

COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

CHILD/YOUTH/VULNERABLE ADULT PROTECTION POLICY AND ITS PROCEDURES POLICY APPLICATION STATEMENT

It is the policy of Community Presbyterian Church that all church members, church officers, nonmember employees and/or contractors, and volunteers, are to maintain the strongest sense of integrity, safety, nurturing, and care involving all interactions with children, youth, and vulnerable adults.

This Policy applies to all Community Presbyterian Church sponsored activities that involve children, youth, vulnerable adults.

DISTRIBUTION

Copies of this Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and its Procedures (“Policy”) shall be made available to all members of Community Presbyterian Church upon their request.

POLICY RATIONALE

The implementation and documentation of a Child/Youth/Vulnerable Protection Policy strives to reduce the risk of abuse and neglect for the following reasons:

- Children, youth, and vulnerable adults are a gift from God and the Church has a divine mandate to provide for their safety and nurturing. The Church is called to be a place that reflects the open arms of Jesus. In Matthew 19:14, Jesus says, “Let the little children come to me.” The Church is to be, at all levels of council and in all entities, a place of safety and nurture reflective of the arms of Christ.
- Any type of abuse involving children, youth, or vulnerable adults has lasting and devastating effects on the life of the victim/survivor. It is the call of the Church to be a life-giving entity of Christ’s healing and hope for community and individuals, not an entity that brings harm and hurt.

- The larger Church suffers with the victim/survivor and his or her family when abuse and neglect occurs. The Church is unable to do the full work of Christ, due to the hurt, pain, and distrust that accompanies abuse. Not only does the Church lose its credibility at all levels, it also suffers considerable financial loss and loss of integrity. More importantly, in instances of child, youth, or vulnerable adult abuse within the Church, there is immeasurable spiritual, psychological, emotional, and physical harm perpetrated that woefully hinders God's call on the Church.
- The Book of Order states, "The congregation as a whole, on behalf of the Church universal, assumes responsibility for nurturing the baptized person in the Christian life," and Presbyterians believe this baptismal commitment to be a serious one, understanding it to apply to all in the church's care, including children, youth, and vulnerable adults who are both baptized and non-baptized. (Book of Order W-2.3013).
- Children, youth, and vulnerable adults are not only persons of care and service in the church, but they are also co-recipients of the graces and love of God. Jesus exemplified this in the Gospel of Mark 10:15–16 when he urged his followers to receive the kingdom of God as a little child. And he specifically takes up the children into his arms and blesses them. So also the Church, as the body of Christ, is to be the presence of Christ's love, in the same way taking up all children, youth, and vulnerable adults into its arms and blessing them; providing for them a safe, thriving, and nurturing environments in which to grow in every way.

PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW WHEN PROVIDING CARE FOR MINORS

When any employee or volunteer of Community Presbyterian Church provides care and supervision for Minors at one of its meetings, events or conferences, the following procedures shall be utilized.

DEFINITIONS;

The following is a comprehensive list of definitions of terms and their intended use in this particular Policy. For the purpose of this Policy:

Child: A child is defined as a person between the ages of 0–11.

Youth: A youth is will be defined as a person between the ages of 12–17.

Minor: A minor is defined as any Child or Youth 0–17 years-old.

Child/Youth Worker: Any person, volunteer, paid staff or contractor who participates at any level at any Community Presbyterian Church sponsored events or activities involving Children and/or Youth. This includes chaperones who accompany Minors to and during meetings, events, and activities covered by this Policy.

Vulnerable Adult: Any person eighteen-years-old or older without the developmental or cognitive capacity to consent.

Vulnerable Adult Abuse: Any act or failure to act that results in physical abuse, neglect, and/or sexual molestation or abuse, sexual, psychological, or emotional mistreatment or exploitation of a Vulnerable Adult.

Child/Youth Abuse: Any act or failure to act that results in physical abuse, neglect, and or sexual molestation or abuse, sexual, psychological, or emotional mistreatment, or exploitation of a Child or Youth.

Sexual Abuse: In the Book of Order, sexual abuse is defined as, “Sexual abuse of another person is any offense involving sexual conduct in relation to (1) any person under the age of eighteen years or anyone over the age of eighteen years without the mental capacity to consent; or (2) any person when the conduct includes force, threat, coercion, intimidation, or misuse of ordered ministry or position” (Book of Order, D-10.0401c).

Misuse of Technology: The use of technology that results in Vulnerable Adult Abuse, Child/Youth Abuse, or in the harassing or abusing of a Child/Youth.

Safe Child Response Team: The Safe Child Response Team is a team comprised of a minimum of at least three members of or appointed by the Session of Community Presbyterian Church who are specifically trained to respond to allegations and reports of Child, Youth, or Vulnerable Adult Abuse.

Sexual Misconduct: As that as defined in the Sexual Misconduct Policy and its Procedures (219th General Assembly (2010)) and revised by the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (2013).

Sexual Misconduct is the comprehensive term used in this Policy to include:

Child sexual abuse; including, but is not limited to, any contact or interaction between a child and an adult when the child is being used for the sexual stimulation of the adult person or of a third person. The behavior may or may not involve touching. Sexual behavior between a child and an adult is always considered forced whether or not consented to by the child. In the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the sexual abuse definition of a child is anyone under age eighteen.

Sexual abuse as defined in the Book of Order: “Sexual abuse of another person is any offense involving sexual conduct in relation to (1) any person under the age of eighteen years or anyone over the age of eighteen years without the mental capacity to consent; or (2) any person when the conduct includes force, threat, coercion, intimidation, or misuse of ordered ministry or position” (Book of Order, D-10.0401c).

Sexual harassment: defined for this Policy is as follows: unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors,

and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- a. submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, or their continued status in an institution;
- b. submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such an individual;
- c. such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment; or
- d. an individual is subjected to unwelcome sexual jokes, unwelcome or inappropriate touching, or display of sexual visuals that insult, degrade, and/or sexually exploit men, women, or children.

Rape or sexual contact by force, threat, or intimidation.

Sexual conduct: offensive, obsessive or suggestive language or behavior, unacceptable visual contact, unwelcome touching or fondling that is injurious to the physical or emotional health of another.

Sexual Malfeasance: is defined by the broken trust resulting from sexual activities within a professional ministerial relationship that results in misuse of office or position arising from the professional ministerial relationship.

Misuse of technology: use of technology that results in sexually harassing or abusing another person, including texting or emailing suggestive messages and images to persons with whom one has a ministerial relationship. It is never appropriate to view pornography on church property. When this includes a person under the age of eighteen, it is considered child abuse.

There is never an expectation of personal privacy when using technological equipment owned by a church or church entity or within the context of ministry.

SCREENING, TRAINING, AND BACKGROUND CHECKS

A Child/Youth Worker, whether as a paid staff, contractor, or volunteer basis, shall be subject to:

1. Community Presbyterian Church's receipt of a completed, background check and a signed form verifying the event policy has been read.
2. There must be at least one Child/Youth Workers who is at least eighteen years-old and four years older than the oldest Youth whom they are serving present.
4. All Child/Youth Workers, paid, contracted, or volunteer, must participate in training sometime within one month prior working with children, youth or a vulnerable adult. The training shall cover the event Child/Youth protection policy thoroughly as well as methods of abuse prevention and a detailed plan of reporting. These trainings shall further cover:
 - What constitutes Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Abuse and neglect.
 - How to recognize signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect.
 - State laws concerning definitions of abuse and reporting.
 - Mandatory criminal background checks and the security of those files.
 - Appropriate boundaries with Minors, especially regarding Adult/Child/Youth ratios, transportation, and use of technology.

- If an overnight event is planned, discussions of boundaries involving appropriate sleeping arrangements and restroom/shower facilities use shall be discussed.
 - How to contact the Safety Response Team
5. No person may serve as a Child/Youth Worker who has a conviction on his/her record of certain felonies or misdemeanors, including, but not limited to, any of the following:
- Criminal homicide;
 - Aggravated assault;
 - Crimes related to the possession, use, or sale of drugs or controlled substances;
 - Sexual Abuse;
 - Sexual Assault;
 - Injury to a Youth;
 - Incest;
 - Indecency with a Youth;
 - Inducing sexual conduct or sexual performance of a Youth;
 - Possession or promotion of child pornography;
 - The sale, distribution, or display of harmful material to a Minor;
 - Employment harmful to Youth;
 - Abandonment or endangerment of a Youth;
 - Kidnapping or unlawful restraint;

- Public lewdness or indecent exposure; and/or enticement of a Youth;
- Any crime that involves Sexual Misconduct or Sexual Abuse, particularly if it involves misconduct or abuse with a Minor;
- Any crime that involves Misuse of Technology for sexual purposes, such as collecting or distributing photographs of Minors who are naked or in sexual or inappropriate poses (child pornography);
- Any crime that involves the use of force, such as assault or endangerment;
- Any crime that involves abduction and kidnapping;
- Any crime that involves drinking and driving, such as driving while intoxicated. In addition,

Community Presbyterian Church is aware that a Child/Youth Worker has a prior conviction for one of the aforementioned crimes or a related crime, the Child/Youth Worker shall automatically be ineligible to attend a Child/Youth event in any capacity.

6. No person may act as or be engaged as a Child/Youth Worker if that person has been found guilty of an offense, in local, state or federal court or in an ecclesiastical proceeding, that includes actions that fall under definitions or prohibitions set forth in this Policy.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS

Community Presbyterian Church shall maintain all Child/Youth Worker applications, results of background checks, and related information in confidential, secured files.

REPORTING

Community Presbyterian Church will publicize a procedure for reporting any prohibited actions and have copies available at all times in a public

place at the event. Anyone suspecting or having knowledge of a violation of child abuse may report such violation to any leader of the Community Presbyterian Church.

Any Child or Youth who suspects or has knowledge of any type of Minor abuse is invited to share the knowledge with any adult leader of the Community Presbyterian Church sponsored event, or the Pastor. Anyone who has knowledge or suspicion of Child/Youth abuse should be made aware that state law requires the immediate reporting of such abuse to the civil authorities.

Any adult leader should immediately report such violation the Installed Pastor. Should the Pastor be alleged to have participated in any type of child abuse, the Stated Clerk of Session should be immediately contacted. Any person receiving information under this paragraph shall share that information immediately with the designated response team.

SAFE CHILD RESPONSE TEAM

This team should be comprised of at least three members, staff or appointed, selected and sent by Community Presbyterian Church's Session. The response team will familiarize itself with the terms of this Policy as well as established procedures under the Rules of Discipline, Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for responding to complaint(s) of alleged Child/Youth abuse against any teaching elder, ruling elder, employee, or volunteer in a leadership position(s) with the Community Presbyterian Church.

The Response Team shall have the following responsibilities in response to allegations of Child/Youth or Vulnerable Adult Abuse or neglect incurred against any Child/Youth Worker or event participant:

1. Immediately provide for the safety of the alleged victim(s) involved.
2. If the report alleges abuse or harassment of a Minor, the response team will:
 - a. immediately ensure the allegation is reported to the civil authorities under state law;

- b. immediately notify the parents or guardian of the Minor;
 - c. notify the insurance company of the allegation and that no investigation has yet occurred.
- 2. Make immediate decisions concerning the temporary removal of the individual accused from any contact with Minors pending an investigation and/or removal of the accused from the event until a resolution of the allegations has occurred.
- 3. Notify Community Presbyterian Session members immediately of the report of alleged abuse/neglect. Any possible media requests will be handled by a designated person or office with advice from an attorney, taking care to safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of all involved.
- 4. Provide victims and their families immediate resources that may aid in the particular spiritual, psychological, or emotional needs and trauma that arise from the devastation of abuse.
- 5. If the report is against the Pastor, the response team shall send a written statement of allegation to the Stated Clerk of the Grand Canyon Presbytery. This written statement of allegation shall trigger the formation of an investigating committee under the Rules of Discipline of the Book of Order: The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Part II.
- 6. If the report is against a ruling elder, the response team will notify the Clerk of Session of membership that an allegation of offense has been received against an elder that triggers the formation of an investigating committee under the Rules of Discipline of the Book of Order: The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Part II.
- 7. If the report is against an employee of Community Presbyterian Church, the response team will notify the person(s) or committee responsible for supervision of the employee,

8. If the report is against a volunteer, or nonmember of the PCUSA, the response team initiate an investigation of the allegations in order to:
 - a. gather any statements of abuse from those making the report, including any information from the Safety Response Team, and any party to the abuse;
 - b. gather any information from the person who was accused of abuse;
 - c. make written determinations and take actions appropriate to resolve the matter including, but not limited to, making recommendations for prevention as well as response.
8. Provide for pastoral counseling for the principal parties involved (accuser(s), possible victim(s), accused, family members).
9. A written summary of any proceedings in such cases will be maintained by the Pastor and Stated Clerk of Session.
10. Any person bringing a report of abuse or assisting in investigating will not be adversely affected in terms and conditions of employment, church membership or affiliation, or otherwise discriminated against or discharged.

EVENT RULES FOR WORKING WITH MINORS AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

Community Presbyterian Church shall ensure that the following measures be in place and actions taken for each event or activity involving Minors and Vulnerable Adults:

1. Child/Youth Workers shall:
 - a. respond to Minors and Vulnerable Adults with respect and consideration and treat all of them equally, regardless of race/ethnicity, color, national origin, gender, age (40 and over), marital status, sexual orientation, gender

identity/expression, creed, protected disability status, citizenship status, genetic information, uniformed service or veteran status or religious affiliation; and

- b. act as a positive role model for Minors and Vulnerable Adults by maintaining an attitude of respect, patience, and maturity.
 - c. maintain appropriate boundaries when in positions of power with Minors or Vulnerable Adults;
 - d. Not give money or gifts to Minors, except within the context of a group gift given to all participants in the celebration of special events or recognitions.
2. Two-adult rule: Two persons, one of whom must be at least 19 years of age and at least four years older than the oldest child, must always be present in groups of Minors or Vulnerable Adults. The only exception is if an emergency situation deems this not immediately possible for both in person and online gatherings.
3. Ratios: The adult to Child ratio for all Child-related events/activities is 2:10 for both in person and online gatherings.
- The adult to Youth ratio for all Youth-related events/activities is 2:17 for both in person and online gatherings.
- There shall also be one adult of each gender when there is one or more Minors of each gender in a group. Only in emergency situations may the ratios and gender diversity be compromised.
4. View Windows and Open Doors: When Minors and adult workers or volunteers are in a room, if the door is closed, the door must have a view window installed. If no view window is installed in the door, the door must remain open at all times.
5. Adult workers/caregivers should respect the privacy of the Minors and Vulnerable Adults to whom they provide care. Responsible use of digital devices and cell phones is required in all situations (ex. Taking age-appropriate photographs and movies, not taking

photographs of Minors who are not fully clothed). Adults and Minors are required at all times to wear appropriate attire.

Workers and volunteers are not permitted to take photographs of Minors or Vulnerable Adults under their care or at the meeting or event and share them in any way, including on the internet, without the written permission of a parent or guardian of the Minor or Vulnerable Adult.

6. Transportation: All adult drivers at Child/Youth events must have proper licensure and insurance on file with the organizing Community Presbyterian Church. All vehicles used must have seat belts for the driver and each passenger.

No Minor under eighty-five pounds may sit in the front seat of any vehicle.

All drivers transporting Minors and Vulnerable Adults must be over the age of twenty-five and must be informed that if their vehicle is used, their insurance would be primary if an accident occurs. If a charter bus is rented, or any outside carrier is contracted, the company hired must ensure criminal background checks on their drivers.

Each vehicle must follow the ratio rules noted in point 2 in this section. Lastly, no minor may be a driver at any event or activity (this includes golf carts at events).

7. Forms: The legal guardians of each Minor must provide the appropriate information and medical forms for each activity/event. The information form should include all contacts for legal guardians and the medical form must include a copy of the Minor's health insurance card.

Further consent forms must be signed by legal guardians for any off-campus events.

Any photos events that are used in social media or published material by Community Presbyterian Church must be released by a signed consent form from a participant's legal guardian. All such

forms must be stored at the event site, in a secure place with restricted access.

8. Each event/activity must ensure that rules are gone over with participants. These rules shall include but are not limited to a code of conduct specific to the event/activity, as well as a list prohibited and expected behaviors for the specific event/activity.
9. Minors and adults must maintain different showering and grooming hours at events in which bathrooms and shower rooms are shared in housing.
10. All volunteers and employees at any Community Presbyterian Church sponsored meetings and events who are responsible to supervise Minors and Vulnerable Adults must also abide by a code of conduct that emphasizes the following prohibited behaviors. Some of these prohibited behaviors include but are not restricted to:
 - a. Display of sexual affection toward a Minor.
 - b. Use of profanity or off-color jokes.
 - c. Discussion of sexual encounters with or around Minors or Vulnerable Adults or in any way involving Minors in personal problems or issues.
 - d. Dating or becoming “romantically” involved with Minors or Vulnerable Adults.
 - e. Using or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs in the presence of Minors and Vulnerable Adults.
 - f. Possessing sexually oriented materials—including printed or online pornography—on church property or property being utilized for a church event.
 - g. Having secrets with Minors or Vulnerable Adults.

- h. Staring at or commenting on the bodies of Minors or Vulnerable Adults.
- i. Engaging in inappropriate or unapproved electronic communication with Minors or Vulnerable Adults.
- j. Working one-on-one with Minors or Vulnerable Adults in a private setting.
- k. Abusing Minors or Vulnerable Adults in anyway, including (but not limited to) the following:
 - Physical abuse: hit, spank, shake, slap, unnecessarily restraint.
 - Verbal abuse: degrade, threaten, or 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 Minors or Vulnerable Adults to engage in the following: hazing, bullying, derogatory name-calling, ridicule, humiliation, or sexual activity.

PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW WHEN AN ENTITY IS PROVIDING CARE FOR MINORS OUTSIDE THE U.S.

There are times when Community Presbyterian Church may offer care for Minors at a meeting, conference or event to be held outside the United States (ex. a regional meeting of World Mission liaisons and/or mission co-workers). Community Presbyterian Church will take all appropriate actions to comply with this Policy to the extent they can be complied with, considering the venue of the meeting, the resources and facilities available, and the laws of the country of the venue. Exceptions should be discussed and addressed with Session prior to the event.

