



Rationale and Purpose for Safe Sanctuaries Policy for Volunteers Working with Children of First Presbyterian Church of Allentown.

We are called by our confessions and our covenant of baptism to participate in the nurture and guidance of all children of God. The Larger Catechism makes it clear that we are "to love, pray for and bless (our children)...protecting and providing for them all things necessary for soul and body..." (7.239).

Sadly, many children are physically and emotionally scarred by child abuse. Statistics indicate that one in every five children has been sexually victimized in some way before they reach eighteen; and some of these likely are members of our church.

As society becomes more aware of the problem, more and more groups are requiring background checks and implementing policies to prevent children from being victimized in their facilities. As a result, persons who are potential perpetrators and are looking for unsupervised access to children, look for places where such policies are not put into place. This is one reason why the church must become involved.

First Presbyterian Church of Allentown is openly committed to safeguarding the well-being of all its members by educating, clarifying and enforcing the policy. In doing so, everyone will have the ability to fully participate in the worship, fellowship, and education that God intended for us as a church family. We are also required to remain in compliance with PA Act 153, which requires certain background checks for those individuals volunteering in roles that have direct contact with children. We also reserve the right to require more volunteer training than what is currently required under Act 153.

The Session of First Presbyterian Church of Allentown is determined that all individuals who work on behalf of the church with children will be properly screened, trained, and supervised to minimize the risk of child abuse at First Presbyterian Church of Allentown by volunteers or employees. This policy is for all volunteers working with children in any of our church's programs. *For the purposes of this policy, "child" and "children" are defined to mean anyone under age eighteen and/or any adult who is developmentally disabled.*

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ALLENTOWN POLICY for VOLUNTEERS WORKING with CHILDREN

Outline

- A. Policy Administration**
- B. Worker Selection and Screening**
- C. Training Volunteers**
- D. Supervision - Two Adult Rule**
- E. General Principles for Responding to Reports of Suspected Abuse**
- F. Procedures for Responding to Reports of Suspected Abuse**
- Appendix A: Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law Summary**
- Appendix B: Blank Forms**
- Appendix C: Safe Sanctuaries Volunteer Requirements Matrix**

A Policy Administration

The Safe Sanctuaries Team has been created for the purpose of

- enforcing, reviewing, and updating policy
- providing necessary trainings for volunteers and trainers
- addressing policy concerns

1) The responsibilities of the team and team leader are to:

- a) ensure the compliance of Safe Sanctuaries policy throughout all ministry areas of First Presbyterian Church of Allentown
- b) provide training opportunities for new volunteers
- c) contact interested volunteers who are incomplete in the application process
- d) report to Session through elder liaison that items in Section 1 above have been accomplished
- e) propose recommendations for revisions/changes to this policy to the Session for approval

2) The responsibilities of the Staff Representative or designee on behalf of the team are to:

- a) provide and review all volunteer applications
- b) process and monitor applications
- c) communicate with the Safe Sanctuaries Team regarding incomplete applications in the paperwork process
- d) determine eligibility of each applicant

- e) assess the need for and conduct personal interviews when necessary
- f) notify appropriate team of applicant status
- g) notify applicants in cases of rejection

Members of the team include a Team Lead, members at large, an Elder liaison, and one Staff Representative. The Team Lead is recruited by the Elder liaison in consultation with the Staff Representative. Members at large are recruited by the Team Lead in consultation with the Staff Representative. Members serve on a rotating schedule of staggered terms. Terms of service for members run from May 1- April 30. Each person serves a three-year term with a two-term limit.

B WORKER SELECTION AND SCREENING

All persons who volunteer with children in any capacity within First Presbyterian Church of Allentown shall be a member of this church for a period of at least six months or actively involved in the church for at least six months.

Selection and screening requirements for all adult volunteers (age 18 and up) include:

- 1) Completed application - All prospective volunteers who will be working with children must complete a Volunteer Application (see form in Appendix B). The application will require information about prior volunteer or paid work with children; (<http://www.fpcallentown.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Application-for-Volunteers-2017.pdf>)
- 2) Copy of Driver's License
- 3) Reference - names, addresses, and telephone numbers of three (3) references acquainted with the applicant's character or work with children for adults and (1) reference for youth application; (see : <http://www.fpcallentown.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Reference-form-REV-7.2015.pdf> or appropriate forms in Appendix B)

Once the above three items have been submitted to the Staff Representative, interested volunteers have 30 days to complete the remainder of the application

process in items 4-7 below. If the requirements are not completed within 30 days from the submission of the application materials, the application process must be restarted.

During that 30-day period, prospective volunteer(s) will be permitted to work in direct contact with children or youth (under the age of 18) on a provisional basis with the requirement that:

- They are not alone with children
- They have been actively involved in First Presbyterian Church for 6 months
- Said individual must be accompanied by a Safe Sanctuaries approved adult (age 18 and older) during this time.

4) Pennsylvania State Police clearance – obtained online

<https://epatch.state.pa.us/>

5) Pennsylvania Department of Human Services clearance- obtained online

<https://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home>

6) Either one of the following:

a. An FBI fingerprint clearance if the applicant has not been a resident of the state of Pennsylvania for the past 10 consecutive years,

https://www.pa.cogentid.com/index_dpw.htm or;

b. If applicant has been a resident of the state of PA for the past 10 consecutive years, a signed affidavit will be accepted

<http://www.fpcallentown.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/FBI-Fingerprint-Affidavit-REV-7.2015.pdf> (or appropriate forms in Appendix B)

7) Reporter Training completed.

a. We are providing this online training through the Boys Scouts of America.

i. Follow this link: <https://my.scouting.org/>

ii. Click on the "Create Account" link at the top left of the page to establish an account.

iii. Login and participate in the training module.

iv. Submit the certificate of completion to FPCA.

Additional information:

- 8) A possible follow up interview as necessary
- 9) **Adult** volunteers must be recertified every 5 years and will be contacted by the Safe Sanctuaries Staff Representative at that time.
- 10) **Youth** volunteers must be recertified in the online reporter training *only* every 2 years.

No one with any prior convictions of physical or sexual child abuse, child neglect, or child exploitation identified by First Presbyterian Church of Allentown through this application process, will be utilized in any capacity in contact with children.

Selection and screening requirements for youth volunteers (age 12-17) include:

- 1) Completion of a Youth Application (<http://www.fpcallentown.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Youth-Application-2017.pdf>)
- 2) Training provided by a local agency on behalf of FPCA

C TRAINING VOLUNTEERS

Through the online Reporter Training (see Section B.7. above), both youth and adult applicants will be instructed in effective procedures for youth protection. Adult volunteers will renew this training every five years; youth volunteers will be required to do so every two years.

D SUPERVISION – TWO ADULT RULE

At least two Safe Sanctuaries approved adults shall be present at all activities sponsored by First Presbyterian Church of Allentown involving direct contact with children. In situations where such compliance is deemed impossible, one approved adult volunteer must be present whether the contact occurs in a public place or in one-on-one situations (e.g., Confirmation sponsors, drivers on youth-sponsored events, tutoring).

Youth volunteers (age 12-17) must be accompanied by at least one Safe Sanctuaries trained adult to eliminate one-on-one situations between youth.

E GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR RESPONDING TO REPORT OF SUSPECTED ABUSE

The first priority is the health and welfare of the child or any other person at risk.

1. The primary response is for the volunteer to make an immediate and direct report of suspected child abuse to ChildLine by calling 1-800-932-0313.
2. Volunteer must then notify staff person in their ministry area. Staff person will notify the pastoral staff and the Safe Sanctuary team lead to determine the proper response, which may include in no particular order:
 - deciding who needs to know about a suspected incident (e.g., other pastors, parents, others)
 - determining when, and what information, other staff members need to know regarding an incident
 - choosing where Safe Sanctuaries Incident Reports and confidential information will be kept
 - contacting the insurance company, church's legal counsel, and Lehigh Presbytery when appropriate

F PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO REPORT OF SUSPECTED ABUSE

- 1. A Volunteer has suspicion, direct observation, or firsthand knowledge that child abuse has occurred by an individual other than a volunteer or church staff person.**

The first priority is the health and welfare of the child or any other person at risk. Primary response is for the adult volunteer to make an immediate and direct report of suspected child abuse to ChildLine by calling 1-800-932-0313.

Volunteer notifies staff person in their ministry area, and proceeds as outlined in E.2. above.

2. Volunteer A has suspicion, direct observation, firsthand knowledge or a direct report that Volunteer B has abused a child.

The first priority is the health and welfare of the child or any other person at risk.

Primary response is for the adult volunteer to make an immediate and direct report of suspected child abuse to ChildLine by calling 1-800-932-0313.

Volunteer notifies staff person in their ministry area, and proceeds as outlined in E.2. above.

Additionally:

- a) Safe Sanctuary Team lead will inform accused Volunteer B that an allegation was made and she/he needs to remove herself/himself from serving until an investigation is conducted and a disposition arrived at.
- b) The pastor is not to give any details of the accusation. The pastor offers pastoral support.

Those involved in this incident in any way will maintain complete confidentiality.

APPENDIX A

PENNSYLVANIA CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES LAW

Act 179 of 2006, amended the Child Protective Services Law 23 Pa. CSA 6301, the Pennsylvania statute that governs mandatory reporting of suspected child abuse.

Types of Reporters and Definition of Perpetrator and Non-Perpetrator

Under "Persons required to Report Suspected Child Abuse (a) General Rule", it reads "A person who, in the course of employment, occupation or practice of a profession comes into contact with children, shall report or cause a report to be made in accordance with section 6313 (relating to reporting procedure) when the person has reasonable cause to suspect, on the basis of medical, professional or other training or experience, that a child under the care, supervision, guidance or training of that person or of an agency, institution, organization or other entity with which that person is affiliated is a victim of child abuse, including abuse by an individual who is not a perpetrator, shall report or cause a report to be made in accordance with Section 6313." Clergy are mandated reporters, except in cases of confidential communications. The church is an affiliated organization, so that clergy are now required to "cause" church employees or volunteers who work with children to report any "reasonable suspicion" of child abuse.

Under the law a perpetrator of child abuse is defined as follows: A person who has committed child abuse and is a parent (natural, adoptive) of a child, a person responsible for the welfare of a child (childcare provider, teacher, health care provider), an individual residing in the same house as the child (step/foster parent, sibling over age 14) or a paramour of the child's parent. As amended in 2006, mandated reporters must report all suspected abuse in accordance with section 6313 (creating ChildLine). ChildLine refers statutorily defined perpetrators to county children and youth agencies for immediate action. ChildLine refers non-perpetrators to police and the district attorney.

Definitions of Abuse

Types of child abuse, all of which must result from an act or failure to act by the person suspected of the abuse, are:

Nonaccidental serious physical injury: a recent (within 2 years of the date of the report) injury that causes the child severe pain or significantly impairs the child's physical functioning, either temporarily or permanently;

Serious physical neglect: prolonged or repeated lack of supervision or the failure to provide the essentials of life, including medical care, which results in the child sustaining a condition that endangers the child's life or development or impairs the child's functioning;

Serious mental injury: a psychological condition, as diagnosed by a physician or licensed psychologist, that renders the child chronically and severely anxious, agitated, depressed, socially withdrawn, psychotic or in reasonable fear that his or her life or safety is threatened, or seriously interferes with the child's ability to accomplish age-appropriate developmental and social tasks;

Imminent Risk: a recent (within 2 years of the date of the report) act or failure to act that creates an imminent risk of serious physical injury or sexual abuse/exploitation of the child that occurs during an incident or series of incidents;

Sexual abuse or exploitation: The employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement or coercion of a child to engage in or assist another individual to engage in sexually explicit conduct

or engage in simulation of sexually explicit conduct for the purpose of producing visual depiction, including photographing, videotaping, computer depicting and filming.

This can include such criminal acts as rape, sexual assault, involuntary deviate sexual intercourse, aggravated indecent assault, molestation, incest, indecent exposure, and prostitution.

Since the reporting requirements now include "abuse by an individual who is not a perpetrator" mandated reporters need to understand the law governing age requirements for sexual contact (18 Pa. C.S. 3123(a)), in case a sexually active child makes a report. Any report by a child less than age 18, of forced sexual contact, requires reporting. Any sexual contact with a child age 12 and under, is never consensual and is reportable. If a person engages in sexual contact with a child ages 13 to 15, and that person is more than 4 years older than the child, that is reportable even if consensual. No age restrictions apply to incest, thus even consensual incestuous sex with a child under 18, is reportable.

APPENDIX B: FORMS

SAFE SANCTUARIES INCIDENT REPORT

1. Today's Date _____
2. Name of Volunteer observing or receiving disclosure of child abuse _____
3. Name of staff person completing this report _____
4. Name of child _____ age/grade in school _____
5. Volunteer's statement of the child's direct report or the volunteer's concern regarding the child (attach ChildLine report)
6. Name of person under suspicion or accused _____
Relationship to child (i.e. volunteer leader, family member, other) _____
7. Response
 - a. ___ Online report/Call made to PA ChildLine via www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis or 1-800-932-0313
Name of person who made the report _____
Date/Time _____
Name of person spoken with (if applicable): _____
8. Report to a Pastor
Name of Pastor _____
Name of Person who made the call _____
Date/Time _____
Summary of call _____
9. Report to Safe Sanctuary Team Lead

APPROPRIATE SECTIONS BELOW TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PASTOR

10. Call to child's parent/guardian by the pastor
Date/Time _____
Name of person spoken with _____
Summary of call _____
11. Other contacts, i.e. insurance company, church's legal counsel, Lehigh Presbytery
 - a. Call to _____

Date/Time _____
Name of person spoken with _____
Summary of call _____

b. Call to _____
Date/Time _____
Name of person spoken with _____
Summary of call _____

c. Call to _____
Date/Time _____
Name of person spoken with _____
Summary of call _____

d. Call to _____
Date/Time _____
Name of person spoken with _____
Summary of call _____

This Safe Sanctuaries Incident Report will be kept confidential with the pastoral staff determining who needs to know of it and when they need to know. It will be kept on file in a secure place in the church office.



First Presbyterian Church of Allentown
3231 W. Tilghman Street
Allentown, PA 18104
610-395-3781

NOTE: These questions will be asked of applicant's listed references. There is nothing the applicant needs to complete on this page.

Name of Reference: _____

Volunteer Name: _____

How long have you known this person? _____

How do you know this person? _____

Do you recommend this person for a position working with children or youth? If no please explain: _____

Do you have any concerns about this person's use of drugs or alcohol? If yes, please explain: _____

Any additional comments? _____

Caller: _____

Date: _____



AFFIDAVIT
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
ss: COUNTY OF Lehigh

_____ swears and affirms as follows

[Print full name above]:

1. I wish to serve as a volunteer for First Presbyterian Church of Allentown (“FPCA”).
2. I am submitting this Affidavit to FPCA in accordance with the provisions of Section 6344.2(B.1) of the Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law, 23 Pa.C.S.A. Section 6301 et seq.
3. I understand that FPCA will be relying on my statements in this Affidavit for the purpose of determining whether I may serve as a volunteer for the church.
4. I have been a Pennsylvania resident during the entirety of the ten-year period immediately preceding today’s date.
5. I am not disqualified from service as a volunteer pursuant to Section 6344(C) of the Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law, in that:

A. I have never been convicted of any of the following criminal offenses under the Pennsylvania Crimes Code, 18 Pa.C.S.A. Section 101 et seq.:

- i. Chapter 25 (relating to criminal homicide);
- ii. Section 2702 (relating to aggravated assault);
- iii. Section 2709.1 (relating to stalking);
- iv. Section 2901 (relating to kidnapping);
- v. Section 2902 (relating to unlawful restraint);
- vi. Section 3121 (relating to rape);
- vii. Section 3122.1 (relating to statutory sexual assault);
- viii. Section 3123 (relating to involuntary deviate sexual intercourse);
- ix. Section 3124.1 (relating to sexual assault);
- x. Section 3125 (relating to aggravated indecent assault);
- xi. Section 3126 (relating to indecent assault);
- xii. Section 3127 (relating to indecent exposure);
- xiii. Section 4302 (relating to incest);
- xiv. Section 4303 (relating to concealing death of child);
- xv. Section 4304 (relating to endangering welfare of children);
- xvi. Section 4305 (relating to dealing in infant children);
- xvii. A felony offense under section 5902(b) (relating to prostitution and related offenses);
- xviii. Section 5903(c) or (d) (relating to obscene and other sexual materials and performances);
- xix. Section 6301 (relating to corruption of minors);
- xx. Section 6312 (relating to sexual abuse of children); or
- xxi. The attempt, solicitation or conspiracy to commit any of the foregoing criminal offenses.

B. I have never been convicted of a criminal offense similar in nature to the criminal offenses listed in A. above under the laws or former laws of the United States or one of its territories or possessions, another state, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or a foreign nation, or under a former law of Pennsylvania.

C. I have not been convicted of a felony offense under the Pennsylvania Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act, 35 P.S. Section 780-101 et seq., during the entirety of the five-year period immediately preceding today's date.

[Sign here in the presence of a notary public]

[Print full name here]

Sworn to and subscribed before me this ____ day of _____, 201__.

Notary Public



First Presbyterian Church of Allentown
3231 W. Tilghman Street
Allentown, PA 18104
610-395-3781

APPLICATION for VOLUNTEERS
(Please print and return to FPCA)

General Information – Please Print

Name _____
Date _____
Phone (home or cell) _____ (work) _____
Home Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Email _____
Social Security Number _____
Date of Birth _____
How long have you been at this address? _____

List all other names you have been known by

Current Occupation

Employer _____

List three personal references, not former employers, relatives, or FPC Staff who can attest to your character and your experiences with children and youth.

1. Name _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Cell or phone where reference can be reached: _____
Email address: _____

2. Name _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Cell or phone where reference can be reached: _____
Email address: _____

3. Name _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Cell or phone where reference can be reached: _____
Email address: _____

Church History and Prior Work with Children and Youth

1. How long have you been actively involved in this church?

2. Describe your involvement

3. Do you have children involved in church programs for children and/or youth?

_____ currently _____ past _____ no

4. What age/grade children or youth are you interested in working with?

5. What other volunteer work with children/youth have you been involved with?

6. What special skills, interests, or hobbies might you share with children/youth?

Personal Information - In caring for children and youth, we believe it is our responsibility to seek adult volunteers who are able to provide healthy, safe, and nurturing relationships. Please answer the following questions accordingly. Your answer to any of the following will not automatically disqualify you from working with children. Any special concerns can be discussed individually with the pastoral staff.

1. Do you have a current driver's license? _____ yes _____ no

If yes, please provide a photocopy of it.

If no, please provide a photocopy of a current photo ID.

2. Have you ever been in treatment for drug or alcohol abuse? _____ yes _____ no

Are you using illegal drugs? _____ yes _____ no

If yes, please describe briefly, or if you prefer you may discuss it individually with a member of the pastoral staff.

3. Have you ever been convicted of, or pled guilty, to a crime?

_____ yes _____ no

If yes, please describe briefly, or if you prefer you may discuss it individually with a member of the pastoral staff.

4. Have you ever been the victim of a crime? _____ yes _____ no
If yes, please describe briefly, or if you prefer you may discuss it individually with a member of the pastoral staff.

The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. Should any of this information change, I agree to notify FPCA of it within 30 days of when the change occurred.

Signature

Print Name

Print Date

APPENDIX C: MATRIX REVISED 12/15

SAFE SANCTUARIES VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS MATRIX						
Volunteer Type	Adult			Youth		
	Application	Background Check	Training	Application	Background Check	Training
NON-SUNDAY MEETINGS/WORSHIP						
Special Activity Babysitter	X	X	X			
WEEKDAY PRESCHOOL						
Parent Volunteers						
SUNDAY MORNING						
Caregivers/Youth Helpers in Nursery	X	X	X	X		X
Church School Teachers	X	X	X			
Church School Assistants	X	X	X	X		X
Sunday Resource Room Staff	X	X	X			
TWEEN/MIDDLE SCHOOL/HIGH SCHOOL MINISTRY						
Youth Fellowship Advisors	X	X	X			
Confirmation Advisors	X	X	X			
Confirmation Sponsors	X	X	X			
Set-up/Clean-up Staff	X	X	X			
Youth Activity Drivers	X	X	X			
Choir Tour Chaperones	X	X	X			X
Interns	X	X	X			
Youth Aged Leaders (e.g. Middle/High School Sexuality Programs)				X		X
VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL						
Adult Leaders	X	X	X			
Adult Age Level Guides	X	X	X			
Youth Aged Helpers *				X		X
Activity Leaders	X	X	X			
Nursery Helpers	X	X	X			
Kitchen Staff	X	X	X			
SUBSTITUTE POOL						
Youth Activity Drivers	X	X	X			
Retreat Chaperones	X	X	X			
MISSION ACTIVITIES						
# Refugee Tutoring	X	X	X			
Tuesday Night Together (TNT)	X	X	X			
% Day of Service	X	X	X	X		X
* In potential one on one situations, use a cleared adult volunteer.						
% Trained individuals are necessary in activities involving youth aged 0-17. Parents accompanying their own children are exempt.						
<i>All employees of First Presbyterian Church require full screening.</i>						