



Child Protection Policy

First Presbyterian Church
Le Claire, IA

Approved: June 28th, 2022

Contact Information Valid Through:
December 31st, 2022

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AVAILABILITY OF POLICY

**PRINTED COPIES OF THIS POLICY, INCLUDING
SUMMARIES AND UPDATED CONTACT INFORMATION,
SHALL BE AVAILABLE AT ALL TIMES IN THE
FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:**

Fellowship Hall

Narthex

Outside Church Office

By Request from the Church Office

**A DIGITAL COPY SHALL ALSO BE AVAILABLE AT THE
CHURCH WEBSITE**

Jesus clearly affirmed the great importance of children when he took a little child in his arms and said in Mark 9:37, *“Whoever welcomes one of these children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me isn't actually welcoming me but rather the one who sent me.”* And again when he said in Mark 10:14, *“Allow the children to come to me. Don't forbid them, because God's kingdom belongs to people like these children.”*

PURPOSE

We believe God's church should provide sanctuary to all of God's creation, especially the most vulnerable, including our children and youth. We, sadly, know churches and leaders have used their power and influence to commit acts of abuse and protect abusers. These acts have harmed victims in untold and ongoing ways, often without any effort provide protection, healing, or restoration to the victims. They have also driven people away from church and damaging its sanctuary-providing role.

First Presbyterian Church of Le Claire vows to take the necessary and holy steps to prevent that from happening in this congregation and to provide corrective and healing action if such an act does occur.

This policy will work to accomplish that goal by providing the following things:

- Volunteer and staff procedures to ensure the protection of children by removing opportunities for abuse.
- Regulations on mandatory background checks for all adult volunteers and non-clergy employees (and clergy employees when Presbytery of East Iowa policies to not already meet or exceed this policy).
- Clearly defined reporting of allegations with easily accessible and regularly updated contact information for points-of-contact for allegations.
- Transparent response procedures for allegations that protect victims and provide compassionate support for all involved.

Many churches say, “It would never happen here.” We would rather say, “We will do everything we can to ensure it does not happen here.”

DEFINITIONS

ADULT

“Adult” refers to a person at least 19 years of age who is also at least 5 years older than the children and/or youth he or she is working with. They will ordinarily be “Screened Volunteers” as defined below to qualify as one of the two adults under the two-adult rule or in any other function involving the supervision of or working with children or youth.

CHILD ABUSE

“Child Abuse” as used in this policy means abuse of any child or youth to include the following: Physical Abuse, including any physical contact intended to coerce or do harm, any hitting, spanking, or shaking. Emotional/Verbal Abuse, including insults, name calling, belittling remarks, unfavorable comparisons with other children or youth, shaming, deliberately causing fear, or using speech to hurt. Spiritual Abuse, including using Scripture or church authority to coerce, control or shame; using threats about condemnation from God or making threats about God withholding love to control behavior. Sexual Abuse, which is defined as any sexual contact with children or youth, including fondling private parts, oral, genital, or anal penetration, sexual intercourse, rape, suggestive sexual comments, showing pornography (sexually explicit material), exposing sexual organs, allowing children or youth to witness sexual activity.

CHILD and YOUTH

“Child” is defined as any person from birth through completion of the fifth grade. “Youth” is defined as any person from immediately following completion of the fifth grade (usually beginning with the summer following the fifth grade) through completion of the twelfth grade or age 18 which ever comes later. During summer fellowship programs a person who has just completed fifth or twelfth grade is considered a youth. Children and Youth Program Committees “Children and Youth Program Committee(s)” refers to committees that are responsible for programs and/or events utilizing volunteers who work with children and/or youth.

PAID STAFF

“Paid Staff” refers to anyone who is paid by the church, or through a contract employment agency, for specific work (i.e. administrative assistants, custodians, music staff, youth worker staff, Christian educators.).

PASTOR and CLERGY

“Pastor” refers to the pastor, solo pastor, associate pastor, commission lay pastor, student pastor, or other individual who is serving in the capacity of the pastoral leader of the church. “Clergy” refers to any ordained Minister of Word and Sacrament of the Presbyterian Church (USA) or equivalent in other denominations.

SCREENED VOLUNTEERS

“Screened Volunteers” are those who have been screened by the Child Protection Committee and deemed suitable to work with children.

VOLUNTEER(S)

“Volunteer(s)” refers only to volunteers who would be working with children and/or youth and require screening as stipulated in this Child Protection Policy and Procedures. Unless otherwise noted, any use of “Volunteer” without further qualification assumes a “Screened Volunteer.”

SCREENING PROCESSES FOR VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF

PURPOSE:

The act of screening greatly reduces the risk that child abuse will occur and increases the protection we can provide. These policies are designed to reduce risk, not evaluate qualifications of volunteers and or staff; committees responsible for hiring staff shall evaluate candidates for qualification using their own policies and job descriptions.

SCREENING PROCESS FOR VOLUNTEERS

The Child Protection Committee is responsible for screening potential volunteers for suitability for working with children. This screening process shall include the following:

- Providing potential volunteers with the “Application for Volunteering with Children and Youth” (referred to as the “Application”) found on **Page 20**. This application will include:
 - Summary of this policy
 - Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers
 - Volunteer Application, including authorization to perform a background check
 - Optionally, a Vehicle Operator Application, including authorization to perform a driving record check, for those who intend to drive children and/or youth to and from church events.
- A potential volunteer completing the “Application” and all relevant forms and returning them to the church in a sealed envelope marked with “CONFIDENTIAL: CHILD PROTECTION APPLICATION” or similar wording.
- The Child Protection Committee will conduct the screening of volunteers itself and determine if any volunteer would not be suitable to work with children or youth as a result of information gathered through the screening process. The screening will include:
 - the Pastor, Youth Director, or a member of the Child Protection Committee contacting any organization and/or employers where the volunteer has worked with children and/or youth to discern suitability.
 - a criminal background check and check of the appropriate state sex offender registries for every prospective volunteer going back seven (7) years.
 - a review of the applicants driving record as detailed on **Page 22** if relevant.
- All potential volunteers will be reviewed by the Pastor and any relevant program leader. If either knows any reason why any potential volunteer would not be suitable, he or she will communicate to the Child Protection Committee that the volunteer should not be considered. If the reason for this judgment is felt to be a confidential matter, the reason does not need be disclosed to the Child Protection Committee.
- The Child Protection Committee will provide the Pastor with a list of any volunteers who are deemed not suitable for working with children and/or youth and the reasons for this conclusion. The Pastor and the chair of the Child Protection Committee will privately discuss this conclusion with the individual. This interview will give the individual an

opportunity to provide additional information he or she feels would mitigate the decision of the Child Protection Committee. If appropriate, the Pastor may suggest that the individual volunteer for a different position for which he or she is qualified and/or withdraw his or her application to work with children and/or youth. The Pastor may disclose the names of individuals who have been rejected to the chairperson of the appropriate children and youth program committee(s) (usually the one recruiting the individual). In most cases this disclosure would be made so that the committee does not ask the individual to volunteer for a position working with children and/or youth in the future or as a substitute.

- The Child Protection Committee will maintain a written record of all volunteers who are not selected as volunteers due to the screening results. This list will be maintained in a locked file on the church premises and will be available only to the Child Protection Committee. The list will not be circulated to any other individuals or committees except as designated by this policy.
- In addition, the Child Protection Committee will keep on file all completed paperwork used in the screening process. Records will be retained indefinitely, since minors typically may bring charges years after the alleged incident took place. These files can be scanned into computer records.

SCREENING PROCESS FOR PAID STAFF

The Child Protection Committee is responsible for screening paid staff as it relates to this policy and suitability for working with children.

- The process applies to all employees, not just those who will be working directly with children and/or youth as part of their duties.
- The screening process, as it applies to this policy, will equal the screening for volunteers.
- The Child Protection Committee will complete their screening after a potential application has been selected for employment but before the applicant is notified.
- If a chosen applicant is deemed unsuitable by the Child Protection Committee, the Head of Staff or relevant Committee Chair will notify the applicant of the reason.
 - If the applicant is a member or active participant of the congregation, both persons shall notify the applicant in-person.
- Other matters related to suitability for employment do not fall under the purview of this policy or the Child Protection Committee.
- Exception to this policy may be made for contract employees without direct contact with children but every effort should be made to complete this screening process.

SCREENING PROCESS FOR CLERGY STAFF

The Child Protection Committee shall be responsible for verifying that the screening process for clergy set forth by the Presbytery of East Iowa meets or exceeds this policy's screening process. If that process falls below this policy, the Pastor Nominating Committee (or Session in the instance of an Intentional Interim or Designated Pastor) shall serve as the Child Protection Committee as it

relates to screening potential clergy employees after being notified by the standing Child Protection Committee and shall following the screen process for Staff defined above.

QUALIFICATIONS AND SCREENING FOR DRIVERS

Any paid staff or volunteer who provides automobile transportation as a part of an event or program sponsored by the church must:

- be an adult as defined above and a “Screened Volunteer.”
- have completed the “Vehicle Operators Application” on **Page 22**.
- have a valid driver’s license.
- have automobile liability insurance.
- have a satisfactory driving record as verified by a review by the church of a Motor Vehicle Records.

Failure to pass this screen should not have influence over the screening for suitability for working with children and/or youth.

LEAD TIME FOR NEW VOLUNTEERS

The Child Protection Committee shall be given the application for any volunteer well in advance of them needing to begin volunteering, preferably at least 14 days. Volunteers shall not act as “Screened Volunteers” until the screening process has been completed.

UPDATING RECORDS

Records of staff and “Screened Volunteers” will be updated annually, checking for changes in address, phone number, employer, and other relevant information. Background checks should be completed regularly on all staff and “Screened Volunteers.”

NO “GRANDFATHER RULE”

No person shall be exempted from this screen process, or any other part of this Child Protection Policy in general, even if they had previously performed a role defined without following this policy.

SUPERVISION RULES

TWO-ADULT RULE:

A minimum of two adults (as defined by this policy) must be present at all activities involving children and/or youth, and one of these adults must be a “Screened Volunteer.” This rule applies to any church function no matter if the event happens on church grounds or at a different location. Any time a group of children and/or youth is separated by “line-of-sight” from other adults, they must have two adults with them.

When the event happens in full view of the public (e.g., a swimming outing or meal at a restaurant), an exception to the “Two-Adult Rule” may be made. When this exception is made, at no point should the adult nor the children and/or youth leave the public area. If the group will leave the full view of the public, the “Two-Adult Rule” must be followed.

When transporting children and/or youth to an event, it may be impractical to follow the “Two-Adult Rule.” If that is necessary, there shall never be less than two children and/or youth with an adult, and at least two children and/or youth must be unrelated to the adult.

Overnight events require special consideration. If male and female children and/or youth will both be present, two male adults and two female adults must be present; if only male or female children or youth are present, two same-gender adults must be present. This policy is intended to protect children and/or youth from abuse and provide proper supervision. Any questions about specific children and/or youth and gender guidelines at specific events may be addressed to the Youth Direct or Pastor.

Private conversations or counseling of a child and/or youth may be necessary and make following the “Two-Adult Rule” impossible. In those instances, this private meeting must happen either with an open door or behind a door with a window. There must also always be an adult within line-of-sight of this private meeting, and this should only happen when absolutely necessary.

Exceptions not defined above may only be made in the event of emergency circumstances where following this policy will provide an impairment to providing for the safety of the children and/or youth involved. Even in an emergency, at no time shall any adult be alone with any singular child or youth, and every reasonable effort should be made to maintain the “Two-Adult Rule.”

ACCOMPANYING A CHILD TO THE RESTROOM

Adults who accompany a child to the restroom should position themselves such that the child has a sense of privacy but where the adults are able to recognize if the child requires assistance. If assistance is needed, the stall door must stay open to remain visible for supervision. In most cases the adults will be the same gender as the child, although this may not always be practical. It is advisable to take more than one child to the rest room at a time.

PHYSICAL FORCE

Physical force, including corporal punishment, shall never be used on a child or youth unless necessary to provide for urgent physical safety. Exceptions to this rule must be made only the most serious situations when any other form of intervention will not provide immediate enough resolution to the situation to provide for the safety of all involved.

OCCASIONAL VOLUNTEERS:

Often it will be necessary for a volunteer who has not completed the screening process to act as one of the two adults in the “Two-Adult Rule.” To provide maximum safety for the youth, only one of the two adults may be an occasional volunteer; the other shall be a screened volunteer. Occasional Volunteers are always welcome when two screen volunteers are present. Occasional volunteers should submit an “Application” if they find themselves volunteering regularly.

YOUNGER HELPERS

There may be times where having supervised younger helpers (under age 19) to aid can be advantageous both to the congregation and the helper. These helps shall be under the supervision of two adults, at least one of which is a screened volunteer, and ordinarily be 5 or more years older than the children and/or youth they are working with.

TRANSPORTATION RULES

PERMISSION TO RIDE

Written permission must be given by the parent or legal guardian for his or her child or youth to ride in any vehicle provided for transportation to any event sponsored by the church. Such permission may be included in approval given by the parent or legal guardian for the child or youth to participate in the event itself.

ADULTS PROVIDING TRANSPORTATION

Any adult providing transportation must have previously been screened according to the regulation above. Of special note, any driver must have liability insurance any time they provide transportation for children and/or youth to and/or from an event.

VEHICLE(S) USED FOR TRANSPORTATION

The personal vehicle(s) used must also be in good working order and be appropriately registered and licensed in the state of residence of the owner. Each vehicle can only carry the number of occupants as number of seatbelts in the vehicle.

MANDATORY SEAT BELTS

Seat belts must be properly worn by all occupants any time the vehicle is in operation. Where legally required, child safety and booster seats must be used. Accommodations for health and disability must be made where required.

TRANSPORTATION ROUTE

If two or more vehicles are transporting children starting and ending at the same location, they must follow the same route.

REPORTING ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AND RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS

REPORTING OF ALLEGATIONS

PRELIMINARY STEPS

The person reporting an incident of abuse on church property or in conjunction with a church sponsored program or event (normally an eyewitness, or the first adult informed of the abuse, usually by the alleged victim, or the victim's parents) should first:

- Secure the safety of the victim. This may include an immediate call to emergency services as deemed necessary.
- Secure the safety of others and stabilize the environment in which the incident occurred.
 - The area should not be left unsupervised by an adult in order to report the incident. The reporting adult may have to employ the help of another adult to inform the appropriate pastor or volunteer of the incident.

REPORTING OF ALLEGATIONS

The reporting adult should report the incident to the staff or volunteer person in charge of the event or program where the incident took place. The person in charge of the event should inform the pastor and the Child Protection Committee. In the event the report involves the actions of the pastor, the Child Protection Committee alone should be informed.

The reporting adult should complete an "Allegation of Abuse Report" form found on **Page 25**. If the reporting adult does not complete a form, the Child Protection Committee must complete a form to the best of their ability.

Even if church does not have a legal obligation to report incidents of abuse to civil authorities, we believe we have a moral obligation to voluntarily submit reports. The Book of Order instructs all officers and employees of the church to act as Mandatory Reports in instances of abuse, and releases Ministers of Word and Sacrament from confidences when legally allowed and the Minister of Word and Sacrament believes a present danger exists for victims (G-4.0302).

If the Child Protection Committee makes a report to civil authorities or believes the report to even possibly be substantive, it must report it to the Ministers and Congregations Committee (MCC) of the Presbytery of East Iowa. An addendum page with up-to-date contact information will be attached to printed and digital copies of this policy and provided to the Child Protection Committee.

RESPONSE TO ALLEGATIONS

INITIAL RESPONSE TO REPORTS AND ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

Who makes the initial response to any allegation of abuse will depend on who the allegation names:

- If the accused is a staff member, the initial response should be made by the Pastor/Head of Staff in conjunction with the Child Protection Committee.
- If the accused is the Pastor, the initial response should be made by the Child Protection Committee, and communication with the MCC should be made as quickly as possible.
- If the accused is not employed by the congregation, the response should be made by the pastor or other relevant staff leader in conjunction with the Child Protection Committee.

The initial response should not presume knowledge of anything but instead work to protect potential victims, provide the best opportunity for truth to be made known, and provide respect for all involved. This initial response shall:

- Gather pertinent information from the victim, accused, and witnesses as quickly as possible.
- Preserve any evidence.
- Relieve any accused person of all church duties. If the accused is a staff person or pastor, they shall be placed on Administrative Leave with Pay.
- Inform the Pastor if not already informed.
- Inform the parents or legal guardians of the victim and/or accused if either is a minor.

FURTHER RESPONSE

Continued response to an allegation is primarily the response of the Child Protection Committee with the Pastor. If a reason exists for the Pastor not being the most appropriate person to provide a response to the victim and/or accused for reasons not related to the allegation (e.g., gender identity), the Pastor may delegate a staff member to act in his or her place.

It is anticipated that the Pastor (or designee), one or more members of the Child Protection Committee, and one or more members of the committee designated by the Stated Clerk if such a committee is formed for the purpose, will work closely together on the further investigation of the allegation or incident to ensure all aspects are covered completely, accurately, and with fairness and compassion shown to all parties. An appropriate response will:

- provide pastoral care to the victim(s) and family(ies), if appropriate.
- provide pastoral care to the accused and family, if appropriate.
- seek legal advice and counsel when appropriate.
- avoid prejudging a situation.
- provide due process to accused and treat them with dignity.
- continue the investigation to conclusion with recommendations to the session for action.
- cooperate with any investigations being conducted by law enforcement and/or the Iowa Department of Human Services.
- document results of the investigation and file as confidential.

- If law enforcement authorities or the Iowa Department of Human Services have been notified and are, or will be, investigating the allegations, initial collection of information should be completed but an additional complete investigation may not be completed.
- inform appropriate individuals of results of the investigation and action taken. Such individuals may be the victim, accused and parents.
- inform the church's insurance agent of the incident or allegation, investigation progress, conclusions and actions taken, if any.

Any investigation should use the "Allegation Investigation Form" on **Page 27**.

RESPONDING TO MEDIA

All media response will go through a singular person. Ordinarily this person will be the Pastor, but the occasion may arise that the Pastor is not the appropriate person to speak to the media; in this instance, a person designated by the Child Protection Committee will communicate with the media. A base media response can be found on **Page 31**.

TRAINING FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING

The Child Protection Committee will coordinate with Christian Education Committee, Youth Director, and Pastor ensure effective training for staff and volunteers is conducted on proper procedures for reporting an incident, or alleged incident, of abuse and responding to such a report. All staff, the pastor, and all screened volunteers should be provided this policy and trained on making a report of an allegation.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR ADMINISTRATION OF THE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

SUMMARY OF RESPONSIBILITIES

The Session is responsible for the administration of all aspects of the Child Protection Policy and its procedures, including screening of applicants, the training and education required by the policy, reporting of allegations or incidents of abuse, and responding to such reports. When practical, all or part of these responsibilities may and will be delegated, including the authority to discern a volunteer or staff person's suitability to work with children, to the Child Protection Committee.

COMPOSITION OF CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE

The Child Protection Committee is composed of three to five individuals selected to represent a cross section of the congregation and appointed by the session. The members must be members of the congregational and may or may not currently be serving on session. Members are appointed annually and may be reappointed each year to an unlimited number of terms. This allows members of the Child Protection Committee to build up substantial experience and expertise in the content of the volunteer jobs, the provisions of the Child Protection Policy and Procedures and the screening process. The Pastor shall serve as an ex-officio member of the Child Protection Committee. In the event that an allegation is made against the Pastor, his or her "ex officio" status will be removed and he or she will be barred from committee proceedings.

MAINTENANCE AND CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS

All information related to volunteers and staff under the purview of this policy ("Applications," information from references and previous organizations and/or employers, and information related to investigations of an allegation of abuse) shall be only accessible on a need-to-know basis. Only members of the Child Protection Committee, the Pastor, and the Custodian of Records shall ever have access to these records, and only to perform functions related to this administration of this policy. Any information gained from these records shall be kept in the strictest of confidence.

The Custodian of Records shall be a member of the Child Protection Committee

First Presbyterian Church — Le Claire, IA

Child Protection Policy Summary

Jesus clearly affirmed the great importance of children when he took a little child in his arms and said in Mark 9:37, *“Whoever welcomes one of these children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me isn't actually welcoming me but rather the one who sent me.”* And again when he said in Mark 10:14, *“Allow the children to come to me. Don't forbid them, because God's kingdom belongs to people like these children.”*

THE SCREENING PROCESS

All those who volunteer to work with children and/or youth must complete the Volunteer Application and give permission to the Child Protection Committee to do a background check. The background check will include a check of the appropriate state sex offender registries. The screening process is the responsibility of the Child Protection Committee.

As part of the screening process, any volunteer who provides automobile transportation as part of an event must be an adult and must have completed the Volunteer and Vehicle Operator Application. Drivers must have a valid driver's license and automobile liability insurance.

Drivers need not follow the Two-Adult-Rule (see below) if there are always at least two children in the car and the car is proceeding either directly to a church event or directly back to the church from an event. All occupants of the vehicle must wear a seatbelt.

TWO-ADULT RULE

A minimum of two adults must be present to supervise each church activity involving children and/or youth. It is the intent of this policy that an event will be cancelled if it is known prior to an event that two adults will not be present to supervise. An exception will be made if the illness of a child or teacher occurs during an event and makes following the Two-Adult-Rule impossible.

Exceptions will also be made during pastoral counseling and/or individual music lessons. During these sessions, either the room door must be kept open or a glass panel in the door must allow the pastor or staff member to be visible at all times.

SIX-MONTH RULE

Volunteers must be members or actively affiliated with the church for at least six months before being permitted to work with children and/or youth.

YOUNGER HELPERS

Children and youth are permitted to help with children/or youth activities, but the Two-Adult-Rule still applies. Children and youth do not have to go through the same clearance procedure as adults.

REPORTING ABUSE

All volunteers are to report any incident of apparent or suspected child abuse that they observe to the Associate Pastor in charge of the event or program where the incident took place, or to the Pastor or Head of Staff. When an investigation of an incident confirms that the incident is consistent with requirements for mandatory reporting, the church will make such a report. This will normally be to the local police department and/or the Iowa Department of Human Services.

FURTHER QUESTIONS ABOUT CHILD PROTECTION

The forgoing is a summary. The complete Child Protection Policy is available to anyone who requests a copy. Questions about the Child Protection Policy should be directed to the Child Protection Committee.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR VOLUNTEERS AND PAID STAFF**Working with Children or Youth**

I consider this a vow before God, and a covenant between me and (fill in the name of the church) the children and youth with whom I will be working, and their families.

- While working with children and youth, I will conduct myself as a Christian called to service in God’s Kingdom.
- I understand that I have been entrusted with the safety and welfare of all children and youth assigned to me. At all times, I will guard their physical safety and mental, emotional, and bodily health.
- I understand that I have been entrusted with the spiritual health of all the children and youth assigned to me.
- I will take care of my own physical and spiritual health.
- I understand that I must be careful of questionable or “suggestive” situations. I will abide by the two-adult rule. If a child or youth requests time alone with me, I will inform the other adult supervisor and will meet with the child or youth in sight of others, but not necessarily where others can hear us.
- I will never touch a child or youth in anger.
- I will use appropriate signs of affection and Christian caring. I will respect the feelings of those who do not enjoy even the slightest casual touch.
- I will guard my language. I will not swear or use inappropriate language in the presence of children and youth.
- I will set a good example by respecting the property of the church, any off-site location of a church event, and of others and will be a good steward of God’s earth.
- I will immediately report any behavior toward a child or youth that seems to be abusive or otherwise inappropriate.

I have read and understand the above Code of Conduct and agree to abide by its provisions.

Signature

Date

**APPLICATION FOR VOLUNTEERING OR WORKING
WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

Application must be completed before volunteering with children and youth.

Name: _____
(Include Maiden Name if change within the last 7 years)

Address: _____
Street City State Zip

Contact Info:

Cell Phone: _____

Daytime Phone: _____

Evening Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

When did you begin attending (MM/YY): _____

References:

Please provide contact information on places you have worked with children and/or youth as an employee or volunteer:

Organization: _____ **Contact Person:** _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ **Email Address:** _____

Organization: _____ **Contact Person:** _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ **Email Address:** _____

Organization: _____ **Contact Person:** _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ **Email Address:** _____

Organization: _____ **Contact Person:** _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ **Email Address:** _____

Have you ever been convicted of, or pleaded guilty or no contest to, a crime, including but not limited to, an offense against a person such as child abuse, substance abuse, related charges other crimes of violence, or theft? **YES NO**

If **YES**, please explain: _____

Note: If you have been a victim of physical or sexual abuse or molestation, and you feel this experience could affect your ability to work with children or youth, you are encouraged to confidentially discuss your interest in volunteering with a pastor before accepting this assignment.

I authorize the church to thoroughly investigate my experience in working with children and/or youth either as a staff member or volunteer and any other matters related to my suitability for working with children and/or youth. I further authorize former institutions, organizations or individuals where I worked as a staff member or volunteer to disclose to the church all information they may have concerning my suitability to work with children and/or youth. In addition, I hereby release the church, my former employers, and all other organizations and persons from any and all claims, demands, or liabilities arising out of, or in any way related to, such disclosure.

I give First Presbyterian Church of Le Claire, IA permission to conduct a background check on me. Upon my acceptance as a volunteer working with children and/or youth, I agree to be bound by the provisions of the Child Protection Policy of this church. I further state that I have carefully read the foregoing release and know and understand its contents. I sign this release of my own free will, and I understand that it is a legally binding agreement.

Signature

Date

VEHICLE OPERATOR APPLICATION

Application must be completed before driving children or youth.

Do you have a valid driver’s license? **YES NO**

Has your license been suspended or revoked in the last 10 years? **YES NO**

Have you ever been convicted of, or pleaded guilty to, or no contest to operating a motor vehicle under the influence of drugs or alcohol or moving violations or at-fault traffic accidents in the last 10 years? **YES NO**

If **YES**, please describe and provide date(s): _____

Do you carry automobile insurance that would cover you when driving youth or children to church-sponsored events? **YES NO**

Do you have any physical or mental disability or other limitation that would hinder your ability to safely operate a motor vehicle? **YES NO**

If **YES**, please explain: _____

All passengers in any vehicle operated by me shall wear seat belts while the vehicle is moving, and I will not allow more passengers to ride in the vehicle than the capacity specified by the vehicle’s manufacturer.

I hereby authorize the church to run a Motor Vehicle Records check on me. I also authorize the organization responsible for maintaining such records to release them to the church.

Signature _____
Date

REFERENCE CHECK DOCUMENTATION

Children and Youth Volunteer or Staff

Applicant Name: _____

Reference Name: _____

Date of Contact: _____

Method of Contact (Circle 1): **PHONE** **EMAIL** **OTHER (_____)**

Reference Contact Information: _____

Reference Type (Circle 1): **FORMER EMPLOYER** **FORMER VOLUNTEER**
 PERSONAL **OTHER (_____)**

How long have you known the applicant? Under what circumstances? _____

What is your knowledge of this person's work with children/youth? _____

How would you describe this person's manner of interacting with children/ youth? _____

Based on your observation, is this person reliable and dependable? Please expand on your response.

Would you feel comfortable with this person being alone with a small group of children/ youth for a period of time? Why or why not? _____

Do you have any concerns we should know about regarding this person's ability to work with children/youth? _____

Were you ever made aware of circumstances in which this person's care of children/youth was called into question or criticized? If yes, please describe the circumstances. _____

Were you ever made aware of any criminal or civil investigations or actions taken against this person? If yes, please describe the circumstances. _____

Do you recommend this person to work with children/youth? Why or why not? _____

Is this person eligible to work with your organization's children again in the future? If no, why not?

Additional notes or comments: _____

Reference Checker's Signature: _____

Reference Checker's Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

ALLEGATION OF ABUSE REPORT

Name of Person(s) Filing Report: _____

Alleged Victim(s) Name(s) and Age(s): _____

Alleged Perpetrator(s): _____

Event/Activity: _____

Witness(es): _____

Date, Time, and Location of Incident: _____

Describe the alleged victim's demeanor and appearance: _____

What actions did you take, if any: _____

Has the incident been resolved: **YES NO** Explain any resolution: _____

What persons or organizations have been informed of this alleged incident: _____

Please Describe the Incident: _____

Do you choose to remain anonymous except to those authorized to investigate this incident?

YES NO

Have you or do you intend to report this incident to law enforcement authorities?

YES NO

The above information is freely provided and true to the best of my knowledge.

Signature

Date

Person(s) Receiving this Report

Date

ALLEGATION OF ABUSE INVESTIGATION FORM

This form is to be used by the Pastor, or designee, and the Child Protection Committee to guide the investigation into the facts of the allegations of abuse of a child or youth and to document the findings. If law enforcement authorities or the Iowa Department of Human Services have been notified and are or will be investigating the allegation, some of the steps below may not be necessary or appropriate for the church to take.

Name of Child or Youth: _____ Age: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Person Reporting: _____ Relationship to Child or Youth: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Title/Position: _____

Alleged Perpetrator: _____ Relationship to Child or Youth: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Title/Position: _____

What Law Enforcement or Social Services Authorities have been notified: _____

Date of Notification: _____

What other organizations have been notified: _____

Date of Notification: _____

Has any professional examined the child or youth because of the incident? **YES** **NO**

If yes, provide details of who, when, where, and treatment, if any: _____

Suggestions of relevant information to obtain from the alleged victim, alleged perpetrator, reporter, witnesses, parents and others who may have pertinent information:

- Description of the abusive event.
- Date, time and location of the abuse.
- List of witnesses and observations of each.
- Is this the first time that an incident like this has occurred to the victim?
- Is this the first time such an allegation has been made against the perpetrator?

Record information obtained on the following pages. Use extra pages as necessary.

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR
NOTIFICATION AND REPORTING OF ALLEGATIONS

IF A CHILD IS IN EMMINENT DANGER,
CALL 911!!!

Department of Human Services:

Phone Number for Oral Report: (800) 362-2178

Email for Written Report: csiu@dhs.state.ia.us

Fax Number for Written Report: (515) 564-4011

Ministers and Congregations Commission Moderator:

Name: Kristine Ward

Phone: (563) 370-1564

Email: kristinew@me.com

BASIC MEDIA STATEMENT

The following is a sample of an initial statement to be made by the church's representative immediately following an incident or allegation of abuse to a child or youth:

We are aware of the alleged incident of abuse involving a child (or youth) of First Presbyterian Church in Le Claire. The appropriate authorities have been contacted and are investigating the allegation. The church has a Child Protection Policy in place to screen all people working with children and youth in our programming. Pastoral care is being extended to those in need. For the protection of all involved, I cannot disclose any further information at this time. Thank you.