
Model Policy for the Protection of Children and Youth



Adopted by Executive Council

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I. THEOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL FOUNDATIONS

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld the Word’s glory, glory as of the only Child from God.”

— John 1:14 (An Inclusive Language Lectionary)

God expressed the fullness of humanity in Jesus of Nazareth, whom we worship as the Word made flesh. To be human is to live with God and the whole of creation in the fullness of freedom and the challenge of responsibility. The pattern of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection resonates unreservedly with God’s call to perfect freedom and responsibility.

In baptism, God, speaking through the Church, claims us in Christ. We become, in Christ, the community of God’s final purpose: justice and peace, love and plenty for the whole creation. This new community lives in Eucharistic fellowship with God and Creation, as a sign and instrument of God’s reconciling purpose in the world.

The Church is called to embody and advance God’s mission. Ministry is the vocation of the whole community: laypersons, deacons, priests, and bishops who together represent Christ and the Church in the world.

The obligation to seek and serve Christ in all persons and to respect the dignity of every human being is binding for all the baptized. The authority with which leaders — ordained persons and adults who minister with minors (children and youth), and youth in leadership roles — are entrusted, creates an inherent power imbalance in the pastoral relationship. This power imbalance derives from the leadership role and, in the case of clergy, the symbolic authority of an ordained person. Christian leadership is intended to provide occasions for guidance and grace, and its abuse is always and unequivocally wrong.

Ministry involves a necessary tension between a Gospel-based integrity and a Gospel-based intimacy as modeled by the life of Christ. A rigid adherence to a system of rules leads to an unproductive legalism. Yet, without the framework of the law, the intimate relationships into which Christ calls us risk distortion and harm. All the people of God are called to minister attentively within this tension. These model policies are intended to provide a pattern for attentive practice of ministry.

This document is a statement for the Episcopal Church, setting forth expectations for its leaders in their relationships with children and youth. The purpose of these model policies is to foster the highest standards of behavior in ministry settings. The document includes:

- Screening and Training Protocols (Appendix A), which explains the level of screening and training required before engaging in ministry with children and youth;
- A description of requisite training that is specialized and tailored to ministry role and function;
- Behavioral standards designed to ensure that children and youth and all who engage in ministry with them are treated with dignity and respect in all settings; and
- Recommended Practices and Guidelines for Social Media and Electronic Communications (Appendix C).

II. EXPECTATIONS AND LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION

This model policy sets forth statements of general expectations and guidelines of behavior for ordained and lay people in the church when engaged in ministry with children and youth. This policy is mandated for all such activities sponsored by every congregation, institution, organization, school, and agency of each diocese. The purpose of these policies is to create safe and welcoming space for all children and youth in our communities and those engaged in ministry with children and youth and to prevent sexual abuse.

This policy is a model and, as such, it presents best practices for creating such safe space. Circumstances in many localities may make some of these best practices difficult to implement or even unworkable. In these cases, local entities may make additions or revisions in developing local policy so long as they meet or exceed the requirements of these policies. This requires that local leadership understand this policy thoroughly enough to make appropriate judgments about local circumstances. Any such additions or revisions must be submitted in writing for the approval of the bishop or Executive Council. No provisions may be omitted from a local policy.

Church governing bodies and all leaders should understand these policies and all local requirements thoroughly enough to make appropriate judgments, and should consult Diocesan Life staff (Missioner for Lifelong Christian Formation or Ministry Coordinator) when unanticipated situations arise.

No policy can foresee every possible circumstance to which it may be applied. Whenever applicable, questions of civil, criminal, and/or ecclesiastical discipline and employment offenses should be addressed with the relevant authorities immediately. Please contact the Office of the Bishop for consultation and resources if assistance is needed.

III. DEFINITIONS

NOTE: These definitions reflect our understanding of terms describing gender identity and sexuality, which are evolving as these model policies are being written.

Adult: Anyone who is 18 years or older and not in high school (see footnote to youth on page 6).

Bullying: Behavior that intimidates, humiliates, offends, degrades, or harms another person, whether verbal, psychological, social, physical, or otherwise.

Child: Anyone under the age of 12 years (see footnote to youth on page 6).

Child Protective Services: A social services program provided by state and local governments serving children and their families who are in need of assistance. Child Protective Services receive and investigate reports of suspected abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Cisgender: An adjective describing a person whose sense of personal identity and gender corresponds with their gender or sex assigned at birth. This is an evolving term, as our understanding and language around gender identity and sexuality expands and matures.

Gender Non-Binary: An umbrella term for people who identify their gender as neither male nor female. These people might identify as both (“bigender”), neither (“agender”), a mix between the two (“genderfluid”), or they can be unsure of their gender (“genderqueer”). This is an evolving term, as our understanding and language around gender identity and sexuality expands and matures.

Intake Officer: The person(s) designated by each diocese to receive information regarding an offense for which a member of the clergy may be held accountable under Title IV of the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church, which sets out the disciplinary process for clergy. Anyone may contact an Intake Officer to report concerns.

Leader: A person, adult or youth, who, for the benefit of another, engages in ministry without responsibility for oversight of others engaged in that same ministry. Examples include Sunday school teachers, camp counselors, and program team.

LGBTQ+: An acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, and others. It refers to people whose gender identities vary from their gender or sex assigned at birth, or whose sexual orientations differ from the heterosexual majority. The “+” is an effort to include additional gender identities. This is an evolving term, as our understanding and language around gender identity and sexuality expands and matures.

Mandated Reporter: A person who is required by state law to report reasonable suspicions of abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation of vulnerable populations to the appropriate state agency. State laws vary greatly. Generally, state law mandates that either all adults or adults in certain professions report suspected abuse of children and/or youth.

It is imperative to know the requirements of applicable state laws. Typically, individuals who are not mandated to report suspicion of abuse may make a report to the appropriate state agency, even though not legally required to do so.

Off-Site: Any location other than the sponsoring Episcopal Church, institution, facility, or campus.
Organizations: All institutions for which the diocese or congregations have legal or fiduciary responsibility (examples: diocesan departments, commissions, conference & retreat centers, adult day care centers, retirement communities, religious orders, congregations, schools, etc.).

Overnight: Any event that starts on one calendar day and ends on a different calendar day.

Pastoral Relationship: Any relationship (1) between a Member of the Clergy and any person to whom the Member of the Clergy provides or has provided counseling, pastoral care, spiritual direction or spiritual guidance, or from whom such Member of the Clergy has received information within the Rite of Reconciliation of a Penitent, or (2) between a lay minister and any person to whom the lay minister is offering prayer, ministry, and/or any person from whom the lay minister has received sensitive, personal, or confidential information in the course of offering ministry.

Programs: Official activities and programs sponsored by The Episcopal Church and its provinces, dioceses, and congregations (examples include: The Episcopal Youth Event, Provincial Youth Events, Happening, Teens Encounter Christ, pilgrimages, mission experiences, New Beginnings, camp programs, Acolyte Festival, etc.).
Public Records Check: A search of documents and data available to the public including criminal and civil court records, credit reports, and driving records from the department of motor vehicles. Typically, such searches are conducted by a third party with expertise in this area.

Responsible Person: The person designated as being accountable for compliance with this policy for an event or program.

Sacramental Use: Consecrated or unconsecrated wine used in the setting of Eucharist.

Sexual misconduct: A broad term encompassing any behavior of a sexual nature that is committed without consent or capacity for consent or by force, intimidation, coercion, or manipulation. Sexual misconduct can be committed by a person of any gender, and it can occur between people of the same or different gender.

Supervisor: A person who has oversight responsibilities for a ministry program and/or Leaders in a ministry program.

Title IV: A section of the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church pertaining to clergy professional standards, accountability and ecclesiastical discipline.

Transgender: An adjective describing a person whose sense of personal identity and gender does not correspond with the gender or sex assigned to them at birth. This is an evolving term, as our understanding and language around gender identity and sexuality expands and matures.

Training: Organized activity designed to provide information and/or instructions to strengthen and enhance the recipient's understanding, capacity, and exercise of ministry.

-Universal Training: A standard of training that will foster a culture of safety and inclusion for all people that includes a broad overview of issues of vulnerability, power, and healthy boundaries. This training is designed to equip all people to live out their Baptismal Covenant.

-Specialized Training: A standard of additional training that equips people who participate in or have oversight responsibility for ministries. In addition to Universal Training, a person will have access to training that is specialized and tailored to their role and ministry function.

Youth: Anyone who is at least 12 years old, but not yet 18 years old. A youth may also be an individual who is 18 years old or older, and still in high school.

¹*Ages established in accordance with generally accepted definitions in the United States. These ages may vary across the wider Episcopal Church.*

IV: APPLICATION AND SCREENING

Dioceses, congregations, and other organizations are required to screen all persons according to the standards in the **Screening and Training Protocols (Appendix A)**. For some positions, screening consists only of a Public Records Check. For other positions there are additional screening requirements of a written application, interview, and reference verification.

A. Public Records Checks

- Congregations and other organizations shall use a provider approved by the diocese to conduct public records checks. Such checks must be completed before the employee or volunteer begins interacting with children and youth;
- Criminal public records checks shall include all available criminal records and sex offender registries;
- A Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) records check is needed if transporting children and youth as part of, or an extension of, ministry of the church or for a church-sponsored event;
- A credit check is required with check signing authority and if making deposits; and
- Public records checks must be updated at least every five years.

B. Additional Screening Requirements

Written application, interview, and reference verification are required before serving in certain roles and ministries as specified in the **Screening and Training Protocols (Appendix A)**. Where required, these components are generally conducted in the following order:

- Submission of a completed written application to serve in a specified role with a clearly defined, written “job description.” The application includes verifiable personal information;
- Personal interview by the person they report to;
- Reference verification conducted by congregations and other organizations to verify personal information and check references listed in the application (people who know but are not related to the applicant); and
- Maintenance of these records as described below.
- Potential Leaders or Supervisors must be known and active in the congregation for at least six months before engaging in ministry with children and youth, unless they are required to have public records checks and reference checks pursuant to the Screening and Training Protocols (Appendix A).
- Dioceses, congregations, and other organizations must keep and maintain all application and screening records secure and confidential in the diocese, congregation’s, or organization’s office. This includes a signature by each applicant verifying receipt of a copy of this policy, including any local procedures or variations.

V. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Training shall be appropriate to each person's function according to the **Screening and Training Protocols (Appendix A)**.

All Leaders shall have Universal Training that fosters a culture of safety and inclusion for all people and covers a broad overview of issues of vulnerability, power, and healthy boundaries. Universal Training is designed to equip all people to live out their Baptismal Covenant. All members of the Episcopal Church shall have access to this training.

In addition to Universal Training, all Supervisors and those with oversight responsibilities for ministry programs and/or other adults who engage in ministry with children and youth shall have Specialized Training that is tailored to their role and ministry function.

Depending on role and responsibility, Specialized Training should include:

- Prevention, identification, and response to all forms of abuse and neglect;
- Vulnerability within the pastoral relationship;
- An introduction to gender non-binary;
- The needs of LGBTQ+ children and youth;
- The ways that children and youth can engage in self-advocacy; and
- The needs of differently-abled children and youth.

Certification of training shall be renewed every three years.

Dioceses, congregations, and other organizations with responsibility for programs with services or ministries to children and youth shall keep records sufficient to evidence compliance with this policy.

VI. MONITORING AND SUPERVISION OF PROGRAMS

A Responsible Person shall monitor and supervise the behavior of adults, children, and youth to ensure appropriate behavior and healthy boundaries.

All people who minister to children and youth must have ongoing supervision. Ongoing supervision should consist of regular check-ins by the Supervisor who may be parish clergy or a team leader. Such supervision shall review the scope, accountability, and responsibility of the ministry with the person engaged in the ministry. Each person engaged in such ministry should know who supervises their ministry and how to contact the Supervisor at all times.

Dioceses, congregations, and organizations shall ensure that all people who minister to children and youth receive prior training as to the scope, accountability, and responsibility of the ministry.

Dioceses, congregations, and organizations shall maintain an up-to-date list of persons with their contact information approved to minister to children and youth. This list shall be kept in the organization's office or other place where records are kept.

A. Unrelated Adults Required

There shall be at least two unrelated adults (at least two years older than the eldest participant) present at ministry settings and events designed for children and youth. If unanticipated circumstances result in an adult being alone with children or youth, that adult shall report those circumstances to the Supervisor, clergy in charge, senior warden, or Responsible Person as soon as possible.

Only one adult may be sufficient in well-monitored, visually accessible program space on the church grounds, such as a Sunday School classroom, provided that another adult can maintain visual contact with the adult program leader. This can be accomplished by designating an individual to conduct frequent random checks of classrooms and unlocked spaces throughout the building(s). These exceptional circumstances must be specifically described in a written document and approved by the governing body of the congregation. See also sections on Overnight Programs (Section VI, I) and Transportation (Section VI, J).

See Appendix B for the North Carolina State Law regarding Mandated Reporters

B. Creating Safe Space for Children and Youth

To create a safe space, it is necessary to anticipate and avoid circumstances in which children and youth are exposed to inappropriate consumables, materials, unmonitored adult contact, or unsupervised peer contact.

For example:

- Alcoholic beverages.** Alcohol (sacramental or otherwise) shall not be stored in publicly accessible areas of the church buildings.
- Computers and electronic devices.** Children and youth shall have adequate supervision when using electronic devices belonging to dioceses, congregations, and other organizations. Devices shall have adequate password protection. Each user shall have their own account and password. See Recommended Practices and Guidelines for Social Media and Electronic Communications (Appendix C).
- Persons with keys and access to locked spaces.** Anyone with keys or electronic access to church buildings shall meet all the requirements for screening and training according to the Screening and Training Protocols (Appendix A).
- Unused spaces.** Spaces not in use should not be readily accessible. Given the vast differences in facilities, each diocese, congregation, and other organization should determine how best to meet this standard.

C. One-to-One Conversations with Children or Youth

When one-to-one conversations occur between an adult and a child or youth, another unrelated adult is either to be present or capable of visually monitoring the conversation.

Examples include:

- Planned or unplanned on-site conversations can take place in a public location, away from where others can hear but in view of other adults.

-Planned off-site conversations/meetings can take place in a public place (such as a coffee shop or restaurant) in view of other adults. A Responsible Person shall be informed about the appointment or plans in advance.

-Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed if a child or youth discloses a situation pertaining to abuse, neglect, self-harm, or exploitation because of mandatory reporting laws.

-Impulsive, secluded or secretive activity, online or in person with children or youth, may foster high-risk situation, and is therefore to be avoided. See Recommended Practices and Guidelines for social media and Electronic Communications (Appendix C).

D. Basic Needs

No one is to be deprived of the basic human needs of food, drinking water, shelter, sleep, access to restrooms, safety, and clothing at any event.

Exceptions may be made for programs intended to teach children or youth about poverty, need, and hunger, such as an intentional fasting program. In these cases, children and youth must agree to participate in writing, and parents or guardians must give written permission that includes certification that the youth or child does not have a medical condition that would put the participant at risk by fasting or missing sleep. Participants who wish to withdraw or who are unable to complete the program must have their basic needs met immediately.

E. Inclusiveness

No one shall be denied rights, status or access to an equal place in the life, worship, and governance of any program or activity because of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, differing abilities, or socio-economic class. To the extent possible, all spaces and settings for programs, activities, and ministry shall be accessible.

The Episcopal Church seeks to support all children and youth by providing reasonable alternative arrangements regardless of state law to address safety and comfort.

Transgender, genderqueer, or gender non-binary children or youth who express the need or desire for increased privacy should be provided with reasonable alternative arrangements. Reasonable alternative arrangements may include the use of a private area, or a separate changing schedule, or use of a single stall restroom. Any alternative arrangement should be provided in a way that protects the child or youth's ability to keep their transgender status confidential. They should not be required to use a locker room or restroom that conflicts with their genderidentity.

Safe bathroom/shower facilities will be provided by gender (or specific times will be assigned to the use of a single facility).

Adults should either have separate shower facilities or shower at other times than the youth. Separate dressing facilities should also be provided. See section on Overnight Programs (Section VI, I).

F. Violence and Weapons

- No one is to strike, hit, or otherwise physically threaten or harm anyone at any time.
- Bullying of any kind by anyone is prohibited.
- Children and youth shall not have weapons of any kind at any event or program for children or youth. Exceptions to this restriction may be made for camp programs or other specific programs with prior approval.
 - +Types of weapons include, but are not limited to: firearms, knives, fireworks, other explosives, or any other kind of weapon
- Report suspected violations immediately. See Suspected Violations of this Policy (Section VII, B).

G. Behavioral Standards for Adults in Ministry with Children or Youth

Adults who work with children and youth are expected to model the patterns of healthy relationships that children and youth deserve in all settings. Interactions should meet all requirements outlined above, and adults should be discouraged from initiating a private relationship with any unrelated child or youth from the church away from sanctioned church activities.

DOs

Adults are encouraged to:

- Have ongoing spiritual practices, which might include daily prayer, regular participation in corporate worship, and Bible study;
- Spend time with and listen to children and youth, and advocate for their ministry within the Body of Christ;
- Offer appropriate physical expressions of care, which may include:
 - +high fives and fist bumps;
 - +hand holding while walking with small children or in prayer;
 - +brief touching of shoulders, hands, or arms;
 - + “laying on of hands” under appropriate pastoral supervision;
 - +brief hugs and arms around shoulders; and
- Model appropriate affection with other adults and be accountable to the community for behavior.

DON'Ts

Adults shall not under any circumstances:

- Provide children or youth with non-sacramental alcohol, marijuana, drugs, cigarettes, tobacco products, e-cigarettes, vapes, or pornography;
- Arrive under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or misused legal drugs at any children's or youth event or when they are responsible for children or youth at an event;

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- Consume non-sacramental alcohol or illegal drugs or misuse legal drugs at any children's or youth event or when they are responsible for children or youth at an event;
 - Engage in illegal behavior or permit other adults or children or youth to engage in illegal behavior;
 - Engage in any sexual, romantic, illicit, or secretive relationship or conduct with any child or youth; or
 - Apart from planned pre-approved educational programs, discuss their own sexual activities, fantasies, or their own use, or abuse of drugs or alcohol with children or youth.

Anyone who suspects a violation of these policies shall take steps as outlined in Responding to Concerns (Section VII).

H. Special Considerations for Off-Site Programming

Off-site programs, trips, and events are a welcome and often necessary means for spiritual, social, and emotional development of children and youth. They also present additional challenges for maintaining best practices for safe and healthy ministry. The expectations for safe space, as described above, should be observed off-site.

In the event of uncertainty about application of the policy, the Responsible Person should contact their Supervisor with the relevant queries.

Because of the unique risks that can't always be anticipated, it is important to obtain permissions and manage documentation as described below.

1. Prior Approvals

- Prior approval by the governing body and the member of the clergy in charge is required, and that approval shall be reflected in the minutes of the governing body. Diocesan sponsored programs, trips, or events shall receive prior diocesan approval.
- Written parental approval is required prior to viewing any movie, whether off- site or on-site, rated "PG-13" or above, or participating in any conversation or program containing sexually explicit or violent content.
- These same prior approvals are required when the site is a private residence, hosting such events as cook outs, pool parties, progressive dinners, etc.

2. Registration, Waiver, and Release Forms

- All children, youth, and adults shall complete and sign a registration form and a waiver and release form before participating in any programs. Confidentiality must be preserved with respect to medical and other sensitive information in the forms. Such forms can encompass a program year.
 - +There must be a parent/guardian's signature on all release and waiver forms for minors. Digital signatures for permission forms including medical waivers, permission to participate, and are permitted by North Carolina state law.

+Completed release and waiver forms shall be maintained in a secure location on-site or online. All forms (medical waivers, permission to participate, etc.) may be stored electronically for out of town or overnight trips.

-Permission slips shall be provided for each off-site event and shall be signed by the parent/guardian.

-Prior permission for a minor to be photographed or recorded on film, videotape, audiotape, or other electronic media is required from a parent/guardian.

3. First Aid and Medications

-Current certification in First Aid, CPR, and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is strongly encouraged for those who work with children and youth.

-A first aid kit, appropriately stocked for the event and participants, shall be available in an easily accessible location.

-A record must be kept for all medication, or first aid given to a participant. This record shall include the participant's name, the date and time of event, the name of the person administering medication or treatment, and a description of the medication, dosage, and/or treatment given.

-All medications (prescription and over the counter) belonging to minors shall be given to the Responsible Person, unless otherwise agreed upon by the parents and the Responsible Person. Exceptions may include inhalers, epi-pens, and birth-control pills.

-Only the Responsible Person, or their adult designee, shall administer medications.

-Require, at minimum, one chaperone, age 25 or older, to be currently certified in First Aid, CPR, and AED operation for out-of-town and offsite events and trips.

4. Supervision

-At any gathering of children or youth, there shall be at least two unrelated adults with one being age 25 or older, preferably reflecting the sex and gender identity of the participants.

-Minimum ratios of adult to child/youth shall be in accordance with American Camp Association (ACA) guidelines as follows:

+5 years & younger — 1 adult for each 5 overnight-participants and 1 adult for each 6 day participants

+6–8 years — Minimum of 1 adult for every 8 participants during the day, and a minimum of 1 adult for every participants for overnight

+9–14 years — Minimum of 1 adult for every 8 participants for onsite activities or meetings;

+15–18 years — Minimum of 1 adult for every 10 participants for onsite activities or meetings,

+9 – 18 years --Minimum of 1 adult for every 8 overnight participants

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- Additional adults can provide skills, mentorship, support, encouragement, spiritual guidance, and joy.
 - When you have new leaders-in-training, the leadership teams should also have a reasonable number of experienced adult leaders to provide support.
 - Events for children 6 – 11 years of age shall be given the minimum opportunity to sleep 9 hours in a 24-hour period.
 - Events for young people 12 – 18 years of age (middle and high school) shall be given the minimum opportunity to sleep 8 hours in a 24-hour period.

5. Insurance

All trips to off-site destinations must have adequate insurance in case of emergency. For more information, contact your insurance broker.

I. Overnight Programs

In overnight programing, particular attention will be given to historically excluded or unrecognized people, such as LGBTQ+ and differently abled individuals. In a situation of unequal power and safety, preferences of these individuals merit additional consideration, accommodation, and action to ensure:

- Participant privacy;
- Maximization of social integration of all participants;
- Minimization of stigmatization of any participants;
- Equal opportunity to participate; and
- Safety of all participants.

Other guidelines for overnight programs:

- The safe use of restrooms and showers by all participants requires dioceses, congregations and other organizations to consider numerous factors, including, but not limited to; age, sex, gender identity and expression, and privacy. Adults should have separate showers or separate times for showers.
- Overnight programs shall provide safe, supervised sleeping arrangements.
 - +No bed, cot, or sleeping bag shall have more than one person sleeping in it.
 - +Supervision by two unrelated adults is required in any space where one or more youth are sleeping.
 - +It is acceptable for all participants to sleep in the same open area when dressing rooms and bathrooms provide appropriate privacy.
- Participants shall have access to three substantial meals each full day and access to sufficient water.
- Participants shall be given the opportunity for at least seven hours of sleep each 24-hour period, except for programs where parental/guardian permission is given to miss sleep. In these cases, children and youth must agree to participate in writing, and parents or guardians must give written permission that includes certification that the youth or child does not have a medical condition that would put the participant at risk by missing sleep.
- Participants shall have some time set aside each day for rest or free time.

Best practice guidelines for hotel stays:

- One child or youth per bed, including cots, pullouts or hide-a-beds, and rollaway beds;
- At least 2 children or 2 youth in each room.
- Adult supervisors or chaperones have rooms on the same floor, scattered among the rooms with children or youth, and at least one adult room is by the stairs or elevators;
- Adult leader assigns rooms and room occupants;

J. Transportation

- For the health and safety of all participants, the following practices shall be followed: For events that originate and/or terminate at the diocesan, congregation, or organization's facility, all drivers must be at least 21 years of age and provide proof of insurance and a current driver's license, a completed volunteer driver information form, and have a satisfactory DMV records check.
- All drivers and riders must comply with state laws including seat belt and cell phone usage.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for the transportation and safety of their children and/or youth to and from the event. This responsibility includes the transportation of any other passengers in their vehicle.
- For events that originate or terminate at diocesan, congregation or organization's facilities, all drivers transporting young people should be at least 25 years of age and provide proof of insurance (liability and collision), current driver's license, a completed volunteer information form and have a satisfactory DMV records check.

K. Camps and Retreat Centers

All camps, camping programs, and retreat centers of the diocese shall follow the guidelines for off-site programming established in this policy. In addition, camps should aim to follow American Camp Association standards to the best of the camp's ability.

L. Travel

Travel with children and youth presents amazing opportunities for participants to experience the church and the world on a larger scale with vastly different perspectives of faith communities and their contexts. It also presents challenges to normal safety protocols and opportunities for creativity if managed well. The following policies will help groups prepare for a variety of potential scenarios, as well as for domestic and international travel.

1. Adult Leaders and Chaperones

- Minimum ratios of adult to youth need to be greater due to the possibility of leaving an adult behind with a participant in the event of a medical emergency.
 - 9–14 years — 1:5
 - 15–18 years — 1:7

-Regardless of group size, no group should travel with fewer than three adult chaperones.

-One adult, minimum age 25, should serve as the travel administrator who is responsible for all aspects of the trip, including carrying all necessary documentation, contacts, and forms including:

- +medical releases; community covenant;
- +emergency contacts;
- +itineraries; and
- +cash and/or credit card capacity to address emergencies.

-It is a best practice that, one adult, minimum age 25, should hold a current medical certification to manage administration of necessary and permissible medications, administer immediate and necessary first aid, and triage medical situations to determine if care of an individual needs to be taken to a higher level of care. When this is not possible, one person should be designated to supervise the administration of medications as instructed on medical release forms, and a clinic near your destination should be identified ahead of time in order to respond to health emergencies as rapidly as possible.

-Acceptable medical certifications include:

- +Wilderness Medical Response
- +Outdoor Emergency Care
- +Emergency Medical Technician/Paramedic
- +Nurse — RN/LPN/Nurse Practitioner
- +Physician's Assistant
- +Medical Doctor

-Best practice is to designate an adult to serve as back-up to the travel administrator, and as back-up for simple first aid and administration of prescriptions. These could be the same person.

-A copy of all documents should be left with an accountable person at the diocesan, congregation, or organization's office. That person should also serve as the local emergency contact person for communications between the traveling group and families at home.

2. Insurance for Travel

-Short-term trip or supplemental insurance, available through most church and organization's policies as an added rider, must be secured at-least one month prior to travel.

-It is recommended that all travelers carry evidence of personal health insurance by virtue of a copy of the actual card provided to the insured person.

-Because not all individuals have access to affordable and adequate health insurance, it is recommended that health insurance be added to trip insurance.

3. International Considerations

-Check in with the U.S. Department of State on travel requirements, including visas.

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- Make certain that every traveler's passport is valid for at least six months beyond your return date.
 - Determine whether or not vaccinations are required and/or recommended for entry into specific countries.
 - Arrange to have at least two cell phones with the group that will have active coverage in your destination(s). Make a back-up plan for communication with your Responsible Person at home.
 - A more thorough list of international travel considerations with links to U.S. and global organizations can be found in the Youth in Mission Manual: http://www.episcopalchurch.org/files/7-traveling_7.pdf

VII. RESPONDING TO CONCERNS

A. Suspected Abuse, Neglect, or Exploitation of Children and Youth

Any adult who has reason to suspect that abuse, neglect, or exploitation of children or youth has taken place, is strongly encouraged, and all mandated reporters are required to contact the state's Child Protective Services.

In addition, anyone who has reason to suspect that abuse, neglect, or exploitation of children or youth has taken place within a facility or program of the diocese, congregation, or other organization, should immediately inform one of more or the following:

- The bishop or the bishop's office in the case of a diocese;
- Member of the clergy in charge or the senior warden in the case of a congregation;
- The director, head, or other governing officer in the case of other organizations; and/or
- The Intake Officer in case a member of the clergy is suspected of abuse, neglect and/or exploitation.

B. Suspected Violations of this Policy

Anyone who suspects a violation of these policies shall immediately report the violation to the Responsible Person, member of the clergy in charge, and senior warden.

Clergy in charge receiving reports of violations of this policy shall be responsible for providing appropriate pastoral care to all those affected and appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or unpaid ministry with the church. If the Responsible Person is a lay person, they are responsible to ensure that appropriate pastoral care is provided for all.

Anyone who suspects a violation of these policies by a member of the clergy shall immediately report the violation to the bishop's office and/or the Intake Officer. Anyone can make a report to an Intake Officer.

The bishop, hearing reports of violations by clergy, or by laity at diocesan events, shall be responsible for providing appropriate pastoral care to all those affected and appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action, up to and including canonical disciplinary action, as provided by Title IV of the Constitutions and Canons and/or termination of employment or unpaid ministry with the diocese.

C. Local Resources for Response

Each diocese, congregation, or organization shall provide a list of local resources that can give information and assistance to anyone concerned about circumstances that may violate this policy (See Appendix E). Such resources with contact information shall include:

- Responsible Person(s) for programs and ministries with children and youth;
- Clergy in charge of a congregation;
- Wardens;
- Bishop;
- Intake Officer(s); and
- Child Protective Services.

VIII. POLICY ADOPTION, IMPLEMENTATION, AND AUDIT

A. The Episcopal Church Adoption and Implementation

The Episcopal Church shall ensure that all programs and events of the Episcopal Church involving children and youth comply with the standards set out in this model policy.

The Episcopal Church shall also ensure that each diocese adopts a Policy for the Protection of Children and Youth in accordance with this model policy by January 1, 2019.

B. Diocesan Adoption, Implementation, and Audit

The Diocese of East Carolina's Executive Council adopted model policies and recommendations for revisions on March 4, 2021, including a requirement for organizations and institutions to implement on or before May 31, 2022.

Dioceses may adopt site-specific variations from this model policy, where permitted by their governing body, dioceses may adopt site-specific variations from this model policy which shall be described in detail, including the circumstances under which those variations are to be permitted and their rationale. This approval shall be recorded in the minutes of the governing body.

The bishop or Executive Council for each diocese shall inform congregations and other organizations within the diocese of the contents of the diocesan policy, the requirement that each congregation or organization adopt a policy in accordance with the diocesan policy, and the vendor(s) approved by each diocese to conduct Public Records Checks.

The Diocese of East Carolina's Executive Council will review a diocesan Safe Church Self-Audit 9 months after implementation and then every three years to comply with diocesan safe church policies. Links to the Self-Audit form will be emailed to the program Administrator during the Audit window and will be available for download on the Diocesan website.

Procedures to be confirmed by audit will include (but are not limited to):

- Existence of diocesan policy that is consistent with and/or exceeds the requirements of this model policy;

-Provision of accessible and appropriate training for all those who work with children and youth in accordance with Screening and Training Protocols (Appendix A).

+Additional resources may be added and required for inclusion and sensitivity training for LGBTQ+ individuals.

-Verification that each congregation and/or organization within the diocese has adopted a policy that is consistent with and/or exceeds the diocesan policy; and

-Verification that each congregation and/or organization has a process to ensure members' access training and conduct public record checks.

C. Congregation and Organization Adoption, Implementation, and Audit

Congregations and organizations must adopt a Policy for the Protection of Children and Youth that is consistent with and/or exceeds the requirements in this model policy and the diocesan policy.

Congregations and organizations may adopt site-specific variations from diocesan policies, where permitted by vestries or governing bodies, which shall be described in detail, including the circumstances under which those variations are to be permitted and their rationale. This approval shall be recorded in the minutes of the vestry or governing body.

The Policy for the Protection of Children and Youth shall be posted in an area where activities take place, and shall be given to all adults, guardians, and all paid and unpaid persons who minister to children or youth. These policies shall include the names and phone numbers of the member of the clergy in charge, the senior warden, and a contact person in the bishop's office.

Each congregation and organization is required to conduct a Safe Church Self-Audit annually to confirm compliance with safe church policies, and to report such audit to the bishop's office.

Procedures to be confirmed by audit will include (but are not limited to):

- Public records checks, application forms, records of screening and reference verification of paid and unpaid persons;
- Records of compliance with Screening and Training Protocols (Appendix A);
- Procedures for responding to concerns and incidents; and
- Evidence of compliance with "safe space" requirements.

Appendix A

Screening and Training Protocols

Dioceses, congregations, and other organizations are required to screen all persons according to the standard in the Screening and Training Protocols. For some positions, screening consists of a basic background check. For other positions there are additional screening requirements of a written application, interview, and reference verification. The chart on the following pages is a standard checklist for each role within the diocese, congregation or organization setting.

Key:

Application & Interview w/References: An application should be complete by applicant, interview conducted, and past employment/personal references checked.

Background Check: Includes Social Security Verification, National Criminal Database search, National Sex Offender Registry and County Criminal Search

By Diocese: This means that the Diocesan Office is responsible for conducting.

By Parish: This means parishes/organizations are responsible for conducting

Credit Check: This is for individuals who handle or manage money.

DMV: Division of Motor Vehicles 7 Year Check

Online SGT: Online Safeguarding God's Training

Receive Policies: Model Policies for the Protection of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults

Regularly: This means 6 or more times annually

Note: Appendix A revised 12/10/21