives of the policy. From time to time Ministers will be required to re-direct, correct and remediate individuals who have not maintained the Code of Conduct or Ministry Standards. While violations of the Code of Conduct or Ministry Standards do **not** constitute an incident of "suspected abuse" requiring statutory reporting, they do require a response.

In the aftermath of an incident of "suspected abuse" or a significant violation of the Code of Conduct or Ministry Standards, it may be necessary for the church and its Ministers to defend their actions which support this policy. Therefore, every Minister of the church shares in the obligation to regularly observe and document their good management.

Following the pattern of good employment practices, Ministers shall follow a process of "progressive discipline" in supervisory relationships with both employees and constituents. This process recognizes that an isolated violation of the Code of Conduct or Ministry Standards may not be intended or malicious; the first transgression may simply indicate the failure to properly train. Nevertheless, repeated violations cannot be tolerated.

Each Minister shall employ "progressive discipline," (Appendix C – Definitions) and maintain records of both monitoring and disciplinary activity. As required elsewhere in this policy, reports shall be provided to ministry leaders and the Personnel Team which shall document any steps in "progressive discipline" that have been taken. While in most situations "progressive discipline" will be the normal process, it is understood that an egregious violation of the Code of Conduct or Ministry Standards may require immediate termination of an employee or volunteer, subject to the conditions for termination specified in Appendix C – Definitions, "Progressive Discipline."

Registered Sex Offender Policy

As a community of faith, serving by the example of Jesus Christ, we also seek to attend to the needs of all who seek healing, redemption and fellowship among us. We shall be prepared to accept in our midst those who have violated the most sacred mores of our society at large, in order to provide them refuge, peace, example and support in their recovery and penitence. We

commit to doing so with utmost care for the welfare of our congregation, collectively and individually, and for the community we serve.

We accept that there are risks to be born in our deliberate association with and ministry to sex offenders who are considered a pariah among the community-at-large as evidenced by the many constraints placed upon their interaction with the community. We agree to honor the needs of the congregation and our community to have reasonable assurance that a sex offender in our care will not have an opportunity to re-offend as a result of lapses in our management of the offender.

We shall consider limited participation or membership of a sex offender in our congregation with utmost care which shall include the following elements:

1. Document understanding of the statutory limitations applying in the State of Pennsylvania to the movement and activities of a sex offender, taking into account the programs of the church or the operations of tenants. (Examples: Sunday school, day care, pre-school, sports leagues, seasonal camps and associations which serve children and “vulnerable adults.”)
2. Consider and understand the character of the crimes which have resulted in requiring an individual to register as a sex offender, the passage of time without repeated conduct or behavior and the risk and opportunity of re-offending that is presented by the particular programs of our congregation.
3. Document understanding of limitations and prohibitions placed upon the offender by courts and probation authorities. The opinion of a mental health professional regarding the suitability of the person to participation in the life of the church shall be obtained. In all cases where probation is in force, we shall obtain the explicit approval of and conditions of participation specified by the probation officer. A recommendation by law enforcement or mental health professionals to deny participation to an offender shall be honored in all cases.
4. Understanding that, with respect to a person who is an employee, volunteer or member, who has previously been convicted for acts of sexual misconduct as defined by insurance contracts, knowledge by church leaders and managers of such prior conviction will have the effect of voiding insurance liability coverage for the individual employee, volunteer or member and for the church for future acts of sexual misconduct by that person.
5. Given that criminal convictions are a matter of public record, there shall be no expectation of secrecy on the part of the offender. As a condition of participation in our faith community, the offender must agree that the leadership of the church shall make it known to the members, constituencies and customers of the church that we have accepted among us a registered sex offender. The conditions and limitations that apply to participation in the life of the church shall be known to all.
6. With the advice of legal counsel, and in all cases, the conditions of participation by a registered offender shall be defined by a “limited access agreement” (Appendix D – Applications & Forms) executed by the offender and church. Such agreement shall be approved by probation authorities as may be necessary according to para. 3., above. The agreement shall be reviewed annually to validate ongoing eligibility. Violation of the agreement by the offender shall be considered as grounds for immediate cancellation of the agreement.

The following additional considerations shall apply:

Victims in the congregation – In such case as the victim of a RSO (registered sex offender) is an existing member of the congregation, employee or is a client of other services provided by the congregation, the RSO shall not be permitted to attend the church or church activities.

Clergy-penitent privilege – “Clergy-penitent privilege” is a “Rule of Evidence” defining or limiting information which clergy may reveal in a court of law only. “Clergy penitent privilege” does not prevent clergy from informing the congregation of matters which may be relevant to their safety; it does not require clergy to hold information in secrecy.

Ordained clergy shall assume responsibility and take extraordinary care to understand the scope and limitations of clergy-penitent privilege in the State of Pennsylvania, and the parameters of confidence and privilege as defined by our denomination. Authorized clergy shall inform the leadership of the church of the general principles of confidence and privilege under which (s)he performs his/her clerical duties.

Escorts (Parish Associate) – Conditions of limited access for a RSO will require that the offender have an escort while on the church premises or at church events elsewhere. Escorts will be selected by the Consistory and the Pastor. A person serving as an escort shall not be a spouse, partner or relative of the offender.

Approval & Supervision –

With the advice and prior approval of the Consistory, a Limited Access Agreement with a Petitioner (known RSO) must be signed by the Pastor and Consistory President.

The Pastor, in association with other “authorized clergy” and parish associates (escorts), who shall be named in the Limited Access Agreement, shall be responsible for the general supervision of the Petitioner in all of the latter’s activity in relation to the church. Elements of supervision shall include the following:

- Knowledge of the terms of the Limited Access Agreement, including activity limitations placed upon the Petitioner. (Appendix D, item 10)
- Knowledge of the Petitioner’s offense history sufficient to understand the risks of association with the church and its ministries.
- Willingness to assert activity limitations and to report any violation of restrictions placed upon the Petitioner.
- Willingness to intervene in any onset of a risky or problem behavior.
- Willingness to report all cases of non-compliance to the Pastor.

The Pastor shall assess, prior to selection, whether a proposed Escort is willing to fulfill the above elements of supervision.

Professional privacy – Members who are employed in certain occupations may have a statutory obligation to maintain privacy around the criminal history of their clients who may also be parishioners. Such members shall decline to accept leadership roles which may put them in a position of decision-making regarding individuals who may be their professional clients.

Juveniles – While the criminal record of a juvenile is ordinarily concealed by the courts, the church may come to know the juvenile’s history by other means. Honest disclosure by a juvenile and parent/guardians in the volunteer application and screening process may reveal that a record exists without knowing the specifics. While a limited access agreement will be

required for the juvenile, as for others, every precaution will be taken to preserve the privacy and confidentiality which the law affords a juvenile.

APPENDIX A—Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct and the Ministry Standards, taken together, constitute the details of abuse prevention. They are active behaviors or administrative steps which define the conduct of each ministry. The distinction between the two is that the **Code of Conduct** outlines those actions or behaviors which each **individual is personally responsible** to fulfill, while **Ministry Standards** constitute processes which are the responsibility of persons in **leadership** positions to deploy and enforce.

This Code of Conduct defines individual responsibilities as Ministers, leaders, employees or volunteers to meet the expectations of St. Paul's UCC with respect to behavior or conduct in the service of the ministries of the church, especially those which serve children and "vulnerable adults."

General Requirements --

Each person subject to this Code shall:

1. Act as a team member in fulfilling ministry objectives.
2. Treat children and "vulnerable adults" (clients) with respect, and fairly without regard to race, age, gender, sexual orientation or religion.
3. Practice those behaviors we regard as necessary and positive as well as to refrain from those behaviors which have been defined as prohibited.

General Prohibitions --

The following behaviors are prohibited at all times:

1. Display affection toward a child/client in privacy.
2. Use profanity or tell off-color jokes.
3. Discuss their sexual encounters with or around children or in any way involve children in their personal problems or issues.
4. Date or become romantically involved with children.
5. Use or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs in the presence of children.
6. Possess sexually oriented materials, including printed or online pornography, on Church property.
7. Have secrets with clients. (St. Paul's UCC distinguishes between secrets and confidences. Secrets are not intended for further disclosure to any person at any time. We do not keep secrets. We define confidentiality as telling those who need to know, what they need to know, when they need to know it. We do honor confidences.)
8. Stare at or comment on children's bodies.
9. Engage in inappropriate or unapproved electronic communication with children.
10. Work one-on-one with children in a private setting.
11. Abuse of clients in any way including (but not limited to) the following:
 - Physical abuse: hit, spank, shake, slap, unnecessarily restraint
 - Verbal abuse: degrade, threaten, curse
 - Sexual abuse: inappropriately touch, expose oneself, or engage in sexually oriented conversations
 - Mental abuse: shame, humiliate, act cruelly
 - Neglect: withhold food, water, shelter
 - Permit children to engage in the following: Hazing, bullying, derogatory name-calling, games of Truth or Dare, ridicule or humiliation or sexual activity
12. Manipulate or exploit a "vulnerable adult" in any way.

Reporting Obligations --

Each Minister or statutory “mandatory reporter” shall report:

1. Concerns or complaints about other employees and volunteers, other adults, or children to a supervisor. (Appendix F – Leadership & Reporting Roster)
2. Allegations or incidents of abuse or “suspected abuse” shall be reported directly to CHILDLINE: 800-932-0313 and immediately to the director or supervisor of that particular ministry or to the Pastor, Consistory President, or Personnel Team who are then responsible to inform the others without delay. (Appendix F – Leadership & Reporting Roster) For vulnerable adults age 60 and over call the PA Elder Abuse Hotline at 1-800-490-8505 and report immediately to the Pastor, Consistory President or Personnel Chair.

Specific Interaction Standards –

Each Minister, employee or volunteer worker of St. Paul’s UCC shall conduct him/herself in a manner that fosters understanding of safe conduct in the context of serving children and “vulnerable adults.” The standards articulated below serves two purposes:

- To protect children and “vulnerable adults” from abuse or grooming for abuse elsewhere; and
- To protect/prevent church staff from engaging in patterns of behavior that may be construed as abusive or predatory. While a single infraction of guidelines may not constitute abuse, a pattern of repeated violations will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from ministry.

1. **Approval and Affection** – In providing approval or affection, the following guidelines apply:

<i>Appropriate Physical Interactions</i>	<i>Inappropriate Physical Interactions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Side hugs • Shoulder-to-shoulder or “temple” hugs • Pats on the shoulder or back • Handshakes • High-fives and hand slapping • Verbal praise • Pats on the head when culturally appropriate • Touching hands, shoulders, and arms • Arms around shoulders • Holding hands (with young children in escorting situations) <p>These may be inappropriate if unwanted by the child or the employee or volunteer.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • full-frontal hugs • Kisses • Showing affection in an isolated area • Lap sitting • Wrestling • Piggyback rides • Tickling • Consistently allowing a child to cling to an employee’s or volunteer’s leg • Any type of massage given by or to a child • Any form of affection that is unwanted by the child or the employee or volunteer • Compliments relating to physique or body development • Touching bottom, chest, or genital areas

2. **Verbal Interactions** – The manner of speaking with children establishes respect. The following guidelines apply:

<i>Appropriate Verbal Interactions</i>	<i>Inappropriate Verbal Interactions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive reinforcement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name-calling

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate jokes • Encouragement • Praise (This does not preclude the ability to inform a child of inappropriate behavior.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussing sexual encounters or in any way involving children in the personal problems or issues of employees and volunteers • Secrets (defined above under “General Prohibitions,” item 7) • Cursing • Off-color or sexual jokes • Shaming • Belittling • Derogatory remarks • Harsh language that may frighten, threaten or humiliate children • Derogatory remarks about the child or his/her family • Confiding in a child the details of one’s private life.
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3. Out-of-Program (Off-Site) Contact –

St. Paul’s UCC expects that the Ministers, employees, and volunteers adhere to appropriate boundaries and uphold the Code of Conduct and Ministry Standards when having outside contact with children from church programs. The following forms of outside contact are appropriate and inappropriate:

<i>Appropriate Outside Contact</i>	<i>Inappropriate Outside Contact</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking groups of children on an outing • Attending sporting activities with groups of children • Attending functions at a child’s home, with parent/guardians present • Interacting with children with the full and transparent consent of parent/guardian 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking one child on an outing without the parent/guardians’ written permission • Visiting one child in the child’s home, without a parent/guardian present • Entertaining one child in the home of a church employee or volunteer • A lone child spending the night with a church employee or volunteer

4. One-on-One Interactions –

Because most abuse occurs when an adult is alone with a child, isolated meetings with a child are to be avoided unless approved in advance by the Consistory President, Pastor, parent/guardian or minister in charge. When so permitted, the following guidelines shall apply:

<i>One-on-One Interaction Guidelines</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When meeting one-on-one with a child, always do so in a public place in which other people are readily accessible. • Avoid physical affection that can be misinterpreted. Limit affection to pats on the shoulder, high fives, and handshakes. • If meeting in a room or office, leave the door open or move to an area that can be easily observed by others passing by. • Inform other employees and volunteers that you are alone with a child and ask them to randomly drop in. (Ask to be supervised.) • Document and immediately report any unusual incidents, including disclosures of abuse

or maltreatment, behavior problems and how they were handled, injuries, or any interactions that might be misinterpreted.

To the extent any of these guidelines may appear to be in conflict, the spirit of them is that one shall seek to be under the supervision of others while meeting privately with a child.

5. Social Media – Electronic Communications –

General Social Media Policy -- No Minister, employee, volunteer or member of St. Paul's UCC shall create or use a media site (web, Facebook, YouTube, or similar) in the name of or purporting to represent the church without the explicit written permission of the Consistory. When clergy or staff, acting in their capacity as a representative of the church, lead or coordinate a group activity using social media, each may use only official church sites/channels when they have been made available by the church. These may include web pages, Facebook, e-mail and similar means.

Communication with Children – (Restricted Communication) – Due to the attendant risk of electronic communications with children, especially the inability to supervise, the following standards shall apply:

- Any communications with children must seek to include the child's parent/guardians. Communications in any format shall generally be limited to logistical matters, e.g., meeting dates, times and places. When communications expand beyond this a supervisor should be made aware, along with the parents/guardians, indicating the scope of conversations while maintaining appropriate confidences.
- Electronic communications to minors are generally to be limited to logistical matters.
- Authorized clergy with profiles on social networking sites may not request to be friends with children or approve friend requests from children unless operating a church authorized, public social media site. Parents/guardians are to be informed of such requests and approvals.
- All ministers with social networking sites shall not make friend requests of children and shall be in communication with parent/guardian when accepting friend requests from children.
- Communications of a personal nature from a child must be reported to a supervisor.
- When a parent/guardian does not have access to the communication used to contact youth, then another viable communication vehicle shall be used to keep the parent/guardian informed.

Note: When reporting to a supervisor one needs to be communicating with a non-relative.

APPENDIX B—Ministry Standards

These ministry standards are intended to provide a safe environment for children and “vulnerable adults” in a variety of circumstances. From time to time it may not be possible to fulfill the standard to the letter. Permission is granted to Ministers in leadership to waive a standard with justification. If it is found that consistent fulfillment of a standard is not practical, then a more long term solution must be developed or the program/activity must be discontinued.

Adult-Child Ratios –

The following are the recommend adult to child ratios:

Aged 0 - 2 years: 1 adult to 3 children
Aged 2 - 3 years: 1 adult to 4 children
Aged 4 - 8 years: 1 adult to 6 children
Aged 9 - 12 years: 1 adult to 8 children
Aged 13 - 18 years: 1 adult to 10 children

If the group is mixed gender, the supervising staff should also include both male and female workers wherever possible.

In all cases, an employee or volunteer under the age of 18 working with minor children shall be under the supervision of an adult over the age of 21.

Employees or volunteer leaders under the age of 21 shall not supervise or lead a youth group in which the oldest participating minor child is less than three years younger than the supervisor/leader.

Bathrooms, Locker Room and Out-of-the-Way Locations –

The following practices shall apply to supervision of bathrooms and changing areas:

1. Minimize presence of diverse child age groups together at the same time.
2. No employee/volunteer shall enter with a *single* unrelated child unless the entry door is ajar (propped open) in a way that (s)he can be observed by others. (During outings and some activities children may be paired with a previously selected “buddy” with whom they are to stay paired with at all times for safety.)
3. When diapering, two adult employee/volunteers must be present when clothes or diapers are being changed. It is preferred that parent/guardians diaper or change clothes on their own children.
4. Children under 5 must be accompanied by an employee/volunteer to and from the bathroom and another adult must be informed when this takes place. The employee/volunteer will assist the child only when necessary. If assistance is needed the adult must leave the stall door open or if possible the bathroom door ajar.
5. Children under 10 shall not enter unsupervised, though the volunteer shall remain outside of the bathroom.
6. Require children to ask permission before using bathrooms.

Employees and volunteers in leadership are to frequently and randomly check bathrooms to assure their security.

Transition and “Free” Time --

Especially during day long, off-site or overnight activities, children will periodically not be engaged in a supervised activity. Supervision shall be maintained during transition times through the use of chaperones, hall monitors and escorts to minimize the opportunity for security breach or child-on-child incidents.

Ministry leaders shall assess at what times and places additional duties are to be assigned to assure supervision of transition and free time.

Transportation of Children –

Transportation of children, whether on buses, motor coaches or private passenger vehicles, is a serious responsibility. When utilizing church owned vehicles or private vehicles of employees and volunteers, utmost care shall be taken in view of the risks associated with managing transportation.

The following standards shall apply:

1. No employee or volunteer shall transport a single child that is not his/her own during a church event, except as may be required in an emergency with the approval of a supervisor and/or guardian. Communications shall be established to verify the whereabouts, expected arrival and change of custody of the child.
2. Any driver operating a vehicle which transports 16 passengers or more, including the driver, is required by PA law to have a "P" endorsement on their driver's license.
3. Any person who drives on behalf of St. Paul's UCC sponsored programs shall be previously qualified under our transportation and driver qualification procedure. (Appendix D – Applications & Forms)
4. Adult-child ratios shall be maintained and within the safe loading limits of the vehicles being used.
5. As practicable, mixed age groups are not to sit together.
6. Employees and volunteers are not to make unauthorized or unplanned stops except in emergency situations.
7. All passengers are to be seated, to use safety belts as available, and child seats as required by law. Child seats are to be provided and installed by the child's parent/guardian.
8. In larger vehicles employees and volunteers are to be seated in a way that permits them to supervise young passengers.
9. When passengers must disembark at a rest facility or destination, care shall be taken to obtain a headcount on arrival and departure. It is strongly recommended that all passengers complete a trip on the same vehicle to assure accountability.

Off-site Activities (Day Trips) --

Off-site activities require special additional planning, taking into account the nature of the destination and exposure to the public at large. For example, attendance at a public venue, such as an amusement park, will require greater supervision than a visit to a sister church. Due to the increased risk of a child becoming lost or injured during an off-site activity, extra care shall be taken to assure adequate supervision.

The following are minimum requirements:

1. All off-site activities shall be approved in advance by Consistory.
2. The trip leader shall provide a general outline for transportation and supervision of the activity.
3. Parent/guardian permission shall be obtained. Permission forms are to cite the destination(s) and activities in which the child might engage (e.g., climbing wall, horseback riding, soccer, baseball, etc.).
4. Parent/guardian providing permission shall indicate who will receive the child on return if other than the person signing the permission.
5. Adult-child ratios for children under the age of 12 shall be increased by at least one person, which may include a minor age 16 or older to assist an adult over the age of 21.
6. Each employee or volunteer shall be assigned to a specific group of children to supervise. Each supervisor must then maintain a roll sheet listing all of the children in his or her group. Head counts of children will be conducted routinely.
7. Standards for bathroom activities, transition time and transportation shall be maintained.

8. Parents/guardians shall be provided a means to make emergency contact with the trip leader.

Overnight Activities --

Camps generally have the experience and staffing to adopt different standards than these below. The assumption for the purpose of this standard is lodging at a public hotel.

As with off-site activities, overnight activities present an even higher level or risk to children than day trips due to isolation from parent/guardians and the 24-hour supervision that is required throughout the activity.

The following standards will apply in addition to standards for off-site activities:

1. All overnight activities, whether on the church site or not, shall have prior approval of Consistory.
2. All overnight activities include a minimum of two adult chaperones over 21 years of age.
3. All volunteers and employees under 18 years of age must be supervised at all times.
4. Parent/guardian permission shall be obtained. Permission forms are to cite the destination(s) and activities in which the child might engage (e.g., climbing wall, horseback riding, soccer, baseball, etc.)
5. The parent/guardian providing permission shall indicate who will receive the child on return if other than the person signing the permission.
6. At all times through the night an employee or volunteer must remain on duty at a location to supervise the coming and going of any child and to assure safe evacuation during an emergency and to prevent children sneaking out. (Maximum two hour watches through the night are recommended.)
7. Trip leaders or other designated adult shall conduct routine walk-throughs of high risk areas.
8. For the event of a building evacuation, an outdoor rally point will be designated in advance.
9. A roster will be maintained of the room assignments for each child and adult.
10. A bed check will be conducted at a specific time known to all.
11. Adult-child ratios are to be maintained for outings away from the lodging site.
12. A daily schedule of events shall be maintained with supervisory duty assignments included.
13. Double-queen lodging is preferred at hotels, four to a room. Children in each room will be of similar age. No adult will share a bed with a child unless they are the parent.
14. Adult rooms will be scattered among rooms occupied by children. There shall be at least one adult lodged on any floor on which children are sleeping.
15. Standards for bathroom, out-of-the-way, off limits locations and transition time shall be maintained as the site circumstances and facilities may require.

APPENDIX C--Definitions

Authorized Clergy --

Includes any person who is admitted to ministry by the United Church of Christ, who serves the congregation in any capacity whether called as pastor or serving in a retired, *emeritus*, administrative or volunteer capacity. Clergy who are active, have pastoral responsibilities and are called by the congregation shall have fulfilled the background checking requirements of the United Church of Christ.

Mandatory Reporter—

As defined by Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law, you are a mandated reporter if you are an integral part of a regularly scheduled program, activity, or service and accept responsibility for a child. **This includes both paid (staff) and unpaid volunteer individuals.** Additionally, if you are supervised or managed by mandated reporters- you are also a mandated reporter (PA Child Welfare Resource Center).

Mandatory reporters are individuals who, in the practice of their employment or volunteer position, come into contact with children and have reasonable cause to suspect that a child under their care, supervision, guidance, or training is a victim of child abuse. This includes a clergyman, minister, or spiritual leader of any regularly established church or other religious organization, as well as any individual paid or unpaid, who, on the basis of the individual's role as an integral part of a regularly scheduled program, activity or service, accepts responsibility for a child.

Mandatory Reporters are required by Pennsylvania law to report “suspected abuse” to police or child welfare agencies reporting directly to CHILDLINE: 800-932-0313 when they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child coming before them is a victim of child abuse.

Ministers-- all “authorized clergy,” employees, elected and appointed lay leaders, and authorized volunteers are Ministers to the congregation.

Progressive Discipline --

A system of escalating discipline as an alternative to summary termination for a policy infraction, even a minor one. Progressive steps in discipline are as follows:

1. Counseling or a formal verbal warning -- It is necessary to document that such a meeting occurred. It is sometimes appropriate that more than one supervisory person be present for this step.
2. Written warning -- A formal letter is prepared and delivered to the employee/volunteer, while a copy is maintained in the employee/volunteer file.
3. Suspension or demotion – This may be appropriate for repeated violations of Ministry Standards. This step might be skipped for Code of Conduct violations.
4. Termination – Repeated willful violations of the Code of Conduct or Ministry Standards call for termination of employment, whether employee or volunteer. However, no Minister has authority to terminate an employee or volunteer unilaterally; Consistory must make a judgment on termination. Legal counsel may be engaged before an employee/volunteer is terminated.

In extreme circumstances it will be appropriate to skip steps and proceed with immediate termination. However, the same rules apply to a summary termination.

An equivalent to progressive discipline shall apply to children and “vulnerable adults” (clients) served by our church. When clients are observed engaging in inappropriate interactions or sexual contact, it is expected that they will be immediately stopped or redirected to another activity. When violations are repeated and the client is unresponsive, the next step is to engage the parent/guardian in a meeting about the behavior with the expectation that the parent/guardian will provide follow-up discussion and discipline of the client. If this step fails to achieve positive results, then additional steps must be taken culminating with expulsion of the client from the church program. Legal counsel may be engaged before expulsion, especially if there may be the appearance of unjustified discrimination.

Sexual Exploitation --

Sexual activity or contact (not limited to sexual intercourse) in which a Minister engaged in the work of the church takes advantage of the vulnerability of a participant by causing or allowing the participant to engage in sexual behavior with the Minister.

Sexual Harassment --

Repeated or coercive sexual advances toward another person contrary to his or her wishes. It includes behavior directed at another person’s sexuality or sexual orientation with the intent of intimidating, humiliating, or embarrassing the other person, or subjecting the person to public discrimination. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition or circumstance of instruction, employment, or participation in any church activity;
- Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for evaluation in making personnel or church-related decisions affecting an individual; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s performance or participation in church activities or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or church environment.

Prohibited sexual harassment includes unsolicited and unwelcome contact that has sexual overtones, particularly:

- Written contact, such as sexually suggestive or obscene letters, notes, or invitations including through use of social media, through e-mail, texting, Tweeting or Facebook comments;
- Verbal contact, such as sexually suggestive or obscene comments, threats, slurs, epithets, jokes about gender-specific traits or sexual orientation, sexual propositions;
- Physical contact, such as intentional touching, pinching, brushing against another’s body, impeding or blocking movement, assault, coercing sexual intercourse; and
- Visual contact, such as leering or staring at another’s body, gesturing, displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, posters, or magazines.

Sexual harassment also includes continuing to express sexual interest after being informed directly that the interest is unwelcome and using sexual behavior to control, influence, or affect the career, salary, work, learning, or worship environment of another. It is not permissible to suggest, threaten, or imply that failure to accept a request for a date or sexual intimacy will affect a person’s job prospects, church leadership, or comfortable participation in the life of the church. For example, it is forbidden either to imply or actually withhold support for an appointment, promotion, or change of assignment, to suggest that a poor performance report will be given because a person has declined a personal proposition; or to hint that benefits, such as promotions, favorable performance evaluations, favorable assigned duties or shifts, recommendations or reclassifications, will be forthcoming in exchange for sexual favors.

Suspected Abuse --

Actual abuse consists of physical, sexual or mental abuse inflicted by a person responsible for a child's health, welfare or care, who may be a parent, guardian or other person having access to a child. Abuse may include neglect of a person's health as a result of failure to properly feed, clothe or attend to apparent illness or mental well-being. As a caregiver in ministry, one need not directly witness, nor is one likely to directly witness actual abuse. It is sufficient to suspect abuse based upon observations of general health, physical condition, patterns of irregular behavior and environmental factors. Examples of observations might include: bruising on multiple occasions, weight loss, chronic physical illness, and anti-social or excessively withdrawn behavior. Environmental factors may include highly contentious divorce and custody battles, or parental drug use. One must use judgment in assessing multiple factors which lead to suspicion of abuse.

While "suspected abuse" is defined here for the benefit of "mandatory reporters," the definition, for the purpose of this policy, includes "suspected abuse" of a "vulnerable adult."

Vulnerable Adult --

Any adult person who by reason of profound physical disability or dependence, developmental disability, mental illness, relative social power or cultural circumstances may be susceptible to physical abuse, sexual exploitation, financial exploitation or manipulation as a consequence of being unable to physically resist, or render judgments regarding physical, mental, financial or environmental well-being. Such persons may be unable to act independently and may, to their detriment, manifest high levels of trust or fear of persons of perceived power or authority.

APPENDIX D – Applications & Forms

1. Authorized Children & Youth Volunteer/Employee Disclosure Form
2. PA State Police Request for Criminal History Record Check (Go to website www.psp.pa.gov/Pages/Request-a-Criminal-History-Record.aspx)
3. Report of Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect: PA form CY47 (Go to website keepkidssafe.pa.gov)
4. St. Paul's UCC Incident Report form
5. Professional Reference Interview Form for Employee Applicants Working with Children
6. Personal Reference Interview Form for Employee Applicants Working with Children
7. Interview & Reference Questions
8. Field Trip Preparation Checklist
9. Volunteer Driver Qualification Form & Agreement for Use of Personally Owned Vehicles
10. Sample Limited Access Agreement for Cases of Convicted Sex Offenders

St. Paul's UCC
Authorized Children & Youth Volunteer/Employee Disclosure Form

NAME:

LAST

FIRST

MIDDLE

ADDRESS:

STREET

CITY

STATE ZIP CODE

HOME PHONE

CELL OR ALTERNATIVE PHONE

EMAIL

References: *One reference must be related to you and the other references must not be related to you.* (Attach additional page(s) as necessary.)

NAME (1)

RELATIONSHIP

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE ZIP CODE

TELEPHONE

EMAIL

NAME (2)

RELATIONSHIP

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE ZIP CODE

TELEPHONE

EMAIL

NAME (3)

RELATIONSHIP

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE ZIP CODE

TELEPHONE

EMAIL

I have been a member of this church since

I have been a friend of this church since

Page 1 of 5
APPLICANT:

I have never been convicted of, nor pled guilty or no contest to, a crime. (Exclude convictions that have been sealed, expunged or legally eradicated, misdemeanor convictions for which probation was completed and the case was dismissed, or offenses about which inquiry is not permissible in this state)

True Not true

If not true, please briefly describe the nature of the crime(s), the date and place of conviction and the legal disposition of the case. The church will not deny a position to any applicant solely because the person has been convicted of a crime. The church, however, may consider the nature, date and circumstances of the offense, as well as whether the offense is relevant to the duties of the position applied for.

No civil lawsuit alleging actual or attempted sexual discrimination, harassment, exploitation, or misconduct; physical abuse; child abuse; or financial misconduct has ever resulted in a judgment being entered against me, been settled out of court, or been dismissed because the statute of limitations has expired.

True Not True

If not true, give a short explanation of the lawsuit. (Please indicate the date, nature, and place of the incident leading to the lawsuit; where the lawsuit was filed; and the precise disposition of the lawsuit.)

I have never terminated my employment, professional credentials, or service in a volunteer position or had my employment, professional credentials, or authorization to hold a volunteer position terminated for reasons relating to allegations of actual or attempted sexual discrimination, harassment, exploitation, or misconduct; physical abuse; child abuse; or financial misconduct.

True Not True

If not true, give a short explanation. (Please indicate the date of termination; name, address, and telephone number of employer or volunteer supervisor; and nature of the incident(s) leading to your termination.)

Do you have a valid drivers' license?

Yes No

With respect to my driving record, I have not had my license suspended or revoked within the last five years due to reckless driving or driving while intoxicated and/or under the influence of a controlled substance.

True Not True

Is there any fact or circumstance involving you or your background that would call into question your being entrusted with the responsibilities of the position for which you are applying?

Yes No

If yes, provide a brief explanation.

Page 2 of 5
APPLICANT:

The covenants between persons seeking authorized volunteer positions in the church require honesty, integrity, and truthfulness for the health of the church. To that end, I attest that the information set forth in this application is true and complete. I understand that any misrepresentation or omission may be grounds for rejection of consideration for, or termination of, the position I am seeking to fill. I acknowledge that it is my duty in a timely fashion to amend the responses and information I have provided if I come to know that the response or information was incorrect when given or, though accurate when given, the response or information is no longer accurate.

Beginning such relationships with an open exchange of relevant information builds the foundation for a continuing and healthy covenant between volunteers and the church they seek to serve. To that end, I authorize St. Paul's UCC and/or its agents to make inquiries regarding my character and qualifications, including all statements I have set forth above. I also authorize all entities, persons, former employers, supervisors, courts, law enforcement, and other public agencies to respond to inquiries concerning me, to supply verification of the statements I have made, and to comment on and state opinions regarding my background, character, and qualifications. To

encourage such persons and entities to speak openly and responsibly, I hereby release them from all liability arising from their responses, comments, and statements.

St. Paul's UCC authorized volunteer recruitment process involves the sharing of information regarding applicants with those persons in a position to recruit, secure, and supervise both the position I am seeking to fill and program I am seeking to participate in. To that end, I authorize St. Paul's UCC and its agents to circulate, distribute, and otherwise share information gathered in connection with this application to such persons for these purposes. I understand that St. Paul's UCC will share with me information it has gathered about me, if I request it to do so.

If I am offered and accept employment or volunteer service with the church, I agree to comply with its published policies and rules, including those related to harassment of employees, reporting known or suspected child neglect or abuse and similar requirements. If requested to do so, I will cooperate with any church investigation of a possible violation of church policies and rules by providing complete and truthful information in an oral and/or written statement.

I acknowledge my receipt and understanding of the St. Paul's UCC, Birdsboro, Safe Church Policy.

PRINT NAME & SIGN

DATE

PRINT NAME & SIGNATURE PARENT OR GUARDIAN FOR APPLICANTS UNDER 18

DATE

NOTES: (Not True and No answers above)

**PENNSYLVANIA STATE POLICE
REQUEST FOR CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK
VOLUNTEER ONLY**

1-888-QUERYPA (1-888-783-7972)

This form is to be completed in ink by the requester – (information will be mailed to the requester only). If this form is not legible or not properly completed, it will be returned unprocessed to the requester. *A response may take four weeks or longer.*

TRY OUR WEBSITE FOR A QUICKER RESPONSE
<https://epatch.state.pa.us>

FOR CENTRAL REPOSITORY USE ONLY CONTROL NUMBER
AFTER COMPLETION MAIL TO: PENNSYLVANIA STATE POLICE CENTRAL REPOSITORY – RCPU 1800 ELMERTON AVENUE HARRISBURG, PA 17110-9758

REQUESTER NAME	
ADDRESS	
CITY/STATE/ ZIP CODE	
TELEPHONE NO. (AREA CODE)	

SUBJECT OF RECORD CHECK				
(FIRST)	(MIDDLE)	(LAST)		
MAIDEN NAME AND/OR ALIASES	SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER	DATE OF BIRTH (MM/DD/YYYY)	SEX	RACE
VOLUNTEER'S AGENCY/ORGANIZATION (MANDATORY)		TELEPHONE NUMBER		

The Pennsylvania State Police response will be based on the comparison of the data provided by the requester against the information contained in the files of the Pennsylvania State Police Central Repository only.

By signing this form, I verify that I am submitting this request for criminal history record information in connection with my status as an unpaid volunteer. I understand that the \$8 fee is being waived because of my status as an unpaid volunteer.

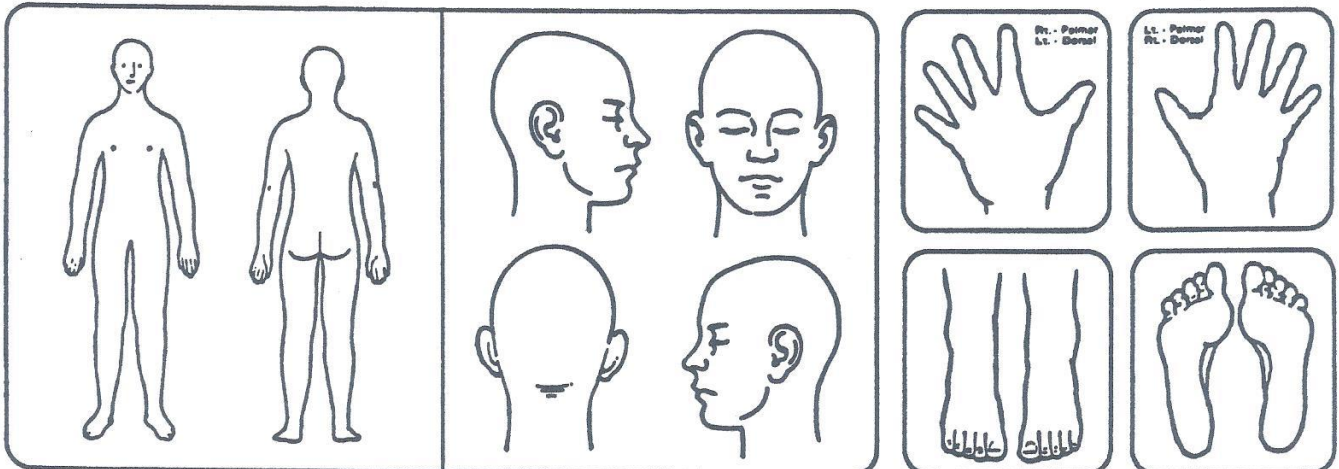
REQUESTER SIGNATURE <small>(*Signature required for processing*)</small>	DATE
---	------

WARNING: 18 Pa.C.S. 4904(b) UNDER PENALTY OF LAW - MISIDENTIFICATION OR FALSE STATEMENTS OF IDENTITY TO OBTAIN CRIMINAL HISTORY INFORMATION OF ANOTHER IS PUNISHABLE AS AUTHORIZED BY LAW.

REPORT OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE (CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICE LAW - TITLE 23 PA CSA CHAPTER 63)

PLEASE REFER TO INSTRUCTIONS ON REVERSE SIDE. EXCEPT FOR SIGNATURE, PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

1. NAME OF CHILD (Last, First, Initial)		SSN	BIRTHDATE	SEX <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F
ADDRESS (State, City, State & ZIP Code)			COUNTY	
1A. PRESENT LOCATION IF DIFFERENT THAN ABOVE			COUNTY	
2. BIOLOGICAL/ADOPTIVE MOTHER (Last, First, Initial)		SSN	BIRTHDATE	TELEPHONE NO.
ADDRESS (City, State & ZIP Code)			COUNTY	
3. BIOLOGICAL/ADOPTIVE FATHER (Last, First, Initial)		SSN	BIRTHDATE	TELEPHONE NO.
ADDRESS (City, State & ZIP Code)			COUNTY	
4. OTHER PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR CHILD		SSN	BIRTHDATE	RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD SEX <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F
ADDRESS (City, State & ZIP Code)			COUNTY	TELEPHONE NO.
5. ALLEGED PERPETRATOR (Last, First, Initial)		SSN	BIRTHDATE	RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD SEX <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F
ADDRESS (City, State & ZIP Code)			COUNTY	TELEPHONE NO.
NAME OF ALLEGED PERPETRATOR'S EMPLOYER AND EMPLOYER'S ADDRESS				
6. FAMILY HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION (Excluding Above Names)				
NAME (Last, First, Initial)		RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD	NAME (Last, First, Initial)	
RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD		RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD		
A.		D.		
B.		E.		
C.		F.		
ADDRESS WHERE THE SUSPECTED ABUSE OCCURRED			COUNTY	
DESCRIBE THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF THE SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE, INCLUDING ANY EVIDENCE OF PRIOR ABUSE TO THE CHILD OR ANY SIBLING OF THE CHILD. ALSO INCLUDE ANY EVIDENCE OF PRIOR ABUSE BY THE ALLEGED PERPETRATOR(S) TO OTHER CHILDREN. PLEASE NOTE EXACT LOCATION OF THE INJURY(S) ON MODEL BELOW.			DATE OF INCIDENT	



7. ACTIONS TAKEN OR ABOUT TO BE TAKEN BY THE PERSON MAKING THE REPORT:			
<input type="checkbox"/> NOTIFICATION OF CORONER OR MEDICAL EXAMINER	<input type="checkbox"/> X-RAYS	<input type="checkbox"/> PHOTOGRAPHS	<input type="checkbox"/> HOSPITALIZATION
<input type="checkbox"/> POLICE NOTIFIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MEDICAL TEST(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> TAKEN INTO PROTECTIVE CUSTODY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (Specify)
8. SAFETY CONCERNS AND RISK FACTORS:			
A. DESCRIBE THE CHILD(REN)'S PHYSICAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH, GOOD MOOD AND TEMPERAMENT. DESCRIBE CHILD(REN)'S INTELLECTUAL FUNCTIONING, COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL SKILLS, SCHOOL PERFORMANCE AND PEER RELATIONS. INCLUDE WHETHER THE CHILD(REN) HAS EXPRESSED ANY SUICIDAL/HOMICIDAL IDEATION OR PLANS.			<input type="checkbox"/> INFORMATION UNKNOWN
B. DESCRIBE HOW THE ADULT CAREGIVERS FUNCTION COGNITIVELY, EMOTIONALLY, BEHAVIORALLY, PHYSICALLY AND SOCIALLY. INCLUDE WHETHER THE ADULTS HAVE ANY MENTAL HEALTH, SUBSTANCE USE ISSUES AND/OR CRIMINAL HISTORY. DOCUMENT ANY PAST OR PRESENT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE. RECORD THE EMPLOYMENT STATUS/SOURCE OF INCOME AND WHETHER THERE ARE ANY FINANCIAL STRESSORS IN THE HOME. INCLUDE ANY SAFETY OR SANITARY CONCERNS REGARDING THE CONDITIONS OF THE HOME AND WHETHER THERE ARE WORKING UTILITIES. WHAT IS THE PRIMARY LANGUAGE OF THE HOUSEHOLD?			<input type="checkbox"/> INFORMATION UNKNOWN
C. DESCRIBE WHETHER THE CAREGIVERS HAVE THE APPROPRIATE KNOWLEDGE, EXPECTATIONS AND SKILLS TO PARENT THE CHILD(REN) ADEQUATELY. DOES THE CAREGIVER ADEQUATELY SUPERVISE THE CHILD(REN)? ARE THEY WILLING AND ABLE TO PROTECT THE CHILD(REN)? DESCRIBE THE ABILITY OF THE CAREGIVER TO EMPATHIZE, NURTURE AND ADVOCATE FOR THE CHILD(REN).			<input type="checkbox"/> INFORMATION UNKNOWN
D. DESCRIBE THE CAREGIVERS' APPROACH/METHODS OF DISCIPLINING THE CHILD(REN). DESCRIBE WHEN DISCIPLINE OCCURS AND WHETHER DISCIPLINARY METHODS ARE AGE-APPROPRIATE? ARE THERE ANY CULTURAL PRACTICES IN THE HOME THAT WOULD INFLUENCE THE DISCIPLINARY METHODS USED?			<input type="checkbox"/> INFORMATION UNKNOWN
E. PLEASE PROVIDE ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION RELEVANT TO THE INVESTIGATION PROCESS THAT HAS NOT ALREADY BEEN ENTERED IN THIS REFERRAL. THIS MAY INCLUDE ADDITIONAL ADDRESSES TO LOCATE THE CHILD OR PERPETRATOR, ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR THE CHILD, EMAIL ADDRESSES, INFORMATION ABOUT ANY WEAPONS IN THE HOME OR CONCERNS YOU MAY HAVE FOR THE CASEWORKER'S SAFETY.			<input type="checkbox"/> INFORMATION UNKNOWN

INSTRUCTIONS TO MANDATED PERSONS:

A mandated reporter making an oral report of suspected child abuse to the department via the Statewide toll-free telephone number (800-932-0313) must also make a written report, which may be submitted electronically, within 48 hours to the department or county agency assigned to the case by using this form. If needed, attach additional sheet(s) of paper to provide all of the requested information on this form.

NOTE:

If the child has been taken into custody, you must immediately contact the county children and youth agency where the abuse occurred.

REPORTING SOURCE:			
PRINTED NAME AND SIGNATURE:		DATE OF REPORT:	
ADDRESS:			
TITLE OR RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD:	FACILITY OR ORGANIZATION:	TELEPHONE NUMBER:	EMAIL ADDRESS:

St. Paul's UCC, Birdsboro

Incident Report

Name and role of person completing this form: _____

X _____ Date: _____
Signature of person completing this form:

Date and time of incident: _____

Names of persons involved in the incident: _____

Description of incident: _____

Witnesses (include contact details): _____

Incident reported to: _____ Date: _____

How (in person, phone, email, this form, etc.): _____

St. Paul's UCC, Birdsboro

Incident Report

Incident Report Follow Up Action

Description of actions to be taken:

Professional Reference Interview Form for Employee Applicants Working with Children

Employee Applicant: _____ Date: _____

Name of Reference: _____

Address: _____

Phone Numbers: _____

Hello, my name is _____ with St. Paul's UCC (Applicant) has applied for a position with us and said you might be able to tell us about his/her previous work with children. Is this a good time for you to talk with me?

I would like to start by letting you know that the applicant has applied for a position working with children, so it is extremely important for us to make sure that every applicant is suitable for this type of position. I appreciate your help with this.

How long have you known the applicant? _____

How do you know the applicant? _____

How would you rate the applicant's ability to learn new information and skills?

____ Above satisfactory ____ Satisfactory ____ Below satisfactory

Can you give me an example of when the applicant was able to learn something new and use it in his/her work?

We are looking for someone who will adhere to the standard policies of our organization. How would you rate the applicant's ability to follow policies and procedures?

____ Above satisfactory ____ Satisfactory ____ Below satisfactory

How would you rate the applicant's ability to work with and relate to other adults?

____ Above satisfactory ____ Satisfactory ____ Below satisfactory

Have you observed the applicant working with children? ____ Yes ____ No

If yes, how would you rate the applicant's ability to relate to children?

____ Above satisfactory ____ Satisfactory ____ Below satisfactory

Can you give me an example of how the applicant relates to children?

In what types of situations have you observed the applicant working well with children (enjoying the work, being effective)?

In what types of situations have you observed the applicant not working well with children (becoming frustrated, angry, resentful or non-productive)?

How would you rate the applicant's ability to use good judgment in normal conditions?

___ Above satisfactory ___ Satisfactory ___ Below satisfactory

How would you rate the applicant's ability to maintain appropriate boundaries with children?

___ Above satisfactory ___ Satisfactory ___ Below satisfactory

How would you rate the applicant's ability to use good judgment in stressful conditions?

___ Above satisfactory ___ Satisfactory ___ Below satisfactory

Can you give me an example of when the applicant used good judgment?

Are you aware of any reason why we should not allow the applicant to work with the children we serve?

Do you have any additional comments or questions?

Signature of Personnel Team Member

Date

Personal Reference Interview Form for Employee Applicants Working with Children

Employee Applicant: _____ Date: _____

Name of Reference: _____

Address: _____

Phone Numbers: _____

Hello, my name is _____ with St. Paul's UCC. (Applicant) has applied for a position with us and said you would be a good person for us to talk with about him/her. Do you have a few minutes to talk with me now? I would like to start by letting you know that (Applicant) has applied for a position working with children, so it is extremely important for us to determine that every applicant is suitable for this type of position. I appreciate your help with this.

How long have you known the applicant? _____

What is your relationship to the applicant? _____

How would you rate the applicant's ability to work with and relate to children?

____ Above satisfactory ____ Satisfactory ____ Below satisfactory

Can you give me an example of how the applicant relates to children?

We are looking for someone who can stay calm and control frustration even under very frustrating conditions with children. How would you rate the applicant's ability to be patient and stay calm?

____ Above satisfactory ____ Satisfactory ____ Below satisfactory

Can you give me an example of how the applicant relates to children?

Have you ever known the applicant to use harsh or abusive discipline with a child?

Would you be comfortable placing one of your own loved ones in the care of the applicant?
Why or why not?

What are the applicant's hobbies and recreational activities?

How would you rate the applicant's ability to relate to adults?

____ Above satisfactory ____ Satisfactory ____ Below satisfactory

Can you give me an example of how the applicant relates to adults?

We need a person who can be supportive and understanding of a child's needs. How would you rate the applicant's ability to be genuinely supportive and understanding to a person in need?

____ Above satisfactory ____ Satisfactory ____ Below satisfactory

Think of a time when the applicant was able to show genuine concern for another person who needed comfort. Tell me about that time.

How would you rate the applicant's ability to maintain appropriate boundaries with children?

____ Above satisfactory ____ Satisfactory ____ Below satisfactory

Do you have any additional comments or questions?

Signature of Personnel Team Member

_____/_____/_____
Date

Employee Interview Questions

Source 1: *Preventing Child Sexual Abuse Within Youth-serving Organizations: Getting Started on Policies and Procedures*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services, 2007.

The following questions may be used in a written application or personal interview. A single answer should not determine whether an applicant is selected or rejected. Along with other forms of information, answers to these questions can help you build a more complete picture of an applicant.

- ***What type of supervisory situation do you prefer?***

If applicants are very independent, they may not fit in an organization whose policies and procedures require close supervision.

- ***What age/sex of youth do you want to work with? How would you feel about working with a different age/sex?***

If an applicant seems fixated on one age/sex, be wary. However, it may be that the applicant has experience or is gifted with working with certain age groups.

Asking follow-up questions about why an applicant has a strong preference can help you determine if there is cause for concern.

- ***Is there anyone who might suggest that you should not work with youth? Why or why not?***

- ***Why do you want the job?***

- ***What would you do in a particular situation?***

Set up scenarios that involve potential concerns, boundary issues, or youth protection policies and interactions to gauge the applicant's response. Be concerned if applicants disregard the organization's policies and procedures or handle a situation poorly.

- ***What makes you a good candidate for working with youth? What would your friends or colleagues say about how you interact with youth?***

- ***What other hobbies or activities do you enjoy?***

Determine if applicants have mature, adult relationships—not just relationships with youth

Source 2: *Policies & Procedures Resources*, Praesidium, Inc.

A more exhaustive set of interview questions along with an interpretive guide is available as part of a program self-assessment, which can be accessed at the Insurance Board website: www.insuranceboard.org. Go to **Safety Solutions/ SafeConduct™ Workbench**. Click on **Self-Assessment**. This resource is especially recommended for programs that deal with large numbers of children and where careful hiring decisions are required.

Field Trip Preparation Checklist

1. Specific location of the off-site activity. (Example: The Children's Museum)

2. Name of the primary contact at the off-site location (Example: Mary Smith, Director of Group Sales at the Children's Museum)

3. Address and telephone number for the location.

4. Parent/guardian permission sheet attached to this document for review.

5. Name and cell phone number of the primary and secondary supervisor for the off-site activity.

6. The employee to child ratio for the trip and names of all who will be attending.

7. Suggested attire for chaperones and children during the off-site activity.

8. Amount of time required for the off-site activity.

9. Estimated departure time and estimated return time.

10. Method of transportation.

11. List of the approved drivers with volunteer driver forms.

12. Overall supervision guidelines for location (employees will be assigned groups of children to monitor throughout the trip; employees will monitor children in "zones," etc.).

13. Location of restrooms/locker rooms at off-site location.

14. Cost of the activity.

Last Minute Checklist:

- 1. All permission sheets returned and compiled for the off-site activity (children cannot participate without a permission slip). Employees must take permission slips to the off-site activity to ensure correct parent/guardian contact information.**
- 2. Roll sheets printed and distributed to all employees for all children attending the off-site activity.**
- 3. All required employees present.**
- 4. All employees and children are in approved attire.**

VOLUNTEER DRIVER
Qualification Form & Agreement for Use of Personally Owned Vehicles
St. Paul's UCC

Name: _____ Birth Date: _____

Home phone: _____ Work phone: _____ Cell phone: _____

Years of driving experience _____

Driver license No. & State*: _____ Expiration Date : _____

Insurance Carrier _____ Expiration date: _____

Liability Policy Limit -- Bodily Injury _____ Property Damage _____

1. Are all licensed vehicles you own covered by insurance as required by law? Yes, No
2. Have you ever been denied a driver's license or had one suspended or revoked? Yes, No
3. Have you had any moving traffic violations or accidents in the past three years? Yes, No

If the answer to questions 2 or 3 is YES, explain. Give dates and details of violations and accidents on the back of this form.

I AGREE to the following as a condition of being permitted to act as a Volunteer Driver:

1. The vehicle owner's insurance is the primary liability insurance coverage in the event of an accident.
2. The owner of the vehicle which I am driving is responsible for keeping the vehicle in safe working order.
3. The owner of the vehicle is responsible for all damage to the owned vehicle however caused.
4. The owner of the vehicle shall maintain liability insurance.
5. The church's insurance shall apply in excess of the vehicle owner's liability insurance limits in the event the primary limits are exhausted, and only to the extent the church is legally obligated to pay damages.
6. **I will not receive or initiate phone calls while operating a vehicle for church activities, to include receiving or initiating text messages.**
7. I will indemnify and hold the church harmless from liabilities and damage resulting from my operation of a motor vehicle not owned by the church. The church will indemnify and hold harmless the volunteer driver for liabilities and damages resulting from acts or negligence of the church.

I hereby AFFIRM that the information I have given is stated truthfully and that I shall abide by the terms of the church's Vehicle Use Policy.

Attach a copy of Driver's License and current Insurance ID Card

Driver Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPROVED: _____ **Date:** _____ **Expiration:** _____

Sample Limited Access Agreement for Cases of Convicted Sex Offenders

NOTICE: In every instance the agreement must be customized to the circumstances of the individual parties, both the congregation and the individual petitioner. In all cases, consultation with an attorney and other behavioral professionals is strongly encouraged before setting the terms of any Limited Access Agreement.

This Limited Access Agreement is executed between:

St. Paul's UCC, referred to below as "we," "the congregation" and "clergy";
And
(Petitioner Name), referred to below as "you" and "your"

St. Paul's UCC, is a Christian Congregation and as such affirms the dignity and worth of all persons. We are committed to being a religious community open to those who are in need of worshiping with us, especially in times of distress and serious personal troubles. However, based on your background, we have concerns about your contact with children and youth in our congregation. The following guidelines are designed to reduce the risk to both you and them of an incident or accusation. We welcome you to our congregation and our membership but your participation will be limited to ensure the safety of our children and youth and to assure that you will not be subject to future accusations.

Within these guidelines, the congregation welcomes your participation in worship services and upon Consistory approval some adult education, and some adult social events may also be made available. Do not enter child or youth classrooms and you are to avoid all contact with children and youth on church property or congregation-sponsored events. This includes the following:

- Do not talk with children.
- Do not volunteer or agree to lead, chaperone or participate in events for children and youth including such things as religious education classes, stories or talks for worship, youth group events, activities during intergenerational events, driving or otherwise transporting children and/or youth.
- You will remain in the presence of an Escort who knows your situation at all times. You must meet that person before coming onto church property (or before arriving at any church-sponsored event), remain with him/her at all times, and depart with him/her.
- If a child or youth in the congregation approaches you, either at church or in a community place, politely and immediately excuse yourself from the situation.
- Avoid being in the church or any church-owned building or church-rented space at any time without an Escort present with you at all times.
- Do not ask for, seek access to, nor remove from the church any materials, files, directories, etc. listing members and friends of the church.

As a part of this agreement it is understood that you will have three (3) members of this congregation, approved by the Pastor and Consistory, who know thoroughly your history and are willing to serve as your Escorts. You will be welcome on church property and at church-sponsored events approved by the Pastor and Consistory but must be accompanied at all times by one of the Escorts named below:

(Named Escort 1)

(Named Escort 2)

(Named Escort 3)

To assist your integration into the congregation and to help you maximize your experience with the church it is agreed that you will meet every other month with the Escorts and a member of the clergy to discuss matters of mutual interest and concern. These meetings will also serve as an ongoing review of the implementation of this agreement.

Implementation of this agreement is based upon a review by the clergy of the most current supporting documents as follows:

- A statement from the court as to the nature of the conviction.
- A risk assessment from a qualified therapist.
- A report from a certified treatment provider indicating that you are not at too high a risk for recidivism.

Any change in the above must be reported immediately to a member of the clergy.

REASONS FOR EXCLUDING A PERSON FROM ALL CONGREGATIONAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

- Refusal to allow the clergy to contact the treatment provider and parole officer.
- Refusal to go for a risk assessment with a qualified therapist.
- Report by a treatment provider that the individual is at too high a risk for recidivism.
- Refusal to sign a Limited Access Agreement.
- Refusal to comply with the requirements of the Limited Access Agreement.
- Violation of parole or probation (which if witnessed by an escort or clergy will be reported to the appropriate authorities.)

This agreement will remain in effect until/unless:

- You fail to honor the terms of the agreement, thus nullifying it.
- It is superseded by any policies and procedures put in place by the church's Consistory. The Consistory in consultation with the Pastor is the body responsible for providing you with guidelines, support and counsel for your participation in the life of the congregation.
- You, the clergy, and the Consistory mutually agree to change the terms of this agreement.

ATTEST: I have reviewed the terms of the above limited access agreement and agree to abide by its provisions. Failure to honor its terms will result in my being denied access to church property and all church events.

Signature

Date

Petitioner Name

Address

WITNESS FOR THE CHURCH—Consistory President and Pastor:

Signature

Date

Name: Consistory President

Signature

Date

Name: Pastor

St. Paul's UCC, 300 West First Street, Birdsboro, PA 19508

**Appendix E—Grounds for Denying
Employment or Participation**

*Office of General Counsel of the United Church of Christ
Pennsylvania Child Abuse Prevention Laws Update*

EXHIBIT F

**GROUND FOR DENYING EMPLOYMENT OR PARTICIPATION AS A
VOLUNTEER 23 Pa. C.S. §§ 6344(c) and 6344.2(c)**

(c) *Grounds for denying employment or participation in program, activity or service.*

(1) In no case shall an administrator hire or approve an applicant where the department has verified that the applicant is named in the Statewide database as the perpetrator of a founded report committed within the five-year period immediately preceding verification pursuant to this section.

(2) In no case shall an administrator hire an applicant if the applicant's criminal history record information indicates the applicant has been convicted of one or more of the following offenses under Title 18 (relating to crimes and offenses) or an equivalent crime under Federal law or the law of another state:

Chapter 25 (relating to criminal homicide).

Section 2702 (relating to aggravated assault).

Section 2709.1 (relating to stalking).

Section 2901 (relating to kidnapping).

Section 2902 (relating to unlawful restraint).

Section 3121 (relating to rape).

Section 3122.1 (relating to statutory sexual assault).

Section 3123 (relating to involuntary deviate sexual intercourse).

Section 3124.1 (relating to sexual assault).

Section 3125 (relating to aggravated indecent assault).

Section 3126 (relating to indecent assault).

Section 3127 (relating to indecent exposure).

Section 4302 (relating to incest).

Section 4303 (relating to concealing death of child).

*Office of General Counsel of the United Church of Christ
Pennsylvania Child Abuse Prevention Laws Update*

Section 4304 (relating to endangering welfare of children).

Section 4305 (relating to dealing in infant children).

A felony offense under section 5902(b) (relating to prostitution and related offenses).

Section 5903(c) or (d) (relating to obscene and other sexual materials and performances).

Section 6301 (relating to corruption of minors).

Section 6312 (relating to sexual abuse of children).

The attempt, solicitation or conspiracy to commit any of the offenses set forth in this paragraph.

(3) In no case shall an employer, administrator, supervisor or other person responsible for employment decisions hire or approve an applicant if the applicant's criminal history record information indicates the applicant has been convicted of a felony offense under the act of April 14, 1972 (P.L. 233, No. 64), known as The Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act, committed within the five-year period immediately preceding verification under this section.

APPENDIX F – Leadership & Reporting Roster

The persons listed below are considered “primary contacts” for reporting for their respective Ministry or program. Each is also a “mandatory reporter” in the State of Pennsylvania for the purpose of reporting “suspected child abuse” to law enforcement or child welfare authorities.

Any employee, volunteer, Minister or member of the congregation of St. Paul’s UCC may report policy or procedure violations or circumstances of “suspected child abuse” to any of the persons listed below, but preferably to the person in whose ministry or program the incident has occurred. In cases of suspected child abuse all ministers of the church are mandated reporters and must not delay in calling CHILDLINE: 800-932-0313. They then must inform the Pastor or Consistory President as soon as possible.

Position	Name	Telephone	e-Mail address
Pastor	Rev. Joseph Motz	610-582-8461	pastormotz@stpaulsbirdsboro.org
Consistory President	Steven Flanagan	717-989-8714	pres@stpaulsbirdsboro.org
Consistory Vice-President	Stuart Wells	610-404-2985	vicepres@stpaulsbirdsboro.org
Personnel Chair	Sherry Hunter	610-842-5095	shunter@cccvs.org
Office Administrator	Luwaina Baker	610-582-8461	<u>office@stpaulsbirdsboro.org</u>
Media Spokesperson	Rev. Joseph Motz & Consistory President	610-582-8461	pastormotz@stpaulsbirdsboro.org pres@stpaulsbirdsboro.org
(Your Church’s confidential reporting option)	Pastor or Personnel Chair	610-582-8461	
Law Enforcement Agency	Birdsboro Police Dept.	610-582-6037	
Berks County Children & Youth Services		610-478-6700	bccy@countyofberks.com

Prior to making an anonymous report, a person reporting must take into account how technology may reveal their identification (caller i.d., e-mail address, etc.). Nevertheless, the Pastor/Personnel Chair will take care not to further compromise confidentiality.

Name

If offered a position as Minister, employee or volunteer, I affirm that I have read the St. Paul's UCC, Birdsboro, Safe Church Policy. I agree to comply with the policies and rules contained in this Safe Conduct policy, to include training, monitoring, reporting and ministry administrative procedures. I agree to meet standards for one-on-one relationships with children/clients as defined above. If requested to do so, I will cooperate with any investigation of a possible violation of church policies and rules by providing complete and truthful information in oral and/or written statements.

Signature

Date

Appendix

(To include Policy/Guidelines for nursery)