

CHURCH PREPARED
SEXUAL ABUSE
PREVENTION,
RESPONSE AND CARE



KENTUCKY BAPTIST CONVENTION SEXUAL MISCONDUCT HANDBOOK

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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Sexual Misconduct Handbook is to provide a resource for ministry leaders in navigating various forms of sexual misconduct, providing clear expectations and boundaries regarding interpersonal behavior.

OBSERVATIONS

All forms of sexual misconduct are wrong; some forms of sexual misconduct are illegal, requiring a report to law enforcement authorities. This Handbook outlines forms of sexual misconduct and identifies legislative code sections, where relevant, describing reporting requirements and processes. In a circumstance where a report to law enforcement or child protection agencies is *required by law*, this Handbook describes best practices and appropriate actions.

LANGUAGE MATTERS

Identifying and addressing sexual misconduct starts with clearly defined language, creating clarity and a common vocabulary surrounding this important topic. Some words have legal significance beyond common use: abuse, harassment and assault, for example, are often used interchangeably. Because precision is important, consider the following terms related to sexual misconduct and their distinctions.

Forms of Sexual Misconduct include:

1. **Child Sexual Abuse:** Inappropriate sexual behavior with a child, perpetrated by an adult
2. **Peer-to-Peer Sexual Abuse:** Inappropriate sexual behavior occurring between children
3. **Sexual Assault:** Nonconsensual sexual behavior occurring *between adults* (often characterized by force, threat or violence)
4. **Sexual Harassment:** Inappropriate sexual behavior *between adults* in the workplace (not *necessarily* characterized by force or violence)

Note: Nos. 1 and 2 involve injury to a child; Nos. 3 and 4 involve injury to an adult.

PART ONE – PROTECTING CHILDREN

Sexual Misconduct harmful to children typically occurs in two forms: Child Sexual Abuse and Peer-to-Peer Sexual Abuse.

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE (CSA)

DEFINITION (Simplified)

Child sexual abuse: Any tricked, forced, manipulated or coerced sexual activity for the pleasure of the abuser.¹

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE FACTS

These statistics provide a framework for the Handbook processes that follow.

In the United States:

- 1 out of 4 girls and 1 out of 6 boys will be sexually abused before reaching 18 years of age.
- More than 90% of children are victimized by someone they *know and trust*.
- 2 out of 3 sexual abuse survivors do not disclose until adulthood, *if ever*.
- These statistics are applicable to all demographics, socioeconomic statuses, ethnicities and denominations.
- Perpetrators *groom* children for inappropriate sexual touch.
- Perpetrators *groom the gatekeepers* to believe they are helpful, responsible and trustworthy individuals.
- *Preferential* offenders have an *age and gender of preference* for sexual interaction with children.
- For the *convicted* male offender recidivism is rampant, reaching 50-150 victims prior to criminal prosecution.
- In the convicted male population, the *age of first offense* is 13-14 years of age, on average.
- Less than 10% of abusers will encounter the criminal justice system in any form, *ever*.
- *False allegations of child sexual abuse are RARE.*

¹[Child Sexual Abuse Definition KRS 600.020 \(1\) & \(61\): 600.020 Definitions for KRS Chapters 600 to 645.](#)

PEER-TO-PEER SEXUAL ABUSE

DEFINITION (Simplified)

Peer-to-Peer Sexual Abuse:

Sexually harmful behavior between children involving an *aggressor* and a child who does not seek out or want the sexual interaction.

FACTS

- 1 out of 3 reports of sexual abuse are perpetrated by another child (under 18 years of age).
- Children as young as 4 or 5 may engage in harmful sexual behaviors.
- For the *aggressor*: the age range of highest rate of offense is 12-14 years of age.
- Seven out of eight reported juvenile sex offenders are over 12 years of age.
- 93% of reported juvenile sex offenders are *male*.

(United States DOJ statistics, 2019)

Realities to keep in mind:

- *All* non-consensual sexual touch is a *crime*.
- Peer-to-peer sexual abuse must be reported under KY mandatory reporting statutes.
- The age of consent for sexual interaction is 16 in the state of Kentucky, but *age of consent* is irrelevant in circumstances characterized by a significant *imbalance of power* (*age, size, authority, position, dependence, etc.*).

COMMUNICATION PLAN

Every ministry should have a communication plan – both *internal* and *external*.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Every ministry should have a clearly communicated plan identifying issues that *must* be shared with other ministry leaders – particularly when the issue may involve injury of a child or adult. If the issue requires a report to law enforcement or child protection authorities, the ministry should follow a well-defined communication plan (see Child Sexual Abuse Response Plan, Appendix 1). Not all matters, however, require a report to authorities (i.e., policy violations, unusual or problematic behaviors).

Every staff member within the ministry should understand the pathways of communication to freely express or describe issues or circumstances for evaluation and possible response by ministry leaders. Open communication avoids this breakdown: “I saw problematic behavior, but I didn’t know who to tell.”

EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Some issues or circumstances must be communicated *outside* the ministry’s internal communication pathways, including suspicions or allegations of child abuse or neglect that must be reported to authorities. Some issues may require communication to families, the congregation and/or an insurance carrier, depending on the facts. Every ministry should create an external communication plan *before* the plan is needed. (See Child Sexual Abuse Response Plan, **Appendix 1**).

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE: REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

REPORTING CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

Every church or ministry will encounter sexual abuse issues, whether in the form or allegations from within the ministry or from a child's *core world* or *home environment*. Where suspicions or allegations of abuse are concerned, every ministry should create a Child Sexual Abuse Response Plan (See **Appendix 1**).

Every ministry's Response Plan should include *abuse reporting policies* complying with the mandatory reporting requirements decreed by the state of Kentucky. Kentucky reporting requirements are provided below, highlighting key provisions and accompanying Best Practices.

Note: Child sexual abuse (perpetrated by an adult) and peer sexual abuse (perpetrated by another child) are reportable events – *both involve sexual abuse of a child*.

KENTUCKY REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Kentucky Revised Statutes: KRS 620.030(1)

Any person who knows or has reasonable cause to believe that a child is dependent*, neglected, or abused shall immediately cause an oral or written report to be made to a local law enforcement agency or to the Department of Kentucky State Police, the cabinet or its designated representative, the Commonwealth's attorney, or the county attorney by telephone or otherwise. Any supervisor who receives from an employee a report of suspected dependency, neglect, or abuse shall promptly make a report to the proper authorities for investigation. If the cabinet receives a report of abuse or neglect allegedly committed by a person other than a parent, guardian, fictive kin, person in a position of authority, person in a position of special trust, or person exercising custodial control or supervision, the cabinet shall refer the matter to the Commonwealth's attorney or the county attorney and the local law enforcement agency or the Department of Kentucky State Police. **Nothing in this section shall relieve individuals of their obligations to report.**

Local Law Enforcement Agency	Call 911
Department of Kentucky State Police	1-877-KYSAFE1 (877-597-2331)
Cabinet For Health and Family Services	1-877-KYSAFE1 (877-597-2331)
Commonwealth's Attorney	[Internet Search for contact info]
County Attorney	[Internet Search for contact info]

CLERGY PRIVILEGE

In Kentucky, *clergy privilege* related to reports of child sexual abuse exists in an extremely narrow form. For clergy privilege to exist, the communication must be received by the clergy member, from the *abuser* (not the victim, victim's parent, spouse or staff member), and must occur in a context wherein the abuser is actively seeking clerical comfort, direction or instruction. In any circumstance where a clergy member receives information related to child abuse from *any source* other than the abuser, *clergy privilege cannot exist*.

KRS 620.030(5)

Neither the husband-wife nor any professional-client/patient privilege, except the attorney-client and clergy-penitent privilege, shall be a ground for refusing to report under this section or for excluding evidence regarding a dependent, neglected, or abused child or the cause thereof, in any judicial proceedings resulting from a report pursuant to this section

If a clergy member concludes that a clergy privilege may be asserted in a given circumstance, competent legal counsel should be consulted.

Best Practice

If a clergy member concludes that a clergy privilege *may* be asserted in a given circumstance, competent legal counsel should be consulted.²

CHANGES IN THE LAW

Legal reporting requirements change constantly: ministry leaders must stay abreast of state and federal changes in the law.³

² Do not assume *all* attorneys are equipped to provide competent counsel where child sexual abuse issues are at issue.

³ Kentucky Statutes: <https://apps.legislature.ky.gov/law/statutes/chapter.aspx?id=39420>

ADDITIONAL REPORTING OBLIGATIONS

OVERVIEW

In addition to a report to relevant authorities, additional circumstances may require reporting.

NOTIFYING YOUR INSURANCE CARRIER

Reporting allegations or suspicions of child abuse to relevant authorities is a legal obligation; failure to do so is a CRIME. Reporting this information to a ministry's *insurance carrier* is a contractual obligation, rather than an obligation under state law; failure to do so can have contractual consequences.

Policy Notice Provision

Every ministry should purchase appropriate insurance coverage, including coverage related to Sexual Abuse and Molestation (SAM Coverage) or Sexual Misconduct Coverage. Every insurance policy will contain a 'notice' requirement similar to this:

In the event the insured [ministry] receives information concerning facts that could give rise to a claim, the insured is required under this policy to notify the insurance carrier immediately, but not later than 24 hours after receipt of this information.

If a circumstance related to sexual abuse includes a fact pattern which *could* give rise to a claim (lawsuit) against the church or ministry program, this notice provision requires the ministry to notify its insurance carrier. (*Presumably a report to authorities has already occurred.*)

Failure to Notify Carrier

Failure to notify the carrier in this circumstance can result in a 'reservation of rights' or denial of coverage by the carrier. Either scenario places the ministry in an adversarial position with its insurance carrier, which is not a desirable circumstance while navigating a crisis.

NOTIFYING PARENTS, CONGREGATION AND STAKEHOLDERS

Though not legally required or contractually mandated, notifying parents, members of the congregation and ministry stakeholders is imperative, particularly if the alleged abuser was a ministry staff member, volunteer or lay leader. What to communicate and to whom is driven by the particular fact pattern being navigated. See the Sexual Abuse Response Plan (See **Appendix 1**) for specific guidance related to these communications.

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES TO REPORTING

OVERVIEW

Every state in the United States, including Kentucky, has mandatory reporting requirements decreed by state law: when a mandatory reporter gains knowledge of or suspects abuse or neglect of a child, that individual is required to report to designated authorities. The consistent message from state and federal lawmakers, child advocacy organizations, insurance organizations and risk managers is this: *when in doubt, REPORT.*

Regardless of clear legal requirements mandating the report of child sexual abuse and neglect – and the reality that *failure to report* can bring about criminal charges – *ministry leaders continue to struggle with this obligation.* To avoid the common pitfalls, ministry leaders must understand common misconceptions about sexual abuse and sexual abusers that lead to failure to report. By replacing misconceptions with factual information, ministries can avoid these failures, providing a clear pathway to a *correct response* that may feel or seem counterintuitive. Listed below are the most common obstacles to reporting.

“WHAT IF I AM WRONG?”

Many individuals struggle with the thought: *What if I’m wrong?* What if I make this report, impact this person’s life, and I’m *wrong?*

Hesitation in reporting child sexual abuse is common, particularly in circumstances where ministry staff members or leaders lack an understanding of sexual abuse, sexual abusers, broader legal requirements and ramifications to the victim. When sexual abuse is alleged or reasonably suspected, leaders know the next step may have significant consequences – for the ministry, for the child and for the individual accused.

At this juncture, too often the focus of ministry leader is on the alleged bad actor:

- “If I call authorities, it can ruin this employee’s career, marriage, reputation ...”
- “This child is accusing someone I know ... I cannot imagine him doing this.”
- “When I asked her about it, she denied touching the child in any inappropriate manner.”
- “This is simply what the child said... and I have no proof.”
- “This child may be making this up – should I believe a trusted staff member or a *child?*”

Here’s the reality: by creating very broad reporting obligations and requiring that *all* allegations and reasonable suspicions of abuse be reported, the Kentucky state

legislature has decided that the safety and welfare of the *child* outweigh any inconvenience to an *adult* (or another child, in peer-to-peer sexual abuse scenarios).

Reporting Principle: the safety and welfare of the child outweighs any inconvenience to an adult.

In addition, when an adult or older child is the subject of a report to authorities, the alleged bad actor has *significant* due process and legal rights in any investigative process and criminal prosecution. Alternatively, when *no* report is made, the child victim receives *no due process*.

Worse, the child joins thousands of abuse survivors who draw damaging conclusions from the experience, including:

- “No one believes me.”
- “They believe my abuser instead of me.”
- “There is no point in speaking out; I will never be believed.”
- “Somehow, it was my fault.”
- “I was powerless to stop what happened, and will be powerless to stop it in the future.”
- “There is no justice here for me, or others.”
- “This is not a safe place for me.”

At this point, child-serving leaders are at a crossroad: *make a report or not*. When a report is made, the accused adult (or older child) may engage in the process to prevent injustice. When the report is *not* made, the child may continue to experience abuse..... *and additional trauma from the silence of those who failed to report*.

FEAR OF FALSE ALLEGATIONS

One of the most unfortunate reasons for failure to report is the fear of reporting a *false allegation*, thereby creating hardship for the individual accused. This fear is pervasive, notwithstanding mandatory reporting requirements, and has great likelihood of causing further damage to an abuse victim. What follows is an attempt to correct the common misconception that false allegations of child sexual abuse are common, or, conversely, that abuse allegations should be investigated and *proven* before a report occurs.

False allegations of child sexual abuse are rare: less than 3%.
(Center for Disease Control)

False Allegations are RARE

Statistically, false allegations of child sexual abuse are *rare*. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) and numerous academic studies indicate false allegations are uncommon: *less than 3%*.

The majority of allegations determined to be false are *made by adults* on a child's behalf in the context of divorce and custody disputes. When an allegation is communicated by the child – *even if subsequently recanted in an effort to please family members or others* – more than 98% of allegations are factual. In most circumstances, a child's outcry provides only a fraction of the actual abusive experience. In general, *children don't fabricate an allegation*.

The point is this: *the great majority of abuse allegations are factual and should be taken as truth*. Not only should the child be believed, it can generally be assumed that the child has endured *more* abusive behavior than what has been communicated. Further, state and federal reporting requirements do not require *proof* or *corroboration*; the reporting requirement is triggered by *receiving an allegation* or forming a *reasonable suspicion* of abuse or neglect.

Legislative Balance: Protect the Child

Clearly, reporting requirements were intentionally crafted to initiate communication with a low threshold of information – even if an alleged bad actor is inconvenienced by the report. This is intentional on the part of state and federal legislative bodies: the safety of the child outweighs inconvenience to the alleged bad actor. Legislative bodies have balanced the possible inconvenience and injury to an accused adult (or older child) and found it to be insufficient to overcome the compelling interest of *protecting vulnerable children*.

GROOMING THE GATEKEEPERS

Circumstances giving rise to a report of sexual abuse are rarely convenient, easy or unemotional. Instead, allegations typically involve behavior that is *difficult to believe* about an individual who is *difficult to suspect*. Keep in mind: false allegations are rare – the majority of outcries are truthful and factual.

In some circumstances, ministry leaders fail to report due to a fundamental lack of understanding of the *preferential offender*. Preferential offenders, who *prefer* a child as a sexual partner, generally have an *age and gender of preference* (e.g. *pre-pubescent females* or *adolescent males*). These offenders *groom* children for sexual abuse, and, in addition, *groom the gatekeepers* surrounding the targeted child, working to have parents, supervisors and co-workers believe them to be helpful, trustworthy and responsible.

When supervisors have been *groomed* as a gatekeeper, he or she rarely remains objective, and this is intentional on the part of the offender. Almost without exception, offenders create opportunities for *trusted time alone* with the targeted child, and because he or she is now 'known' and trusted, and an allegation or suspicion is more likely to be discounted by co-workers and supervisors.

HISTORICAL ALLEGATIONS

Historical allegations – those that relate to alleged abuse occurring years or decades ago – have become common. In most circumstances, ministries should treat historical allegations as if the alleged abuse occurred *today*. Keep these two realities in mind: the United States has the best criminal justice system in the world, yet the system is clearly imperfect.

Two out of three children *don't tell* about abuse until adulthood, if ever.

In our current cultural context, two out of three children *don't tell* about abuse they have experienced until adulthood, *if ever*. This is further compounded by the fact that most children don't tell because "no one will believe me" (which, too often, is true). The Church must become more skilled at preventing abuse, recognizing signs and symptoms of abuse, and recognizing predatory behaviors and characteristics. A ministry's willingness to recognize and report suspicions of abuse forms a key element in protecting the children it serves.

If the historical allegation relates to behavior which occurred on your watch, in the context of your ministry, or the alleged abuser is a current or former staff member or volunteer, *report* to law enforcement. *Do not* assume that the passage of time makes a report time-barred or irrelevant; from a public perception standpoint, this looks like cover-up. In general, when in doubt ... *report*.

HEARSAY

Many fail to make a report of child abuse because the information they learned about the suspected abuse was 'hearsay'.

Hearsay Defined *and Misapplied*

The legal definition of hearsay: *an out-of-court statement, made in court, to prove the truth of the matter asserted.* In a courtroom setting, the Rules of Evidence prefer the original source of a statement or utterance rather than a version of the statement being recounted by another. In short, 'hearsay' is a legal principle associated with forms of evidence that are admissible in a legal proceeding.

Suspensions of Abuse Include Hearsay

The concept of 'hearsay' is often interpreted by lay people as follows: *I cannot report an abuse matter because I only heard about it from another – therefore, I cannot meet the evidentiary threshold for making a report.* Ministry leaders must not, however, confuse standards related to courtroom Rules of Evidence with Kentucky mandatory reporting requirements.

Kentucky Reporting Requirements

The Kentucky legislature clearly created an 'evidentiary threshold' well below that required to prove a matter in a criminal or civil proceeding – in fact, it is the lowest possible threshold in law. Kentucky law requires all adults to report SUSPICIONS of child abuse or neglect. *Suspicion* is not defined in the code section, but is commonly understood to mean: *a feeling or thought that something is possible, likely or true.* Hearsay falls clearly within this broad definition. In fact, most *suspensions of abuse* originate from something learned from another.

In short, the Kentucky legislature intentionally created an extremely broad definition in order to receive as much information from as many individuals as possible in order to protect vulnerable children. Whether relevant information is 'hearsay' (or not) may play a role in subsequent criminal or civil proceedings, but 'hearsay' should never provide a basis for failure to report child abuse or neglect to the appropriate Kentucky authorities.

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION

AN EFFECTIVE SAFETY SYSTEM

Reporting child abuse and neglect is *one* element in a ministry's child protection efforts. Reporting *alone* is not enough; each ministry must implement a plan to *prevent* child sexual abuse.

Preventing child sexual abuse begins at the *ministry level*: every Church should work proactively to *prevent* and *respond well* to child sexual abuse. Prevention begins with the implementation of an effective *Safety System*. MinistrySafe provides all elements of an effective Safety System and an online framework for managing each element. Learn more about MinistrySafe's online resources and the implementation of a Safety System in the *MinistrySafe – Getting Started Guide* in **Appendix 2**.

The Offender's Grooming Process

In developing an effective Safety System, ministries are building a fence: a protective device meant to keep out an unwanted intruder, and the *type* of fence is driven by the type of intruder. Accordingly, an understanding of offender behavior and characteristics is key. When ministry leaders understand offender *behavior*, the Church is able to design and construct effective barriers.

When a ministry gathers children, it becomes an attractive target for the *preferential offender*, who prefers a child as a sexual partner, generally targeting a child within his or her *age range and gender of preference*.

We cannot recognize this risk *visually* ...
we must recognize this risk *behaviorally*.
The behavior is known as 'the grooming process'.

Sadly, it's not possible to recognize the preferential offender *visually*; offenders have no visual profile. Instead, ministry leaders must recognize the risk *behaviorally* – *the grooming process*. The grooming process of the preferential offender includes two key elements: ***grooming the child*** and ***grooming the gatekeepers***.

The targeted child is *groomed* for inappropriate sexual interaction, while *gatekeepers* (parents, ministry leaders and co-workers) are groomed into a belief that the offender is

a helpful, responsible and trustworthy individual. Remember, all abusers are creating opportunities for *trusted time alone* with a targeted child.

Validated by decades of academic studies, the grooming process of the abuser is *known* and *recognizable*, and includes the following steps:

- Gaining access to children within an *age and gender of preference*;
- Selecting a specific child (or children);
- Introducing nudity and sexual touch; and
- Keeping the child *silent*.

Elements of an Effective Safety System

An Effective Safety System includes following elements:

- Sexual Abuse Awareness Training
- Skillful Screening Processes (and Training)
- Appropriate Criminal Background Check
- Tailored Policies & Procedures
- Systems for Monitoring and Oversight

Each of these elements play a role in a system; no one element serves as a stand-alone safety protocol.

Sexual Abuse Awareness Training

Sexual Abuse Awareness Training forms the foundation of an effective Safety System, because ministry leaders cannot address a risk they do not understand, and *what we believe shapes what we DO*. Prevention starts with awareness.

Awareness Training equips ministry staff members and volunteers with a better understanding of abuser characteristics, the abuser's *grooming process* and *common grooming behaviors*—giving workers *eyes to see* abuser characteristics and behaviors.

Training topics include:

- Facts and Misconceptions
- Characteristics of an Abuser
- Grooming Process
- Peer to Peer Abuse
- Risk Reduction & Prevention
- If a Child Reports
- Impact on Children
- Reporting Requirements

Further, *what we believe shapes what we SAY*. When staff members and volunteers are trained to recognize grooming behaviors, all are better equipped to receive and report allegations and suspicions of abuse, both internally and to appropriate civil authorities.

What we BELIEVE shapes what we DO.
What we BELIEVE shapes what we SAY.

Skillful Screening

The best predictor of future behavior is past behavior. Screening is the process by which ministry leaders gather information about an applicant's past behavior to better predict future behavior. An effective ministry screening process should include the following elements for paid staff positions *and* volunteers: application, reference checks, criminal background check and an interview.

Commonly, ministries screen applicants for fitness of purpose – gathering information about an applicant's past behavior to determine whether the applicant has the skills, abilities and education to fill a particular role. For example, if a Christian school desires to hire a Greek teacher, it's important to gather information to determine whether the applicant has mastered Greek and can effectively teach it. In this example, the school's purpose for screening was related to fitness of purpose (teaching Greek), *not child safety*.

Screening for child safety requires the gathering of information concerning an applicant's past behavior to determine whether the applicant has 'wolf-like qualities'. Where child safety is concerned, an effective screening process includes questions designed to elicit high-risk indicators of the preferential offender (male and female).

Every applicant – paid or unpaid – should be screened before he or she may enter the *sheep pen*, gaining access to children. The goal: *keep the wolf out of the sheep pen* – recognizing wolf-like qualities *before* allowing access to children.

Unfortunately, many ministries are not screening effectively, and some Churches are not screening *at all*. Training and resources related to effective screening are available through MinistrySafe; see *The MinistrySafe System – Getting Started*, **Appendix 2**.

Criminal Background Check

In 2022, most ministries require criminal background checks. For many, background checks are the Church's sole volunteer screening method, because ministry leaders lack

an understanding of the criminal justice system and known *limitations* of criminal background checks.

We must perform criminal background checks ...
but background checks cannot be the only thing we do.

Consider this statistic:

Less than 10% of sexual abusers will encounter the criminal justice system, *ever*.

Given this reality, if a ministry's background check system is working *perfectly* (which is unlikely), more than 90% of individuals who have sexually abused children have no past criminal record ... *and know it*. Making a reasonable effort to access past criminal history has become a standard of care, but background checks cannot serve as a stand-alone safety system.

Background checks *can* be a helpful tool when used effectively. For each staff member or volunteer, the depth of criminal background check should be determined by the extent of direct contact with children. In addition, background checks should be periodically refreshed. As well, ministry leaders should become conversant with high-risk indicators revealed by the background check process, including plea-down offenses, stair-step offenses and grooming offenses.

Tailored Policies & Procedures

Policies and Procedures are the written expression of permissible and impermissible behavior within the ministry program. Effective policies should be tailored to the type of ministry program and population served, and shaped around an understanding of the abuser's *grooming process, abuser characteristics* and *common grooming behaviors*.

Through Awareness Training, staff members and volunteers are trained to better understand the *purpose* of policies, therefore serving more effectively within policy boundaries, and recognizing problematic behaviors *before* inappropriate sexual interaction occurs. As well, when policy 'bright lines' are clearly communicated – *this* is appropriate, *this* is *NOT* – staff members and volunteers are more likely to notice when someone steps *over* the 'bright line'. Written policy should present clear guidelines concerning appropriate touch, talk, boundaries, social media, bathroom use, one-to-one interaction, overnight stays and reporting requirements.

One purpose of policies is to provide a written expression of what IS and IS NOT appropriate behavior within a particular program. Because the grooming process will vary, policies will vary – depending on the type of program (i.e., children’s ministry vs. student ministry) or the age and gender of children served. As a result, all policies will address grooming, but there may be policy variations for different ministry programs. A sample Children’s Ministry Policy provided by MinistrySafe is attached as **Appendix 3**.

Systems for Monitoring and Oversight

For any Safety System to remain effective, systems for monitoring and oversight must be in place, ensuring that *you DO what you SAY you do* in a consistent manner.

A periodic review of safety system elements is necessary to maintain consistency:

Does the system still fit the ministry?

Are adequate methods of accountability in place?

Is the ministry able to archive evidence of safety system compliance?

Leaders must evaluate new programs for child protection issues, monitor changes in reporting requirements, address ongoing need for policy updates, and include child protection compliance in employee performance evaluations. Periodic review ensures that child protection is not jeopardized by the departure of one or two key staff members or volunteers.

To learn more about MinistrySafe’s online Control Panel and Systems for Monitoring and Oversight, visit MinistrySafe.com or see *The MinistrySafe System – Getting Started*, attached as **Appendix 2**.

SAFETY COMMITTEE

The Safety Committee is a group of individuals responsible for addressing all areas of child protection in an ongoing manner, ensuring that Safety System elements are implemented consistently.

It is imperative that the Safety Committee be empowered and authorized by church polity to ACT where child protection issues are concerned.

Serving on the Church Safety Committee

The Safety Committee should consist of at least three individuals, such that child protection issues or allegations do not ‘bottleneck’ with one or two people. More than nine individuals may become unwieldy, where scheduling issues are concerned. *Best practice:* Require completion of Sexual Abuse Awareness Training and Skillful Screening Training for the Children’s Minister, Student Ministry Pastor, the chair of the Safety Committee and the Executive Pastor.

Recommended Safety Committee members include:

- Executive Pastor
- Children's Minister
- Student Ministry Pastor
- Any Pastor overseeing any other child-serving program
- Designated Elder or Deacon (representing the Elder Board or Deacons)

Safety Committee Meetings

Initially, the committee should meet monthly. After six monthly meetings, the committee may elect to meet quarterly. In addition to regular meetings, the Safety Committee should meet immediately following any significant incident related to child protection to discuss the incident, action steps, and any need for policy modification.

Topics to be Discussed (Initial Six Months)

- Creating the Sexual Abuse Response Plan
- Creating a proposed budget for child protection
- Church adherence to child protection policies and adopted practices
- Any issues arising from specific child-serving programs
- Potential problem areas or programs
- Screening protocols, including timelines, for employees and volunteers
- Keeping a comprehensive list of ALL Church programs serving minors

All child protection issues should be addressed by the Safety Committee. No Church ministry program should be authorized to initiate services to children or youth without first vetting the proposed services through the Safety Committee.

Every five years, the Safety Committee should complete an assessment of all services offered to children or youth, evaluating child protection in each program, including:

- Unscheduled drop-in supervision
- Discussion with program leaders
- Discussion with child protection experts
- Review of performance evaluations in key positions

All suspicions or allegations of child abuse or neglect communicated to or arising out of Church programs should be reported to a member of the Safety Committee. ***Failure to report to the Safety Committee by a Church employee should be deemed a violation of ministry policy which may lead to termination.***

Best Practice: Should a suspicion or allegation of child sexual abuse be received by ANY committee member, the committee chair must be notified the same business day, but in any case, within 24 hours, such that no member of the committee becomes a bottleneck related to the allegation or information.

Any failure to comply with this requirement should be deemed a violation of ministry policy which may lead to termination.

When an allegation or suspicion of abuse arises, the committee will act to report the allegation if the circumstance, outcry or allegation was not previously reported to child protection agencies or law enforcement. After this report has occurred, the Safety Committee will take appropriate action to safeguard other children and implement elements of the Sexual Abuse Response Plan. When needed, the Safety Committee (or its designee) will retain legal counsel concerning reporting requirements and appropriate action in all child protection contexts.

CONCLUSION

Sexual abusers move to where the barriers to entry are lowest or nonexistent: too often, the Church. When ministry leaders understand the risk presented by the preferential offender, an effective Safety System may be put in place, proactively protecting children from sexual abuse.

PART TWO – PROTECTING ADULTS

ADULT-TO-ADULT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

OBSERVATIONS

All forms of sexual misconduct are wrong; some forms of sexual misconduct are *illegal*, requiring a report to law enforcement. Because sexual misconduct involving a child is a *crime*, the appropriate response is more straight-forward. Sexual behavior between adults, however, may lack a clear pathway forward, depending upon the context.

Sexual Interaction vs. Sexual Misconduct

Sexual interaction between unmarried adults is immoral and contrary to Scripture, but may not be *illegal*.

When does sexual interaction become *sexual misconduct*? The hallmarks of sexual misconduct between adults inevitably involve *motive* and an *imbalance of power*. Any evaluation of adult-to-adult sexual misconduct requires the use of wisdom and judgment.

The hallmarks of sexual misconduct between adults inevitably involve *motive* and an *imbalance of power*.

Protective Frameworks

In colleges and universities, for example, there is a presumed imbalance of power related to incoming freshmen – especially females – which may create an unsafe environment. As a result, all colleges and universities receiving federal funding are required under Title IX to provide training to highlight the risk and create an avenue for reporting any violation, which may result in significant Title IX penalties for the offender *and* the institution.

Other forms of protection *in the workplace* are provided by state and federal legislation. The Church, however, remains largely unregulated.

Given clear biblical mandates regarding behavior (Proverbs 29:7; 31:8-9; Psalm 82:3; Isaiah 56:1; Matthew 25:40; Galatians 6:2; James 1:27), the Church should provide the healthiest possible environment for the weak or vulnerable. In many ministry environments, however, the weak and vulnerable lack any meaningful protection, even that in place on university campuses and in secular workplaces.

In ministry environments, there is no 'presumed imbalance of power', there is no 'Title IX' framework, and there is often no reporting mechanism or defined authority to penalize or remove offenders.

ESTABLISHING AN ENVIRONMENT OF RESPECT

Every church should create and maintain an environment of respect – free from harassment or any form of sexual misconduct between adults. Child protection pathways are established by legislation and licensure; aside from sexual assault, misconduct involving adults must be established through policies and clearly expressed expectations at the ministry level.

The Kentucky Baptist Convention (KBC), for example, has clearly expressed expectations, policies and communication pathways to ensure environments of respect for KBC offices and programs.

Consistent with Baptist polity, the KBC lacks the authority to establish or mandate policies and processes at the church level. It may be helpful, however, for Kentucky Baptist churches to have access to and review the policies and processes used by the KBC. Accordingly, the KBC policies and processes regarding harassment, sexual harassment and workplace violence are provided, below, for evaluation by Kentucky Baptist churches.

It is not the role of the KBC to create or edit policies and processes for Kentucky Baptist churches; the information provided below is intended as an aid for ministry leaders to better understand work done at the *Convention level*, by way of example. Further, the policies and processes must fit the user; though the policies and processes provided below may be useful as an example, they should be tailored to the individual Church utilizing them.

The information in Appendix 3 is NOT provided as a recommended or required template. Kentucky Baptist Convention policies and procedures are open-source documents occasionally requested by pastors and church committees as they build their own church-specific policies and procedures.

ANTI-HARASSMENT

All forms of harassment are inappropriate; some forms of harassment are *illegal*, when the offensive behavior or commentary involves an individual's race, color, national origin, sex, age (40+), disability, pregnancy, work-related injury, genetic information, veteran status, or any other status as required by law.

The Anti-Harassment policy created and used by the Kentucky Baptist Convention is the first document provided in **Appendix 4**.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is a form of misconduct that undermines the integrity of the employment relationship and threatens a healthy and respectful work environment. It refers to behavior that is not welcome, that is personally offensive, that debilitates morale, and that, therefore, interferes with work effectiveness. No employee – whether male or female – should be subjected to unsolicited and unwelcome sexual overtures or conduct, either verbal or physical.

The Sexual Harassment policy created and utilized by the Kentucky Baptist Convention is the second document provided in **Appendix 4**.

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

In an effort to provide all employees and visitors with a safe, violence-free environment, the Kentucky Baptist Convention has created a policy that delineates the KBC's position with respect to workplace violence, providing guidelines regarding prohibited conduct, reporting incidents and complaint investigation.

The Workplace Violence policy created and used by the Kentucky Baptist Convention is the third document provided in **Appendix 4**.

PART THREE

SURVIVOR CARE AND THE LOCAL CHURCH

Studies show there are 60 million child sexual abuse survivors in the United States. Given a population of 300 million, that's 1 out of 5 Americans who were sexually abused before reaching 18 years of age.

Sexual abuse survivors are attending churches, our Kentucky Baptist Churches, searching for hope and healing from the devastating effects of sexual abuse. **KBC churches must care for survivors.** What follows are suggestions related to best practices for caring for sexual abuse survivors in the local church.

“Trauma is the new mission field.”

Diane Langberg

Sanctification is the process of growing in Christlikeness. Personal sanctification involves the whole person - head, hands, and heart.

- Head / Knowing - “Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth” John 17:17
- Hands / Doing - “Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.” James 1:22
- Heart / Being - “Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.” Proverbs 4:23

Everything about a person flows from the heart. When a heart is wounded through a sin, such as sexual abuse, sanctification becomes more difficult. Wounded hearts hold onto anger, fear, resentment, and unforgiveness. Caring for sexual abuse survivors means helping to address wounded hearts in godly ways.

TWO MODELS OF HELP

There are two models of help available to survivors: professional and biblical.

- Professional help is a **one-on-one model**. In most instances, a professionally trained counselor or therapist meets with an individual to provide thoughtful interaction and exercises for healing.
- Biblical help is a **one-another model**. In this model of helping, the local church becomes the living, active body of Christ through real life relationships, sharing hurts and applying biblical truth.

The biblical model of helping offers several advantages:

- **The Word of God** - a source for truth and guidance for life (Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. Psalm 119:105)
- **The Indwelling Holy Spirit** - a source for power and access to the power of God (Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. 2 Cor. 3:17)
- **The Family of Faith** - (Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts." Colossians 3:16)

CHRISTIAN ANTHROPOLOGY

Christian anthropology is the study of humans as it relates to God. A complete anthropology includes:

- Doctrine of Sin - "what is wrong with us"
- Doctrine of Suffering - "what has happened to us"

Jesus Addressed our **sin** by his death as our Savior on the cross. He went to the cross in His physical body to address our sin.

Jesus Addresses our **suffering** by his life as our Shepherd through the church. He shepherds us in our suffering through his spiritual body, the church.

Christian anthropology requires us to shepherd those who have suffered through the local church. We must be willing to engage in real life ministry, which is often messy and fluid, as we shepherd our church body toward healing and wholeness.

THE FEARLESS SERIES FOR THE LOCAL CHURCH

The Fearless Series for women is a five-video series for small groups in the local church to begin the conversation about sexual abuse. Both survivors and local church attendees may participate in the five-session video study. A trained facilitator guides discussion and keeps the group on track to accomplish session goals.



Dr. James Reeves hosts facilitator training several times each year, and is available to consult with individual churches to implement the Fearless Series.

Facilitator training is FREE of charge. For information about the series visit www.FS4Women.com

CONTENT of FEARLESS SERIES:

- **Prevalence of sexual abuse**
- **Problems that can present from sexual abuse**
- **Priority for the church to address sexual abuse**
- **Prevention of sexual abuse**
- **Pathway of healing from sexual abuse**

HELPFUL INFORMATION:

Each video is 30 minutes long, followed by a small group discussion for about an hour. *Facilitator training is FREE of charge.* The suggested group size is 5 to 7 women. A study guide accompanies the video sessions.

“This series has helped me understand that I am not the only one. I now have insight about what to look for in children that may be sexually abused. I can be healed!”

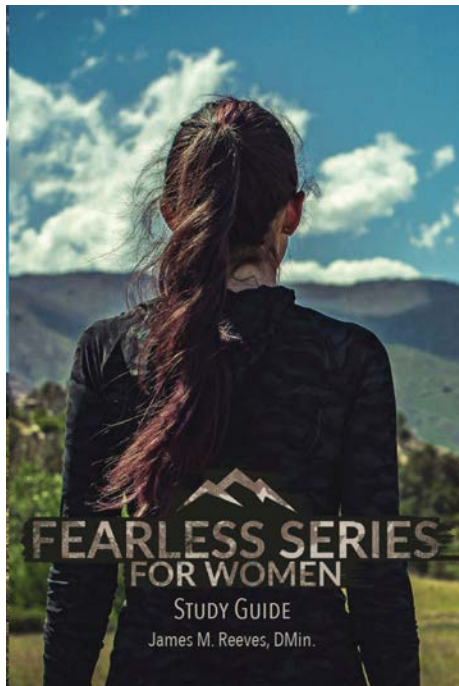
Carol (Fearless Series participant)

CONTINUED HELP FOR SURVIVORS

Dr. Reeves and his team understood the need for survivors to continue healing in a community of caring, committed women. The Fearless Series WORKBOOK is an additional 8 weeks of learning, discussion, and healing for survivors, including group discussion led by a trained facilitator. *Facilitator training is FREE of charge.*

PURE HOPE

For women who desire to continue meeting, a 52-week discussion guide is available. The purpose of Pure Hope is to provide accountability, support, and encouragement for women healing from sexual abuse.



For more information, visit: www.FS4Women.com

Dr. James Reeves, Founding Pastor (1984)

City on a Hill Church, Ft. Worth, Texas

Contact: JamesReeves@FS4Women.com

APPENDIX 1

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE RESPONSE PLAN

BIG PICTURE QUESTIONS

- Will this issue/event define the Church, in terms of public perception?
- What is the cost of managing (or mismanaging) a child sexual abuse allegation?
- How will this reflect on the Church's reputation within the community?
- Will the Church's enrollment or census suffer?
- What is the impact on the congregation's trust in the Church's *child-safe culture*?
- What may a child sexual abuse claim or lawsuit cost the Church?
- Is the Church carrying adequate insurance coverage to address this specific risk?

ADDRESSING A CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE (CSA) ALLEGATION

- Creating (and following) a defined *written* plan is imperative.
- Who manages the plan (e.g. Executive Pastor or other)?
- The PLAN must include contact information for critical individuals and entities, including:
 - Mandatory Reporting contacts (see below)
 - Attorney (with *significant* experience addressing CSA issues)
 - Insurance agent and carrier
 - PR or media contacts

KENTUCKY REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:

Any person who knows or has *reasonable cause to believe* that a child is neglected or abused **shall immediately** make an oral or written report to a local law enforcement agency or the Department of Kentucky State Police; the cabinet or its designated representative; the Commonwealth's attorney or the county attorney; by telephone or otherwise.

"Any supervisor who receives from an employee a report of suspected dependency, neglect, or abuse shall promptly make a report to the proper authorities for investigation."

NOTE: EVERY ADULT IS A MANDATORY REPORTER IN KENTUCKY.

CONTACT LIST:

- Local law enforcement in county where abuse occurred: **911**; OR
- Department of Kentucky State Police **1-877-597-2331**; OR
- Commonwealth's attorney; OR
- County attorney (county in which the abuse occurred); OR
- The cabinet or its designated representative.

An additional WRITTEN report *may* be requested, and must be completed and submitted to relevant authorities within 48 hours of the initial report.

Content of Report:

- Names and addresses of the child and his or her parents or caregivers
- The child's age
- The nature of the alleged abuse or neglect, including any previous charges of abuse or neglect
- The name and address of person allegedly responsible for the abuse or neglect; and
- Any other information that the person making the report believes may be helpful.

CSA REPORTING PLAN

- Create *clear instructions* in the event a mandatory report to authorities is necessary:
 - To whom and within what timeframe to report (Report 'immediately' by telephone or in person, followed by a written report, if requested, within 48 hours).
 - Required information for report.
 - Request the name of the person to whom the report is given, and file number.
 - Document the report in writing, including date and time of report (ONLY FACTUAL INFORMATION, *no speculation.*)
- ***Remember, when in doubt, REPORT.***
- Failure to report isn't just a bad idea, IT'S A CRIME, with criminal penalties!
- Report must occur *regardless* of the desires of the child or his/her parents.
- NEVER promise confidentiality to a child where child abuse is alleged or suspected.
- Create a partnership with local law enforcement for reporting purposes.
- Create known, easy access to critical documents:
 - Insurance policies
 - KY Reporting Requirements
 - Contact information for critical individuals or entities
- Designate media/information point-person:
WHO will speak on behalf of the Church, and WHO SHOULD NOT?
- If child abuse is alleged to have occurred *within a Church ministry program*, immediately put the Church's insurance carrier *ON NOTICE, in writing.*
- Create a communication tree (phone/email/text) to inform key individuals, church staff members, and stakeholders.

VICTIMS/VICTIMS' FAMILIES

- All actions should occur from a VICTIM-CENTRIC perspective.
- Remember, **FALSE ALLEGATIONS ARE RARE!**
- Avoid any defensive posture that prioritized REPUTATION over CARE.
- DO NOT IDENTIFY the victim(s) to the public or the congregation.
- Offer counseling with a licensed professional counselor of the victim's choice.
- Communicate with the victim(s) and their families:
 - Communicate early and often.
 - Listen with an empathetic ear.
 - Set aside organizational defensiveness or justifications.
 - Understand that parents will need to VENT.
 - Victims and families may be understandably angry!
 - **EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION AND CARE NOW IS MORALLY RIGHT and ETHICALLY CORRECT.**

In general, abuse survivors sue a ministry based upon how they are treated *after* the allegation is communicated to ministry leaders.

- The victim's comfort should take priority over any desire to continue to support or provide ministry services to the (alleged) abuser.
Ex: In a Peer-to-Peer sexual abuse scenario, the comfort and emotional protection of the non-aggressor (victimized) child should be prioritized. *The Church may not be able to continue to provide ministry services to the aggressor child.*
- NEVER require the victim(s) to confront the alleged abuser.
- NEVER require *cheap forgiveness* of the alleged abuser from the victim.
- NEVER assume that *repentance* from the abuser is real or conclusive.
- NEVER give a known, admitted or credibly accused abuser access to children.
- How will the Church manage gossip and backlash in the community?
In many cases, a group of children or families will support a well-liked staff member; keep in mind: '*Molesters Groom the Gatekeepers*'.
- How will the Church prevent bullying behaviors aimed at alleged victims?
(For example: "She brought it on herself. She's a")
 - Plan to manage subsequent bullying behaviors.
 - Staff awareness is *key*.
 - Social media may be used negatively (e.g. Facebook page to "save the staff member").
- How will the Church provide aftercare to affected children and parents?
Initially, if the alleged abuser serves as your staff member or volunteer, provide external counseling options with a licensed professional counselor, rather than 'in house'.
At the same time, Christ-based care and support are ALWAYS appropriate.

PARENTS/STAKEHOLDERS

- Communicate with families immediately.
 - **Effective and immediate communication with parents is critical.**
 - Discuss: How is this best addressed in various Church programs?
 - Avoid gridlock – what are the customary communication lines?
 - Who receives priority in the communication process?
 - Start with those more directly impacted and work OUT; direct others to the website or more general forms of communication.

Common Questions from Parents/Stakeholders:

- Has _____ Church fired him/her yet?
- Why hasn't the church fired him/her yet?
- Did _____ Church undertake a thorough criminal background check when he/she was hired?
- What are the church's hiring practices?
- What will the church do to prevent this from happening again?
- Who will take over the alleged abuser's responsibilities?
- Is it safe to bring my child back?
- What are you doing at _____ Church to protect children from abuse?

CHILDREN IN PROGRAM

- Identify and meet with children (through parents) who *may* have been impacted.
 - **DO NOT INTERFERE WITH ANY ONGOING CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION.**
- Include parents when communicating with children in the program. This is particularly important with children 13 and under.
- All should hear the same information, rather than garbled expressions or different 'facts'.
- Use caution when creating written materials to send home with children; assume written materials will be shared.

STAFF MEMBERS

- Briefings and debriefings:
 - Information provided to staff members should be uniform, but may be specific to hierarchy; upper leadership getting needed detail.
 - Allow discussion in a closed and safe setting.
- Employee assistance programs - counseling resources:
 - Provide resources for self-care.
 - Identify resources for counseling care.
- Longer-term follow-up:
 - Follow-up with individuals close to circumstance, co-workers, friends.
- Expect to deal with staff members' anger, sense of betrayal and disappointment.

LEGAL COUNSEL

- Clearly identify skilled legal representation conversant with sexual abuse issues.
- How will the Church address allegations of wrongdoing against the ministry?
- How will the Church address potential wrongful termination issues?

INSURANCE CARRIER – COVERAGE FOR CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE ISSUES:

- Identify insurance agent: is agent knowledgeable concerning sexual abuse?
- Review coverage for critical incidents and occurrences of this nature.
- Does the Church have adequate insurance coverage, given the current environment?
- Does existing insurance policy have an exclusion, endorsement, qualification or limitation of coverage for matters related to sexual abuse or sexual misconduct?
- IF an allegation or suspicion of abuse relates to a Church employee or volunteer, immediately put the carrier ON NOTICE, *in writing*.

MEDIA MANAGEMENT

How will the Church proactively provide information to stakeholders and manage media?

- Who is responsible for media communications?
- How will the Church address news reporters calling Church leaders?
- How to address news reporters calling staff members OUTSIDE the church?
- How will the Church monitor local press coverage and social media posts?
- How will the Church manage media on campus (physically), or on adjacent property?
- How will the Church utilize social media, if at all? (If social media is utilized to provide and direct communication regarding an allegation, do so very carefully.)
- ONE designated individual should speak on the Church's behalf.

If other staff members or volunteers are contacted:

"We take child safety very seriously. In order to get you the most accurate information, let me give you _____'s telephone number (designated staff member)."

Common Questions from Media:

- Please comment on the incident....
"We want to let law enforcement do their jobs without interference or speculation. We take child safety VERY seriously at _____ Church. This is why we reported the allegation immediately, when it was communicated to one of our staff members."

- Is this worker still employed? Is this volunteer still involved?
 “The staff member/volunteer is taking a leave of absence during the pending investigation OR is working in a position where he/she is not interacting with children.”
- Could there be more than one victim? Have other children been impacted?
 “Our top priority is the protection of children. We are fully cooperating with law enforcement in its investigation. At this point, we are not aware of any other victims. OR
 At this point, we are taking steps to determine what steps should be taken to more effectively protect children in _____ Church programs.”
- When did you first hear about the allegations?
 “In accord with our policy, the allegation was reported immediately, after it was communicated to one of our staff members.”
- Can you give us details about the charges?
 “We are fully cooperating with law enforcement, who are currently investigating. We don’t want to interfere with the investigation in *any* way, so can’t discuss details at this point.”
- Have you seen the evidence (text messages/photos, etc.)?
 “We are fully cooperating with law enforcement, who are currently investigating. We don’t want to interfere with the investigation in *any* way, so can’t discuss details at this point. OR We’ve been instructed by law enforcement to limit discussion of details so that the investigation can proceed effectively.” (Common occurrence)
- Was the alleged abuser screened (background check, etc.)?
 “All _____ Church staff members or volunteers who work with children complete a criminal background check and stringent screening process, including an application, interview and reference checks. This process was created by child protection experts.”
- Has he/she been charged with anything like this in the past?
 “No. All _____ Church staff members and all child-serving volunteers complete a criminal background check and stringent screening process, including an application, interview and reference checks. This process was created by child protection experts.”
- Has the Church fired the alleged abuser? Why? Why not?
 In order of preference:
 - “The staff member has been terminated from employment OR is taking a leave of absence during the pending investigation OR is working in a position where he/she is not interacting with children.”
 - If a volunteer, suspend all interaction with children during the pending investigation.

ADMITTED BEHAVIOR

After an allegation or suspicion of abuse is reported:

- If abusive behavior is admitted, in part or whole, immediately terminate the employee or volunteer and communicate that he or she is no longer welcome on Church property.

'AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION IS WORTH A POUND OF CURE!'

- Implement an effective Safety System.
- Utilize effective training: educate staff members and volunteers to recognize *the abuser's grooming process* and *common grooming behaviors*.
- Hiring processes: SCREEN your staff members and volunteers.
- Understand what an effective Background Check does, or does not, accomplish.
- Will staff members know to tell, *and whom to tell?*
- Foster a culture of communication: ***if you see something, say something.***

APPENDIX 2

THE MINISTRYSAFE SYSTEM: GETTING STARTED



THE MINISTRYSAFE SAFETY SYSTEM

Tips for you and your team

Summary of Topics

Available Trainings
Creating your Account
Using your Control Panel
Frequently Asked Questions

AVAILABLE TRAININGS

Primary Trainings include:

Sexual Abuse Awareness Training

Sexual Abuse Awareness Training forms the foundation of the Safety System and provides a basic understanding and awareness of child sexual abuse risk, abuser characteristics, the abuser's grooming process, and common grooming behaviors.

Audience: Volunteers and staff members - anyone who wears your nametag

Run Time: 1h 3 min

Cost: \$5 per person

Skillful Screening Training

Skillful Screening Training educates managerial staff members and screening personnel about the risk of child sexual abuse and effective screening practices during the hiring or onboarding process.

Prerequisite: Sexual Abuse Awareness Training

Audience: Managers, screening personnel

Run Time: 2 hr 11 min

Cost: \$50 per person

MinistrySafe Institute

MinistrySafe Institute provides seminary-level material aimed at vocational ministry professionals who desire educational resources addressing child sexual abuse risk at a deeper, more comprehensive level.

Audience: Pinnacle ministry employees, senior pastors, executive pastors, ministry risk managers, child-serving program leaders, children's ministers and youth pastors.

Run Time: 15 hr 6 min

Cost: \$150 per person

CREATING YOUR ACCOUNT



To create your MinistrySafe account, go to the [sign-up page](#) on MinistrySafe's website. Select MinistrySafe Membership from the two options.

You will be asked to input information about yourself and your church. On the third and final page of the sign up process, you will be asked to provide billing information. This page includes a space to enter a coupon code. Enter the coupon code **kbc2022** to receive \$100 off the first year's annual Membership fee.

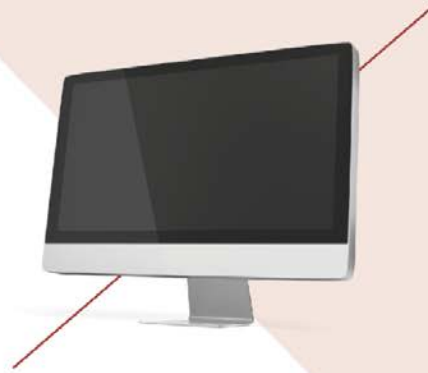
Once you have submitted your billing information, you will have instant access to your new account.



Coupon code

USING YOUR CONTROL PANEL

Learn how to add Users and send Trainings



Video Tour

Begin by viewing a video tour of the Safety System

CREATE USER TAGS

The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the Control Panel. The user's name 'Melissa' is in the top right corner. A dropdown menu is open, showing options: 'My account', 'Organization information', 'Organization settings' (highlighted with a green box), and 'Back to admin'. A green circle with the number '1' is placed over the 'Organization settings' option. Below the navigation bar, there are filters for 'By Tag', 'By Role', and 'By Type', along with a '50' dropdown. A table below shows user data with columns for 'Role', 'EMP / VOL', 'Status', 'Renewal', 'Background Check', and 'Screening' (Application, References, Interview, Policies).

	Role	EMP / VOL	Awareness Training		Background Check		Screening			
			Status	Renewal	Status	Renewal	Application	References	Interview	Policies
	trainee	EMP	✓	09/28/2023			✓		✓	
	trainee	VOL	✓	07/12/2023	⊘		✓			

User Tags are customizable labels to create organization within your Control Panel. Tags can be something that is specific to your organization such as ministry, program, or campus.

The screenshot shows the 'ORGANIZATION USER TAGS' section. It contains a list of tags: 'Camp 2020', 'Camp 2021', 'Nursery', 'Preschool', and 'Staff'. Each tag has a small icon and a blue link icon. Below the list is a form with a 'Tag Name' input field and an 'Add tag +' button. A green box highlights the 'Add tag +' button, and a green circle with the number '2' is placed next to it.

ADD USERS AND SEND TRAINING

Organization ID: 6320

Manage organizations > Laura's MS Account > Home

3

Show how to use safety system video

Trainings Statistics

Category	Percentage
Completed (Cur)	20%
None Assigned	10%
Assigned (Incorr)	10%
Needs renewal	40%

Background Check Statistics

Category	Percentage
Completed (Cur)	25%
None Assigned	0%
Assigned (Incorr)	0%
Needs renewal	25%

Legend:

- Completed (Cur)
- None Assigned
- Assigned (Incorr)
- Needs renewal

CLICK 'ADD USER'

Organization ID: 6320

Manage organizations > Laura's MS Account > Manage Users

4

Add user +

Search

Active Users

By Tag

User Information				
	Name	Tags	Role	EMP / VOL
<input type="checkbox"/>	Jennings, Lisa	Camp 2021, Preschool	trainee	EMP
<input type="checkbox"/>	Freeman, Jill	Camp 2020, Nursery	trainee	VOL
<input type="checkbox"/>	Johnson, Angela	Camp 2021, Preschool	trainee	VOL
<input type="checkbox"/>	Peters, Justin	Camp 2021, Preschool	supervisor	EMP
<input type="checkbox"/>	Jones, Melissa	Nursery	ssa	EMP
<input type="checkbox"/>	Simmons, Jennifer	Preschool	ssa	EMP

ADD USERS AND SEND TRAINING

5

First name

Last name

Email address

Employee/Volunteer

Select One

Role

Trainee

Tags

Camp 2020

Camp 2021

Nursery

Preschool

Staff

Select Awareness Training Videos

Sexual Abuse Awareness Training

Sexual Abuse Awareness Training - California

Sexual Abuse Awareness Training - Camp

Sexual Abuse Awareness Training - Daycare

Sexual Abuse Awareness Training - Education

Sexual Abuse Awareness Training - Youth Ministry

To send other trainings, go to **Trainings**.

Show additional fields +

- Enter the Trainee's name and email address
- Select if they are an 'employee' or 'volunteer'
- Select 'Trainee' as the role
- Select a Tag and a Training to send
- Click 'Add User' and repeat process for next Trainee

Select Awareness Training Videos

Sexual Abuse Awareness Training

Sexual Abuse Awareness Training - California

Sexual Abuse Awareness Training - Camp

Sexual Abuse Awareness Training - Daycare

Sexual Abuse Awareness Training - Education

Sexual Abuse Awareness Training - Youth Ministry

To send other trainings, go to **Trainings**.

Cancel Add user



What happens next?

MinistrySafe will automatically send an email to your Trainees containing a link to the online Training. Your Trainee simply needs to click on the link in the email.

After clicking on the link, your Trainee will be prompted to watch the Sexual Abuse Awareness Training, which is about 1 hour in length. After watching the Training, your Trainee will be prompted to take a short quiz, which is scored online. A score of 70 or better will generate a Certificate of Completion.

Once your Trainee has completed the quiz, an email containing the Certificate of Completion will be sent to the Trainee and the Safety System Administrator. The online Control Panel will also update to reflect the completion and calculate the renewal date for the Training.

If the Training is not completed in a reasonable time period, check with your Trainee to determine if there is a problem, or simply resend the Training link. You can also enable renewal reminders in your Training Settings.

Awareness Training			
Role	EMP / VOL	Status	Renewal
trainee	EMP	✓	09/28/2025
trainee	VOL	✓	07/12/2023
trainee	VOL	✓	01/01/2023
supervisor	EMP	✓	10/10/2022

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



How efficient is the email system?

Very efficient!
MinistrySafe sends tens of thousands of links per month and over 95% of them get to the Trainee the 1st time.

How are we billed?

MinistrySafe bills on the first of each month for the previous month's usage.

Can I send the link to any email address?

Yes, you can send the link to any email. You can forward it; copy and paste the link; whatever you need to do. Just remember the Training link is specific to one Trainee and that Trainee must complete the Training using his or her own link.

Why might a trainee not receive the email?

Incorrect email addresses account for the majority of errors. However, because this is a *child sexual abuse* Training, some spam filters send the email to junk or block the email altogether.



Need help?

Check out our
[Help Center](#)

Still need help?

Give the
MinistrySafe
office a call
or send us an
email or chat!



Hours:
M-TH 9am-5pm
Central
F 9am-3pm
Central



support@MinistrySafe.com



833-737-7233 Toll Free

APPENDIX 3

SAMPLE MINISTRYSAFE CHILDREN'S MINISTRY POLICY



My Church Children's Ministries [Sample Policy Form]

This sample MinistrySafe policy form is one of the many that is available through MinistrySafe.com.

Important Principle No. 1:

If a policy document is intended to protect children from sexual abuse, it must be rooted in the grooming process. For policies and procedures to be effective, all staff members and volunteers must receive training to better understand the grooming process of a preferential offender and peer-to-peer abuse. At MinistrySafe, the training is called Sexual Abuse Awareness Training (SAAT).

Important Principle No. 2:

The grooming process varies depending on the age of a child, gender of a child and type of program. The grooming of a child unfolds differently in a student ministry than it does in a Pre-K, or an overnight camp, or a youth sport program. Policies and procedures must be rooted in the grooming process unique to that program and the age/gender of the children served.

Important Note: Sample Policies

MinistrySafe provides a variety of sample policy forms – rooted in the grooming process and tailored to different types of programs (youth ministry, education, camp, youth sport, day care and more); contact MinistrySafe to learn more about additional policy and screening forms.

This sample policy is related to My Church's Children's Ministries.

How to Use this Sample Policy Form

This sample form contains color-coded prompts and instructional comments within the body of the document. Because there is no 'one size fits all' policy form, the authors have attempted to provide guidance on as many matters as possible. It is expected that ministry leaders **will modify these policy documents** to fit the programs, positions, facilities and other factors that make each ministry unique.

Red type is instructional and should be removed from a final draft of your policy document.

Yellow highlights relate to positions or titles assigned to a person or persons with supervisory responsibility (i.e. Youth Pastor or Executive Pastor). Modify this document such that the correct position or title for YOUR ministry is associated with the responsibility described. Remove the highlights in your final policy document.

Blue highlights relate to specific state reporting requirements. The reporting requirement for the state of Kentucky is listed in this form. Remove the highlights in your final policy document.

Once all highlights and red type are removed, be sure to re-check the Table of Contents to ensure that the page number listed corresponds with appropriate section.

Dear Children's Volunteer or Staff Member,

Welcome to My Church!

At My Church, we take our responsibility to care for children very seriously. These guidelines are intended to facilitate a safe and nurturing environment in which children can grow in relationship with Jesus.

The pages of this handbook provide a general overview of procedures and guidelines for My Church volunteers and staff members. Our policies are intended to create a safe environment for children. The following procedures have been adopted and will be strictly enforced.

After you have carefully read this policy manual, please sign and return the agreement form located on the last page.

Sincerely,

My Church Staff

My Church Policies & Procedures for Children’s Ministries

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Overview of the My Church Safety System

Because we love children and desire to protect them, My Church requires all staff members and volunteers working with children or students (and other vulnerable populations) to complete **FOUR SAFETY STEPS** before ministry work or volunteer placements begin.

STEP ONE: Sexual Abuse Awareness Training

My Church policies and procedures require that staff members and volunteers avoid abusive behavior of any kind. Staff members and volunteers are required to report any policy violations to a supervisor or a member of the My Church Safety Committee. Staff members and volunteers should have a basic understanding of the characteristics of sexual abusers and their behaviors in 'grooming' a child for sexual abuse. Grooming is the process used by an abuser to select a child, win the child's trust (and the trust of the child's parent or 'gatekeeper'), manipulate the child into sexual activity and keep the child from disclosing the abuse.

To equip My Church staff members and volunteers with information necessary to recognize abuser characteristics and grooming behavior, My Church requires all staff members and volunteers to complete MinistrySafe's Sexual Abuse Awareness Training (live or online at www.MinistrySafe.com). This training will be renewed every two years.

STEP TWO: Screening Process

Staff members and volunteers are required to complete the My Church Screening Process, which requires a staff member or volunteer to:

- complete an Employment Application (employees only)
 - complete the Safety Application (employees and volunteers)
 - complete a face-to-face interview (employees and volunteers)
 - provide references to be checked (employees and volunteers)
- *a volunteer must attend My Church for six months before being eligible to serve in volunteer positions providing access to children, students or vulnerable populations.

STEP THREE: Policies & Procedures

Staff members and volunteers are required to review the policies contained in this manual and sign the last page indicating that he or she has read and understood the material, and agrees to comply with policy requirements.

STEP FOUR: Criminal Background Check

My Church requires that all staff members and volunteers working or volunteering in children's or student activities or programming undergo a criminal background check. Depending upon position, differing levels or intensity of background check may be required. Individuals who have committed sexually-oriented or sex-related crimes may not serve in any area providing services to children or minors. In addition, certain other past criminal acts *may* preclude an applicant from serving minors.

**The above policy segment is intended to clearly identify for an inappropriate applicant the hurdles which exist to gaining access to children or students at 'My Church'. In addition, the segment describes measures in place to equip other staff members and volunteers to recognize abuser characteristics and behaviors, as well as reporting requirements. These policy segments provide an 'opt out opportunity' for would-be molesters.*

Child Safety Policy

ABUSE TOLERANCE

My Church has a **zero tolerance for abuse** in ministry programs and ministry activities. It is the responsibility of every staff member and volunteer at My Church to act in the best interest of all children in every program.

In the event that staff or volunteers observe any inappropriate behaviors (i.e. policy violations, neglectful supervision, poor role-modeling, etc.) or suspected abuse (physical, emotional, or sexual) it is their responsibility to immediately report their observations to their **immediate supervisor**, the **Children's Pastor** or the **Executive Pastor**.

Designations may vary depending on the size, structure or reporting relationships within a church. This segment should identify the position or title of the individual to whom staff members or volunteers are to report.

REPORTING SUSPICIOUS OR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS

My Church is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for children and their families. To this end, any report of inappropriate behaviors or suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and will be reported, in accordance with this policy and state law, to the My Church Safety Committee Chair and the Police Department, Child Protective Services, or other appropriate agency.

An element of the safe environment referenced above includes the fostering of a culture of reporting relevant information to a supervisor or a member of the My Church Safety Committee. Because sexual abusers 'groom' children for abuse, it is possible a staff member or volunteer may witness behavior intended to 'groom' a child for sexual abuse. Staff members and volunteers are asked to report 'grooming' behavior, any policy violations, or any suspicious behaviors to a supervisor or a member of the My Church Safety Committee.

ENFORCEMENT OF POLICIES

My Church staff members and volunteers who supervise other staff members or volunteers are charged with the diligent enforcement of all My Church policies. Violations of these policies are grounds for immediate dismissal, disciplinary action, or reassignment from a position in Children's Ministries – for both volunteers and staff members. Final decisions related to policy violations will be the responsibility of the **Executive Pastor** and the **Board of Elders**.

These positions or titles may vary depending on the structure or reporting relationships within a church body.

Reporting Abuse or Suspicions of Abuse

REPORTING VIOLATION OF POLICY

In order to maintain a safe environment for our children, My Church staff members and volunteers must be aware of their individual responsibility to report any questionable circumstance, observation, act, omission, or situation that is a violation of these policies. All questions or concerns related to inappropriate, suspicious, or suspected grooming behavior should be directed to an immediate supervisor in the ministry area, the **Children's Pastor**, or the **Executive Pastor**. *These positions or titles may vary depending on the structure or reporting relationships within the church body.*

CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLATION

Any person accused of committing a prohibited act or any act considered by the church to be harmful to a child will be immediately suspended from participation in My Church Children's Ministries. This suspension will continue during any investigation by law enforcement or Child Protective agencies.

Any person found to have committed a prohibited act should be prohibited from future participation as a staff member or volunteer in all activities and programming that involves children, students or vulnerable populations at My Church. If the person is a staff member or employee, such conduct may also result in termination of employment from My Church.

Failure to report a prohibited act to the designated person is a violation of this policy and grounds for termination (employee) or removal (volunteer). Volunteers who fail to report a prohibited act may be restricted from participation in any activities involving children, students or vulnerable populations at My Church.

REPORTING ABUSE OR SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE

My Church is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for children and their families. To this end, any report of inappropriate behavior or suspicions of abuse or neglect will be taken seriously and will be reported, in accordance with this policy and state law, to Child Protective Services or criminal law enforcement.

Because sexual abusers 'groom' children for abuse, it is possible that a staff member or volunteer may witness behavior intended to groom a child for sexual abuse. Please report 'grooming' behavior, policy violations, or any suspicious behaviors to an immediate supervisor, such that the church may take appropriate action to safeguard children in the program.

REPORTING ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

We report all suspected or alleged abuse or neglect of children to the appropriate Kentucky authorities pursuant to KRS 620.030(1)

Abuse Hotline: 1-877-KYSAFE1 [1-877-597-2331]

Because many adults are unfamiliar with Kentucky reporting requirements and may be fearful of the process, My Church utilizes a 'tandem or dual report' model, where permitted. A 'dual report' occurs when a My Church supervisor reports the suspicion or allegation *together* with the individual who saw, heard or received information causing him or her to suspect abuse or neglect.

THIS PRACTICE IS NOT REQUIRED, OR INTENDED TO INHIBIT ANY STAFF MEMBER OR VOLUNTEER FROM REPORTING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT, CPS OR THE ABUSE HOTLINE *DIRECTLY*. Instead, it is meant to facilitate reporting, protect children and support individuals who may not feel able or willing to report alone.

NO PERMISSION IS NEEDED from My Church before reporting to law enforcement personnel or the Child Abuse Hotline.

While not required by state law, please report all suspicions of child abuse or neglect (or any inappropriate or 'grooming' behaviors of a colleague or coworker) to an immediate supervisor or a member of the My Church Safety Committee. This request is intended to assist the church in properly protecting children involved in My Church programs.

When in doubt, report.

These positions and titles may vary depending on the structure or reporting relationships within the church body. State reporting requirements vary state by state, with most including the language above. Research your state's law for specific reporting requirements for your church.

NOTE: a church should never 'investigate' as a condition of reporting.

Safety Committee

SAFETY COMMITTEE

Recognizing the importance of providing and maintaining a safe environment for children, My Church will appoint and maintain a Safety Committee, which will meet once each quarter.

The purpose of the Safety Committee is to enable My Church Children's Ministries to carry out appropriate ministry activities while safeguarding program participants against emotional, physical or sexual abuse.

COMPOSITION

The Safety Committee will be comprised of the following members:

- the Executive Pastor
- the Children's Pastor
- the Student Pastor

**These positions or titles may vary depending on the structure or reporting relationships within a church body.*

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Safety Committee will be charged with the following duties:

1. Applying existing My Church policies and procedures related to children's safety and risk management issues.
2. Monitoring all Children's Ministries programs for ongoing compliance with safety policies.
3. Making recommendations to the My Church Board of Elders regarding safety issues.

Children's Ministry Staff Monitoring Plan

BUILDING SAFETY

Every ministry supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the ministry program area is monitored during programming serving children. This includes unobserved monitoring of staff members, volunteers and children. No child will ever be left unattended in a ministry area or on a playground during regular programming, classes or activities.

SUPERVISION

Only parents (dropping off children), screened ministry volunteers, church staff members, and children are allowed in areas where ministry to children is occurring. All other adults should be asked for identification and immediately escorted out of the area. If questions or concerns arise related to any person in the area, a ministry supervisor or security team member should be notified immediately.

Two trained, screened adults should supervise children at all times.

Avoid being alone with an individual child in any room or during any ministry program. If one supervising adult must leave a group of children, another volunteer or employee must be notified so that the *Two Adult Rule* can be followed.

If two individuals serving in a room are related to one another, a third unrelated volunteer or staff member must be present.

If an unusual circumstance occurs and you find yourself alone with a single child, take the child to a room or building occupied by others, or to a location easily observed by others. (Example: if a child is the last in a class to be picked up by a parent, move to an adjoining room where other staff members or volunteers are present.)

If you need to talk with a child alone, do it in the hallway or a highly visible area, or have another leader with you.

After every ministry event, ensure that every room, area and restroom is checked prior to leaving.

PLAYGROUNDS

On the playground, remember to circulate, watching children during play periods, giving particular attention to areas not easily seen from all viewpoints. (Example: under slides, in corners, behind structures).

Any two children together in an unseen or less easily viewed area should be redirected to another (more open) area of the playground.

Child Safety Measures

WORKER TO CHILD RATIOS

My Church is committed to providing adequate supervision in all Children's Ministries programs. Accordingly, the following worker to child ratios will be observed:

Program	Workers	Children
Nursery	2	8
Preschool, 2 & 3 years old	2	12
Preschool, 4 & 5 years old	2	18
Elementary	2	20
VBS	2	20

**The above ratios are MinistrySafe minimum recommendations. Where supervision is concerned, more is generally better.*

If a worker is 'out of ratio' it is his or her responsibility to immediately notify the program supervisor or the **Children's Pastor**. Supervisors will make diligent efforts to find substitute workers to immediately bring worker to children ratios into compliance with Church policy.

CHECK-IN

Upon check-in, each child will receive a nametag and their parent or guardian will be given a claim tag. Volunteers must check each claim tag before releasing a child at pick up.

If a claim tag is lost, send the parent or guardian to _____, where proper identification must be shown to a staff member before the child is released. (Have the child stay in the classroom; the parent may pick up the child once cleared).

RELEASE OF CHILDREN

At any time that a child has been entrusted to My Church staff members or volunteers, the Church incurs responsibility for the safety and well-being of the child. Staff members and volunteers must act to ensure the appropriate supervision and safety of children in their charge.

Children's Ministries staff members or volunteers are responsible for releasing children in their care only to parents, legal guardians, or other persons designated by parents or legal guardians at the close of services or activities.

It is presumed a person who drops off a child or student has authority to pick up the child.

In the event that staff members or volunteers are uncertain of the propriety of releasing a child, they should immediately locate or contact their immediate supervisor or the **Children's Pastor** before releasing the child.

Disciplinary Policies

DISCIPLINE

It is My Church's policy that staff members and volunteers are prohibited from using physical discipline in any manner for behavioral management of children. **No form of physical discipline is acceptable.** This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behaviors by children. When a child is misbehaving, follow these steps:

1. Go to the child and calmly ask him or her to stop the behavior. (Most children respond immediately and correct the behavior.) Give a warning and remind the child of class expectations, and redirect to a positive behavior. Do this individually when possible, try not to single out a specific child in a large group setting. *When working with younger children, some physical redirection may be necessary: for example, removing a toy from the hands of a child who is hitting another.

2. If the child repeats the action, guide them to a quiet place – separate from the other children – for a short but designated period of time. Stay within sight of others, and avoid being alone (or unseen) with the child.

Provide the child with a simple, understandable reason for the separation, and a clear explanation of your expectations.

("Terry, you didn't stop hitting Kelly when I asked you to, so it was necessary for me to separate you from the group.")

3. After a 3rd time, refer to a staff member. A staff member may inform a parent or guardian, who may be asked to become involved in redirecting misbehavior.

Uncontrollable or unusual behavior should be reported to ministry supervisor.

NEVER...

- Never yell at a child.
- Never grab a child.
- Never threaten a child. Always follow through with your word.
- Never hit a child.
- Never confront a parent in front of others.
- Never openly humiliate a child in front of the class.

BULLYING

Verbal, physical or emotional bullying is not acceptable in My Church ministry programs. At the first sign of bullying in any form, act decisively, and inform your ministry supervisor. There is no "harmless put-down" where bullying is concerned.

1. *First Offense:* Issue a warning to the child and a general reminder to the group that this kind of interaction is wrong. Try not to embarrass or chastise.
2. *Second Offense:* Pull the offending child(ren) from the group (in a seen or supervised location) and discuss the inappropriate interaction or behavior. Set clear parameters and behavioral goals. Let the child know that the next step is communication with a pastor and the child's parents. Notify an immediate supervisor of ANY signs of bullying or verbal abuse.

Privately, but with another adult present, confirm that a child who was the target of the bullying behaviors is not in danger of continued harassment and is physically and emotionally stable. DO NOT SINGLE A CHILD OUT IN FRONT OF THE GROUP ... be discreet.

3. *Third Offense:* Send the child to a pastor or ministry supervisor for a phone call (or communication onsite) with his or her parent(s) and possible removal from the activity or event.

Restroom Policies

DO NOT USE OR OCCUPY a bathroom in use by children. Adults should use a restroom separate and apart from restrooms used by children during weekend services or when there are children present. [Unless not possible given physical plant/facility limitations.] No volunteer OF ANY AGE should enter or occupy a bathroom while children are using it. When no child is present, adults (and young volunteers) are allowed in a bathroom (one at a time) so long as there is another adult at the doorway keeping any child from entering. Only adult females may change diapers and must do so on diaper changer stations within plain view of other volunteers.

NURSERY CHILDREN

Because nursery children may require complete assistance with their bathroom activities, all staff members and volunteers will observe the following policies:

Diapering

- Only female nursery workers or the child's parent or legal guardian will undertake the diapering of children of either sex.
- Changing of diapers should be done in plain sight of other nursery workers.
- Children will never be left unattended on changing tables.
- Any special instructions given by parents leaving children in nursery will be recorded on the registration cards ("Seth Adams has a medicine in the bag for rash.")
- Children should be re-diapered and re-clothed immediately upon the completion of changing their soiled diaper.
- Children should be changed on changing stations only.

Toilet training

- No child will be forced to toilet train.
- Only female nursery workers or the child's parent or legal guardian will participate in toilet training efforts with children of either sex.
- When children are taken into bathrooms the door will be left partially open.
- Young children will never be left unattended in bathrooms.
- Parents should be consulted on each child's progress in the toilet training process before leaving the child with volunteers or staff members. Any special instructions given by parents leaving children in the nursery will be recorded on the registration card ("Georgia can use the toilet, but she needs to be reminded – ask her if she needs to go").
- Children should be assisted in straightening their clothing before returning to the room with other children.

- “Accidents” should be handled by reassuring the child and completing the changing of diapers or underwear and clothing. Extra clothing and diapers are available from My Church in the children’s area, if the parent has not furnished a clothing change.

GRADES 1-6

If you must go into the restroom to check on an individual child, seek out another worker to accompany you. If another worker is not available, go to the exterior bathroom door, knock, and ask if the child needs assistance. Do not enter the restroom.

If a child requires immediate assistance, leave the exterior bathroom door open when entering the bathroom area and try to verbally assist the child in completing his or her toileting activities, while the child remains behind the door of the bathroom stall. Any assistance with the straightening or fastening of garments should be done in the presence of another staff member or volunteer.

If restroom use is required:

- Only *adult* female workers will assist children in the restroom, unless a parent is assisting their own child.
- Only one child in the restroom at a time, in a single toilet facility.
- When a worker is assisting a child, the door must not be locked, and must remain ajar. In general, children should receive the minimum amount of assistance needed based upon their individual capabilities. Encourage children to do all they can for themselves.
- All students in grades 1-3 must be accompanied to the restroom by a female leader. 4th and 5th grade students may go to KIDS ONLY restrooms alone with a bathroom pass from their room.
- Be aware if a student repeatedly asks to use the restroom and stays there for unusual periods of time. Report this behavior to a supervisor if it occurs.
- A single staff member or volunteer should never take a lone child to the restroom.

SPECIAL NEEDS

Parents will offer instruction to staff members or volunteers to change the diapers of individuals with special needs. After the age of 4, parents or legal guardians will change the diapers of all individuals with special needs. If someone with special needs requires assistance using the restroom, a special needs volunteer may assist them in the restroom.

Medication

Do not administer medication of any kind to any child while serving in ministry programs, including 'over the counter' drugs.

Transportation

Staff members and volunteers may from time to time be in a position to provide transportation for children. The following guidelines should be strictly observed when workers are involved in the transportation of children:

- Children should be transported directly to their destination. Unauthorized stops to a non-public place should be avoided. Staff members and volunteers should avoid transportation circumstances that leave only one child in transport.
- Staff members and volunteers should avoid physical contact with children while in vehicles.
- No cell phones may be utilized by the driver while driving My Church vans, or vehicles owned or rented by My Church, unless in an emergency.
- No drivers under age 25 may drive My Church owned or rented vehicles.

Verbal Interactions with Children

Verbal interactions between staff members or volunteers and children should be positive and uplifting. My Church staff members and volunteers should strive to keep verbal interactions encouraging, constructive, and mindful of their mission of aiding parents in the spiritual growth and development of children.

To this end, staff members and volunteers should not talk to children in a way that is or could be construed by any reasonable observer as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. In addition, staff members and volunteers are expected to refrain from swearing in the presence of children.

One-to-One Interactions with Children

Staff members and volunteers should never conduct one-to-one, unobserved meetings or interaction with children while participating in My Church Children's Ministry program. Another adult who has completed the My Church application and screening process should always be present.

Physical Contact

My Church is committed to protecting children in its care. To this end, My Church has implemented a 'physical contact policy' which promotes a positive, nurturing environment for our Children's Ministries while protecting children. The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by anyone working in Children's Ministries programs:

- Hugging, pats on the back and other forms of appropriate physical affection between staff members or volunteers and children are important for children's development, and are generally suitable in the church setting.
- Inappropriate touching and inappropriate displays of affection are forbidden. Any inappropriate physical contact, touching or displays of affection should be immediately reported to an immediate supervisor, the **Children's Pastor** or the **Executive Pastor**.
- Physical contact should be for the benefit of the child, and never be based upon the emotional needs of a staff member or volunteer.
- Physical contact and affection should be given only in observable places or when in the presence of other children or children's staff members and volunteers. It is much less likely that touch will be inappropriate or misinterpreted when physical contact is open to observation.
- Physical contact in any form should not give even the appearance of wrongdoing. The personal behavior of staff members or volunteers in Children's Ministries must foster trust at all times. Personal conduct must be above reproach.
- Do not force physical contact, touch or affection on a reluctant child. A child's preference not to be touched must be respected.
- Children's staff members and volunteers are responsible for protecting children under their supervision from inappropriate or unwanted touch by others.
- Any inappropriate behavior or suspected abuse by a staff member or volunteer must be reported immediately to an immediate supervisor, the **Children's Pastor** or the **Executive Pastor**.

Intoxicants

Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from the use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drugs while in any My Church facility, while traveling with children, or while working with or supervising children.

Tobacco Use

My Church requires staff members and volunteers to abstain from the use or possession of tobacco products in church facilities, while in the presence of children or their parents, or during My Church activities or programs. My Church is a tobacco-free facility.

Sexually Oriented Conversations

Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from engaging in any sexually oriented conversations with children, and are not permitted to discuss any inappropriate or explicit information about their own personal relationships, dating or sexual activities with any child in the program.

Sexually Oriented Material

Staff members and volunteers in Children's Ministries at My Church are prohibited from possessing any sexually oriented materials (magazines, cards, images, videos, films, etc.) on church property or in the presence of children.

Nudity

Staff members and volunteers in My Church's Children's Ministries should never be nude in the presence of children in their care. In the event there is a situation that may call for or contemplate the possibility of nudity (i.e. changing clothes during a pool party, weekend or overnight retreat, etc.), staff member/volunteer will submit a plan to the **Children's Pastor** concerning arrangements for showering or changing clothes.

Parental Involvement

PARENTAL CONTACT

Parents who leave a child in the care of My Church staff members and volunteers during church services or activities will be contacted if their child becomes ill, injured, or has a severe disciplinary problem while participating in Children's Ministries programs.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents are encouraged to visit any and all services and programs in which their child is involved at My Church. Parents have an open invitation to observe all programs and activities in which their child is involved. However, parents who desire to participate in or have continuous, ongoing contact with their children's programs at My Church will be required to complete the My Church volunteer application and screening process.

Policies and Procedures Statement of Acknowledgement and Agreement

This page is to be signed, detached, and delivered to the Ministry Supervisor.

I have received and read a copy of My Church's Children's Ministries Policies and Procedures and understand the importance of the material in the manual. I agree to abide by these guidelines while serving or working at My Church.

I understand the manual may be modified, and that any guideline may be amended, revised, or eliminated by My Church.

I have reviewed the duties listed in my ministry position description, and I agree to fulfill these duties. I understand I may choose to end my employment or voluntary service at My Church at any time (If possible, I will provide two weeks' notice to my supervisor).

I acknowledge and understand that the materials and guidelines contained in this handbook in no way express or imply a contractual employment relationship between me and My Church. If applying as a volunteer, I acknowledge and agree that I will receive no monetary compensation for hours worked.

I understand it is my responsibility to review new guidelines which may be created and distributed.

I acknowledge receipt of My Church policies and procedures manual.

Staff Member or Volunteer's name (please print)

Staff Member or Volunteer's signature

Date: _____

APPENDIX 4

SAMPLE KBC ADULT PROTECTION POLICIES

Mission Board Policy #1951

ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

The Mission Board of the Kentucky Baptist Convention will neither tolerate nor condone the illegal harassment of any employee based on the individual's race, color, national origin, sex, age (40+), religion, disability, work-related injury, genetic information, pregnancy, veteran status, or any other status as required by law.

Examples of the types of conduct prohibited by this policy include, but are not limited to the following:

- Offensive or derogatory comments, jokes, innuendoes, pictures, videos, or music
- Acting in a manner to show dominance over or to intimidate another person because of their race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, disability, work-related injury, veteran status, or any other status as required by law
- Offensive email, text messages, or voice-mail messages
- Any other conduct or behavior deemed inappropriate by management.

Such behavior may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Any employee who believes that he or she, or any other employee, is being subjected to such illegal harassment should follow the complaint procedure in Mission Board Policy #1950 and bring the matter to the attention of his or her immediate supervisor(s). If this is not appropriate, employees are urged to report and ask the assistance of the (a) associate executive director for convention operations, (b) HR & administration manager, (c) executive director-treasurer, or (d) any other supervisory personnel. It is the responsibility of the associate executive director for convention operations, HR & administration manager, or executive director-treasurer to provide guidance, investigate charges of impropriety and recommend appropriate action.

All claims will be thoroughly investigated as outlined in Mission Board Policy #1950, and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken. This policy prohibits any form of retaliation against an employee for filing an honest complaint under this policy or for assisting in a complaint investigation. If, however, after investigating any complaint of harassment or unlawful discrimination, it is determined that the complaint is not honest and was not made in good faith, or that an employee provided false information

regarding the complaint, disciplinary action may be taken against the individual who filed the complaint or who gave the false information.

In addition to the above, any complaints of illegal harassment of an employee by a non-employee who does business with the Board will also be investigated in the same manner as stated above. Further, any complaints of illegal harassment by an employee against vendors or any other non- employees that do business with the Board should be reported and investigated in the same manner as stated above.

Approved: Team Leaders 3/7/05, Admin Comm 3/28/05, Ms Bd 5/10/05

Reviewed: 2/08

Revised: Team Leaders 1/31/11, Admin Comm 3/24/11, Ms Bd 5/10/11

Reviewed: 2/14

Revised: Team Leaders 3/6/17, Admin Comm 3/23/17, Ms Bd 11/13/17

Revised: Team Leaders 3/9/20, Admin Comm 3/26/20, Ms Bd 5/4/20

Mission Board Policy #1950

SEXUAL HARASSMENT MISSION BOARD, KENTUCKY BAPTIST CONVENTION

I. DEFINITION (EEOC 29 Code of Federal Regulations 1604.11)

“Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when

- (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s employment,
- (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or
- (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.”

II. PURPOSE

To define the policy of the Mission Board, Kentucky Baptist Convention (the Board) that all employees have the right to a work environment free from all forms of illegal discrimination and conduct which can be considered harassing, coercive or disruptive, including sexual harassment.

III. POLICY

The Board’s position is that sexual harassment is a form of misconduct that undermines the integrity of the employment relationship. No employee - either male or female - shall be subjected to unsolicited and unwelcome sexual overtures or conduct, either verbal or physical. Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature. It refers to behavior that is not welcome, that is personally offensive, that debilitates morale, and that, therefore, interferes with work effectiveness.

Examples of the types of conduct prohibited by this policy include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Offensive or derogatory comments, jokes, innuendoes, pictures, videos, or music
- Acting in a manner to show dominance over or to intimidate another person because of their gender
- Violating someone's "personal space"
- Obscene or vulgar language
- Sexually suggestive touching, grabbing, or kissing
- Whistling, leering, staring, and stalking
- Suggestive or sexually-explicit videos, posters, calendars, photographs, graffiti, and cartoons
- Unwanted or offensive letters or poems
- Offensive e-mail, text messages, or voice-mail messages
- References to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life, body, and sexual activities
- Questions about one's sex life or experiences
- Repeated requests for dates
- Any other conduct or behavior deemed inappropriate by management.

Such behavior may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

IV. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

It is the responsibility of the executive director-treasurer, team leaders, and supervisors to make sure his/her organizational component is in full compliance with this policy.

Employees who have complaints should report such conduct to their immediate supervisor(s). If this is not appropriate, employees are urged to report such conduct to and ask the assistance of either the (a) associate executive director for convention operations, (b) HR & administration manager, (c) executive director- treasurer or (d) any other supervisory personnel. It is the responsibility of the associate executive director for convention operations, HR & administration manager and executive director-treasurer to provide guidance, investigate charges of impropriety and recommend appropriate action. All claims must be thoroughly investigated.

V. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

A. EMPLOYEE

Complaints of sexual harassment generally should be brought to the attention of the immediate supervisor unless the alleged harasser is the employee's immediate supervisor, or the employee has other reasons to be uncomfortable about talking with the immediate supervisor. In such cases, the employee should bypass the immediate supervisor and take the complaint directly to the (1) associate executive director for convention operations, (2) HR & administration manager, (3) executive director-treasurer, or (4) any other supervisory personnel.

B. SUPERVISORY PERSONNEL

After notification of any employee's complaint, the supervisory personnel will immediately contact any one of the four persons listed in Section V.A.

(1) (2) (3) (4) above.

C. PROCESS

1. After notification of the employee's complaint, a confidential investigation will immediately be initiated by one of the (four) persons listed in Section V.A. above to gather all facts about the complaint. The associate executive director for convention operations will have the primary responsibility for investigations unless another member of management is more appropriate under the circumstances.

2. After the investigation has been completed, a determination will be made regarding the resolution of the case by the one who conducted the investigation, the alleged harasser's immediate supervisor, the respective team leader and the executive director-treasurer. If warranted, disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, will be taken. If no action is warranted, then both parties will be informed that the facts did not substantiate the allegations. In this situation, steps will be taken to facilitate the parties continuing to work together.

D. NON-RETALIATION

This policy prohibits any form of retaliation against an employee for filing an honest complaint under this policy or for assisting in a complaint investigation. However, if, after investigating any complaint of harassment or unlawful discrimination, it is determined that the complaint is not honest and was not made in good faith, or that an

employee provided false information regarding the complaint, disciplinary action may be taken against the individual who filed the complaint or who gave the false information.

VI. NON-EMPLOYEES

In addition to the above, any complaints of sexual harassment by an employee against vendors or any other non-employees that do business with the Board should be reported and investigated in the same manner as stated in Section V.

Any complaints of sexual harassment by a non-employee who does business with the Board against an employee will also be investigated in the same manner stated in Section V.

Approved: EMG 12/7/92, Admin Comm 12/14/92, Ex Bd 2/15/92

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Reviewed: 1/02

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Revised: Admin Comm 10/13/20, Ms Bd 12/14/20

Mission Board Policy #2100

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION POLICY

The Kentucky Baptist Convention (KBC) strives to provide all visitors and employees with a safe, violence-free environment. As part of our commitment to this policy, KBC prohibits and has a zero tolerance for all forms of workplace violence and prohibits all conduct that could lead to workplace violence. This applies to violence by any individual, including employees, contractors, vendors, and visitors.

KBC has partnered with Triple Counter Measure, LLC for the development of this policy and subsequent training on workplace violence prevention. While the development of a policy and the completion of training will not guarantee the prevention of workplace violence and cannot possibly include all threats or scenarios, KBC is committed to equipping employees with knowledge on the prevention of workplace violence.

Employees legally permitted (concealed carry permitted), to possess firearms and/or ammunition can do so in their personal and/or KBC assigned vehicle. Such weapons and ammunition shall remain concealed while in the employee's personal and/or KBC assigned vehicle and may only leave the vehicle for exigent circumstances as defined by Kentucky law.

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to delineate our organization's position with respect to workplace violence and to provide general guidelines for the reporting of such incidents, investigation of complaints and proper resolution.

B. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to any person on the premises of KBC, including but not limited to employees, contractors, vendors, and visitors.

C. POLICY STATEMENT

KBC regards workplace violence with the greatest of seriousness. We do not tolerate any type of workplace violence committed by or against employees or property. Committing such acts of violence will subject an employee to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Where appropriate, the matter may be referred to legal authorities for prosecution to the fullest extent of the law.

D. WEAPONS POLICY

Deadly Weapons are prohibited from KBC buildings by all persons unless written permission is specifically granted by the Active Shooter Response Team Oversight Board. In accordance with KRS 237.106, employees who are legally permitted to possess firearms and/or ammunition can do so in their personal and/or KBC assigned vehicle. Such weapons and ammunition shall remain concealed while in the employee's personal and/or KBC assigned vehicle and may only leave the vehicle for exigent circumstances as defined by Kentucky law.

Some examples of deadly weapons are listed below but are not limited to:

- A weapon of mass destruction
- Any weapon from which a shot, readily capable of producing death or other serious physical injury
- Any knife other than an ordinary pocket knife or hunting knife
- Billy, nightstick, or club
- Blackjack or slapjack
- Nunchaku karate sticks
- Shuriken or death star
- Artificial knuckles made from metal, plastic, or other similar hard material
- Firearms or explosives
- Any item considered dangerous, could cause harm or intended to be used as a weapon

E. DEFINITION

Workplace violence includes, but is not limited to, violence against employees, contractors, vendors and visitors that takes place in the workplace, is committed by persons who either have an employment-related connection with our organization or are outsiders, and involves:

1. Physical acts against persons or other's property,
2. Verbal threats, or vicious statements that a reasonable person would perceive to harm or cause fear,
3. Written threats, vicious cartoons or notes, and other written communication that a reasonable person would perceive to threaten or create fear, or
4. Visual acts or gestures that a reasonable person would perceive as threatening or intending to cause injury or convey hostility.

Applicable state law is list below for reference.

508.010 Assault in the first degree.

1. A person is guilty of assault in the first degree when:
 - a. He intentionally causes serious physical injury to another person by means of a deadly weapon or a dangerous instrument; or
 - b. Under circumstances manifesting extreme indifference to the value of human life he wantonly engages in conduct which creates a grave risk of death to another and thereby causes serious physical injury to another person.
2. Assault in the first degree is a Class B felony.

508.020 Assault in the second degree.

1. A person is guilty of assault in the second degree when:
 - a. He intentionally causes serious physical injury to another person; or
 - b. He intentionally causes physical injury to another person by means of a deadly weapon or a dangerous instrument; or
 - c. He wantonly causes serious physical injury to another person by means of a deadly weapon or a dangerous instrument.
2. Assault in the second degree is a Class C felony.

508.030 Assault in the fourth degree.

1. A person is guilty of assault in the fourth degree when:
 - a. He intentionally or wantonly causes physical injury to another person; or
 - b. With recklessness he causes physical injury to another person by means of a deadly weapon or a dangerous instrument.
2. Assault in the fourth degree is a Class A misdemeanor.

508.050 Menacing.

1. A person is guilty of menacing when he intentionally places another person in reasonable apprehension of imminent physical injury.
2. Menacing is a Class B misdemeanor.

508.060 Wanton endangerment in the first degree.

1. A person is guilty of wanton endangerment in the first degree when, under circumstances manifesting extreme indifference to the value of human life, he wantonly engages in conduct which creates a substantial danger of death or serious physical injury to another person.
2. Wanton endangerment in the first degree is a Class D felony.

508.070 Wanton endangerment in the second degree.

1. A person is guilty of wanton endangerment in the second degree when he wantonly engages in conduct which creates a substantial danger of physical injury to another person.
2. Wanton endangerment in the second degree is a Class A misdemeanor.

508.078 Terroristic threatening in the second degree.

1. A person is guilty of terroristic threatening in the second degree when, other than as provided in KRS 508.075, he or she intentionally:
 - a. Makes false statements that he or she has placed a weapon of mass destruction at any location other than one specified in KRS 508.075; or
 - b. Without lawful authority places a counterfeit weapon of mass destruction at any location other than one specified in KRS 508.075.
2. Terroristic threatening in the second degree is a Class D felony.

508.080 Terroristic threatening in the third degree.

1. Except as provided in KRS 508.075 or 508.078, a person is guilty of terroristic threatening in the third degree when:
 - a. He threatens to commit any crime likely to result in death or serious physical injury to another person or likely to result in substantial property damage to another person; or
 - b. He intentionally makes false statements for the purpose of causing evacuation of a building, place of assembly, or facility of public transportation.
2. Terroristic threatening in the third degree is a Class A misdemeanor.

Any violation of outlined laws will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

F. PREVENTION AND RESPONSE METHODS

KBC believes the key to dealing with potential situations of workplace violence lies in attempting to prevent the situations before they become violent.

As such, the organization has numerous programs in place to foster prevention and provide help for those needing assistance. These programs include things such as:

- **Counseling Assistance Program (CAP)**
The CAP offers professional and confidential counseling services designed to help address personal concerns and life issues employees face. This confidential employee benefit provides an assessment and referral service for employees and their families.
- **Facility Security Measures**
Employees are required to use a key FOB to scan into the building. Visitors and contractors are screened by KBC employees prior to being granted access to any KBC buildings. Security cameras are placed strategically, and surveillance is monitored. All doors are always kept locked.
- **Sound Recruiting Practices**
KBC recruiting practices include reference and background checks to enhance the process of hiring and retaining the best employees.
- **Training**
KBC offers training on workplace violence prevention and response on a regular basis.

G. REPORTING PROCEDURES

Any potentially dangerous situation and/or incident must be reported immediately to a supervisor or the Executive Office leadership. Reports can be made anonymously, and all reported incidents will be investigated. Reported situation and/or incident warranting confidentiality will be handled appropriately and information will be disclosed to others only on a need-to-know basis. All parties involved in a situation and/or incident will be counseled, and as appropriate, the results of the investigation will be discussed with them. Our organization will actively intervene at any indication of a potential hostile or violent situation. Any employee who takes any retaliation, regardless of the magnitude of the retaliation, against a person who reports any act of violence or a suspicion of violence shall be subject to immediate discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

Employees are not expected to make professional judgments as to the potential for fellow employees or visitors to become dangerous. Employees are expected to make reasonable observations and to inform their supervisor, a safety team member, or Executive Office leadership if anyone exhibits behavior that could signal a potentially dangerous or hostile situations. Such behavior includes, but is not limited to:

- Discussing weapons or bringing them to the workplace or KBC property;
- Displaying overt signs of extreme stress, resentment, hostility, or anger;
- Making a threatening remark;
- Sudden or significant deterioration of performance;
- Displaying irrational or inappropriate behavior;
- Other conduct which a reasonable person believes to be threatening or violent in nature;
- Extended bouts with depression;
- Communicating the loss of the will to live or taking one's own life.

H. DANGEROUS/EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

No policy can address all potentially negative or harmful situations. Employees who encounter an armed or dangerous person should not attempt to challenge or disarm the individual unless there is no other option. Employees should remain calm, be cooperative and follow the instructions of the armed or dangerous person, unless the perpetrator is actively engaged in attacking. If there is a perpetrator actively committing violence, then utilize the *RUN, HIDE, FIGHT* method in which you were trained. If supervisor or emergency personnel can be safely notified of the need for assistance without endangering the safety of others, such notice should be given. When faced with a potentially dangerous situation, employees must assess the situation in accordance with their training, use their best judgment, and act accordingly.

I. ENFORCEMENT

Threats, threatening conduct, or any other acts of aggression or violence in the workplace will not be tolerated. Any employee determined to have committed such acts as outlined in this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Any employee or non-employee engaged in violent acts on KBC's premises may be reported to the proper authorities and fully prosecuted.

J. FOR FURTHER ASSISTANCE

Employees should contact the HR & administration manager for assistance and understanding of this policy regarding workplace violence. The HR & administration manager, if necessary, may obtain further clarification.

K. RESPONSE

A. Response to an Armed Individual - An armed individual is a person that is armed but not actively engaged in attempting to harm or kill people.

- Do not challenge.
- Stay calm.
- Talk loud enough that someone will hear you and call 911 – Example: “I see you have a gun. Guns are not allowed here. Why do you have a gun?”

B. Response to an Armed Hostage Situation - An armed hostage situation is when an armed individual is actively holding someone against their will.

- Do not challenge.
- Buy time, do not escalate situation.
- Law enforcement will contain and negotiate.

C. Response to an Active Shooter - An active shooter is a person actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area. These situations are unpredictable and develop very rapidly. Typically, the immediate deployment of law enforcement is required to stop the shooting and mitigate harm to victims. Because active shooter situations are often over within minutes, well before law enforcement arrives on the scene, individuals must be prepared both mentally and physically to deal with an active shooter situation.

L. ACTIVE SHOOTER - COPING WITH THE SITUATION

- Always be aware of your environment and any possible dangers
- Take note of the two nearest exits in any facility you visit
- Always be prepared to utilize your *RUN, HIDE, FIGHT* training
- Only as a last resort, attempt to take the active shooter down. If the shooter is at close range and you cannot flee, your chance of survival is much greater if you try to incapacitate the shooter.

M. RESPONDING

Quickly determine the most reasonable way to protect your own life. You have three options: RUN, HIDE, OR FIGHT. Anyone that hears gun fire should attempt to call 911, then use the PA system to announce twice "active shooter in *location (if known)*." Follow instructions on your safety card or pamphlet available at all major exits. Remember that non-employee personnel are likely to follow the lead of employees and managers during an active shooter situation.

Receptionist: Upon hearing the active shooter announcement, any receptionist should press the panic button then follow their workplace violence training.

1. ***RUN*** - ***If there is an accessible escape path, attempt to evacuate the premises.***

- **Always keep hands visible and free of objects!**
- Have an escape route and plan in mind
- Help others escape, if possible
- Evacuate regardless of whether others agree to follow
- Leave your belongings behind
- Attempt to prevent individuals from entering an area where the active shooter may be
- Follow the instructions of any police officers
- Do not attempt to move or render aid to wounded people
- Call 911 when you are safe and able to do so

2. ***HIDE*** - ***If evacuation is not possible, find a place to hide where the active shooter is less likely to find you. Your hiding place should:***

- Be out of the active shooter's view
- Provide protection if shots are fired in your direction (i.e., an office with a closed and locked door)
- Not trap you or restrict your options for movement

To prevent an active shooter from entering your hiding place:

- Lock the door
- Blockade the door with heavy furniture

If the active shooter is nearby:

- Lock the door
- Turn **off** cell phone or pager – Vibrating devices may still be detected.
- Turn **off** any source of noise (i.e., radios, televisions)
- Hide behind large items (i.e., cabinets, desks)
- Remain silent

3. **FIGHT** - ***Only as a last resort, and only when your life is in imminent danger, attempt to disrupt or incapacitate the active shooter by:***

- Acting as aggressively as possible
- Throwing items and improvising weapons
- Yelling
- Committing to your actions

N. CONTACTING EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

If possible, dial 911 or your local emergency number to alert police to the active shooter's location.

- Speak slowly and calmly.
- State the location of the active shooter(s).
- Give your exact location (KBC building address, room #, etc.)
- Note the number of shooters.
- Provide a physical description of shooter(s).
- If possible, describe the number and type of weapon(s) held by the shooter(s)
- If possible, provide the number of potential victims at the location.
- If you cannot speak, leave the line open and allow the dispatcher to listen.

O. WHEN LAW ENFORCEMENT ARRIVES

Law enforcement's purpose is to stop the active shooter as soon as possible. Officers will proceed directly to the area in which the last shots were heard. Note the following activities:

- Officers may wear regular patrol uniforms or external bulletproof vests, Kevlar helmets and other tactical equipment, or may be plain clothed but have identifying conspicuous law enforcement identifications such as vest or jacket that says "Police" or a badge.
- Officers may be armed with rifles, shotguns, and handguns.
- Officers may use pepper spray or tear gas to control the situation.
- Officers may shout commands and may push individuals to the ground for their safety.

When Law Enforcement Arrives on the Scene do the Following:

- **Always keep hands visible and free of objects!**
- Remain calm and follow a recognized law enforcement officer's instruction.
- Avoid making quick movements toward officers such as holding on to them for safety.
- Avoid pointing, screaming, or yelling.
- Do not stop to ask officers for help or direction when evacuating, just proceed in the direction from which officers are entering the premises.

The first officers to arrive to the scene will not stop to help injured persons. Expect rescue teams comprised of additional officers and emergency medical personnel to follow the initial officers. These rescue teams will treat and remove any injured persons. They may also call upon able-bodied individuals to assist in removing the wounded from the premises.

Once you have reached a safe location or an assembly point, you will likely be held in that area by law enforcement until the situation is under control, and all witnesses have been identified and questioned. If you are still on the premises, do not leave until law enforcement authorities have instructed you to do so.

P. AFTER AN ACTIVE SHOOTER EVENT

Any employee that witnesses an active shooter is legally considered a witness and must contact law enforcement. KBC management may not formally interview an employee prior to being interviewed by law enforcement. The employee has been a witness to a crime and speaking with others before law enforcement may impede the investigation.

It is suggested that anyone witnessing an active shooter event seek counseling either through KBC provided CAP services or their own personal counselor.

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**KENTUCKY BAPTIST CONVENTION
Corporate Policies**

Workplace Violence Policy Acknowledgment Form

I acknowledge that I have received and read a copy of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Workplace Violence Policy. I understand and agree, as a term and condition of my employment, to abide by the terms and conditions of this policy. I understand that violations according to this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination from my employment with KBC.

Employee Printed Name_____

Employee Signature:_____

Date:_____

Witness:_____

Approved: Team Leaders 10/24/2016, Admin Comm 10/27/2016, MB 11/14/2016

Reviewed: 2/17

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