

Policies and Procedures for the
Prevention of Sexual Misconduct in the
Diocese of Alabama



The Episcopal Diocese of Alabama

2026

Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults

I. LETTER FROM THE BISHOP

Beloved in Christ,

Jesus teaches that the children among us are to be welcomed and nurtured. They possess a crucial openness and trust serving as an example for all. They model for us an entry into life in God's kingdom.

It is their very openness and trust which also makes them vulnerable to harm. It is our responsibility to become aware of the ways in which some people abuse children, and to protect them from these predators.

For this reason all leaders in the church and all adults who have regular contact with children and vulnerable adults in our ministries should be familiar with this policy and complete the required and associated training. Unless we are vigilant in this effort, we may fail in caring for some of the most vulnerable among us. We also risk seeing our programs and ministries fail as the result of an incident of abuse within the ministry.

I am grateful for your commitment to read this policy, complete the training and join in this important and sacred task.

Sincerely,

The Rt. Reverend Glenda Curry

II. EXPECTATIONS AND LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION

This policy supersedes earlier policies and procedures published by the Diocese of Alabama. It builds upon, strengthens, and in some cases, alters procedures and practices published in previous editions in 1994, 2000, 2006, and 2014. These policies and procedures have been developed in general conformity with the *Model Policies* published by the General Convention of the Episcopal Church in 2018. These policies are applicable to all canonical or licensed clergy of the Diocese of Alabama, all employees and volunteers serving within parishes, ministries, and entities within the Diocese including groups, ministries, and organizations using church owned facilities.

The Diocese of Alabama prohibits sexual misconduct and sexual abuse by all church workers and seeks through these policies and procedures to provide an environment safe from these prohibited activities for the children, youth and vulnerable adults who participate in the programs and activities of its parishes and associated institutions.

No person shall be regularly (whether frequently or infrequently) placed in a position of ministry with children or youth who is not known to other Church Workers in the parish. No person previously convicted of sexual misconduct may be placed in direct contact with children or youth.

Implementation of these policies is the responsibility of the clergy, wardens and vestries of all parishes in the Diocese of Alabama. The boards and officers of all church-related organizations are also charged with responsibility for implementation. Conformity with these policies and procedures by outside groups and organizations using church-owned facilities is required for those events, programs, and ministries operating in church-owned facilities and shall be monitored by the clergy and wardens of associated parishes or, in cases in which the facility is directly operated by the Diocese, by the Diocesan Bishop. Support and guidance in the interpretation and implementation of these policies shall be offered by the Bishop through the Office of the Bishop.

No policy can foresee every possible circumstance to which it may be applied. Any additions or modifications by local leadership to these policies may be made only with the written approval of the Bishop or the Bishop's designate. Also, any presentation or teaching based on these policies should be approved by the Office of the Bishop.

Whenever applicable, questions of civil, criminal, and/or ecclesiastical discipline and employment offenses should be addressed with the relevant authorities immediately. Please contact the Office of the Bishop for consultation and resources if assistance is needed.

III. DEFINITIONS

NOTE: These definitions reflect our understanding of terms some of which are evolving as these policies are being written.

Abuse: Abuse includes **physical abuse** (non-accidental injury intentionally inflicted upon a child, youth, or vulnerable adult), **sexual abuse** (any sexual content, indecency, or activity of a sexual nature with a minor, or vulnerable adult), and **emotional abuse** (mental or emotional injury to a child or youth that results in an observable and material impairment in the child's, youth's, or vulnerable adult's growth, development, or psychological functioning).

Adult: Anyone who is 19 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.

Church Worker: These policies apply equally to volunteers and to employees unless a specific exception is stated. For purposes of these policies a Church Worker may be employed and compensated or may be a volunteer.

Clergy in Charge: A member of the clergy who is in charge of a program for children and youth. In a congregation, this is the head of the congregation unless the head has appointed another clergy staff member as the Clergy in Charge of the program.

Diocese: The Episcopal Diocese of Alabama

Head of Organization: The person who is the canonical head of a congregation or the chief executive officer of an organization, such as a head of school or executive director.

Intake Officer: The person(s) designated 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.

LGBTQ: An acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender. It refers to people whose sexual orientation is not heterosexual or whose gender identity or expression vary from their sex assigned at birth.

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. In Alabama mandated reporters include clergy and others, even volunteers, who "render aid or medical assistance to any child, when the child is known or suspected to be a victim of child abuse or neglect."

Neglect: The failure to provide for a child's or youth's basic needs and/or medical needs or to take action to protect a child or youth from harm.

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.

Peer Abuse: Any bullying or abuse occurring between children, between a child and a youth, or between youth.

Programs: Official activities and programs sponsored by the diocese or its organizations. Such as but not limited to Acolyte Festival, EYC, Sawyerville Camp, Summer Camp at McDowell Camp & Conference Center, Special Session, Foothills Day Camp, Youth Department 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.

Qualified Adult: A Qualified Adult is an adult who is (i) screened and trained in Safeguarding to work with children and youth, (ii) not a Vulnerable Adult, and (iii) at least two years older than the oldest participant in the program.

Responsible Person: The person designated as being accountable for compliance with this policy for an event or program. Such person must be (i) a Qualified Adult who has been trained and screened under these policies and (ii) physically present during the event.

Sacramental Use: Consecrated or unconsecrated wine used in the setting of Holy Communion.

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.

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

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.

IV. APPLICATION AND SCREENING

Congregations and other organizations are required to screen all persons according to the standards in the ***Screening and Training Charts***. For some positions, screening consists only of a Public Records Check. For other positions there are additional screening requirements such as a written application, interview, and reference verification.

A. Public Records Checks

- Congregations and other organizations must submit background check release forms for public records checks to the Diocese. All background checks must be conducted through the Office of the Bishop. Such checks must be completed before the employee or volunteer begins interacting with children and youth.
- Criminal public records checks shall include available criminal records and sex offender registries.
- A Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) records check is needed if transporting children and youth as part of, or an extension of, ministry of the church or for a church-sponsored event. The check should be repeated every five years when applicable.
- Sexual Offender Registries must be reviewed prior to anyone beginning work with children and youth. The Sexual Offender Registry is first checked during a background check and shall be checked by the parish every five years so long as the person remains active in ministry or works with children and youth.

B. Additional Screening Requirements

Written application, interview, and reference verification are required for individuals employed with any potential for working with children, youth and vulnerable adults. These procedures must be completed in addition to public records check, training, and sexual offender registry check prior to any contact with children and youth. Documentation of each procedure is to be retained in the employee file indefinitely. If these procedures are not complete when the job is offered, the offer shall be conditional pending completion of all screening requirements. Where required, these components are generally conducted in the following order:

- 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 conducted by congregations and other organizations to verify personal information and check references listed in the application (people who know but are not related to the applicant); and
- Maintenance of these records as described below.

Volunteer leaders or Supervisors must be known and active in the congregation for at least six months before engaging in ministry with children and youth.

Congregations and other organizations must keep and maintain all application and screening records secure and confidential in the diocesan, congregational, or organization office. This includes a signature by each applicant verifying receipt of a copy of this policy, including any local procedures or variations. These records shall be retained permanently.

V. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Training shall be appropriate to each person's function according to the **Screening and Training Charts**. Generally, any and all people involved with children and youth shall have similar requirements for screening, training, and supervision.

All Supervisors and those with oversight responsibilities for ministry programs and/or other adults who engage in ministry with children and youth shall have Specialized Training that is tailored to their role and ministry function.

The background check and all necessary training modules must be completed prior to participation in ministry with children, youth or vulnerable adults.

Background checks and training should be repeated within a minimum of five years.

Any volunteer or paid employee (i.e. nursery workers) over the age of 16 are required to complete the necessary training modules and undergo a reference check.

Depending on role and responsibility, Specialized Training may include:

- Identification of and response to different forms of abuse and neglect.
- Vulnerability within the pastoral relationship.
- The needs of LGBTQ+ children and youth.
- The ways that children and youth can engage in self-advocacy;
- and the needs of vulnerable children and youth.
- Congregations, and other organizations with responsibility for programs with services or ministries to children and youth shall keep records sufficient to evidence compliance with this policy.
- The particular needs of people with disabilities and vulnerable adults in cases such as but not limited to respite care, Bethany's Kids and Special Session.

VI. 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 who may be parish clergy or a team leader. Such supervision should review the scope, accountability, and

responsibility of the ministry with the person engaged in the ministry. Each person engaged in such ministry should know who supervises their ministry and how to contact the Supervisor or the person to whom this responsibility has been temporarily delegated.

Congregations and organizations shall ensure that all people who minister to children and youth receive training as to the scope, accountability, and responsibility of the ministry. Parishes and other entities covered by these policies are responsible for notifying the Office of the Bishop of those persons who need background checks and or training and for monitoring completion of all requirements.

The Diocese shall maintain an up-to-date list of people trained to minister to children and youth.

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 Supervisor, Clergy in charge, Senior Warden, or Responsible Person as soon as possible. Should an adult find themselves alone with just one minor, the adult shall immediately take steps to remedy the situation as well as immediately notifying the Supervisor.

Only one adult may be sufficient in well-monitored, visually accessible program space on the church grounds, such as a Sunday School classroom in use when normal church activities are underway and located in a portion of the building easily assessable.

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:

- a. **Alcoholic beverages.** Alcohol (sacramental or otherwise) shall be stored out of sight preferably in locked spaces.
- b. **Computers and electronic devices.** Children and youth shall have adequate supervision when using electronic devices belonging to the diocese, congregations, and other organizations. Devices shall have adequate password protection.
- c. **Persons with keys and access to locked spaces.** It is recommended that anyone with keys *or* electronic access to church buildings shall meet all the requirements for screening and training according to the ***Screening and Training Charts***.
- d. **Unused spaces.** Spaces not in use should not be readily accessible.

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

When one-to-one conversations occur between an adult and a child or youth, they shall occur at times when other adults are present in the church building or, if in a public building, at times when other adults are present.

Examples include:

- a. Planned or unplanned on-site conversations can take place in a public location, away from where others can hear but accessible to other adults.
- b. Planned off-site conversations/meetings can take place in a public place (such as a coffee shop or restaurant) in view of other adults. A parent or guardian shall be informed about the appointment or plans 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.

Impulsive, secluded or secretive activity, online or in person with children or youth, may foster a high-risk situation, and is therefore to be avoided.

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.

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, disability, or socio-economic class. To the extent possible, all spaces and settings for programs, activities, and ministry should be accessible.

Reasonable alternative arrangements shall be made to address the safety and comfort of persons who express the need or desire for additional privacy in restroom use or other private activities. Such persons shall be offered reasonable alternative arrangements such as use of a single-stall restroom, a private area for changing clothes, or a separate changing schedule. To the extent possible, any alternative arrangement should be provided in a way that protects the ability to keep confidential the need for privacy.

This provision expressly includes requests made by persons whose gender identity does not conform to traditional gender categories. Such persons 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 should either have separate shower facilities or shower at other times than the youth. Separate dressing facilities should also be provided.

Personnel shall not use harsh language, profanity, degrading language or punishment, or any mechanical restraint for behavior management.

F. Violence and Weapons

- No one is to strike, hit, or otherwise physically threaten or harm anyone at any time.
- Bullying or hazing 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.
- Report suspected violations immediately.

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 including online interactions and behavior. Interactions should meet all requirements outlined above, and adults should be discouraged from initiating a private relationship with any unrelated child or youth from the church away from sanctioned church activities.

Do

Adults are encouraged to:

- Have ongoing spiritual practices, which include daily prayer, regular participation in corporate worship, and Bible study.
- Spend time with and listen to children and youth and support their ministry within the Body of Christ.
- With consent, offer appropriate physical expressions of care,
- Model appropriate affection with other adults and be accountable to the community for behavior.

DON'T

Adults shall not under any circumstances:

- Provide children or youth with non-sacramental alcohol, marijuana, drugs, cigarettes, tobacco products, e-cigarettes, vapes, or pornography.
- Offer piggyback rides or let children or youth sit in their laps.

- 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 any children’s or youth event or when they are responsible for children or youth at an event.
- Communicate, including via text or online, with children, youth, or youth parents while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- 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.

Anyone who suspects a violation of these policies shall report their suspicions immediately.

H. Special Considerations for Off-Site Programming

Off-site programs, trips, and events are welcome and meaningful opportunities 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 permissions and manage documentation as described below.

1. Prior Approvals

- Prior approval by a member of the clergy in charge or the governing body in the absence of a clergy person
- Written 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.

2. Registration, Waiver, and Release Forms

- All children, youth, and adults shall complete and sign a registration for and/or permission form as appropriate and a liability waiver and photo and/or social media release form before participating in any programs. Confidentiality must be preserved with respect to medical and other sensitive information in the forms. Such forms can encompass a program year.
 - There must be a parent/guardian’s signature on all release and waiver forms for minors. Electronic signatures are permitted in Alabama (2006 Alabama Code - Section 8-1A-7)

- Completed release and waiver forms shall be maintained in a secure location on-site or online. Forms should be held for a minimum of 365 days.
- Permission slips shall be provided for each off-site event or for the yearly offsite programming for a discrete program such as the Youth Department. Forms shall be signed by the parent/guardian.
- Prior permission for a minor to be photographed or recorded on film, video, audio, or other electronic media for the publications and social media is required from a parent/guardian.

3. First Aid and Medications

- 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, unless otherwise agreed upon by the parents and the Responsible Person. Exceptions may include rescue medications.
- Only the Responsible Person, or their adult designee, shall administer medications.

4. Supervision

- 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. During overnight events there must be at least one female and one male chaperone with mixed gender groups.
- Minimum ratios of adult to child/youth shall be in accordance with American Camp Association (ACA) guidelines as follows:
 - 5 years & younger — 2 adult for the first 5 overnight-participants and 1 adult for each additional 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

I. Overnight Programs

- The safe use of restrooms and showers by all participants requires consideration of numerous factors, including, but not limited to age, sex, gender identity and expression, and privacy. Adults should have separate showers or separate times for showers.
- 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 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 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 or hideabeds, 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, 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 a diocesan facility, congregation, or related 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 DMV 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

To maintain the highest possible standards of safety and accountability while recognizing that certain structured diocesan programs—such as Sawyerville, Vacation Bible School (VBS), and parish or diocesan youth retreats—operate under staffing models that may not meet full American Camp Association (ACA) ratios. This policy establishes a chain-of-command supervision model consistent with diocesan safeguarding principles.

This section applies only to organized, pre-approved programs conducted under the authority of the Episcopal Diocese of Alabama or its designated ministries and parishes.

Definitions

- Youth Staff/Chaperone: A participant age 16 or older who has completed all required Safeguarding God’s Children training and serves in a supervised leadership or support role.
- Adult: Any individual age 19 or older.
- Supervising Adult: An adult age 25 or older who holds responsibility for oversight of youth staff and program operations.
- Director/Clergy: The on-site program leader, rector, or chaplain responsible for ensuring compliance with diocesan policies.

Supervision Requirements

- A minimum of two unrelated adults, both age 19 or older, must be present at all times during programming.
- At least one adult age 25 or older must serve as the Supervising Adult, Director, or Clergy in charge.
- Youth Staff/Chaperones (ages 16 and older) may assist with rotations, small groups, or activity supervision only under the direct oversight of the supervising adult(s).

L. Travel

Travel with children and youth present opportunities for participants to experience the church and the world on a larger scale with different perspectives of faith communities and their contexts. It also presents challenges to normal safety protocols. 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.

- 9–14 years — 1:5
- 15–18 years — 1:7
- It is preferred that no group should travel with fewer than three adult chaperones. If the Travel includes an overnight stay the ratios for overnight events must be observed.
- One adult, minimum age 24, 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.
- 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.
- 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

- For major travel short-term trip or supplemental insurance, available through most church and organization's policies should be added as a rider.
- It is recommended that all travelers carry evidence of personal health insurance by virtue of a copy of the actual card provided to the insured person.

VII. 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, is strongly encouraged, and all mandated reporters are required to contact 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, congregation, or other organization, should immediately inform one of more or the following:

- The Bishop or the Office of the Bishop
- Clergy in charge or the Senior Warden in the case of a congregation without a clergy person.

- The director, head, or other governing officer in the case of other organizations; and/or
- The Intake Officer in any case in which a member of the clergy is suspected of abuse, neglect and/or exploitation.
- Should the allegations involve a bishop, a report shall be made to the Office of the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church USA.

B. Response of the Bishop Diocesan

The Bishop Diocesan, upon hearing reports of possible violations or abuse 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 canonical disciplinary action, as provided by Title IV of the Constitutions and Canons and/or termination of employment or unpaid ministry with the diocese.

C. Suspected Violations of this Policy

Anyone who suspects a violation of these policies shall immediately report the violation to the Responsible Person, and the Clergy in Charge. Note that an accusation that these policies have been violated is not the same as an accusation of actual abuse. Violations of these policies and procedures are often referred to as a “boundary violation.”

Clergy in Charge receiving reports of violations of this policy shall be responsible for taking immediate steps to ensure compliance with these policies. Any activity or event not being conducted according to these policies may be prematurely ended if such actions seem necessary to protect the participants.

Anyone who suspects a violation of these policies by a member of the clergy shall immediately report the violation to the Intake Officer of the diocese or to a Bishop serving within the Diocese of Alabama.

VIII. POLICY ADOPTION, IMPLEMENTATION, AND AUDIT

A. Adoption and Implementation

The Episcopal Diocese of Alabama shall ensure that all programs and events within the diocese involving children and youth comply with the standards set out in this policy.

B. Congregation and Organization Adoption, Implementation, and Audit

Congregations and organizations may adopt **additional policies and procedures so long as those policies and procedures are** consistent with and/or exceed the requirements in this diocesan policy and those additional policies and procedures are approved by the Office of the Bishop.

Notice of this ***Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults*** shall be posted in an area where activities take place, and the Policy shall be given to all paid and unpaid persons who minister to children or youth. The name, phone numbers, and email addresses of the member of the clergy in charge, or the head of congregation in a vacant cure and a contact person in the Office of the Bishop shall also be provided.

Each congregation and organization is required to conduct a ***Safe Church Self-Audit*** annually to confirm compliance with safe church policies, and to report such audit to the bishop's office.

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

- Availability of and safe retention of public records checks, application forms, records of screening and reference verification of paid and unpaid persons involved in ministry with children and youth.
- Availability of and safe retention of Records of compliance with ***Screening and Training Charts***.

Screening and Training Chart	Ministry Function	Background Check	Application, Interview, References	Safeguarding Training	Known for 6+ months	Sign the Covenant For Sexual Responsibility	Sign the Church Worker Statement
All Full-time Staff (30+ hours/week)	Administrative	X	X	X			
	Communications	X	X	X			
	Sextons	X	X	X			
	Choir Directors	X	X	X			
	Choir Members					X	X
Children's Ministry	Nursery Director	X	X	X		X	X
	Nursery Workers	X	X	X		X	X
	Day School Workers	X	X	X		X	X
	Children's Choir	X	X	X		X	X
	Volunteers	X		X	X	X	X
	Sunday School Teachers*	X		X	X	X	X
	VBS*	X		X	X	X	X
Youth Ministry	Youth Ministers	X	X	X		X	X
	Youth Advisors	X	X	X		X	X
	Chaperones	X	X	X		X	X
	Happening Staff	X	X	X		X	X
	Volunteers	X		X	X	X	X
Camp McDowell	Camp Staff	X	X	X		X	X
	Counselors	X	X	X		X	X
	Counselors in Training	X	X	X		X	X
	Volunteers	X		X	X	X	X
	Special Session	X	X	X		X	X
Sawverville and Foothills Day	Paid Staff	X	X	X		X	X
	Interns	X	X	X		X	X
	Volunteers	X	X	X		X	X
	Coordinators	X		X	X	X	X
Vestry Members	All Vestry Members					X	
Clergy	All Clergy	X	X	X		X	X

*Uncompensated Sunday School teachers and VBS volunteers operating during normal church school hours and where other adults are routinely present are exempt from background checks and safeguarding, but it is strongly encouraged

**Outside groups using church facilities involving youth and children may accept copies of background checks and sexual misconduct training from that organization and retained in parish files.

Required Training Modules	Safe Church, Safe Communities: Healthy Boundaries	Duty to Report: Mandated Reporter	Keeping Your Church Safe	Policies: Episcopal Diocese of Alabama	Safeguarding God's People: Preventing Sexual Harassment for Workers	Social Media Safety	Keeping Your Day Camp Safe	Keeping Your Overnight Camp Safe	Safeguarding God's People: Preventing Sexual Harassment For Managers and Supervisors	Safe Church, Safe Communities: Pastoral Relationships	Safe Church, Safe Communities: Introduction and Theological Background	*Preventing Abuse Against Adults with Disabilities	Recognizing Abuse and Exploitation in Elder Serving Programs
All full-time (30+ hours/week) Parish Staff: - Administrative - Sextons - Choir Directors - Communications	X	X	X	X	X								
Children's & Youth Ministry: - Nursery Director - Day School Director - Youth Ministers - Youth Advisors	X	X	X	X		X			X	X	X	X	
Children's & Youth Ministry: - Chaperones - Happening Staff - Nursery Workers - Day School Workers - Children's Choir - Volunteers - Sunday School Teachers* - VBS*	X	X		X	X	X				X			
Camp McDowell: - Camp Staff - Counselors - Counselors in Training - Volunteers - Special Session*	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X		X	
Sawyerhill and Foothills Day Camp - Paid Staff - Interns - Volunteers - Coordinators	X	X		X	X	X	X	X					
Respite Programs - Paid Staff - Volunteers				X								X	X
All Clergy:	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	