

Policy Sample for Individuals Convicted of Sexual Offenses¹

Section 1 — Purpose

The _____ Anglican Church is dedicated to creating a safe and welcoming environment for everyone, with a particular focus on protecting both children and adults. At the same time, the Church strives to extend grace to all individuals. However, to reach these objectives, it manages risk through oversight and regulated participation for all known and registered offenders.

Section 2 — Definitions

- Sex Offender: An individual who has been convicted of a sex offense and is required to register under the sex offender registration system. Sexual offenses can include a wide range of offenses, such as rape, sexual assault, child molestation, or possessing or creating child pornography.
- Minor: An individual under the age of 18.
- Chaperone: A person appointed by the Safety Committee to supervise the Offender during their involvement in Church activities.²
- Safety Committee: The church team responsible for overseeing the offender and the accountability covenant. This committee must consist of at least one clergy member, one vestry warden, and the children's ministry leader.
- Tiers: A classification system that categorizes convicted individuals based on the severity of their crime and their risk of re-offending.³

¹ Some churches ban all sex offenders, while others only restrict Tier 1 offenders, and some have dedicated ministries. However, when addressing this issue, it is essential to consider each case separately. This document acts merely as guidance, and each church should discuss and determine its own position or policy.

² Having more than one chaperone to share the workload of escorting the offender in different services is important.

³ A Tier I Sex Offender is convicted of less serious sex crimes, such as voyeurism or some public indecency charges, and has minimal registration requirements for a shorter period.

Tier II Sex Offenders are convicted of more serious offenses, like certain child pornography cases or some crimes involving minors, with increased registration obligations.

Tier III Sex Offenders commit the most severe crimes, including rape or producing child pornography, and must register for life under the strictest requirements.

Section 3 — Risk Mitigation

- Before participating in any church activities, Offenders must disclose their history and meet with the Safety Committee.
- Offenders must obtain all necessary permissions from the relevant legal authorities.
- Mandatory counseling for at least 6 months is required, unless the Safety Committee waives it based on prior conduct and professional recommendations.
- All records related to these matters are kept confidential.

Section 4 — Accountability Covenant

- All responsible parties must sign an Accountability Covenant that outlines the conditions under which the Offender may participate in church activities.
- Breaching any part of the covenant will result in immediate suspension from participation.
- The covenant must clearly outline which activities and locations the Offender is permitted to access, and which are not.

Section 5 — Monitoring

- At least one chaperone of the same gender must always accompany the Offender.
- Chaperones are required to submit regular reports about the Offender's involvement.
- Meetings to review the Offender's status with the Safety Committee occur at least twice each year.
- The Offender must promptly report any new legal issues to the Safety Committee.

Section 6 — Restricted Activities

- Offenders are prohibited from any involvement with minors or participation in youth ministries.
- Offenders are not permitted to hold leadership positions within the Church.
- Access to certain areas of the church and to events is restricted and permitted only when no minors are present.
- Visits to church members' homes are only permitted if there are no minors present.

- Participation in additional or special church services requires prior approval from the Safety Committee.

Section 7 — Church Responsibilities ⁴

- The Church must maintain appropriate insurance coverage and keep all records confidential.
- Training is provided for chaperones, and ongoing spiritual support is offered to the Offender.
- The Church regularly monitors its membership against official offender lists.
- Prompt action is taken to manage any risks or report concerns to legal authorities as necessary.

Section 8 — Model Accountability Covenant

All involved individuals, including the Offender and Safeguarding Committee, must formally endorse the Accountability Covenant. Should any breaches of this covenant occur, the individual will be promptly excluded from church activities, and the relevant authorities will be informed without delay.

Offender

Signature _____ Date _____

Printed Name _____

Each member of the Safety Team.

Signature _____ Date _____

Printed Name _____

⁴ Some experts suggest informing about the offender to the entire congregation, to certain segments of the church, while others advise against broad disclosure to prevent gossip, liability and spiritual growth. The specific approach should be determined in consultation with legal counsel, local law enforcement, and church leadership.