POLICY FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

January 2019

I.   THEOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL FOUNDATIONS

"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld the Word's glory, glory as of the only Child from God."
— John 1:14 (*An Inclusive Language Lectionary*)

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

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

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

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

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

This document is a statement for the Episcopal Church, the Diocese of Southern Virginia, congregations and organizations setting forth expectations for its leaders in their relationships with children, youth and vulnerable adults and is intended to provide a pattern for attentive practice of ministry.

II.   EXPECTATIONS AND LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION

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

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

Church governing bodies and all leaders should understand these policies and all local requirements thoroughly enough to make appropriate judgments, and should consult with the Canon for Formation when unanticipated situations arise.

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

III.   DEFINITIONS

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

Adult: Anyone who is 18 years or older and not in high school *(see footnote to youth on page 7)*.

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

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

Child: Anyone under the age of 12 years *(see footnote to youth on page 7)*.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mandated Reporter: A person who is required by state law to report reasonable suspicions of abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation of vulnerable populations to the appropriate state agency.

State laws vary greatly. Generally, state law mandates that either all adults or adults in certain professions report suspected abuse of children and/or youth. It is imperative to know the requirements of applicable state laws. Typically, individuals who are not mandated to report suspicion of abuse may make a report to the appropriate state agency, even though not legally required to do so.

Minister: *Verb* – Any action, program or activity initiated by a representative (lay or ordained) of a faith community to reach out, serve, or care for another. *Noun* – Any person who ministers; all lay ministers and ordained clergy.

Off-Site: Any location other than the sponsoring Episcopal Church, institution, facility, or campus.

Organizations: All institutions for which the diocese or congregations have legal or fiduciary responsibility (examples: diocesan departments, commissions, conference & retreat centers, adult day care centers, retirement communities, religious orders, congregations, schools, etc.).

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

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

Programs: Official activities and programs sponsored by The Episcopal Church and its provinces, dioceses, and congregations (examples include: The Episcopal Youth Event, Provincial Youth Events, Happening, Teens Encounter Christ, pilgrimages, mission experiences, New Beginnings, camp programs, Acolyte Festival, etc.).

Public Records Check: A search of documents and data available to the public including criminal and civil court records, credit reports, and driving records from the department of motor vehicles. Typically, such searches are conduct by a third party with expertise in this area.

Residential Facility: Any institutional or group home setting where a vulnerable adult resides on a permanent or temporary basis such as a nursing home, rehabilitation center, assisted living facility, treatment center, or memory care facility.

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

Sacramental Use of Alcohol: Consecrated or to-be-consecrated wine used in the setting of Eucharist.

Sexual Misconduct: A broad term encompassing any behavior of a sexual nature that is committed without consent or capacity for consent or by force, intimidation, coercion, or

manipulation. Sexual misconduct can be committed by a person of any gender, and it can occur between people of the same or different gender.

- **Sexual Abuse or Molestation:** A form of misconduct with any person, including but not limited to, any sexual involvement or sexual contact with a person who is a minor or who is legally incompetent. Sexual abuse is a criminal offense and must be reported to law enforcement officials.
- **Sexual Harassment**: In a situation where there is an employment, mentor, or colleague relationship between the persons involved, including but not limited to sexually-oriented humor or language; questions or comments:
  - o Sexual behavior or orientation, unrelated to employment qualifications; or
  - o Physical contact; inappropriate comments about clothing or physical appearance; or repeated requests for social engagements.
- **Sexual Exploitation:** Includes, but is not limited to, the development of or the attempt to develop a sexual relationship between clergy, employee or volunteer, and a person with whom he/she has a pastoral relationship, regardless of whether or not there is apparent consent from the individual.

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

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

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

Training: Organized activity designed to provide information and/or instructions to strengthen and enhance the recipient's understanding, capacity, and exercise of ministry.
- **Universal Training**: A standard of training that will foster a culture of safety and inclusion for all people that includes a broad overview of issues of vulnerability, power, and healthy boundaries. This training is designed to equip all people to live out their Baptismal Covenant.
- **Specialized Training**: A standard of additional training that equips people who participate in or have oversight responsibility for ministries. In addition to Universal Training, a person will have access to training that is specialized and tailored to their role and ministry function.

Vulnerable Adult:
- Any adult at or older than the age designated as an elder by applicable state law;
- Any adult who is infirm or diminished in capacity due to age, illness, or disability;
- Any adult who is ministered to in their home (by Eucharistic Visitors, Pastoral Care Visitors, Stephen Ministers, or others);
- Any adult who is wholly or partially dependent upon one or more other persons for emotional, psychological, or physical care or support, such dependency may be temporary as in the case of an accident, illness, or birth of a child; and

- Any adult who by virtue of a crisis, experiences vulnerability leading to dependency on another or lacks agency in a pastoral relationship as in the wake of death of a family member or job loss.

Weapon: An instrument likely to produce bodily harm or death from the way it is used. Examples would include but are not limited to knives and firearms. Other objects can be considered weapons if they are used in a vicious or cruel way.

Youth: Anyone who is at least 12 years old, but not yet 18 years old. A youth may also be an individual who is 18 years old or older, and still in high school. [1]

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

IV. APPLICATION AND SCREENING

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

A. Public Records Checks
- Congregations and other organizations shall use a provider approved by the diocese to conduct public records checks. Such checks must be completed before the employee or volunteer begins interacting with children and youth.
- Criminal public records checks shall include all available criminal records and sex offender registries.
- A Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) records check is needed if transporting children and youth as part of, or an extension of, ministry of the church or for a church-sponsored event.
- A credit check is required for check signing authority.
- Public records checks must be updated at least every five years. If an individual moves outside the state of Virginia and subsequently returns, a background check must be repeated upon their return regardless of how much time has elapsed.

B. Additional Screening Requirements
Written application, interview, and reference verification are required before serving in certain roles and ministries as specified in the ***Screening Protocols*** (Appendix A). Where required, these components are generally conducted in the following order:
- Submission of a completed written application to serve in a specified role with a clearly defined, written "job description." The application includes verifiable personal information;
- Personal interview;
- Reference verification conducted by congregations and other organizations to verify personal information and check references listed in the application (people who know but are not related to the applicant); and
- Maintenance of these records as described below.

Potential Leaders or Supervisors must be known and active in the congregation for at least six months before engaging in ministry with children, youth, and vulnerable adults unless they are required to have public records checks and reference checks pursuant to the ***Screening Protocols*** (Appendix A).

Dioceses, congregations, and other organizations must keep and maintain all application and screening records secure and confidential in the diocese's, congregation's, or organization's office. This includes a signature by each applicant verifying receipt of a copy of this policy, including any local procedures or variations.

V.   EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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

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

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

Depending on role and responsibility, Specialized Training should include:
- Prevention, identification, and response to all forms of abuse and neglect including financial exploitation;
- Mandated and voluntary reporting of suspected abuse, neglect, and exploitation of children, youth and vulnerable adults;
- Vulnerability within the pastoral relationship;
- An introduction to gender identity
  - Gender non-binary;
  - The needs of LGBTQ+ children, youth and vulnerable adults;
  - The needs of aging LGBTQ+ individuals who often struggle to find care or residential facilities adequately equipped to meet their needs;
- The ways that children, youth, and vulnerable adults can engage in self-advocacy;
- The needs of differently-abled children and youth.

Certification of training shall be renewed every three years.

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

VI.   MONITORING AND SUPERVISION OF PROGRAMS

All people who minister to children and youth and vulnerable adults and/or have a pastoral relationship with others must have ongoing supervision. Ongoing supervision should consist of regular check-ins by the Supervisor who may be parish clergy or a team leader. Such supervision shall review the scope, accountability, and responsibly of the ministry with the person engaged in the ministry.

A Responsible Person shall monitor and supervise the behavior of adults, children, and youth to ensure appropriate behavior and healthy boundaries. Each person engaged in ministry to children, youth and vulnerable adults should know who supervises their ministry and how to contact the Supervisor at all times.

The Diocese of Southern Virginia, each of its congregations and organizations shall maintain current running lists of persons approved to minister to children, youth and vulnerable adults and/or engage in pastoral relationships with others. This list shall include contact information, dates of safe church training, and background check completion dates for the individuals listed and will be kept in the organization's office or other place where records are kept.

A. Presence Of Unrelated Adults	
Children & Youth Specific	**Vulnerable Adult Specific**
There shall be at least two unrelated adults (at least two years older than the eldest participant) present at ministry settings and events. If unanticipated circumstances result in an adult being alone with children or youth, that adult shall report those circumstances to the Supervisor, clergy in charge, senior warden, or Responsible Person as soon as possible. In exceptional circumstances only one adult may be sufficient in well-monitored, visually accessible program space on the church grounds, such as a Sunday School classroom, provided that another adult can maintain visual contact with the adult program leader. This can be accomplished by designating an individual to conduct frequent random checks of classrooms and unlocked spaces throughout the building(s). Exceptional circumstances must be specifically described in a written document and approved by the governing body of the congregation.	While not required, it is best practice for those ministering to vulnerable adults, or in the homes of others, to do so with another trained adult minister present. Those engaged in such ministries should minister in pairs. If circumstances result in a minister being alone with a vulnerable adult, that minister shall report this to the Supervisor, clergy, senior warden, or Responsible Person as soon as possible. It is best practice for those ministering to vulnerable adults to document their visits, including time, place, and any observations or concerns. This documentation promotes continuity of care and transparency in ministry. The Supervisor of the ministry shall review such documentation and shall respond to any concerns in a timely manner. Confidentiality among clergy and lay ministers is required and all documentation is kept confidential.

B. Creating Safe Space

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

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

Children & Youth Specific	Vulnerable Adult Specific
To create a safe space, it is necessary to anticipate and avoid circumstances in which children and youth are exposed to inappropriate consumables, materials, unmonitored adult contact, or unsupervised peer contact. **Alcoholic beverages**. Alcohol (sacramental or otherwise) shall not be stored in publicly accessible areas of church buildings. **Computers and electronic devices.** Children and youth shall have adequate supervision when using electronic devices belonging to the Diocese of Southern Virginia, congregations, and other organizations. Devices shall have adequate password protection. Each user shall have their own account and password. See *Recommended Practices and Guidelines for Social Media and Electronic Communications* (Appendix C) for additional guidance. **Persons with keys and access to locked spaces***. Anyone with keys or electronic access* to church buildings shall meet all the requirements for screening and training according to the *Screening* and *Training Protocols* (Appendix A/B). **Unused spaces.** Spaces not in use should not be readily accessible. **One-On-One Conversations**. When one-to-one conversations occur between an adult and a child or youth, another unrelated adult is either to be present or capable of visually monitoring the conversation.	To create a safe space, it is necessary to anticipate and avoid circumstances that could result in exposure of vulnerable adults to undue influence or exploitation. On-site and off-site settings for ministry with vulnerable adults and pastoral relationships and conversations should: - Be in places where casual monitoring by others is convenient; - Convey safety and comfort.

- o Planned or unplanned on-site conversations can take place in a public location, away from where others can hear but in view of other adults. - o Planned off-site conversations/meetings can take place in a public place (such as a coffee shop or restaurant) in view of other adults. A Responsible Person shall be informed about the appointment or plans in advance. **Confidentiality**. Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed if a child or youth discloses a situation pertaining to abuse, neglect, self-harm, or exploitation because of mandatory reporting laws. - Impulsive, secluded or secretive activity, online or in person with children or youth, may foster a high-risk situation, and is therefore to be avoided. See ***Recommended Practices and Guidelines for Social Media and Electronic Communications*** (Appendix C).	

C. Inclusiveness

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

The Episcopal Church seeks to support all persons by providing reasonable alternative arrangements to address safety and comfort.

Transgender, genderqueer, or gender non-binary children, youth and vulnerable adults who express the need or desire for increased privacy should be provided with reasonable alternative arrangements. Alternative arrangements should provide for the ability to keep one's transgender status confidential. Reasonable alternative arrangements may include:
- Use of a private area
- Separate changing schedule
- Use of a single-stall restroom.

Any alternative arrangement should be provided in such a way that does not require the use of a locker room/restroom that conflicts with the individual's gender identity.

Safe bathroom/shower facilities will be provided by gender (or specific times will be assigned

to the use of a single facility).	
Children & Youth Specific	**Vulnerable Adult Specific**
Adults should either have separate shower/dressing facilities or shower/dress at other times than the children and youth. See section on ***Overnight Programs*** (Section VI.I).	

D. Violence And Weapons

No one is to strike, hit, or otherwise physically threaten or harm anyone at any time.
Bullying of any kind by anyone is prohibited.
Report suspected violations immediately. See ***Suspected Violations of this Policy*** (Section VII.B).

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

Children & Youth Specific	**Vulnerable Adult Specific**
Children and youth shall not have weapons of any kind at any event or program for children or youth. Exceptions to this restriction may be made for camp programs or other specific programs with prior approval.	No one is to control or attempt to control another by bullying, intimidation, threats, verbal/emotional abuse, or isolation from others. Bullying of any kind by anyone is prohibited.

E. Behavioral Standards For Ministry

All who work with children and youth and vulnerable adults are expected to model the patterns of healthy relationships in all settings.

Have ongoing spiritual practices, which might include: daily prayer, regular participation in corporate worship, and Bible study.

Spend time with and listen to children, youth and vulnerable adults, and advocate for their ministry within the Body of Christ

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

Children & Youth Specific	**Vulnerable Adult Specific**

Adults are encouraged to:
• Offer appropriate physical expressions of care, which may include:
  o high fives and fist bumps;
  o hand-holding while walking with small children or in prayer;
  o brief touching of shoulders, hands, or arms;
  o "laying on of hands" under appropriate pastoral supervision;
	All persons working with vulnerable adults shall:
	• Take care not to unduly influence a person to whom they minister;
	• Accept only token gifts from those to whom they minister;
	• Gifts shall be reported, in writing, to a Supervisor, clergy, senior warden, or Responsible Person.
	• Decline to accept loans of any kind from

- o brief hugs and arms around shoulders.
- Model appropriate affection with other adults and be accountable to the community for behavior.

Adults shall not under any circumstances:
- Provide children or youth with non-sacramental alcohol, marijuana, drugs, cigarettes, tobacco products, e-cigarettes, vapes, or pornography;
- Arrive under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or misused legal drugs at any children's or youth event or when they are responsible for children or youth at an event;
- Consume non-sacramental alcohol or illegal drugs or misuse legal drugs at any children's or youth event or when they are responsible for children or youth at an event;
- Engage in illegal behavior or permit other adults or children or youth to engage in illegal behavior;
- Engage in any sexual, romantic, illicit, or secretive relationship or conduct with any child or youth. Adults should be discouraged from initiating a private relationship with any unrelated child or youth from the church away from sanctioned church activities.
- Apart from planned pre-approved educational programs, discuss their own sexual activities, fantasies, or their own use, or abuse of drugs or alcohol with children or youth.

those to whom they minister.
- Decline to agree to be named as a beneficiary or to act as an administrator or executor in a will of anyone to whom they minister.
- Inform Supervisor, clergy, senior warden, or Responsible Person of anything that causes concern for the safety or wellbeing of those to whom they minister.

All who minister to vulnerable adults are encouraged to:
- Offer appropriate physical expressions of affection, as long as they are welcomed by the recipient. These may include:
  - o brief hugs;
  - o pats on the shoulder or back;
  - o kisses on the cheek;
  - o handshakes;
  - o holding hands during prayer.
- Maintain healthy boundaries when sharing personal information.

Adults shall not under any circumstances:
- Provide vulnerable adults with non-sacramental alcohol, marijuana, illegal drugs, cigarettes, e-cigarettes, vapes, or pornography;
- Arrive under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or misuse of legal drugs when they are responsible for, or ministering to, a vulnerable adult;
- Consume non-sacramental alcohol or illegal drugs or misuse legal drugs when they are responsible for, or ministering to, a vulnerable adult;
- Engage in illegal behavior or permit others to engage in illegal behavior; or
- Engage in any sexual, romantic, illicit, or secretive relationship or conduct with any vulnerable adult.

F. Visits To Private Residences
The safety of all persons and healthy boundaries are essential when visiting in a private home.
- Avoid situations that might compromise privacy; common examples include:
  - o Visiting behind closed bedroom doors;

o   Sitting on the bed of the person being visited; or
o   Visiting a person while they are not fully clothed.
- The best practice is to visit in teams of two or more. If it is not possible for another adult minister to be present, a member of the individual's household should be present. If neither is possible, documentation of the time, duration of visit, general matters discussed, and any pastoral concerns shall be provided to the Supervisor as soon as possible after the visit.

G. Visits To Residential Facilities

The safety of all persons and healthy boundaries are also essential when visiting in a Residential Facility. Best practices include:
- Facility staff should be informed of the visitor's presence;
- If a visit takes place out of sight of staff, they should be notified in advance and informed when such meeting is concluded;
- The door to a resident's private room must remain open during visits;
- Visitors should be mindful that LGBTQ+ residents may not be safe to express their sexual identity or orientation, as staff members may not yet have been trained;

In the event of uncertainty about application of this policy, the visitor is encouraged to contact their Supervisor with the relevant queries.

H. Special Considerations for Off-Site Programming

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

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

In the event of uncertainty about application of the policy, the Responsible Person should contact their Supervisor or the Bishop's office with the relevant queries.

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

1. Prior Approvals	
Congregational sponsored off-site programs, trips and events require prior approval by the governing body and the member of the clergy in charge, and that approval shall be reflected in the minutes of the governing body. Diocesan sponsored programs, trips, or events shall receive prior diocesan approval. These same prior approvals are required when the site is a private residence, hosting such events as cook outs, pool parties, progressive dinners, etc.	
Children & Youth Specific	**Vulnerable Adult Specific**
Written parental approval is required prior to viewing any movie, whether off-site or on-site, rated "PG-13" or above, or participating in any conversation or program containing sexually explicit or violent content.	If a vulnerable adult resides in a care/assisted living facility written approval from the facility is required prior to the event.

2. Registration, Waiver, And Release Forms

All participants shall complete and sign a registration form and a waiver and release form before participating in any programs. Confidentiality must be preserved with respect to medical and other sensitive information in the forms. Such forms can encompass a program year.

- There must be a parent/guardian's signature on all release and waiver forms for minors.
- Completed release and waiver forms shall be maintained in a secure location on-site or online.
- Waiver and release forms for minors must be saved for the length of time before the minor turns 18 years old plus 3 years. Waiver and release forms for adults must be saved for 5 years.

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3. First Aid and Medications

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

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

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

Children & Youth Specific	Vulnerable Adult Specific
All medications (prescription and over the counter) belonging to minors shall be given to the Responsible Person, unless otherwise agreed upon by the parents and the Responsible Person. Exceptions may include inhalers, epi-pens, and birth-control pills. Only the Responsible Person, or their adult designee, shall administer medications.	If a vulnerable adult requires assistance with medications of any type, then a record must be kept for all medication or first aid given to a participant. All medications (prescription and over the counter) belonging to vulnerable adults requiring assistance with medications shall be given to the Responsible Person, unless otherwise agreed upon.

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4. Transportation

For the health and safety of all participants, the following practices shall be followed:

- For events that originate and/or terminate at the diocesan, congregation, or organization's facility, all drivers must be at least 21 years of age and provide proof of insurance and a current driver's license, a completed volunteer driver information form, and have a satisfactory DMV records check;
- All drivers and riders must comply with state laws including seat belt and cell phone usage.

Children & Youth Specific	Vulnerable Adult Specific
Parents/guardians are responsible for the transportation and safety of their children	A list of those approved to provide transportation shall be maintained in the

and/or youth to and from the event. This responsibility includes the transportation of any other passengers in their vehicle.	office of the organization; Anyone being transported must consent to such transportation beforehand. If a person is unable to consent due to impairment or lack of agency, then prior approval by that person's guardian, spouse, or other trusted family member is required;

5. **Supervision**
   a. At any gathering of children or youth, there shall be at least two unrelated adults with one being age 25 or older, preferably reflecting the sex and gender identity of the participants. Note – the ratios for overnight/travel programs are increased. See I.4 Adult Leader and Chaperones Travel Guidelines.
   b. Minimum ratios of adult to child/youth shall be in accordance with American Camp Association (ACA) guidelines as follows:
      • 5 years & younger — 1 adult for each 5 overnight-participants and 1 adult for each 6 day-participants
      • 6–8 years — 1:6 for overnight, and 1:8 for day
      • 9–14 years — 1:8 for overnight and 1:10 for day
      • 15–18 years — 1:10 for overnight and 1:12 for day
   c. Additional adults can provide skills, mentorship, support, encouragement, spiritual guidance, and joy.
   d. When you have new leaders-in-training, the leadership teams should also have a reasonable number of experienced adult leaders to provide support.

I.   OVERNIGHT /TRAVEL PROGRAMS

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

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

In overnight programing, particular attention will be given to historically excluded or unrecognized people, such as LGBTQ+ and differently-abled individuals. In a situation of unequal power and safety, preferences of these individuals merit additional consideration, accommodation, and action to ensure:
   • Participant privacy;
   • Maximization of social integration of all participants;
   • Minimization of stigmatization of any participants;
   • Equal opportunity to participate; and
   • Safety of all participants.

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

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

1. **Travel Administrator:**
   - One adult, minimum age 25, should serve as the travel administrator who is responsible for all aspects of the trip, including carrying all necessary documentation, contacts, and forms including:
       - medical releases;
       - community covenant;
       - emergency contacts;
       - itineraries; and
       - cash and/or credit card capacity to address emergencies.

2. **Medical**
   - It is a best practice that, one adult, minimum age 25, should hold a current medical certification to manage administration of necessary and permissible medications,

administer immediate and necessary first aid, and triage medical situations to determine if care of an individual needs to be taken to a higher level of care. When this is not possible, one person should be designated to supervise the administration of medications as instructed on medical release forms, and a clinic near your destination should be identified ahead of time in order to respond to health emergencies as rapidly as possible.

- Acceptable medical certifications include:
  - Wilderness Medical Response
  - Outdoor Emergency Care
  - Emergency Medical Technician/Paramedic
  - Nurse — RN/LPN/Nurse Practitioner
  - Physician's Assistant
  - Medical Doctor
- Best practice is to designate an adult to serve as back-up to the travel administrator, and as back-up for simple first aid and administration of prescriptions. These could be the same person.
- A copy of all documents should be left with an accountable person at the diocesan, congregation, or organization's office. That person should also serve as the local emergency contact person for communications between the traveling group and families at home.

3. **International Travel Considerations**
- Check in with the U.S. Department of State on travel requirements, including visas.
- Make certain that every traveler's passport is valid for at least six months beyond your return date.
- Determine whether or not vaccinations are required and/or recommended for entry into specific countries.
- Arrange to have at least two cell phones with the group that will have active coverage in your destination(s).
- Make a back-up plan for communication with your Responsible Person at home.
- A more thorough list of international travel considerations with links to U.S. and global organizations can be found in the *Episcopal Youth in Mission Manual* which can be found at: **https://www.episcopalchurch.org/ministries/youth-ministries/mission-manual/**.

4. **Adult Leader and Chaperones Travel Guidelines**
- Minimum ratios of adult to youth need to be greater due to the possibility of leaving an adult behind with a participant in the event of a medical emergency.
- 9–14 years — 1:5
- 15–18 years — 1:7
- Regardless of group size, no group should travel with fewer than three adult chaperones.

VII.   RESPONDING TO CONCERNS

A. Suspected Abuse, Neglect, or Exploitation of Children, Youth or Vulnerable Adults

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

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

DIOCESAN RESOURCE CONTACT LIST		
Name	**Title**	**Contact Information**
The Rt. Rev. Susan B. Haynes	**Bishop**	**757-213-3381** bishop@diosova.org
Lynn Farlin	**Canon for Formation**	**757-213-3377** lfarlin@diosova.org
The Rev. Marguerite Alley	**Intake Officers**	**757-286-6874** margueritesr@gmail.com
The Rev. Dale Custer		**804-399-4655** raymonddalecuster@gmail.com
The Rev. Bob Gay		**757-253-0391** rggay@cox.net
The Rev. Susan Grimm		**434-738-3171** susaninmidlo@yahoo.com
Congregation Specific	**Rector/Clergy in Charge**	*Congregation Specific*
Congregation Specific	**Senior Warden**	*Congregation Specific*
Organization Specific	**Director, Head, or other governing officer in the case of other organizations**	*Organization Specific*
Congregation Specific	**Responsible Person(s) for programs and ministries with children, youth**	*Congregation Specific*

Congregation Specific	Responsible Person(s) for programs and ministries with vulnerable adults	*Congregation Specific*
Organization Specific	Adult Protective Services	**888-832-3858** **For local Social Services Information visit** http://www.dss.virginia.gov/localagency/index.cgi
Organization Specific	Child Protective Services	**800-552-7096** **For local Social Services Information visit:** http://www.dss.virginia.gov/localagency/index.cgi

B. Suspected Violations of this Policy

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

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

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

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

C. Local Resources for Response

Individuals seeking additional information should consult the following local resources available through the Virginia Department of Social Services:

Reporting Abuse & Neglect   http://www.dss.virginia.gov/abuse/
Adult Protective Services   http://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/as/aps.cgi
Child Protective Services   http://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/cps/index.cgi

VIII. POLICY ADOPTION, IMPLEMENTATION, AND AUDIT

A. The Episcopal Church Adoption and Implementation

The Episcopal Church shall ensure that all programs and events of the Episcopal Church involving children, youth and vulnerable adults comply with the standards set out in Model Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth (Resolution 2015-A073) and Model Policies for the Protection of Vulnerable Adults (Resolution 2015-A074).

The Episcopal Church shall also ensure that each diocese adopts a policy for the protection of children, youth and vulnerable adults in accordance with these model policies by January 1, 2019.

B. Diocesan Adoption, Implementation, and Audit

The Diocese of Southern Virginia shall adopt a policy for the protection of children, youth and vulnerable adults that is consistent with and/or exceeds the requirements of Model Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth (Resolution 2015-A073) and Model Policies for the Protection of Vulnerable Adults (Resolution 2015-A074).

The Diocese of Southern Virginia may adopt site-specific variations from these model policies, where permitted by their governing body, which shall be described in detail, including the circumstances under which those variations are to be permitted and their rationale. This approval shall be recorded in the minutes of the governing body.

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

The Diocese of Southern Virginia is required to conduct a **Safe Church Self-Audit** every three years to confirm compliance with diocesan safe church policies.

Procedures to be confirmed by audit will include (but are not limited to):
- Existence of diocesan policy that is consistent with and/or exceeds the requirements of the model policies;
- Provision of accessible and appropriate training for all those who work with children, youth and vulnerable adults in accordance with **Screening** and **Training Protocols** (Appendix A/B). Such training shall include, at a minimum, topics identified in this policy;
- Verification that each congregation and/or organization within the diocese has adopted a policy that is consistent with and/or exceeds the diocesan policy; and
- Verification that each congregation and/or organization has a process to ensure members access training and conduct public record checks.

C. Congregation and Organization Adoption, Implementation, and Audit

Congregations and organizations must adopt a ***Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults*** that is consistent with and/or exceeds the requirements the diocesan policy.

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

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

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

Procedures to be confirmed by audit will include (but are not limited to):
- Public records checks, application forms, records of screening and reference verification of paid and unpaid persons;
- Records of compliance with ***Screening*** and ***Training Protocols*** (Appendix A/B);
- Procedures for responding to concerns and incidents;
- Evidence of compliance with "safe space" requirements.

Appendix A: Diocese of Southern Virginia Safe Church Screening Protocols

	Ministry Function	Public Records Check	Application, Interview, Reference Check
Staff & Contracted Ministers	Clergy	X	X
	Church Employees	X	X
	Church Staff - unpaid	X	X
	Church contractors (1099)	Depends	Depends
	Diocesan Employees	X	X
	Diocesan Staff - unpaid	X	X
	Diocesan contractors (1099)	Depends	Depends
	Day School Staff	X	X
	Day School Teachers	X	X
	Day School Volunteers	X	X
Program Supervisors	Child/Youth Choir Director	X	X
	Choir Director	X	X
	Commissioned Ministry Teams	X	X
	Director of Religious Education	X	X
	Camp Director	X	X
	Youth Minister	X	X
	VBS/Day Camp Director	X	X
	Other Program Supervisors	X	X
Program Participants	Acolyte Mentor	X	
(non-supervisory)	Choir Parents		
	Church School Teacher	X	
	Counselor in Training	18 and older	X
	Nursery worker - unpaid	X	
	Teenage assistants		
	Musicians who work with youth	X	X
	Confirmation mentors	X	X
	Tutors	X	
	VBS/Day Camp Volunteers	X	
	Resident Camp Counselor	X	X
	Parish Nurse	X	X
	Lay Chaplains	X	X
	Youth Group/Event Leaders	X	X
	Mission Trip Leaders	X	X
Drivers	Drivers	DMV	
Governance	Wardens	Criminal & Credit	
	Vestry		
	Treasurer/Check Signers	Criminal & Credit	
	Other Elected/Appointed Boards		
Key/Building Access	Altar Guild	Recommended	
	Building Hosts	Recommended	
Home Visitors	Eucharistic Visitors	X	X
	Pastoral Care Visitors	X	X
	Stephen Ministers	X	X

If you do not see your role on this list please contact the diocesan office for guidance.

Appendix B: Diocese of Southern Virginia Safe Church Training Protocols

	Ministry Function	Universal Training	Specialized Training
Staff & Contracted Ministers	Clergy		X
	Church Employees		X
	Church Staff - unpaid		X
	Church contractors (1099)	X	
	Diocesan Employees		X
	Diocesan Staff - unpaid		X
	Diocesan contractors (1099)	X	
	Day School Staff		X
	Day School Teachers		X
	Day School Volunteers		X
Program Supervisors	Child/Youth Choir Director		X
	Choir Director		X
	Commissioned Ministry Teams		X
	Director of Religious Education		X
	Camp Director		X
	Youth Minister		X
	VBS/Day Camp Director		X
	Other Program Supervisors		X
Program Participants	Acolyte Mentor	X	
(non-supervisory)	Choir Parents	X	
	Church School Teacher	X	
	Counselor in Training	X	
	Nursery worker - unpaid	X	
	Teenage assistants	X	
	Musicians who work with youth	X	
	Confirmation mentors	X	
	Tutors	X	
	VBS/Day Camp Volunteers	X	
	Resident Camp Counselor		X
	Parish Nurse		X
	Lay Chaplains		X
	Youth Group/Event Leaders		X
	Mission Trip Leaders		X
Drivers	Drivers	X	
Governance	Wardens		X
	Vestry		X
	Treasurer		X
	Other Elected/Appointed Boards		X
Key/Building Access	Altar Guild	X	
	Building Hosts	X	
Home Visitors	Eucharistic Visitors		X
	Pastoral Care Visitors		X
	Stephen Ministers		X

If you do not see your role on this list please contact the diocesan office for guidance.

Appendix C: Diocese of Southern Virginia Recommended Practices and Guidelines for Social Media and Electronic Communications

As an ever increasing number of people use and prefer digital communication over other forms, it is essential that the church be present in this mission field. Social networks and email can enhance communication, faith sharing and deepen relationship. The following recommended guidelines apply commonly accepted principles of health boundaries and safe church to digital networking and communication.

Commonly Accepted Principles of Healthy Boundaries and Safe Church
- Adults have more power than children and youth.
- Clergy have more power than people with whom they have a pastoral relationship.
- The mutuality of friendship cannot exist when there is a disparity of power.
- Two unrelated adults must be able to maintain visual contact with each other any time they engage in ministry with children or youth.
- Windows in doors allow transparency of interactions with children, youth and adults who may be vulnerable.

General Information about Digital Communication
- All communication send digitally (email, social networking sites, notes or posts, etc.) is NOT confidential and may be shared or re-posted to others.
- Interactions in the virtual world need to be transparent, as a window in the door provides transparency in the physical world.
- In the virtual world healthy boundaries and safe church practices must be adhered to as they are in the in the physical world.
- In the virtual world, "friend" can mean anyone with whom you are willing to communicate through that medium. In the physical world, friend can mean much more in terms of intimacy, self-disclosure, mutuality and expectations for relationship.
- Laws regarding mandated reporting of suspected abuse/neglect/exploitation of children, youth, elders and vulnerable adults apply in the virtual world as they do in the physical world.

Recommended Practices & Guidelines for Interactions with Children & Youth

Relationships on Social Networking Sites
- Adults who minister to children and youth are strongly encouraged to set very stringent privacy settings on any social networking profile. Individual personal profiles may be used to interact with real friends, family and peers. Adults should not submit "friend" requests to minors or youth. Youth may not be able to decline such requests due to the disparity of power between youth and adults. Youth may ask to be "friends," and adults should discern the level of contact they want to maintain with youth prior to responding to these requests.
- If an adult chooses to accept friend requests from minors or youth who are associated with their community of faith, other adult leaders must have full access to all aspects of that adult's profile and correspondence.

- Adults who want to connect via a social networking site with youth to whom they minister are strongly encouraged to set up a closed group account that the youth may join. Youth requesting to "friend" an adult can then be invited to join this group rather than be accepted as a friend on an adult's personal profile account. The purpose of these two separate accounts is to create a line of privacy and maintain healthy boundaries with youth and real family, friends and colleagues.
- Any material on any site (whether affiliated with the church or not) that raises suspicion that a child has been or will be abused/neglected/exploited should be immediately reported to the clergy and/or appropriate local authorities. If the material is on a church affiliated site, that material should be documented for church records and then removed from the site after consultation with appropriate local authorities and/or police.

Groups on Social Networking Sites
- Closed groups, but not "hidden" groups, should be used for youth groups (J2A, Rite 13, Confirmation, Pilgrimage, mission trips, etc.)
- Groups should have at least two unrelated adult administrators as well as at least two youth administrators
- Invitations to youth to join the group should be made by youth administrators, unless a youth previously asked an adult administrator to invite him/her to join the group.
- Norms should be created to govern what content is appropriate and inappropriate for an online youth group.
- Any material on any site (whether affiliated with the church or not) that raises suspicion that a child has been or will be abused/neglected/exploited should be immediately reported to the clergy and/or appropriate local authorities. If the material is on a church affiliated site, that material should be documented for church records and then removed from the site after consultation with appropriate local authorities and/or police.
- Inappropriate material that does not raise suspicion that a child has been or will be abused/neglected/exploited should be immediately removed from the site.
- Any content that details inappropriate behavior (outside the bounds of the established norms) during a church sponsored activity should be addressed by adult youth leaders and parents.
- Social networking groups for youth should be open to parents of current members.
- Parents should be informed that the content of youth pages or groups that are not sponsored by the church are NOT within the purview of adult youth leaders.
- Adult leaders of youth groups and former youth members who, due to departure, removal from position, or are no longer eligible because they "aged out" of a program should be immediately removed from digital communication with youth groups via social networking sites, list serves, etc.

Recommendations for Norms for Social Networking Site Groups
Norms should acknowledge that materials posted on church sponsored sites and/or group pages are NOT confidential. Norms should also acknowledge that content deemed inappropriate will be removed from the site or group page. The following issues should also be addressed:
- Appropriate language

- Eligibility of membership
- Loss of eligibility of membership
- Who, how and when may photos be tagged (e.g. members may tag themselves in a photo but may not tag others)
- Appropriate and inappropriate behavior of members
- Compliance with mandated reporter laws regarding suspected abuse/neglect/exploitation

Recommended Practices & Guidelines for Interactions with Adults

- Clergy are strongly encouraged to set very stringent privacy settings on any social networking profile to shield both adult and youth members from viewing content that may be inappropriate.
- Clergy should not submit "friend" requests to parishioners and others to whom they minister. The disparity of power may not give the other person the ability to decline such a request.
- Clergy who want to interact with parishioners via a social networking site may want to consider setting up a group account that all parishioners may join. The purpose of having a separate personal profile and a parish group is to create a line of privacy and maintain healthy boundaries with parishioners and real family, friends and colleagues.
- Clergy should consider the impact of declining a "friend" request from parishioners. These encounters may create a tension in "real world" relationships. Clergy can direct "friend" requests from parishioners to the parish's group page.
- Clergy who work directly with youth are encouraged to establish church-sponsored digital communications groups to maintain contact with youth members.
- When a cleric's ministry at a parish or other ministry setting ends, the cleric should remove parishioners as "friends" or contacts in all forms of digital communications.

Recommendations for Video Chats, Blogs or Video Blogs

- Adults should refrain from initiating video chats with youth.
- Participants in a video chat or blog should consider what will be shown in the video such as their surroundings, their clothing/state of dress, etc.
- All transcripts of online text chats, video chats, blogs or video blogs should be saved when possible.
- All clergy and adults engaged in ministry with youth should consider the content and nature of any post that will be read by or visible to youth. Your voice is often considered the voice of the church.

Recommendations for Publishing/Posting Photos and other online content

- Congregations must inform participants when they are being videoed because church buildings are not considered public space.
- Any faith community that distributes video of its worship services or activities on the web or via other broadcast media must post signs that indicate the service will be broadcast.

- For children under age 18, congregations may only post photos/video for which they have a release on file for any minors featured in the photo or video. Congregations are encouraged to develop an "opt-out" photo and video policy for adults. Photos and video that feature adults may be taken and published except for those adults who request to not have their photos shared. A **Media Opt Out Form** is useful for this purpose.
- Congregations should establish a policy regarding the identification or "tagging" of individuals in online photos. The best practice is to not identify or "tag" any individuals in photos or videos. Tagging of youth and children is prohibited. When written permission is obtained from parents/guardians, the captioning of photos or videos of minors is permitted. The caption should not include the minor's full name, nor should it be linked to any online profile.
- Only photos that respect the dignity of every person depicted in the image should be published.

Recommendations for Use of Email or Texting (Includes Twitter)

- Email can be an appropriate means of communicating basic factual information such as the time of an event, agenda for a meeting, text of a document, etc.
- Email is not an appropriate communication method for matters that are pastorally or legally sensitive, emotionally charged or require extensive conversation.
- If an email message is longer than a few sentences, then the matter might be more properly addressed via live conversation.
- Humor and sarcasm can be easily misinterpreted in an email.
- All email users should take a moment to consider the ramifications of their message before clicking the "send" or "reply all" button.

Appendix D: Congregation/Organization Safe Church Annual Audit

Audit Year: _____

Audit is due to the Diocese of Southern Virginia by June 30

Name of Congregation/Organization: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Congregation/Organization's Designated Safe Church Contact:

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

When completing the form check the appropriate boxes and list dates when requested. If your congregation/organization takes additional steps to ensure compliance with the Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults please list them in the Notes section.

POLICY ADOPTION

☐ Our congregation/organization **originally** adopted the Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults as provided by the Diocese of Southern Virginia.

   Date Originally Adopted: _____

☐ Check this box only if your congregation/organization has made **additions** to the Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults. We certify that this document meets or exceeds the original Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults and is appropriate for our congregation/organization. A copy of the amended/adopted document is attached.

   Date Additions Adopted: _____

☐ Our congregation/organization has completed a **yearly review** of the Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults for the current audit year.

   Date Reviewed: _____

POLICY NOTIFICATION

☐ A copy of the Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults is posted in an area where activities take place.

Location where the policy is posted: _____

☐ The Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults is given to adults, guardians, and all paid and unpaid persons who minister to children, youth and vulnerable adults.

SCREENING OF MINISTRY LEADERS

☐ Our congregation/organization screens ministry leaders, in accordance with the Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults Screening and Training Protocols, which includes:

- A written application;

- A personal interview;

- Verification of personal references; and

- Public records check, updated at least every 5 years.

Who maintains these screening records? _____

Where are they maintained? _____

Who has access to the records? _____

TRAINING OF MINISTRY LEADERS

☐ Our congregation/organization trains ministry leaders, in accordance with the Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults Screening and Training Protocols, which includes:

- All leaders, paid or volunteer, have completed the appropriate Safe Church training for their role;

- Certification of training is renewed every 3 years;

- Ministry leaders receive and acknowledge receipt of a copy of the Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults.

Who maintains these training records? _____

Where are they maintained? _____

SAFE PROGRAM SPACE

☐ There are always two or more unrelated adults present in ministry settings and events designed for children and youth.

☐ All program space whose primary use is for children and youth is visually accessible.

☐ To the furthest extent possible, unoccupied spaces are locked when not in use.

☐ Alcoholic beverages are not stored in publicly accessible areas of the church buildings.

☐ Publicly accessible computers with internet access are password protected and children and youth use church computers only with supervision.

☐ Keys and electronic access to church spaces are limited to individuals who have met all requirements for screening and training.

☐ No one is denied the right, status, or access to an equal place in the life, worship, and governance of any program or activity because of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, differing abilities, or socio-economic class.

☐ To the furthest extent possible, all spaces and settings for programs, activities, and ministry are accessible.

RESPONDING TO CONCERNS/INCIDENTS

☐ There is a well-understood procedure for responding to concerns and/or incidents of suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation of children and youth and vulnerable adults, that includes:

- Contact information for the local Child Protective Service and Adult Protective Service;
- Contact information for the appropriate person to report/document the concern/incident to in the Congregation/Organization and Diocese;
- Steps to take when individuals have concerns;

- Follow-up procedures.

Copies of these procedures are posted in the following locations: _____

_____

NOTES

If your congregation/organization has additional procedures to ensure compliance with the

Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults please list the procedures

below**:**

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Signature of Rector/Senior Warden: _____

Name of Individual Completing This Form: _____

Date Form was Completed: _____

Completed form can be submitted via mail to:

Canon for Formation
Episcopal Diocese of Southern Virginia
11832 Rock Landing Dr., Suite 100
Newport News, VA 23606-4231

or via email to: lfarlin@diosova.org.

THE COMPLETED AUDIT FORM MUST BE SUBMITTED NO LATER THAN JUNE 30 OF EACH YEAR.

Appendix E: Safe Church Resource Contact List

	EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF SOUTHERN VIRGINIA SAFE CHURCH RESOURCE CONTACT LIST [Church Name]	
Name	**Title**	**Contact Information**
The Rt. Rev. Susan B. Haynes	Bishop	**757-213-3381** bishop@diosova.org
Lynn Farlin	Canon for Formation	**757-213-3377** lfarlin@diosova.org
The Rev. Marguerite Alley The Rev. Dale Custer The Rev. Bob Gay The Rev. Susan Grimm	Intake Officers	**757-286-6874** margueritesr@gmail.com **804-399-4655** raymonddalecuster@gmail.com **757-253-0391** rggay@cox.net **434-738-3171** susaninmidlo@yahoo.com
	Rector/Clergy in Charge	
	Senior Warden	
	Director, Head, or other governing officer in the case of other organizations	
	Responsible Person(s) for programs and ministries with children, youth	
	Responsible Person(s) for programs and ministries with vulnerable adults	
	Adult Protective Services	**888-832-3858** **For local Social Services Information visit** http://www.dss.virginia.gov/localagency/index.cgi
	Child Protective Services	**800-552-7096** **For local Social Services Information visit:** http://www.dss.virginia.gov/localagency/index.cgi

Appendix F: JOB DESCRIPTION GUIDELINES

For Volunteer Positions/Ministries

MISSION FOCUS STATEMENT
Why does the group exist?
What function does it play in the church community?
Who does it serve?

QUALIFICATIONS
List the specific qualifications needed to serve effectively in this role

RESPONSIBILITIES
Highlight the specific duties and responsibilities
What factors will the individual be evaluated on?

SUPERVISION
Who does this individual report to - who supervises or is directly responsible for this ministry?
Is it a clergy person, vestry member, or some other responsible party?

SAFE CHURCH EXPECTATIONS
Provide a copy of the Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults
Highlight key essential policies that are core to this position

Make sure to review the job description with the individual.
It's a good idea to revisit and edit/update job descriptions each year.

Appendix G: SAMPLE APPLICATION FORM

APPLICANT INFORMATION		
Last Name:	First Name:	M.I.:
Street Address:	City:	
State:	Zip Code:	
How long have you lived at this address?		
Email Address:	Phone:	
Social Security #:	Best time to reach you:	
Date Available:	Position Applied For:	

EDUCATION HISTORY	
Name of School: Address: Dates Attended: Did you graduate? Degree Earned:	
Name of School: Address: Dates Attended: Did you graduate? Degree Earned:	

Name of School:

Address:

Dates Attended:

Did you graduate?

Degree Earned:

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Current Employer:

Address:

City/State/Zip:

Immediate Supervisor's Name:

Immediate Supervisor's Phone #:

Position Held:

Work Status: ___ Full-Time ___ Part-Time

Dates of Employment:

May we contact your previous supervisor for a reference?   ___ Yes   ___ No

Reason for Leaving:

Previous Employer:

Address:

City/State/Zip:

Immediate Supervisor's Name:

Immediate Supervisor's Phone #:

Position Held:

Work Status: ___ Full-Time   ___ Part-Time

Dates of Employment:

May we contact your previous supervisor for a reference?   ___ Yes   ___ No

Reason for Leaving:

Previous Employer:

Address:

City/State/Zip:

Immediate Supervisor's Name:

Immediate Supervisor's Phone #:

Position Held:

Work Status: ___ Full-Time   ___ Part-Time

Dates of Employment:

May we contact your previous supervisor for a reference?   ___ Yes   ___ No

Reason for Leaving:

Previous Employer:

Address:

City/State/Zip:

Immediate Supervisor's Name:

Immediate Supervisor's Phone #:

Position Held:

Work Status: ___ Full-Time ___ Part-Time

Dates of Employment:

May we contact your previous supervisor for a reference? ___ Yes ___ No

Reason for Leaving:

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE – Include all experience working with children, youth or vulnerable adults. Attach additional sheet(s), if necessary.

Organization:

Contact:

Phone:

Duties:

Dates (from/to):

Organization:

Contact:

Phone:

Duties:

Dates (from/to):

Organization:
Contact:
Phone:
Duties:
Dates (from/to):

Organization:
Contact:
Phone:
Duties:
Dates (from/to):

POSITION
What position are you applying for?
What interested you in the position?
What skills/gifts do you have that you can bring to the position you are applying for?
List any special skills, licenses, certifications, etc. that you have earned that would be helpful in this position?
Are you legally eligible to work in this country? ____Yes   ____No
Have you ever been accused of physically, sexually or emotionally abusing a child or adult? ____Yes   ____No

REFERENCES

1. _____ Personal Reference _____ Professional Reference	
Name:	E-mail:
Address:	Phone:
City, State Zip:	Relationship to you:
How long have you known this person?	May we contact this individual as a reference?

2. _____ Personal Reference _____ Professional Reference	
Name:	E-mail
Address:	Phone:
City, State Zip:	Relationship to you:
How long have you known this person?	May we contact this individual as a reference?

3. _____ Personal Reference _____ Professional Reference	
Name:	E-mail:
Address:	Phone:
City, State Zip:	Relationship to you:
How long have you known this person?	May we contact this individual as a reference?

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF POLICY FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

Read and initial each item to signify your agreement to comply with the statement:

_____ I agree to do my best to prevent abuse and neglect among children, youth, and vulnerable adults involved in church/organization activities and services.

_____ I agree not to physically, sexually or emotionally abuse or neglect a child, youth, or a vulnerable adult.

_____ I agree to comply with the Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults.

_____ In the event that I observe any inappropriate behaviors or possible policy violations with children, youth, or vulnerable adults, I agree to immediately report my observations.

_____ I acknowledge my obligation and responsibility to protect children, youth, and vulnerable adults and agree to report known or suspected abuse of children, youth, or vulnerable adults to appropriate church leaders and state authorities in accordance with the Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults.

_____ I understand that the church will not tolerate abuse of children, youth, or vulnerable adults and I agree to comply in spirit and in action with this position.

RELEASE & SIGNATURE

To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this application is complete and accurate. I understand that providing false information is grounds for not hiring me or choosing me for a volunteer position, or for my discharge if I have already been hired or chosen.

I authorize any person or organization, whether or not identified in this application, to provide any information concerning my previous employment, education, credit history, driving record, criminal conviction record, sexual offender registry or other qualifications for my employment or volunteering. I also authorize _____ [church or organization] to request and receive such information.

If hired or chosen, I agree to be bound by _____ [church's or organization's] policies and procedures, including but not limited to the Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults. I understand that these may be changed, withdrawn, added to or interpreted at any time at the _____ [church's or organization's] sole discretion and without prior notice to me.

I also understand that my employment or volunteering may be terminated, or any offer or acceptance of employment or volunteering withdrawn, at any time, with or without cause, and with or without prior notice at the option of _____ [church or organization] or myself.

Nothing contained in this application or in any pre-employment or pre-volunteering communication is intended to or creates a contract between myself and _____ [church or organization] for either employment, volunteering, or the providing of any benefit.

Signature: _____ *Date:* _____

Appendix H: SAMPLE EMPLOYMENT REFERENCE CHECK

Applicant's Name: _____

Position Applied For: _____

Name and Title of Reference: _____

Company/Organization: _____ Contact #: _____

Identify yourself and explain that the applicant has provided their name as a reference. Describe the type of job the person has applied for and highlight the population they will be working with i.e. children, vulnerable adults, etc.

In what capacity do you know (name)? For how long?

What was (name's) position?

What were (name's) specific job responsibilities?

Why did (name) leave the position?

Describe your level of satisfaction with (name's) job performance?

Did (name) get along well with co-workers and supervisors?

What are (name's) strengths and weaknesses?

How did (name) handle conflict? Pressure? Stress?

Were there any issues that impacted (name's) job performance?

If the opportunity arose, would you rehire (name)?

Would you trust (name) to care for a child or person who was vulnerable?

Is there anything about (name) that I haven't asked that you would like to share with me?

Appendix I: VOLUNTEER REFERENCE CHECK SUGGESTED QUESTIONS

- In what capacity do you know this person?

- How long have you known the person?

- What was the nature of the person's responsibilities?

- Describe the nature of the volunteer work and ask about the person's ability to do the work.

- Describe the population the person will be working with, i.e. children or vulnerable adults, and ask if they have observed the person interacting with that population.

- Do you know of any reasons why this person should not work with children, youth, or vulnerable adults?

- If the person will be driving as part of their volunteer responsibilities, ask about their driving abilities. Have you ever ridden in a car while this person was driving? Did you have any concerns as a passenger?

- Describe the person's character and reliability?

- How does this person handle conflict? Stress?

- How does this person respond to direction and supervision?

- Is there anything else I should know about this person?

Appendix J: Background Screening Consent and Release

Applicant should complete all relevant information and sign and date this form.

I, _____, hereby authorize _____ and/or its agents to make an independent investigation of my background that may include: references, character, past employment, education, credit history (if applicable for position), adult criminal or police records, and motor vehicle records including those maintained by both public and private organizations and all public records for the purpose of confirming the information contained on my Application and/or obtaining other information which may be material to my qualifications for service now and, if applicable, during the tenure of my employment or service with the Diocese of Southern Virginia.

I release _____ and its agents and any person or entity, which provides information pursuant to this authorization, from any and all liabilities, claims or law suits in regards to the information obtained from any and all of the above referenced sources used. The following is my true and complete legal name and all information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge:

Full Name (Printed)_____

Maiden Name or Other Names Used_____

Social Security Number_____ Date of Birth* _____/_____/_____

Phone Number(s)_____

Present Address_____

City_____State_____Zip_____

How Long at Present Address?_____

Former Address_____

City_____State_____Zip_____

How Long at Former Address?_____

Please list all states and counties of residence since turning age 18:

_____

_____

(Please circle any of the following states in which you have lived: CA, CO, DE, LA, MA, SD, VT, WV, WY)

Driver's License Number: _____ State of License: _____

_____
Signature of Applicant / Date

 *NOTE: The above information is required for identification purposes only, and is in no manner used as qualifications for employment, internship, or service as a volunteer.

Appendix K: Sample Media Release Form

Opt In: For children under age 18, please complete the section below.

I, _____, Parent/Guardian of (you may list multiple names)

_____

_____

Grant permission for [CHURCH NAME] to take photos/video of my child(ren) during church events and to use these images in church publications, website and social media. I understand that photos and videos will NEVER be accompanied by captions or tags that include names or any other identifying information.

Signature: _____   Printed name: _____

Date: _____

Opt Out: We respect the fact that you may wish to NOT have photos or video of yourself, or your children under age 18, used for church purposes. If this is the case, please complete this Media Opt Out section below.

I do not wish my photograph, or those which include members of my family who are listed below, to be used by [CHURCH NAME] for church purposes, including but not limited to: still photography, video, electronic and print publications and websites.

Please list all household members included in this opt out:

Signature: _____   Printed name: _____

Date: _____

Appendix L: PERMISSION SLIP TEMPLATE

I _____ give permission for
                    (Parent/Guardian)

my child _____ to attend and
                    (Name of Minor)

participate in _____ that is taking
                    (Description of Event)

place on _____ at _____.
                (Date)   (Location)

In case of illness or accident, I give permission to have my child evaluated and treated by available medical personnel. I understand a reasonable attempt will be made to notify me in such an event. I also understand that no obligation or responsibility in regard to rendering treatment or medication is assumed or undertaken as a consequence of this activity; notwithstanding, the adults in charge have permission to authorize any medical care, which in their judgment, they deem necessary and to sign any medical forms necessary on my child's behalf. I do hereby release

_____,
                    (Church Name)

and all persons connected therewith from any liability, claim and expense related to any such condition, circumstance or treatment.

Printed Name of Parent/Guardian: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Phone # (s) where I can be reached: _____

Appendix M: Diocese of Southern Virginia Driver Information Form

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Home Phone #: _____ Cell Phone # _____

Home Congregation/Organization: _____

Vehicle Information: (list any personal vehicles you will be driving)

Make of Vehicle: _____ Model: _____

Year: _____ License Plate # & State: _____

Is your vehicle in good repair and equipped with safety restraints? _____

How many restraints are available for the passengers? _____

Have you received any traffic violations within the last five years? _____

If yes, provide details of the violation as well as the resolution of the violation.

I agree to abide by the following: (Initial each line)

_____ Passengers will be in safety restraints while the vehicle is running

_____ All traffic regulations will be obeyed, including speed limits

_____ I will not transport others while under the influence of alcohol or other drugs

_____ I will not transport others if I am impaired in any way

Attach a copy of: Driver's license, auto insurance card for proof of insurance, & vehicle registration

Driver's Signature _____ Date: _____

Appendix N: MEDICATION RECORD FORM

Event: _____

Person Receiving Medication	Medication Description	Dosage Given	Date Medication Given	Time Medication Given	Name of Person Administering Medication

Appendix O: ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORT

Date of Accident/Incident: _____ **Time of Accident/Incident:** _____

Name of individual involved in Accident/Incident: _____

Location where Accident/Incident occurred: _____

Describe the Accident/Incident (attach additional sheets as needed):

Describe the nature of the injury and any medical/first-aid given:

Witnesses:		
Name	**Phone #**	**Email**

Who Was Notified that this accident/incident occurred?			
Name	**Title/Role**	**How was notification provided**	**Date**

Name of Individual completing this report: _____

Phone #: _____ **Email:** _____

Signature of Individual completing this report: _____

Appendix P: CONFIDENTIAL NOTICE OF CONCERN

Individual of Concern: _____

Date of Incident: _____ **Time of Incident**: _____

Type of Concern:

[ ]   Inappropriate behavior with a child/youth

[ ]   Policy violation with a child/youth

[ ]   Possible risk of abuse with a child/youth

[ ]   Inappropriate behavior with a vulnerable adult

[ ]   Policy violation with a vulnerable adult

[ ]   Possible risk of abuse with a vulnerable adult

Other Concern:

_____

_____

Respond to each question below and attach additional sheets if needed

Describe the situation/incident in detail:

Has the individual been of concern previously? If yes, provide details of any previous issues/incidents.

Who witnessed the situation/incident?

Who was questioned/interviewed re: the situation/incident?

Were police or other agencies notified?

If the police or other agency was notified, what was their recommendation about further action?

What action was taken?

Was a follow-up plan outlined/will the situation require monitoring?

Who else need may need to be notified?

Would you like someone to call you to discuss this situation?

Submitted by

Name: _____

Title/Position: _____

Telephone number: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

Signature: _____Date:_____

This form should be submitted to the Canon for Formation or the Bishop at:

Episcopal Diocese of Southern Virginia, 11832 Rock Landing Dr., Suite 100, Newport News, VA 23606-4231