

SHENANDOAH PRESBYTERY ~ CHILD, YOUTH, and VULNERABLE ADULT PROTECTION POLICY
Adopted February 23, 2019

... "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth; anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them. Mark 10: 14-16.

A Vision for Children and the Church

Because we affirm that all children are a gift of God, created by God and created good;
all children are a gift to the whole of the human community;
all children have a real faith, and gifts for ministry;
all children have the right to be children;
and all children are not just tomorrow, they are today.

Because we believe that all children depend upon adults for safety and security
in a world that does not always value children;
all children are affected first and most deeply by those things that work against health
and wholeness:
where there is disease, children sicken and die;
where there is homelessness, children sleep on the streets and in other dangerous places;
where there is war, children are frightened and without a safe place;
where the air and water are polluted, children feel the effect in their bodies and in their
futures;
where there is shame, children's spirits are wounded.

Therefore we hope for a world where all children can find a safe place;
where all ages, races, genders, creeds, and abilities are recognized, valued, and
celebrated;
where all adults hear the voices of children and speak with as well as for them;
where all children have "first call" on the world's resources and first place in the minds
and hearts of the world's adults.

Because Jesus welcomed children and encouraged us to welcome them in his name;
Jesus lifted up a child as an example of what the realm of God is like;

Therefore we hope for a church
where we take seriously our baptismal vow to nurture all children committed to our care;
where we bring good news to all those places where children are in need;
where adults and children alike share in ministry.

We covenant to act so that this vision may be made real for all children, now and in times to come.

Adopted by the 205th General Assembly, 1993

Preamble

Because we believe that children are a gift of God as demonstrated by Jesus welcoming them; because we believe in the *Vision for Children* adopted by the 205th General Assembly; and because we are called, as God's people to nurture, love, and care for our children, and youth, and vulnerable adults, Shenandoah Presbytery has adopted the following policy to provide a safe place for these children, youth, and including vulnerable adults to experience the kingdom of God.

Rationale for the Policy

We believe implementing a Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy will reduce the risk of any form of abuse and/or neglect:

- because children, youth, and vulnerable adults are gifts from God, and our Presbytery has a responsibility to provide for their safety and nurturing; the Church at all levels and in all times should be a place of safety which represents the arms of Christ;
- because any type of abuse or neglect of children, youth, and vulnerable adults has devastating effects on the lives of victims, and the Presbytery is called to be a life-giving representative of Christ's healing and hope for community, not a source of harm, hurt, or neglect;
- because the larger Church suffers along with victims/survivors of abuse; Shenandoah Presbytery can be crippled by the pain involved in having both victims and perpetrators;
- because the Church has promised through the Book of Order to nurture and care for children, youth, and adults through its baptismal commitment to these individuals;
- because the Church, as the body of Christ, represents Christ's love, and his taking up of the children and youth into his arms and blessing them, embodies in every way a safe environment in which to grow.

Purpose

This policy is designed to reduce the risk of child, youth, and vulnerable abuse in any form in order to:

- Provide a safe and secure environment for children, youth, adults, members, volunteers, visitors, and paid staff.
- Assist Shenandoah Presbytery in evaluating an individual's suitability to supervise, oversee, and/or exert control over the activities of children, youth, and vulnerable adults.
- Satisfy the concerns of parents and staff members with a screening process for paid staff and volunteers.
- Provide a system to respond to alleged victims of sexual abuse and their families, as well as to the alleged perpetrator.
- Protect staff and volunteers from the possibility of false accusations of sexual abuse.

Definitions

Children/Youth/Vulnerable Adults

In discussing abused or neglected children, Virginia Code Section 63.2-100 defines child as a person younger than age 18. Adults are defined as those persons who have reached their eighteenth birthday. Below is a comprehensive list of definitions of terms and their intended use in this particular policy:

Child/Youth: any person who has not reached their eighteenth birthday as defined by State Code.

Adult: any person who has attained their eighteenth birthday.

Vulnerable Adult: Any person eighteen-years-old or older without the developmental or cognitive capacity to consent.

To Whom Policy Applies

Paid Staff: All employees who are paid directly by Shenandoah Presbytery.

Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Worker: Any person, volunteer, paid staff person, or contractor, who is entrusted with the care and supervision of children, youth, or vulnerable adults and/or exerts control, oversight, or supervision over children, youth, or vulnerable adults or who participates in events/activities sponsored by Shenandoah Presbytery that involve children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults.

Types of Abuse

Vulnerable Adult Abuse: Any act or failure to act that results in the physical, sexual, psychological, or emotional mistreatment, neglect, or exploitation of a vulnerable adult.

Child/Youth Abuse: Any act or failure to act that results in the physical, sexual, psychological, or emotional mistreatment, neglect, or exploitation of a child, youth, and/or minor.

Sexual Abuse: “Sexual abuse of another person is any offense involving sexual conduct in relation to (1) any person under the age of eighteen years or anyone over the age of eighteen years without the mental capacity to consent; or (2) any person when the conduct includes force, threat, coercion, intimidation, or misuse of ordered ministry or position” (*Book of Order*, D-10.0401c).

Technology Abuse: The use of technology that results in the harassing or abusing of a child, youth, or vulnerable adult. This includes using technology to send suggestive message and images to a child, youth, or vulnerable adult. Staff, paid and volunteer workers should not have any technological contact with a child, youth, or vulnerable adult that is not preapproved by that person’s legal guardian with a signed waiver.

Presbytery Terminology

General Presbyter/Stated Clerk

Associate General Presbyter

CPA: Committee on Presbytery Administration

CER: Committee on Educational Resources

Safe Child Response Team: The Safe Child Response Team is comprised of a minimum of three (3) members including the Associate General Presbyter plus two or more members appointed by the CER who are specifically trained to respond to allegations and reports of child, youth, or vulnerable adult abuse at Shenandoah Presbytery-sponsored programs, activities, or events. This team must be readily available to be contacted and activated at all Shenandoah Presbytery sponsored events.

Sponsoring Program, Committee, or Entity: Any program or committee other than those cited above or other entity of Shenandoah Presbytery that is tasked with the responsibility of planning program, activities, and/or events that involve or are for children/youth/vulnerable adults.

Standards of Conduct

General

Paid and volunteer adults shall behave in a manner appropriate to protecting children/youth/minors and vulnerable adults and promoting their spiritual growth. Children, youth, and vulnerable adults shall be shown respect at all times. Paid or volunteer adults shall not touch or interact with children/youth/minors or vulnerable adults in any way that is sexually stimulating, emotionally demeaning, or exploitative.

Common expressions of affection or affirmation such as hugs and pats on the back, physical care giving such as changing diapers or giving first aid **are** appropriate in Presbytery-sponsored events/activities. Adults should take care that physical expressions of affirmation and affection are not excessive and are not imposed on a child/youth/minor or vulnerable adult without his or her consent.

In addition to being tasked with protecting these individuals' physical and emotional safety, paid and volunteer adults and youth working with children, youth, and vulnerable adults are also responsible for being aware of signs indicating neglect of these individuals' well-being.

Administration of Policy

The Committee on Educational Resources (CER) shall hold primary responsibility for implementation of the Child, Youth, and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy. The CER will ensure that:

- A policy statement is provided to and signed by all volunteers and employees participating in any Shenandoah Presbytery sponsored program, activity, or event involving children, youth, or vulnerable adults;
- In general, that volunteer applications will be accepted only after six months of an individual's active involvement as a member of a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregation in Shenandoah Presbytery;
- Exceptions to the volunteer application policy may be made by the CER to: a) cover short-term involvement in child/youth/vulnerable adult-care activities (Presbytery Meeting, other day-long sponsored events) where an authorized staff person may be paired with the short-term volunteer; or b) to cover a Presbytery-sponsored program, activity, or event where volunteers have had a background check within the last 3 years by the sponsoring church (see Permission to Notify Session for Safe Place Endorsement in the Appendix).
- Applications for volunteer positions are received by the Committee on Educational Resources (CER) for the specific program in which a volunteer wishes to participate. The CER may assign a sub-committee of its membership or administrative staff to review applications. The General Presbyter and/or the Associate General Presbyter will serve ex-officio with the sub-committee or provide oversight to administrative staff if either of these is the primary reviewer of applications.
- Perceived problems with specific applications will be communicated to applicants.

Implementation of Policy – Eligibility, Applications, Background Checks

Volunteer and Employee Screening Procedures

Any paid staff members and volunteers who will work with children, youth, or vulnerable adults must be screened. This screening for paid staff and volunteers includes the following considerations. In general, all *volunteers* in ongoing assignments in Shenandoah Presbytery shall have completed an approved Volunteer Application form [see Appendix for all applications].

Employment Application and Volunteer Application:

- Six Month Rule: no volunteer will be considered for any position involving contact with children, youth, and vulnerable adults until they have been involved with Shenandoah Presbytery for a minimum of six (6) months. This time of interaction between our leadership and the applicant allows for better evaluation and suitability of the applicant for working with children. The General Presbyter/Stated Clerk and Associate General Presbyter will be exempt from the six month rule.
- Written Application: all persons seeking to work with children, youth, and vulnerable adults must complete and sign a written application in a form to be supplied by the Presbytery. The application will request basic information from the applicant and will inquire into previous experience with children, previous church affiliation, reference and employment information, as well as disclosure of any previous criminal convictions. Applications include a statement, which the applicant should acknowledge in writing, certifying that statements provided in the application are true and complete, and any misrepresentation or omission may be grounds for rejection of the applicant or for dismissal if he or she is employed. This statement authorizes Shenandoah Presbytery to contact any individual or organization listed in the application. The application form will be maintained in confidence on file at the Shenandoah Presbytery offices.
- Personal Interview: upon completion of the application, a face-to-face interview may be scheduled with the applicant to discuss his/her suitability for the positions.
- Background Check: Shenandoah Presbytery will conduct a criminal background check on all paid staff and volunteers who are entrusted with the care and supervision of children, youth, or vulnerable adults and/or who directly oversee or exert control of these persons. All criminal background checks will be updated periodically. The procedure used for background checks shall follow the *Presbytery of Shenandoah Policy on Background Checks* approved August 26, 2017.
- Reference Checks: Before an applicant is permitted to work with children, youth, or vulnerable adults at least two of an applicant's references will be checked. These references should be of an institutional nature as opposed to personal or family references, preferably from organizations where the applicant has worked with children, youth, or vulnerable adults in the past.
- Screening Applications: The CER or sub-committee used for screening applications shall pay specific attention to any gaps in time and irregular employment patterns or unexplained absences and pursue these gaps with employers listed and in a subsequent interview. If detrimental information is uncovered but the applicant remains desirable, this information will be discussed with the applicant. In the event the applicant is ultimately hired or accepted as a volunteer, the CER will document the reasons for overriding the prior information. Whenever possible, Shenandoah Presbytery will ask the Associate Presbyter to participate in staff applicant/volunteer applicant interviews.
- Disqualification: No person may be entrusted with the care and supervision of children/youth/vulnerable adults or may directly oversee and/or exert control or oversight over same who has been convicted of the offenses outlined below, been on a probated sentence or received deferred adjudication for any offense outlined below, or has presently pending any criminal charges for any offense outlined below until a determination of guilt or innocence has been made, including any person who is presently on deferred adjudication: 1) any offense against a child/youth/vulnerable adult as define by Code of Virginia/West Virginia; 2) a misdemeanor or felony offense as defined by the Code of Virginia/West Virginia classified as sexual assault, indecency, assault of or injury to a child/youth/vulnerable adult, abandoning or endangering any

such individual, sexual performance with a child/youth/vulnerable adult, possession or promoting child pornography, enticing a child/youth or vulnerable adult, bigamy, incest, drug related offenses, or family violence, or, 3) a prior criminal history of an offense against a child/youth/vulnerable adult.

- Signing of Policy and Application to Serve: Each adult engaged in the leadership of a Shenandoah Presbytery-sponsored event, program, or activity shall acknowledge receipt of the Shenandoah Presbytery Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and its procedures by signing an application to be employed, volunteer, or supervise. In addition, each person engaged in the leadership of a Shenandoah Presbytery-sponsored event, program, or activity shall consent to all comprehensive background checks required and shall comply with any consequences of a reported violation of this policy.
- Two Adult Rule: It is Shenandoah Presbytery's goal that a minimum of two unrelated adult workers will be in attendance at all times when children, youth, or vulnerable adults are being supervised during sponsored programs and activities. Some youth activities may have only one adult teacher in attendance during a class session; in these instances, doors to the activity location should remain open, and there should be no fewer than three students with the adult teacher. Children, youth, or vulnerable adults should not be alone with one adult during a sponsored program or activity unless there is a specific counseling situation. The adult to child ratio for all child-related events/activities is 2:10. The adult to youth ratio for all youth-related events/activities is 2:17. Within these ratios, adults shall represent the genders of the minors. Only in emergency situations may the ratios and gender diversity be compromised.
- Confidentiality: Information obtained through screening, application, reference check, interview, and criminal background check will be maintained in confidence, unless otherwise required by law. The Presbytery shall be responsible for maintaining and retaining all records and reports used for hiring and also related to alleged incidents of abuse and background checks for all individuals for whom these are received for a period of twenty (20) years. All information discovered or obtained through the above-referenced means will be kept in a secure location in the Presbytery office with restricted access.
- Acknowledgement of Responsibility: Each adult engaged in the leadership of a Shenandoah Presbytery-sponsored event, program, or activity shall acknowledge receipt of the Shenandoah Presbytery Child, Youth, and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and its procedures by signing an application to be employed, volunteer, or supervise. In addition, each person engaged in the leadership of a Shenandoah Presbytery-sponsored event, program, or activity shall consent to all comprehensive background checks required and shall comply with any consequences of a reported violation of this policy.
- Training: Presbytery shall offer an annual training, with supplemental training as necessary, for all paid and volunteer leadership in Shenandoah Presbytery churches. Where at all possible, all child/youth/vulnerable adult workers, paid, contracted, or volunteer, should participate in training sometime within the year prior to a Presbytery sponsored program, activity or event. The training may be provided by the sponsoring leadership of the specific program, activity, or event (e.g. church, mission group) and shall cover the child/youth/vulnerable protection policy thoroughly as well as methods of abuse prevention and a detailed plan of reporting. The sponsoring council or entity may contract with others to provide these trainings.
- Teenage Workers: Shenandoah presbytery recognizes that there may be times when it is necessary or desirable for babysitters (paid or volunteer) who are under the age of 18 to assist with caring for children during Presbytery-sponsored programs, events, or activities. The following guidelines apply to teenage workers: 1) they must be at least age 14, 2) they must be screened as specified above, and, 3) they must be under the supervision of an adult and never be left alone with children.

- Transportation for Presbytery Sponsored Programs, Events, Activities: Leaders for all Presbytery-sponsored programs, events, and activities will obtain written parental permission, including a signed medical treatment form and emergency contacts, before taking minors on trips and should provide information regarding the trip. All adult drivers at child/youth/vulnerable adult events must have proper licensure and insurance on file with the organizing group. All vehicles used must have seat belts for the driver and each passenger. No minor under eighty-five pounds may sit in the front seat of any vehicle. All drivers transporting minors and vulnerable adults must be over the age of twenty-five and must be informed that if their vehicle is used, their insurance would be primary if an accident occurs. If a charter bus is rented, or any outside carrier is contracted, the company hired must ensure criminal background checks on their drivers. Each vehicle must follow the ratio rules noted in the two-adult rule in this section. Lastly, no minor may be a driver at any program, event, or activity (this includes golf carts at events).

Procedures for Handling Misconduct Allegations

Shenandoah Presbytery will respond promptly to investigate any allegation of sexual abuse or neglect that is alleged to have occurred at any Shenandoah Presbytery-sponsored event, program, or activity. All allegations will be taken seriously. It is important to be appropriately respectful to the needs and feelings of those who allege sexual abuse and those who have been accused of sexual abuse. The following procedure shall be followed:

1. All allegations of abuse against ordained Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Ruling Elders shall be reported to the Stated Clerk. The Discipline section of the Book of Order and Presbytery Policy regarding these matters shall be followed. (See Shenandoah Presbytery Sexual Misconduct Policy.) Reports against non-ordained Presbytery staff and any volunteers shall be reported to the Associate General Presbyter;
2. The parent(s) or guardian(s) of the child, youth, or vulnerable adult involved will be notified by the Associate Executive Presbyter;
3. Any non-ordained staff worker/volunteer alleged to be the perpetrator of the abuse or misconduct will immediately be placed on leave from working with children, youth, or vulnerable adults pending an investigation and instructed to remain away from work premises during the investigation into the alleged abuse;
4. Civil authorities will be notified, and Shenandoah Presbytery will comply with the Commonwealth/State's requirements regarding mandatory reporting of abuse as the law then exists, and the Book of Order. Shenandoah Presbytery will fully cooperate with the confidential investigation of the incident by civil and/or criminal authorities. The church of both the victim reporting the abuse and the alleged perpetrator will be notified of the incident by the Associate General Presbyter.
5. Presbytery's insurance company will be notified, and an incident report will be filed. Any documents received relating to the incident and/or allegations will immediately be forwarded to the insurance company;
6. The Associate General Presbyter will be Presbytery's spokesperson to the media concerning incidents of abuse or neglect, unless he or she is alleged to be involved. We will seek the advice of legal counsel before responding to media inquiries or releasing information to the Presbytery. All other representatives of the Presbytery should refrain from speaking to the media;
7. A representative of Shenandoah Presbytery will reach out with a pastoral visit to any persons involved in the alleged incident who desire it;
8. An official of Shenandoah Presbytery along with legal counsel(s) and/or other consultants may, when appropriate, meet with the alleged perpetrator, the alleged victim, and any others with knowledge of relevant facts regarding the alleged incident.

9. Following the official investigation of a complaint against a non-ordained Presbytery staff or volunteer, the Stated Clerk and the Associate Presbyter, will, as appropriate, meet with legal counsel(s) and/or other consultants and inform the Presbytery that an allegation has been made and that our policies have been followed.
10. An official of Shenandoah Presbytery will meet with the alleged perpetrator and notify him/her of the results of the investigation and recommendations for actions.
11. An official of Shenandoah Presbytery will meet with the alleged victim, along with his/her parents or guardian(s) and notify them of the results of the investigation and recommendations for actions.
12. Any person who is *not* found innocent of the alleged abuse or misconduct will be removed from his/her position working with children, youth, or vulnerable adults.
13. Throughout the investigation, an official of Shenandoah Presbytery shall maintain contact with the alleged victim and his/her parent(s) or legal guardian(s), and inform them of the actions taken and assist them in the process of healing.

Presbytery Responsibility for Awareness and Communication of the Policy

Shenandoah Presbytery shall widely disseminate the Child, Youth, and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy to its membership through multiple means: web site, newsletter, special announcements, training classes, new employee/volunteer materials, administrative manual and other sources. Presbytery committees may be given responsibility for specific aspects of awareness and communication of this policy.

Further, Shenandoah Presbytery will publicize this policy including the procedure for reporting any prohibited actions and have copies available at all times in a public place at sponsored programs, activities, or events so that anyone suspecting or having knowledge of a violation of child, youth, or vulnerable adult abuse may report such violation to any leader of a Presbytery sponsored program, activity, or event. Any child or youth who suspects or has knowledge of any type of child, youth, or vulnerable adult abuse is invited to share the knowledge with any adult leader of the Presbytery sponsored program, activity, or event. Anyone who has knowledge or suspicion of child/youth abuse should be made aware that state law requires the immediate reporting of such abuse to the civil authorities. Any adult leader should report such violation to the General Presbyter/Stated Clerk, Associate General Presbyter, or any other leader designated with oversight for the sponsored program, activity, or event. Any person receiving information under this paragraph shall share that information immediately with the designated persons cited above.

Social Media—Electronic Communications

General Social Media Policy

No minister, employee, contractor, or volunteer of Shenandoah Presbytery or any sponsoring programs, committees, or other entities shall create or use a media site (Web, Facebook, YouTube, or similar) in the name of or purporting to represent Shenandoah Presbytery without the explicit written permission of the General Presbyter/Stated Clerk. When clergy or staff, acting in their capacity as a representative of Shenandoah Presbytery or its entities, lead or coordinate a program, activity, or event using social media, each may use only official Shenandoah Presbytery sites/channels when they have been made available by Shenandoah Presbytery. These may include Web pages, Facebook, e-mail, and similar means.

Persons who create public pages on behalf of Shenandoah Presbytery programs, events, and activities are responsible to monitor communications and to assure that employees and volunteers do not have private (and possibly inappropriate) conversations with children, youth, and vulnerable adults.

Shenandoah Presbytery has a Facebook link for its web site; the administrator for that fb page shall, on behalf of the Presbytery shall treat unsolicited communication or “friending” from children or youth under age as an unauthorized text message.

If any child, youth, or vulnerable adult reveals abuse or inappropriate interactions with an adult, that person must report this information in the manner of any “suspected abuse” according to this policy’s Procedures for Handling Misconduct Allegations.

All Presbytery-sponsored program, activity, or event communication on social media platforms with children or youth shall be for the purposes of scheduling, advertising, promoting and reporting of events. Any and all communication shall follow the Social Networking Code of Conduct found below.

Social Networking Code of Conduct

Each person who assumes leadership or supervision of use of resources of social media for Shenandoah Presbytery sponsored programs, activities, or events shall apply this Social Networking Code of Conduct:

- Prohibit comments that are, or could be construed by any observer, to be harsh, coercive, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating.
- Prohibit sexually oriented conversations or discussions about sexual activities.
- Private messages between employees and volunteers and children or youth shall reflect the ratios of adult/youth listed above.
- Prohibit posting inappropriate pictures (for example, sexually suggestive, exploitive, or voyeuristic) or inappropriate comments on pictures.
- Provide children, youth, and their parents with this Social Networking Code of Conduct.
- Encourage parents to play a role in monitoring their children’s and youth interactions with employees and volunteers.
- Continuously remind children and youth how to interact appropriately through social networking sites.
- Deny participation by individuals who repeatedly violate the code of conduct.

Any person who assumes leadership or supervision of a Shenandoah Presbytery sponsored program, activity, or event, shall present this Social Networking Code of Conduct to children or youth and parents/guardians.

Annual Evaluation of Policy and Training

The Committee on Educational Resources (CER) shall ensure that there is annual review of the Child, Youth, and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and that necessary changes are made as needed.

APPENDICES

Shenandoah Presbytery
CONFIDENTIAL
Children/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Work Application
Volunteers and Employees

Form date: _____

PERSONAL

Name: _____

Daytime Telephone _____

Address _____
Street city zip code

In which Children/Youth or Vulnerable Adult Program (s) are you seeking to become involved?

What skills or interests would you bring to the Children/Youth/Vulnerable program?

What experience with children/youth have you had the in last 5 years?
Organization Program Dates contact (include phone number)

Organization Program Dates contact (include phone number)

Have you at any time ever:

1 Been arrested for any reason ___yes ___no

1 Been convicted of, or pleaded no contest to, any crime involving children? ___yes ___no

1 Been convicted of, pleaded no contest to, a moving violation in the last 3 years? ___yes ___no

1 Engaged in, or been accused of, any act of child molestation, exploitation, abuse or neglect? ___yes ___no

Are you aware of:

1 Having any traits or tendencies that could pose a threat to children, youth or others? ___yes ___no

1 Any reason why you should not work with children, youth or others? ___yes ___no

If the answer to any of these questions is yes, please explain in detail on an attached sheet.

Church Activity

What church or churches have you regularly attended in the past 5 years?

Church name Pastor's name/ phone number Years attended

References (other than family members)

Name/ Relationship Address Phone

1 _____

2 _____

Applicant verification and release:

I recognize that Shenandoah Presbytery is relying upon the accuracy of the information contained herein. Accordingly, I attest and affirm that all the information that I have provided is completely true and correct.

I authorize Shenandoah Presbytery to contact any person or entity listed in this application, and I further authorize any such person or entity to provide Shenandoah Presbytery with information, opinions, and impressions relating to my background or qualifications.

I further authorize Shenandoah Presbytery to conduct a criminal background investigation and /or child/adult abuse investigation if the check is deemed necessary.

I voluntarily release Shenandoah Presbytery any such organization or entity listed herein by me from liability involving the communication of information relating to my background or qualifications.

I have carefully read the Shenandoah Presbytery **CHILD, YOUTH, and VULNERABLE ADULT PROTECTION POLICY**, and agree to abide by this policy.

Signature _____ Date _____

Witness _____ Date _____

PERMISSION TO REQUEST FROM SESSION – Background Check at Church Level

I, _____ (print complete name), hereby authorize Shenandoah Presbytery to contact my church for signed and witnessed affirmation that _____ Presbyterian Church has completed a background check in the past three (3) years and authorized me to be in ministry with children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults in my congregation. I release Shenandoah Presbytery and any person or entity, which provides information pursuant to this authorization, from any and all liabilities, claims, or lawsuits in regards to the information obtained from any and all of the above referenced sources used.

The following is my true and complete legal name, and all information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

RESOURCES CONSULTED

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and its Procedures.
oga.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/oga/docs/pcusa_cpp.doc

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.) - CHILD/YOUTH/VULNERABLE - ADULT PROTECTION POLICY

AND ITS PROCEDURES *Approved*

http://oga.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/oga/pdf/child_protection_policy_final.pdf

A Vision for Children and the Church PC (U.S.A.) https://www.presbyterianmission.org/wp-content/uploads/A_vision_for_children_and_the_church.pdf

Book of Order 2017-2019, The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Part II, Office of the General Assembly.

Child and Youth Abuse Prevention Program & Social Media Code of Conduct for the Presbytery of the Peaks - Adopted by Presbytery of the Peaks, February 13, 2016

<https://www.peakspresbytery.org/index.php/resources-presbyterian-churches-congregations-worship-virginia/forms/21-resources/210-sexual-misconduct-policies>

Child Protection and Sexual Misconduct Policies, Resources on Child Protection Policies; National Capitol Presbytery; <https://www.thepresbytery.org/documents/child-protection-policies>

Albany Presbytery Child Protection Policy (New York) – Approved by Presbytery Council on April 12, 2016.

<http://albanypresbytery.myworshiptimes31.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2016/09/Albany-Presbytery-Child-Protection-Policy-2016.pdf>

Bill Tracking 2018 Legislative Session: HB 1494 Suspected adult abuse, neglect, or exploitation; mandated reporting, vulnerable adults; ...the bill also directs the Department of Social Services to develop a definition of "vulnerable adult" and to report its recommendation regarding such definition to the Chairmen of the House Committee on Health, Welfare and Institutions and the Senate Committee on Rehabilitation and Social Services by December 1, 2018. Except for the reporting requirement, the bill has a delayed effective date of July 1, 2019; <http://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?181+sum+HB1494>

Presbytery of the James and Richmond First Presbyterian Church;

https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/739648_82eb3822cd11493abd23affae6be6345.pdf