



Welcome to Safe Sanctuary
for We Care Volunteers

Why are we here today?

- FUMC seeks to create a safe environment for vulnerable persons, whether children or adults, in which opportunities for abuse are minimized by the proper enlistment and supervision persons working with them. This document contains applicable definitions, policies and procedures related to training and prevention, and instructions for response and reporting of neglect or exploitation of vulnerable adults. Our Safe Sanctuary policy also protects our volunteers.
- FUMC adopted our Safe Sanctuary Policies in 2005 mandated by the Florida United Methodist Conference.
- Annual training is required for all adults working with our children, youth and vulnerable adults to ensure that they are aware of all current issues regarding protection of our members.

Foundation

“Then Jesus said to his host, “When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or sisters, your relatives, or rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.” Luke 14:9-14

Promise Statement

We uphold the idea that to report abuse is to be a witness to the world of the love and justice of God, and we fully recognize that reporting abuse is a form of ministering to the needs of those crying out for help. Simply stated, reporting abuse may help stop existing abuse and prevent further abuse.

How to Report Elder Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

FLORIDA ABUSE HOTLINE

1-800-96-ABUSE

1800-962-2873



As caring Christians, we also are committed to protect and advocate for vulnerable persons whether adults or children - participating in the life of the church. The church, at all levels of its organization, is entrusted with the responsibility of providing an emotionally and physically safe, spiritually grounded, healthy environment for vulnerable persons, and their families that will contribute to healing. We recognize the grace that God gives in upholding Christian community; and we will look for grace-filled ways of deal with both the victim and the accused.

Definitions

- **Abuse** - The infliction of physical pain or injury or the willful deprivation of services necessary to maintain mental and physical health, by a Caregiver or other person.
- **Caregiver** - An individual who has responsibility for there care of a Vulnerable person as a result of a family relationship voluntarily, by contract, or as a result of the ties of friendship.
- **Elderly Person** - A person 60 years of age or older
- **Emotional Abuse** – The intentional or reckless infliction of emotional or mental anguish, or the use of a physical or chemical restraint, medication or isolation as punishment or as a substitute for treatment or care of any Vulnerable Person.
- **Exploitation** – The expenditure, reduction, or use of the property, assets or resources of a Vulnerable Person without the express voluntary consent of that person or his/her legally-authorized representative.
- **Financial Exploitation** – The use of deception, intimidation, undue influence, force or threat of force to obtain or exert unauthorized control over a Vulnerable Person’s property, with the intent to deprive the Vulnerable Person of that property.

Definitions Part 2

- **Neglect** – The failure of a Caregiver or other person to provide food, shelter, clothing, medical services, medication or health care for a Vulnerable Person.
- **Staff Person** – Any person employed by the Church who is responsible for activities involving Vulnerable Persons.
- **Volunteer** – A person eighteen (18) years of age or older who assists in conducting activities for Vulnerable Persons under the supervision of a paid Staff Person.
- **Vulnerable Person** – Any person, regardless of age, whose behavior indicates that he or she is mentally incapable of adequately caring for himself or herself and his or her interests without adverse consequences to himself or herself or others, or who, because of physical or mental impairment, is unable to protect himself or herself from abuse, neglect, exploitation, sexual abuse, or emotional abuse by others.

Screening and Supervisory Procedures and Policies

- Written job description and/or expectations provided; signed and dated as necessary (e.g., if used in lieu of an application for employment or to volunteer).
- An application/personal information form shall be completed (including signed and dated) by any Volunteer or Staff Person seeking to work with Vulnerable Persons. The application will include: name and address, date of birth, phone number, emergency contact information, gifts, skills, relevant experience/training, education, two work-related references, church membership and number of years, pastor's name and phone number, and a brief statement of reasons for seeking position. Any additional information required by any outside agency utilized by the Church to obtain background checks (e.g., Employment Screening Services shall also be provided.)

Screening (Part 2)

- Must complete and sign consent form authorizing national criminal background and sex offender registry checks.
- A **background check** must be provided for anyone, whether Volunteer or Staff Person, who intends to work with Vulnerable Persons. Background checks must be renewed at least every **three** years.
- Personal interviews will be conducted and documented by We Care staff representatives, and kept in a confidential file maintained at the We Care office.
- **We Care Safe Sanctuary** must be completed **once** a year either via online or a training session.

Guidelines for Volunteer and Staff Persons working with Elderly Persons and Vulnerable Adults

- No Staff Person or Volunteer may engage in any form of neglect, abuse or exploitation of Vulnerable Persons, whether for financial gain or for any other reason.
- Persons leading any group of Vulnerable Persons must be 18 years of age or older.
- Six month rule: Any Volunteer working with Vulnerable Persons must be a member of a local church, or must have attended a local church, regularly, for at least six months.
- Doors are never to be locked and are to remain open unless equipped with windows. If possible, Staff person and Volunteers will avoid being alone with a Vulnerable Person without being visible to others in immediate surroundings. For the first home visit there will be a two person rule that applies and then once approved the Minister/or Volunteer can go alone.
- All staff Persons and Volunteers will be required to read and sign that they understand the above guidelines for working with Vulnerable Adults.

Guidelines for Volunteer and Staff Persons working with Elderly Persons and Vulnerable Adults (Part 2)

- Appropriate training, including training for dealing with special-needs children and adults will be conducted and verified for Volunteer or Staff Person, who intends to work with Vulnerable Adults. Retraining to be conducted annually and verified.
- Resource materials to assist with training and retraining shall be maintained by We Care Staff. Please ask for help if you are finding it to be difficult.



Thank you for participating in our
We Care Safe Sanctuary!