

		St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Griffins Mills	Date:	25-Aug-11
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1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Griffins Mills (hereafter "St. Paul's") is a spiritual community that takes seriously its responsibility to provide a safe and nurturing environment for children and youth who participate in our ministries. This policy covers the obligations of church employees and volunteers who work with children and/or youth.

2 RELATED DOCUMENTS

- 2.1 New York Family Court - Part 1 - § 1012 Definitions
 2.2 New York State Code - Title 6 – Child Protective Services

3 DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 **"Volunteers"** means those people who of their own free will offer to help lead or provide child care for the children and youth who come under the care of St. Paul's. It shall include, but not be limited to, all teachers, drivers, chaperones, childcare providers, hall monitors, youth sponsors, youth leaders, and confirmation mentors who work with children under the age of 18.
- 3.1.1 Childcare providers, who are not regular paid employees of the church but are reimbursed for their occasional service, shall be considered as volunteers.
- 3.2 **"Abused child"** means a child less than eighteen years of age whose parent or other person legally responsible for his care
- 3.2.1 inflicts or allows to be inflicted upon such child physical injury by other than accidental means which causes or creates a substantial risk of death, or serious or protracted disfigurement, or protracted impairment of physical or emotional health or protracted loss or impairment of the function of any bodily organ, or
- 3.2.2 creates or allows to be created a substantial risk of physical injury to such child by other than accidental means which would be likely to cause death or serious or protracted disfigurement, or protracted impairment of physical or emotional health or protracted loss or impairment of the function of any bodily organ, or
- 3.2.3 commits, or allows to be committed an offense against such child defined in article one hundred thirty of the New York State Penal Law; allows, permits or encourages such child to engage in any act described in sections 230.25, 230.30 and 230.32 of the penal law; commits any of the acts described in sections 255.25, 255.26 and 255.27 of the penal law; or allows such child to engage in acts or conduct described in article two hundred sixty-three of the penal law provided, however, that
- 3.2.3.1 the corroboration requirements contained in the penal law and
- 3.2.3.2 the age requirement for the application of article two hundred sixty-three of such law shall not apply to proceedings under this article.
- 3.3 **"Neglected child"** means a child less than eighteen years of age
- 3.3.1 whose physical, mental or emotional condition has been impaired or is in imminent danger of becoming impaired as a result of the failure of his parent or other person legally responsible for his care to exercise a minimum degree of care

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- 3.3.1.1 in supplying the child with adequate food, clothing, shelter or education in accordance with the provisions of part one of article sixty-five of the New York State Education Law, or medical, dental, optometrical [sic] or surgical care, though financially able to do so or offered financial or other reasonable means to do so; or
- 3.3.1.2 in providing the child with proper supervision or guardianship, by unreasonably inflicting or allowing to be inflicted harm, or a substantial risk thereof, including the infliction of excessive corporal punishment; or by misusing a drug or drugs; or by misusing alcoholic beverages to the extent that he loses self-control of his actions; or by any other acts of a similarly serious nature requiring the aid of the court; provided, however, that where the respondent is voluntarily and regularly participating in a rehabilitative program, evidence that the respondent has repeatedly misused a drug or drugs or alcoholic beverages to the extent that he loses self-control of his actions shall not establish that the child is a neglected child in the absence of evidence establishing that the child's physical, mental or emotional condition has been impaired or is in imminent danger of becoming impaired as set forth in paragraph (3.3.1) of this subdivision; or
- 3.3.2 who has been abandoned, in accordance with the definition and other criteria set forth in subdivision five of section three hundred eighty-four-b of the New York State Social Services Law, by his parents or other person legally responsible for his care.
- 3.4 **"Person legally responsible"** includes the child's custodian, guardian, any other person responsible for the child's care at the relevant time. Custodian may include any person continually or at regular intervals found in the same household as the child when the conduct of such person causes or contributes to the abuse or neglect of the child.

4 RESPONSIBILITY/AUTHORITY

- 4.1 All employees and volunteers of St. Paul's must comply with this policy.
- 4.2 The Safe Church Committee is responsible for ensuring the implementation of this policy.
- 4.3 The Safe Church Committee shall review the Child and Youth Safety Policy and its implementation annually. A report of its status shall be made to the Church Council at that time.

5 PROCESS FLOW

- 5.1 Not applicable.

6 REQUIREMENTS

6.1 General

- 6.1.1 In order to provide a safe community for children, youth, and adult, the church requires all employees and volunteers to comply with the "Requirements of Employees and Volunteers in the Child and Youth Ministries" (section 6.2) and the "Child and Youth Safety Guidelines and Procedures" (section 6.3) adopted by the Church Council. As part of these requirements all employees and volunteers will be required to complete an appropriate application form.

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- 6.1.2 All employees and volunteers will be required to review this policy at an orientation session or meeting with a Safe Church Committee member. Such sessions shall be documented with a signed training record.
- 6.1.3 All employees and volunteers will be supervised by respective professional staff persons.
- 6.1.4 Any person who is currently under investigation for, or has been convicted of (1) criminal sexual conduct, (2) neglect of a child, or (3) physical abuse, will NOT be permitted to work or volunteer in any church sponsored activity or program involving children or youth.

6.2 Requirements of Employees and Volunteers in the Child and Youth Ministries

- 6.2.1 At no time shall one employee or volunteer be allowed to be alone with a child or a youth. The only exception to this policy would be in a situation in which the contact occurs in a public place and other persons are in and out of an open area where the employee or volunteer is working with the child or youth. (e.g. Library, community room, gym, etc.)
- 6.2.2 All employees and volunteers working with children under the age of 18 must read the "Child and Youth Safety Policy" of this church; agree to it by completing and signing the appropriate application form(s), and attend an orientation session or meet a member of the Safe Church Committee to review the "Guidelines and Procedures."
- 6.2.3 All volunteers, whether members or non-members, must be active participants in the life of the church for at least 6 months prior to volunteering their services to the children and youth ministries.
- 6.2.4 If a person who wishes to volunteer with St. Paul's children or youth is a non-member, or has been a member for less than 6 months prior to volunteering, then they must complete and sign "The Child and Youth Safety Policy" and additionally supply the names of 3 non-family members from the St. Paul's congregation who can give recommendations. This is provided for in item four (4) of the Child and Youth Volunteer Application. They must also attend an orientation session or meet with a member of the Safe Church Committee to review the guidelines.
- 6.2.5 Employees and volunteers are required to report immediately to their supervisor(s) any suspicious or inappropriate behavior of suspected (1) criminal sexual conduct, (2) neglect of a child, or (3) physical abuse.

6.3 Child and Youth Safety Guidelines and Procedures

6.3.1 On-site procedures

- 6.3.1.1 At no time shall one employee or volunteer be allowed to be alone with a child or a youth. The only exception to this policy would be in a situation in which the contact occurs in a public place and other persons are in and out of an open area where the employee or volunteer is working with the child or youth.

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- 6.3.1.2 An open area containing classrooms shall have a Hall Monitor present during Sunday school hours. The Hall Monitor will be appointed by the Superintendent of Sunday School and must abide by the Child and Youth Safety Policy.
- 6.3.1.3 Restroom use: At no time should a volunteer be alone with a child in the restrooms. For children requiring assistance in the restroom the Hall Monitor will be informed and the Hall Monitor will ask the parent or older sibling to assist the child in need.
- 6.3.1.4 If a situation unexpectedly does not meet the criteria of this policy then alternatives must be put into place so that the event is in compliance. The following examples are meant as illustration only and are not to be perceived as the only possible solutions.

Example: If only one teacher and one child/youth shows up for a Sunday school class then the supervisor could recommend these solutions:

- a. the teacher and child/youth could join another class
- b. the supervisor could join the teacher and child/youth
- c. the teacher and child/youth could have class in the library

6.3.2 Off-site procedures

- 6.3.2.1 Off-site procedures are for when the children and youth are part of the St. Paul's community and/or when the employees or volunteers are representing St. Paul's but the children and youth are not a part of the St. Paul's community (e.g. mission trips)
- 6.3.2.2 At no time shall one employee or volunteer be allowed to be alone with a child or a youth. The only exception to this policy would be in a situation in which the contact occurs in a public place and other persons are in and out of an open area where the employee or volunteer is working with the child or youth.
- 6.3.2.3 When representing the church all employees and child/youth volunteers must comply with the Child and Youth Safety Policy.
- 6.3.2.4 As each facility will be different it will be the responsibility of the supervisors to determine how best to use the facility and comply with the church policy.
- 6.3.2.5 Overnights: Males and females shall be segregated during sleeping time.† If it is deemed necessary for adults to share sleeping accommodations with the children/youth, a minimum of two adults, the same sex as the children/youth to be chaperoned, shall sleep in each area.
- 6.3.2.6 All drivers and chaperones on children/youth off-site trips shall be included in all parts of the Child and Youth Safety Policy.

6.3.3 Non-church sponsored use of the church facility procedures

- 6.3.3.1 Anyone who uses the St. Paul's facility for non-church sponsored activities with children or youth (e.g. MOPS, Boy/Girl Scouts, and continuing educations, etc.) will be required to comply with the church policy, which states: At no time shall one employee or volunteer be allowed to be alone with a child or a youth. The only exception to this policy would be in a situation in which the contact occurs in a public place and other persons are in and out of an open area where the employee or volunteer is working with the child or youth.

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6.3.3.2 At the time a contract is made with a non-church group or person to use the church facility; it shall be the duty of the Church Secretary to obtain written confirmation from the users of their need to comply with the above.

6.3.4 Safe Church Committee procedures

6.3.4.1 It shall be the responsibility of the Safe Church Committee to give each newly hired employee a copy of the Child and Youth Safety Policy. A copy of the policy will be included in the hiring packet.

6.3.4.2 An obligation to enforce the policy shall be written into the contract of each employee who has significant responsibility for supervising employees or volunteers who lead children or youth (e.g. Music Director).

6.3.4.3 Ministerial and Program staff members, along with other employees who work with children or youth, will review the implementation of the "Child and Youth Safety Policy" each August.

6.3.5 Reporting of suspicious or inappropriate activity and response

6.3.5.1 Suspicious or inappropriate activity brought to the attention of an employee or volunteer must be reported immediately (within 24 hours) to the appropriate professional staff person.

6.3.5.2 The appropriate person(s) to whom to make this report to are:

6.3.5.2.1 The Pastor/President of the Council

6.3.5.2.2 Superintendent/Assistant Superintendent of Sunday school

6.3.5.2.3 Other individuals who may have supervisory responsibilities

6.3.5.3 The person making the report of the alleged abuse or receiving the report of suspicious activity shall then document the date, time and circumstances of the alleged incident.

6.3.5.4 The person receiving the initial report of suspicious activity will report immediately to the Pastor or Head of Staff.

6.3.5.5 The Safe Church Committee lead, or individuals who may have child/youth supervisory responsibilities and the Pastor, will determine what, if any, further action shall be taken.

6.3.5.6 All allegations shall be regarded as serious, and due consideration shall be given to the rights and privacy of both the alleged victim and the person being accused.

6.3.5.7 The person who is being accused will be required to refrain from participating in all child and youth activities until it is determined if further action shall be taken. Care shall be taken to handle this in a discreet manner.

6.3.5.8 After reviewing the reported circumstances, if the appropriate person receiving the report and the Pastor determine that there is reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or neglect, then further action shall be taken in a manner consistent with Chapter 15 of the Constitution for St. Paul's.

6.3.5.9 Even if the allegation is not sustained, the professional staff persons making the decision have the option to recommend another appropriate action, which could include removal of the person from the program, a review of the processes being used within that program, and /or further education.

6.3.5.10 The ministerial staff will provide appropriate counseling.

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6.3.6 Staff Care of Documents

- 6.3.6.1 Only the child and youth professional staff will review forms filled out by volunteers. The child and youth professional staff is defined as the Superintendent of Sunday school, the Pastor, the lead Safe Church Committee person, and an appointed support staff person.
- 6.3.6.2 All information will be treated in a confidential manner. Except in the case of a response to a report of suspicious activity, only the appropriate professional staff shall have access to the information on these documents. In the case of a report of suspicious activity, the Response Team and the appropriate legal authorities will have access to the information.
- 6.3.6.3 The documents will be kept in secure storage.
- 6.3.6.4 References will be contacted by the appropriate staff persons before the individual begins service.
- 6.3.6.5 Volunteers will be required to complete a Child and Youth Volunteer Application form once every five (5) years. In the interim years volunteers will be required to complete a "Child and Youth Volunteer Short Form," verifying that the information provided in their application is still accurate and truthful.

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Required Every 5 Years

Any changes in must be reported immediately if working with youth.

Please answer each question in full. Your responses will be kept confidential.

Name (First, Middle Initial, Last) _____

Add Street _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____

Phone _____

	Yes	No
Are you a member of St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Griffins Mills?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If not, how long have you attended?		
Is there any circumstance that might call into question your being entrusted with the leadership and spiritual development of the children and youth of St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Griffins Mills?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you currently under investigation for a crime involving children or youth?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you ever been convicted of, or pled guilty or no contest to any crime after having been accused of any incident involving children and youth?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you ever been found responsible or guilty in any court for neglect or abuse of a child?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
As a church volunteer, do you agree to observe all church policies regarding work with children or youth?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you read, and do you understand and agree to abide by, the "Child and Youth Safety Policy?"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you consent to a criminal background check?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you consent to background inquiries by St. Paul's Lutheran Church to persons named by you and any other person, or to verify any information supplied by you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you authorize persons contacted by St. Paul's Lutheran Church in conducting background checks to speak freely to callers from the church inquiring about background checks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Volunteer Signature

Date

Volunteer Printed Name

Parent Signature
(Required for volunteers under the age of 18)

Date

If you have any concerns about the requested information, please feel free to speak to any

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Please list any past experience you have working with children and youth. Include name and place of the institution(s) or organization(s).

Name and location	Dates
Name and location	Dates
Name and location	Dates

Please provide names and contact information for two non-relatives who are familiar with your character as it relates to working with children and youth. References will be checked.

Name	Address
Name	Address

Members of less than 6 months and non-members, please additionally provide the names of three non-family members of the congregation who will provide recommendations.

Name	Address
Name	Address
Name	Address

Please list the name and address of other churches you have attended regularly during the past five years.

Name	Address
Name	Address
Name	Address
Name	Address
Name	Address

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Required Every 5 Years

Any changes in must be reported immediately if working with youth.

Please answer each question in full. Your responses will be kept confidential.

Name (First, Middle Initial, Last) _____

Add Street _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____

Phone _____

	Yes	No
Is there any circumstance that might call into question your being entrusted with the leadership and spiritual development of the children and youth of St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Griffins Mills?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you currently under investigation for a crime involving children or youth?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you ever been convicted of, or pled guilty or no contest to any crime after having been accused of any incident involving children and youth?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you ever been found responsible or guilty in any court for neglect or abuse of a child?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
As a church volunteer, do you agree to observe all church policies regarding work with children or youth?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you read, and do you understand and agree to abide by, the "Child and Youth Safety Policy?"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you consent to a criminal background check?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you consent to background inquiries by St. Paul's Lutheran Church to persons named by you and any other person, or to verify any information supplied by you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you authorize persons contacted by St. Paul's Lutheran Church in conducting background checks to speak freely to callers from the church inquiring about background checks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Applicant Signature

Date

Applicant Printed Name

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Required During Interim Years

Any changes in must be reported immediately if working with youth.

Please answer each question in full. Your responses will be kept confidential.

Name (First, Middle Initial, Last) _____

Add Street _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____

Phone _____

	Yes	No
Have you read, and do you understand and agree to abide by, the "Child and Youth Safety Policy?"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The last time you volunteered with a child or youth activity at St. Paul's Lutheran Church was:		

I verify that the information that I provided on the Child and Youth Volunteer Application or the Employee Application is still correct and truthful.

Volunteer Signature

Date

Volunteer Printed Name

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Required Every 5 Years

Any changes in must be reported immediately if working with youth.

Please answer each question in full. Your responses will be kept confidential.

AUTHORIZATION FOR RELEASE OF INFORMATION

In filling out this application, I understand that this potential employer is in no way obligated to provide employment to me or for me to accept employment with such. I also understand that past employment records, references and other facts stated by me may be subject to inquiry.

I hereby grant this potential employer permission to check any of the information on this form. In connection with and for the duration of my employment with this potential employer, I authorize all persons, schools, companies, internet accounts, corporations, credit bureaus, law enforcement agencies or government branches of the services to supply any information concerning my background and release them from any liability and responsibility arising from their doing so, except where my written statement upon this form specifically requests that no investigation be made. Disclosure of date of birth will not be used to determine suitability for employment. I understand it will be for identification purposes only. All information will be held in the strictest of confidence. I further understand that any misrepresentation of facts upon this application will be considered as cause for possible dismissal.

Name (First, Middle Initial, Last) _____
 Also Known As _____
 (please list any aliases) _____

Address Street _____
 City _____ State _____
 Zip _____
 Phone _____

Driver's License Number and State _____
 Social Security Number _____

 Applicant Signature Date

 Applicant Printed Name

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Required Every 5 Years

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Please answer each question in full. Your responses will be kept confidential.

Name (First, Middle Initial, Last) _____

Date of Birth _____

Address Street _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____

Phone _____

Driver's License Number and State _____

Expiration _____

Vehicle to be Driven (if not rented by church)

Make and Model _____

Year _____

License Plate Number _____

Registraion Expires _____

Owner of Vehicle _____

Insurance Company _____

Policy Number _____

Expiration _____

Liability Limits _____

I agree with/to the following:

I am 21 years of age or older

I have read and agree to follow the Children and Youth Safety Policy

I will wear and agree to require all passengers to wear seat belts at all times

I will drive in a safe and responsible manner, and will not exceed posted speed limits

I consent to a driving record and/or criminal background check

Signature

Date

Note: If you have any concerns about the requested information, please feel free to speak to any member of the program or ministry staff.