



CHURCH OF THE

Good Shepherd

C.A.R.E. Policy & Procedures

Children and Adults in a Responsible Environment

FINAL VERSION

Effective Date: May 2023

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CHURCH OF THE
Good Shepherd

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CHURCH OF THE
Good Shepherd

Child Protection & Abuse Prevention Policy & Procedures



Child Protection & Abuse Prevention Policy & Procedures

I. Purpose

Church of the Good Shepherd (CGS) is committed to protecting the vulnerable, caring for survivors of abuse, and holding those who abuse power accountable for sexual, physical or spiritual misconduct; to educating our leadership, staff and members relating to such matters; and to establishing reporting and response procedures relating to these issues for minors (and to the extent applicable, also for vulnerable adults). This Policy is adopted in order to implement those purposes.

II. Vision

Consistent with CGS's purpose to embody and preview the Kingdom of God, our church seeks to reflect Christ's love, humility, refuge and justice, particularly for the most vulnerable:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because
the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor;
he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn...

Isaiah 61:1-3

We acknowledge that sin can come from within our body and that that power can be abused in such a way that individuals experience sexual, physical or spiritual abuse and misconduct. Church leaders, who by nature of their positions hold power, are to shepherd God's people with love and humility, following the example of our Great Shepherd. However, they in particular are in danger of abusing their power. "Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which He obtained with His own blood. I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock..." (Acts 20:28-29) The Gospel and our call to love one another requires that we take abuse and misconduct seriously and that we bring light to areas of darkness. We are also called to be a community that seeks healing, ensures justice, pays special attention to vulnerable people and exercises authority with care.

To assure that CGS remains a safe place for all persons, especially those who are vulnerable, we have adopted the following **Child Protection & Abuse Prevention Policy and Procedures**.

While all CGS members, staff and officers are encouraged to follow Jesus' teaching in Matthew 18:15-16, as well as Paul's inspired injunction in Galatians 6:1, as the biblical way to resolve conflict among peers, we acknowledge that in situations where abuse or misconduct are involved, individuals may be unwilling or unable to follow this teaching. Power differentials can make it dangerous for a victim to approach an abuser alone regarding abuse or misconduct. Under those circumstances, we acknowledge that members will follow the procedures set forth in this Policy.

III. Overview of Child Protection & Abuse Prevention Policy & Procedures

This document applies to policies and procedures regarding the safety of minors and vulnerable adults participating in events sponsored by Church of the Good Shepherd (CGS). This document applies to compensated church staff and church volunteers who have the responsibility for supervising the activities sponsored by CGS for minors ages 17 and below and (to the extent reasonable) to vulnerable adults. This document does not constitute a contract between the church and its employees or volunteers or any other party. It is a statement of procedures and general guidelines that the church will seek to follow. The church makes no guarantee to any party that every aspect of this policy will be followed in all situations. CGS is not responsible for the individual acts of any employee or volunteer. This document does not apply to activities that are not sponsored by CGS (including, for example, babysitters hired by church members for community group meetings or other similar situations, even if the church members are reimbursed by the church for such babysitters – the parents are responsible in such situations).

IV. Definition of Terms

Church is defined as Church of the Good Shepherd.

Child, student or minor is defined as an individual under the age of 18.

Employee is defined as an individual who is paid by CGS on a full or part-time basis or as an independent contractor.

Member is defined as any person who has publicly and formally agreed to CGS's membership criteria and who has been voted into membership by the Session.

Ministry Leader is defined as any person who is directly responsible for an area of ministry at CGS (music ministry, children's ministry, youth ministry, etc.) or, as applicable, the person's supervisor.

Officer is defined as any elder or deacon of CGS.

Session is defined as the body of elected elders (both teaching and ruling) of CGS.

Visitor is defined as any person who attends a CGS church service or other church event who is not a Member.

Volunteer is defined as any Officer, Member or Visitor who is serving in a non-paid position for purposes of supporting CGS, such as kitchen crew, coffee team, welcome team, Sunday School or SMC teachers, Communion servers, or any other leader, convenor, teacher, host or facilitator of any CGS program or event.

Vulnerable Adult is defined as an individual age 18 or older who has the functional, mental, or physical inability to care for themselves.

Child abuse is defined as any action (or lack of action) which endangers or harms a child's physical, psychological, or emotional health and development. Child abuse occurs in different ways and includes the following:

- **Physical abuse:** any physical injury to a minor which is not accidental, such as beating, shaking, burning, biting.
- **Emotional abuse:** a pattern of controlling behavior such as constant criticism, belittling, threatening, persistent teasing, bullying, shaming, insulting degrading, intimidating or humiliating.
- **Sexual abuse:** any sexual activity between a minor and an adult, including activities such as fondling, exhibitionism, intercourse, incest, pornography. Other forms of sexual abuse can include verbal comments, exposure to pornographic materials, obscene phone calls or other electronic communication, allowing minors to witness sexual activity.

Sexual Misconduct is defined as unwanted sexual touching, sharing of pornographic images (including "sexting") or other improper sexual activity with a minor, including between minors.

V. CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

- In order to prevent child abuse or neglect, CGS addresses child safety through appropriate screening, training and supervision employees and volunteers participating in activities involving children and students.
- CGS will not knowingly allow anyone who has been convicted of child abuse to participate in Children's Ministry or Student Ministry, either as a staff member or volunteer. Anyone who committed child abuse before the age of 18 or more than 10 years earlier will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, taking into account such factors as age, seriousness of the offense, acknowledgement of responsibility, and effective rehabilitative treatment, as well as the nature of the volunteer position the person will serve in (e.g. working with children vs. other types of volunteer positions).
- This CGS Child Protection and Abuse Prevention Policy will be utilized in determining appropriate administrative actions for anyone accused of, or found to have, committed child abuse or neglect.

- If CGS is asked for a reference for anyone whose service or membership was terminated due to a violation of our Code of Conduct for Minor & Vulnerable Adult Safety, CGS will generally disclose the reasons for termination. Further, if CGS becomes aware that a former employee or volunteer of CGS who was dismissed becomes employed by or volunteers to work with children or youth in another organization, CGS will generally seek legal counsel on our duty to make that organization aware of the reasons for CGS's termination of employment of the individual.
- Failure to follow the Child Protection and Abuse Prevention Policy or the Code of Conduct will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment, if on staff. If a volunteer is a member of CGS, such failure may result in the exercise of church discipline by the Session in accordance with the Book of Church Order for the Presbyterian Church in America. Non-member volunteers may be terminated of any and all associated responsibilities.
- If it is determined that a staff person has seriously or intentionally violated the Code of Conduct or willfully harms a child, they will not be allowed to voluntarily resign but will have their employment terminated.
- In cases where corroborating evidence shows that a person previously employed by CGS committed child abuse while in the employ of CGS, their personnel file will reflect such and they will be ineligible for re-hire.
- CGS staff and volunteers will comply with all North Carolina mandated reporting laws. Staff and volunteers are required to follow the CGS Reporting Protocol.
- Once an Incident Report has been filed by a staff member or volunteer, according to our Reporting Protocol, a report must normally be made to the North Carolina Department of Social Services or to the police, as appropriate, unless a determination is made that the incident does not meet the definition of a reportable offense under North Carolina law.
- No portion of this policy can be amended by any individual, nor can any individual grant permission to deviate from this policy. Any change to this policy must be confirmed by the Session.

VI. Selection and Screening Process

Church of the Good Shepherd believes that appropriate personal relationships between adult employees or volunteers and minors of the church foster the community of Christ. Therefore, CGS will seek to prevent any abuse of minors when they are participating in church programs. Preventive measures include screening, training, and supervision of all Employees and volunteers and a commitment to eliminating opportunities for abuse within church programs and church-sponsored events. This screening includes, but is not limited to, the following:

A. Application: CGS may request an application, conduct a personal interview and/or ask for references for any prospective Volunteer or Employee. Volunteers working with minors must also adhere to all supplemental policies relating to the safety of minors.

B. Background Checks: CGS will ask for permission to run background checks on all adult volunteers that serve in kids ministry and/or student ministry. This background check will be used to verify background information and credentials, obtain criminal history, check the sex offender registry and run a social security number verification. No personal data will be collected pertaining to motor vehicle registrations, property ownership records, change of address forms, utilities or phone records. (See Appendix B)

C. Media Searches: Ministry Leaders of minors may search the Internet and Social Media for concerning information that would raise questions on whether or not the recruit would be a good fit for this position. Platforms that may be checked are Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and Pinterest, as well as others.

D. Exceptions: If there are last minute volunteers who have not been screened, they will be approved by the Ministry Leader for the event or area where the volunteer is needed and will be placed with a volunteer or staff member who has been screened and has had a background check. If they continue to serve, they will be subjected to the review process at the earliest convenient time.

VII. EMPLOYEES/VOLUNTEERS WHO ARE MINORS

Employees/volunteers, who are themselves under age 18, are a valuable resource in the care and nurture of our covenant children. The following guidelines apply to this employee/ volunteer.

A. Volunteers/employees must be at least 12 years old. Volunteers under the age of 12 will be permitted to serve alongside a parent/legal guardian.

B. Minor employees/volunteers shall be screened and trained as specified above with the exception that a background check is not required.

C. Minor employees/volunteers must gain consent from parent/legal guardian prior to serving.

VIII. Training

A. All Employees and Volunteers must be familiar with this Policy. Within a reasonable time period following the date of employment by Employees, or following the date of formal engagement by Volunteers, all such Employees or Volunteers who have not been previously trained shall participate in mandatory abuse and misconduct awareness, prevention and response training. This training will include a review of this policy, reporting and response procedures and how to recognize abuse and misconduct.

B. CGS Ministry Leaders and/or Session members will provide regular training opportunities for new Volunteers and Employees and will review this Policy and

protocols as needed.

C. Documentation of participation in training events offered at CGS will be maintained in the administrative offices of either Ministry Leaders and/or pastoral staff.

IX. SUPERVISORY REQUIREMENTS

Church of the Good Shepherd has zero tolerance for abuse in its programs and ministry activities. It is the responsibility of every employee and volunteer in children's and student ministries to act in the best interest of all minors in every program. The following requirements are applicable to all employees and volunteers who have contact with minors participating in any program at the church or a church-sponsored event.

A. Safety of children: It is the responsibility of every employee and volunteer to promote the emotional and physical safety of minors, taking into account all factors and circumstances known to them. If, in their opinion, an unsafe condition exists, they shall immediately take appropriate precautions to protect all minors.

B. Two-deep leadership: A reasonable effort shall be made to have two employees or volunteers present in the room (or nearby) with minors during CGS activities. Unnecessary one-on-one contact between minors and employees or volunteers should be avoided. CGS recognizes that there will be times when an unaccompanied employee or volunteer may be present with a group of minors or with a single minor. In those circumstances (such as instructional time or counseling), windows shall remain uncovered or the activity shall be conducted in a public space, in the view of other adults or minors. Meetings that regularly occur between one employee or volunteer and a group of minors will be preceded by communication with the parents of the minors involved. Church of the Good Shepherd recognizes that a fundamental goal of the middle and high school philosophy of ministry is to build relationships with students and families and to have regular, intentional contact with students. Meetings that spontaneously occur between one employee or volunteer and a group of minors or with a single minor are to be encouraged rather than thwarted by the scope of this policy. Therefore, employees and volunteers will be responsible to conduct these meetings in view of other adults and/or minors, to inform parents as soon as reasonably possible, and to report of the meeting with their supervisor or the person overseeing that area of ministry following the meeting.

C. Ratio of employee/volunteers to minors: When supervising minors, it is required that a reasonable ratio of employees and volunteers to minors be maintained at all times. The supervisor overseeing the age group shall be primarily responsible for setting and maintaining a reasonable ratio of employees and volunteers to minors giving due regard to all factors present, including the number and age of the participants, the nature of the activities, and the location where the activities are taking place.

D. Overnight procedures: CGS sponsored overnight activities require permission and consent from the parent or legal guardian of the minor(s) participating in the form of their registration for the event, must have a minimum of two employees or volunteers

participating, and must maintain a ratio of one employee or volunteer per nine minors. There must be both male and female employees or volunteers present at all co-ed overnights and at least two same-sex employees or volunteers on same-sex overnights. Whenever possible, CGS will seek to have two employees or volunteers per living space for overnight events; however, in cases where this cannot occur, parents will be notified of the arrangements as soon as possible.

E. No confidentiality: Employees and volunteers can never promise complete confidentiality to a minor. Employees and volunteers must report to the pastoral staff if a minor discusses harming him/herself or others, committing a crime, or being the victim of a crime or abuse.

F. Digital privacy: Inappropriate use of cameras, imaging, or digital devices is prohibited. It is inappropriate to use any device capable of recording or transmitting visual images in areas where privacy is expected by participants, especially minors. Employees and volunteers should not post images of minors on the internet unless permission has been granted by the parents or legal guardians.

G. Hazing and bullying: Physical hazing and initiations are prohibited. Bullying is prohibited and includes verbal, physical and cyber bullying.

H. Controlled substances: The use of tobacco, alcohol, drugs, e-cigarettes/vaping, and/or mind-altering substances in the presence of minors or the provision of such substances to minors is prohibited. The responsible use of legal substances, however, by an Employee or Volunteer is not prohibited in situations where parents who are not Employees or Volunteers are invited and attending (such as an outing to a Durham Bulls game or other similar social activity).

X. Physical and Non-physical Contact

A. Permissible Contact

1. Limited Physical Contact: Limited physical contact with minors, such as a pat on the back or on the head, or a handshake, is permissible. Brief hugs are permissible within sight of others and with consent of the minor. Employees/volunteers must avoid any prolonged hugs and must stop a hug immediately upon request of the minor. Touching hands, faces, shoulders and arms, placing an arm around the shoulders, sitting beside minors, holding hands during prayer, high fives and congratulatory hand slapping are all appropriate but should also be stopped immediately upon request of the minor.

2. Gift Giving: Accepting and giving gifts from/to minors is permissible when appropriate (Christmas, birthday or small tokens given to all members of a group or class) but is discouraged as a frequent practice. Employees and volunteers should report to their supervisor any gifts they receive that seem inappropriately given.

3. Close emotional relationships: Employees and volunteers need to avoid developing close emotional relationships with minors of either sex outside of the scope of a healthy biblical mentoring relationship and are expected to exercise extreme caution in their relationships with minors. Employees and volunteers should make known to their supervisor any growing attachments to specific individuals; and such supervisor shall discuss the situation with the pastors and/or session, as appropriate.

B. Prohibited Contact by Employees or Volunteers

1. Sexual Abuse: Any physical contact between an employee/volunteer and a minor that would provide, or is intended to provide, any form of sexual gratification.

2. Inappropriate Physical Contact: Physical contact between an employee/volunteer and a minor such as giving massages, kissing, prolonged embracing and the like.

3. Physical Abuse: Striking, shaking, slapping or other violent behaviors towards a minor.

4. Pornography: Showing to minors images or videos that are pornographic is prohibited. Accidental viewing of pornography when in the presence of minors should be reported to the ministry area supervisor immediately. The creation or collection of pornographic images or videos of minors (i.e. sexting) is prohibited. If employees/volunteers become aware of the existence of pornography (including sexting) in the hands of a minor, they should immediately report this to the supervisor.

5. Verbal/Mental/Emotional Abuse: Language, image, video, or other media that is humiliating, degrading, threatening, sexual, personally intimate, related to body development or physique, or crude – regardless of how the communication was conveyed (e.g. text messages, email, phone calls, social networking sites, etc.).

6. Dating: At no time shall any employee or volunteer pursue or participate in a dating relationship with a minor or any person who is a student in high school or younger, and at all times employees and volunteers should be sensitive to minors with “crushes.”

C. Reporting

All employees and volunteers are responsible for immediately discussing with their supervisor any signs of possible violations of the above and/or concerns they may have about possible victimization. To the extent required by the Reporting Protocol, the discussion shall be documented by the supervisor.

XI. Discipline Procedures

No form of punishment that involves pain or physical discomfort may be used. Minors may be restrained if they are in danger of hurting themselves or others. Disruptive minors may be removed from the group when necessary with appropriate supervision.

XII. Bathroom Procedures

A. For children younger than Kindergarten: Children using the bathroom should be accompanied by an employee or volunteer. The door should be left ajar and the employee or volunteer should wait either outside the bathroom or in the bathroom outside the stall. Employees or volunteers should only enter the stall if the child asks for assistance. If an employee or volunteer must assist a child in the stall, leave the main door open and, when possible, notify another employee or volunteer. Any inadvertent physical contact must be reported to a supervisor.

B. For children Kindergarten through 5th grade: An employee or volunteer should accompany the children to the bathroom. The employee or volunteer should wait outside the bathroom or, if inside, with the door ajar. Unless the child has special needs, the employee or volunteer should not be in the stall with the child. If an employee or volunteer cannot accompany the child, use the buddy system so that another child of the same sex can accompanying the child needing to use the restroom.

XIII. Transportation Procedures

A. All drivers should be licensed and adhere to all laws and restrictions of their personal driving privileges. Drivers must also have proof of insurance with limits that meet or exceed requirements of the state in which the vehicle is registered and primarily used.

B. Whenever it is possible, screened adults will drive. If it becomes necessary for students or parents who have not been screened to drive, parental consent will be obtained prior to the event.

C. Policy for transporting students can be found below, and must be adhered to:

1. There must be previous communication to parents that their child will be transported by someone who works for or volunteers with CGS and has met previous standards of a background check and approval by a committee within CGS's leadership.

2. There must be communication between a staff or volunteer with a child's parent if there is an unexpected scenario that requires transportation. A phone call will suffice. A text message or email with no response will not suffice unless the employee or volunteer cannot reach the parent any other way.

3. In some events, parents and students may be asked to drive and carpool. The staff will make parents of participants aware of the carpool situations prior to their child being transported.

4. Every effort must be made for drivers to avoid being alone in the car with a minor of the the opposite sex for any CGS event or function, unless at the expressed consent of the minors' parents/legal guardians. There will be one driver with one student only when it is explicitly requested by or explained to a parent, and in those situations there will be communication stating that a child has reached their destination if the parent is not there to receive their student (this would apply when a student is dropped off at their house and no contact is made face to face with the parent).

5. Only in the most extreme situations, such as in the event of a life threatening emergency, will these guidelines not be adhered to, and such exceptions should be reported to the supervisor immediately.

D. Adult employees or volunteers who drive minors to and/or from CGS sponsored events must complete a **Driver Information Form** (see **Appendix C**), which documents a valid driver's license and proof of insurance. This form will be kept on file with the Ministry Leader of the sponsored event.

XIV. Consequences of Violation of Child Safeguarding Policy and/or Procedures

Any employee/volunteer accused of committing a prohibited act or any act considered by Church of the Good Shepherd leadership to be harmful to a minor, may be immediately suspended from participation in any church ministry for minors. Any employee/volunteer found in violation of the CGS Child Protection and Abuse Prevention Policy may be prohibited from future participation as an employee/volunteer in all church ministries for minors. If the person is an employee, such conduct may also result in termination of employment from the church.

XV. Reporting Alleged Child Abuse

A. Reporting Obligation

North Carolina General Statute, Section 7B-301 provides the following:

"(a) Any person or institution who has cause to suspect that any juvenile is abused, neglected, or dependent, as defined by G.S. 7B-101, or has died as the result of maltreatment, shall report the case of that juvenile to the director of the department of social services in the county where the juvenile resides or is found. The report may be made orally, by telephone, or in writing. The report shall include information as is known to the person making it including the name and address of the juvenile; the name and address of the juvenile's parent, guardian, or caretaker; the age of the juvenile; the names and ages of other juveniles in the home; the present whereabouts of the juvenile if not at the home address; the nature and extent of any

injury or condition resulting from abuse, neglect, or dependency; and any other information which the person making the report believes might be helpful in establishing the need for protective services or court intervention. If the report is made orally or by telephone, the person making the report shall give the person's name, address, and telephone number. Refusal of the person making the report to give a name shall not preclude the department's assessment of the alleged abuse, neglect, dependency, or death as a result of maltreatment.

(b) Any person or institution who knowingly or wantonly fails to report the case of a juvenile as required by subsection (a) of this section, or who knowingly or wantonly prevents another person from making a report as required by subsection (a) of this section, is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor."

B. To Whom to Report

Nothing in this policy shall relieve the right or responsibility of church employees or volunteers to report suspicions of abuse to the appropriate law enforcement agency/department.

C. How to Report

An employee/volunteer is required to report an incident to supervisory staff as soon as possible after becoming aware of the incident. The reporter will be asked to fill out a church Child Protection and Abuse Prevention Incident Report form which is available from your Ministry Leader and located in the church office. (See "Child Protection and Abuse Prevention Reporting Protocols" at the end of this Policy.)

D. Reports not Required by State Law

While employees and volunteers are required to submit a Child Protection and Abuse Prevention Incident Report for situations in which State Law would require a report be made to officials, employees and volunteers are also encouraged to fill out such an incident report for serious violations of this Policy or the Code of Conduct, or for instances of Sexual Misconduct that is not required to be reported to the State, including, for example, sexual misconduct between minors.

XVI. Response Plan

In the event that an incident of child abuse or sexual misconduct is alleged to have occurred on the premises of Church of the Good Shepherd or during a church sponsored program or activity, the following procedure shall be implemented by the supervising adult unless he/she is alleged to be involved.

A. The parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of the minor(s) shall be notified.

B. The employee/volunteer alleged to be the perpetrator of the abuse or misconduct will immediately be placed on leave from working with church minors pending an investigation.

C. The church will comply with the state's requirements regarding mandatory reporting of abuse.

D. If the alleged abuse involves an ordained pastor employed by the church, the Eastern Carolina Presbytery will be notified, and the Stated Clerk's office will be made aware of the situation. If the allegations of abuse involves an officer of the church, the Session will be notified.

E. The church will cooperate fully with any investigation of the incident by state or local authorities.

F. One person will be selected by the Senior Pastor or the Session to act as the official spokesperson for the church. The spokesperson will be available to the media to answer questions and describe the Child Safeguarding Policy, contact an attorney, and the church's insurance company.

G. In the event of a breach of either the CGS Child Protection & Abuse Prevention Policy or the Code of Conduct, the Session may create an ad hoc team, comprised of both men and women, with the expressed goal of coming alongside to help provide resources for counseling, or other aid to both the victims and alleged abuser.

H. In certain situations, CGS reserves the right to request a Limited-Access Agreement be created before an adult found to be in violation of the policy may return to working with minor children and students. Violation of the terms of a limited-access agreement will result in immediate removal from their position in this ministry.

I. All reports of child abuse or neglect shall be treated with the utmost discretion and held in absolute confidence, to the extent that such is possible. No person shall communicate any information concerning the alleged event to any person except as necessary (a) to comply with the church's Child Protection and Abuse Prevention Policy & Procedures and/or the law, (b) to perform the tasks of the ad hoc team set out in paragraph (G) above, or (c) to cooperate with an official investigation of the alleged incident. Any breach of this confidentiality by a church employee/volunteer may be cause for immediate dismissal. A pastor/elder, after consultation with those conducting the official investigation of the incident, may authorize limited additional disclosure if necessary to protect other minors from harm, particularly where the person responsible for the abuse cannot be identified. But in no case shall the identity of the victim or the accused person be disclosed except as required by law or with the consent of the person involved or that person's parent or legal guardian. Any person who is found guilty of the alleged child abuse or misconduct will be removed from their employment/volunteer position with minors.

J. Nothing in this Policy relieves the Pastors or the Session from providing appropriate pastoral

care for all the persons involved in any alleged incident or alleged violation of this Policy, including both the victims and the alleged perpetrator. In addition, while it is the duty of the Session to engage in church discipline and to take appropriate steps to enforce this Policy, the church is not always equipped to make legal determinations of the facts underlying allegations of abuse or sexual misconduct when the facts are in dispute. The church must be careful to wait for a full investigation to be completed prior to making decisions about the truth of any allegations made (see Proverbs 18:17, “The one who states his case first seems right, until the other comes and examines him.” At the same time however, given the long history of victims of sexual abuse not being believed, the church should take all appropriate steps for the protection and support of the alleged victim. After a reasonable period of time, absent such legal determinations, the church will use prudence to determine what, if any, steps to take for the further protection of all persons involved, especially the minors involved.

XVII. Amending the Child Safeguarding Policy

In cases where the Child Protection Policy requires change, a submission of proposed changes will be made to the Session of Church of the Good Shepherd and approved by the Session before the changes take effect.



CHURCH OF THE
Good Shepherd

Code of Conduct for Minor & Vulnerable Adult Safety



Code of Conduct for Minor & Vulnerable Adult Safety

1. What is a Code of Conduct?

All staff and volunteers who work with children are expected to interact with children in a mature, capable, safe, caring, responsible manner, with a high level of accountability. This Code of Conduct describes how adults will interact with children and vulnerable adults and the boundaries they are expected to observe. This Code of Conduct includes, but is not limited too, the following expectations of staff and volunteers. By being vigilant in following the Code of Conduct, we will help protect children and vulnerable adults from abuse. The most effective way to reduce abuse of children and vulnerable adults is to be vigilant. (Subsequently, the terms "child/ren" and "vulnerable adult/s" will be used synonymously.)

2. Accountability

All adult staff and volunteers are responsible for providing or receiving feedback from others in order to maintain our high level of professionalism. As an adult working with children, you agree to interact with the children by observing these principles. It is our expectation that you understand your responsibility to observe the interaction between adults and children and when you see interaction that is questionable, inappropriate, or crossing a child's boundaries, you will intervene on behalf of the child. Such intervention may include:

- Remaining present with the child in order to provide him/her a sense of security,
- Redirecting the child to join other children in a different area,
- Speaking to the adult and stating the boundary violation you have observed and reminding them of the responsibility to abide by this code of conduct, or
- Speaking to the Ministry Leader regarding your observation.

By Volunteering, you give permission to the other adults in our programs to take these intervening actions if you are seen crossing safe boundaries or violating this code of conduct.

3. Visibility

All work with children shall be planned and carried out in a way that minimizes risks as far as

possible. This includes being visible to other adults when working with children. To the greatest extent possible, volunteers shall not be in a room alone with a child with the door closed, or in any area of our property that is secluded or hidden from view.

4. Overcoming Isolation

To protect our children, staff and volunteers, at no time during a program may an adult be alone with a single child where others cannot observe the adult. We expect all adults to reduce isolation by having a minimum of two children present, informing the child's parent of any meeting you wish to have with the child, and doing it during a time and/or in a location where your interaction with the child is visible to others. Isolation could be overcome, for example, by taking two or more children to the bathroom together rather than only one, dropping off siblings last in a carpool, or taking your own child or spouse along when providing rides. We expect an adequate number of adults to supervise student events, especially overnight activities.

When ministry to a child involves one-on-one contact, the following procedures shall be followed, as applicable:

- Always be accountable to other adults regarding your interactions with students or children by informing the ministry leader and or parents when, where and for how long your one-on-one interaction will be.
- The activity must be in a public place that is visible to others, never in a private or secluded location, such as a room with the door closed or in a home alone with the child or student.
- Counseling or other necessarily confidential meetings with children shall be done in an office with a window in the door and only when another adult is in close vicinity, aware that the meeting is occurring, and willing to stay in the vicinity until it is completed; and
- Parents and/or supervisors are to be notified beforehand of any activities with students or children.

In an emergency situation, find someone to go with you if at all possible, or notify any available adult.

5. Parent Involvement

Parents are responsible for knowing where their children are at all times. Therefore, parents shall be informed of planned activities. Parents shall be encouraged to make unannounced visits to program activities as a way of reducing isolation and monitoring the interaction between adults and children.

6. Supervision

Supervision reduces risk. Program administrators shall periodically and randomly inspect classrooms, offices, work areas and other areas where children and adults are together.

7. Technology

Technology should be used appropriately to protect children or students from abuse and exploitation. Volunteers and staff shall not engage in social networking, texting or any other means of private communication with children and youth without the permission of the parents or guardian. All electronic communication must not be intentionally erased or deleted and must be made available for review upon request by the ministry leader, Pastor, or parents/legal guardians.

8. Discipline

CGS believes discipline of children to be scriptural and primarily the function of parents. We're given a description of God's discipline in Hebrews 12:7-11. It is not punishment, but guidance, training, and molding of character for which we strive. CGS volunteers do not seek to merely control behavior, but to partner with parents to help shape a child's character to be more and more like that of Christ. We also strive to keep a safe environment for all children under our care. Therefore, if a child becomes unruly or disruptive, and does not respond to verbal requests, a parent may be summoned to take proper care of the situation in a way that is appropriate for their family. Physical punishment will never be given by CGS employees/volunteers.

9. Touch

Because healthy, caring touch is valuable to children, but unhealthy touch is abusive, the following guidelines apply:

- Touch shall be open rather than secretive.
- A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors.
- Touch should be in response to the need of the child, and not the need of the adult.
- Touch should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child rather than the adult.
- It should be with the child's permission and any resistance from the child should be respected.
- Touch should always communicate respect for the child.
- Adults should avoid doing things of a personal nature for children that they are able to do for themselves, including personal hygiene and bathroom breaks, dressing, bathing, etc.
- Adults and other students or children should not hit, slap, pinch, push, or otherwise assault children; and any attempt to restrain a child against their will should only be for the express purpose of protecting other individuals, and only to the extent reasonably necessary under the circumstances.

The following signs of affection are generally appropriate within specific contexts: verbal praise, side hugs, shoulder to shoulder hugs, pats on the shoulder, back, or head (when culturally appropriate). For smaller children, touching their hands, faces, shoulders and arms,

arms around their shoulders, hugs, or holding them when others are present.

The following behaviors between staff or volunteers and children are inappropriate or may be perceived as inappropriate and shall not be engaged in: touching buttocks, chests, genital areas, or thighs; showing affection in isolated areas or when alone with a child; sleeping in bed with a child; inappropriate comments that relate to physique or body development; flirtatious or seductive looks; any form of affection that is unwanted by the child; showing sexually-suggestive videos or playing sexually-suggestive games with any child; any behavior that could be interpreted as sexual in nature.

Adults shall monitor each other in the area of physical contact, helping each other by pointing out anything that could be misinterpreted.

10. Showing Favoritism

Adults shall avoid favoring or showing differential treatment to a particular child or student to the exclusion of others.

Accepting and giving gifts from/to minors is permissible when appropriate (Christmas, birthday or small tokens given to all members of a group or class) but is discouraged as a frequent practice. Employees and volunteers should report to their supervisor any gifts they receive that seem inappropriately given.

11. Verbal Interaction

Words can also be used to support and encourage a child, such as praise, positive reinforcement, and appropriate jokes. Inappropriate verbal interaction includes the following: shaming, belittling, humiliating, name calling, using harsh language that may frighten, threaten or humiliate the child, cursing, or making derogatory remarks about the child. Adults shall avoid favoring or showing differential treatment to particular children or students to the exclusion of others.

Inappropriate verbal interaction also includes telling off-color jokes that are racial, sexual, or otherwise degrading; making sexually suggestive comments, telling inappropriate secrets, or inappropriately discussing sexual encounters or desires with children.

12. Reporting of Abuse

When anyone has reason to suspect or has knowledge of child abuse or other sexual misconduct within the scope of Church of the Good Shepherd's work and ministry, he or she must make a report according to our Reporting Protocol. The Reporting Protocol is attached to this Code of Conduct.



CHURCH OF THE Good Shepherd

Code of Conduct Acknowledgement Form

I acknowledge that I have read and agree to follow the Church of the Good Shepherd Code of Conduct. I have read and agree to abide by the Church of the Good Shepherd Reporting Protocol. In addition, it is my responsibility to read and comply with any future updates to any and all of our child protection documents.

I confirm that I have not been accused of (to the best of my knowledge), been investigated for, or prosecuted for instances involving any form of abuse or inappropriate behavior with a child. If I have been accused of or investigated for any such actions, I have fully disclosed that in writing to the church.

I agree not to engage in any such behaviors.

I further agree that as an individual who has engendered trust from a child, I will not tolerate physical, emotional or sexual child abuse, neglect or sexual misconduct.

I understand the importance of accountability to the other adults who work with children. Therefore, I give my permission for anyone who observes any inappropriate or questionable interaction between me and a child to speak to me regarding their observation. I will not take offense when approached by someone with concerns about my interaction, because I understand that the protection of each child must be my first priority.

I agree to immediately report to the appropriate leadership any reasonable suspicion of or disclosure of inappropriate behavior between an adult and a minor or between two minors when one has power over the other by virtue of age or physical abilities, in accordance with our Reporting Protocol.

Name (Print and sign)

Date

Position

Supervisor's Signature.



CHURCH OF THE

Good Shepherd

Child Protection and Abuse Prevention Reporting Protocol



Child Protection and Abuse Prevention Reporting Protocol

North Carolina law provides that anyone who is employed by or volunteers for an organization that serves children is a mandated reporter. This includes clergy, staff, and all volunteers in a church.

A mandated reporter is anyone who is required by law to report to the Department of Social Services (DSS) any reasonable suspicion of child abuse, neglect, or other maltreatment. Failure to make a report of reasonable suspicion of abuse is a misdemeanor offense and punishable as a Class I misdemeanor.

A voluntary reporter is anyone who is not required by law to make such a report, but who believes that a person involved with a ministry of the church has either participated in an act of sexual misconduct or has seriously or intentionally violated the Child Protection and Abuse Prevention Policy & Procedures (“this Policy”).

Church of the Good Shepherd has established the following Reporting Protocol to assist in satisfying the reporting requirements of North Carolina law and in evaluating any alleged incident of sexual misconduct or violation of this Policy.

What am I required to report?

The minimum standard for a report to be made to DSS is any “reasonable suspicion” of abuse. Reasonable suspicion does not mean you have proof that abuse has occurred. There are three ways you will learn about abuse:

1. A child discloses abuse.
2. You observe abuse.
3. You have reasonable suspicion of abuse.

When a child discloses abuse, or you observe abuse, you must report the abuse by following the reporting protocol below.

Reasonable suspicion is harder to determine than receiving a disclosure or observing abuse. At Church of the Good Shepherd, we have a Code of Conduct that describes the boundaries adults

are to maintain when interacting with children. Every adult who works with children must sign our Code of Conduct, acknowledging they agree to abide by the Code of Conduct when interacting with children. When an adult agrees to our Code of Conduct, he/she gives permission to any adult who observes any inappropriate or questionable behavior to speak to him/her about what has been observed and to remind them of the commitment we have made to maintain safe boundaries between adults and children.

When an adult is seen crossing a child's safe boundaries or violating our Code of Conduct, the adult who observed the inappropriate behavior or boundary violation is expected to intervene on behalf of the child and at an appropriate time, speak either to the adult about the boundary violation that was observed, or the Ministry Leader (or individual in charge of the event). If there is reason to believe the child is at risk or the response by the adult when held accountable for their actions causes concern, a formal Child Protection and Abuse Prevention Incident Report described below must be completed.

It may also be determined that there is reasonable suspicion that a child has been abused outside of any church event, such as in the home. In such a case you are still a mandated reporter, even though the abuse is not related to a program or ministry of the church.

Making a report to DSS does not constitute an accusation of abuse. Making a report means we are requesting that a professional service be performed to determine if a child is at risk and if abuse has occurred.

To whom in the church is a report made?

If the child is in immediate danger, call law enforcement or 911 immediately. Once law enforcement has been called, you then follow the reporting protocol below.

PROTOCOL FOR ADULT VOLUNTEERS

If you have received a disclosure of abuse, you have observed abuse, you have reasonable suspicion of abuse, or you have reason to believe that there has been an incident of sexual misconduct during a church sponsored program or activity, you must report it immediately to either the ministry director or to the Pastor. The person making the report will be referred to here as the "Reporter." If neither the Ministry Leader nor the Pastor is on site to hear the verbal report, then the verbal report must be given to the individual in charge of the event.

PROTOCOL FOR PAID STAFF/MINISTRY DIRECTORS

If you have received a disclosure of abuse, you have observed abuse, you have reasonable suspicion of abuse or you have reason to believe that there has been an incident of sexual misconduct during a church sponsored program or activity, you as the "Reporter" must report it immediately to one of the church Pastors.

After the verbal report has been made, the Reporter must complete a Child Protection and Abuse Prevention Incident Report (provided by the Ministry Leader or Pastor) and submit the

completed, signed and dated form to the person to whom it was verbally reported. The Incident Report must be submitted as soon as possible.

Note: If the verbal report was given to the individual in charge of the event (if neither the ministry director nor the Pastor was on site to receive the verbal report), the Reporter then is responsible, as soon as practically possible, to contact the ministry director or Pastor as well, to initiate the Incident Report completion.

The Reporter and the person receiving the Incident Report (ministry director or Pastor) must each sign the Incident Report, noting the dates and times the Incident Report was signed. Both the Reporter and the person receiving the report must retain a copy of the Incident Report with both signatures showing dates and times.

Any ministry director who receives an Incident Report must forward the original to the Pastor (or the person designated by the Pastor to receive these reports). The Pastor must sign the Incident Report, indicating the time/date signed.

All Incident Reports received by the Pastor or his designee that allege abuse (i.e. those which are required to be reported to authorities) must be reported to DSS as soon as possible. The Pastor does not have the option of bypassing this step of making the report to DSS. The date and time the incident was reported to DSS or law enforcement must be noted on the Incident Report, which will be kept in the church office in a secure file.

The Reporter cannot be denied the opportunity to report directly to DSS, but should understand that, by following this Reporting Protocol, he/she has met their mandatory reporting requirement.

All Incident Reports that are not required to be reported to DSS (i.e. reports alleging a serious or intentional violation of this Policy or reports alleging an incident of sexual misconduct that does not constitute sexual abuse – e.g. an incident involving two minors) should be investigated as soon as possible under the supervision of the Senior Pastor or the Session, and consistent with the other terms of this Policy. In appropriate circumstances (e.g. where one minor has alleged that another minor has engaged in sexual misconduct), a report should normally be made to the applicable police department.

How is a report made to DSS?

To make a report, call the North Carolina Department of Social Services Child Protective Services Intake of Durham County which is responsible for receiving and responding to reports of abuse. **That office can be reached at**
919-560-8424 Monday-Friday, 8:30am – 5:00pm
Or After Hours, Weekends and Holidays @ non-emergency # of (919) 560-4600

It is best if the report can be made by phone. The Intake Officer will be able to collect important information that will assist the agency in determining the best response option available and what will create the highest level of safety for the child.



CHURCH OF THE

Good Shepherd

Appendix A:

Child Protection & Abuse Prevention Incident Report Form



CHURCH OF THE
Good Shepherd

Child Protection and Abuse Prevention Incident Report Form

To be submitted to the Pastoral Staff

CONFIDENTIAL

Are you reporting a disclosure, observation or suspicion of abuse?

- ☐ Disclosure
- ☐ Observation
- ☐ Suspicion

Are you reporting a serious violation of the Child Protection and Abuse Prevention Policy, or an allegation of sexual misconduct that took place during a church program or activity?

- ☐ Serious violation of this Policy
- ☐ Allegation of sexual misconduct

Name of staff or volunteer receiving a disclosure of child abuse, report of observed behavior or having reason to suspect child abuse has occurred (Reporter):

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Incident Information

Victim Information (if known):

Victim's Name: _____

Date of birth: _____

Class Grade: _____

Disclosure:

Date, time and location you received the disclosure:

How did you receive the disclosure (verbally, text message, etc.):

Provide the victim's statement if you received a disclosure (as best as you remember, use the exact words the child said or communicated; continue on additional paper if necessary. If the child communicated electronically, please provide a copy of the communication. DO NOT INTERROGATE OR QUESTION THE CHILD):

Name of person accused of the abuse: _____

Relationship of accused to victim [Paid staff, volunteer, family member, other (specify)]:

Contact information of the accused:

Phone: _____

Email: _____

DO NOT ATTEMPT TO CONTACT THE ALLEGED PERPETRATOR!

SUSPICION/OBSERVATION:

Name of the accused / alleged perpetrator:

How is this person engaged in ministry at CGS: (Paid staff, volunteer, family member, other, specify):

If the person suspected/observed is not engaged in the ministry of CGS, what is this person's relationship to the child:

Contact information of the accused / alleged perpetrator:

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Describe in detail the behavior you observed or the boundary violation of our Code of Conduct that causes your suspicion. **DO NOT ATTEMPT TO CONTACT THE ALLEGED PERPETRATOR.**

Report Information: FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Name of person receiving Report: _____

Position held at the church: _____

Date of this Report: _____

Time this Incident Report was received: _____

Signature of person reporting: _____

Signature of person receiving Report: _____



CHURCH OF THE

Good Shepherd

Appendix B:

Background Check Approval Form



CHURCH OF THE
Good Shepherd

NOTICE - BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION

In connection with your volunteer or paid position in Nursery, Children's and/or Youth Ministry with [Church of the Good Shepherd] (the "Church"), notice is hereby given that a consumer report and/or investigative consumer report may be obtained from a consumer reporting agency for volunteer engagement purposes. These reports may contain information about your character, general reputation, personal characteristics and mode of living, whichever are applicable. The reports may also contain information about you relating to your criminal history, driving and/or motor vehicle records, education or employment history, or other background checks.

You have the right, upon written request made within a reasonable time after the receipt of this notice, to request disclosure of the nature and scope of any investigative consumer report prepared by contacting the Church and Protect My Ministry 14499 N. Dale Mabry Hwy., Suite 201 South, Tampa, FL 33618; Phone: 1-800-319-5581. For information about Protect My Ministry's privacy practices, see www.protectmyministry.com. The scope of this notice and below authorization is not limited to the present and, if you are hired or accepted for volunteer service, will continue throughout the course of your employment and/or volunteer tenure and allow the Company to conduct future screenings for retention, promotion or reassignment, as permitted by law and unless revoked by you in writing.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND
AUTHORIZATION**

By signing below I hereby authorize the obtaining of consumer reports and/or investigative consumer reports by the Church at any time after receipt of this authorization and throughout the course of my employment or volunteer service, if applicable.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Print Name: _____

Last Four Digits of SSN: _____



CHURCH OF THE
Good Shepherd

Applicant Data Collection Form

Background Check Personal
Information Church of the Good
Shepherd

This form will be shredded and disposed of after background check has been completed.

Today's Date: _____

Name: (first) _____ (middle) _____ (last) _____

Please list other names used: _____

Date of birth: (month) _____ (day) _____ (year) _____

Home Address: (street) _____

City _____ County _____ State _____ Zip _____

SSN _____

DL # or State ID # _____

State Issued: _____

Email address: _____



CHURCH OF THE

Good Shepherd

Appendix C:

Driver Approval Form



CHURCH OF THE Good Shepherd

Driver Information Form

Date: _____
Name: _____
Phone: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ Zip: _____

DRIVER ☐ Employee ☐ Volunteer

Name: _____
Date of birth: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Driver's License #: _____
State: _____ Date of Expiration: _____
Does the license state any restrictions? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes, explain: _____

VEHICLE THAT WILL BE USED

Name of owner: _____
Address of owner: _____
Make and model of vehicle: _____
Year of vehicle: _____
License Plate #: _____ State: _____
Number of seatbelts available: _____

INSURANCE INFORMATION

When a volunteer or employee is using a privately owned vehicle, that vehicle's insurance coverage will always be considered primary. Please provide the following information concerning the vehicle(s) that will be used:

Insurance Company: _____
Policy number: _____
Date of policy expiration: _____

CERTIFICATION

I certify that the information given on this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that as an employee or volunteer driver, I must be 21 years of age or older, possess a valid driver's license, have the proper and current license and vehicle registration and have the State of North Carolina required insurance coverage in effect on any vehicle used for a church.

Signature

Date



CHURCH OF THE
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Appendix D:

North Carolina and National Hotlines and Organizations



CHURCH OF THE
Good Shepherd

North Carolina and National Hotlines and Organizations

National Domestic Violence Hotline: 800-799-7233. A 24-hour confidential service for survivors, victims and those affected by domestic violence, intimate partner violence or relationship abuse.

North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence: 919-956-9124
3710 University Drive #300, Durham, NC 27707

Durham Crisis Response Center: 919-403-6562 206
N. Dillard St., Durham, NC

Child and Family Services/ Durham County:
Call to report child abuse: 919-560-8424, Monday-Friday 8:30am-5:00 pm
Non-emergent, off hours, weekends and holiday number: 919-560-4600

Prevent Child Abuse North Carolina: 919-829-8009
3000 Aerial Center Parkway, Suite 180, Morrisville, NC 27560
The National Prevent Child Abuse number is 1-800-CHILDREN (244-5373)

Orange County Rape Crisis Center: 919-968-4647
1229 E. Franklin St., Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Rape Crisis Center: 919-968-4677
825 N. Estes Dr., Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Justice Matters: 919-794-7511 (legal services, advocacy and training expertise in human trafficking)
1006 Lamond Ave., Durham, NC