

St. Paul's Chestnut Hill Safe Church Policies and Procedures

A. Purpose

We, the Vestry of St. Paul's Chestnut Hill, recognize that we have the responsibility to insure that our parish, its programs, and its campus, present a safe haven for all of God's children. In the Baptismal Covenant, we pledge to "seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving our neighbor as ourselves and to strive for justice and peace among all people, and to respect the dignity of every human being." To that end, we pledge to make St. Paul's Chestnut Hill safe for all people, a true sanctuary: a place where parents can bring their children and expect that they will come home whole and not broken, where vulnerable people can go for counseling and prayer and come away intact, where the sick and infirm who are unable to physically attend our campus can have their needs ministered to appropriately and safely, and where all parishioners are safe.

In doing Christ's work, several levels of relationships with our parishioners exist. These include pastoral relationships, both clerical and lay ministers; employer-employee or staff relationships; and volunteer relationships such as teachers, nursery care and youth leadership positions. These relationships will be governed by these stated policies and procedures. We pledge that St. Paul's will be maintained as a safe, secure place of worship in which clergy, lay ministers, teachers, volunteers, and staff will interact appropriately, sensitively, and compassionately with every human being who graces our parish with their presence.

B. Definitions

1. **Campus** - The entire premises of St. Paul's Chestnut Hill, including the church and rectory buildings, yards, parking lots, parks, and walkways.

2. **Child Abuse** - shall mean any of the following:

A. Any act or failure to act by a perpetrator which causes non-accidental serious physical injury to a child under the age of 18. Serious physical injury is an injury that causes a child severe pain or significantly impairs a child's physical functioning, either temporarily or permanently.

B. Any act or failure to act by a perpetrator which causes non-accidental serious mental injury to a child under the age of 18. Serious mental injury is a psychological condition, as diagnosed by a physician or licensed psychologist, including the refusal of appropriate treatment that renders a child chronically and severely anxious, agitated, depressed, socially withdrawn, psychotic or in reasonable fear that the child's life or safety is threatened; or seriously interferes with a child's ability to accomplish age-appropriate development and social tasks.

C. Any act or failure to act by a perpetrator which causes sexual abuse or sexual exploitation of a child under 18 years of age.

D. Serious physical neglect by a perpetrator constituting prolonged or repeated lack of supervision or the failure to provide the essentials of life, including adequate medical care, which endangers a child's life or development or impairs the child's functioning.

E. Any act or failures, or acts of failures to act by a perpetrator which create(s) an imminent risk of serious physical injury to or sexual abuse or sexual exploitation of a child under 18 years of age. To substantiate imminent risk of serious physical injury or sexual abuse/exploitation, a specific act or failure to act must be documented, and the act or failure to act must result in risk of abuse, I.e., be supported by substantial evidence that serious injury or sexual abuse/exploitation would have occurred.

3. **Emotional Abuse**- is the devaluing of one person by another, such as name-calling or indicate that the person is worthless.

4. **Pastoral Relationship** - is any relationship between a cleric, employee, or volunteer, and any person to whom such cleric, employee, or volunteer provides counseling, pastoral care, spiritual direction, or guidance, or from whom such cleric, employee, or volunteer has received confidential or privileged information. This includes lay pastoral caregivers and unpaid volunteers such as Stephen Ministers, lay Eucharistic Ministers, lay healing ministers, or other similar pastoral caregivers.

5. **Physical Abuse** - is the bodily injury of one person by another.

6. **Sexual Abuse** - or sexual molestation of any person includes but is not limited to any sexual involvement or sexual contact with a person who is a minor or who is legally incompetent.

7. **Sexual Misconduct** - includes sexual abuse or molestation of any person, sexual harassment, or sexual exploitation.

8. **Sexual Harassment** - involves any cleric-employment, mentor-counselor, or colleague relationship, and includes but is not limited to sexually oriented humor or language, questions, or comments about sexual behavior or preference unrelated to employment qualifications or counseling concerns; undesired physical contact; inappropriate comments about clothing or physical appearance; or repeated requests for social engagements.

9. **Youth** - is defined as any person under the age of 18 and over the age of 12.

C. Training & Education Policies & Procedures Regarding Child Sexual Abuse and Adult Sexual Misconduct

1. **Clergy and Staff** - All clergy (canonically resident or licensed), all employees of the parish (including paid office personnel, as well as sextons, organists, church school directors, any anyone considered an employee for IRS purposes), and anyone who regularly supervises youth and child activities (whether paid or volunteer, including youth group leaders, day care or nursery providers, acolyte trainers, youth choir leaders, or others involved with overnight activities or formal counseling of youth or children), **shall** attend four (4) hours of specified education regarding child sexual abuse and four (4) hours of specified education regarding adult sexual misconduct in church settings, as provided by the Diocese of Pennsylvania

2. **Volunteers and Non-Staff Lay Ministers and Leaders** - All members of the Vestry, all Spiritual Formation for Youth teachers, all Committee Chairpersons, and all volunteers who provide counseling, pastoral care, spiritual direction, or guidance, including Stephen Ministers, lay Eucharistic Ministers, lay pastoral visitors, and others, **are strongly recommended** to attend four (4) hours of specified education regarding child sexual abuse and four (4) hours of specified education regarding adult sexual misconduct in church settings, as provided by the Diocese of Pennsylvania.

3. **Training curriculum** - Training in child sexual abuse awareness education shall include a clinical review of child molestation, typical seduction patterns of extra-familial child molesters, youth protection safeguards, state child abuse statutes and reporting requirements, and Diocesan policies and procedures. Training in adult sexual harassment, exploitation, or abuse awareness education shall include issues of sexual harassment in employment, mentor and colleague relationships; sexual exploitation in pastoral relationships, theological and ethical considerations; and Diocesan policies and procedures.

4. **Compliance and Reporting** - The Rector of St. Paul's Chestnut Hill shall be responsible for the compliance of this mandatory and recommended training. All new personnel shall be trained within six (6) months of employment or beginning their employment. All persons required under this section to receive training shall do so within six (6) months of the effective date of this policy. All who complete such training, whether required to do so or who voluntarily do so, shall provide a signed copy of Certificate of Attendance to the Parish Office.

D. Policies Relevant to Clergy, Staff, or Volunteers Who Work With Children or Youth

1. Only members or staff employees of St. Paul's Chestnut Hill shall work with children or youth of our parish.

2. All persons identified in section C(1) above shall complete a questionnaire to be provided by the parish which shall include a request for references and a disclosure statement, which shall be signed and returned to the Rector, along with a photocopy of a valid driver's license, which shall be kept on confidential file in the Parish Office.

3. All existing and any new employees, clergy, or volunteers who are involved with overnight activities or counseling of children or youth, must submit to a national criminal background check prior to undertaking those activities. For those currently undertaking those activities, a background check shall be conducted as soon as possible after these policies are enacted. The results of the national criminal background check shall be reviewed by the Rector, who shall keep their contents confidential. Only those in position of supervision shall be allowed to review the results of such national criminal background checks, on a need-to-know-basis, as determined by the Rector.

4. St. Paul's Chestnut Hill strictly prohibits interaction with children or youth by anyone with a civil or criminal record of child sexual or physical abuse, or who has admitted prior abuse, or anyone known to have a paraphiliac diagnosis (including pedophilia, exhibitionism, or voyeurism) as defined by the American Psychiatric Association.

5. No corporal punishment shall be used to discipline children or youth in any activity or program at St. Paul's Chestnut Hill. No one is to strike or hit anyone at any time.

6. Only adults may be supervisors to children or youth. Two adult supervisors must be present during any youth activity, one of whom must be over twenty-one (21) year of age. If such cannot occur, the activity is to be cancelled. At a minimum, the national church standard of one adult for every five youth or children at parish events will be followed. The adult leadership will be reflective of the youth attending so that if there are male and female youth there must be male and female adult advisors.

7. No person attending any parish activity is to be physically, emotionally, or sexually abused.

8. Illegal drugs and alcohol may not be used or be in the possession of any adult or youth on or at any parish youth activity. Anyone found with these substances will be excluded from the activity and sent home.

9. All parish youth activities prohibit smoking. Anyone smoking will be sent home.

10. Youth and children left at a site for a parish activity are required to remain there under the supervision of the adult supervisors until they have been picked up by their parents or guardians. Parish adult supervisors who participate in the activity and bring their youth to an event are required to maintain supervision of them.

11. No one will be discriminated against at any parish youth activity on the basis of race, color, gender, sexual orientation, physical disability, origin, ancestry, or religion.

12. All overnight activities will provide separate sleeping arrangements for males

and females. A single adult and a single youth will never sleep alone. In addition, separate bathroom/shower facilities by gender (or specific times to use a single facility) will be provided.

13. Adult supervisors are to avoid dropping off and/or picking up youth without being accompanied by another adult. Families are encouraged to arrange their own transportation.

14. At times when one-on-one interactions with youth cannot be avoided, another adult is to be present or at least aware of the place of consultation and who is being counseled. Every attempt will be made for the counseling to take place in a public place such as a corner away from but in clear view of others. Seclusion is to be avoided.

15. All youth must have parental or guardian permission to attend any parish youth event. Youth and children may not be taken out of town by staff or supervisors without prior written notice to the Vestry, Rector, and/or Assistant Rector. All overnight or out-of-town trips will require written parental permission.

16. All volunteers and supervisors are to refrain from giving personal gifts or money privately to youth without first consulting the parents or Rector or Assistant Rector.

17. No youth event, including Spiritual Formation classes, is to function with a closed door policy. Clergy, parents, church staff, and parishioners have the right to observe any youth activity at any time. Activities should take place in rooms with windows, to the extent practicable.

18. Volunteers, teachers, and supervisors will meet regularly to openly discuss problems, accountability, policy clarification, personal feelings, and issues which interfere with or concern youth or child ministry efforts.

19. No adult youth volunteer, teacher, or supervisor is to date a youth or become romantically or sexually involved with a youth or child.

20. No weapons are to be brought to a parish youth event or activity. Anyone in possession of any weapon will be sent home.

21. No one is to be deprived of the basic human needs of food, shelter, sleep, or clothing at any parish event. The national requirement of providing youth with seven to eight hours of sleep per night will be adhered to for overnight youth events.

22. Children with serious disciplinary problems shall be referred to their own parents immediately during Youth Spiritual Formation classes or other youth or children events. It is not within the ministry of teacher volunteers or other youth supervisors or workers to act in loco parentis with regard to serious behavior problems. Where discipline is called for in children or youth ministry settings, it shall be limited to

appropriate reprimands and/or quiet time apart from the class or group until the parents are notified.

23. No admitted or convicted sex offender or child abuser shall be permitted to be involved with any children or youth at St. Paul's Chestnut Hill.

24. No one accused of child abuse or neglect will be involved with children while the accusations are pending. All accusations will be evaluated carefully with full scrutiny and deep concern for the children and youth of St. Paul's Chestnut Hill.

25. All children and youth are to be at the location for the specified event and time scheduled during parish activities. Youth and children are not permitted to roam the campus without supervision. It is the primary responsibility of parents to supervise and be aware of where their children are while they are on the campus, unless they are under the direct supervision of teachers, youth leaders, or other supervisors.

26. When parish events involve the serving of hot foods or drinks, adult monitors shall be present to prevent youth and children from serving themselves or otherwise coming into harmful contact with hot foods, liquids, or surfaces. Parents are encouraged to assist their children in such situations to prevent injury.

E. Policies Regarding Reporting of Child Abuse or Neglect

1. Every allegation of child abuse or neglect brought to the attention of anyone at St. Paul's Chestnut Hill who works with children or youth will be taken seriously. Any child or youth who feels that he or she has experienced improper behavior is encouraged to report it to an adult advisor or the Rector or Assistant Rector as soon as possible.

2. When an employee or supervisor, teacher, or volunteer believes that child abuse or neglect has been or is occurring to a child or youth, that person shall observe these guidelines to protect the child or youth from further abuse or neglect:

A. Exercise sensitivity towards the child or youth who has disclosed abuse,

B. Refrain from denying or explaining away the abuse,

C. Assure the child or youth that the abuse or neglect is not his/her fault and that he/she should feel safe,

D. Refrain from being judgmental of the abuser since it is often someone for whom the child cares deeply,

E. Do not make promises to the child that you are certain you cannot keep,

F. Assure the child that you will revere the information shared but do not agree to keep it secret from the child or youth,

G. Respect the privacy of the child by not telling any more people than necessary.

3. When child abuse or neglect is disclosed or suspected in good faith, employees and volunteers, teachers, or advisors shall report it to the Rector or Assistant Rector and Bishop within seventy-two (72) hours.

4. Anyone who has any questions about a specific situation or whether to report it is encouraged to report it anyway by contacting the Pennsylvania Division of Family Services (2150875-330), or the Child Abuse Hotline (1-800-932-9313).

F. Policies and Procedures Regarding Sexual Harassment and Misconduct

1. Current Employee Sexual Harassment Policy - The parish has adopted a sexual harassment prohibition policy and procedures for implementing that policy, codified in "Section 400. Sexual Harassment" of our Personnel Policies, which is applicable to all St. Paul's Chestnut Hill employees. This policy incorporates the sexual harassment policy of the Diocese of Pennsylvania as in effect January 1, 1995, as it may be modified.

2. Clerical and Lay Sexual Misconduct Policy - It is the specific policy of St. Paul's Chestnut Hill, as it is that of the Diocese of Pennsylvania, that sexual misconduct as defined above, by any ordained person, aspirant, postulant, or seminarian sponsored by or working in this parish, or by any lay employee or volunteer serving in any capacity, is strictly prohibited.

3. Clergy Sexual Misconduct Procedures - Any allegation of sexual misconduct brought against an ordained person is a matter of serious magnitude and must be reported immediately to the Bishop. The process for handling and disposing of such clerical sexual misconduct complaints will be evaluated, investigated, and resolved in accordance with the Episcopal Process in accordance with Diocesan policy and canonical law.

4. Sexual Misconduct of a Layperson - All complaints of sexual misconduct by a member of the laity exercising a ministry or having a pastoral relationship within this parish, should be reported immediately to the Rector or Assistant Rector, and ultimately to the Bishop.

G. Policies Regarding Adult Lay Ministries

1. To the extent possible, ministries of visitation in a private setting on behalf of the parish should be done by two adults, who should be of the same sex as the person being visited. Every effort shall be made to adhere to an open door policy, with due consideration for the privacy of the person being visited, and the seriousness of the

subject of the visitation being given priority.

2. Adults exercising ministries of visitation in a private setting on behalf of the parish should document such visits and include the person(s) visited, and the date, time a reason for, and length of the visit. Such documentation for all visits shall be provided to the Rector as soon as possible after such visitations, and shall be maintained in the Parish Office.

H. Adoption and Amendment

These policies and procedures are adopted by the Vestry of St. Paul's Chestnut Hill on _____, 2004, and are subject to amendment by the Vestry at any time.

Signature: _____
Secretary of the Vestry