**Safety and Security Policies and Procedures**

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**SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES**

These procedures help promote the physical safety and security of persons using the (**YOUR CHURCH NAME HERE)** building and/or persons involved in church activities. The intent is to provide instructions for how to deal with various situations.

As a community of faith committed to following Jesus Christ, we strive to extend a generous welcome to all who enter our doors and to treat them with the love and dignity that God bestows upon each and every one of us. We want our church to be a safe place for everyone.

Unfortunately, we cannot simply assume that our church is a safe place. We know that we cannot eliminate all risks, but we can strive to reach that goal by taking intentional and direct actions. **The Safe Church Ministry Team (THIS IS THE RECOMMENDED SAFETY/SECURITY TEAM NAME)** wants people of all ages to be able to deepen their relationship with God and each other in an environment that is safe and secure. It is in this spirit that **(YOUR CHURCH NAME HERE)** Safe Church Policies and Procedures was created. We consider this to be a living document, which will be amended over time as new issues arise. We hope that although this this document will not cover every scenario, it will provide guidelines to create a safer environment for our members, employees and guests.

The Safe Church team’s function is to oversee the implementation of the Safe Church Policies and Procedures.

**BUILDING AND GROUNDS**

**Building Opening Procedure**

1. Enter the building quickly without stopping to set doors to the unlocked position.
2. Go directly to the alarm and deactivate the alarm using the current password.
3. Depending upon the purpose for opening the building (Sunday morning, evening meeting, etc.) it may be appropriate to keep the doors locked or to set them to unlocked. If appropriate, set them to the unlocked position.
4. Turn on lights and change the thermostat settings as needed.

**Building Closing Procedure**

1. Walk through each room of the building. As you do so:
* Make sure no one is present.
* Use the checklist in this document, “Checklist Before Leaving the Church Building,” to make sure the room is ready for closing. Pay special attention to the Kitchen, Pre-school and Nursery doors. They must be checked from the outside that they are locked. (**This manual will need specific changes to go with your building(s). Use this as a guideline to personalize for your specific building needs. Have a photo copy that it can be checked off and signed each time)**
1. Lock the front doors, but remain in the building.
2. Activate the alarm.
* Make sure the alarm light is solid green **(THIS MAY VARY WITH ALARM SYSTEMS)**, which means that all doors and windows are closed.
* Key in the code. The light will turn to solid red and the alarm panel will make a sound. **(THIS MAY VARY WITH ALARM SYSTEMS)**
1. Leave the building quickly, making sure the doors are locked behind you.

**Checklist Before Leaving the Church Building**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Sanctuary***  | ***Atrium/Prayer Room*** | ***Family Room***  | ***Classrooms/ Youth Room***  | ***Kitchen***  | ***Pre-K and Nursery***  | ***Bathrooms***  | ***Offices***  |
| \*The thermostat **should not** be on “**Hold**”. If it is on “Hold” press the “Hold” button to clear.  |
| Thermostat\*  | Thermostat\*  | Thermostat\*  | Thermostat\*  |  | Thermostat\*  |  | Thermostat\*  |
| Lights off  | Lights off  | Lights off  | Lights off  | Lights off | Lights off  | Lights off | Lights off  |
| Windows locked  | Windows locked | Windows locked | Windows locked  | Windows locked | Windows locked  | Windows locked | Windows locked  |
| Window alarm tab attached  | Window alarms attached  | Window alarms attached | Window alarms attached  | Window alarms attached | Window alarms attached  | Window alarms attached | Window alarms attached  |
| Lock Doors then push on door frame to be sure it’s locked, then pull back toward you to fully close door | Lock Doors then push on door frame to be sure it’s locked, then pull back toward you to fully close door  | Lock Doors then push on door frame to be sure it’s locked, then pull back toward you to fully close door  | Lock Doors then push on door frame to be sure it’s locked, then pull back toward you to fully close door  | Check from the OUTSIDE to ensure doors are fully closed and locked.  | Check from the OUTSIDE to ensure doors are fully closed and locked.  |  | Lock Doors then push on door frame to be sure it’s locked, then pull back toward you to fully close door |
| Emergency door — push on door frame to be sure it’s locked, then pull back toward you to fully close door.  |  |  |  | Stovetops and ovens off. Exhaust hood off**.**  |  | Check to see that toilets and urinals are flushed  |  |
|  |  | **Coffee maker off**  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Building Keys or Code Policy**

Purpose: To establish a process by which the safety and security of **(YOUR CHUCH NAME HERE)** is maintained, balanced with accessibility for those persons conducting the business of the church in its many forms or for individuals renting the facility.

A. To promote building security and good safety practices and to maintain an up-to-date record of key or code holders, the building code will be changed and key holders will be vetted regularly.

B. The Church Administrator will maintain an up–to-date record of key or code holders and have the primary responsibility of distributing and collecting keys, providing a ‘building lock-up’ orientation, and facilitating the process of the security code change.

1. Key/Code holders must receive an orientation for how to lock up the building safely.
2. Key/Code holders may be asked to be added to the list for responding to calls from the Alarm Company.
3. Activity, committee or term-specific key holders should return their key promptly when no longer needed or when term is completed. Longer-term key holders will update records with Church Administrator.
4. Key/Code holders will sign an acknowledgement of agreement with points 1, 2, and 3 at the time of receiving a key and/or the new code.

**Building Closing Policy**

Principles: The safety and well being of the members and staff of the **(YOUR CHURCH NAME HERE)** community are of first importance.

The building may be closed at any time if it is determined remaining open would be hazardous to the inhabitants. This could include, but is not restricted to, a building utility issue (such as a gas leak), weather, or hazardous situation. One of the following should be contacted as standard procedure to make the decision in situations other than those described below are:

**Pastor, Executive Pastor , Associate Pastor, staff person in charge, or Vice-President of the board (this will be of your church’s choosing)**

**Inclement Weather**

**Sunday Mornings:**

Inclement Weather

* If there is a government restriction against driving on the roads (a Level 3 emergency or above), Services may be cancelled.
* Church members will be notified of this decision via the website, email, to the facebook page, and by a message recorded on the main church phone. This communication will be initiated and organized by the **Pastoral Staff.**
* We respect the right of service leaders, speakers, and teachers to use their judgment before setting out for church when the weather is bad. As soon as a teacher has decided that they will not be attending church, they are expected to contact **(INSERT CONTACT HERE).**
* These principles and expectations will be shared with the **(YOUR CHURCH NAME HERE)** community, particularly the **Children/Youth staff and sponsors**, on a regular basis. They will be included as part of teacher orientation, with particular emphasis on the winter season.

Other

* Children’s classes are always subject to the availability of a sufficient number of qualified adults to lead them. When there are not enough teachers for a specific class those children will remain with their parents throughout the service.

**Non-Sundays:**

• **For special events and the church office opening and closing, we will follow the school district’s decision regarding inclement weather.**

**Property and Equipment Inspection Procedures**

General Safety Inspection (Annual)

1. The Board will be responsible to appoint a team to do a self-inspection of all the church facilities and grounds. It is recommended that this be done annually and a minimum of two people do the self-inspection together to provide a variety of perspectives.
2. The team will obtain a good self-inspection checklist. Set a date and time for the inspection. If possible, use the same month of the year each year.
3. Perform the inspection using the checklist.
4. Develop recommendations for remediation of any problems that are discovered, and for overall improvement.
5. Communicate the recommendation to the **Pastoral Staff­­ and/or** **Board.** Request funds where needed.
6. Where possible, take action to remove or correct problems.

Stove/Oven Hood Inspection (Semi-Annual)

The Stove/Oven hood must be inspected every 6 months by an approved agency[[1]](#endnote-1). **(The church may decide on an HVAC/R company that is local in which takes care of hot side equipment as well. For liability reasons it is recommended to have this inspection done by a service and not a volunteer)**

Fire Extinguisher Inspection (Annual)

Fire extinguishers must be tested by the fire department yearly.

Automated External Defibrillator (AED) Inspection (Annual)

The AED must have the battery checked every year. Battery should be replaced every five years.

RECORD KEEPING: Records of dates of inspections, battery changes and actions taken shall be kept by the Church Administrator in the church office.

**Hazardous Material Storage Policy**

All hazardous materials such as paint, solvents, chemicals and cleaning supplies shall be stored in either the locked shed or in a locked storage cabinet.

**Staff/Non-Staff Accident Report**

**In the event that a staff or non-staff member is injured the accident report must be filled out and returned immediately to the church office.**

**Staff Accident Report Form**

**(YOUR CHURCH NAME HERE) STAFF ACCIDENT REPORT**

DATE \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF INJURED STAFF \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF INJURY (Month, Day, Year) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

LOCATION OF ACCIDENT \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

TIME OF INJURY \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

COMPLETE DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT (WHAT HAPPENED? WHAT WERE YOU DOING? HOW DID IT HAPPEN?):

NATURE OF INJURY (BE SPECIFIC-LACERATED INDEX FINGER, FRACTURED TOE, STUDENT BLOOD ON BARE HANDS, ETC.):

MEDICAL ATTENTION (NAME ATTENDING PHYSICIAN, ETC.):

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_DATE \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE DELIVER THIS REPORT DIRECTLY TO THE **(YOUR CHURCH NAME HERE)** CHURCH OFFICE.

**Non-Staff Accident Report Form**

**(YOUR CHURCH NAME HERE) Accident Report**

Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person Filing Report: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Subject\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Guardian/Parent Notified\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Address and phone number of Subject injured: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Location\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Brief description of incident:

Action or Preventative Repair Needed?

***Please put this form in the Church Administrator’s Mailbox in the church office.***

Follow Up Action:

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

**NOTE: EVERY BUILDING MUST HAVE AN EVACUATION PLAN POSTED AT ALL TIMES.**

**NATURAL DISASTER/FIRE**

**Earthquake/Hurricane Procedure**

If an intense shaking/intense wind occurs:

* If you are inside: DROP, COVER & HOLD.
* DROP to knees.
* COVER by getting under tables, chairs or desks, with backs to windows.
* HOLD tight to legs of furniture. Watch for falling objects. Stay away from windows.
* DO NOT run out of the building, as it may be damaged and the building exterior brick may be falling off.
* Wait for end of shaking or heavy winds.
* (EARTHQUAKE ONLY) Exit building immediately if possible and gather in the parking lot away from buildings.
	+ If you are outside:
* Get clear of all buildings, power lines, light poles or sources that may be dangerous.
* Remain in vehicle if possible.
* Assume DROP & HOLD position if possible
* Wait for end of shaking/heavy winds.

**Earthquake/Hurricane Post-Event Procedure**

After a major earthquake or Hurricane:

1. Check for injuries to yourself, then others. Do not attempt to move seriously injured persons unless they are in immediate danger. Render first aid assistance if required.

2. Check for fires or fire hazard only if authorized and properly trained and it is safe to do so.

3. EVERYONE shall exit the building and gather in the parking lot. If there is a need for emergency vehicles, we need to leave a portion of the parking lot accessible.

4. Gather into family units, or group yourself with the people who were with you prior to the earthquake. For example, if you were in the Sanctuary, you are to look for the other people that were in the Sanctuary with you.

5. Expect aftershocks.

6. DO NOT re-enter the building until it has been declared safe by trained emergency personnel, such as the fire department.

7. Wait for an all-clear signal from an official church representative before leaving the premises. We need to account for every person that we can.

**Tornado Watch Procedure**

When the National Weather Service has declared a **Tornado Watch**, the weather conditions are considered favorable for tornadoes to form in and near the watch area.

1. Identify a person from the pastoral staff or someone who will monitor conditions.2. While other church activities continue, the appointed person should: a. Listen for radio updates.

b. Listen for sirens.

c. Watch for these danger signs: a dark, often greenish sky; large hail; low-lying clouds; and/or a loud roar (similar to a freight train).

3. If conditions shift to that of a **tornado warning**, the appointed person should notify everyone in the building.

**Tornado Warning Procedure**

When there is a **Tornado Warning,** a tornado has been sighted by the public or local law enforcement or a Doppler radar indicated an area of rotation that could develop, or has developed, into a tornado. Most likely, the community tornado warning sirens will be activated.

 1. If you are out in the open:

1. Attempt to reach shelter, such as the building. If unable to escape or find shelter, lie flat in a ditch or depressions, avoiding areas subject to rapid water accumulation or flooding in heavy rains.
2. Do not shelter in vehicles, low-lying areas that could flood, or by outside walls or windows.

2. If you are in or can reach the church building:

1. Remain in the building. Stay away from windows.
2. All individuals should move to shelter areas or shelter in place, depending on the warning issued.
3. Designated shelter locations are bathrooms, storage room, inner offices
4. Person(s) monitoring the radio, TV or weather monitor should bring it with them to monitor the expiration or continuation of the warning.
5. Teachers will assist all children directly to the bathrooms if there is time. Otherwise they will be directed to the closest safe location.
6. Provide assistance to persons with disabilities.
7. Get behind heavy furniture if possible.
8. If there are windows in the room, turn your back to windows, sit down if possible.
9. REMAIN IN THE SHELTER UNTIL THE TORNADO WARNING IS OVER.

Officials will monitor the radio, TV or weather monitor to determine when the tornado warning is over.

**Tornado Post-Event Procedure**

Take these actions if a tornado has touched down on the Church building or property.

1. Gather in the parking lot. Gather into family units, or group yourself with the people who were with you prior to the tornado

2. DO NOT re-enter the building until it has been declared safe by trained personnel such as the fire department.

3. Wait for an all-clear signal from an official church representative before leaving the premises. We need to account for every person that we can.

**Fire Emergency Procedure**

1. If you are on fire, STOP-DROP-ROLL. If another person is on fire, yell, “STOP! DROP! ROLL!”
2. If you discover a fire:

a. Activate the nearest fire alarm pull station. Continue to the next step regardless of whether or not the alarm sounds.

b. Call 9-1-1. (Note: The fire alarm will only notify people in the building of a fire or drill. You MUST call 9-1-1.)

c. If the fire alarm did not sound after being pulled, tell building occupants of the fire and the need to evacuate.

d. After pulling the fire alarm and calling 9-1-1, you may attempt to put out the fire only if it is small (no larger than a wastebasket). If the fire is too large or you are uncomfortable or unfamiliar with the proper use of a fire extinguisher, close the door (if there is one) and evacuate the building.

1. When an alarm sounds in the building, begin immediate evacuation of the building. CLOSE ALL DOORS BEHIND YOU.
2. Evacuate the building using the closest door. Teachers should bring their class roster.
3. Do not block or wedge exit doors in an open position. The doors must remain closed to keep smoke out and keep them safe for evacuation and fire personnel.
4. Go to the Evacuation Assembly Point, which is the parking lot. Stay with the group that you were with or in family groups until everyone is accounted for.
5. If you are trapped by smoke, stay low, cover your mouth with a wet cloth, stay near a window and open it but do not break it, and if there is a door, put something in any cracks around the door. Phone 9-1-1 if possible.
6. Give special attention to any visitors or persons with disabilities. If you are near someone identified as a visitor or disabled, help him or her find the way out of the building and to the Evacuation Assembly Point, which is the parking lot.
7. Do not get in your car and leave the premises until an all clear sign is given by the **Pastoral Staff** or by the police/fire department authority. We must account for all persons who were here at the time of the fire.

**First Aid**

**Allergy Management Plan**

**Peanut and Nut Allergies**

Allergic reactions, predominately to peanuts and tree nuts, as well as insect stings, can cause a life-threatening (anaphylactic) reaction for some individuals. To help protect those with peanut allergies, (the most common of severe allergies), we recommend every church adopt a policy of being as peanut free as possible.

Signs should be posted in the kitchen and children’s snack area asking that peanuts and peanut butter not be served at any church event. Any food that contains peanuts or peanut butter should be clearly labeled.

Those adults and parents/guardians of children with peanut allergies will still be responsible for monitoring their food intake, knowing that it is extremely difficult to eliminate all products made in facilities where cross contamination can occur.

***Notification of Allergies of Minors to the Children’s Pastor/Staff***

All families are asked to give the **Children’s Pastor or the designated support staff** written information on any serious or life threatening allergies that their child has. This information shall then be given to any adults who interact with the child.

The written information should include a picture of the child, the type of allergen and likely reaction.

**EpiPen Procedure**

Children and adults who are prone to anaphylactic reactions should have an EpiPen with them at all times.

MINORS WITH EpiPens: If a minor has an allergy that is significant enough to warrant the use of an EpiPen, the parent will notify the **Children’s Pastor or the designated support staff or Religious Education Professional** in writing.

1. Written documentations should include whether the child carries an EpiPen at all times and has been trained in its use.

2. Include the child’s triggers and how they present themselves in terms of reaction.

3. The **Children’s Pastor or the designated support staff** will share the information with all adult volunteers who have contact with that minor.

The Children’s Department will offer training to volunteers as to the proper use of an EpiPen when the need arises due to a reported allergy.

If a situation should warrant the use of the EpiPen:

* 1. One adult will stay with the child and provide calming support.
	2. Another adult will call 911 and then attempt to find or call the parent.
	3. A third individual should be sent to the front parking lot to wait for the emergency squad and direct them to where the child is.

If a child with a severe allergy or a first time reaction does not carry an EpiPen but appears to be having an anaphylactic reaction:

* 1. One adult will stay with the child and provide calming support.
	2. Another adult will call 911 and then attempt to find or call the parent.
	3. A third individual should be sent to the front parking lot to wait for the emergency squad and direct them to where the child is.

**Blood-Borne Pathogen Exposure Procedure**

Treat all bodily fluids as if they are contaminated. Do not touch blood or other bodily fluids without proper protections for the caregiver.

Always use gloves, which are available in all the first aid kits. Goggles and a mask can also be used when cleaning up bodily fluids.

How to Clean-up after an area is contaminated:

1. Always use gloves, mask and goggles.
2. Cautiously approach all bodily fluids and warn others in the area before isolating the contaminated spot.
3. Cover the spill with absorbent towels, and then apply a 10% solution of bleach water to the towels. Mix 1 part bleach to 9 parts water OR 1⁄2 cup bleach to 1 quart water.
4. Allowing solution to soak for 20 minutes before wiping up.
5. Remove used towels and reapply clean towels and bleach solution a minimum of two times or as many times as necessary.
6. Mop or wipe up the area and clean again with soap and water. Then, if desired, wipe with disinfectant wipes.
7. After a cleanup procedure, always remove and dispose of gloves, towels and other equipment in a trash bag labeled “BIO-HAZARD” that is sealed and disposed up out of the way from others.
8. Wash hands thoroughly after dealing with any type of accident.

**Administration of Medications and First Aid**

1. Parents/guardians must notify the adult caregiver if their child has an extreme allergy or medical condition prior to leaving them in the care of that person.
2. Children will not be allowed to administer their own medication during a church- sponsored event. If a child must take medication while engaged in a **(insert Church name here)** event, the adult caregiver can administer the medication only with the written permission of the parent/guardian.
3. Fully stocked first aid kits are available in multiple locations around the church and can be utilized by the adult caregiver or other trained individual to provide initial care for injuries.
4. Any incident requiring first aid will be reported immediately to the event sponsor or **(YOUR CHURCH NAME HERE)** representative.

**Medical Emergency Procedure**

There are FIRST AID Kits in the **(HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES BUT YOU WILL NEED TO INSERT WHERE YOUR FACILITY HOUSES FIRST AID KITS. WE SUGGEST EVERY BUILDING AND EVERY FLOOR HAVE AT LEAST ONE) hallway, the Great Room, the nursery bathroom and the kitchen.** They include guides that contain detailed steps in the event of a heart attack, choking, bleeding, poisoning and burns, as well as other injuries.

In the event of a medical emergency:

1. Stay calm. Assess the situation. Look for a Medic Alert bracelet or necklace on the person requiring help.
2. If the medical situation does not require a medical professional (for example, a slightly skinned knee), take action as appropriate using the resources available in the first aid kits.
3. If the medical situation requires a medical professional, do the following:
	1. Have someone call 9-1-1. If you are alone, yell as loudly as possible for help. If you are unable to summon help, you should call 9-1-1 first, then assist the person to the best of your ability.
	2. When calling 9-1-1, give the operator as much information as possible, i.e. type of emergency, what help is needed, exact address, phone number, information on a Medic Alert bracelet or necklace. Don’t hang up until you are told to do so by the 911 operator.
	3. If another person is available, have them go outside to flag down the emergency vehicle and direct them to the person in need of help.
	4. DO NOT MOVE THE VICTIM.
4. If the victim is unconscious:
	1. CALL: Check the victim for unresponsiveness. If there is no response, Call 9-1-1 and THEN return to the victim. In most locations the emergency dispatcher can assist you with CPR instructions.
	2. It is no longer recommended to do mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.
	3. PUMP: If the victim is still not breathing normally, coughing or moving, begin doing chest compressions. Push down on the chest 1 1⁄2 to 2 inches below sternum, right in between the nipples. Pump at the rate of 100 per minute, faster than once per second.
	4. CONTINUE WITH PUMP or AED until help arrives.
5. If the victim is choking:
	1. Make sure they are coughing and getting air.
	2. If the victim cannot speak or cough, and you think something may be lodged in their throat, from behind, slip your arms around the victim’s waist. Make a fist with one hand and grasp with the other hand. Place your fist right above the navel area. Press into the abdomen with quick upward thrust. Repeat until the object is removed, or the victim starts breathing or coughing.
6. If the victim is bleeding:
	1. USE RUBBER GLOVES. They are in all first aid kits. Apply pressure to the area.
	2. If possible, elevate bleeding area above level of the heart.
7. YOU MUST FILE AN ACCIDENT REPORT for any accident that occurs on the premises. See Appendix B or C for the form(s). They are to be given to the Office Administrator (put in the administrator’s box). The administrator should notify the minister of all accident reports.
8. If a child or youth is involved, the Children’s Pastor or Youth Pastor must also be notified.

**CARE AND SAFETY OF MINORS POLICIES (AGES BIRTH THROUGH 17)**

Providing a safe and nurturing environment for children during events sponsored or hosted by **(YOUR CHURCH NAME HERE)** is an important component of practicing hospitality, sharing our faith and nurturing our community. Parents/guardians must feel supported and able to attend church events knowing their children are cared for in a safe manner. See the sections YOUTH GROUP Policies and Procedures for details applicable to activities involving our youth group, both on and off **(YOUR CHURCH NAME HERE)** property. The following policies pertain to all events in or around the building and grounds of **(YOUR CHURCH NAME HERE)** that INVOLVE INDIVIDUALS FROM BIRTH THROUGH AGE 17 (herein referred to as children). Adults will be considered anyone on or after their 18th birthday.

**Background Check for Caregivers and Teachers**

**(YOUR CHURCH NAME HERE)**  will conduct a criminal background check on all paid staff and volunteers who are entrusted with the care and supervision of minors, or a person who directly oversees and/or exerts control or oversight over or has access to minors. All criminal background checks will be updated annually. Information discovered or obtained through the above referenced means will be kept in a secure location and access to it will be restricted. These materials will be archived.

**Supervision**

***The safety and behavior of each child is the responsibility of his/her parent or guardian, unless the child is participating in an organized church function or in childcare for a specific church event.***

Supervision for an organized function involving children will be arranged by a **(YOUR CHURCH NAME HERE)** staff member in accordance with our Safe Congregation Policies, which require the following.

1. At least two caregivers are present in each room.

2. A minimum of one of these caregivers in each room must be an adult 21 years or older that is either an approved or on **(YOUR CHURCH NAME HERE)**  Approved Childcare Provider List.

3. Members of our youth group over the age of 14 may serve as the second caregiver but must work under the direct supervision of an approved adult caregiver.

4. FOR CHILDREN WALKING TO AGE 3: Two approved childcare providers may be responsible for up to 10 children The ratios will be 4 children per adult or 8 children per two adults. Both childcare providers must be present in the same group. An additional caregiver should be present in the group or room for each addition four children between walking to age 3.

1. FOR CHILDREN FROM BIRTH TO WALKING: Two approved childcare providers may be responsible to up to 8 children between birth to walking. The ratio will be 4 children per adult or 8 children per 2 adults. An additional caregiver should be present for each additional infants requiring care.
2. It is recommended that infants and toddlers be cared for in separate groups or rooms if possible.
3. Children over the age of four should be provided with suitable activities in their own space if at all possible.
4. Parents/guardians are to remain on the premises while their child/children are in childcare.

**Provision of Childcare for Routine Church Events**

Childcare is automatically provided for the following all-church events by our Nursery Coordinator, who is assisted as needed to provide adequate supervision as defined above:

•  Sunday mornings beginning at 9:00am and ending at 12:00pm • Wednesday evening during scheduled activities and services •  **FILL IN TIMES OR EVENT WHEN YOU WILL PROVIDE CHILD CARE HERE**

**Provision of Childcare for Other Events**

Church groups are encouraged to consider the need for childcare when planning events at the church, such as committee meeting, church-sponsored group functions, fundraisers, etc. If participation by adults with children is desired, then childcare should be offered.

**Guidelines:**

1. The event coordinator requesting childcare providers should submit their request to the church administrator by email **(CHURCH ADMINISTRATORS EMAIL ADDRESS HERE)** or by phone **(PHONE NUMBER HERE)** no less than one month in advance of the event. The following information should be included:

•  The name of the group requesting childcare.

•  The date and time when care is needed. Please estimate the actual time when the caregivers will be able to leave. Allow sufficient time for all children to be picked up following the end of the event and for the room to be straightened up. •  Name and contact information of the event coordinator (email/phone number). •  Name and cell phone number of person who will be in charge on-site during the event/meeting, if different from above. •  The number and age of children expected.

1. The Children’s Pastor will be responsible for arranging all child care, procuring both a primary and assistant care giver and communicating pertinent information to both the event coordinator and to each of the care givers.
2. When a regular caregiver is unavailable for an event, the Children’s Pastor will refer to the list of approved caregivers, calling until one is secured. This information should then be passed on to the event coordinator.
3. If child care cannot be arranged, the event coordinator should be notified at least 48 hours in advance of the event, who will then notify the participants. This should allow the participants a reasonable chance of making other child care arrangements on their own.
4. If a care giver (either primary or assistant) must cancel within 48 hours of an event, they must contact the event coordinator directly. Likewise, if it is discovered that care givers are not needed (when already prearranged for an event), the event coordinator must contact the care givers directly. This notice should be given to the care givers no later than 3:00 on the day of the event or by the evening prior for a morning event.

**Administrative Guidelines Regarding Childcare Providers**

1. The **(YOUR CHURCH NAME HERE)** Church Administrator shall maintain a list of approved childcare providers and will periodically update the list, as needed.
2. Any individual who wishes to be on the Approved Childcare Provider List will complete an application, provide two references and undergo a criminal background check paid for by **(YOUR CHURCH NAME HERE)**.

**Emergency and Crisis Management for our Minors**

The safety of children and prompt and clear communication with parents/guardians shall be the top priority in the event of facilities problems, natural disasters, accidents, injuries, illnesses, missing persons, or the threat or incidence of terrorist activity.

In the event of any emergency, children are to follow the directions of staff members or other adult leaders present. In the event a child is injured or becomes ill during an event and requires medical attention, parents/guardians will be notified immediately. Minor injury or illness will be reported to the parents/guardians at the conclusion of the event.

**Administration of Medications and First Aid**

1. Parents/guardians must notify the adult caregiver if their child has an extreme allergy or medical condition prior to leaving them in the care of that person.
2. Children will not be allowed to administer their own medication during a church- sponsored event. If a child must take medication while engaged in a **(YOUR CHURCH NAME HERE)** event, the adult caregiver can administer the medication only with the written permission of the parent/guardian.
3. Fully stocked first aid kits are available in multiple locations around the church and can be utilized by the adult caregiver or other trained individual to provide initial care for injuries.
4. Any incident requiring first aid will be reported immediately to the event sponsor OR youth representative during youth programming.

**Sexual Contact, Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment**

1. All adults working with our children have responsibility to model appropriate relationships between each other as well as to refrain from and discourage inappropriate relationships with any child under age 18, no matter how mature the individual. Adults must assume primary responsibility for maintaining appropriate boundaries between participants of all ages and cultivating an atmosphere of health and trust.
2. Adults must never engage in any manner of sexualized behavior with, or in the presence of, a child or youth. This refers not only to explicitly sexual behavior, but also to jokes with sexual content and “*double entendres*.” Physical expressions of affection, such as hugs, certainly have a place, but it is best to allow the minor to initiate the contact, and the adult must be sensitive not to allow them to be too frequent or prolonged.
3. In the case of a minor found engaging in sexual contact, sexualized behavior or sexual harassment, the individual will be removed from the event immediately and parents/guardians will be notified. Repeated incidents of such behavior may result in the minor being ineligible to take part in future events.
4. In the case of an adult engaging in sexual contact, sexualized behavior or sexual harassment that person’s behavior will be reported to law enforcement officials and the person will no longer be eligible to take part in events involving children.

**Mandatory Reporting as Required by State Law**

# All staff members and adults working with our minors are subject to the Texas Statutes concerning mandated reporters. Reports will be made as prescribed by the law.

# Any person who knows or has reason to believe a child is being neglected or physically or sexually abused, or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused within the preceding three years, shall immediately report the information to the church staff and Child Protective Services, police department, or the county sheriff.

# Reports concerning the possibility of abuse or neglect must be made as soon as possible but in no event longer than 24 hours after obtaining knowledge or having suspicion.

The following are additional special guidelines that apply to the Children’s Ministry (Birth-5th Grades) Activities at **(YOUR CHURCH NAME HERE).** The Safe Church Policy as well as these additional guidelines are created to affirm, support, protect and advocate for the children.

**Staffing**

* APPROPRIATE STAFFING for nursery, preschool, and K-5th programs will follow the ratios set forth in the Safe Church Policy. Children should be assigned to their proper classes according to guidelines set forth by **(YOUR CHILDRENS PROGRAM NAME HERE).**
* TWO ADULT RULE always applies with preschool children. Preschool children need more attention. Plus, there are times that in an emergency a leader may need to leave the room with a child. Preschool children will not be left unattended even for a moment. In the extreme event where an adult might find themself alone in a room with children, the upper part of the split door MUST remain open.
* VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF SHOULD HAVE NAME TAGS. Volunteers and Staff working in classrooms and various programs should wear nametags. Parents have a right to know exactly who is working with their child. They need to know clearly who is in charge, with whom to leave instructions and who is accepting responsibility for their children.
* ONLY ASSIGNED WORKERS AND VOLUNTEERS should be in the nursery and training rooms. The only exceptions to this guideline would be to the nursery for a mother nursing her child and a parent/guardian called to the nursery or training room to calm an upset child.

**Facilities and Equipment**

* HALLWAYS, ENTRANCES AND EXITS to all areas occupied by preschool and elementary age children, will be monitored as deemed necessary. A volunteer or paid staff monitor will be available to lock hallway doors as necessary, report any suspicious intruders, assist classroom leader if children need to leave their classroom, etc.
* SPLIT DOORS are in all of the preschool classrooms. When possible and practical the top part of the door should remain open.
* DOORS WITH WINDOWS should never have the window obstructed.
* BATHROOMS AND DIAPER CHANGING FACILITIES: Bathrooms that are used by older children are located in easily accessible hallways. Diaper Changing Tables are provided in Nurseries and Preschool rooms where needed.
* EQUIPMENT: Age appropriate toys and equipment are provided in all children’s classrooms. Toys and equipment will be checked regularly to ensure good working condition and proper regulations.
* SANITIZING: Children’s areas will be kept clean and sanitary. Toys and equipment used by young children will be disinfected regularly to minimize any health risks.
* PLAYGROUNDS: Outside playground facilities will be checked regularly for safety and to make sure that equipment is in good working order. Signs are posted in playground areas for age appropriateness

**Child Security**

* DROP OFF: Parents or guardians should escort all children to the door of the child’s appropriate classroom or activity or a central check-in point if used for the activity.
* Parents should make every effort to honor the appropriate start times. Late arrivals are disrespectful of the leaders and disrupt activities. Leaders should inquire of parents each week of any concerns, needs, joys, etc. related to their child.
* SIGN IN/OUT: Parents of children are to sign their child in upon arrival and sign the child out at pick-up time A Sign In/Out Chart will be provided for each classroom or event.
* NAME LABELS: Parents of children should complete name tag and abide by the labeling process.
* Children will be released to the same person who dropped the child/children off. Leaders should be notified in writing if anyone other than the parents is to pick up. Parents should make every effort to honor pick-up times. Late pick-up is disrespectful of the leaders and uncomfortable and frightening for children. Leaders shall never leave a child alone for parent pick up, not inside or outside of the church building
* Leaders should conduct a safety count, before and after, when moving children from place to place within the church buildings, outside, or for any special events or activities. (i.e. Classroom to playground, Sanctuary to classroom, field trips, etc.)
* If a child needs to leave a classroom to find a parent, that child should be accompanied and delivered to that parent by an adult leader.

**Diaper changing and bathroom procedures**

* Diapering will only be done in designated areas with full classroom view. Diaper areas will be disinfected after a child is changed. Hands will be washed after each child is changed.
* Only approved volunteer and staff workers may change a child’s diaper (other than a child’s parent).
* Volunteers and staff workers must not be alone with children in the bathroom unless the door is open. When a child needs assistance in the bathroom, a door must remain open at all times.
* If the bathrooms are in the hallways of the church, children should be accompanied to the bathroom by an adult. Adult may stand outside the bathroom door.

**Crisis Management**

1. The safety of youth and prompt, clear communication with parents/guardians shall be the top priorities in the event of facilities problems, natural disasters, transportation delays, transportation accidents, injuries, illnesses, missing persons, or threat or incidence of war or terrorist activity.
2. In the event of any emergency, youth are to follow the directions of staff members or other adult leaders present.
3. If a Youth Group event must be cancelled, delayed or ended early because of severe weather or other safety concerns, parents/guardians will be contacted immediately by staff members or youth leaders.
4. In the event that a vehicle transporting youth to, from, or during an event is involved in an accident, all parents/guardians will be notified as soon as is practical, and be told about the accident, injuries (if any), and plans for the remainder of the event.
5. In the event a youth is injured or becomes ill during an event, medical attention will be sought (if necessary), and parents/guardians will be notified (immediately, if medical attention is necessary; or after the event, if it is a minor injury or illness).

**Conduct Policies**

Alcohol Policy

 No Alcohol shall be allowed on church property at any time.

**Disruptive Behavior Policy**

 **(YOUR CHURCH NAME HERE)** may deny entry to the Church property, or attendance at any Church service or function, to any congregation member, congregational friend, or visitor deemed to be disruptive or harmful to the Church. This behavior includes, but is not limited to the following:

•  Threats to the safety of any adult or child. •  The disruption of worship services, church functions, or church activities.

If a congregant, friend, or visitor's behavior warrants immediate action, such action will be taken by a **Security Team Member** **and/or the Pastoral Staff**. This may include asking the offending person(s) to leave the property, or suspending the meeting or activity until such time as it can be safely resumed. If further assistance is necessary, the Police Department may be called. If not directly involved, the members of the **Pastoral Staff** should be notified of these actions as soon as possible.

**ACTION IF THERE IS VERBAL OR PHYSICAL DISRUPTION DURING WORSHIP SERVICE OR AN EVENT (NON-VIOLENT)**

1. Security Team member will call 9-1-1.
2. Other Usher should secure all doors throughout the church and notify the **Children’s Pastor or the designated support staff** that there are intruders on premises and to keep the minors safe using the Intruder Policy.
3. **The Security Team** will escort the intruders out of the building.
4. Don’t engage in discussion. Tell them they are trespassing on our sacred space and ask them to leave the property peacefully.
5. If possible, someone could video the occurrence for possible future legal need, but do not release the footage to the public or retain the footage beyond its immediate or legal need.
6. Remain alert for intruders after service or event ends.

After any necessary immediate action has been taken, the following steps (listed in ascending order of response) must be considered to address the issue if the offender is a member, family of member or a friend known to the **(YOUR CHURCH NAME HERE)** community.

1. Conduct a face-to-face meeting to resolve the issue, held by **appropriate Pastoral Staff** and the offending party
2. Send a letter to the offending party, specifically outlining the behavior that needs to be corrected. (This step may be conducted in addition to the step above.)
3. Conduct a special meeting between the **Pastoral Staff, Security Team Member(s)** and any other parties involved in the dispute, with the purpose of developing an appropriate action plan for addressing the issue.

If an action plan is developed, it will be administered by the **Security Team Members and Pastoral Staff.** Action plans may include, but are not limited to, the following:

•  Exclusion of the offending person(s) from property, worship services, functions, or activities for a certain period of time.

•  Specific conditions, behaviors, or terms under which the offending person(s) may return to property, and/or attend worship services, functions, or activities.

 •  Specific conditions, behaviors or terms under which the offending person(s)' membership or attendance will be immediately terminated.

•  Permanent termination of the offending person(s) from membership.

**Smoking Policy**

Smoking is not allowed in the building, the playground or the entryway. This includes all pipes, cigars, cigarettes and e-cigarettes.

**Sex Offender Policy**

The safety of our children, and all who participate at **(YOUR CHURCH NAME HERE)**, as well as our commitment to biblical hospitality, are high priorities in our community. However, we understand that at times, these two principles may come into conflict when a known sex offender would seek participation at our church.

In order to ensure the safety of our community, and particularly the children, a member of **(YOUR CHURCH NAME HERE)** pastoral staff should periodically check the Texas state database of convicted sex offenders to determine if any registered sex offender is part of, or has recently visited, our community. In the event that a registered sex offender is attending, or wishes to attend **(YOUR CHURCH NAME HERE)**, the sex offender policy outlined below will be implemented in order to balance that person’s need for, and right to, compassionate ministry, with the congregation’s need for, and right to, safety and security.

In the situation in which a known sexual offender is seeking participation or a current participant is revealed as a sexual offender, the **(YOUR CHURCH NAME HERE)** Pastoral Staff in consultation with the Board has approved the following policy.

A response team consisting of the **Pastor and designated members** of our congregation who may have an expertise in this area would be established. The purpose of this team would be to gather information, using the resources available, to make a decision of possible inclusion into our community on a case-by-case basis. Following the guidelines outlined in the current requirements of our liability insurance provider, this team will proceed to evaluate this request for limited participation.

This assessment should include

•  The willingness of the individual to work with the Pastor and the response team to determine the limits of their participation at **(YOUR CHURCH NAME HERE)**

 •  The Pastor or his designated person contacting the treatment provider or the parole officer and/or the court.

•  A risk assessment done by a qualified therapist with the outcome being a low risk factor for recidivism

•  A signed agreement between the person asking for inclusion and the church on the limits of participation

* Appropriate Scrutiny of References

In considering the balance of safety and welcoming, there is not a guaranteed right to participate, but we strive to reach the best decision for the congregation and the individual.

1. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)