

THE CHEVY CHASE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Child Protection Policy
Approved – June 6, 2000

Safe Church Policy Concerning Abuse Prevention
Approved and added to Child Protection Policy – October 16, 2018

I. PURPOSE

The Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church (CCPC) has established this policy to (a) help provide a safe, nurturing environment for children (b) provide procedures for hiring, review, and adherence to guidelines by all supervisors (including dismissal and prosecution) and (c) safeguard those who supervise children from unfounded accusations of misconduct. This policy applies to all CCPC programs that involve supervision of a child by any CCPC employee or volunteer.

To guard against sexual abuse and misconduct from supervisors, CCPC seeks to ensure that those persons responsible for supervising children in the church deserve this trust and responsibility. The policy is also designed to protect those who supervise children by minimizing the risk of abuse or false allegations of abuse. Consistent with the policies of National Capital Presbytery, our CCPC policy uses the definitions stated below:

II. DEFINITIONS

“Sexual abuse” or **“sexual misconduct”** includes, but is not limited to, any contact or interaction with a child when the child is being used for the sexual stimulation of another person. The behavior may or may not involve touching. Sexual behavior with a child is always considered forced whether or not consented to by the child.

“Child” or **“children”** refers to those legally considered minors. A person who is legally incompetent is also considered a “child” under this policy.

“Employee” is the comprehensive term used to cover individuals who are called or hired full-time or part-time to work for the church for salary or wages.

“Occasional paid sitter” is the term used to denote those who are hired occasionally for special functions.

“Volunteer” is the term used for those who provide services for the church, who receive no financial benefit or remuneration, and who have long-term or potentially unsupervised access to children other than their own.

“Staff Member” is the term used for non-clergy employees responsible for CCPC’s education, mission, music, youth, or other programs that involve children.

“Parent assistant” refers to parents who provide occasional childcare assistance, under the supervision of a CCPC employee, in church programs in which their children participate. Examples include parents who co-op at the Weekday Nursery School, serve in the nursery on Sunday mornings, or assist with choir practices and performances.

“**Supervision**” includes direct observation or control of activities, and may include visual monitoring of activities via open or windowed doors.

III. STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

Employees, volunteers, and those supervising children shall not touch, interact with, or otherwise communicate with children in any way that is intended to be sexually stimulating. Common expressions of affection (hugs), affirmation (pats on the back), support (prayer), or physical caretaking (changing diapers, etc.) are appropriate in this community of caring Christians. Care must be taken, however, that expressions of affection and affirmation are not excessive or imposed on a child.

To protect both our children and their church supervisors, those supervising children should work in pairs. Whenever possible, two supervisors should be present with the children at all activities. On those rare occasions when a teacher or other adult must unexpectedly work alone with a child there must be a visual access at all times (e.g., an open door or window).

Children involved in a church activity should be transported in groups rather than alone. A single adult should not drive a single child without the permission of the child’s parent or guardian; when practical, such permission should be obtained in writing. On those occasions when one-on-one counseling or social interaction is appropriate, the supervisor should notify another supervisor where s/he and the child will be. Standards of conduct for all CCPC pastoral staff are defined in the National Capital Presbytery Policy and Procedures on Sexual Misconduct, which is available through the church or presbytery office.

IV. SUPERVISION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

All Session committees and staff members will seek employees or volunteers in sufficient numbers to staff church programs consistent with this policy.

As a condition of employment, any employee or applicant seeking to be employed by CCPC will be required to

- (a) complete and sign a disclosure statement
- (b) undergo a criminal records background check; and
- (c) allow CCPC to contact references.

All employees, volunteers, and occasional paid sitters who supervise children and youth must first satisfactorily complete:

- (a) an application, providing references to make sure that the applicants is suitable for the position. Committee members should recruit volunteers from those who have been members or active in the life of CCPC for at least six months.
- (b) training and orientation which will include a discussion and explanation of this policy. All employees and volunteers who will supervise children must sign an acknowledgment that they have read, understand, and agree to abide by the policy. Parent assistants will receive this policy, and complete the accompanying training.

Written information about this policy shall be posted in the church office. The Inquirer’s Course for new members also will include information about this policy.

V. REPORTING OF MISCONDUCT

A person who has reason to believe that sexual abuse or misconduct covered by this policy has occurred shall immediately report such information to the staff member or pastor supervising the activity. The supervising staff member or pastor immediately shall report the incident to CCPC's pastor/head of staff. In addition, consistent with CCPC's policy, all allegations of sexual abuse or misconduct involving children will be reported to the appropriate government authority as required by law. CCPC will cooperate fully with government authorities in the investigation of allegations of sexual abuse or misconduct.

The pastor/head of staff will inform the Session that an allegation has been made and reported. Those persons involved in the investigation or report should hold relevant information in strict confidence, subject to such disclosures as are required by Church procedures or required by law. As appropriate, the head of staff will also inform the National Capital Presbytery.

The Safe Policy Concerning Abuse Prevention (BELOW) was added to the Child Protection Policy by the Session on October 18, 2018.

Safe Church Policy Concerning Abuse Prevention at the Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church

Policy Prohibiting Abuse, Exploitation and Harassment

As a community of Christian faith, the Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church is committed to creating and maintaining ministries, programs, facilities and a community in which members, friends, staff and volunteers can worship, learn and work together in an atmosphere free from all forms of discrimination, harassment, exploitation, abuse, or intimidation. All persons associated with the Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church, (CCPC), should be aware that the church is strongly opposed to Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Harassment and that such behavior is prohibited by church policy. It is the intention of the church to take action in an attempt to prevent and correct behavior that is contrary to this policy and, if necessary, to discipline those persons who violate this policy.

This policy applies to church members, friends, employees, volunteers, and any others participating in CCPC activities and programs. Related policies include the CCPC Child Protection Policy and the CCPC Personnel Manual.

Definitions

Sexual Exploitation: sexual activity or contact (not limited to sexual intercourse) in which one person takes advantage of the vulnerability of another person by causing or allowing that person to engage in sexual behavior.

Sexual Harassment: repeated or coercive sexual advances toward another person contrary to his or her wishes. It includes behavior directed at another person with the intent of intimidating, humiliating, or embarrassing the other person, or subjecting the person to public discrimination. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition or circumstance of instruction, employment, or participation in any church activity.
- Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for evaluation in making personnel or church-related decisions affecting an individual; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance or participation in church activities or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or church environment.
 - Prohibited sexual harassment includes unsolicited and unwelcome contact that has sexual overtones, particularly:
 - Written contact, such as sexually suggestive or obscene letters, notes, e-mails, or invitations;
 - Verbal contact, such as sexually suggestive or obscene comments, threats, slurs, epithets, jokes about gender-specific traits, sexual propositions;
 - Physical contact, such as intentional touching, pinching, brushing against another's body, impeding or blocking movement, assault, coercing sexual intercourse; and
 - Visual contact, such as leering or staring at another's body, gesturing, displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, posters, or magazines.

Sexual harassment also includes continuing to express sexual interest after being informed directly that the interest is unwelcome and using sexual behavior to control, influence, or affect the career, salary, work, learning, or worship environment of another. It is impermissible to suggest, threaten, or imply that failure to accept a request for a date or sexual intimacy will affect a person's job prospects, or comfortable participation in the life of the church. It is forbidden either to imply or actually withhold support for an appointment, promotion, or change of assignment, to suggest that a poor performance report will be given because a person has declined a personal proposition; or to hint that benefits, such as promotions, favorable performance evaluations, favorable assigned duties or shifts, recommendations or reclassifications, will be forthcoming in exchange for sexual favors.

Procedures for Handling Complaints of Sexual Exploitation or Harassment

- A. Several approaches may be taken in addressing incidents of alleged sexual exploitation or harassment:
1. The complainant can attempt to resolve the matter directly with the respondent, the individual accused of sexual exploitation or harassment.
 2. The complainant can report the incident to the Sr. Pastor/Head of Staff in an effort to resolve the matter informally or, if the Senior Pastor is the subject of the complaint, to the Clerk of the Session or the Personnel Committee. The Clerk of Session or Personnel Committee shall report the complaint to the Executive

Presbyter of the National Capital Presbytery, or the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery.

3. If an informal resolution of the complaint does not seem wise, appropriate, possible, or does not succeed, the complainant or Pastor may request that the Session establish a “Response Team.” The Response Team will consist of at least two members, and at least one male and one female. The Pastor will also report the complaint to the Executive Presbyter of the National Capital Presbytery, or the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery.

4. The Response Team may gather statements or other information from the individuals involved in the alleged exploitation or harassment and from others who may have pertinent information, such as qualified professional consultants.

5. The Response Team may present such information to the Session or an appropriate subcommittee thereof.

6. The Session, or an appropriate subcommittee thereof, shall make determinations and take actions appropriate to resolve the matter. These may include:

1. finding that sexual exploitation or harassment has occurred, and that the appropriate body of the church is called upon to take action accordingly; such action may include one or more of the following:
 - a. a formal reprimand, with defined expectations for changed behavior;
 - b. probationary standing, with the terms of the probation clearly defined;
 - c. dismissal from employment or authorized volunteer position in the church.
2. finding that sexual exploitation or harassment did not occur.

B. A written summary of the Response Team proceedings in such cases will be maintained.

C. The person(s) toward whom the inappropriate behavior is directed need not be the complainant. At any time the church may initiate or proceed with the formal complaint process.

D. In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes sexual harassment or exploitation, consideration shall be given to the record of the alleged incident(s) as a whole and to the totality of the circumstances, including the context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred.

E. Any person bringing a sexual harassment or exploitation complaint or assisting in the investigation of such a complaint will not be adversely affected in terms and conditions of employment or church membership or affiliation, or otherwise discriminated against, for initiating or assisting in the investigation of the complaint.

- F. If the complainant or respondent is not satisfied with the disposition of the matter by the Response Team, he or she has the right to appeal to the Session. The subject of any such appeal to the Session shall be limited solely to whether the procedures of this policy were followed. The matter will not be reconsidered on the merits and the decision of the Response Team will be the final resolution of the matter. If the Session determines that the procedures of this policy were not followed, it will refer the matter back to the Response Team to complete the processing of the complaint in accordance with these procedures.

THE CHEVY CHASE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Child Protection Policy and Safe Church Policy Concerning Abuse Prevention

I have read, and I understand, and I agree to abide by The Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church Child Protection Policy and Safe Church Policy Concerning Abuse Prevention.

Name (Please print.)

Signature