

Mountain View Presbyterian Church

Addendum: Child, Youth, and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy

Purpose: To maintain the strongest sense of integrity, safety, nurturing, and care involving all interactions with children, youth, and vulnerable adults. And to establish proper preventative measures to protect individuals against sexual misconduct as well as to specify courses of action in the case of allegations of sexual misconduct is alleged.

Standard of Conduct: All workers, volunteers, paid, full-time and part-time, of Mountain View Presbyterian Church are expected to comply with the established policy on Child, Youth, and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy. Any actions contrary to the church policy will be dealt with swiftly and may include disciplinary measures up to and including termination, as well as legal ramifications when applicable.

Distribution: This policy shall be provided to person who believe they have been sexually harassed or abused. Copies of this policy shall be available through all staff and maintained in the church office.

Definitions: The following is a comprehensive list of definitions of terms and their intended use in this policy. For purposes of this policy:

Child: A child is a person between the ages of 0 – 11 (5th grade).

Youth: A youth is a person between the ages of 12 – 17 (6th – 12th grade).

Minor: A minor is any child or youth.

Child/Youth Worker: Any person, volunteer or paid staff or contractor, who participates at any level with Mountain View Presbyterian Church sponsored events or activities involving children and/or youth defined in the Program Staffing Requirement Policy.

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

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

Sexual Abuse: Is defined as 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)

Misuse of technology: The use of technology that results in the harassing or abusing of a child/youth. This includes using technology to send suggestive message or images to or of a child or youth. Adults should not have any technological contact with a child or youth that is not either preapproved by the child/youth's legal guardian with a signed waiver, or the contact is on an open public medium, such as a church website or other social media program.

Mandatory Reporter: According to Washington State law any allegation of sexual activity with a child or vulnerable adult must be reported to Child Protective Services.

Screening, Training and Background Checks: The following is required for every child/youth worker, whether on a paid staff, contractor, or volunteer basis:

1. The Church must receive completed, signed, and approved application and background check authorization forms, including a signed form verifying the event policy has been read. The application should include a minimum of two references.
2. All child/youth workers must be at least twenty-years-old and four years older than the oldest youth whom they are serving. Exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Pastor.
3. The applicant must consent to a criminal background check. These checks shall be run no more than six months prior to the event and/or comply with insurance company standards. Child/Youth workers who participate annually in events may only be required to have one background check per calendar year.
4. All staff, workers, volunteers, paid, full-time and part-time, will be interviewed by an authority within the program and/or service that is recruiting.
5. All staff, workers, volunteers, paid, full-time and part-time, will provide a valid form of ID (i.e., state driver's license, social security card, or other acceptable form of ID).
6. All child/youth workers, paid, contracted, or volunteer, must participate in training sometime within the year prior to the event. The training is to be provided by church staff and shall cover the event child/youth protection policy thoroughly as well as methods of abuse prevention and a detailed plan of reporting. The Church may contract with others to provide these trainings.
7. No person may serve as a child/youth worker who has a conviction on his/her record of certain felonies or misdemeanors, including, but not limited to, any of the following:

- Criminal homicide;
- Aggravated assault;
- Crimes related to the possession, use, or sale of drugs or controlled substances
- Sexual abuse;
- Sexual assault;
- Injury to a youth;
- Incest;
- Indecency with a youth;
- Inducing sexual conduct or sexual performance of a youth;
- Possession or promotion of child pornography;
- The sale, distribution, or display of harmful material to a minor;
- Employment harmful to youth;
- Abandonment or endangerment of a youth;
- Kidnapping or unlawful restraint;
- Public lewdness or indecent exposure; and enticement of a youth;
- Any crime that involves sexual misconduct or sexual purposes, such as collecting or distributing photographs of minors who are naked or in sexual or inappropriate poses (child pornography);
- Any crime that involves the use of force, such as assault or endangerment;
- Any crime that involves abduction and kidnapping;
- Any crime that involves drinking and driving; such as driving while intoxicated.

In addition, if the Church or a local congregation is aware that a child/youth worker has a prior conviction for one of the aforementioned crimes or related crime, the child/youth worker shall be ineligible to attend a child/youth event in any capacity unless given specific permission from the Pastor following the recommendation of the Personnel Committee.

Community Events: Whenever the Church organizes an event for minors that invites minors from local congregations who will be supervised by child/youth workers, the Supervisor shall:

1. Provide guidance to the congregations that are sending child/youth workers about best practices for securing child/youth workers and eligibilities requirements.
2. Provide guidance to the congregations that are sending child/youth workers concerning the requirement for completed background checks and disqualifications before events.

3. Assign and train staff on background checks:
 - a. Review every background check received;
 - b. Identify criminal conviction that should disqualify a person from being a child/youth worker;
 - c. Notify the event Supervisor if staff determine potential disqualifying information.
 - d. Event Supervisor shall notify the applicant that they have not qualified as a child/youth worker.

Mandatory Event Rules and Procedures

1. The Church requires badges, ID and/or a method to sign children in and out of events.
2. All staff, workers and volunteers are responsible to address suspicious behavior or any behavior that may be contrary to church policy and to document and report such occurrences to the church staff immediately.

Mountain View Presbyterian Church shall ensure that the following measures will be in place and actions taken for each event or activity involving children and youth: Two-adult rules: Two non-related adults must always be present in groups of children and youth. The only exception is if an emergency situation deems this not immediately possible or the program is individualized (i.e., Confirmation) and authorized by staff. All children and youth workers and volunteers must be a minimum of four years older than the age group the lead or supervise.

Mountain View Presbyterian Church has a goal to maintain the following ratio of ministry workers to children. These ratios are minimum goals. The church recognizes in some circumstances these ratios may not be feasible, such as an unexpected increase in the number of children/youths attending an event or parents dropping off children early or not picking them up timely. No children (ages infant – 5th grade), however, should ever be left in a room without supervision of a ministry worker. If there is one worker present in a space, there should be at least three children/youth and the “Floater rule” and “Doors and Windows” policies are to be followed. Additionally, one worker should avoid being alone with more than half the ratio of children below. When the number exceeds the below ratio by 5, one extra worker will be added whenever possible.

Program	Worker	Child/Youth
Mixed Age program ages 3+	2	8
Mixed Age program ages 5 - 15	2	14
Praise and Promise Preschool	2	20

1. View Windows and Open Doors: When minors and adult workers or volunteers are in a room, if the door is closed, the door must have a view window installed. If no view window is installed in the door, the door must remain open at all times. If event is held at a host site, such as Tall Timber Ranch or Campbell Farm, the host site’s policy for view windows and open doors shall take priority because they know how best to keep youth and vulnerable adults safe in their facilities.
2. Floater Rule: This rule allows for one primary or secondary worker to be in a classroom when there is another approved primary worker floating through the building regularly. When using this rule, the classroom door must remain open at all times.
3. Adult worker/caregivers should respect the privacy of the children to whom they provide care. Responsible use of digital devices and cell phones is required in all situations.
4. Age-appropriate training to children and youth should be provided regarding behavior that should be reported to caregiver or leader of the event.
5. Transportation: All adult drivers at child/youth events must have proper licensure and insurance on file with the Church. All vehicles used must have seat belts for the driver and each passenger. Minors who may sit in the front seat of any vehicle must conform to the legal rules set the Washington state law. All drivers transporting minor and vulnerable adult 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 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 legal ratio rules. Lastly, no minor may be a driver at any event or activity (this includes golf carts at events).
6. Forms: The legal guardians of each minor must provide the appropriate information and medical forms for each activity/event (primarily off-campus). The information form should include all contacts for the legal guardians and the medical form must include a copy of the minor’s health insurance card. Any event photos with child/youth that are used in social media or published material by the church must be released by a signed consent form from

participant's legal guardian as well as the minor. All such forms must be stored confidentially in the church office.

7. Each event/activity must ensure that rules are gone over with participants at each event/activity. These rules shall include but are not limited to a code of conduct specific to the event/activity, as well as a list prohibited and expected behaviors for specific event/activity. The code of conduct and prohibited and expected behaviors list should be given in written form to each participant and legal guardian, as well as discussed thoroughly at the beginning of the event/activity.
8. All volunteers and employees at any church sponsored events must also abide by a code of conduct that emphasizes the following prohibited behaviors. Some of these prohibited behaviors include but are not restricted to:
 1. Display of sexual affection toward a child.
 2. Use of profanity or off-color jokes.
 3. Discussion of personal sexual encounters with or around children or in any way involving children in personal problems or issues.
 4. Dating or becoming "romantically" involved with children (under the age of eighteen).
 5. Using or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs in the presence of children.
 6. Possessing and/or viewing of sexually oriented materials – including printed or online pornography – on church property or property being utilized for a church event.
 7. Having secrets with youth/children.
 8. Staring at or commenting on children's bodies.
 9. Engaging in inappropriate or unapproved electronic communication with children.
 10. Working one-on-one with children in a private setting.
 11. Abusing youth/children in anyway, including (but not limited to) the following:
 - i. Physical abuse: hit, spank, shake, slap, unnecessarily restraint.
 - ii. Verbal abuse: degrade, threaten, or curse.
 - iii. Sexual abuse: inappropriately touch, expose oneself, or engage in sexually oriented conversations.
 - iv. Mental abuse: shame, humiliate, act cruelly.
 - v. Neglect: withhold food, water, shelter.
 - vi. Permit children or youth to engage in the following: hazing, derogatory name-calling; ridicule, humiliation, or sexual activity.

Safe Child/Vulnerable Adult Reporting Response

The Pastor/designee will familiarize themselves with the terms of this policy as well as established procedures under the Rules of Discipline, Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for responding to complaint(s) of alleged child/youth abuse against any teaching elder, ruling elder, employee, or volunteer in a leadership position(s) with the sponsoring entity and any events they may sponsor.

The Pastor and/or designee shall have the following responsibilities in response to allegations of child/youth or vulnerable adult abuse or neglect incurred against any child/youth worker or event participant:

1. Immediately provide for the safety of the alleged victim(s) involved.
2. If the report alleges abuse or harassment of a minor, the Pastor/designee will:
 - a. immediately ensures the allegation is reported to the civil authorities under state law;
 - b. immediately notify the parents or guardian of the minor;
3. Make immediate decisions concerning the temporary removal of the individual accused from any contact with children or youth pending an investigation and/or removal of the accused from the event until a resolution of the allegations has occurred.
4. Notify designated people at the church immediately of the report of alleged abuse/neglect. Any possible media requests will be handled by a designated person or office with advice from an attorney as necessary, taking care to safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of all involved.
5. Consult the presbytery about resources available for victims of the alleged abuse prior to each event and have those resources readily available at every event. This will provide victims and their families' immediate resources that may aid in the particular spiritual, psychological, or emotional needs and trauma that arise from the devastation of abuse.
6. Provide pastoral counseling for the principal parties involved (accuser(s), possible victim(s), accused, family members).
7. A written summary of any proceedings in such cases will be maintained by the church.

8. Any person bringing a report of abuse or assisting in investigating will not be adversely affected in terms and conditions of employment, church membership or affiliation, or otherwise discriminated against or discharged.

Confidentiality of Records

Mountain View Presbyterian Church shall maintain all child/youth worker applications, results of background checks, and related information in confidential, secured files.

Receipt and Acceptance of Mountain View Presbyterian Church Policies:

I hereby certify that I, _____, have received a copy of the Sexual Misconduct Policy & Procedures as well as Child, Youth and Vulnerable Adults for Mountain View Presbyterian Church; and that I have read and understand them. I further understand that the policies in the sexual misconduct policy document are the procedures that will be followed in any accusation of sexual misconduct on the part of any clergy person, employee, or volunteer of the church.

Signature _____ Date _____