



The Child Protection Policy

for the safety and protection of the children at

Clemson Presbyterian Church

Revised 2017

Introduction

We joyfully provide care, Christian education, and opportunities for fellowship and service at Clemson Presbyterian Church (CPC), all intended to point both our church's children and our guests toward Christ while taking all reasonable measures to keep them safe and protected from harm or abuse.

The children of our church are a precious stewardship and a blessing (Gen 33:5, Ps 127:3-5), they enjoy the Lord's special favor (Mt 18:10, Lk 18:16), and their care, nurture, and education in the church are highly important means in bringing them to salvation (Prov 22:6, 2 Tim 3:14-15). Given these truths, it is incumbent upon church officers, staff, paid workers, volunteers, and all members to take great pains to guard and protect the children in their care. The CPC Session adopts this Policy to help achieve these ends. The Session designates the Associate Pastor of Youth and Families as primarily responsible for implementation of this Policy.

CPC cannot, nor can any institution or organization, absolutely guarantee that no harm will befall a child entrusted to its care. However, CPC can, through adherence to this Policy, make meaningful efforts to ensure that persons placed in positions of responsibility and trust with respect to the children of the church are persons deserving of that trust and responsibility.

Policy Statement

This policy directs that supervision of activities involving children and youth with adults be conducted in a manner that minimizes the risk of abuse or of false allegations of abuse. The Policy shall be made available to all members and staff of CPC.

Definitions

- 1) **CPC**– Clemson Presbyterian Church, a particular church of the Presbyterian Church in America and a South Carolina nonprofit corporation.
- 2) **Policy** - The Children's Ministry Protection Policy.
- 3) **Church Officers** - A pastor, associate pastor, assistant pastor, ruling elder, or deacon.
- 4) **Ministry Leader** - A person designated by the CPC Session or a ministry director as the leader of a specified ministry of CPC.
- 5) **Child/Children** - For the purpose of this policy appendix, a person not yet having reached the age of eleven (0-10).
- 6) **Youth** - For the purpose of this policy appendix, a person between the ages of eleven and Fifteen (11-15).
- 7) **Adult** - For the purpose of this policy appendix, a person age sixteen and older (16+).

I. Volunteer Worker Screening Procedures

- 1) Prior to consideration for a position, any candidate who may be working with children or youth will complete and return an initial ministry application (see Form #1).
- 2) The ministry application will be carefully reviewed by the Associate Pastor of Youth and Families or Ministry Leader to determine if the worker will be appropriate for the ministry position based on the information provided.
- 3) If the person is deemed appropriate for the ministry work, then up to three references may be checked to confirm the information provided on the ministry application. (See Form #3).
- 4) Any information indicating that a candidate poses a threat to others or has any prior history of physical or sexual abuse directed against another person will result in the immediate removal of the individual candidate from consideration for a ministry position with CPC.
- 5) A criminal background check will be performed through state law enforcement or other agency with respect to any candidate, seeking to work with children or youth, who is age 18 or older.

II. Employee Screening Procedures

- 1) The same procedure set forth for volunteer workers (I.1 – I.5) will apply to all potential employees, regardless of the ministry position for which they are being considered (see Forms #1 and #3).
- 2) If the person is deemed appropriate for the ministry work, then at least two of the references will be checked to confirm the information provided on the ministry application.
- 3) Any information indicating that a candidate poses a threat to others or has any prior history of physical or sexual abuse directed against another person will result in the immediate removal of the individual candidate from consideration for employment with CPC.

III. Waiting Period

- 1) No volunteer worker candidate will be considered for any teaching ministry position (Sunday School, D Groups, Sunday Night Ministry, VBS, etc.) involving contact with children or youth until the candidate has been received as a communicant member or been regularly involved in CPC for six months or more.
- 2) A non member/attender can be allowed to serve for special events/paid work if they have been fully vetted by our process (see section I) and are serving with someone associated with our church.

IV. Supervision

- 1) Classroom or Activity Workers: At least two individuals (at least one of whom must be over the age of 18) must be assigned to every function, and in each classroom, vehicle, or other enclosed area, during every children's ministry program. Both workers must remain with the children at all times except that one worker may escort children to the

restroom in accordance with the requirements of Part V herein. The remaining worker must be visible from the door.

- 2) Workers should arrive at least 5 minutes before a scheduled activity and should keep watch over those in their care until all have been picked up by an authorized person. Do not send children out to find their parents, and do not release any child to await transportation.
- 3) Youth (ages eleven and older) do not require two adults to be present for all activities but will utilize classrooms with viewports or open doors. Additionally, a youth worker should not be alone with an individual youth except in those situations where privacy is warranted. In such cases the activity of one or both parties should be clearly visible by other adult supervision (e.g. pastor's office with counselee or counselor visible from the door).
- 4) The following guidelines will be observed for child-to-adult ratios:

| Age Range | Staff:Child Ratio | Maximum Group Size |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Infants and Toddlers | | |
| 0-2 years | 1:5 | 10 |
| 2-3 years | 1:7 | 14 |
| Pre-School | | |
| 3-4 years | 1:12 | 22 |
| 4-5 years | 1:17 | 26 |
| 5-6 years | 1:20 | 30 |
| School Age | | |
| 6-9 years | 1:18 | 36 |
| 9-10 years | 1:20 | 40 |

V. Work Restrictions

- 1) Children ages five through ten shall be escorted by a volunteer or supervisor to the bathroom. The volunteer/supervisor will make another adult aware that they will be escorting a child to the bathroom. The adult must first make sure the facility is safe and then must wait outside the restroom until the child exits. If the child is a female, she must be escorted by an adult female.
- 2) Children five years of age or younger (boys and girls) may be assisted as needed in the restroom by an adult female, but the bathroom door must remain unfastened.
- 3) Never touch a person's private areas except when necessary, as in the case of changing a diaper. Diapers may be changed only by female workers.
- 4) Workers should avoid the appearance of impropriety, such as sitting older children on their lap, kissing or embracing others, etc.

- 5) Workers are to release children in their care only to parents, guardians, or persons specifically authorized to pick up the person. If in doubt, do not release the child until verifying the person is authorized to pick up the child.

VI. Discipline

- 1) Workers are not permitted to spank, hit, grab, shake, or otherwise physically discipline anyone.
- 2) Disciplinary problems should be reported to the workers' ministry leader or to a parent or guardian.

VII. Injuries or Illness

- 1) Persons who are ill (with a fever, or having a communicable disease which can be transmitted by cough or by touch) will not be permitted to participate in any ministry activity.
- 2) A suitable substitute (who has been approved as a volunteer worker through the above screening process) must be used to take the place of a worker who is ill.
- 3) Participants should be returned to their parent or guardian as soon as illness is discovered. If this is not possible, then the person who is ill should be isolated in a manner that will allow supervision to continue until the person can be returned to his/her parent or guardian.
- 4) Reasonable steps should be taken to avoid contact by anyone with body fluids of any kind.
- 5) Any ministry leader who becomes aware of an injury to a worker or participant must take steps to ensure proper medical attention is given to the injured person.
- 6) Persons who have received an injury which is obviously minor should be given first aid as needed at the time of injury. The person's parent or guardian must be notified of the minor injury when he/she picks up the injured person.
- 7) Any injury which may require medical treatment beyond simple first aid must be given immediate attention. The parent or guardian of the injured person must be immediately notified, along with the worker's ministry leader. An ambulance should also be called immediately if warranted by the injury.

VIII. Record-Keeping

A written notice of injury report must be prepared by workers whenever an injury occurs during a ministry function (see Form #5). The report will be forwarded to the worker's ministry leader promptly upon completion.

IX. Notice of Injury, Abuse, or Molestation

- 1) Workers who become aware of any injury, abuse, or molestation connected with any ministry activity must immediately inform their ministry leader or a Church Officer of such injury, abuse, or molestation.

- 2) Any ministry leader who becomes aware of any injury, abuse, or molestation connected with any ministry activity will immediately inform a Church Officer of such injury, abuse, or molestation and will complete a "Incident Report" form (see Form #6).
- 3) Any Church Officer who becomes aware of possible abuse or molestation of a participant that has happened within the church ministry (and does not involve a parent) will ensure that the participant's parent or guardian is immediately informed that possible abuse or molestation has occurred.
- 4) Any Church Officer who becomes aware of possible abuse or molestation of a participant or of a serious injury will inform the Associate Pastor of Youth and Families, who will inform the CPC Session. At the direction of the CPC Session, the Associate Pastor of Youth and Families will investigate the incident, report his findings to the CPC Session, and further respond as required by this Policy.
- 5) The Associate Pastor of Youth and Families will also see that an attorney is promptly contacted to provide a written opinion as to whether CPC should report the abuse or molestation to appropriate governmental authorities. The written opinion should be obtained within 24 hours of when the Associate Pastor of Youth and Families first becomes aware of the abuse or molestation, and the attorney's advice should be followed. If the attorney recommends that an incident be reported, the advice must be acted upon by the Associate Pastor of Youth and Families immediately.

Whether a report of suspected child abuse or neglect is made to the Department of Social Services (DSS) or to the local law enforcement agency depends upon the relationship of the alleged perpetrator to the child victim. When the alleged perpetrator is the child's parent, guardian, or other person responsible for the child's welfare, the report should be made to DSS in the county where the child resides or can be found. When the alleged perpetrator is not the child's parent, guardian, or other person responsible for the child's welfare, the report should be made to the local law enforcement office. If the relationship or identity of the alleged perpetrator is unclear or unknown, the report should be made to DSS. (Children's Law Center, January 2010 School of Law, University of South Carolina)

- 6) Upon notice of abuse or molestation, the Associate Pastor of Youth and Families must notify the ministry's insurance carrier as well as any organizational entity (e.g. denominational office) to whom CPC has a duty to report such allegations.

X. Violation of Policy or Procedures

- 1) Workers must promptly notify their ministry leader of any activity undertaken on their own behalf or by others which violates the Policy.
- 2) Any ministry leader or Church Officer who becomes aware of a violation of the Policy will take all necessary steps to ensure future compliance with the policy and procedures by all workers; and will remove workers from their positions if such removal is warranted, or if a worker poses a potential threat to others.
- 3) The Associate Pastor of Youth and Families is responsible to monitor compliance with the Policy.

XI. Internal Investigation

- 1) Any allegation of abuse or molestation will be taken seriously and will be investigated by the CPC Session or its designees as provided by the Policy.
- 2) Any employee of CPC who is the subject of an investigation will be removed from his/her position, with pay, pending completion of the investigation (unless the employee has admitted to the abuse or molestation, in which case he/she will be terminated in accordance with organizational employment practices).
- 3) Any volunteer worker who is the subject of the investigation will be removed from his/her position pending completion of the investigation.
- 4) Any person who is not found innocent, by an internal or external investigation or by legal process, of alleged abuse or molestation will be removed from work with children or youth within CPC. CPC will consult with legal counsel for advice if termination of employment is indicated.

XII. Dealing with Law Enforcement/Media

- 1) All Church Officers, employees, and volunteers will cooperate fully with any law enforcement or governmental agency that may be investigating allegations of injury, abuse, or molestation in connection with activities of CPC.
- 2) Legal counsel will be contacted for advice and guidance as soon as possible after CPC receives notice of possible abuse or molestation in connection with CPC activities. Decisions concerning CPC's response to the allegations will be made in accordance with such advice.
- 3) The Session will designate a spokesman following notice of any abuse or molestation in connection with activities of CPC. This spokesman will be the only person to convey information concerning the situation and (to avoid compromising any ongoing investigation) will convey only such information as is necessary under the circumstances.

XIII. Annual Employee/Worker Review

- 1) The Policy shall be conveyed for review annually to all workers, employees, coordinators, supervisors, and leaders to whom it applies.
- 2) All ministry employees and volunteer workers associated with CPC who will be working in any capacity with children or youth will complete a brief renewal application once every three years (see Form #2).
- 3) Should the renewal application show that any employee or volunteer worker has become unsuitable for working with children or youth, he/she will be immediately removed from his/her current position and will not be considered for other positions involving work with children or youth.
- 4) The Associate Pastor of Youth and Families is responsible to ensure that the Child Safety Documents are disseminated to CPC members and volunteers and for training and education on the documents.

XIV. Revision of Policy/Procedures

The Policy and Procedures will be regularly reviewed with legal counsel and can only be modified with the permission of the CPC Session. Any such modification will be promptly conveyed to all persons affected by the modification.

XV. Resources

The following organizations may be able to provide additional information on protecting your ministry's children and youth:

Prevent Child Abuse America

1-800-CHILDREN

www.preventchildabuse.org