

## Child Protection Policy

### Theological Statement/Purpose for our Policy

- To provide protection and a safe environment for all the children of Memorial Park Church.**
  - Recognizing God's Word as ultimate authority, we seek to follow His example of loving and having tender concern for all children (Luke 18:16). Our policy is based upon our love for all children, who were made in the image of God. The purpose of this policy is to provide a safe place for the moral and spiritual development of children involved in the Memorial Park Christian Preschool, Children's Ministries, and Student Ministries programs.
  - We understand that our church is not immune to the depravity of man, and thus we will take every measure to care for and protect children from any and all forms of abuse. As we seek to uphold the name of Jesus, and be his hands and feet, we commit to everything in our power to protect our children and families.
- To train and empower our staff and volunteers in their role as a mandated reporter, while protecting them from being falsely accused or suspected of any wrongful behavior towards a child.**
  - While the topic of child abuse is a difficult one, we believe that we have been called to both protect all children in our church and uphold the laws of our state and country (1 Peter 2:13-17).
  - We desire to have workers and volunteers who are rich in knowledge in their role as a mandated reporter, and help to cultivate a safe environment.
  - We also acknowledge that false accusations can do a great deal of damage to an individual and a ministry. Our procedures and policies are designed to protect a worker or volunteer from finding themselves in a compromising situation in the first place
- Scriptural basis:**
  - Avoid every kind of evil.* 1 Thessalonians. 5:22
  - But among you there must be not even a hint of sexual immorality...because these are improper for God's holy people.* Ephesians 5:3
  - If anyone causes one of these little ones – those who believe in me – to stumble, it would be better for them to have a large millstone hung around their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.* Matthew 18:6

### CHILD ABUSE AS DEFINED UNDER PA CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES LAW (CPSL)

Although this policy focuses primarily on child sexual abuse, all forms of child abuse are prohibited, and are included under this policy.

### DEFINITION OF ABUSE

Definitions of abuse from the Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law (CPSL) [Title 23 PA.C.S. Chapter 63], as amended December, 2013, to be effective December 31, 2014, as follows:

Intentionally, knowingly or recklessly doing any of the following:

- Physical abuse – Causing bodily injury through any recent act or failure to act. Creating a reasonable likelihood of bodily injury to a child through any recent act or failure to act. Bodily injury is impairment of physical condition or substantial pain.

The following are “per se” acts of child abuse (meaning the act itself, apart from the outcome, is considered child abuse).

- Kicking, biting, throwing, burning, stabbing, or cutting a child in a manner that endangers the child.
  - Unreasonably restraining or confining a child, based on consideration of the method, location, or the duration of the restraint or confinement.
  - Forcefully shaking a child under one year of age.
  - Forcefully slapping or otherwise striking a child under one year of age.
  - Interfering with the breathing of a child.
  - Causing a child to be present at a location while a violation of 18 PA.C.S. §7508.2 (relating to operation a methamphetamine laboratory) is occurring, provided that the violation is being investigated by law enforcement.
2. Fabricating, feigning, or intentionally exaggerating or inducing a medical symptom or disease which results in a potentially harmful medical evaluation or treatment to the child through any recent act.
  3. Mental abuse – Causing or substantially contributing to serious mental injury to a child through an act or failure to act or a series of such acts or failures to act. Serious mental injury is a psychological condition, as diagnosed by a physician or licensed psychologist, including the refusal of appropriate treatment, that:
    - (1) renders a child chronically and severely anxious, agitated, depressed, socially withdrawn, psychotic, or in reasonable fear that the child's life or safety is threatened; or
    - (2) seriously interferes with a child's ability to accomplish age-appropriate developmental and social tasks.
  4. Neglect – Causing serious physical neglect of a child. Serious physical neglect is any of the following when committed by a perpetrator that endangers a child's life or health, threatens a child's well-being, causes bodily injury or impairs a child's health, development or functioning:
    - a. A repeated, prolonged or egregious failure to supervise a child in a manner that is appropriate considering the child's developmental age and abilities.
    - b. The failure to provide a child with adequate essentials of life, including food, shelter or medical care.
  5. Causing the death of the child through any act or failure to act.
  6. Sexual abuse – Causing sexual abuse or exploitation of a child through any act or failure to act. Creating a likelihood of sexual abuse or exploitation of a child through any recent act or failure to act. Sexual abuse or exploitation is the employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement, or coercion of a child to engage in or assist another individual to engage in sexually explicit conduct, which includes, but is not limited to, the following:
    - a. Looking at the sexual or other intimate parts of a child or another individual for the purpose of arousing or gratifying sexual desire in any individual.
    - b. Participating in sexually explicit conversation either in person, by telephone, by computer, or by a computer-aided device for the purpose of sexual stimulation or gratification of any individual.
    - c. Actual or simulated sexual activity or nudity for the purpose of sexual stimulation or gratification of any individual.
    - d. Actual or simulated sexual activity for the purpose of producing visual depiction, including photographing, videotaping, computer depicting, or filming.

- e. *This paragraph does not include consensual activities between a child who is 14 years of age or older and another person who is 14 years of age or older and whose age is within four years of the child's age.*

The following are per se acts of child abuse:

1. Leaving a child unsupervised with an individual, other than the child's parent, who the actor knows or reasonably should have known:
  - a. Is required to register as a Tier II or Tier III sexual offender under 42 PA.C.S. Ch. 97 Subch. H (relating to registration of sexual offenders), where the victim of the sexual offense was under 18 years of age when the crime was committed.
  - b. Has been determined to be a sexually violent predator under 42 PA.C.S. §9799.24 (relating to assessments) or any of its predecessors.
  - c. Has been determined to be a sexually violent delinquent child as defined in 42 PA.C.S. §9799.12 (relating to definitions)
2. Any of the following offenses committed against a child (Criminal code)
  - a. Rape, as defined in 18 PA.C.S. § 3121 (relating to rape).
  - b. Statutory sexual assault, as defined in 18 PA.C.S. § 3122.1 (relating to statutory sexual assault).
  - c. Involuntary deviate sexual intercourse, as defined in 18 PA.C.S. § 3123 (relating to involuntary deviate sexual intercourse).
  - d. Sexual assault, as defined in 18 PA.C.S. § 3124.1 (relating to sexual assault).
  - e. Institutional sexual assault, as defined in 18 PA.C.S. § 3124.2 (relating to institutional sexual assault).
  - f. Aggravated indecent assault, as defined in 18 PA.C.S. § 3125 (relating to aggravated indecent assault).
  - g. Indecent assault, as defined in 18 PA.C.S. § 3126 (relating to indecent assault).
  - h. Indecent exposure, as defined in 18 PA.C.S. § 3127 (relating to indecent exposure).
  - i. Incest, as defined in 18 PA.C.S. § 4302 (relating to incest).
  - j. Prostitution, as defined in 18 PA.C.S. § 5902 (relating to prostitution and related offenses).
  - k. Sexual abuse, as defined in 18 PA.C.S. § 6312 (relating to sexual abuse of children).
  - l. Unlawful contact with a minor, as defined in 18 PA.C.S. § 6318 (relating to unlawful contact with minor).
  - m. Sexual exploitation, as defined in 18 PA.C.S. § 6320 (relating to sexual exploitation of children).
3. Any recent act or failure to act is defined as occurring within the last two years.

## OTHER LEGAL DEFINITIONS

**Adult** – an individual 18 years of age or older.

**Child or Youth** – any person considered a minor under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, that is, a person who is under 18 years of age.

**Direct contact with children** – the care, supervision, guidance, or control of children or routine interaction with children.

**Mandated Reporter** – effective 12/31/14, the PA CPSL imposes a reporting mandate, or requirement, on any adult who comes into contact with children in the course of his or her work or professional practice, specifically including "clergyman, priest, rabbi, minister, Christian Science practitioner, religious healer, or spiritual leader of any regularly established church or other religious organization," or "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, is a person responsible for the child's welfare or has direct contact with children." **This includes volunteers, as well as staff.** These adults are known as "mandated reporters."

(as defined CPSL Title 23 PA.C.S. Chapter 63)

**Routine interaction** – regular and repeated contact that is integral to a person's employment or volunteer responsibilities.

## **TERMS USED IN THIS POLICY**

**Pastor(s)** – a minister under call to the congregation.

**Child Protection Committee (CPC)** – group of individuals who develop, implement, and enforce the Child Protection Policy.

**Approved Adult** – anyone 18 years of age or older who has satisfied the requirements of the Child Protection Policy. An Approved Adult can be an employee or a non-employee of the congregation, and is considered a mandated reporter if the person is 18 or older. Approved Adults are required to have state-specified screening/clearances.

**Person in Charge or Designee** –the "Person in Charge of the Institution or their designee" is responsible for facilitating cooperation with authorities on a suspected child abuse investigation; and is also responsible for receiving notification from the mandated reporter that a suspected abuse report has been filed. For these specific purposes, the Person in Charge at Memorial Park is the Executive Pastor of Ministry.

**Child Advocate** – the Chair of the Child Protection Committee.

**Qualified Youth Volunteer** – anyone younger than 18 who works under the supervision of at least one Approved Adult.

**Special Adult Presenter** – a person who may or may not be a member of the congregation and who has a specific talent or experience to share with children/youth at a particular event/class. A special presenter's opportunity is temporary and must be supervised by Approved Adults. There will be no physical interaction with children.

**Outside Contractor** – a person who is contracted (paid or unpaid) who has a specific service or experience to share with children/youth at a particular event/class, coming on site in a role when they will interact with children. Must provide copies of their clearances.

## **THE CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE (CPC)**

The CPC shall consist of the Lead Pastor, the Executive Pastor of Ministry, one sitting Elder, the Director of Family Ministries, the Executive Director of Operations, and one member of the congregation. Other members may be added as needed.

The Committee will:

1. Implement and enforce this Child Protection Policy.
2. Review and make recommendations to the Session for revising congregation policy regarding the safety of our children/youth.

3. Provide/arrange for training for all staff and Approved Adults working with the children/youth regarding child abuse and the Child Protection Policy.
4. Maintain a list of Approved Adults and disseminate within the church community, as needed.
5. Monitor Approved Adults to ensure that policies are being followed.
6. Keep Session apprised of all activities of the committee.
7. Be kept apprised of investigations.

The Executive Director of Operations is responsible to:

1. Maintain confidential files of all clearances.
2. Make available, upon request of an individual, copies of his/her clearance reports.
3. Review all applications.
4. Collect and forward requests for clearances, with cover letters, to PA State Police and PA Department of Public Welfare; as well as FBI Fingerprint clearances for staff, and volunteers who haven't been residents of Pennsylvania for ten years.
5. Determine whether subject is eligible for employment or as volunteer based on result of clearances and other factors. Certain convictions or founded CPS reports will result in automatic denial of placement in work with children. (See Appendix forms Approved Adult - Review of Application and Clearances and Approved Adult - Review of Disqualifications for Application.)

The Executive Pastor of Ministry will:

1. Receive and process reports of suspected abuse.
2. Make the institutional report to CPS ChildLine hotline.

The CPC Chair will:

1. Ensure that required forms are received for all applicants and proper records are maintained.
2. Schedule meetings as often as needed, but no fewer than one each year.

## **SELECTION OF APPROVED ADULTS**

To protect the children/youth in our care, the following guidelines are established for those who desire to work with children/youth younger than 18 years of age.

### **Approved Adults must:**

1. Attend Memorial Park Church for a minimum of 3 months (if a volunteer).
2. Complete the required clearance forms.
3. Attend a standard initial training session.
4. Sign and comply with the Child Protection Covenant.

### **Required Clearances**

All paid workers and volunteers are required to obtain the following clearances **before** any contact with children:

1. Child Abuse History Clearance Form (CY-113) – free for volunteers; \$8 for employees
2. Pennsylvania State Police Request for Criminal Record Check Form (SP4-164) – free for volunteers; \$8 for employees
3. Staff age 14 and older are required to have FBI fingerprint checks completed. Volunteers who have not lived in Pennsylvania for the last 10 years or those who have been convicted of certain crimes are also required to have FBI fingerprint checks completed. – approximately \$28

See Appendix for direction on obtaining clearances.

Background checks will be repeated every 5 years; and, if requested after a break in service of more than one year.

Volunteers who have obtained the above clearances through other employment may submit copies of official original of such clearances to the Church as long as these clearances were completed within the past two years. Anyone with clearances older than this must obtain new clearances for working with children in the church.

If the church has paid for the clearances, the original copies must stay on file at the church.

All prospective employees must obtain new background checks as a condition of employment.

Each ministry area is responsible for verifying that potential volunteers have completed required clearances and completed the required training.

## **TRAINING AND EDUCATION**

This policy will be available to the entire congregation in a manner and at a web-based and/or physical location easily accessible.

In order to be an approved adult, a volunteer or staff member must participate in an initial training that covers recognizing and responding to child abuse, mandated reporting requirements, and church guidelines and practices. A refresher course for all approved adults will be held at least every two years. Volunteers or staff who cannot attend sessions in person will be required to complete University of Pittsburgh's Child Abuse Online Training Course.

All approved adults and staff will receive a full copy (paper or electronic) of the Child/Youth Protection Policy and Guidelines, sign a Statement of Compliance, and sign a Child Protection Covenant.

## **PROCEDURES FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

### **Staff and Volunteers**

1. Training will be offered at the beginning of each church school year. It will be considered mandatory for new employees and volunteers.
2. Once an individual has participated in the initial training, a refresher training will be required every two years to ensure that the individual's knowledge is current and accurate.
3. The Child Protection Committee will be responsible for maintaining a record of who has completed training.
4. Training will include the use of professional training materials on child abuse, including specific information about child sexual abuse, behavioral signs, and how to respond to a disclosure; the grooming process sexual offenders often use to engage children; a review of policies and procedures that are specific to Memorial Park Church and pertinent to the work in which the employee or volunteer will be involved; and instruction in the use and completion of the various forms.
5. This training will be open to all members of the congregation.

## **Family Education Program**

Christian Education curriculums on healthy physical, emotional, and sexual boundaries, including sexual abuse prevention, shall be offered. The purpose is to provide families with the opportunity to receive age-appropriate information in a faith-based context to help them to recognize inappropriate conduct on the part of an adult or older child, and to empower them to say no, and tell a "safe adult" at church, home, school.

## **RECORDS**

Applications and related forms for staff and volunteers will be locked in a confidential file under the jurisdiction of the Executive Director of Operations . Clearances are confidential and will only be made available to limited staff in business operations.

The Executive Director of Operations will be responsible for maintaining these records and following these recordkeeping steps:

1. Maintaining a master list of all Approved Adults in MPC Connect.
2. Notifying staff and volunteers at least 60 days in advance when their clearances need to be renewed, to initiate the process of obtaining renewed reports
  - a. New reports are to be obtained every five (5) years from the date of the earliest existing reports.
  - b. New reports are required for all personnel and volunteers who have had a one (1) year break in continuous service.
  - c. Notify appropriate ministry leaders of staff and volunteers who have not renewed their clearances by the expiration date.
3. Retain copies of all reports, even ones that are superseded by renewed reports.

## **RECORD RETENTION**

Records pertaining to children and youth; and staff/volunteers who work with them shall be maintained indefinitely. This includes child and youth registration and permission forms, as well as staff and volunteer clearances. Such records should only be destroyed with the written approval of the CPC, and in accordance with the state statute of limitations related to sexual abuse of minors. In Pennsylvania, the statute for filing criminal and civil charges for certain types of sexual abuse of a minor extends to 50 years past the victim's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Records may be digitized and stored electronically.

Each department will be responsible for scanning all registration and/or permission slips for each event into a pdf file. A copy of the file must be emailed to the Executive Director of Operations within 7 days of the event.

## **KEY POLICY**

1. The word "key" in this policy includes traditional keys as well as fobs and ID cards that allow access using the building's security system.
2. Certain people are authorized by virtue of their position in the church to hold keys. These people include, but are not limited to, paid employees and a limited number of volunteers.
3. Any other person who seeks possession of a key to the church facilities will have a clearly stated reason for needing a key and will require approval by the Executive Director of Operations.
4. All exterior door keys shall be of a type that cannot be duplicated, in order to eliminate unauthorized reproduction. A limited number of staff will hold a master key for the building, as assigned by the Lead Pastor.

5. The keys will be assigned by the Executive Director of Operations. The Building Supervisor will distribute keys once they are assigned. If there is a need for additional keys, the Building Supervisor will obtain new keys.
6. Records of key holders will be maintained by the church's Building Supervisor and kept on file. Keys shall be returned when they are no longer needed by the holder, and the return will be documented.
7. It will be the responsibility of Executive Director of Operations to monitor who is in possession of keys and request the return of keys from persons no longer authorized to hold them. Keys are not to be loaned to unauthorized persons, duplicated, or kept beyond the time that they are needed
8. Key holders will be required to sign a Statement of Compliance, and submit a Key Receipt Form.
9. **VERY IMPORTANT:** No key holder will use his/her key to access the church with a child or children not his or her own (or of whom the key holder is not a legal guardian or foster parent of) at a time when there is no church related activity being held in which the child and the key holder are involved. This is intended to prevent a situation where an adult key holder is alone with a child in the facility. In the rare case, an exception is to be made to this provision, a written note from the child's parent or legal guardian must be submitted to the church office and approved by one of the following: Lead Pastor, Executive Pastor of Ministry, or Executive Director of Operations prior to entry.



## USE OF FACILITIES BY OUTSIDE ORGANIZATIONS

Outside groups and organizations using the church facilities on a recurring basis are to be made aware of this policy and must agree to adhere to it especially regarding:

- The “two adults” rule
- Clearances and training for volunteers
- Procedures for immediate reporting of suspected child abuse to ChildLine;
- Prohibition on adults being alone in the facility with a child not their own

An adult representative of outside groups will be required to sign a Statement of Compliance for the sponsoring organization before use of the facilities will be granted.

## PERMISSION SLIPS, OVERNIGHT ACTIVITIES, TRANSPORTATION

### 1. Permission Slips:

- a. General – Children/youth must have permission to participate in activities. Parents/guardians need to complete and return a Child and Youth Registration form, which includes pertinent medical information and emergency phone numbers, a medical release, and general permission to participate in the activities of the group. These forms will be updated every year and filed in the church office.
- b. Specific – Children/youth must have permission to participate in any overnight activity or specific activity that takes place away from church grounds. The permission must be written, signed by a parent or guardian, and must identify the activity in which the child/youth will be participating and possible risks that might be encountered. A permission slip is not required when a child/youth is accompanied by his or her parent or guardian to the activity.
- c. Medical – All children/youth going on a trip off campus must have a Medical Release Form on file before they will be allowed to participate.
  - a. A copy of the completed form will be kept on file.
  - b. Each time a field trip or overnight event occurs, the original must be taken with an adult leader while a copy remains in the Church office.

2. **Overnight Activities:** Overnight activities involving children/youth shall be chaperoned by at least two Approved Adults. Boys and girls will sleep in separate areas with at least one Approved Adult of the same biological sex directly supervising each group.

3. **Transportation of Children/Youth:** When children/youth are transported for church activities they shall be transported in groups with at least one Approved Adult and two students in each vehicle. Understanding that there are circumstances that are unavoidable, adults should avoid being alone in a car with a child/youth.

4. **Personal Vehicle Transportation.** To transport children/youth in a personal vehicle, the driver must be 18 years of age or older. Drivers must have a copy of their driver’s license, registration, and proof of insurance on file in the church office. Anyone who has had their license revoked or suspended within the past five years will be ineligible to drive for any church activities. Anyone driving a personal vehicle will have primary liability responsibility. To transport children/youth in a church owned vehicle, the driver must be 21 years of age or older.

## APPROPRIATE SUPERVISION RATIOS

### Classroom Ratios of adults to children/ youth

Age/Grade	Minimum number of Approved Adults required*		Number of Children/ youth
Nursery	1	per	3
Early childhood	1	per	8
Grades 1-3	1	per	10
Grades 4-8	1	per	12
Grades 9-12	1	per	15

For example, the ratio for 1-3 children in the nursery requires one person, but the minimum is two, so two people are required. When a 4<sup>th</sup> child is added, the ratio now requires two people. When a 7<sup>th</sup> child is added, three people would be required.

## NURSERY PROTECTION GUIDELINES

The nursery of Memorial Park Church is designed to provide a place of safety and caring for our youngest church participants, while allowing their parents to participate in worship or activities. As such, the following policy is designed to protect the children, parents and volunteers who participate:

1. Parents will receive a copy of the Nursery Guidelines for Parents.
2. Parents must sign in on the check in computers. If they are not in the system, they must go to the visitor table to register and be checked in. No child will be admitted into the nursery without a system-issued name tag.
3. Parents should label all bottles, juices, blankets, toys, and any other personal belongings. Pacifiers should be attached to the child. Only dry food snacks are allowed in the nursery. Snacks containing nuts are never allowed due to allergies. Small snack items that can be choked on, such as grapes, are not permitted.
4. Discipline Plan: Limit setting is directed toward maximizing the growth and development of the children and is for protecting the group and the individuals within it. Positive reinforcement is the major tool of appropriate discipline. Staff and volunteers will verbalize to the child when she/he is behaving in an inappropriate manner and will redirect a child who appears to be making inappropriate choices. If a child is repeatedly displaying inappropriate behavior and redirecting has not resulted in a more appropriate behavior choice on the child's part, parents/guardian will be asked to come to the nursery. Nursery staff and volunteers **WILL NOT**
  - a. Use corporal punishment, including spanking
  - b. Subject children to cruel or severe punishment, humiliation, or verbal abuse
  - c. Deny any child food as a form of punishment
  - d. Punish any child for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet.
5. Children must be picked up promptly following services or church activities and parents must present the pick-up tag given at check-in.
6. At least one parent/guardian shall remain in the church while the child is in the nursery during worship or other church activities.

7. Should an incident occur that results in physical injury, parent(s) will be notified and an incident report will be completed.

## GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

To ensure that a nurturing Christian environment for children/youth is maintained within the congregation, to protect children/youth who participate in activities sponsored by the church from sexual, mental, and/or physical abuse, and to protect the congregation's members from false allegations of abuse, the following policy has been adopted:

1. **Child Abuse Prohibited:** Those who accept the special responsibility of working with the congregation's children/youth shall not violate that responsibility by causing non-accidental physical injury, non-accidental mental injury, sexual abuse, or serious physical neglect of children/youth; or any other act described as child abuse in this policy or the laws of Pennsylvania.
2. **Sexual Abuse Prohibited:** Those who accept the special responsibility of working with the congregation's children/youth shall not violate that responsibility by having any interaction with a child/youth where the child/youth is being used for sexual stimulation of the adult or a third person regardless of whether or not the behavior involves touching, or any other act described as sexual abuse in this policy or the laws of our state.
3. **Two Approved Adults Rule:** Two people shall be present during any church sponsored children/youth activity. At least one of the people must be over the age of 18 and be an Approved Adult.
  - a. In some instances where unforeseen circumstances result in two people not being present, the meeting or activity must take place in a publically visible place, or a designated Approved Adult can circulate outside the area or be within close proximity to provide assistance if needed. In a mixed group, whenever possible, a male and a female Approved Adult shall be present.
  - b. Youth volunteers and staff under age 18 caring for children up to age 12 may work under the supervision of Approved Adults.
4. **Visibility:** All activities/meetings with children/youth must be conducted in a way that allows visibility, e.g., glass areas of doors should not be obstructed, curtains/blinds shall be open; when possible, door should be open or a window shall allow easy observation of the room. Where possible, conduct activities in a public place, with another person within sight and sound of the activities.
  - a. Do not send two children/youth with a four or more year age difference to an isolated setting, e.g., bathroom, tent, empty classroom.
5. **Bathroom and Diapering:** In general, children shall be encouraged to use the bathroom before and after classes or other activities. In this way, parents can assist as needed.
  - a. If you need to take a child to the toilet, be aware of your visibility and the child's privacy, e.g., adult stands holding public bathroom door open while child enters toilet stall alone.
  - b. Diapering: Two Approved Adults must be present when clothes or diapers are being changed. The child's parent can also be recruited to change clothes or a diaper.
  - c. Two and Three Year Olds: An Approved Adult must accompany children to and from the bathroom and inform another adult when this takes place. The adult will assist the child only when necessary. If assistance is needed, the adult must leave the stall door open.
  - d. Preschool: An Approved Adult must accompany preschoolers to the bathroom. The adult will remain outside the stall. If assistance is required, the approved adult should encourage independence but can assist with minimal tasks if necessary (belts, snaps, etc.).

6. **Empty Room Policy:** After an activity, check rooms to ensure that all participants have vacated the room.
7. **Expressions of Affection:** True expressions of affection toward children/youth can be a manifestation of Christ's love for all of us. A kind word of encouragement to a child/youth or a pat on the back can be a small but significant act for both the adult and the child/youth. That being said, adults must use caution and common sense when physically expressing affection toward children/youth.
  - a. Ask for permission to show affection and respect refusal.
  - b. Be aware of appropriate hand placement. A child/youth or an observer could misinterpret a pat on the bottom or a bear hug. Note that a body-to-body embrace; a touch on private areas (those areas covered by a bathing suit) having an older child sit on your lap, or a kiss on the mouth is inappropriate.
  - c. Discipline of any type involving physical contact is not permitted.

## **CHILDREN AND YOUTH CLASSROOM PROTECTION GUIDELINES**

1. Copies of this policy referring to general or specific protection guidelines will be provided to the parents of children attending children and youth group activities.
2. If anything unusual occurred during bathroom assistance, the parent will be notified at pickup.
3. Children in grades 1-12 can use the bathrooms unescorted, provided they return within a reasonable time frame. This privilege can be granted or rescinded at the teacher's discretion. Please note that good practice is to send students to restrooms in pairs, particularly at times when activity in the building is low.
4. Limit setting is directed toward maximizing the growth and development of the children and for protecting the group and the individuals within it. Positive reinforcement is the major tool of appropriate disciplining. Verbalize to the child when he/she is behaving in an appropriate manner. Redirect a child who appears to be making inappropriate choices. If a child is repeatedly displaying inappropriate behavior, and redirecting and talking to the child has not been successful in motivating the child to choose a more positive behavior, then the parent will be notified. The teacher will pass on information of repeated inappropriate behavior to the Minister to Families. No one shall use corporal punishment, including spanking; humiliation; or verbal abuse.

## **YOUTH MENTORING PROGRAM**

Youth mentors are same-biological-sex, Approved Adults, who provide friendship and companionship for youth throughout their teenage years. Mentors are offered to youth to facilitate their spiritual growth and maturity, complementing the role of parents. These relationships are an exception to the policy of needing two Approved Adults present for all activities with youth. This additional risk is addressed by the following policies:

1. The Minister to Millennials will be responsible for knowing when a mentor and mentee are planning to meet. Mentors will check in with the Minister of Millennials at weekly leader meetings. Parents will also be made aware when a meeting will take place.
2. All mentoring with children or youth should always occur in a public place, and they will meet at the location rather than traveling together in a car.
3. In the event of one-on-one evening meetings, be aware of time. This is to avoid any appearance of impropriety, and to discourage mentor pairs from meeting late in the evening.
4. Mentors are not to engage children/youth in counseling that requires professional help. For example – drug or alcohol addiction, sexual assault by a dating partner, severe problems with parental relationships,

sustained depression or chronic anxiety, eating disorders, suicidal tendencies, etc. The need for formal or professional counseling shall be discussed with the Executive Pastor of Ministry.

## **SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE REPORTING AND RESPONSE; RESPONSE TO ALLEGATIONS/ADMISSIONS; OR CRIMINAL CHARGES**

### 1. Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

- a. Anyone **may** report suspected child abuse. However, the PA CPSL imposes a reporting mandate, or requirement, on any adult who comes into contact with children in the course of his or her work or professional practice, specifically including "clergyman, priest, rabbi, minister, Christian Science practitioner, religious healer, or spiritual leader of any regularly established church or other religious organization," and "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, is a person responsible for the child's welfare or has direct contact with children." These adults are known as "mandated reporters."
- b. Church staff that should be considered mandated reporters under the CPSL would include those who routinely come into contact with children, such as pastors, music ministers, youth directors, and any other paid staff expected to come into contact with children on a regular basis, as well as their supervisors. Volunteers who accept the responsibility of caring for children ("Approved Adults" under this policy) are also considered mandated reporters under the CPSL. Staff or volunteers whose job or service responsibilities do not include care or direct contact with children as defined by the CPSL (such as most administrative or custodial staff, kitchen workers, adult ministry volunteers) are not considered mandated reporters unless they supervise those who are.

### 2. When to Report

The CPSL stipulates that a report is **required** when:

- a. The mandated reporter comes into contact with the child in the course of employment, occupation, and practice of a profession or through a regularly scheduled program, activity, or service;
- b. The mandated reporter is directly responsible for the care, supervision, guidance, or training of the child, or is affiliated with an agency, institution, organization, school, regularly established church or religious organization, or other entity that is directly responsible for the care, supervision, guidance, or training of the child; and,
- c. The mandated reporter has reasonable cause to believe that a child under the care, supervision, guidance or training of the church or the reporter, has been abused
  - i. **The following two items require a report, regardless of whether the child is under the care of the reporter, or the church:**
    - 1) A person makes a specific disclosure to the mandated reporter that an identifiable child is the victim of child abuse; or
    - 2) An individual 14 years of age or older makes a specific disclosure to the mandated reporter that the individual has committed child abuse.
  - ii. The mandate to report applies to all suspected child abuse, not just abuse that has been perpetrated by someone within the church. Possible abusers could include, for example, parents, relatives, older siblings, neighbors, coaches, school teachers, family friends, and other children. If neither the victim nor the alleged offender is connected with the church, the mandated reporter does not need to notify the church or complete internal church policy requirements, but does need to file a report under CPSL.

3. A mandated reporter does not need to be able to determine who is responsible for the abuse, i.e., identify the alleged offender.

4. A mandated reporter does not need to make a first-hand observation of the suspected child abuse victim.
5. The CPSL specifically grants legal immunity to any individual who, in good faith, makes a report of suspected child abuse. Failure to report suspected abuse by a mandated reporter can result in charges and fines. A mandated reporter may also be charged as a “perpetrator” in some cases for failure to protect a child.
6. The new law also specifically preserves previous law on confidential communications to clergy, but that is a very narrow exception that rarely applies beyond the Catholic confessional. Persons being counseled by church staff should understand that reporting of child abuse is required by law.

## **REPORTING & DOCUMENTING SUSPECTED ABUSE – Overview**

An employee or an Approved Adult who has **reasonable cause to suspect** that a child/youth has been abused by anyone (including but not limited to the child/youth’s family, guardians, church staff member, an Approved Adult or volunteer) or who **receives a specific disclosure** as previously described in this policy shall make an **immediate and direct report of suspected child abuse to ChildLine** either electronically at [www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis](http://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis) or by calling 1-800-932-0313, the Pennsylvania ChildLine and Abuse Registry (ChildLine) as required by law. The legal reporting obligation is met by contacting ChildLine, either electronically or by telephone. However, as of 12/31/14, there is “no wrong door” for reporting, and mandated reporters that make reports directly to local Child Protective Services or the police will not be in technical violation of the law.

Neither the mandated reporter nor the church is responsible for investigating or determining whether or not abuse has occurred prior to making a report. The standard under the law for reporting is that “a reasonable person has cause to believe the child has been abused.” It may be necessary to ask the child or person alleging the abuse has occurred for some clarification solely in order to determine if there is cause to believe abuse may have occurred. Detailed interviews and extensive questioning with the child and/or the alleged abuser should be conducted by legal authorities, **NOT THE CHURCH**.

If a child is injured or in pain, call 911 for an ambulance. If anyone is in immediate physical danger, call 911 for police assistance.

Within 48 hours of the oral report to ChildLine, the mandated reporter who made the original report must complete a written or electronic report of the suspected abuse on Form CY-47 (See Appendix), based on the mandated report and Suspected Child Abuse Incident Report of the Approved Adult or volunteer and send it your County agency. If the original report was electronic, the follow up report is not needed. **This is a legally required report.**

### **Allegheny County Information:**

The initiative for investigating alleged abuse resides with the Department of Human Services (DHS) and/or law enforcement, and shall not be carried out by the congregation. There is no requirement that multiple reports of the same alleged incident(s) of abuse be filed by the church; however, our policy is that the original report will be followed up with a report from the Executive Pastor of Ministry.

All allegations of child/youth abuse or serious physical neglect will be taken seriously by the pastor(s), Session, and the CPC. These allegations will be treated in strict confidence. All reporting steps taken will be documented, including a log of phone calls, personal visits, and written reports. Documentation will be kept in a secure file in the Executive Director of Operations Office.

All communications regarding the report of suspected child abuse shall attempt to protect the dignity and privacy of those persons affected by the report including the alleged child/youth victim and the person suspected of child abuse, while at the same time ensuring that persons in responsibility and law enforcement authorities remain fully informed. **The name of the mandated reporter and anyone who cooperates in an investigation should also remain confidential. Release of the name of the mandated reporter or anyone who cooperates in an investigation is prohibited by law.**

## **REPORTING and DOCUMENTING SUSPECTED ABUSE – Process**

An overview of the action steps and the sequence in which they must be taken is provided below, with details in the following section of policy. Again, if neither the victim nor the alleged offender is connected with the church, the mandated reporter does not need to notify the church or complete internal church policy requirements.

1. The mandated reporter must “immediately” report to ChildLine by phone or online. (legal requirement) The reporter must then “immediately thereafter” inform their immediate supervisor a report has been made. (legal requirement)
2. The supervisor will then inform the Executive Pastor of Ministry of the report made. (policy requirement)
3. The reporter must complete and file a written CY47 report with local CPS within 48 hours after making an oral report to ChildLine. (legal requirement) If reported online, an additional written report is not required.
4. The reporter must provide a copy of the CY47 report to the Executive Pastor of Ministry along with documentation of when it was filed. (policy requirement)
5. The reporter must complete an internal Child Abuse Incident Report and give it to the Executive Pastor of Ministry. (policy requirement)
6. The Executive Pastor of Ministry will then inform the Lead Pastor, Session, and Executive Director of Operations that a report has been made, but details will not be provided. The Executive Director of Operations will notify the insurance company that a report has been filed. (policy requirement)
7. The Department of Human Services (DHS) will inform the reporter of the results of the investigation no later than 30 days after it is concluded, which is generally within 30-60 days. The reporter will then inform the Executive Pastor of Ministry of the results. (policy requirement)
8. The Executive Pastor of Ministry will note on the internal Child Abuse Incident Report the date the results were provided by the reporter, and file any related documentation. (policy requirement)

## **FOLLOW-UP, INVESTIGATION, DOCUMENTATION**

1. Following placement of the call to report suspected abuse to ChildLine, the Executive Pastor of Ministry will inform the parent (provided that **neither** of the custodial parents is suspected of abuse), being careful not to reveal the identity of the mandated reporter. If the alleged abuser is a custodial parent, or resides in the same household as the child, his or her first contact about the allegation should come from either Child & Youth Services or the police, not the church.
2. No one should enter into discussion with the alleged abuser after a report has been filed and during the course of the legal investigation about the details of the complaint. The alleged abuser will be removed from any position in which he or she has supervisory authority over children pending the completion of the investigation.
3. The insurance company should be contacted after the report is filed as a matter of routine practice if abuse involves a staff person, if the abuse occurred on church property or at a church program, or if the abuse involved a volunteer caregiver.

4. The Department of Human Services has 30 days from the date it receives the "results" of the investigation based on the report to inform the mandated reporter (NOT the church) as to:
  - the final status of the child abuse report, in other words, whether it is indicated, founded or unfounded and
  - any services provided, arranged for, or to be provided by the county agency to protect the child.

In accordance with this policy, the mandated reporter will share the above with the Executive Pastor of Ministry immediately after receiving results from DHS. Investigations are to be concluded by CPS in 30 or 60 days.

## **SHARING INFORMATION**

1. The extent to which information will be shared with the congregation will be determined by the Session. The input of the Moderator of the Presbytery of the Alleghenies may be sought if pastoral staff is involved. **The identity of the victim and the mandated reporter are confidential by law and it is legally prohibited to share their identities.**
2. All necessary parties will cooperate with the investigations made by the police.
3. The Session will authorize an official spokesperson for the congregation. Only the authorized person or persons may speak for the congregation to the news media, government agencies, attorneys, or others.

## **CONTINUING THE MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH**

1. Pastoral support will be offered to all parties involved, including those who have made the complaint, the alleged abuser, the families of both, and the congregation. Decisions about how this support will be given will be made by pastoral staff.
2. If the allegations involve pastoral staff, the ministry of the church will need to be maintained while the issue is being addressed. Decisions regarding how this will be accomplished will be made by the Session with assistance from the Presbytery of the Alleghenies, as needed.

## **RESPONSE TO ALLEGATIONS/ADMISSIONS OR CRIMINAL CHARGES**

Persons who admit to or plead guilty to, or are convicted in a court of law of any form of physical or sexual abuse of a child/youth will be immediately, permanently, and completely disqualified by the CPC from working with children/youth in the church. Persons who admit to a pastor or any member of the CPC any type of physical or sexual abuse of a child/youth but who have not appeared in a court of law will be disqualified from working with children/youth in the congregation.

The CPC may temporarily or permanently disqualify any person(s) from working with children/youth, as the committee deems appropriate, even if no conviction resulted. Effective 12/31/14, certain offenses automatically disqualify anyone from working in a paid or unpaid position with children. (See Appendix Form: Approved Adult - Review of Legal Disqualifications for Application)

## **VIOLATIONS OF CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

Alleged violations of the policy, other than abuse, shall be immediately reported to the Executive Pastor of Ministry who will investigate the alleged violations of the policy. If a person(s) is found to be in violation of the policy, the Executive Pastor of Ministry will determine what disqualification or disciplinary action, if any, is necessary.



## **Allegations were not Abuse, but a Demonstration of Poor Judgment**

1. The Pastoral Team will hold the offender responsible and accountable for the behavior. Grace and mercy are extended in the context of repentance, accountability, and justice.
2. Education and/or counseling will be expected to correct unhealthy behavior patterns.
3. The offender will be removed from susceptible environments for a stated period of time, and not function in any supervisory capacity over children and youth for at least one year, after which an evaluation determining fitness for this ministry should be made by the Pastoral team. The second such occurrence of demonstration of "poor judgment" will result in the individual being precluded from any future ministry with children.
4. Communicate action taken with complainant and congregation, as needed.

## **PROVIDING COMMUNITY FOR KNOWN SEXUAL OFFENDERS**

*Brothers, if someone is caught in sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently.... Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. Galatians 6:1-2 (NIV)*

Individuals who have been adjudicated by a court or child protective services findings as sexual offenders and/or have admitted to past sexual abuse of children and are willing to abide by the guidelines set forth in this policy, are welcome to attend worship services and adult educational activities. Such individuals are hereafter referred to as "known sexual offenders" or "offenders".

The minimum guidelines by which any known offender may participate in the life of the congregation are set forth below, and shall be incorporated into a covenant specific for the individual offender which is to be signed by the offender prior to participation.

Depending on the circumstances and at the discretion of the CPC, additional restrictions may be incorporated into an individual covenant. If an individual is on probation or parole, specific provisions related to contact with children, participation in counseling, and others, will be incorporated into the covenant. The individual covenant may also permit participation in additional church activities (other than those involving children) if circumstances warrant.

An individual on probation or parole for a child sexual offense may have restrictions placed on church attendance as part of their probation/parole condition. On occasion, an exception to a "no church attendance" provision of probation or parole may be made by an officer of the court, based on the church's capacity to manage the offender in a way that keeps that individual from contact with children. Any individual on probation or parole must provide the Executive Pastor of Ministry with a copy of the probation and parole agreement, including its terms and conditions, as well as the contact information for the parole or probation officer assigned.

### **Minimum guidelines under which a known sexual offender may participate:**

1. Offenders are expected to comply fully with all restrictions and requirements placed upon them as a result of any legal actions, and provide the designated Executive Pastor of Ministry with copies of any judgments, conditions of parole, or other documents in which restrictions on or requirements as a result of convictions or judgments are stated.

2. Offenders are expected to participate in regular professional counseling program, specifically addressing their abusive behaviors. Offenders will provide the name of the agency and mental health professional to the Executive Pastor of Ministry at the time of request for participation. The offender may be asked to periodically sign a limited disclosure authorization for the therapist to verify to the Executive Pastor of Ministry that the individual is in treatment. The offender must identify a small group of accountability partners that will provide spiritual, emotional, and practical support on a regular basis. In a case of extreme financial hardship where the offender cannot afford counseling (and is not required by the court to be in counseling) the Executive Pastor of Ministry will work with the offender to create an alternative plan that may include regular pastoral counseling, participation in a community-based group for sexual offenders, or other affordable venues.
3. Offenders will not accept any leadership or representational position within or on behalf of this church. Known sexual offenders can never become Approved Adults.
4. The offender may participate in worship in the sanctuary and attend adult Sunday school classes. Any other activities the offender is permitted to participate in will be detailed in the covenant.
5. At no time should the offender deliberately place himself/herself in any location within or nearby the church facilities that is in close proximity to children. This includes, but is not restricted to entrances to the nursery, preschool or Children's Ministry wings.
6. At least twice each calendar year and as otherwise requested, the offender shall meet with and report to the Executive Pastor of Ministry regarding status of adherence to these guidelines.
7. If the offender should decide to relocate membership (or substantially attend) another congregation, the designated pastor will seek to inform the leadership of that congregation of the conditions of these guidelines.

## **APPENDIX**

- I. APPROVED ADULT – Covenant of Child Protection
- II. CLEARANCES – MPC Background Check Process and Submission Form
- III. Offender Covenant for Participation in Congregation
- IV. Statement of Compliance for Outside Organizations



# Memorial Park

An Evangelical Presbyterian Church

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## Approved Adult Covenant of Child Protection

I accept the responsibility to nurture the Christian faith and well-being of the children and youth of the Memorial Park Church and to care for them as Christ cares for me.

*"I ...will tend the flock of God that is in my charge... willingly, as God would have me do it..."* 1 Peter 5:2

I have read, understand, and agree to abide by the Child Protection Policy of Memorial Park Church.

I further indicate my understanding and compliance with the following specific conditions set forth in that manual:

- I will become familiar with the location of telephones, first aid kits, fire extinguishers, and fire exits, and with the Emergency Procedures.
- If I become aware of an injury, accident, or mishap at any property and/or facility of Memorial Park Church or at a Memorial Park Church activity at any location, I will make certain that the incident is reported immediately to a Staff member.
- While at a property and/or facility of Memorial Park Church or at a Memorial Park Church activity at any location, I will not be alone with a child or youth (through age 17 years) other than my own.
- If I become aware of an inappropriate relationship involving children, youth, or a child or youth and an adult, any one of whom is associated with Memorial Park Church, I will report it immediately to Child Protective Service, via their website or phone number.
- When the activity that I am supervising has ended, I will make sure that the lights are out and the doors are locked before I leave, or I will notify other Church representatives who are still in the building that I am leaving.

Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone, if different: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

**Memorial Park Church**

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## Background Clearance Process

A new state law effective 12/31/2014 requires us to update all our background clearances for anyone who cares for or has direct contact with children under age 18. All employees age 14 and older and all volunteers age 18 and older are required to have clearances before they can work with children. Clearances must be updated every three years to remain effective.

*Note: You only need to complete this process once to cover all ministry areas at MPC.*

Obtaining clearances is now a three-step process that must be completed by each individual:

- Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Check
- Child Abuse History Clearance from the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services
- FBI fingerprint check (not required for volunteers who have lived in the state for 10 years)

MPC will reimburse employees and volunteers for the cost of obtaining the necessary clearances. There are two options:

- The individual pays for the clearances and requests reimbursement when submitting the clearances (total cost for employees < \$50; PA clearances are free for volunteers and the FBI check is < \$30).
- The individual schedules a time with the departmental representative to complete the clearances online at the church, and charges will be paid on a church credit card.

Volunteers who are willing to cover the cost may choose to make a donation marked "Child Abuse Clearances" and receive a tax-deductible credit or just not request reimbursement.

### Pennsylvania Criminal History Check

Go to the PA State Police website: <https://epatch.state.pa.us/Home.jsp>

- Select New Record from the Record Check tab and follow the instructions through to the Certification Page. Volunteers: be sure to click on the yellow box where it says, "Volunteers Only."
- When the Search Results Table appears, write down the Control Number for future reference or print the page. Click on the Control Number to go to Record Check Details. **This page is only a receipt, not your official clearance.** Print the receipt. Note: there is no charge for volunteers.
- Click on Certification Page to access your official clearance, and print the page.

### Pennsylvania Child Abuse Clearance

You may apply for your PA Child Abuse Clearance online at <https://www.compass.state.pa.us/CWIS>.

You must create a log in, and then the website will walk you through the procedure. Church Staff should use either "School Employment" or "Child Care Worker" as the purpose for application. Volunteers can use the "Volunteer" option. You will need all your past addresses since 1975 plus the name, relationship, and age of everyone you have lived with since then. Be sure to print the payment page **before** hitting the final submission button; you will not have an option to print a receipt afterwards. Note: there is no charge for volunteers. Once you have submitted all of the information, the clearance papers will be sent by mail.

## **FBI Fingerprint Check**

All employees are required to have fingerprints taken. Volunteers are also required to have their prints checked unless they have been continuous residents of Pennsylvania for the last ten years and have not been convicted of an offense under Section 6344. Those volunteers are exempt if they sign a document attesting to this (see submission form on the next page).

To begin the process, you must register by going to <https://uenroll.identogo.com>.

- Enter Service Code: 1KG6ZJ if you are a volunteer
- Enter Service Code: 1KG756 if you are an employee

Begin with Schedule or Manage an Appointment. Follow up with What to Bring to an Appointment, and finally Locate an Enrollment Center. The closest center to the church is:

IdentoGO  
8158 Perry Hwy  
Pittsburgh, PA 15237

Your fingerprints will be electronically submitted, and you will receive notice of your clearance in approximately two weeks.

## **Submitting Clearances**

When you have all required clearances, use the form on the next page to submit them to the church business office. For new employees, these should be submitted as part of your employment packet. We have to receive official copies of all clearances. If you have done your clearances through another organization that has the originals, they must print a copy and sign off that they hold the original. We cannot accept personal copies. Note that receipts are NOT the same as the official clearances.

Remember: for new employees and volunteers, these must be submitted BEFORE you have any contact with children at Memorial Park Church.



# Memorial Park

## An Evangelical Presbyterian Church

### Submission of Background Clearances

Please do not submit until you have ALL required clearances.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

- Employee
- Volunteer

I am submitting the following clearances:

- Pennsylvania Criminal History Check
- Pennsylvania Child Abuse Clearance
- FBI Fingerprint Check
- I am exempt from the FBI fingerprint check because (1) I am a volunteer, (2) I have been a resident of Pennsylvania for the last 10 years, AND (3) I have not been convicted of an offense under Section 6344.

Reimbursement:

- I am not requesting reimbursement.
- I am requesting reimbursement in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
*(attach receipts if requesting reimbursement)*
- I would like to make a donation in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
*(attach check and mark "Child Abuse Clearances" on the memo line)*

I swear and avow that the information provided for my clearances and on this form is true and complete.

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

#### FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Received by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Clearances Received:

- Pennsylvania Criminal History Check – Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Pennsylvania Child Abuse Clearance – Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- FBI Fingerprint Check – Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- FBI Fingerprint Waiver

Reimbursement:

- Not requested
- Paid on church credit card
- Requested – receipts received, voucher submitted
- Donation received – deposited submitted

Memorial Park Church

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# Memorial Park

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## Nursery Guidelines for Parents

The nursery of Memorial Park Church is designed to provide a place of safety and caring for our youngest church participants, while allowing their parents to participate in worship or activities. As such, the following policy is designed to protect the children, parents and volunteers who participate:

- Sign your child in for nursery care, using the check in computers.
- Complete a registration/ emergency form if you haven't completed one before
- Label all bottles, juices, blankets, toys and any other personal belongings.
- Pacifiers should be attached to the child
- Only dry food snacks are allowed in the nursery (snacks containing nuts are not allowed)
- If a child needs to use the bathroom, an approved volunteer will accompany him/him unless the parent indicates that they are to be contacted on the emergency form referenced above.
- If a child is repeatedly displaying inappropriate behavior and redirecting has not worked, parents/guardian will be asked to come to the nursery.
- At least one parent/guardian shall remain in the church while the child is in the nursery.
- Children must be picked up promptly following service or church activities and checked out by a parent or a person designated on the registration/ emergency contact form.
- Should an incident occur that results in physical injury, parent(s) will be notified immediately.

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# Memorial Park

An Evangelical Presbyterian Church

## Sexual Offender Covenant for Participation in the Congregation

I acknowledge that I have received and read the Child and Youth Protection Policy of Memorial Park Church, and I agree to comply with all its provisions. By signing this covenant, I further agree to abide by the guidelines set forth in the policy in the section regarding providing community for known sexual offenders and detailed below; and any additional restrictions specified below.

- I will comply fully with all restrictions and requirements placed upon me as a result of any legal actions, and provide the Executive Pastor of Ministry with copies of any judgments, conditions of parole, or other documents in which restrictions on or requirements as a result of convictions or judgments are stated.

I am currently on probation or parole:  YES  NO If YES, complete the following:

- Conditions include "No contact with children"  YES  NO
- Conditions include participation in regular professional counseling and an accountability group  YES  NO

The name and contact information for my parole/probation officer is listed below:

Name of parole officer

Phone

- I acknowledge my attendance is limited to
  - Worship Services and Adult Education classes as follows: (List specific services/times).
  - List any other permitted activities here:

At no time will I deliberately place myself in or remain in any location in or around the church facilities which would cause undue distress to others, particularly areas with children. I understand that a child is anyone under the age of 18 years.

- At least twice each calendar year and as otherwise requested, I will meet with and report to the Executive Pastor of Ministry regarding status of adherence to these guidelines.
- If I should decide to relocate membership (or substantially attend) another congregation, I understand that Memorial Park Church will seek to inform the leadership of that congregation of the conditions of these guidelines.
- I will participate in regular counseling with a licensed professional counselor experienced in treating sexual offenders and give my counselor permission to release information regarding my attendance and participation to the Executive Pastor of Ministry. Licensed professional counselors hold at least one graduate degree, and have a current license to practice in the state of PA.

The contact information for the mental health professional providing my treatment is listed below:

Name of counselor

Phone

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www.MemorialParkChurch.org

If sessions are terminated I will immediately inform the Executive Pastor of Ministry. If such sessions are a condition of my parole or probation, understand I may be suspended from participation at church until I am back in counseling with another licensed professional counselor that satisfies the conditions set forth by the court.

The following paragraph applies ONLY if treatment is NOT a condition of probation or parole:

If I cannot afford counseling because it would create extreme financial hardship, I will discuss my situation with the Executive Pastor of Ministry to create an alternative plan that may include community or church based groups, one-on-one mentoring, or other affordable venues.

### ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES/RESTRICTIONS/DETAILS

I understand that **No Contact** with children includes verbal, emotional, and physical contact, and mental grooming. I will only use the private bathroom on the main (Sanctuary) level of the church. I agree to honor and abide by this covenant. I understand that violation of the covenant may result in additional restrictions, or in termination of my participation at worship services and other church activities. I acknowledge my responsibility to be a faithful participant in this program.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of offender Date

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of pastor or designee for church Date



# Memorial Park

An Evangelical Presbyterian Church

## Statement of Compliance for Outside Organizations Using Church Facilities

Memorial Park Church (MPC) is committed to providing a safe environment for all children, youth, and adults who participate in ministries and programs at our facilities.

**Your organization must agree to the following terms in order to obtain consent for use of the MPC facilities:**

- There must always be two adults present with each group of children.
- All adult staff and volunteers must have the required clearances for your state of residence.
- For overnight accommodations, male and female youth and adults should be in separate rooms.
- Adult supervision must comply with the following ratios:

Age/Grade	Minimum number of Approved Adults required*		Number of Children/youth
Nursery	1	per	3
Early childhood	1	per	8
Elementary	1	per	10
Grades 6-8	1	per	12
Grades 9-12	1	per	15

For example, the ratio for 1-3 children in the nursery requires one person, but the minimum is two, so two people are required. When a 4<sup>th</sup> child is added, the ratio now requires two people. When a 7<sup>th</sup> child is added, three people would be required.

Pennsylvania state law requires that any incidence of suspected child abuse be reported directly to ChildLine (800-932-0313) immediately. We also require that you notify the Executive Pastor of Ministry at Memorial Park (412-364-9492 x-113). In case of imminent danger, always call 911 first.

On behalf of my organization, I agree that we will observe and abide by the tenets of this agreement. I certify that I am empowered to sign this document on behalf of my organization and agree that my organization does hereby indemnify, defend, and hold harmless Memorial Park Church from and against any and all claims arising out of my organization's use of facilities.

Name of Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Group Visiting: \_\_\_\_\_ Date(s) of Visit: \_\_\_\_\_

Adults: Men \_\_\_\_\_ Women \_\_\_\_\_ Children/Youth: Boys \_\_\_\_\_ Girls \_\_\_\_\_ Ages \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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