Policy for the Protection of Children and Youth: Diocese of Ohio

(Approved by Diocesan Council 9/12/2026)

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I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of these policies (based on Model Policies approved by The Episcopal Church on November 28, 2017) is to create safe and welcoming space for all children and youth in our communities and for those engaged in ministry with children and youth, to prevent sexual abuse and to foster the highest standards of behavior in ministry settings. These policies will govern all ministries with children and youth at Diocesan sponsored events and activities effective June 12, 2019.

II. DEFINITIONS

NOTE: These definitions reflect our understanding of terms describing gender identity and sexuality, which are evolving.

Adult: Anyone who is 18 years or older and not in high school.

Bullying: Behavior that intimidates, humiliates, offends, degrades, or harms another person, whether verbal, psychological, social, physical, or otherwise.

Chaperone: An adult participating in the event who helps provide safety and well-being of participants accountable to supervisor.

Child: Anyone under the age of 12 years.

Child Protective Services: A social services program provided by state and local governments serving children and their families who are in need of assistance. Child Protective Services receive and investigate reports of suspected abuse, neglect, and exploitation. The number to use in the State of Ohio is 855-642-4453.

Cisgender: An adjective describing a person whose sense of personal identity and gender corresponds with their gender or sex assigned at birth. This is an evolving term, as our understanding and language around gender identity and sexuality expands and matures.

Gender Non-Binary: An umbrella term for people who identify their gender as neither male nor female. These people might identify as both ("bigender"), neither ("agender"), a mix between the two ("genderfluid"), or they can be unsure of their gender ("genderqueer"). This is an evolving term, as our understanding and language around gender identity and sexuality expands and matures.

Intake Officer: The person(s) designated by each diocese to receive information regarding an offense for which a member of the clergy may be held accountable under *Title IV of the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church,* which sets out the disciplinary process for clergy. Anyone may contact an Intake Officer to report concerns.

The Intake Officers for the Diocese of Ohio are Ms. Wilma Beaty, (intakeofficer2@dohio.org), The Rev. Charlotte Collins Reed (intakeofficer3@dohio.org), and Mr. Richard Sippola (intakeofficer4@dohio.org).

Leader: A person, adult or youth, who, for the benefit of another, engages in ministry without responsibility for oversight of others engaged in that same ministry. Examples include Sunday school teachers, camp counselors, and program team. A Leader is accountable to the Supervisor.

LGBTQ+: An acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, and others. It refers to people whose gender identities vary from their gender or sex assigned at birth, or whose sexual orientations differ from the heterosexual majority. The "+" is an effort to include additional gender identities. This is an evolving term, as our understanding and language around gender identity and sexuality expands and matures.

Mandated Reporter: A person who is required by state law to report reasonable suspicions of abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation of vulnerable populations to the appropriate state agency. Ohio State Law requires those who work in an official or professional capacity with minors (under 18) or with individuals with developmental disabilities of physical impairments (under 21) to immediately report their suspicions to the appropriate Children Services Agency.

The Episcopal Diocese of Ohio has designated that any and all persons working with children or youth are classified as Mandated Reporters and must follow the protocols set forth by the State of Ohio for reporting child abuse or neglect.

Neurodivergent: An umbrella term for people whose brains process, learn, or behave differently than the societal baseline or "neurotypical" norm. Common examples include Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Dyslexia, and Tourette Syndrome.

Off-Site: Any location other than the sponsoring Episcopal Church, institution, facility, or campus.

Organizations: All institutions for which the diocese or congregations have legal or fiduciary responsibility (examples: diocesan departments, commissions, conference & retreat centers, adult day care centers, retirement communities, religious orders, congregations, schools, etc.).

Overnight: Any event that starts on one calendar day and ends on a different calendar day.

Pastoral Relationship: Any relationship (1) between a Member of the Clergy and any person to whom the Member of the Clergy provides or has provided counseling pastoral care, spiritual direction or spiritual guidance, or from whom such Member of the Clergy has received information within the Rite of Reconciliation of a Penitent, or (2) between a lay minister and any person to whom the lay minister is offering prayer, ministry, and/or any person from whom the lay minister has received sensitive, personal, or confidential information in the course of offering ministry.

Programs: Official activities and programs sponsored by The Episcopal Church and its provinces, dioceses, and congregations (examples include: The Episcopal Youth Event, Provincial Youth Events, Happening, Teens Encounter Christ, pilgrimages, mission experiences, New Beginnings, camp programs. Acolyte Festival, etc.).

Public Records Check: A search of documents and data available to the public including criminal and civil court records, credit reports, and driving records from the department of motor vehicles. Typically, such searches are conducted by a third party with expertise in this area.

Responsible Person: The person designated as being accountable for compliance with this policy for an event or program.

Sacramental Use: Consecrated or unconsecrated wine used in the setting of Eucharist

Sexual misconduct: A broad term encompassing any behavior of a sexual nature that is committed without consent or capacity for consent or by force, intimidation, coercion, or manipulation. Sexual misconduct can be committed by a person of any gender, and it can occur between people of the same or different gender.

Supervisor: A person who has oversight responsibilities for a ministry program and/or Leaders in a ministry program.

Title IV: A section of the *Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church* pertaining to clergy professional standards, accountability and ecclesiastical discipline.

Transgender: An adjective describing a person whose sense of personal identity and gender does not correspond with the gender or sex assigned to them at birth. This is an evolving term, as our understanding and language around gender identity and sexuality expands and matures.

Training: Organized activity designed to provide information and/or instructions to strengthen and enhance the recipient's understanding, capacity, and exercise of ministry.

III. APPLICATION AND SCREENING

The Diocese will screen all persons according to the standards in the *Screening and Training Protocols* (Appendix A). For some positions, screening consists only of a Public Records Check.

A. Public Records Checks

- The Diocese will conduct public records checks before adult volunteers begin interacting with children and youth at diocesan events and activities;
- Criminal Public Records checks shall include all available criminal records and sex offender registries;
- A Bureau of Motor Vehicles records check is needed if transporting children or youth as part of a diocesan sponsored event.

Public records checks must be updated at least every 5 years

B. Additional Screening Requirements

Application, interview, and reference verification may be required before serving in certain roles and ministries.

- Submission of a completed written application to serve in a specified role with a clearly defined, written "job description." The application includes verifiable personal information;
- Personal interview;
- Reference verification; and
- Maintenance of these records as described below.

Adult Leaders or Supervisors must be known and active in the organization or employed by the organization before engaging in ministry with children and youth and shall have public records checks pursuant to the *Screening and Training Protocols* (Appendix A).

The Diocese will keep and maintain all application and screening records secure and confidential in the diocesan office. This includes a signature by each applicant verifying receipt of a copy of this policy, including any local procedures or variations.

All Adult Leaders will complete and submit to the appropriate person in the Bishop's Office–a completed *Adult Event Leader and Adult Volunteer Participant Form*, *Adult Health Form*, and *a Driver's Declaration Form*, if applicable, prior to the event. Such forms will be considered valid for a period of one calendar year.

IV. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

All Leaders shall have *Safe Church, Safe Communities* training which fosters a culture of safety and inclusion for all people.

Training shall be appropriate for each person's function according to the *Screening and Training Protocols* (Appendix A).

Certification of training shall be renewed every three years.

The Diocese will keep sufficient records to evidence compliance with this training policy.

V. MONITORING AND SUPERVISION OF PROGRAMS

A Responsible Person shall monitor and supervise the behavior of adults, children, and youth to ensure appropriate behavior and healthy boundaries.

All people who minister to children and youth must have ongoing supervision. Ongoing supervision should consist of regular check-ins by the Supervisor, reviewing the scope, accountability, and responsibly of the ministry with the person engaged in the ministry. Each person engaged in Diocesan events or activities should know who the Responsible Person is and how to contact them at all times.

The Diocese shall ensure that all people who minister to children and youth receive prior training as to the scope, accountability, and responsibility of the ministry.

The Diocese shall maintain a current list of people, and their contact information, who are approved to minister to children and youth. This list shall be kept in the Diocesan office or another place where records are kept.

A. Unrelated Adults Required

There shall be at least two unrelated adults (at least two years older than the eldest participant) present at ministry settings and events designed for children and youth. If unanticipated circumstances result in an adult being alone with children or youth, that adult shall report those circumstances to the Responsible Person as soon as possible.

Only one adult may be sufficient in well-monitored, visually accessible program space at the event location, provided that another adult can maintain visual contact with the adult leader. This can be accomplished by designating an individual to conduct frequent random checks of rooms and unlocked spaces throughout the building(s).

B. Creating Safe Space for Children and Youth

To create a safe space, it is necessary to anticipate and avoid circumstances in which children and youth are exposed to inappropriate consumables, materials, unmonitored adult contact, or unsupervised peer contact.

For example:

- **Alcoholic beverages.** Alcohol (sacramental or otherwise) shall not be stored in publicly accessible areas of the event buildings.

- **Computers** and **electronic devices.** Children and youth shall have adequate supervision when using electronic devices belonging to the diocese. Devices shall have adequate password protection. Each user shall have their own account and password. See *Recommended Practices and Guidelines for Social Media and Electronic Communications* (Appendix B).

- **Persons with keys and access to locked spaces.** *Anyone with keys or electronic access* to church buildings shall meet all the requirements for screening and training according to the *Screening and Training Protocols* (Appendix A).

- **Unused spaces.** Spaces not in use should not be readily accessible. Given the vast differences in facilities, the Diocese should determine how best to meet this standard.

C. One-to-One Conversations with Children or Youth

One-to-one counseling with children or youth will be done in an open or public or other space where private conversations are possible but occur in full view of others. If done in an offsite, public location, the Responsible Person shall be informed in advance.

Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed if a child or youth discloses a situation pertaining to abuse, neglect, self-harm, or exploitation because of mandatory reporting laws.

D. Basic Needs

No one is to be deprived of the basic human needs of food, drinking water, shelter, sleep, access to restrooms, safety, and clothing at any event.

Exceptions may be made for programs intended to teach children or youth about poverty, need, and hunger, such as an intentional fasting program. In these cases, children and youth must agree to participate in writing, and parents or guardians must give written permission that includes certification that the youth or child does not have a medical condition that would put the participant at risk by fasting or missing sleep.

Participants who wish to withdraw or who are unable to complete the program must have their basic needs met immediately.

E. Inclusiveness

No one shall be denied rights, status or access to an equal place in the life, worship, and governance of any program or activity because of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, differing abilities, or socio-economic class. To the extent possible, all spaces and settings for programs, activities, and ministry shall be accessible.

Transgender, genderqueer, or gender non-binary children or youth who express the need or desire for increased privacy should be provided with reasonable alternative arrangements. Reasonable alternative arrangements may include the use of a private area, or a separate changing schedule, or use of a single stall restroom. Any alternative arrangement should be provided in a way that protects the child or youth's ability to keep their transgender status confidential. They should not be required to use a locker room or restroom that conflicts with their gender identity.

Safe bathroom/shower facilities will be provided by gender (or specific times will be assigned to the use of a single facility).

Adults will either have separate shower facilities or shower at other times than the youth. Separate dressing facilities should also be provided.

F. Violence and Weapons

- No one is to strike, hit, or otherwise physically threaten or harm anyone at any time.
- Bullying of any kind by anyone is prohibited.
- Children and youth shall not have weapons of any kind at any event or program for children or youth. Exceptions to this restriction may be made for camp programs or other specific programs with prior approval.
- Report suspected violations immediately. See ***Suspected Violations of this Policy*** (Section VI, B on page 12).

G. Behavioral Standards for Adults in Ministry with Children or Youth

Adults who work with children and youth are expected to model the patterns of healthy relationships that children and youth deserve in all settings. Interactions should meet all requirements outlined above, and adults should be discouraged from initiating a private (one-on-one) relationship with any unrelated child or youth from the church away from sanctioned church activities.

DOs

Adults are encouraged to:

- Have ongoing spiritual practices, which might include daily prayer, regular participation in corporate worship, and Bible study;
- Spend time with and listen to children and youth, and advocate for their ministry within the Body of Christ;
- Ask recipients permission before offering appropriate physical expressions of care, which may include:
    - high fives and fist bumps;
    - hand-holding while walking with small children or in prayer;
    - brief touching of shoulders, hands, or arms;
    - the "laying on of hands" under appropriate pastoral supervision;
    - brief hugs and arms around shoulders; and
- Model appropriate affection with other adults and be accountable to the community for behavior.

DON'Ts

Adults shall not, under any circumstances:

- Provide children or youth with non-sacramental alcohol, marijuana, drugs, cigarettes, tobacco products, e-cigarettes, vapes, or pornography;
- Arrive under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or misused legal drugs at any children's or youth event or when they are responsible for children or youth at an event;
- Consume non-sacramental alcohol or illegal drugs or misuse legal drugs at a children's or youth event or when they are responsible for children or youth an event;
- Engage in illegal behavior or permit other adults or children or youth to engage in illegal behavior;
- Engage in any sexual, romantic, illicit, or secretive relationship or conduct with any child or youth; or

- Apart from planned pre-approved educational programs, discuss their own sexual activities, fantasies, or their own use, or abuse of drugs or alcohol with children or youth.

Anyone who suspects a violation of these policies shall take steps as outlined in ***Responding to Concerns*** (Section VI on page 12).

H. Special Considerations for Off-Site Programming

Off-site programs, trips, and events are a welcome and often necessary means for spiritual, social, and emotional development of children and youth. They also present additional challenges for maintaining best practices for safe and healthy ministry. The expectations for safe space, as described above, should be observed off-site.

In the event of uncertainty about application of the policy, the Responsible Person should contact their Supervisor with the relevant queries.

Because of the unique risks that can't always be anticipated, it is important to obtain permission and manage documentation as described below.

1. Prior Approvals

- Diocesan sponsored programs, trips, or events shall receive diocesan approval
- Parental approval is required prior to viewing any movie, whether off-site or on-site, rated "PG-13" or above, or participating in any conversation or program containing sexually explicit or violent content
- Parents or Guardians must complete a *Registration/Consent Form* before participation in event by any child/youth?
- These same prior approvals are required when the site is a private residence, hosting such events as cook outs, pool parties, progressive dinners, etc.

2. Registration/Consent Form

- Registration/Consent forms are required of all participants before participating in any programs. Such forms can encompass a program year.
- There must be a parent/guardian's signature on all release and waiver forms for minors.
- Completed release and waiver forms shall be maintained in a secure location on-site or online.
- Permission slips shall be provided for each off-site event and shall be signed by the parent/guardian.
- Prior permission for a minor to be photographed or recorded on film, videotape, audiotape, or other electronic media is required from a parent/guardian.

3. Medical Procedures and Requirements

- Medical Information Forms (for adult and youth participants) are required of all participants.
- Current certification in First Aid, CPR, and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is strongly encouraged for those who work with children and youth.
- A first aid kit, appropriately stocked for the event and participants, shall be available in an easily accessible location.

- A record must be kept for all medication or first aid given to a participant. This record shall include the participant's name, the date and time of service, the name of the person administering medication or treatment, and a description of the medication, dosage, and/or treatment given.
- All medications (prescription and over the counter) belonging to minors shall be given to the Responsible Person or adult designee, unless otherwise agreed upon by the parents and the Responsible Person. Exceptions may include inhalers, epi-pens, and birth-control pills.
- Only the Responsible Person, or their adult designee, shall administer medications.

4. Supervision at Off-site Gatherings

- At any gathering of children or youth, there shall be at least two unrelated adults with one being age 25 or older, preferably reflecting the sex and gender identity of the participants.
- Minimum ratios of adult to child/youth shall be in accordance with American Camp Association (ACA) guidelines as follows:
    - 5 years & younger — 1 adult for each 5 overnight-participants and 1 adult for each 6 day-participants
    - 6-8 years — 1:6 for overnight, and 1:8 for day
    - 9-14 years — 1:8 for overnight and 1:10 for day
    - 15-18 years — 1:10 for overnight and 1:12 for day
- Additional adults can provide skills, mentorship, support, encouragement, spiritual guidance, and joy.
- When you have new leaders-in-training, the leadership teams should also have a reasonable number of experienced adult leaders to provide support

5. Insurance

All trips to off-site destinations must have adequate insurance in case of emergency. For more information, contact your insurance broker.

I. Overnight Programs

In overnight programing, particular attention and access will be given to historically excluded or unrecognized people, such as LGBTQ+, differently abled, and neurodivergent individuals. In a situation of unequal power and safety, preferences of these individuals merit additional consideration, accommodation, and action to ensure:

- Privacy of Participant;
- Maximization of social integration of all participants;
- Minimization of stigmatization of any participants;
- Equal opportunity to participate; and
- Safety of all participants.

Other guidelines for overnight programs:

- Adults must have separate showers or separate times for showers. Assignments of bathrooms will consider numerous factors, including, but not limited to: age, sex, gender identity & expression, and privacy
- Overnight programs shall provide safe, supervised sleeping arrangements
    - No bed, cot, or sleeping bag shall have more than one person sleeping in it.
    - Supervision by two unrelated adults is required in any space where one or more youth are sleeping.
    - It is acceptable for all participants to sleep in the same open area when dressing rooms and bathrooms provide appropriate privacy.
- Participants shall have access to three substantial meals each full day and access to sufficient water.
- Participants shall be given the opportunity for at least seven hours of sleep each 24-hour period, except for programs where parental/guardian permission is given to miss sleep. In these cases, children and youth must agree to participate in writing, and parents or guardians must give written permission that includes certification that the youth or child does not have a medical condition that would put the participant at risk by missing sleep.
- Participants shall have some time set aside each day for rest or free time.

Best practice guidelines for hotel stays:

- One child or youth per bed, including cots, pullouts, hide-a-beds, and rollaway beds;
- At least 2 children or 2 youth in each room.
- Adult supervisors or chaperones have rooms on the same floor, scattered among the rooms with children or youth, and at least one adult room is by the stairs or elevators;
- Adult leader assigns rooms and room occupants;

J. Transportation

- For the health and safety of all participants, the following practices shall be followed: For events that originate and/or terminate at the diocesan, congregation, or organization's facility, all drivers must be at least 21 years of age and provide proof of insurance and a current driver's license, a completed volunteer driver information form, and have a satisfactory BMV records check.
- All drivers and riders must comply with state laws including seat belt and cell phone usage.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for the transportation and safety of their children and/or youth to and from the event. This responsibility includes the transportation of any other passengers in their vehicle.

K. Camps and Retreat Centers

All camps, camping programs, and retreat centers of the diocese shall follow the guidelines for off-site programming established in this policy. In addition, camps should aim to follow American Camp Association standards to the best of the camp's ability.

L. Travel

The following policies will help groups prepare for a variety of potential scenarios, as well as for domestic and international travel.

1. Adult Leaders and Chaperones

- Minimum ratios of adult to youth need to be greater due to the possibility of leaving an adult behind with a participant in the event of a medical emergency.
- 5 years & younger — 1 adult for each 5 overnight-participants and 1 adult for each 6 day-participants
- 6-8 years — 1:6 for overnight, and 1:8 for day
- 9-14 years — 1:5
- 15-18 years — 1:7
- Regardless of group size, no group should travel with fewer than three adult chaperones.
- One adult, at the minimum age of 25, should serve as the travel administrator who is responsible for all aspects of the trip, including carrying all necessary documentation, contacts, and forms including:
- medical releases;
- community covenant;
- emergency contacts;
- itineraries; and
- cash and/or credit card capacity to address emergencies.
- It is best practice that, one adult, minimum age of 25, should hold a current medical certification to manage administration of necessary and permissible medications, administer immediate and necessary first aid, and triage medical situations to determine if care of an individual needs to be taken to a higher level of care. When this is not possible, one person should be designated to supervise the administration of medications as instructed on medical release forms, and a clinic near your destination should be identified ahead of time in order to respond to health emergencies as rapidly as possible.
- Acceptable medical certifications include:
- Wilderness Medical Response
- Outdoor Emergency Care
- Emergency Medical Technician/Paramedic
- Nurse — RN/LPN/Nurse Practitioner
- Physician's Assistant
- Medical Doctor
- Best practice is to designate an adult to serve as back-up to the travel administrator, and as back-up for simple first aid and administration of prescriptions. These could be the same person.
- A copy of all documents should be left with an accountable person at the diocesan, congregation, or organization's office. That person should also serve as the local emergency contact person for communication between the traveling group and families at home.

2. Insurance for travel

- It is recommended that all travelers carry their insurance card or a copy of it. Because not all individuals have access to affordable and adequate health insurance, it is recommended that health insurance be added to trip insurance.

3. International Considerations

Short-term trip or supplemental insurance must be secured at-least one month prior to travel.

- Check in with the U.S. Department of State on travel requirements, including visas.
- Make certain that every traveler's passport is valid for at least six months beyond your return date.
- Determine whether vaccinations are required and/or recommended for entry into specific countries.
- Arrange to have at least two cell phones with the group that will have active coverage in your destination(s). Make a back-up plan for communication with your Responsible Person at home.

A more thorough list of international travel considerations with links to U.S. and global organizations can be found in the ***Youth in Mission Manual*** here: https://www.episcopalchurch.org/ministries/youth-ministries/mission-manual/

VI. RESPONDING TO CONCERNS

A. Suspected Abuse, Neglect, or Exploitation of Children and Youth

Any adult who has reason to suspect that abuse, neglect, or exploitation of children or youth has taken place, and all mandated reporters are required to contact the state's Child Protective Services.

In addition, anyone who has reason to suspect that abuse, neglect, or exploitation of children or youth has taken place within a facility or program of the diocese, should immediately inform one of more or the following:

- The bishop or the bishop's office in the case of a diocese;
- The director, head, or other governing officer in the case of other organizations; and/or
- The Intake Officer in case a member of the clergy is suspected of abuse, neglect and/or exploitation. Intake Officers for the Diocese of Ohio can be found here: https://www.dohio.org/our-diocese/report-clergy-misconduct

B. Suspected Violations of this Policy

Anyone who suspects a violation of these policies shall immediately report the violation to the Responsible Person.

Clergy in charge who receive reports of violations of this policy shall be responsible for providing appropriate pastoral care to all those affected and appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or unpaid ministry with the church. If the Responsible Person is a lay person, they are responsible to ensure that appropriate pastoral care is provided for all.

Anyone who suspects a violation of these policies by a member of the clergy shall immediately report the violation to the bishop's office and/or the Intake Officer. Anyone can make a report to an Intake Officer.

The bishop, hearing reports of violations by clergy, or by laity at diocesan events, shall be responsible for providing appropriate pastoral care to all those affected and appropriate remedial and/ or disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or unpaid ministry with the diocese. Suspected violations by clergy are addressed in Title IV of the Constitutions and Canons.

C. Resources for Response

The Diocese shall provide a list of resources that can give information and assistance to anyone concerned about circumstances that may violate this policy. Such resources with contact information shall be posted on the diocesan website.

Such resources and contact information shall include:

i. Responsible Person(s) for programs and ministries with children and youth;

ii. Bishop's Office;

iii. Intake Officer(s); and

iv. Child Protective Services. (The statewide number to report child abuse/neglect is **855-642-4453**.

VII. DIOCESAN POLICY AUDIT

The diocese shall conduct an ***Audit of Policy for the Protection of Children and Youth*** every three years to confirm compliance with diocesan safe church policies.

Procedures to be confirmed by audit will include (but are not limited to):

- Existence of diocesan policy that is consistent with and/or exceeds the requirements of the Model Policy;
- Provision of accessible and appropriate training for all those who work with children and youth in accordance with *Screening and Training Protocols* (Appendix A).
- verification that each congregation and/or organization within the diocese has adopted a policy that is consistent with and/or exceeds the diocesan policy;
- Verification that each congregation and/or organization has a process to ensure members access training and conduct public record checks.

Appendix A: Screening and Training Protocols for the Diocese of Ohio

Training	Group 1: **Clergy**	Group 2: **Paid Staff**	Group 3: **Staff & Volunteers who work with Children/Youth**	Group 4: **Elected Positions and other Lay Leadership**	Group 5: **Eucharistic Ministers (EM) and Eucharistic Visitors (EV)**	Group 6: **People with keys/code to the building**
Safe Church, Safe Communities - Universal Training: **Healthy Boundaries**	X	X	X	X	EM/EV	X
Safe Church, Safe Communities - Universal Training: **Inclusion**	X	X	X	X		
Safe Church, Safe Communities - Specialty Training: **Power and Relationships**	X	X	X	X	EM/EV	
Safe Church, Safe Communities - Specialty Training: **Pastoral Relationships**	X					
Safe Church, Safe Communities - Specialty Training: **Bullying**	X	X	X	X		
Safe Church, Safe Communities - Specialty Training: **Abuse & Neglect**	X	X	X	X	EV	X
Duty to Report: **Mandated Reporter**	X		X		EV	
Safeguarding God's People: **Preventing Sexual Harassment for Workers**		X				
Safeguarding God's People: **Preventing Sexual Harassment for Managers & Supervisors**	X					
Preventing Sexual Activity Between Young Children			X			
Preventing Sexual Activity Between Adolescents			X			

Screening

Public Records Check	X	X	X		EV	
Bureau of Motor Vehicles Check	X	X	X			

Appendix B: Recommended Practices and Guidelines for Social Media and Electronic Communications with Children And Youth

Social media posts and electronic communications are not confidential. Many can be shared or reposted to others All interactions should be transparent with healthy boundaries. Laws regarding mandated reporting of suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation of children and youth applies in the digital world just as they do in the physical world.

Recommended Practices and Guidelines:

- The diocese should create and "own" the social media accounts representing the diocese and have multiple administrators and/or supervisors with access. If personal accounts are used, a system of monitoring should be established.
- The diocese should not identify or "tag" individuals. The "tagging" of children and youth should be prohibited. When written permission is provided by a parent/guardian, the captioning of photos or videos of minors may be permitted. The caption should not include the minor's full name, nor should it create a clickable link to someone's personal profile. Self-tagging or tag requests from youth are allowable within closed groups.
- The diocese does not have a responsibility to review or monitor the personal pages or groups that are not sponsored by the diocese.
- If a digital communication raises health or safety concerns, leaders should respond pastorally and notify the supervisor.
- When using photos and videos for ministry purposes, obtain a media release for each person and only post images that respect the dignity of every person depicted. The diocese must inform participants when they are being videoed because church buildings are not considered public space. Signs should be posted that indicate a service or activity will be broadcast when worship services or activities are streamed or distributed on the web or via other broadcast media.
- Consider the following best practices
    - Have at least two unrelated adult administrators as well as at least two youth administrators for groups that are designed for youth;
    - Use closed groups, but not "hidden" or "secret" groups, for youth;
    - Have only youth administrators invite other youth to join the online group, unless a youth previously asked an adult administrator to invite them to join;
    - Remove any content that shows or describes inappropriate behavior outside the bounds of the established behavioral covenant;
    - Open social networking groups for youth to parents of current members;
    - Remove adult leaders of youth groups and youth who are no longer members, due to departure, removal from position, or are ineligible because they "aged-out" of a program from social networking sites, list serves, etc;
    - Observe mandated reporting laws regarding suspected abuse, neglect, and exploitation

Recommended Practices and Guidelines for Interactions with Children and Youth:

- Prudent judgement should be used in the time of day a child or youth is contacted through social media. Under normal circumstances, refrain from contact or exchanging texts, chats, or emails before 8:00 am or after 10:00 pm, unless it's an emergency.
- Privacy settings and personal boundaries should be implemented.

    - Create and use profiles on social networking sites that meet professional and institutional standards.
    - Do not submit connection requests to children or youth for personal interactions. Youth may not be able to decline such requests due to the disparity of power between youth and adults. Youth may ask to be "friends," adults should discern the nature of contact appropriate for healthy ministry.
    - Apply privacy settings that are consistent with all children and youth, across all social networking sites and platforms. Avoid playing favorites or the appearance of playing favorites.
    - Administrators of social media accounts and digital communications must periodically review settings, accessible content, photos, and videos to ensure compliance with professional and institutional standards.
    - Parents of children and youth shall be informed of social networking sites and platforms used within the ministry.
    - When possible, send communication (1) to entire groups, or (2) in public areas, rather than in private messages. This includes photos, images and videos.
    - When sending emails to a child or youth that contain personal or private information regarding that child or youth, a parent or guardian needs to be CC'ed on the email as well.
    - Disclose ongoing digital pastoral communications (i.e.: e-mails, Facebook messages, texting, other social media platforms messaging features, etc.) with children and youth to a parent and/or a supervisor to determine when a referral to a professional provider or resource is needed.

- Delete inappropriate material posted in digital groups, address the behavior and report it, in accordance with legal and institutional requirements.
- In video calls, follow the same criteria used in telephone calls. In addition, prudent judgement regarding attire and surroundings shall be observed.

Covenant to Govern Digital Groups

- Inappropriate behavior by ANY individual in any group (e.g., Facebook group, Snapchat group, email, text or Twitter group) will not be tolerated. This includes bullying, posting pictures that depict abuse, violence, illegal activities, sexual acts or any other behavior deemed inappropriate by group administrators. Inappropriate behavior will result in the immediate removal of the offender from the group, and further action as necessary.
- Groups may be joined by individuals who are an active part of the group (youth group, parish group, event group, etc.) as closed groups with administrative review.
- Settings for groups will be "closed" or "private" so that group activity is not public.

Recommended Practices and Guidelines for Interactions with Children and Youth:

- Participants will be removed from the digital group when they are no longer a part of the group in the real world.
- Groups will be disbanded when there is no longer a need for digital communication within the group.
- Only content that is appropriate and pertinent to the group may be posted. Content will be monitored by the administrators, or the group settings can be such that only approved communications are actually posted.
- Adults may not tag photos, videos, snaps, tweets, etc. without the written permission from parents of youth under the age of 18. Self-tagging or tag requests by youth or their parents is permissible.
- Mandatory reporting laws will be followed.
- Consequences for breaking the covenant will include removal from the group, loss of any administrative privileges and further action.