THE WILMINGTON
UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH

Safe Sanctuary Policy and Procedures Manual

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The Wilmington United Methodist Church

Safe Sanctuary Mission

The Wilmington United Methodist Church is a spiritual community, which takes seriously its responsibility to provide a safe and nurturing environment for children, youth and vulnerable adults who participate in our ministries. In keeping with our covenant relationship with God, we honor our Lord and all who seek Him, by doing justice, loving kindness and walking humbly with Him. (Micah 6:8). All volunteers and employees who are in leadership roles in these ministries are living out the vows we take in baptism to nurture our children and youth in the Christian faith. Every church worker plays a key role in fostering the spiritual development of individuals and families in our church community.

The disturbing and traumatic rise of physical and sexual abuse of children, youth and vulnerable adults has claimed the attention of our nation and society. The following statements reflect the commitment of The Wilmington United Methodist Church to provide a safe environment for all children, youth and vulnerable adults and church workers who participate in church sponsored ministries.

In an effort to provide a safe community, this church requires all church employees and volunteers to commit themselves to the Safe Sanctuary Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults adopted by the Administrative Council of this Church. As members and participants in the programs and undertakings of this household of faith, we pledge to conduct ourselves in a manner consistent with the teachings of Christ and that we will guard our thoughts and tongues, will refrain from any behaviors which corrupt our witness for Christ, and that our actions and choices will reflect prudence, purity of heart, and an earnest love for the will of God. Children and youth are defined as minors that are anyone under the age of 18. A vulnerable adult is an individual, age 18 or over, who, because of age, developmental disability, mental illness, or physical handicap requires supervision or personal care and lacks the personal and social skills required to live independently. Commitment to this policy will require church workers to provide personal information, review the church's Safe Sanctuary policy and understand that they will be
under the supervision of their respective leaders.

Safe Sanctuary Statement of Purpose

Members of the Wilmington United Methodist Church (WUMC) come from a variety of experiences, backgrounds, and needs. WUMC is committed to providing an environment that is as safe as possible for everyone who participates in any WUMC ministry. In addition, WUMC is committed to taking the necessary precautions to protect any person working in a WUMC ministry from false accusations or suspicions.

Members of the Wilmington United Methodist Church recognize the need to have formal, written policies with procedures to help (i) prevent the opportunity for the occurrence and/or appearance of abuse of children and youth and (ii) protect workers, employees, and volunteers from false accusations and/or suspicions. The following policies and procedures are not based on a lack of trust in those adults who provide programs and supervision but instead are intended to protect our preschoolers, children, youth, workers, employees, volunteers, and the entire church body. All adult leaders are required to follow these policies and procedures.

Safe Sanctuary Committee

Each position listed below will be a standing appointment on the Safe Sanctuary Committee:

Clergy/Staff
Director of Religious Education
Trustee Designee
Designee from Staff Parish Relations Committee
Parent Representatives
Youth Ministry Representative
Preschool Board Representative
Professional Volunteer (lawyer, social worker, counselor, law enforcement professional or other member in relevant vocation)

The Committee will meet at least annually to update members on policy or program changes and to verify that the Committee is fulfilling its obligations to the congregation. The Committee may be assembled for emergency purposes at any time, but as soon as practicable, following any reportable incident and as often as necessary to revise procedures, provide instruction/assistance to clergy, staff or volunteers and to keep members of the congregation properly informed of WUMC Safe Sanctuary Program and its ongoing administration. The Committee will also be responsible for coordinating the training for all staff and volunteer workers in these policies and procedures in either verbal or written form (See Section on Volunteer Training).

Hiring, Placement & Training of Compensated Workers & Volunteers

Employees of Wilmington UMC

1. **Prior employment**
2. **References and screening**
3. **Background Check for Criminal Record and Driving Record**
4. **Record Confidentiality**

No applicant that is found to have been involved in any activity, in which the applicant abused, exploited, or neglected children or youth will be approved. Any conviction of a crime against children or youth shall disqualify any applicant. The SPRC reserves the right to also disqualify applicants that have been convicted of other violent offenses or have been convicted of behaviors which indicate that the applicant is ill-suited to work with children or youth (drug related convictions, DUI/DWI convictions within past five years, or other convictions for offenses such as rape, murder, assault, domestic violence, theft, etc...)

Nursery/Children's Ministry Protection Procedures

1. **Working Definitions** For this policy, the following definitions will apply:

Personnel – All volunteers and paid staff who are working with children, as deemed by Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) in their job description (birth to 18 years of age) will fill out the appropriate application, be interviewed, and give written permission for a background check prior to that person assuming the position.

> Volunteers must attend WUMC for 6 months before they are eligible to be a direct contact care provider. However, such individuals may begin the application, training and background check process at any time during that 6-month period.

Screening Committee – The Screening Committee will be composed of the Senior Pastor and 3 others selected by the Senior Pastor from SPRC, Trustees, and Education Committee. They will be responsible for screening all volunteers and paid staff who are working with children (birth to 18 years of age). The members of this committee will be asked to serve for 2 years. The screening committee will meet at least one time each program year.

Outside groups – All organizations who utilize on a recurring basis the church building or other properties owned by the church, but are otherwise organized and supervised outside the structure of the Wilmington United Methodist church.

Abuse means harm or threatened harm to the health and welfare of an adult with special needs, a child, or youth by any person responsible for the health and welfare of an adult with special needs, a child or youth, that occurs through non-accidental physical or mental injury: sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, or mistreatment, sexual harassment, sexual contact, sexual molestation; disseminating, exhibiting, or displaying sexually explicit material.

Adult means any person at least 18 years of age and a recommended 5 years older than the oldest child in the group they are working with (with an exception noted for adults with special needs)

Appropriate means conduct that one would reasonably assume would be acceptable and permissible by a child's parent or guardian.

Protected Persons refers to a child and/or youth under 18 years of age, and vulnerable adults participating in the ministry.

Leader means anyone directly responsible for supervising and overseeing the specific Church related function, event or activity. A person in a "position of trust" with Protected Persons such as any clergy, staff, Sunday school leader or teacher, employee, program director, youth counselor, hall or bathroom monitor and any other person in a leadership position, who is at least eighteen (18) years old, and involved in a Ministry. No person under the age of 18 shall be placed in a position of supervision over protected persons. Younger persons (less than 18) may be utilized as Leader helpers but shall always be under Leader supervision.

Parent or Guardian means any parent, step-parent, foster parent, grandparent or appointed guardian with the general responsibility for the health, education, or welfare of a protected person.

Sexual abuse means engaging in any sexual contact, sexual penetrations, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, of protected persons; or the dissemination, exhibiting, or displaying of sexually explicit material to a protected person, regardless of whether such conduct is with or without the knowledge or consent of the protected person. This abuse

may be violent or nonviolent. It includes any conduct that involves protected persons in sexual behavior for which they are not personally, socially, emotionally or developmentally ready.

Sexual contact means any touching of an erogenous zone of another, including without limitation the thigh, genitals, buttock, pubic region, or, if the person is a female, a breast for the purpose of sexually arousing or gratifying either person.

Sexual exploitation means allowing, permitting or encouraging a protected person to engage in prostitution or in the photographing, filming, creating electronic- or computer-generated images or other forms of depicting a protected person engaged in actual or suggestive sexual conduct.

Sexual harassment means any sexual advance or demand, either verbal or physical, which is perceived by the recipient as demeaning, intimidating or coercive.

**** See Ohio Revised Code, 2907.01 Sex Offenses general definitions (September 2005)**
For more expanded definitions.

Two Adult Rule means that two adults (as defined above), preferably not related to each other, will supervise protected persons at all times.

A **volunteer** is an unpaid individual involved in a ministry, activity, or service at the Wilmington United Methodist Church or on the church's behalf.

II. Nursery Ministry Protection Procedures

These procedures cover the activities in the Nursery Ministry of The Wilmington United Methodist Church. The Nursery ministry age is from birth up to 3 years of age.

A. <u>Drop-off and Pick-up</u>:

1. All parents or guardians leaving children in the nursery ministry shall follow these procedures to assure proper claiming of children.

2. All parents or guardians are to complete a Church School Registration Form for their children that shall be kept on file with the Director of Religious Education. The form will ask for the child's name, parent or guardian name, home address and medical information, which should include allergies and medical conditions.

3. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to indicate to the Nursery Attendants and Director of Religious Education if there are any custody concerns regarding the release of the child, and, if that is the case, the parent will provide a copy of the custody order.

4. All children will wear a nametag for identification.

5. The parent/guardian shall fill out the daily roster with his/her full name, the child's full name, where the parent/custodian will be while the child is in the nursery, also what time he/she will return to pick-up the child.

6. The WUMC nursery ministry will be using a specific Nursery Identification procedure for the drop off and pick up of children.

7. The only person allowed to pick-up a child will be the parent/guardian who dropped off the child unless other arrangements were made when the child was dropped off. In this situation, if the person picking up the child is unknown to the nursery ministry workers, he/she will need to show a pictured identification to the workers along with the ID tag received during check-in.

B. Restrictions:

1. Only trained, assigned workers/volunteers will be allowed in the nursery areas. No other individuals will be allowed in these areas without an identified need and the approval of the Nursery Attendants.

2. No worker/volunteer may take a protected person to an unsupervised area without permission from the parent/guardian.

C. Providing Adequate Personnel:

1. **On-site** programs that involve Nursery and Elementary age children will include supervisory personal according to the following ratios:

Children Infant through 2 Years of age

2: max of 8
3: max of 12
4: max of 16, etc.

Children Pre-School Age 3-5yrs

2: max of 16
3: max of 24
4: max of 32, etc.

Children Kindergarten – 5th Grade

2: max of 24
3: max of 36
4: max of 48, etc.

2. **Off-site** programs that involve Elementary age children will include supervisory personal according to the following ratios:

Children Pre-School Age 3-Kindergarten

2: max of 10
3: max of 15
4: max of 20, etc.

Children 1st – 5th Grade

2: max of 16
3: max of 24
4: max of 32, etc.

II. Children's Ministry Protective Procedures

These procedures cover the activities in the Children's Ministry of The Wilmington United Methodist Church. The Children's ministry age includes all children ages 4 years of age through 4th Grade.

A. Drop-off and Pick-up:

1. All parents or guardians leaving children in Children's ministry programming shall follow these procedures to assure proper claiming of children.

2. All parents or guardians are to complete a Church School Registration Form for their children that shall be kept on file with the Director of Religious Education. The form will ask for the child's name, parent or guardian name, home address and medical information, which should include allergies and medical conditions.

3. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to indicate to the Children's Ministry Leaders and Director of Religious Education if there are any custody concerns regarding the release of the child, and, if that is the case, the parent will provide a copy of the custody order.

4. All children will wear a nametag for identification.

5. Every registered child will sign in to a daily activities roster while participating in any on-site activity. Parents will be asked to sign their child out during pick up.

6. The only person allowed to pick-up a child will be the parent/guardian who dropped off the child unless other arrangements were made when the child was dropped off. In this situation, if the person picking up the child is unknown to the Children's ministry leaders, he/she will need to show a pictured identification to the workers.

7. A signed permission form will be required for every child participating in any off-site activities. The permission form will be taken by the leader to the off-site activity, and turned in to the Director of Religious Education after the event. (*See General Rules of Transportation*)

III. Rules of Behavior – Nursery/Children's Ministry

A.Two Adult Rule –Whenever practicable, a minimum of two teachers shall be present during any protected persons' activity. We will strive to never have a teacher working alone with any protected person.

B.Open-door-policy – All children's classrooms will have a viewing window that will remain free of covering at all times. If the classroom does not have a viewing window, the door must remain open at all times. The teachers/volunteers shall never be in a closed-door situation with any protected person.

C.Visible Presence: A Sunday School coordinator or staff person will be in the hallways whenever volunteer teachers are teaching children. This person will act as a visible presence in support of teachers, as well as a deterrent of any potentially harmful situations for our protected persons.

D.Restroom Policies: In situations where an escort is needed for a trip to the restroom, a teacher will stand outside the restroom and only assist the protected person if needed. Whenever a teacher is in the restroom with a protected person the door will remain open. The teacher shall never be in a closed door situation with a protected person. If a protected person soils themselves during the Sunday School, every attempt will be made to locate a parent. If a parent is unable to be located, two adult volunteers will be present while cleaning up the child.

E. Discipline: Corporal punishment, of any kind, is ***never*** appropriate. Teachers are asked to redirect a child in they should display inappropriate behavior.

F. Staff and Administrators: As appropriate, a staff member or administrator will supervise ongoing programs and may make unannounced visits into classrooms or other program sites.

**These policies cover all children's activities while on the premises of The Wilmington UMC.*

IV. Training

1. All staff and volunteer workers will receive training in these policies and procedures in either verbal or written form.
2. These policies and procedures will be made known to the congregation and to all new members.
3. Background checks will be completed every two years.

Youth Ministry Protection Procedures

These procedures cover the activities of the Youth Ministry at The Wilmington United Methodist Church. Protected persons are placed in the Youth Ministry beginning 5th grade through the summer after 12th grade.

I. Supervision of Youth

A. Supervision Ratios of Youth and Adults:

1. *For safety purposes*, with high school and middle school students there will be, whenever possible, one adult for every seven youth.
2. *For purposes of supervising youth*, an adult is defined as anyone who is at least 23 years old. Anyone under the age of 23 must be screened and approved by the Youth Staff before allowed to be used in a leadership position.

B. Responsibility Times for Youth Ministry Workers:

1. The youth ministry assumes responsibility for supervision of youth from 15 minutes before a scheduled event until 15 minutes after a scheduled event.
2. The youth ministry is not responsible for youth at times when no youth ministry offerings are scheduled and also not responsible for youth when youth are choosing not to participate in the youth ministry offerings which are scheduled. Youth parents will be contacted to pick up their child if they choose not to participate.

II. Guidelines for Youth Counseling in Informal and/or Individual Settings

1. **Same-sex counseling is encouraged**. However, ministry priorities and immediate circumstances may make same-sex counseling unfeasible. When occasions of other than same-sex counseling occur, a youth worker should seek to abide by the two-adult rule.

2. In a situation where the two-adult rule is not feasible, a youth worker is expected to move him/her and the youth he/she is counseling towards the rest of the group, in hope of finding a second adult.

3. The youth ministry has an interest in helping youth and youth ministry workers maintain appropriate boundaries. Youth workers need to communicate the message that I am your friend, but I am not your peer clearly at all times, not only in the midst of crises, but also before any crises emerge.

4. ***Non-parental Adults***: Youth workers *under* the age of 23 needs to maintain the distinction between leaders and peers. They will not have authority over students, but will be invited to lead by example. When they are in this leadership position their prior relationship becomes secondary. Youth workers over the age of 23 must also be aware of the distinction between leaders and peers.

III. Guidelines for Youth Counseling in Formal and/or Group Settings

1. In Sunday School or a small group setting, the goal is to have two adults in every room; if not the open door policy will be in effect.
2. In Youth Fellowship, the goal is to have one adult for every seven youth in attendance. If possible, when dividing into small groups, we would like to have two adults per group.

Transportation Procedures for Children/Youth Activities

The following procedures are for providing transportation for Protected Persons to and from activities sponsored and/or supervised by The Wilmington United Methodist Church and affiliates. These procedures relate to transportation provided by the church, parents of youth, and youth workers to and from activities off the church property.

A. Vehicle Requirements:

1. These vehicle requirements pertain to vehicles owned by Wilmington United Methodist Church, those provided by parents of participating children/youth, those provided by youth workers and any external commercial vehicles provided for transportation of children/ youth.

2. All vehicles shall be in good running order, have a current valid license plate, and passenger restraints. The passenger restraints must be used while transporting children/youth.

3. All vehicles shall have insurance coverage as required by Ohio law. A copy of a current insurance card must be on file with the appropriate program director.

4. All vehicles will be multi-passenger vehicles. No motorcycles, scooters, or mopeds will be allowed. No vehicle will be allowed to carry more than the passenger capacity as specified by the vehicle manufacturer.

B. Qualification of Drivers:

1. All drivers will be workers (as qualified by the Safe Sanctuary Policies and Procedures), parents of participating youth or licensed commercial drivers. The appropriate administrator will pre-approve all drivers.

2. All drivers will have a current valid driver's license with the classification for the vehicle being driven and be at least 25 years of age, unless he or she is a staff member of the Church.

3. All drivers who are staff workers will be subject to periodic checks of their motor vehicle record.

4. A minimum of two adults shall supervise all groups of children and youth on off-site events.

C. General Rules for Transportation:

1. Unless otherwise approved by the administrator and the parents/custodians, all Transportation subject to these procedures will begin and terminate at the church property.

2. All drivers will obey all traffic laws. Failure to do so may disqualify them from driving for church related activities.

3. For overnight church functions, signed parent permission forms will be obtained from each child/youth prior to being allowed in any of these vehicles. If the youth does not have a completed permission form he/she will not be permitted to participate in the transportation arranged by the church. The permission forms are to be collected and checked by the group leader prior to leaving the church property. Upon return to the church, the forms will be provided to the appropriate administrator.

4. No driver is to transport any child/youth alone, without written or verbal permission from the youth's parents. If possible, there will always be more than one youth in the vehicle. In the event there is one child or youth in the vehicle the minor must be seating in the rear seat of the vehicle. The two-adult rule does not apply in the parent-child relationship.

V. Procedures for Children/Youth Overnight Activities

A. These procedures cover youth activities which require an overnight stay and are sponsored and/or supervised by The Wilmington United Methodist Church and affiliates. This includes, but is not limited to camping, lock-ins, hotels/motels, and overnight stays in a personal dwelling.

B. Approval - A signed parent permission form will be required of each child/youth prior to the activity. These will be collected and approved by the group leader prior to the activity. Following the activity, the forms will be provided to the appropriate administrator.

C. All overnight or off church property activities require the prior permission of the appropriate administrator or director.

D. Providing Adequate Personnel:

On-site programs that involve children and youth will include supervisory personal according to the following ratios:

Children 1st – 5th Grades

2: max of 24
3: max of 36
4: max of 48

Youth 2: 14

Off-site programs that involve children and youth will include supervisory personal according to the following ratios:

Children 1st – 5th Grade

2: max of 16
3: max of 24
4: max of 32, etc.

Youth

2: max of 28
3: max of 35
4: max of 42, etc.

VI. Rules of Conduct for Children/Youth Overnight Activities

A. All persons are to abide by the Safe Sanctuary Policies and Procedures, including the team approach for supervision.

B. None of the children/youth will be allowed away from the designated overnight area without prior permission of the group leader and the parent's signed permission.

C. No members of the opposite sex will be allowed to sleep in the same room unsupervised.

D. Child/ Youth covenant must be signed by the child/youth and their parents before being allowed to participate in overnight activities.

E. Adults will not be allowed to sleep in the same bed with a child/youth unless the child/youth is *their* child *and* of the same sex. (this rule allows for rare instances when this is necessary on Youth ski trips or other similar events).

VII. Training

A. All staff and volunteer workers will receive training in these policies and procedures in either verbal or written form.

B. These policies and procedures will be made known to the congregation and all new members.

C. Background checks will be completed every two years.

Outside Groups Using the Church Facility

A. An outside group is defined as any organization other than the Wilmington UMC that rents or uses any facility of the Wilmington UMC; or is given permission by Wilmington UMC to use any facility and the name of the Wilmington UMC for any purpose.
B. All outside groups, whether meeting regularly or for a limited time, will be subject to the policies and procedures as stated in the WUMC Safe Sanctuary Policy.
C. All leaders and liaisons of outside groups must receive training and submit the proper forms to the church office stating that they will abide by the Safe Sanctuary Policy and procedures.
D. Failure to uphold the policy expectations and procedures may result in the outside group losing privileges to meet within the church.

Volunteer Training

I. Frequency of Scheduled Training

Training will be provided to each and every eligible WUMC volunteer, who will teach, work with, coach, counsel, transport, supervise, chaperone, lead or direct any member, visitor or participant under the age of 18, or a vulnerable adult. Eligible WUMC volunteers are defined as persons who have been members of the Wilmington United Methodist Church for at least six months or are actively participating at WUMC, have never been convicted of any child abuse offense, and are willing to undergo our Covenant Safe Sanctuary Training Program and consent to a background investigation every two years. Exceptions to this will only be made by the appropriate program director.

In order to make training available to all eligible volunteers, training sessions will be offered annually, and as needed. Volunteers must complete the training course and submit a completed volunteer application and signed Covenant form with the Program Director **before** serving as a volunteer. On the rare occasion and only when extreme situations dictate, will an exception may be made to this policy.

We anticipate that these exceptions will only be necessary at the onset of the initial administration of our congregation-wide program and the Trustees reserve the right to terminate these exception provisions at will. Such revocation will be documented in the contents of the Safe Sanctuary Manual.

II. Sample Covenant & Administration of Signed Covenants

A sample Covenant is provided in Appendix B. The Director of Religious Education or his/her designation committee representative (The Screening Committee) will be responsible for maintaining copies of signed covenants along with the volunteer applications. Trustees will periodically conduct random audits of the files of each Program to validate proper record keeping compliance.

III. Guiding Principles

A. By fostering awareness of appropriate, as well as inappropriate behavior with, or in the presence of Protected Persons, WUMC, as part of the body of Christ, will demonstrate Christian love and respect for one another.

B. WUMC recognizes that certain Workers have exceptional talents for teaching and supporting the growth and development of Protected Persons, and wishes to encourage them to use their spiritual gifts. At the same time however, WUMC has set certain criteria for those Workers who choose to serve in ministries in order to promote and protect the well-being of Protected Persons. It is not the intent of the membership of WUMC to be judgmental, for we are all accountable to God.

C. The membership of WUMC will rely on God's wisdom in developing, implementing and 'carrying out God's will through this policy. Compassion and truth will be the guiding forces for any investigation, reporting or follow-up action that results from the procedures as outlined in this policy. Congregational support is critical for adherence to this policy.

D. The limited nature of our resources, and our desire to devote as much time and effort as possible to the work of the Lord, mandates that this policy be fully understood by every member of our congregation and church family. This will enable church staff and leadership to do what is necessary to preserve the church's resources for the work of the Lord.

E. When a legal adult has mental challenges that place him or her in a vulnerable position, or an elderly disabled person who might not be able to escape potential abuse, the two-person rule shall apply.

IV. Behavior

A. The following behaviors are prohibited for all Workers:

- Threatening to inflict or intentionally inflicting emotional or physical injury
- Committing any sexual offense or engaging in any sexual contact
- Making any kind of sexual advance or making a request for sexual favors
- Engaging in verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature, including but not limited to backrubs, massages, kissing, or similar contact
- Physical discipline, such as spanking

B. Touching to comfort or affirm a Protected Person in an age-appropriate manner is permitted. Side-by-side hugs are suggested instead of full body contact. Appropriate touching need not be completely avoided, but is acceptable only in public. All adult workers shall be aware of how it looks and how the person being contacted may interpret the contact.

C. The following are unacceptable and will not be tolerated at any ministry:

- Tobacco
- Alcohol
- Illegal drugs
- Firearms or other weapons
- Foul or offensive language
- Pornographic material

The said examples are not "all-inclusive". Any behavior that contravenes the Statement of Purpose shall be considered prohibited behavior.

V. Worker Enlistment and Screening Process

Persons shall meet the requirements and approvals for service set out herein in order to be a Worker in a Ministry.

VI. Application Process

A. Workers shall complete Volunteer Application (Appendix A) and a form for Consent to Perform Criminal History/Background Check (Appendix C).

VII. Certification Process

A. A criminal records check shall be made on applicants by an outside source specializing in such confidential screening. Results will be given to the applicable Director. Issues requiring a discussion with the Senior Clergy or designate will be treated with confidentiality. The applicant will be extended the care and ministry of the church in determining appropriate placement for service. Re-checks of each Worker shall be conducted as necessary, with a frequency of at least every two years.

B. An Ohio Department of Motor Vehicles record review shall be made on all applicants the results of which will be used to assure the applicant meets all of the church's insurance requirements. Additionally, applicants will be required to supply proof of a valid Ohio driver's license and current insurance with a photo copy of each.

C. Directors shall communicate the substance of this policy to Workers, and Workers shall agree to comply with this policy on the Employee/Volunteer Agreement to Policy Form (Appendix H). This communication will include the statutory requirements for the mandatory reporting of child abuse and the identification of abuse as defined by the Ohio Family Code (Appendix L), along with Fire and Building Safety (Appendix K).

D. Directors may require other operational training as necessary for that director's ministry.

E. Workers shall be members of WUMC for six (6) or more months prior to beginning service. Exceptions will be allowed only if the applicant provides a recommendation letter from a pastor and/or relevant staff person at a prior church of applicant, or if written recommendations are received from three (3) current members of WUMC, who have been members for more than one (1) year.

F. Persons having a Criminal History of any of the following types of offenses shall not be allowed to serve in any Ministry involving protected persons:

- Child abuse, whether physical, emotional, sexual, or neglectful
- Violent offenses, including murder, rape, assault, domestic violence, etc.

G. Offenses, depending on how recent, the frequency, and nature may also preclude an applicant or Worker from serving in a Ministry. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Senior Clergy and the applicable Director. In such cases, the determining factors will be the best interests, safety and well-being of the Protected Persons. Any applicant or Worker whose Criminal History is such that his or her approval is subject to decision by the Senior Clergy and the applicable Director, will be given the opportunity to explain the circumstances to the Senior Clergy and the applicable Director.

H. Workers shall be at least twenty-five (25) years of age to drive and must possess a valid Ohio driver's license and proof of current insurance coverage. A copy of each is required to be on file with the applicable director.

I. Persons having a Criminal History of DUI or DWI conviction within the eight (8) years immediately prior to application shall not be allowed to act as a driver. Other violations on the applicant's motor vehicle record may prevent the applicant from serving as a driver as required by the church's insurance.

J. Lying on an application may result in removal from service in a Ministry.

K. Workers and Volunteers who refuse to comply with this policy or repeatedly fail to follow it shall be subject to dismissal.

L. Workers and volunteers who do not attend mandatory training are subject to dismissal.

M. Persons may begin working in a Ministry when the application paperwork and certification work is complete and the person is found to meet the acceptance standards.

Incident Reporting

I. Incidence or Suspicion of Incidence Report

A. Reporting:

Do not ignore any reported incident of abuse. Any suspicious activity, observed abuse, or victim allegations that are brought to the attention of a church worker or volunteer must be reported immediately to the persons identified below:

1. Allegations against volunteers
    - The accused adult should never be confronted before the safety of the child or youth is secured.
    - The volunteer will be relieved of duties by the appropriate program director until accusations are determined.
    - The report shall be made to the Director of Religious Education.
    - The Director shall, in turn, report to the Pastor.
    - The Pastor and Director shall determine if the District Superintendent shall be notified.
2. Allegations against Employees
    - For any employee, other than the Senior Pastor, the report shall be made to the Chairperson of the Staff Parish Relations Committee and the Pastor and/or Associate Pastor
    - The Pastor and/or Associate Pastor and the Chairperson of the SPRC shall determine if the District Superintendent shall be notified.
3. Allegations against any Pastor
    - The report shall be made to all of the following
        1. The Chairperson of the Staff Parish Relations Committee
        2. The Chairperson of the Church Council
        3. The District Superintendent

Post Reporting Procedures

A. WUMC acknowledges that there are many victims who may be affected by an incident or of suspicion of child abuse or neglect. We are mindful that the following persons will require the proper response, care, counseling and support following any such event:

- Family members of the harmed child, youth, or vulnerable adult
- Peers of child, youth or vulnerable adult
- Peers of the child's or youth's or vulnerable adult's parents
- Remaining workers of children, youth, or vulnerable adult programs
- Congregation as a community of faith
- Family of the accused abuser

We believe that failure to address the issues of suffering, anger, fear, and grief that occur within the church after abuse can have extended and unnecessary consequences for everyone. We will not hide or shrink away from our responsibility to promptly and appropriately address any incident of abuse and that as a congregation we are committed to the prevention of and termination of behaviors which to contribute to the cycle of abuse.

B .Responding to Allegations of Abuse:

If it is determined that the allegation has a factual basis, then the following steps shall be taken:

1. A response team shall be formed and will be assigned to take any further actions that are required. The Response Team shall follow the advice of legal counsel and the District Superintendent (or the Superintendents representative)

2. The Response Team shall be made up of the Senior Pastor, The Director of Religious Education, The Staff Parish Relations Committee Chairperson, the Church Council Chairperson, and a mental health professional.

3. The Response Team shall appoint one sole media spokesperson. The Response Team shall determine the appropriate means of communicating with the congregation.

4. The Response Team will:

A. Inform the employee or volunteer of the accusation and discuss the accusations

B. Suspend with pay (for paid employees) the alleged offender while the confidential investigation is being conducted.

C. Consult with church attorney for advice regarding compliance with reporting laws – then file the necessary report with the appropriate agency within the time frame required by the State of Georgia.

D.Together with the agency official, meet with the child's parents and, in their presence and with their permission, with the child. Your purpose for meeting is to learn more fully the nature of the allegations, including when and where the alleged offense took place. Reassure the child that he or she has done nothing wrong and that it was right to report the incident. Allow the child to speak freely. Do not coach responses from them and do not become defensive to any statements. Seek the truth and protect the child's well-being. If the nature of the alleged abuse is such that any physical injury could have their child examined immediately by a
qualified physician.

E. Notify the liability insurance company. Do not wait for the investigation to be concluded unless your attorney advises you to. Do not wait until criminal charges are filed or until you are faced with a civil suit. Involving the insurance company is not an admission of negligence. It is a wise protective measure and may be the means by which legal counsel may be retained to provide a defense for the church and, possibly for the accused. Besides making a coverage determination, the insurance company can also offer advice and assistance in addressing the incident.

F. Cooperate in the investigation conducted by the insurance company and Child Protective Services.

G. Provide ongoing spiritual and counseling support for the victim and his/her family.

H. Consider the spiritual needs of the accused and seek assistance from the District Superintendent and Conference personnel in providing the proper counseling and response for the accused and the accused's family.

Notification Contacts:

Child Protective Services:

Clinton County: 937-382-5935
Green County: 937-562-6600
Highland County: 937-393-3111

Insurance: Cincinnati Insurance Company

Lent Insurance Agency – Dayton
6651 Centerville Business Parkway
Dayton, Ohio 45459
937-853-4215

Law Enforcement: in accordance with local law as instructed by Child Protective Services and legal counsel.

Legal Representative

1) As provided by insurance company and/or
2) Legal representative for church (if not same as 1 above)

Documentation – Record Keeping, Storage & Purging

A. The Pastor or appropriate Church staff will be responsible for maintaining the following documents and assuring the confidentiality of same:

1. Staff background checks
2. Motor vehicle reports
3. Suspicion of incidents
4. Incidence reports
5. Incident meeting notes/correspondence
6. Instructions from law enforcement/Child Protective Services
7. Insurance claims records and correspondence
8. Litigation files and associated documents/correspondence

B. Copies will be produced only as required by law, insurance or as deemed appropriate by mutual agreement by the Senior Pastor.

C. Documents necessary for employment at WUMC will be secured by the Chair of the Staff-Parish-Relations Committee in the employment folder for hired workers, vendors, and staff.

D. Background checks for prospective applicants who are not hired will be destroyed within 60 days. All information acquired during the recruiting of volunteers and employees shall be treated in a confidential manner.

E. Paid staff records will be destroyed after a 20-year period. For volunteer church workers records will be purged after the volunteer has transferred membership or otherwise left the congregation or 24 months after the volunteer's last active participation in a Children's or Youth Program (including music ministries).

F. The Safe Sanctuary Committee will meet annually to review records of volunteers and Senior Pastor and SPRC will meet periodically to review paid staff records, at this time they will purge outdated documents. It is particularly important to have a routine method to properly dispose of anything discovered in the employment or volunteer application process that is not public record. Such files must be maintained under the strictest confidence and locked in a cabinet to assure that they are not seen by unauthorized parties. Because liability insurance policies are largely written on an occurrence basis, these policies and other related insurance records and any claims files will be kept indefinitely.

Appendix A. Volunteer Application
Wilmington United Methodist Church
Volunteer Application and Applicant Covenant Statement

Note: All information on this completed form will be kept strictly confidential and access will be restricted to those few persons with a legitimate interest in the information.

Personal Information

Name: _____

Address: _____

How long at this address? _____ Day phone: _____Evening phone:_____

Cell phone: _____ email:_____

Drivers License Number and State of Issue: _____
Are you over 18 years of age? _____
Are you at least 5 years older than the age level with which you wish to work? _____

Church History and Prior Work Experience with Children and/or Youth

Are you a WUMC member? _____ How long? _____ List previous church names and locations during last 7 years: _____
List previous church volunteer positions with children and or youth:_____
_____
List previous non-church work involving children and/or youth: _____
_____
Age with which you wish to work: ___0-2 yrs ___3-5 yrs ___Kdg-5th grade ___6th-12th grade ___ Leisure
Reasons for volunteering for this position: _____
_____
List qualities, gifts, training or experience that prepared you for working with children and/or youth:
_____

Are there any characteristics or experiences that would negatively affect your ability to work with children and/or youth?_____
_____

Criminal History

Have you ever been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a crime, either misdemeanor or felony (including but not limited to drug or alcohol charges, child abuse, other crimes of violence or theft)? _____
If yes, please explain fully. _____
_____

References

Please list 3 references (who are unrelated to you by blood or marriage) and provide contact information for each. As stated above, all responses are kept confidential.

1. Name and Address: _____
   Day and Evening Phones: _____
2. Name and Address: _____
   Day and Evening Phones: _____
3. Name and Address: _____
   Day and Evening Phones: _____

Appendix B
Applicant's Covenant Statement

The Wilmington United Methodist congregation is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, youth and volunteers who participate in ministries and activities sponsored by this church. The following policy statements reflect our congregation's commitment to preserving this church as a holy place of safety and protection for all who enter and as a place in which all people can experience the love of God through relationships with others.

1. No person who has been convicted of child abuse – either sexual, physical or emotional – should volunteer to work with children or youth in any church-sponsored activity.
2. Survivors of child abuse need the love and support of our congregation. Any survivor who desires to volunteer in some capacity to work with children or youth is encouraged to discuss his/her willingness with one of our ordained clergy before accepting an assignment.
3. All volunteers involved with children or youth of our church must have been members of the congregation for at least six months before beginning a volunteer assignment or be paired with a person who has been cleared through background check and reference check.
4. Volunteers with children and youth shall observe the "Two-Adult Rule" at all times, unless a roamer is provided, so that no adult is ever alone with children or youth.
5. Volunteers with children and youth shall attend regular training and educational events provided by the church to keep volunteers informed of church policies and state laws regarding child abuse.
6. Volunteers shall immediately report to their supervisor any behavior that seems abusive or inappropriate.

Please answer each of the following questions:

As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to:

1. Observe and abide by all church policies regarding working with children and youth? _____
2. Abide by the six-month rule before beginning a volunteer assignment? _____
3. Abide by the "Two-Adult Rule" at all times? _____
4. Participate in training and education events provided by the church related to your volunteer assignment? _____
5. Promptly report abusive or inappropriate behavior to your supervisor, staff member or minister of this church? _____
6. Discuss with WUMC ordained clergy your experience, if any, as a survivor of child abuse? _____
   (Answering yes to this question does not automatically disqualify you from volunteering with children.)
7. Inform the ordained clergy of this congregation if you have ever been convicted of child abuse? _____

I have read this Covenant, and I agree to observe and abide by the policies set forth above.

The responses I have made on this form are complete, true and accurate.

_____ _____

Signature of Applicant Date

Appendix C.

Criminal History/Background Check

The Wilmington United Methodist Church

61 E. Main St. -- Suite #4 -- Wilmington, OH 45177
Phone: (937)382-1465 • Fax: (937)382-4149

Dean Feldmeyer - Pastor
pstrdean@cinci.rr.com

www.wilmingtonumc.com

Amber Dorsch - DRE
amberdorsch@cinci.rr.com

Your service to **Wilmington United Methodist Church** is truly welcomed. We are proud of our ministries and recognize it is the result of the quality and caliber of the people in our church. In pursuit of that excellence we require that all employees and volunteers with children and youth consent to and authorize our requesting of a criminal background history.

Authorization and Consent for Release and Disclosure

I authorize _____ and any of its agents/designated representatives to perform a criminal background check and to disclose orally, electronically, and/or in writing the results of this verification process and/or interview to the designated authorized representatives of Wilmington United Methodist Church.

Please clearly print all information.

Full Name: _____

Social Security #: _____ Sex: _____ Race: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Current Address: _____ Yrs. _____ Mos._____

City: _____ County: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Current Drivers License Number: _____ State of Issue: _____

Please list any Residences in states other than OH during the past 7 years:

City: _____ County: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Yrs/Mos._____

City: _____ County: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Yrs/Mos._____

City: _____ County: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Yrs/Mos._____

City: _____ County: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Yrs/Mos._____

This information is provided voluntarily and is true and complete to the best of my knowledge. It will be used for identification purposes in verifying information for background verification.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix D.

Volunteer Reference Form

Record of Contact with Reference Identified by Volunteer Applicant for Work with Children or Youth at Wilmington United Methodist Church

Applicant Name: _____
Reference Name: _____
Reference Address: _____
Reference Phone: _____
Person Making Reference Contact: _____
Date and Time of Contact: _____ **Method of Contact:** _____

Introduction: _____ has applied to work with children or youth at Wilmington United Methodist Church and has given us your name as a reference. Would you mind answering a few questions? The information you provide will be kept confidential.

Using a scale of 1-10 (1-poor, 10-excellent) or the word Unknown please rate the applicant's personality or abilities:

Responsible _____	Exercises good judgment _____	Patient _____
Dependable _____	Sensitive to needs of others _____	Observant _____
Encouraging _____	Teaching/Coaching skills _____	Caring _____

1. What is your relationship to the applicant?

2. How long have you known the applicant?

3. In what settings have you observed the applicant?

4. How would you describe the applicant's ability to relate to children/youth?

5. How would you describe the applicant's ability to relate to adults?

6. Do you know of any characteristic that would negatively affect the applicant's ability to work with children and/or youth? If so, please describe.

7. Would you want the applicant as a volunteer worker with your child and/or youth? Why or Why not?

Information submitted by: _____ _____
Signature Date

Office Use Only: Date information received by Safe Sanctuary Screening Committee: _____

Appendix E

Report of Suspected Incident of Child Abuse

POLICY OF WILMINGTON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH FOR THE PREVENTION OF ABUSE OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

1. Name or worker (paid or volunteer) observing or receiving disclosure of child abuse:

_____

2. Victim's name: _____

3. Age: _____ Birth date: _____

4. Date/Place of initial conversation with/report from victim: _____

_____

5. Victim's statement – Detailed summary: _____

_____

_____

_____

6. Name of person accused of abuse: _____

7. Relationship of accused to victim (paid staff, volunteer, family member, other)

_____

8. Date and time of report to pastor: _____

9. Reporter: _____

10. Summary: _____

_____

_____

_____

11. Date of call to victim's parent/guardian: _____

12. Person placing call: _____

13. Spoke with: _____

14. Summary: _____

_____

_____

_____

15. Person placing call to child and family service agency :

_____

16. Date and time of call: _____

17. Spoke with: _____

18. Summary: _____

_____

_____

_____

19. Person placing call to local law enforcement agency: _____

20. Date and time of call: _____

21 Spoke with: _____

22. Summary: _____

_____

_____

_____

23. Other contacts: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____ _____

Signature Date

Appendix F
WUMC Abuse Prevention Policy

POLICY OF WILMINGTON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH FOR THE PREVENTION OF ABUSE OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Age-Appropriate Discipline Methods - Children

Our goal is to ensure that every child who participates in a Ministry is offered a safe environment where God is the center of all that we do and say.

To do this, we need the children to follow these basic rules:

1. Treat everyone with kindness and respect.
2. Follow directions given by the teacher or leader of a ministry.
3. Stay in the classroom at all times unless escorted by a teacher or leader.
4. Remember, there is no fighting, name calling or rude behavior.
5. Use all equipment properly. Treat property with respect and clean-up after yourself (remember this is God's House)

As parents and teachers we realize that children are filled with energy. However, should a child's behavior become disruptive to the class or any ministry, the following actions shall be taken.

Pre-School:

1. The teacher/leader shall redirect the child's focus to an activity.
2. A verbal warning and separation from the source of disruption
   Ex: separate children, put toy away, etc.
3. Time-out in the classroom. Use this time to explain to the child why it is important to exercise proper behavior.
4. As a last resort, the parent/guardian shall be located and asked to sit with the child or remove him/her from the activity for that day.

Elementary:

1. The teacher/leader shall redirect the child's focus to an activity.
   Ex: ask the child to help.
2. A verbal warning and separation from the source of disruption
   Ex: separate children, put toy away, etc.
3. Time-out in the classroom. Use this time to explain to the child why it is important to exercise proper behavior.
4. As a last resort, the parent/guardian shall be located and asked to sit with the child or remove them from the activity for that day.

Appendix G

Abuse Prevention Policy Forms

POLICY OF WILMINGTON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH FOR THE PREVENTION OF ABUSE OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Employee/Volunteer Agreement to Policy Form

This is to confirm that I have received and read a copy of the Safe Sanctuary Policies of Wilmington United Methodist Church of Wilmington, Ohio. Included within these policies is a legal definition of child abuse and neglect from the Ohio Revised Code and written information describing the Ohio Laws regarding the reporting of suspected child abuse and/or neglect.

Worker Name: (please print) _____

Worker Signature: _____

Date: _____

Employee/Volunteer Agreement to Training Form

This is to confirm that I have received training in accordance with the Safe Sanctuary Policy of Wilmington United Methodist Church of Wilmington, Ohio. I received training on _____, at _____.

Worker Name: (please print) _____

Worker Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix H
Wilmington United Methodist Youth Behavior Covenant

Violation of this covenant could result in a trip home, at parent's expense, and a conference with the Senior Minister, parent(s), and Youth Ministry staff, as well as not being allowed to participate in future events. All consequences as a result of violating this covenant will be at the discretion of the WUMC Youth Minister.

- While on every event whether on the church campus or off, I will obey all Wilmington UMC adults.
- I will encourage my peers and chaperones by lifting them up in public and private; I will not take part in criticizing them, making fun of them, or tearing them down in any way.
- I will be respectful to people, buildings, equipment, and the environment, and be a good steward of my possessions, as well as the possessions of the church and others.
- I will not be alone with a member of the opposite sex for any reason and I will never leave the group by myself. I will always be in a group of at least four youth. If I have to leave the group, I will receive permission from a WUMC adult prior to leaving, and will always be with at least one other person.
- If I am assigned a job for any activity I will do it willingly and to the best of my ability.
- I will not wear clothes with inappropriate messages or images. I will wear clothes of a modest style and all shirts will have sleeves. I understand that if I wear inappropriate clothes, I will have to change immediately.
- I will use all cell phones, iPods, and other electronics devices sparingly, since the purpose of youth activities is to experience God and godly fellowship with others.
- I will not have any drugs, firearms, alcohol, or tobacco products, and I will notify a WUMC adult if I observe any youth who do.

I understand that the main purpose of all church related activities is to glorify God and to strengthen my relationship with Him and I will keep that in mind while participating. By signing this covenant, I understand that I am promising to try to live the life I am being called to live by Jesus Christ and that all my actions should reflect this calling.

_____ _____

Youth Signature **Date**

_____ _____

Parent Signature **Date**

Appendix I
Parent Covenant

This is to confirm that I have received and read a copy of the Safe Sanctuary Policies of Wilmington United Methodist Church of Wilmington, Ohio. Included within these policies is a legal definition of child abuse and neglect from the Ohio Revised Code and written information describing the Ohio Laws regarding the reporting of suspected child abuse and/or neglect.

I understand that as a parent, my role for abiding by the policy includes:

- Following the Safe Sanctuary Policy as written
- Taking responsibility for my children when inside the church and not participating in a Children or Youth Activity
- Making sure that my child/children are not anywhere in the church building at any time without a proper adult
- Following the proper procedures for check-in and check-out at all ministry activities
- Actively upholding the church to the policy
- Reporting any misconduct or failure to uphold the policy to the Director of Religious Education

Parent Name: (please print) _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix J

Accident/Incident Report

POLICY OF WILMINGTON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH FOR THE PREVENTION OF ABUSE OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

This form is to be completed after an accident or injury, or by the person witnessing an incident involving questionable behavior involving a worker with a protected person

Date of Incident: _____ Time of Incident: _____

Name of child/youth involved: _____

Address of child/youth: _____

Location of incident: _____

Parent or guardian: _____

Name of persons witnessing the incident:

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Name: _____ Phone: _____
Name: _____ Phone: _____

Describe the incident: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Print name of person filing report: _____

_____ _____

Signature Date

Appendix K
Fire & Building Safety Guidelines

Prevention Measures

Be alert to any potential causes for accidents, injuries, or fire in your area and during your event. If repairs are needed in an area, (frayed cords, broken chairs/tables, water on the floor, etc.) notify the Applicable Director or leader of ministry event. The buildings, grounds, and equipment must be maintained in order to protect the safety of all.

First – Aid

First – Aid care shall be administered as soon as possible. First – Aid kits and a guide to emergency care shall be available. If necessary, 911 shall be called for local emergency services to respond. Advance emergency release forms from the parent/guardian shall be obtained granting permission for a child's emergency medical care.

If a child/youth arrives ill or becomes ill (fever, vomiting, etc.) during a ministry event, the parent/guardian shall be contacted and asked to pick up their child/youth.
These steps shall be followed when providing first-aid that involves cleaning an open wound, bleeding cut, or examining the mouth:

- Wear disposable gloves
- Wash hands before and after administering aid
- Use care in disposing trash. Place refuse that contains body fluids or blood in a sealed plastic bag and place in a trashcan with a plastic liner.
- Clean the area with a disinfectant spray.

Accident / Incident Response

After First Aid has been administered and the injured person has been cared for, complete a WUMC Accident/Incident Report and notify the Applicable Director. The Director shall follow through with any additional actions to be taken.

Fire Evacuation & Response

Fire evacuation plans shall be posted in appropriate areas. Workers shall be trained to understand evacuation procedures and locations of fire alarms, extinguishers and flashlights in the event of electrical failure. In the event of a fire, the first priority is to ensure the safety of all persons in your care. Secondly, pull the fire alarm or dial 911. Only if it is safe to do so, *then* attempt to contain the fire by shutting door or using a fire extinguisher. Do not use the elevator for evacuation. Evacuation plans shall be reviewed with children/youth periodically.

Severe Weather Response

Severe weather plans shall be posted in appropriate areas. Workers shall be trained to understand safety procedures including evacuation plans and location of flashlights in the event of power outages. Do not use the elevator for evacuation. Evacuation plans shall be reviewed with children/youth periodically.

Vandalism & Suspicious Behavior

Any suspicious behavior or activity shall immediately be reported to the Worker in charge of a Ministry. If necessary, 911 shall be called for local police services to respond. All precautions shall be taken to maintain safety and security. This may include moving children/youth to a safe location, locking doors, etc. In cases deemed to pose an imminent danger to persons or property, no one shall attempt to intervene but shall wait for police to assess and act. After assuring that a situation is secure, the Worker shall complete WUMC Accident/Incident Report and notify the Applicable Director.

Automobile Incident Response

In the event of an automobile accident during a ministry event, the driver shall first ensure the safety of all passengers, administer first-aid and/or call 911 for emergency services as necessary. After assuring that the situation is safe, the driver shall notify the Worker in charge of the ministry event and complete a WUMC Accident/Incident Report. The Worker shall contact the applicable Director and/or Senior Pastor. The Applicable Director or Sr. Pastor shall notify parents/ guardians promptly.

Appendix L

Reporting child abuse or neglect as per Ohio Revised Code 2151.421

(A)(1)(a) No person described in division (A)(1)(b) of this section who is acting in an official or professional capacity and knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect based on facts that would cause a reasonable person in a similar position to suspect, that a child under eighteen years of age or a mentally retarded, developmentally disabled, or physically impaired child under twenty-one years of age has suffered or faces a threat of suffering any physical or mental wound, injury, disability, or condition of a nature that reasonably indicates abuse or neglect of the child shall fail to immediately report that knowledge or reasonable cause to suspect to the entity or persons specified in this division. Except as provided in section 5120.173 of the Revised Code, the person making the report shall make it to the public children services agency or a municipal or county peace officer in the county in which the child resides or in which the abuse or neglect is occurring or has occurred. In the circumstances described in section 5120.173 of the Revised Code, the person making the report shall make it to the entity specified in that section.

(b) Division (A)(1)(a) of this section applies to any person who is an attorney; physician, including a hospital intern or resident; dentist; podiatrist; practitioner of a limited branch of medicine as specified in section 4731.15 of the Revised Code; registered nurse; licensed practical nurse; visiting nurse; other health care professional; licensed psychologist; licensed school psychologist; independent marriage and family therapist or marriage and family therapist; speech pathologist or audiologist; coroner; administrator or employee of a child day-care center; administrator or employee of a residential camp or child day camp; administrator or employee of a certified child care agency or other public or private children services agency; school teacher; school employee; school authority; person engaged in social work or the practice of professional counseling; agent of a county humane society; person, other than a cleric, rendering spiritual treatment through prayer in accordance with the tenets of a well-recognized religion; employee of a county department of job and family services who is a professional and who works with children and families; superintendent, board member, or employee of a county board of developmental disabilities; investigative agent contracted with by a county board of developmental disabilities; employee of the department of developmental disabilities; employee of a facility or home that provides respite care in accordance with section 5123.171 of the Revised Code; employee of a home health agency; employee of an entity that provides homemaker services; a person performing the duties of an assessor pursuant to Chapter 3107. or 5103. of the Revised Code; or third party employed by a public children services agency to assist in providing child or family related services.

(4)(a) No cleric and no person, other than a volunteer, designated by any church, religious society, or faith acting as a leader, official, or delegate on behalf of the church, religious society, or faith who is acting in an official or professional capacity, who knows, or has reasonable cause to believe based on facts that would cause a reasonable person in a similar position to believe, that a child under eighteen years of age or a mentally retarded, developmentally disabled, or physically impaired child under twenty-one years of age has suffered or faces a threat of suffering any physical or mental wound, injury, disability, or condition of a nature that reasonably indicates abuse or neglect of the child, and who knows, or has reasonable cause to believe based on facts that would cause a reasonable person in a similar position to believe, that another cleric or another person, other than a volunteer, designated by a church, religious society, or faith acting as a leader, official, or delegate on behalf of the church, religious society, or faith caused, or poses the threat of causing, the wound, injury, disability, or condition that reasonably indicates abuse or neglect shall fail to immediately report that knowledge or reasonable cause to believe to the entity or persons specified in this division. Except as provided in section 5120.173 of the Revised Code, the person making the report shall make it to the public children services agency or a municipal or county peace officer in the county in which the child resides or in which the abuse or neglect is occurring or has occurred. In the circumstances described in section 5120.173 of the Revised Code, the person making the report shall make it to the entity specified in that section.

(B) Anyone who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect based on facts that would cause a reasonable person in similar circumstances to suspect, that a child under eighteen years of age or a mentally retarded, developmentally disabled, or physically impaired person under twenty-one years of age has suffered or faces a threat of suffering any physical or mental wound, injury, disability, or other condition of a nature that reasonably indicates abuse or neglect of the child may report or cause reports to be made of that knowledge or reasonable cause to suspect to the entity or persons specified in this division. Except as provided in section 5120.173 of the Revised Code, a person making a report or causing a report to be made under this division

shall make it or cause it to be made to the public children services agency or to a municipal or county peace officer. In the circumstances described in section 5120.173 of the Revised Code, a person making a report or causing a report to be made under this division shall make it or cause it to be made to the entity specified in that section.

(C) Any report made pursuant to division (A) or (B) of this section shall be made forthwith either by telephone or in person and shall be followed by a written report, if requested by the receiving agency or officer. The written report shall contain:

(1) The names and addresses of the child and the child's parents or the person or persons having custody of the child, if known;

(2) The child's age and the nature and extent of the child's injuries, abuse, or neglect that is known or reasonably suspected or believed, as applicable, to have occurred or of the threat of injury, abuse, or neglect that is known or reasonably suspected or believed, as applicable, to exist, including any evidence of previous injuries, abuse, or neglect;

(3) Any other information that might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injury, abuse, or neglect that is known or reasonably suspected or believed, as applicable, to have occurred or of the threat of injury, abuse, or neglect that is known or reasonably suspected or believed, as applicable, to exist.

Any person, who is required by division (A) of this section to report child abuse or child neglect that is known or reasonably suspected or believed to have occurred, may take or cause to be taken color photographs of areas of trauma visible on a child and, if medically indicated, cause to be performed radiological examinations of the child.

Child Abuse As Per Section 2919.22 of the Ohio Revised Code:

A. No person who is the parent, guardian, custodian, person having custody or control, or person in loco parentis of a child under eighteen years of age or a mentally or physically handicapped child under twenty-one years of age, shall create a substantial risk to the health or safety of the child, by violating a duty of care, protection, or support. It is not a violation of duty of care, protection, or support under this division when the parent, guardian, custodian or person having custody or control of a child treats the physical or mental illness or defect of the child by spiritual means through prayer alone, in accordance with tenets of a recognized religious body.
B. No person shall do any of the following to a child under eighteen years of age or a mentally or physically handicapped child under twenty-one years of age:
    1. Abuse the child;
    2. Torture or cruelly abuse the child;
    3. Administer corporal punishment or other physical disciplinary measure, or physically restrain the child in a cruel manner or for a prolonged period, which punishment, discipline, or restraint is excessive under the circumstances and creates a substantial risk of serious physical harm to the child;
    4. Repeatedly administer unwarranted disciplinary measures to the child, when there is a substantial risk that such conduct, if continued, will seriously impair or retard the child's mental health or development.
    5. Entice, coerce, permit, encourage, compel, hire, employ, use, or allow the child to act, model, or in any way participate in, or be photographed for, the production, presentation, dissemination, or advertisement of any material or performance that the offender knows or reasonably should know is obscene, is sexually oriented matter, or is nudity-oriented matter.

Types of Child Abuse:

1. **Physical abuse** - abuse in which a person deliberately and intentionally causes bodily harm to a child. Examples may include violent battery with a weapon (knife, belt, strap, and so forth), burning, shaking, kicking, choking, fracturing bones, and any of a wide variety of non-accidental injuries to a child's body.
2. **Emotional abuse** - abuse in which a person exposes a child to spoken and/or unspoken violence or emotional cruelty. Emotional abuse sends a message to the child of worthlessness, badness, and being not only unloved but undeserving of love and care. Children exposed to emotional abuse may have experience being locked in a closet, being deprived of any sign of parental affection, being constantly told they are bad or stupid, or being allowed or forced to abuse alcohol or drugs. Emotional abuse is often very difficult to prove and is devastating to the victim.
3. **Neglect**- abuse in which a person endangers a child's health, safety, or welfare through negligence. Neglect may include withholding food, clothing, medical care, education, and even affection and affirmation of the child's self-worth. This is perhaps the most common form of child abuse.
4. **Sexual Abuse** - abuse in which sexual contact between a child and an adult (or another older or more powerful youth) occurs. The child is never truly capable of consenting to or resisting such contact and/or such sexual acts. Often, the child is physically and psychologically dependent upon the perpetrator of the abuse. Examples of sexual abuse may include fondling, intercourse, incest, and the exploitation of and exposure to child pornography or prostitution.
5. **Ritual Abuse** - abuse in which physical, sexual, or psychological violations of a child are inflicted regularly, intentionally, and in a stylized way by a person or persons responsible for the child's welfare. The abuser may appeal to some higher authority or power to justify the abuse. The abuse may include cruel treatment or animals or repeated threats of harm to the child, other persons, and animals. Reports of ritual abuse are often extremely horrifying and may seem too grim to be true. Children making such reports must not be ignored.

Indicators of Child Abuse:
Children suffering abuse often will not tell anyone about it. Therefore, it is important to be able to recognize other signs of abuse. When these indicators are observed in a child, they can be considered as warnings and lead to looking into the situation further.

1. **Possible signs of physical abuse**:
   - Hostile and aggressive behavior towards others
   - Fearfulness of parents and/or other adults
   - Destructive behavior toward self, others, and/or property
   - Inexplicable fractures or bruises inappropriate for child's developmental stage
   - Burns, facial injuries, pattern of repetitious bruises
2. **Possible signs of emotional abuse**:
   - Exhibits severe depression and/or withdrawal
   - Exhibits severe lack of self-esteem
   - Failure to thrive
   - Threatens or attempts suicide
   - Speech or eating disorders
   - Goes to extremes to seek adult approval
   - Extreme passive/aggressive behavior patterns
3. **Possible signs of neglect**:
   - Failure to thrive
   - Pattern of inappropriate dress for climate
   - Begs or steals food; chronic hunger
   - Depression
   - Untreated medical conditions
   - Poor hygiene
4. **Possible signs of sexual abuse**:
   - Unusually advanced sexual knowledge and/or behavior for child's age and developmental stage
   - Depression - cries often for no apparent reason
   - Promiscuous behavior

- Runs away from home and refuses to return
- Difficulty walking or sitting
- Bruised/bleeding in vaginal or anal areas
- Exhibits frequent headaches, stomachaches, extreme fatigue
- Sexually transmitted diseases

In addition to these indicators, children who have been sexually abused at church may exhibit some of the following:

- Unusual nervousness or anxiety about being left in the nursery or Sunday school class
- Reluctance to participate in church activities that were previously enthusiastically approached
- Comments such as "I don't want to be alone with_____ in reference to a child care worker or Sunday school teacher
- Nightmares including a child care worker or teacher as a frightening character
- Unexplained hostility toward a child care worker or teacher

5. **Possible signs of ritual abuse**:
   - Disruption of memory or consciousness
   - Unexplained mistrust and mood swings
   - Flashbacks
   - Eating Disorders
   - Fear of the dark, especially at sundown or a full moon
   - Agitation or despair that seems to occur in cycles
   - Fear of ministers, priests, or others wearing robes or uniforms
   - Nightmares or sleep disorders
   - Any of the symptoms of sexual abuse