

# ST. JOHN'S CHILD/YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY

## SEPTEMBER 2017

### Background

St. John's Presbyterian Church, a member congregation of the Presbytery of Donegal and the Presbyterian Church USA, is committed to the spiritual nurture of the children and families in our congregation as they grow to love and serve Jesus Christ. To facilitate such nurture and growth we must create safe spaces and safe relationships for that development.

We also join the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in the commitment to protect the children in our care. The following resources are developed from best practices from churches and child-welfare agencies around the country and are in compliance with PA State Child Protective Service/ Mandatory Reporting Laws as of September 2015.

### Purpose:

Our purpose for establishing this policy is to demonstrate our commitment to the physical and emotional safety as well as spiritual growth of all children and youth at St. John's. It also serves the purpose of establishing safeguards for the adults that serve them. This policy applies to all programs involving children and youth while in the building or on the grounds of St. John's. It also applies while participating or serving in an off-site event or trip sponsored by St. John's.

### Definitions:

Term	Definition
“child” or children	Any person(s) under the age of 18
“adult”	Anyone 18 years of age or older
“child abuse” (as defined under Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law)	“(i) Any recent act or failure to act by a perpetrator which causes non-accidental serious physical injury to a child under 18 years of age. (ii) An act or failure to act by a perpetrator which causes non-accidental serious mental injury to or sexual abuse or sexual exploitation of a child under 18 years of age. (iii) Any recent act, failure to act or series of acts or failures to act by a perpetrator which creates an imminent risk of serious physical injury to or sexual abuse or sexual exploitation of a child under 18 years of age. (iv) Serious physical neglect by a perpetrator constituting prolonged or repeated lack of supervision or the failure to provide essentials of life, including adequate medical care, which endangers a child’s life or development or impairs the child’s functioning.”
“children’s activities”	Any activity or program in which children are under supervision of staff persons or volunteers

“youth activities”	Any activity or program specifically for children in grades 6 through 12. However, youth are still considered children for the purposes of this policy
“staff person”	Any person employed by St. John's
“volunteer”	A person 18 years of age or older, unpaid, who assists with the care, supervision, or guidance of children or who routinely interact with children as a part of a church activity under the supervision of staff.
“helper”	Any person between the ages of 15 and 17 who serves in a volunteer role

## Employees and Volunteers

### Screening Procedure for St. John's Presbyterian Church Staff and Volunteers:

- 1) Staff persons: All staff persons shall be required to complete and provide:
  - A written application and references/ a personal interview
  - Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Record Check
  - Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance through the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services
  - FBI Criminal History Report – this step requires fingerprints
  - Preliminary 3 hour online training regarding mandated reporting or equivalent in-person training
  - Signed Participation Covenant Agreement
- 2) Volunteers: All volunteers who, as part of a regularly scheduled program, activity or service, accept responsibility for a child or have direct contact with children shall be required to complete and provide:
  - Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Record Check
  - Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance through the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services
  - FBI Criminal History Report – this step requires finger prints.
    - If a volunteer has lived in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania consecutively for the last 10 years, a notarized affidavit is acceptable.
  - Signed Participation Covenant Agreement

All volunteers and staff persons who, as part of a regularly scheduled program, activity or service, accept responsibility for a child or have direct contact with children shall be required to be a member of St. John's for at least 6 months or have regularly attended St. John's for at least 2 years prior to serving in a supervisory role in children or youth activities. In the case of new staff hires and teaching elders, references deemed adequate by the Personnel Committee and Pastoral staff will replace the six-month waiting period.

Background checks must be repeated every 60 months. Volunteers with clearances older than 60 months or those without clearances must be in compliance before they can volunteer.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania may change the requirements for clearances at any time. For the most up to date information please check [www.keepkidssafe.pa.gov](http://www.keepkidssafe.pa.gov)

The cost of screening shall be borne by the volunteer. If the financial cost presents a hardship such that it would discourage an individual from volunteering, the individual should speak confidentially to one of the pastors.

All volunteers and staff persons must be at least five (5) years older than the children/youth with whom they are working.

## Working with Children

### Supervision

In order to provide a safe haven and not jeopardize our ministries, the following procedures are required.

- 1) A minimum of two unrelated adult staff and/or volunteers will be in attendance at all times when children are being supervised during programs and activities at or sponsored by St. John's. This may include the presence of an adult “floater” who moves in and out of rooms, provided all doors remain open. For off-site events, there will be a ratio of one adult for every four children who are elementary school age or younger. There will be a ratio of one adult for every 5 middle school or high school youth (5<sup>th</sup> grade and older) for off-site events.
- 2) All activities should occur in open view. Should the children’s activity be an outdoor program or occur in a setting which makes it difficult to comply with this Policy, the staff person in charge of the activity shall take appropriate measures to make sure that the setting suits the activity, and the children are properly supervised.<sup>1</sup>
- 3) Youth ages 15-17 may serve as “helpers” with children at least 5 years younger than themselves. These “helpers” are exempt from background checks; however, they must be responsible and always work in the presence of an adult supervisor or the adult floater as referenced in Item 1) above.
- 4) Overnight activities require at least one adult of each gender when both girls and boys are present. Leaders must ensure that the children/ youth are given appropriate privacy in areas of sleeping, changing and bathing. Sleeping accommodations will be separated by gender. Same gender adults will be present in the sleeping quarters.
- 5) All activities that take place away from St. John's shall have completed permission forms signed by the parents/ guardians.
- 6) Scouting and similar organizational activities that take place away from St. John's are expected to comply with their own rules and regulations. The Church will not be held liable for any activities that take place elsewhere. Those activities within the church will comply with this policy.

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<sup>1</sup>Joy Thornburg Melton, *Safe Sanctuaries: Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse in the Church*, (Nashville, TN: Discipleship Resources, 1998).

In certain situations requiring one-on-one mentoring for a St. John's program such as confirmation, children and youth may be with one adult in a public space (such as a common area in the church, an ice cream parlor, restaurant, or public lobby) with the written permission of the child's parent. The mentor should notify a pastor prior to the meeting with the time and location of the meeting.

### **Check-in/ Check Out Procedure**

For children 4<sup>th</sup> grade and below, a security check-in/check-out procedure will be followed. The child will be signed in and out by a parent/ guardian. If someone other than the parent/ guardian will pick up the child that must be noted and authorized at sign in. Ministry leaders are encouraged to ask for identification if they do not recognize the adult picking up a child.

### **Discipline Policy**

It is the policy of St. John's not to administer corporal punishment, even if parents give permission for it. There will be no spanking, grabbing, hitting, or other physical discipline toward children. Volunteers should consult with ministry leaders if assistance is needed with disciplinary issues.

### **Sick Child Policy**

It is our desire to provide a healthy and safe environment for all the children at St. John's Presbyterian Church. Parents are encouraged to be considerate of other children when deciding whether to place a child under our care. In general, children who in the last 24 hours have exhibited symptoms of fever, diarrhea, vomiting, green/ yellow runny nose, eye or skin infections, or other symptoms of communicable or infectious disease should not be dropped off.

Children who are observed by our staff or volunteers to be ill will be separated from other children and the parent or guardian will be contacted to request the child be picked up.

### **Food/ Allergy Policy**

With the rise of life-threatening food allergies in children, snacks and meals should only be provided to children who have a complete permission slip that notes allergy information on file. If the church is providing snacks, all children present should have access to a snack safe for them, or none should be given. In the event that children do not have documentation on file, parents should be asked to provide food and snacks for their children. Due to the rising prevalence of reactions to airborne peanut allergens, foods with peanuts should be eliminated unless all children present have food sensitivity documentation on file.

### **Medications Policy**

It is the policy of St. John's not to administer either prescription or non-prescription medication to the children under our care. Medications should be administered by a parent at home. Exceptions to the medication policy may be granted in the case of life-saving medications such

as an Epi Pen, inhaler, or glucose tab with an acceptable documented plan signed by a parent/guardian.

In the case of overnight events, the medication policy will be modified so that children and youth can receive their medication. Prescriptions in their original bottles with written and signed instructions will be provided to the adult in charge of the trip. Over-the-counter remedies such as acetaminophen (generic Tylenol®), ibuprofen (generic Advil®) or Benadryl® for allergic reactions may be administered by a trip leader with signed parental/guardian consent.

### **Confidentiality of Medical Information**

Information regarding the medical conditions of children is confidential and is only made available to the adults responsible for care of children/youth when it impacts care.

Confidentiality forms will be signed each year by our Sunday School teachers to ensure that they are aware that medical information for the children/youth in their classes must be kept confidential. In the event information about a contagious illness needs to be shared with others who may have been unknowingly exposed to a sick child, the confidentiality of the children and families will be observed.

### **Restroom Guidelines**

For children five years of age and younger, volunteers will escort a group of children to a hallway bathroom. Children should never be taken to a closed bathroom alone. The volunteers should check the bathroom first to make sure that it is empty, and then allow the children inside. If a child is taking longer than seems necessary, the volunteer should open the bathroom door and call the child's name. If the child requires assistance, the volunteer should prop open the bathroom door and leave the stall open as he/ she assists the child.

For the protection of all, volunteers should never be alone with the child in a bathroom with the door closed and never be in a closed bathroom stall with a child. Parents are strongly encouraged to have children visit the bathroom prior to dropping them off for a class or program.

### **Transportation of Children/ Youth**

Children/ youth may be transported off-site as part of a church sponsored activity provided there is prior written consent from a parent/ guardian (most often in the form of a permission slip which can be found on St. John's website), and an up-to-date participant health form is kept with a responsible adult leader on the trip at all times.

A parent or volunteer who is providing transportation must be at least 21 years of age, provide a copy of his/her driver's license, and proof of insurance for the vehicle being used, in addition to the Commonwealth required clearances noted earlier in this policy. No staff member or volunteer may drive a child or youth alone. There must be two adults in each vehicle transporting children and/or youth.

## Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

As of 2015, the Pennsylvania Mandatory Reporter laws clarify and expand the individuals who qualify as mandated reporters of child abuse. People in the following positions will be defined as mandated reporters:

- Clergy members, including ministers and other spiritual leaders
- An individual, paid or unpaid, who on the basis of the individual's role as an integral part of a regularly scheduled program, activity or service, accepts responsibility for a child. These individuals include those serving at youth camps or programs, sports or athletic programs, outreach programs, enrichment programs, troops, clubs, or similar organizations

When an incident of child abuse occurs, or allegation of an incident within the church or at a church event off-premises is made, or an employee or volunteer otherwise has reasonable cause to suspect child abuse, it is crucial that it be dealt with immediately and in a clearly outlined manner.

1. If a staff person or volunteer has reasonable cause to suspect, based upon his/her training and experience, that a child is a victim of child abuse, the staff person or volunteer shall immediately contact the **Pennsylvania Childline and Abuse Registry (1-800-932-0313)**. Initial reports can also be filled via the website: [www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis](http://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis)
2. This includes situations where:
  - a. A staff person or volunteer comes into contact with a child that has been abused
  - b. An individual makes a specific disclosure to a staff person or volunteer that an identifiable child is the victim of child abuse; or
  - c. An individual 14 years of age or older makes a specific disclosure to you that he/she has committed child abuse.
3. A volunteer may ask an appropriate staff member to be present while the call is placed, however, the volunteer is legally responsible for contacting Childline. Staff members may not influence the decision as to whether or not the incident should be reported, but may help in providing the name, address, and family information of the alleged victim, as well as support to the reporter.
4. After a report is made, the volunteer shall notify the staff person in charge of the activity if he or she has not already done so.
5. The staff person in charge of the activity will immediately notify the Pastoral staff if he or she has not already done so. If the accused is one of the pastors, the other pastor, St. John's Clerk of Session, the Executive Presbyter of Donegal Presbytery and the Stated Clerk of Donegal Presbytery shall be notified immediately.

Any incidences involving Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, or an outside group using the church facility, must, in addition to the statutorily-required reporting, be reported to a pastor.

Individuals under investigation will be required to refrain from all child care/ supervisory activities until the incident report is resolved. If the removal of any person from an activity is

required, care should be taken to handle this in a discreet manner, recognizing that an investigation is still being conducted.

The procedure outlined below shall then be followed under the direction of the pastors if the accused is an employee or volunteer of St. Johns:

1. The Presbytery of Donegal will be notified, along with our insurance company and an incident report will be filed. Our insurance company requires timely reporting of any suspected incident of abuse. Failure to report a loss within 30 days of being made aware of any circumstance which could result in a claim or suit alleging sexual misconduct will void our coverage. Notice sent to our insurance carrier must include the time, place, circumstances of the sexual misconduct including the names and addresses of all persons involved and witnesses. In addition, St. John's should never attempt to settle or resolve any alleged incident of abuse/misconduct without involving the insurance carrier, this too could void our coverage.
2. The church and the presbytery will comply with the legal requirements regarding mandatory reporting of abuse as the law dictates and cooperate with any investigation by the Commonwealth or local authorities. In the event there is not an investigation by the Commonwealth or local authorities, a team will be formed to investigate the circumstances of the incident, acting only in accordance with the Presbytery of Donegal, the PC(USA) Book of Order and the insurance company reporting requirement.
3. Any person who is not found innocent of the alleged abuse or misconduct will be removed from his/her position with children/ youth and appropriate action will be taken.
4. The pastors or designee will be the spokesperson to the media concerning incidents of abuse or neglect unless they are involved. All other staff/ volunteers should refrain from speaking to the media. Pastors should make every effort to maintain pastoral confidentiality in such situations, especially when speaking to the media.

Appendices in this document provide a checklist for reporting child abuse and other documents to assist in assuring the proper information is filed and reported.

## Other Policies

### Other Groups Using St. John's Presbyterian Church Facilities

All those who, as part of a regularly scheduled program, activity or service, accept responsibility for a child or have regular direct contact with children while assisting with Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, as well as independent programs or groups' activities held at St. John's will be required to complete and provide to the local church leaders:

- Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance through the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services
- Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Record Check
- FBI Criminal History Report – this step requires finger prints.
  - If a volunteer has lived in the state of Pennsylvania consecutively for the last 10 years, a notarized affidavit is acceptable. (Appendix F)

These groups shall be required to complete and provide St. John's with a signed Safe Church Covenant Agreement for Outside Groups (Appendix B). They shall also develop and abide by policies consistent with the requirements of this policy.

All information will be kept confidential. Paper copies will be kept in a locked file on the church premises.

### Responsibilities/ Administration of Policy

Oversight of the policy: The Pastors and the Personnel Committee have oversight of this policy and are responsible, along with the Christian Education committee for ensuring that the policy is followed, including adequate training for staff and volunteers on this policy.

Record keeping: The Personnel Chair and/ or his/her designated representative such as the Clerk of Session or administrative assistant shall coordinate efforts to keep accurate, current, and confidential information concerning certification and training records of individuals who may work with children. Clearances and records will be kept on file under lock or passkey for at least 1 year after clearances expire.

Insurance Coverage: The Trustees of St. John's will confirm yearly that our insurance provides sexual misconduct/child abuse coverage for the church. If the policy does not provide coverage, additional coverage to protect the church will be purchased or the leadership will acknowledge the church's responsibility to incur the cost of such allegations.



## Appendices

### Appendix A: Participation Covenant Agreement

#### Participation Covenant Agreement

St. John's Presbyterian Church's purpose for establishing this Agreement is to help St. John's and all our volunteers and employees demonstrate our commitment to the physical and emotional safety, and spiritual growth of our children, youth and all adult workers and volunteers. By signing this agreement, you pledge your support of our common endeavor to keep our children and youth safe.

As a volunteer or church employee, I promise or affirm:

- 1) that I am over 18 years of age.
- 2) that I am willing to submit to and/or provide Criminal and Abuse Background checks.
- 3) that I will never leave children unsupervised in the room where I am leading or helping with a church-sponsored activity or event.
- 4) that I have been a member for 6 months or a regular attender of St. John's for at least two years.
- 5) that I will immediately report any suspected cases of child abuse in accordance with the requirements of law and St. John's Presbyterian Church's Child/ Youth Protection Policy.
- 6) that I will attend church-sponsored training and educational events provided to keep church volunteers informed of church policies and state laws regarding work with children.
- 7) that the information I have provided on this form is true and correct. I authorize St. John's and the Presbytery of Donegal (where appropriate) to verify the information I have provided on this form by conducting a criminal record check or by other means, including contacting others.
- 8) that I will abide by and be bound by the policies of St. John's and to refrain from inappropriate conduct in the performance of my duties on behalf of the church.
- 9) that I have read this agreement and the St. John's Presbyterian Church Child/Youth Protection policy, and I am fully aware of its contents. I sign this consent freely and under no duress or coercion.

Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Witness \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B: Child/ Youth Protection Covenant Agreement for Outside Groups

### Child/ Youth Protection Covenant Agreement for Outside Groups

St. John's Presbyterian Church's purpose for establishing this Agreement with you is to help the church, all church-sponsored and church-affiliated organizations and other organizations using the St. John's buildings or grounds demonstrate our commitment to the physical and emotional safety, and spiritual growth of our children, youth and all adult workers and volunteers. By signing this agreement, you pledge your support of our common endeavor to keep our children and youth safe.

On behalf of the organization named below, I promise and affirm:

1. that we shall require all organization employees and volunteers, who accept responsibility for a child, or have direct contact with children, in the church buildings to complete and provide to us every 5 years:
  - a. Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance through the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare; and
  - b. Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Record Check; and
  - c. FBI Criminal History Report – this step requires finger prints.
    - 1.c.i. If a volunteer has lived in the state of Pennsylvania consecutively for the last 10 years a notarized affidavit is acceptable. *See Appendix F.*
2. that we will maintain a file of all clearances provided under No. 1 above.
3. that we will require employees and volunteers to immediately report any suspected cases of child abuse in accordance with the requirements of law.
4. that we will report any behavior seen as abusive or inappropriate to the Pastoral Staff of St. John's.
5. that we will never leave children unsupervised in the room where we are leading or helping with an activity or event.
6. that we will provide St. John's with a copy of our written policy that incorporates the assurances provided above.

Organization Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Individual (print) \_\_\_\_\_

Title/ Role with Organization (print) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Witness \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix C: Forms for Reporting Suspected Violation of Protection Policy and/or Child Abuse

### Initial Report

#### **St. John's Presbyterian Church Record of Suspected Violation of Safe Sanctuary Policy and/or Child Abuse Report**

Name of person observing or receiving information on suspected violation:

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Name of victim: \_\_\_\_\_

Age of victim: \_\_\_\_\_

Names of Witnesses: \_\_\_\_\_

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Observer's Statement (if additional space needed use the back of this form):

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Name of person accused of violation:

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Reported to (Pastor, Name, Time, Date, Communication Method):

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Notes of report to Pastor:

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Reported to **Pennsylvania Childline and Abuse Registry 1-800-932-0313** (Name, Time, Date):

Reported to Insurance Company (Name, Time, Date, Communication method)

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Signature of person filling out form: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Pastor: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Original of this report to be kept by Pastor in a confidential file.

## Pastor Form

### To be filled out by the Pastor:

Date, Time and name of parent/guardian called:

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Recap of conversation with Parent:

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Date, time and name of law enforcement called:

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Recap of conversation with Law Enforcement Officer:

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Date, time and name of associate called at ChildLine (1-800-932-0313)

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Recap of conversation with ChildLine:

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Other Contacts and/or information:

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*Note: A copy of this form will be sent to the Executive Presbyter of the Presbytery of Donegal in the case of an accusation against an employee or volunteer of the church. Original to be kept by Pastor in a confidential file.*

## ChildLine Report Checklist

### St. John's Presbyterian Church Childline Report Checklist

The staff person or volunteer who observes alleged abuse or to whom such alleged abuse is reported is responsible for making an accurate and timely report. This checklist is to be completed and turned in to the Pastoral Staff along with a copy of the report.

1. Ensure the safety of the children and other adults before leaving to make a report.
2. In an emergency situation, call the local police.
3. Contact or leave message for pastoral staff advising them of the situation.
4. In a non-emergency situation, the individual making the report shall obtain as much information about the alleged victim as possible (i.e. full name, address, family information, etc.). In the case of a volunteer acting as the reporter, a staff member may assist in providing this information.
5. The individual reporting shall call the Pennsylvania Childline and Abuse Registry (1-800-932-0313). The individual shall complete form PA CY47, which can be found online. The Childline operator may have this completed while the reporter is still on the phone. As an alternative, the individual reporting may file a report on-line at [www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis](http://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis)
6. Make 2 copies of form PA CY47. One copy is for the reporter's personal records. The other shall be provided to the Pastoral Staff. Send the original of form PA CY47 to the Pennsylvania Childline and Abuse Registry as noted on the form.
7. The Pastor will submit Report of Suspected Violation of Safe Sanctuary Policy to the Executive Presbyter (Appendix C).

With the exception of the required reports above, the reporting individual should not share with any other person information regarding the alleged child abuse, including the alleged offender. Under no circumstances should the individual make any public statements about the report, as this could give rise to a defamation claim.

Reporter's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Reporter's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix D: Cyber Safety

The internet and portable devices allow people to stay in contact with each other more easily than any other time in history. Some incredible ministry can take place using modern technology, but as with all forms of ministry there are some inherent risks involved with electronic communications. The following policies are meant to minimize those risks. *Please be aware, there is no privacy in Cyberspace.* Accordingly, volunteers and staff persons shall comply with the following guidelines:

### 1. Obtain parental/ guardian permission

Volunteers and staff persons shall receive advanced parental permission for children and youth in writing for:

- Posting or sending photos of participants on any websites or social media platforms, email, or making videos for any use
- Emailing, messaging, calling, texting, or sending data and/ or audio to a child or youth by computer, tablet, cell phone, or other media device
- The sharing of any full name or contact information of a child or youth

### 2. Never post easily identifiable information online

- If you communicate by e-mail with children/ youth, do not use “broadcast” emails
- Use the “Bcc” option so that each recipient sees only his or her own address when a message is received.
- Be cautious when transmitting easily identifiable information like events dates, times, locations, or participants.
- Limit what is communicated in electronic prayer requests. When placing a child or youth on an electronic prayer list, consider only using first names. If someone must know the last name or the mailing address of an individual, have him or her call one of the pastors.

### 3. Limit individual communication with children and youth

- Conduct any communications in a professional manner (even though you may be the sounding board for a person having a bad day, the reverse is not true)
- Save all communications you have with children and youth (emails, messages, Facebook conversations, texts.) An electronic “paper trail” may be important. Do not Snapchat with a child or youth as there is no record of the conversation.
- If you are uneasy about any topic addressed in an email, text, or other messenger conversation with a child or youth, share that conversation with a parent/ guardian (if appropriate) or another trusted adult. Honor privacy, but not secrecy
- If abuse is divulged electronically, follow standard reporting procedures

### 4. Safety Measures for sharing photos electronically

- When posting photos, refrain from using names and never use last names or identifiable information
- Check photos for vulnerable/ compromising situations and make sure they uphold your mission. Check to make sure nametags are not distinguishable.

- We strongly encourage the respect and dignity of every person depicted in an image. Only pictures depicting youth in an appropriate light should be posted. “Appropriate” pictures may include goofy pictures that the youth’s parents are comfortable being posted. If a picture would make the youth feel self-conscious, vulnerable, or would subject the youth to ridicule, the picture should not be posted.
- Limit access by employing the use of a password
- Obtain additional permission to use photos elsewhere (i.e. a journal or website, local paper, etc.)
- When in doubt, don’t post. Consider using stock or purchased photos if you have concerns about sharing photos.

#### 5. Safety measures for using social networking sites

Social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, among others are popular and often spaces useful for communicating. Use judgement when using these programs and follow these guidelines:

- Set privacy settings to limit who can see your profile
- Restrict who can be your “friend.”



## Appendix E: How to Apply for PA Mandated Clearances Staff/ Volunteers

### Church Employees Applying for Clearances – Revised 9/30/15

#### Act 34 Pennsylvania Criminal History Check – every 5 years

This is an online procedure; cost is \$8.00.

Click <https://epatch.state.pa.us/Home.jsp>.

Go to "Submit a New Record Check."

Follow the online instructions.

When your results have processed, record your control number for future reference.

Click on the control number to access your official clearance.

**The clearance certificate will not be available again after you view it. Print and save the certificate immediately.**

Please submit a copy of the certificate to the church and keep a copy for your records.

#### Act 151 Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Check – every 5 years

This is an online procedure; cost is \$8.00.

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

Create an account or log in to an existing account. You will need an email address to create an account.

Follow the online instructions. You will receive an email with a temporary password to use with your Keystone ID.

In order to log in, click "Access My Clearances" to be directed to log in page. Then, "Create a Clearance Application."

For Application Purpose, select "Regular Contact With Child."

You will receive an email to confirm your submission and an email once results have processed.

Record your e-Clearance ID so you can access your results again.

Print and save your certificate.

Please submit a copy of the certificate to the church and keep a copy for your records.

#### Act 114 FBI Criminal History Report – every 5 years

There are two ways to attain this clearance.

*If you volunteer in schools, you may need fingerprints:*

Cost is \$27.00. You must register prior to fingerprinting.

Register at [https://www.pa.cogentid.com/index\\_pde.htm](https://www.pa.cogentid.com/index_pde.htm)

For Reason, select "School Districts."

You will receive an email with a confirmation number.

Record your confirmation number.

Fingerprinting locations are listed online.

On the day of fingerprinting, take:

- valid driver's license or another approved photo ID
- your confirmation number

Your results will be mailed to you.

Please submit a copy of the report to the church and keep a copy for your records.

*If you only work in the church:*

Cost is \$25.75. You must register prior to fingerprinting.

Register at [https://www.pa.cogentid.com/index\\_dpw.htm](https://www.pa.cogentid.com/index_dpw.htm)

For Reason, select "Employment with ... Children."

You will receive an email with a confirmation number.

Record your confirmation number.

Fingerprinting locations are listed online.

On the day of fingerprinting, take:

- valid driver's license or another approved photo ID
- your confirmation number

Your results will be mailed to you.

Please submit a copy of the report to the church and keep a copy for your records.

#### Mandated Reporter Training – every 5 years

This training is required for preschool and daycare employees and for their supervisors.

The training is recommended for clergy and all other employees.

Most employees/volunteers are mandated (required) to report child abuse under the new law.

Training will: 1) define mandated reporters vs. permissive reporters (those who choose to report)

2) teach procedure for reporting suspected child abuse

This is free online training designed to take 3 hours. Go to [www.reportabusepa.pitt.edu](http://www.reportabusepa.pitt.edu).

## Presbytery of Donegal Volunteers Applying for Clearances – Revised 6/13/2017

### Act 34 Pennsylvania Criminal History Check – every 5 years

This is an online procedure; fee is waived for unpaid volunteers.

Click <https://epatch.state.pa.us/Home.jsp>.

Go to "Submit a New Record Check." Follow the online instructions.

When your results have processed, record your control number for future reference.

Click on the control number to access your official clearance.

**The clearance certificate will not be available again after you view it. Print and save the certificate immediately.**

Please submit a copy of the certificate to the church and keep a copy for your records.

### Act 151 Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Check – every 5 years

This is an online procedure; fee is waived for unpaid volunteers.

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

Create an account or log in to an existing account. You will need an email address to create an account.

Follow the online instructions. You will receive an email with a temporary password to use with your Keystone ID.

In order to log in, click "Access My Clearances" to be directed to log in page. Then, "Create a Clearance Application."

For Application Purpose, select "Volunteer having contact with children." Volunteer category is "Other."

You will receive an email to confirm your submission and an email once results have processed.

Record your e-Clearance ID so you can access your results again. Print and save your certificate.

Please submit a copy of the certificate to the church and keep a copy for your records.

### Act 114 FBI Criminal History Report – every 5 years

There are three ways to attain this clearance.

***If you only will volunteer in the church, there are two ways to be cleared. Please follow instructions #1 OR #2:***

***1. Residents of PA for the past 10 years...***

You may submit a signed and notarized affidavit

(<http://tinyurl.com/volunteeraffidavit>) stating you have not been convicted of an offense under State Statute 6344.

***2. Anyone who lived outside PA within the past 10 years...***

You must be fingerprinted. Cost is \$23.00.

You must register prior to fingerprinting.

Register at [https://pacogentid.3m.com/index\\_dpwnNew.htm](https://pacogentid.3m.com/index_dpwnNew.htm).

For Reason, select "DHS Volunteer."

You will receive an email with a confirmation number.

Record your confirmation number.

Fingerprinting locations are listed online.

On the day of fingerprinting, take:

- valid driver's license or another approved photo ID
- your confirmation number

Your results will be mailed to you.

Please submit a copy of the report to the church and keep a copy for your records.

***If you also will volunteer in a school, you may need to be fingerprinted. If so, please follow these instructions:***

Cost is \$24.25. You must register prior to fingerprinting.

Register at [https://www.pa.cogentid.com/index\\_pde.htm](https://www.pa.cogentid.com/index_pde.htm).

For Reason, select "School Districts."

You will receive an email with a confirmation number.

Record your confirmation number.

Fingerprinting locations are listed online.

On the day of fingerprinting, take:

- valid driver's license or another approved photo ID
- your confirmation number

Your results will be mailed to you.

Please submit a copy of the report to the church and keep a copy for your records.

### Mandated Reporter Training – every 5 years

***This training is for all volunteers who work with children/youth weekly and/or overnight.***

***This training is RECOMMENDED for all volunteers.***

Most volunteers are mandated (required) to report child abuse under the new law.

Training will: 1) define mandated reporters vs. permissive reporters (those who choose to report)

2) teach procedure for reporting suspected child abuse

This is free online training designed to take 3 hours. Go to [www.reportabusepa.pitt.edu](http://www.reportabusepa.pitt.edu).



## Appendix F: Affidavit (Alternate to FBI Clearance)



**DISCLOSURE STATEMENT APPLICATION FOR VOLUNTEERS**  
**Required by the Child Protective Service Law**  
**23 Pa. C.S. Section 6344.2 (relating to volunteers having contact with children)**

I swear/affirm that I am seeking a volunteer position and **AM NOT** required to obtain a clearance through the Federal Bureau of Investigation, as:

- the position I am applying for is unpaid; **and**
- I have been a resident of Pennsylvania during the entirety of the previous ten-year period.

I swear/affirm that I have not been named as a perpetrator of a founded report of child abuse within the past five (5) years as defined by the Child Protective Services Law.

I swear/affirm that I have not been convicted of any of the following crimes under Title 18 of the Pennsylvania consolidated statutes or of offenses similar in nature to those crimes under the laws or former laws of the United States or one of its territories or possessions, another state, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or a foreign nation, or under a former law of this Commonwealth.

Chapter 25	(relating to criminal homicide)
Section 2702	(relating to aggravated assault)
Section 2709	(relating to stalking)
Section 2901	(relating to kidnapping)
Section 2902	(relating to unlawful restraint)
Section 3121	(relating to rape)
Section 3122.1	(relating to statutory sexual assault)
Section 3123	(relating to involuntary deviate sexual intercourse)
Section 3124.1	(relating to sexual assault)
Section 3125	(relating to aggravated indecent assault)
Section 3126	(relating to indecent assault)
Section 3127	(relating to indecent exposure)
Section 4302	(relating to incest)
Section 4303	(relating to concealing death of child)
Section 4304	(relating to endangering welfare of children)
Section 4305	(relating to dealing in infant children)
Section 5902(b)	(relating to prostitution and related offenses)
Section 5903(c) (d)	(relating to obscene and other sexual material and performances)
Section 6301	(relating to corruption of minors)
Section 6312	(relating to sexual abuse of children), or an equivalent crime under Federal law or the law of another state.

I have not been convicted of a felony offense under Act 64-1972 (relating to the controlled substance, drug device and cosmetic act) committed within the past five years.

I understand that I shall not be approved for service if I am named as a perpetrator of a founded report of child abuse within the past five (5) years or have been convicted of any of the crimes listed above or of offenses similar in nature to those crimes under the laws or former laws of the United States or one

of its territories or possessions, another state, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or a foreign nation, or under a former law of this Commonwealth.

I understand that if I am arrested for or convicted of an offense that would constitute grounds for denying participation in a program, activity or service under the Child Protective Services Law as listed above, or am named as perpetrator in a founded or indicated report, I must provide the administrator or designee with written notice not later than 72 hours after the arrest, conviction or notification that I have been listed as a perpetrator in the Statewide database.

I understand that if the person responsible for employment decisions or the administrator of a program, activity or service has a reasonable belief that I was arrested or convicted for an offense that would constitute grounds for denying participation in a program, activity or service under the Child Protective Services Law, or was named as perpetrator in a founded or indicated report, or I have provided notice as required under this section, the person responsible for employment decisions or administrator of a program, activity or service shall immediately require me to submit current clearances obtained through the Department of Human Services, the Pennsylvania State Police, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, as appropriate. The cost of clearances shall be borne by the employing entity or program, activity or service.

I understand that if I willfully fail to disclose information required above, I commit a misdemeanor of the third degree and shall be subject to discipline up to and including denial of a volunteer position.

I understand that the person responsible for employment decisions or the administrator of a program, activity or service is required to maintain a copy of my clearances.

I hereby swear/affirm that the information as set forth above is true and correct. I understand that false swearing is a misdemeanor pursuant to Section 4903 of the Crimes Code.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_