

Safe Sanctuary Policy and Guidelines

for

PENDER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

12401 Alder Woods Drive
Fairfax, Virginia 22033

Approved by Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee
Approved on April 16, 2022

Approved by Church Council
Approved on August 22, 2022

Modified from previous versions

May 17, 2017 and November 2014

Based on audit findings reported May 2016

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Purpose

Pender United Methodist Church (PUMC) seeks to express God's love of children, youth, and other vulnerable persons and to provide for their wholeness and personal well-being. A central tenet of the Christian faith is the inherent value and worth of all children, youth, and adults. Children, youth, and other vulnerable people are least able to protect themselves in our society and are particularly vulnerable to abuse and neglect. Pender United Methodist Church is eager to do all it can to protect the children, youth, and other vulnerable people who participate in the life of this congregation. We believe implementing a policy and adopting procedures to protect our children, youth, and other vulnerable people recognizes that our Christian faith calls us to offer both hospitality and protection to our children, youth, and other vulnerable people. *The Social Principles of the United Methodist Church* states that "children must be protected from economic, physical, and sexual exploitation and abuse." The Social Principles also states, "all persons are individuals of sacred worth, created in the image of God."

Our goal is to create and maintain a safe, secure, and loving place where children, youth, and other vulnerable persons grow and develop through PUMC ministries. The Church Council recognizes that we should not allow possible risks to undermine or stop our ministerial work with children, youth, or other vulnerable persons. Church Council proposes that we acknowledge the risks and develop a practical plan to address these concerns; that we take steps to prevent harm to our children, youth, and other vulnerable persons; and that we continue to answer the Gospel's imperative to be in ministry with children, youth, and other vulnerable persons, thus making a difference in their lives.

In addition, PUMC seeks to protect the staff and volunteers who support children, youth, and other vulnerable adult activities and to minimize the legal risk and liability exposure accordingly. In this context, volunteers are unpaid adults who work with children, youth, and other vulnerable adults. Staff are those employed by PUMC, including Pender Hill School (PHS). Children are defined as people age 18 and under. For purposes of this policy document an 18 year old who has not graduated from high school is considered a child. The Safe Sanctuary Policy document applies only when children, youth, and other vulnerable persons are participating in a PUMC activity under direct supervision by a PUMC designated adult. Otherwise, parents or guardians are responsible for their own children, youth, or other vulnerable persons.

Priority

PUMC truly embraces the safety and security of our children, youth, and vulnerable persons as the highest priority for our Church family. Accordingly, this policy was created with the intent and incorporates procedures in support of this mission. We recommend that annually, the entire congregation is reminded of everyone's shared responsibility to care for our children, youth, and other vulnerable persons as we emphasize this policy. Church leadership, volunteers, and staff are required to participate in annual training sessions.

General Principles

The PUMC children, youth, and vulnerable person ministries and activities are reliant on the commitment and Christian love of the people who work with these populations of persons. We understand that not all circumstances can be addressed in this policy document. Volunteers and staff are expected to exercise their best judgment and commitment to the well-being of our children, youth, and other vulnerable persons in situations not specifically addressed in this policy. If needed, please seek further guidance from the Minister of Children, Youth, and Family Ministries or the Grow in God Cluster Leader on specific situations.

A child, youth, or other vulnerable person well-being encompasses the health, safety, and security needs to allow for a receptive environment for receiving God's love. This policy sets for the techniques and requirements necessary to maintain such an environment by protecting the privacy (personal information, personal hygiene, confidentiality) ensuring adequate supervision and managing children, youth, or other vulnerable persons behavior (two adult rule, boundaries concept, special situations), and ensuring that the safe sanctuary policy and guidance annual compliance with staff and volunteers.

Working with children, youth, and other vulnerable persons requires attentive observation and a caring level of respect, understanding, and compassion. It requires a special awareness of differences among children, youth, and other vulnerable persons without calling specific attention to them. The circumstances will dictate how to respond in a respectful way when behavior needs to be addressed. Loving mature judgment is called for in all situations.

The Safe Sanctuary Policy and Guidelines compliance requires staff and volunteers to first gain a complete understanding of the policy and then certify their agreement with the policy annually. The success of this policy relies on the integrity and honesty of this self-certification completed with good intention.

Policy Requirements

Privacy

Personal information – Children, youth, and other vulnerable persons’ personal records are to be maintained in a secure manner and shared only with authorized parties. Privacy will be protected by securing children’s personal records except in the case of written permission or Government requirements.

Personal Hygiene – Children, youth, and other vulnerable persons require privacy when performing personal habits of daily hygiene. Younger children and in special circumstances, other vulnerable persons may require more assistance, which must be provided. When in doubt, respect the child or other vulnerable person’s privacy. When help is requested, provide it.

Confidentiality – Where possible speak with children, youth, or other vulnerable persons and their respective parents or guardians about specific situations out of earshot of others. Discreetly inform the person in charge if appropriate. It is important to respect confidentiality by not discussing specific children, youth, or other vulnerable persons issues in front of disassociated parties. Always be aware of your surroundings when discussing specific children, youth, or other vulnerable persons issues or information.

Supervision

Two Adult Rule – The key component to ensuring adequate supervision for children, youth, or other vulnerable persons is found in the two-adult rule. Children, youth, or other vulnerable persons must be always supervised. Staff and volunteers are assigned in teams of two or more in any PUMC children, youth, mission, or committee activity.

When necessary, one adult may leave the room temporarily. In the event, the two-person rule cannot be implemented due to staffing and/or volunteer shortages, one adult and a roamer may be used. This requirement works well because it provides an extra set of hands in the classroom, especially in the case of an emergency when one must leave the room. It also provides a third-party witness to events, an appropriate adult to child ratio depending on the children or youth ages allowing appropriate control and the ability to manage the children, youth, or other vulnerable person needs. All events involving children, youth, or other vulnerable persons should follow an open-door policy whereby associated parents, church leaders, volunteers, and staff may enter and observe at any time with consideration to minimize any disruption.

Roamer Rules

Count your steps as physical distance matters. When using a roamer, the area to be monitored must be an easy walk for one person. One person cannot cover a vast amount of space on his/her own. Consider line-of-sight as well as the roamer's ability to hear. The roamer's responsibilities should also include common rooms and hallways as well as individual classrooms.

Be sporadically consistent. When a roamer is used, make sure that all volunteers are aware that the roamer could and will randomly appear and observe the classroom and/or group of children, youth, or other vulnerable persons. The roamer should select random times and observe the classroom and/or group of children. The roamer should select random times during an activity to keep observations sporadic but consistent. The roamer should feel free to revisit the same location multiple times to aid this consistent, sporadic behavior.

I can see clearly. Doors should always remain ajar, and windows should be uncovered to allow the roamer and parents to have the opportunity to see the children, youth, or other vulnerable persons. When using the half Dutch door keep the top half of the door open. This rule should also apply to exterior windows. Keep shades and blinds open. If the doors need to be closed because of the noise level or multiple groupings in a centralized location and there is no Dutch door in place, make sure that children, youth, or other vulnerable persons can be seen through a window.

Pay attention and log details. A good way to denote that the classrooms were observed is to document the time in a time-tracker log. Create a log for the roamer to document the time he/she visited the classroom and to note if all behaviors seemed consistent.

Boundaries – There are situations in which children, youth, and other vulnerable persons are given specific parameters such as amount of time, location, etc., within which leaders make clear the expectations and ensure that they are met. If at any time a child, youth, or other vulnerable person is behaving inappropriately the adult in charge will tell the child it is unacceptable and will inform the child, youth, or other vulnerable person of the expected behavior. If problems persist, the adult may want to consult the adult in charge and ultimately parents or guardians may be contact. No physical punishment or harsh verbal treatment is to be used at any time.

Special Situations:

Day Field Trips. Adult chaperons are needed when children, youth, or other vulnerable persons leave the property on a PUMC activity. Two adults are required and at least one male and one female are preferred. Parent or guardian signed permission forms delegating authority to act on behalf of the parents or guardians in the case of a child emergency are required for all children and youth 18 years old and under for each trip. For vulnerable adults 18 years of age or older an emergency point of contact form must be completed.

1. When PUMC hosts an activity involving children, youth, or other vulnerable persons from another church or community organization the groups using the church facility will follow PUMC safe sanctuaries policies and procedures.
2. PUMC volunteer and paid staff will be given the opportunity to attend training about safe sanctuaries policies, procedures, and child abuse issues on a regular basis.
3. If a suspected incident of child abuse or neglect occurs at or is revealed to a volunteer or staff person at a PUMC sponsored activity, the adult in charge of the activity will:
 1. Insure the safety of the child, youth, or other vulnerable person.
 2. Call the church pastor, Minister of Children, Youth, and Family Ministries or designee.
 3. Call the county office of the Department of Social Services.

Overnight and Mission Trips. In addition to following standard field trip procedures other requirements apply to overnight stays.

1. Bunk rooms in large retreat facilities are ideal and allow for males, females, all gender rooms to be housed separately. When possible, adults will be segregated within the bunk house facilities. Occasionally, when hotel rooms are the only available option adults will maintain separate accommodations from children, youth, or other vulnerable persons.
2. When making housing arrangements, the adults in charge will communicate openly with all children, youth, and other vulnerable persons parents or guardians in advance of the arrangements becoming finalized, to address questions like: “What room are available and how are the beds arranged?” “How will adults monitor sleeping activity in rooms?” “What steps are being taken to keep sleeping areas safe?”
3. Whenever possible, the adult in charge will consult transsexual minors on where they would like to go to, what they would like to wear, and what name they would like to go by. Ensure that their choices are consistent with the housing arrangements that you have communicated to the parents or guardians, to include any dress codes your ministry may have in place, and guidance for name tags and registration forms. If they have friends, they are already comfortable with, let them choose who they would like to room with rather than assume where they would be most comfortable. Allow everyone to have these options, so it’s a group norm, not just a special treatment for a specific minor.

Drivers and Insurance. Whenever PUMC transports children, youth, or other vulnerable persons away from the church campus the following guidance should be followed.

1. Adults should never transport a child, youth, or other vulnerable person by themselves.
2. For individuals not driving the church van on a children, youth, or other vulnerable person event (for example ski strips, Philippi West Virginia mission trip) individuals must show proof of their valid driver’s license, registration, and auto insurance.
3. For individuals driving the church van on a children, youth, or other vulnerable person events they must show proof of a valid driver’s license. These persons will be approved and covered by PUMC’s insurance company.

4. All persons will adhere to the outlined guidance of the volunteer and selection policy document.

Additional guidelines may be provided by individual children, youth, or other vulnerable persons ministries, such as Jesus Loves You (JLU). For certain events and activities permission slips and/or waivers are required.

Volunteer Selection Policies

All volunteer and staff who work with children, youth, and other vulnerable persons at Pender United Methodist Church will be:

1. At least 19 years old. Exceptions apply for approved youth helpers.
2. At least five years older than the oldest child or youth they will be supervising.
3. A regular attendee at Pender United Methodist Church for at least six months or a Care. Com, Au Pair, or Nanny who will be accompanied by a regular PUMC attendee.

All volunteer and staff (including clergy) who work with children, youth, or other vulnerable persons at PUMC will:

4. Complete and sign the PUMC application and renewal form giving permission to check references and conduct a criminal background check.
5. Provide the name and contact information of one emergency point of contact.
6. Individuals who have been convicted of physical or sexual abuse or neglect may not work in any church sponsored activity or program for preschoolers, children, youth, or other vulnerable persons.
7. Individuals 19 years old and older who volunteer or serve with children, youth, or other vulnerable persons on a single occasion must adhere to the first three parameters outlined in 1-3 but are not required to meet the parameters in step four.

The Application and Annual Renewal Form (AAR) is reviewed for approval upon submission. Missing information negates approval. Forms which contain any yes responses will be referred to the responsible parties for additional review and discussion. Approval is not guaranteed. Additionally, staff have other requirements that must be met as directed by S/PPRC. The personal information of the volunteer or staff person will be housed in the church office and used only for these purposes by authorized parties.

Reference

Child Abuse Definitions

Commonwealth of Virginia Statutes. Under Section 63.1-284.2 of the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended, an abused child is defined as one who is less than eighteen (18) years of age, “whose parents or other persons responsible for his/her care creates or inflicts, threatens to create or inflict, or allows to be created or inflicted upon such child a physical or mental injury by other than accidental means, or creates a substantial risk of death or disfigurement, or impairment of bodily or mental function.”

An act of child abuse may be committed by any person responsible for the care of another individual who is less than eighteen (18) years of age. It does not matter whether the person caring for the child under the age of 18 (hereinafter referred to as a “child” or “children” which term as used in this policy also includes youth ages 12-17) is a compensated or a volunteer worker. It does not matter whether the person routinely is entrusted with the care of children or whether such individual only occasionally comes in contact with children. It does not matter whether the person was entrusted with the care of a child for an hour or only a moment. It only matters that a child was abused or neglected by the person who, on the occasion in question, was responsible for the child’s care.

Types of Child Abuse. Child abuse refers to an act committed by a parent, care giver, or person in a position of trust (even though he/she may not care for the child on a daily basis) which is not accidental and which harms or threatens to harm a child’s physical or mental health or welfare. The following definitions and explanations in this section are from the Virginia Department of Social Services.

- 1. Physical Abuse.** A physical injury, threat of injury or creation of a real and significant danger of substantial risk of death, disfigurement or impairment of bodily functions. Such injury or threat of injury, regardless of intent, is inflicted or allowed to be inflicted by non-accidental means. Examples: asphyxiation, bone fracture, brain damage, skull fracture, subdural hematoma, burns, scalding, cuts, bruises, welts, abrasions, internal injuries, poisoning, sprains, dislocations, gunshot, stabbing wounds.

2. **Physical Neglect.** The failure to provide food, clothing, shelter, or supervision for a child if the child's health or safety is endangered. Physical neglect may include multiple occurrences or a one-time critical or severe event that results in a threat to health or safety, such as a toddler left alone. Other types of neglect include abandonment, inadequate supervision, inadequate clothing, inadequate shelter, inadequate personal hygiene, inadequate food and malnutrition.
3. **Sexual Abuse.** Sexual abuse includes any act defined in the code of Virginia which is committed, or allowed to be committed, upon a child by his/her parent or other persons responsible for the child's care. Examples of such abuse are: sexual exploitation, sexual molestation, intercourse/sodomy and other sexual abuse.
4. **Medical Neglect.** Refusal or failure by caretaker to obtain and/or follow through with a complete regimen of medical, mental, or dental care for a condition, which if untreated, could result in illness or developmental delays.
5. **Failure to Thrive.** A syndrome of infancy or early childhood which is characterized by growth failure, signs of severe malnutrition, and variable degrees of developmental retardation. Children are considered to be in this category only when the syndrome is diagnosed by a physician and is caused by non-organic factors.
6. **Mental Abuse/Neglect.** A pattern of acts or omissions by the caretaker which result in harm to a child's psychological or emotional health or development.
7. **Educational Neglect.** The child's caretaker is directly responsible for the failure of the child to attend school or an approved alternative program of study.

8. **Bizarre Discipline.** Any actions in which the caretaker uses eccentric, irrational, or grossly inappropriate procedures or devices to modify the child's behavior.

Reporting Process

To protect children, youth, and other vulnerable persons to whom the church ministers, PUMC requires that all volunteers and staff follow certain requirements to report concerns to PUMC officials.

Reporting Administrative Violations of the PUMC Safe Sanctuary Policy. Administrative violations of the church policies regarding working with children, youth, and other vulnerable persons must be reported to the Minister of Children, Youth, and Families. Should the situation require further review the Minister for Children, Youth, and Families will forward the problem to the responsible party, either S/PPRC or the Trustees depending on if the violation is from staff or a volunteer.

Reporting Child Abuse Concerns. Any allegation of child abuse must be taken seriously. Whenever anyone has reason to suspect or believe that any child, youth, or other vulnerable person involved with any church activity may be abused or neglected, the individual must immediately report it to the Minister of Children, Youth, and Family Ministries or the Pastor. The Minister of Children, Youth, and Family Ministries will then communicate with the Pastor, reporting individual, church leadership (as appropriate) and the church's legal counsel (as appropriate) to determine the appropriate course of action, if deemed necessary an investigation may be conducted and a report may be collected from the related parties. In all situations the Pastor should show care and comfort and pray for the church and all persons affected by the allegation. The Pastor may also need to contact the District Superintendent, document all procedures observed in handling the allegation, report the allegation to the church insurance carrier, and extend whatever pastoral care and resources are necessary. Always be mindful of respecting confidentiality of all related parties. All records will be maintained in confidence.

1. The person alleged to be the perpetrator of the abuse or misconduct will immediately be placed on leave from working with children, youth, or other vulnerable persons pending an investigation.

2. PUMC will cooperate with any investigation of the incident by state or local authorities. In the event there is no investigation of the incident by state or local authorities, the pastor and Chairperson of S/PPRC will conduct an investigation of the circumstances of the incident. They may consult with legal counsel as they deem necessary.
3. Any person who engages in child abuse will be removed from their position or not allowed to work with children, youth, and other vulnerable persons.

Training

Prior to working in the children, youth, or any area including other vulnerable person ministries, workers must undergo child protection safety training. Comprehensive training on issues of child sexual abuse in church settings shall be required for all clergy, staff, and volunteers who regularly supervise activities for children, youth, and other vulnerable people. This training should be offered at least annually.

1. Watch the Safe Sanctuary Policy and Guidelines video.
2. Read and acknowledge the Safe Sanctuary Policy document. All individuals must undergo training and meet the parameters outlined in the volunteer selection policies.

Ministry Supervision Guidelines

Whenever supervising activities involving children, youth, and other vulnerable persons at Pender United Methodist Church

1. At least two non-related adults (including at least one screened adult) will always be present.
2. Children, youth, and other vulnerable persons will be checked into and out of a church sponsored activity by their parent or legal guardian or people authorized by the parent/legal guardian.
3. Participants will have access to a telephone or cell phone when groups are at or away from the church facility.

4. One-on-one interactions with children, youth, and other vulnerable persons will be with an open door and visible to all. The Pastor, Minister of Children, Youth, and Family Ministries, parent, guardian, or another screened adult should be aware of any such interactions.
5. Activities with children, youth, and other vulnerable persons should publicly be accessible. Anyone has the right to visit and observe the children, youth, other vulnerable person's activity, classroom, or church sponsored program at any time, unannounced as long as the two-adult rule or one screened adult and roamer rule is being followed. Exceptions to this right may be issued at the discretion of church leadership.
6. All classroom and office doors will have a window or be visible from the hallway, or doors should remain open while the room is occupied.
7. Windows will be kept free from adornment.
8. If the two-adult rule cannot be observed, a screened, designated roamer will regularly check on groups with only one adult.
9. For overnight events at the church and church-sponsored off-premise activities, two or more screened adults must be present. This arrangement must include at least one male and one female if the group is mixed gender.

The use of electronic or social media communications may be useful tools in supporting ministries with children, youth, and other vulnerable persons. However, in such circumstances, the following requirements shall be met:

1. The volunteer or staff person shall never initiate a connection (friending or following) on social media.
2. If a minor initiates a connection, the child, youth, or other vulnerable person's parent or guardian as well as the Minister of Children, Youth, and Family Ministries shall be notified.

3. If an adult leader receives a private text from a child, youth, or vulnerable person that seems to be questionable, the adult leader should immediately end the conversation in the virtual space and offer opportunities to have the conversation in person and in compliance with the earlier guidelines for one-on-one conversations. The ministry supervisor and/or parent or guardian should be made aware of the incident immediately. If an in-person meeting is not possible, those involved will determine the most reasonable alternative in compliance with the earlier guidelines for one-on-one conversations.
4. Adult leaders should post photos on social network sites only with prior written permission granted by a parent or guardian. When posted, photos must not be tagged with names or location indicators. All photos must be appropriate and in keeping with the spirit of the ministry event.
5. All in-person protection policies apply to online platform meetings like Zoom, Skype, Messenger, Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, You Tube, and so on. (For example, two unrelated adults or one screened adult and a roamer should be present in the virtual room just as they would be in a physical room).
6. An official church account should be established and used for online activities, not a personal account.
7. Communication about online meetings should be shared with parents, guardians, as well as with children, youth, and other vulnerable persons.
8. Adult leaders and participants should use their real names as usernames.
9. Attendance of online meetings should be documented.
10. All electronic communications shall be documented and retained.

Whenever PUMC hosts an activity involving children, youth, or other vulnerable people from another church or community organization:

1. Groups using the church facility will follow PUMC Safe Sanctuary Policies and Guidelines.
2. PUMC volunteers and staff, including clergy will be given the opportunity for training about Safe Sanctuary Policies, and Guidelines, and child abuse issues on a regular basis. They will be re-screened every three years.

If a suspected incident of child abuse or neglect occurs or is revealed to a volunteer or staff person at a PUMC sponsored activity, the adult in charge of the activity will.

1. Ensure the safety of the child, youth, or other vulnerable person.
2. Call the Minister of Children, Youth, and Family Ministries, Grow in God Cluster Leader, or the Pastor.
3. Call the appropriate county/state hot line.

Policy Ownership & Operations

Consistent with the purpose outlined above, this Safe Sanctuary Policy was created to protect our children, youth, other vulnerable persons, volunteers, staff, and to minimize the risk to the church. It is an important priority and as such is supported, maintained, and enforced by various people in specialized roles.

Summary of Duties and Responsibilities – All parties listed below are responsible for oversight of the Safe Sanctuary Policy looking to identify vulnerabilities in the system and bring them to the attention of the appropriate party. This could include regulatory or legal climate changes or any type of suggestion that may enhance the welfare of our children, youth, and other vulnerable persons.

1. **Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee (S/PPRC)** has the role of overseeing all staff at the church and accordingly is in charge of this policy as it relates to staff. In the case of a problematic compliance issue with staff, S/PPRC will determine the course of action.
2. **Board of Trustees** has the role of managing risk within the church and is in charge of this policy for volunteers. In the case of a problematic compliance issue with volunteers, trustees will determine the course of action. Trustees have the authority to cancel an event if compliance is not met in advance.

3. **Church Council** votes on behalf of its members on church operations including Safe Sanctuary Policy. Council is composed of individual ministry leads and other safe sanctuary responsibilities (see church leaders below).
4. **Minister of Children, Youth, and Family Ministries** or his/her designee, is responsible for administering policy compliance with an eye toward continuous improvement and operational efficiency. Responsibilities include providing access to the policy and required forms, reviewing and tracking AAR forms, and escalating items of concern to the appropriate party. Policy execution rests with the Minister of Children, Youth, and Family Ministries except in the case of a problematic compliance issue as listed above or a child abuse suspicion situation.
5. **Church Leaders** including ministry leads are responsible for an event involving children, youth, and other vulnerable persons must ensure safe sanctuary compliance of all volunteers and staff prior to the event. Noncompliance may result in an event being canceled.
6. **Staff and volunteers** are responsible for following the policy.
7. **Parents and guardians** are responsible for their children, youth, and other vulnerable persons at all times. It is their responsibility to ensure that their people are under the direct supervision of a designated adult when participating in a PUMC activity.

Policy Review and Audit – Conscientious safe sanctuary policy management requires periodic review. If this policy is followed and monitored as intended, then improvements can be incorporated as necessary as part of the normal on-going routine. The Church Council will designate a team to conduct two specific audits for this policy.

1. A Transaction Audit of compliance adherence shall be completed annually. This includes inspecting documentation specifically related to the paperwork completed by individuals seeking compliance.
2. A complete policy review audit of how compliance is achieved shall be completed every five years. This includes reviewing the policy and each related document from a perspective of meeting the overall objectives.

Conclusion

In all our ministries with children, youth, and vulnerable persons, Pender United Methodist Church is committed to demonstrating the love of Jesus Christ so that each of God’s children, youth, and other vulnerable persons here will be “surrounded by steadfast love, established in faith, and confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal.”

This Child, Youth, and Other Vulnerable Persons Safe Sanctuary policy is adopted by actions of the Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee of Pender United Methodist Church this (day) of (month), (year).

Appointed clergy: _____

Chair, Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee: _____

Chair, Church Council: _____

REFERENCES

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Child Protection Policy.

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Pender United Methodist Church
Application and Annual Renewal (AAR) Form
for Volunteers and Staff
Working with Children, Youth, and Other Vulnerable Persons

At Pender United Methodist Church (PUMC) our children, youth, and other vulnerable persons their safety is a top priority. In compliance with our Safe Sanctuary Policy and Guidelines we ask you to complete this application and annual renewal form. Thank you for your cooperation and service.

Your Full Name:

Prefix	First Name	Middle Initial	Last Name
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Home Address

Street Address

Street Address Line 2

City	State/Province
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Zip Code

Home phone number

Work telephone

PUMC Role/Volunteer/Staff Position (Check all that apply)

- Staff
- Sunday School/Children's Church
- Nursery/Child Care
- Youth Group/Jesus Loves You (JLU)
- Pender Hill School
- Mission Trip
- Music Ministry
- Vacation Bible School
- Otherwise

Questions for Self-Certification – All Yes answers require an explanation.

1. Have you ever been convicted of or plead guilty to or have charges pending concerning any crime or misdemeanor involving actual or attempted child abuse, neglect, or sexual molestation in Virginia or in any other jurisdiction, including, but not limited to murder, abduction for immoral purposes, sexual assault, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, failing to secure medical attention for an injured child, pandering, crimes against nature involving children, taking indecent liberties with children, neglect of children, obscenity offenses, or similar sexual act or other moral impropriety involving children, youth, or other vulnerable persons?

- Yes
- No

2. Have you ever been convicted of or plead guilty to or have charges pending concerning a felony of any type that has not been expunged? (Note: conviction of a crime that does not involve any risk to children or youth or other vulnerable persons is not an automatic bar to volunteer service or employment with PUMC).

- Yes
- No

3. Have you ever abused a minor or engaged in any conduct that could be regarded as child abuse or neglect but not limited to murder, abduction for immoral purposes, sexual assault, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, failing to secure medical attention for an injured child, pandering, crimes against nature involving children, taking indecent liberties with children, neglect of children, obscenity offenses, or similar sexual act or other moral impropriety involving children, youth, or other vulnerable persons?

- Yes
- No

4. Because we take very seriously our responsibility to protect children, youth, and other vulnerable persons who participate in our programs and use our facilities we may consult various crime and/or child abuse databases including Sex Offender registry. Do you have any reason to believe that an investigation on you would disclose any negative information related to children, youth, or other vulnerable persons?

- Yes
- No

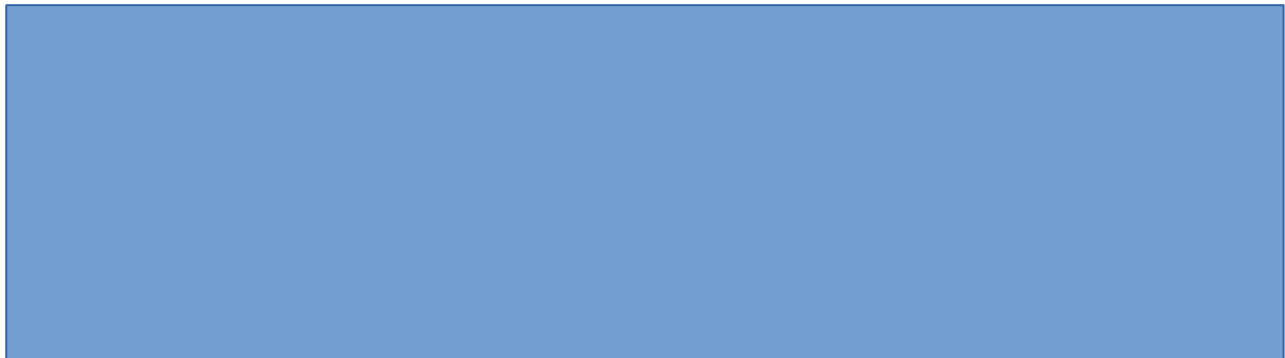
5. Is there any other information that might be relevant to assessing your fitness to work with children, youth, or other vulnerable persons?

- Yes
- No

Applicant's Statement and Verification (check all and affirm below)

- I have completed the required Safe Sanctuary Policy training, read, and understand the policy and agree to abide by it.
- I authorize you to contact any individual or organization to give you any information about my character and fitness for working with children, youth, or other vulnerable persons. I release PUMC and all such individuals and organizations from any and all liability for any damage that may result from furnishing such evaluations to you.
- Should my application be accepted, I agree to be bound by all policies standards and regulations of PUMC, including the safe sanctuary policy and to refrain from all illegal and or improper conduct in the performance of my services on behalf of PUMC.
- I hereby affirm and acknowledge by signing below, that all the information I provided in this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. Further, I understand that any misrepresentation or omission may be grounds for rejection or dismissal. This I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Virginia.

Applicant's Signature (Sign with mouse or track pad)



Applicant's Statement and Verification (check all and affirm below)

- I have completed the Safe Sanctuary Policy training, read and understand the policy and agree to abide by it.

- I authorize you to contact any individual or organization to give you any information about my character and fitness for working with children, youth, or other vulnerable persons. I release PUMC and all such individuals and organizations from any and all liability for any damage that may result from furnishing such evaluations to you.

- Should my application be accepted, I agree to be bound by all policies, standards, and regulations of PUMC including the Safe Sanctuary Policy and to refrain from any and all illegal and any improper conduct in the performance of my services on behalf of PUMC.

- I hereby affirm and acknowledge, by signing below, that all the information I provided in this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. Further I understand that any misrepresentation or omission may be grounds for rejection or dismissal. This I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Virginia.

Applicant's Signature _____ Date _____

Applicant's Name printed _____

Ministry Leader or Adult Volunteer/Leader Signature

_____ Date _____

Ministry Leader or Adult Volunteer/Leader Printed Name

_____ Date _____

PUMC Reviewer (Minister of Children, Youth, Family Ministries) Signature

_____ Date _____

PUMC Reviewer Printed Name

_____ Date _____

Comments:

- Approved
- Under Review

PUMC Safe Sanctuary Policy August 2022-Final Version.docx (20220822)