Youth and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy

Revised May 24, 2024

We, the members of First Presbyterian Church of Iowa City, Iowa, are committed to the safety, welfare, and protection of everyone participating in the activities and programs of our congregation, especially youth and vulnerable adults.

To Whom Does This Policy Apply

This policy applies to all First Presbyterian Church employees and volunteers who interact with the youth and vulnerable adults of First Presbyterian Church.

Definitions:

- **Youth:** birth through age 17
- **Vulnerable Adult:** a person eighteen years of age or older who is unable to protect the person's own interests or is unable to adequately perform or obtain services necessary to meet essential human needs, as a result of a physical or mental condition that requires assistance from another
- **Volunteer:** A member or participant of First Presbyterian Church who has been active for a minimum of 6 months. Volunteers must be at least 18 years old, four years older than the oldest youth under their supervision, and have passed a background check.
- **Church activity:** any activity or event hosted by, organized by, or participated in by First Presbyterian Church whether on church property or off-site.
- **Two Adult/Three Person Rule:** A minimum of two screened adults (paid or unpaid) should be present to supervise each activity involving youth and/or vulnerable adults. The two adults may not be married/co-habitating/domestic partners or otherwise romantically involved with one another. However, when it is not possible to comply with the two-adult rule, an adult should follow the rule of having at least three individuals (including youth) present at all times. The only exception to the two-adult rule is pastoral counseling by a staff pastor. In those circumstances, the meeting must be conducted in view of others (e.g., either a window in the door, or a door left open).
- **Child Protection Committee:** a committee approved by Session consisting of two members, one from the Christian Education Committee and one from the Personnel Committee, and three other members of the church. The members of this committee will be approved/authorized by Session and can serve up to two consecutive, three-year terms. This committee is responsible for the implementation and oversight of this policy and must meet annually to review the policy, its implementation, and oversight.

Working with Vulnerable Adults

- This policy and expectations of conduct apply to working with youth *and* vulnerable adults. The training specified for staff and volunteers is specific to those working with *youth*.
- The "Two Adult" rule should be followed when interacting with vulnerable adults. This also applies when transporting a vulnerable adult, except in cases of emergency.
- When one-on-one interactions between a vulnerable adult and another adult employee or volunteer is unavoidable due to unforeseen circumstances, care must be taken to remain in a safe environment that provides visibility by others.

Related Forms:

- Disclosure Statement for Volunteer (page 7)
- Voluntary Disclosure Statement for Parent/Guardian (page 8)
- Adult Code of Conduct (page 9)
- Youth Code of Conduct (page 10)

- Incident Report Form (page 11)
- Auto Safety Certification Form (page 12)
- Medical Information Form (page 13)
- Medical Release Form (page 14)
- Social Media Form (page 14)
- Medication Form (page 15)
- Event Permission Slips (created as needed)

All forms, reports, and documents discussed in this policy will be confidential and kept in a secure location. The confidential information may be shared only with staff and volunteers who interact with youth.

What does this policy require?

- Every person involved with youth must commit to relate in a sensitive manner with youth of all genders.
- Each individual working with youth is responsible for their actions.
- Any individual failing to adhere to this policy may be prohibited from future interactions with youth at First Presbyterian Church.

Staff and Volunteer Screening

- Each staff member and volunteer must complete a Disclosure Statement and agree to the Adult Code of Conduct prior to working with youth.
- Each person must receive a negative background/criminal history check prior to working with youth.

Staff and Volunteer Training

- Each staff member and volunteer must complete child protection training prior to working with youth. This training will be provided online, in written form, in-person, and/or hybrid utilizing various tools as needed. Training will be required every two years.
- The Child Protection Committee will ensure that all training is up to date.
- Training will include the following:
    - Review of the Youth and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and appendices.
    - Definitions of child abuse, signs of child abuse, and requirements for reporting.
    - Procedures for reporting allegations and concerns pertaining to youth protection issues.
- CPR training and first aid training is recommended for all volunteers.

Supervising Responsibilities

The Director of Christian Education is responsible for ensuring that these forms are kept up to date annually:

- Medical Information Form
- Social Media Form: This form grants permission for First Presbyterian Church to use a youth's name and/or pictures on First Presbyterian Church's social media platforms, including but not limited to: Facebook, FPC Website, Instagram, SnapChat, etc. as well as in

print for various marketing purposes.
- Event Permission Slips: These forms are specific to events and provide for signed parent or guardians' permission for all off-site activities.

Adult to Youth Ratio

- In addition to following the "Two Adult Rule," the following adult/youth ratios should be utilized:
    - Birth to kindergarten: a minimum of 1 adult to 4 youth must be present at all times
    - Grades 1-8: a minimum of 1 adult to 7 youth must be present at all times
    - Grades 9-12: a minimum of 1 adult to 10 youth must be present at all times
- When one-on-one interactions between youth and an adult employee or volunteer is unavoidable due to unforeseen circumstances, care must be taken to remain in a safe environment that provides visibility by others.
- Any individual supervising youth must exercise due care to provide a safe environment. This includes always being present, observing, and adhering to the Code of Conduct.

Transportation

- When transporting youth, all drivers for church events must have the Auto Safety Certification Form complete and on file. Copies of a valid driver's license and proof of insurance are also required. Parent approval is required for youth driven by drivers under the age of 25.
- When possible, there will be at least three people present in any vehicle, either two adults and one youth, or one adult and two youth. When this is not possible, consent of parent or guardian must be obtained and an Incident Report Form filled out.
- A youth may ride home with a volunteer only if their parent or guardian gives written permission to the supervising adults of the arrangement prior to the end of the event. This permission may include electronic forms, such as text, chat, or email.
- All occupants of a personal vehicle must use a seat belt and proper child safety restraints.
- This policy shall not hinder adult volunteers or employees from providing transportation in a medical emergency. The adult shall make a reasonable attempt to contact a parent or guardian prior to providing such transportation.
- When transporting youth, all State and Federal Laws must be followed.

Overnight Travel Guidelines

- There must always be two adult leaders present.
- The preferred arrangement is two adults per room and one person per bed.
- If there is a situation that requires a different arrangement, the event supervisor will discuss the options with the parents/guardians and/or the youth.
- All medication for youth will be in possession of and administered by an adult. No medication (prescription or over-the-counter) will be given without written permission from a parent or guardian on the Medication Form. All medication dispensed will be recorded and initialed by volunteer or staff on the bottom portion of this form.

Social Media and Phone Usage

- First Presbyterian Church employees and volunteers will not disclose anything sensitive or confidential about youth on their personal social media accounts. This includes but is not limited to personal information, medical information, a location, or pictures of any youth or vulnerable adult.
- Any photos posted that show youth require written permission from parents/guardians (see Media Release Form).
- When communicating with youth via text messaging, direct messaging, email, or a similar format, staff and volunteers must follow the "Two Adult Rule." Staff and volunteers should not have individual messages/email with youth or vulnerable adults that are not seen by another screened staff member or volunteer.
- All communications must be kept professional.
- If a social media post causes concern for the welfare of a youth, contact the proper emergency services immediately (for example: police, hospital, pastor, mental health services) and then the Director of Christian Education and Head of Staff.

Illness Policy

- If a youth becomes ill at church and needs to go home, the parent or guardian will be notified. In emergency situations, if parents or guardians cannot be located, medical attention will be provided at a medical facility.
- Youth with fever, vomiting, or diarrhea should not attend or return to church until they are symptom free for 24 hours.
- Parents or guardians of youth with later diagnosed communicable or contagious diseases are asked to notify the church of the disease immediately.
- Youth with lice should not be attending any church program until proper treatment has been given.
- It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to make sure the Medical Information Form is up to date.

Youth Discipline Policy

Throughout all disciplinary procedures, the adults at First Presbyterian Church shall always demonstrate care, even though inappropriate behavior cannot be tolerated. Adults shall:

- Never handle inappropriate behavior with physical punishment, permissiveness, by ignoring the problem, by answering in kind, or with sarcasm.
- Handle inappropriate behavior by:
    - Initially, informing the youth when behavior is unacceptable, making sure that they understand the reasons why certain behaviors are expected.
    - If the unacceptable behavior persists or recurs, warn the youth that they may be taken out of the environment/activity to calm down, to reflect on their behavior.
    - Advise them that they may be alternatively referred to another adult if the behavior does not improve.
    - Utilize an age appropriate "time out."
    - If behavior becomes dangerous to others, the youth should be immediately taken out of the environment and another supervising adult should be

consulted/informed. The Incident Report Form should be filled out. Parents/guardians should be notified and may be asked to take the youth home.

Record Keeping:

- If a youth violates the code of conduct, the reporting adult must fill out an Incident Report Form as soon as possible. The form should be submitted to the Head of Staff.
- If further action is warranted, the Child Protection Committee will be notified. The committee may meet with the parents/guardians and the youth.
- If no further action is needed, the Head of Staff will report the incident at the next meeting of the Child Protection Committee.
- The forms will be reviewed annually to determine if further action is necessary.

Complaint Procedure

- Any person who believes he/she has been subjected to sexual misconduct, witnessed sexual acts committed upon others, or has been told by a youth that they have been subjected to such behavior shall immediately inform the Child Protection Committee.
- An Incident Report Form shall be filled out. The complaint shall include the date(s) and approximate time(s) of the alleged sexual misconduct; the identities of the accused, the accuser, and or/victim; the location(s) of the incident(s); the specific act(s) of sexual misconduct; and the names of all witnesses and persons with relevant information.
- Church employees and volunteers must report any questionable observations, acts, or situations in violation of these policies by submitting an Incident Report Form to the Child Protection Committee.

Responses to Reports of Abuse:

- All information will be held in strict confidence, subject to disclosure as required by FPC policy or law.
- The Head of Staff or a member of the Child Protection Committee will oversee the removal of the accused from the program or place where the incident occurred and will inform the accused that they may not return to the church or church activities until notified by the Committee.
- The Head of Staff or a member of the Child Protection Committee shall inform the Session that an allegation has been made and reported. The Presbytery will also be informed.
- The Child Protection Committee will write a report of its determination relative to the situation. This report will make a recommendation to Session regarding the future participation of the accused in church activities and programs.

Disclosure Statement (Volunteer)

It is the intent of the Session of First Presbyterian Church, Iowa City, Iowa, to make every reasonable effort to provide a safe environment. Therefore, the Session requires the following information from adult volunteers (18 and over) who work directly with young people or assist staff on a regular basis with church ministries. This statement must be completed and returned to the Director of Christian Education. This information shall be considered confidential.

Have you ever been convicted of a serious misdemeanor, aggravated misdemeanor, or a felony under Iowa law or any other state/country law? ___Yes ___No Have you ever been convicted of or had an administrative finding of violating any law involving child abuse, sexual abuse, physical abuse, sexual harassment or exploitation, or any other crime related to children? ___Yes ___No Have you ever been the subject of an investigation or listed as the perpetrator in a founded child abuse report? ___Yes ___No	Do you currently have charges pending or are there any ongoing investigations relating to any of the aforementioned? ___Yes ___No Has your driver's license ever been revoked for any reason? (Answer to be used in determining volunteer drivers.) If yes, please attach explanation. ___Yes ___No Do you agree to allow the staff of First Presbyterian Church, Iowa City, to conduct a criminal background check and a check of the child abuse registry, and to request and contact personal references? ___Yes ___No

If you have a concern about a question or any of your answers, please speak to the Head of Staff or the Director of Christian Education

Name _____
First Middle **Last**

Address _____City/State_____Zip___ _

Day phone _____ Evening phone _____

Are you a member of First Presbyterian Church, Iowa City?

____Yes ____No

By signing this form, I agree that should any information change in the future, I shall contact First Presbyterian Church immediately.

Signature _____ Date _____

Voluntary Disclosure Statement (Parent/Guardian)

It is the intent of the Session of First Presbyterian Church, Iowa City, Iowa, to make every reasonable effort to provide a safe environment. Therefore, the Session requests the following information from parents/guardians with youth who participate in church activities. This statement may be completed and returned to the Director of Christian Education. This information shall be considered confidential.

Child's Full Name:_____

Date of Birth: _____

Parent/Guardian Full Name:_____

Contact Number:_____ Email Address:_____

Does your child have any medical conditions we should be aware of? (e.g., asthma, diabetes, allergies)

Does your child have any behavioral or emotional needs that require special attention?

Does your child require any special accommodations or support during activities?

Is your child on any medication that we need to administer or be aware of during activities?

Does your child have any dietary restrictions or food allergies?

Is there any additional information you believe we should know to ensure your child has a positive and safe experience?

If you have a concern about a question or any of your answers, please speak to the Head of Staff or to the Director of Christian Education.

Are you a member of First Presbyterian Church, Iowa City?

___Yes ____No

Adult Code of Conduct

I consider this a vow before God, and a covenant between me and First Presbyterian Church, Iowa City, the youth with whom I will be working, and their families.

- While working with youth, I will conduct myself as a Christian called in service to God, and keeping in mind that every human being is a Child of God.
- I understand that I have been entrusted with the safety and welfare of all youth assigned to me. At all times, I will guard their physical safety and mental, emotional and bodily health.
- I understand that I have been entrusted with the spiritual health of all the youth assigned to me.
- I will abide by the two-adult or three-person rule. If a youth requests time alone with me, I will inform the other adult supervisor and will meet with the youth in sight of others, but not necessarily where others can hear us.
- I will respect the boundaries and personal space of others and request permission before any kind of physical touch, including hugs.
- I will not swear or use disrespectful/derogatory language in the presence of youth. I will be respectful and inclusive in addressing youth in the manner in which they wish to be addressed.
- I will set a good example by respecting the property of the church, any off-site location of a church event, and of others and will be a good steward of God's earth.

Prohibited Behaviors

The following are prohibited:

- Any display or demonstration of sexual activity, abuse, insinuation of abuse, or event of abusive conduct towards youth.
- Sexual advances or sexual activity of any kind between any adult and a youth.
- Infliction of any physically abusive behavior or bodily injury to a youth.
- Physical neglect of a youth, including failure to provide adequate supervision while participating in church activities.
- Causing mental or emotional injury to a youth.
- Possessing obscene or pornographic materials at any church activity.
- Possession, use of, or being under the influence of any intoxicating substances

I have read and understand the above Code of Conduct and agree to abide by its provisions.

Signature _____ Date _____

(applicant)

Youth Code of Conduct

The purpose of this Code of Conduct for Youth is to keep all kids and adults safe so that each individual can fully learn, enjoy, and explore Christian faith at FPC.

- I will respect the boundaries and personal space of others and request permission before any kind of physical touch, including hugs.
- I will be respectful and inclusive in addressing people in the manner in which they wish to be addressed.
- I will set a good example by respecting the property of the church, any off-site location of a church event, and of others and will be a good steward of God's earth.
- I will, for my safety and the safety of others, pay attention during announcements and group instructions.
- I will participate in activities with a positive attitude.
- I will abide by the two-adult or three-person rule.
- I will report any unsafe situations or concerns to an adult immediately.

Prohibited Behaviors

Behavior which shall be considered unacceptable includes but is not limited to:

- Infliction of any physically abusive behavior or bodily injury (hitting, kicking, pushing)
- Verbal abuse of another person (name calling, teasing, swearing)
- Disruptive or unsafe behaviors
- Sexual advances or sexual activity of any kind between youth
- Causing mental or emotional injury
- Possession, use of, or being under the influence of any intoxicating substances
- Possession of any type of weapon

Accident/Incident Report Form

(Use separate form for each involved youth)

Reason for Report _____

Date of Incident _____Time _____

Name of Reporter _____

Youth Activity _____

Name of Person(s) Involved _____ Age of youth _____

Nature and extent of Violation(s), incident, or injury _____

_____

Identity of any corroborating witnesses or other persons with relevant information _____

_____

Name, age, and condition of other person(s) in the location where incident occurred

_____

What action did you take? _____

_____

Has the incident been resolved? Yes_____No (If no, explain) _____

_____

Other relevant information _____

_____

The information contained in this document is correct to the best of my knowledge.

Printed Name of Reporter _____

Signature _____Date: _____

Signatures of Witness (if possible) _____

Report Submitted To _____Date: _____

Auto Safety Certification

Name of Driver_____Date of Birth _____

Address _____City, State, Zip _____

Phone Number _____Driver's License Number/ State _____

Date of Expiration _____ Restrictions _____

Vehicle# 1 Information & **Insurance Coverage**

Vehicle Model and Year _____# of Seatbelts _____

License State & Plate Number _____ License Plate Expiration Date _____

Name of Owner _____ Phone Number _____

Owner's Address _____

Auto Insurance Company _____Policy Number_____

lnsured's Name _____Policy Expiration Date _____

Vehicle# 2 Information & **Insurance Coverage**

Vehicle Model and Year _____# of Seatbelts _____

License State & Plate Number _____ License Plate Expiration Date _____

Name of Owner _____ Phone Number _____

Owner's Address _____

Auto Insurance Company _____Policy Number_____

lnsured's Name _____Policy Expiration Date _____

Certification

I certify that the information on this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that as a volunteer driver for First Presbyterian Church of Iowa City, I am 25 years of age or older, possess a valid driver's license, have the proper and current vehicle registration, and have the required insurance coverage in any vehicle used to transport youth participants to a church-sponsored event. I **further certify that** I **have read and will use a seatbelt for each passenger and will comply with state traffic laws when transporting youth participants for a church-sponsored event.**

Signature of Driver _____Date _____

I have attached a copy of my **Driver's License** and a copy of my **Auto Insurance Card.**

Medical Information Form

Youth name: _____

Youth birthdate: _____

Parent name(s): _____

Parent email(s): _____

Parent cell: _____Parent cell: _____

Best way to contact in case of emergency:

_____

Alternate emergency contact name: _____

Relationship: _____ Phone:_____

Medications prescribed: _____

_____

Allergies:_____

Health Insurance Information (optional): _____

Please write instructions for medications on Medication Form provided.

Medical Release Form

This consent form gives permission to seek whatever medical attention is deemed necessary, and releases the Church and its staff of any liability against personal losses of named youth.

I/We the undersigned have legal custody of the youth named above, a minor, and have given our consent for him/her to attend events being organized by the Church. I/We understand that there are inherent risks involved in any ministry or athletic event, and I/we hereby release the Church, its pastors, employees, agents, and volunteer workers from any and all liability for an injury, loss, or damage to person or property that may occur during the course of my/our youth's involvement. In the event that my/our youth is injured and requires the attention of a doctor, I/we consent to reasonable medical treatment as deemed necessary by licensed physician. In the event treatment is required from a physician and or/ hospital personnel designated by the Church, I/we agree to hold such person free and harmless of any claims, demands, or suits for damages arising from the giving of such consent. I/We also acknowledge that we will be ultimately responsible for the cost of any medical care should cost of that medical care not be reimbursed by the health insurance provider. Further, I/we affirm that the health insurance information provided is accurate at this date.

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____

Date_____

Media Release Form

I give permission for my youth's name and/or picture to be used on the FPC Facebook, Website, and social media, or any church marketing materials.

Signature of Parent/ Guardian _____

Date _____

Medication Form

Provide details regarding daily medications below. Check box for time of day and also list exact time (if necessary) for dispensing medication. If medication is to be given less often than daily, include additional instructions.

Medication Name	Dosage	Instructions	Morning Time	Midday Time	Afternoon Time	Evening Time
Ex. Amoxicillin	*10 ml*	*Keep refrigerated, use syringe*	☑ *8:00am*	☐	☑ *8:00pm*	☐
			☐	☐	☐	☐
			☐	☐	☐	☐
			☐	☐	☐	☐

Additional Instructions:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Record of Medications Dispensed

Name of youth _____

Medication Name	Dosage	Date/Day	Morning Time	Midday Time	Afternoon Time	Evening Time	Initial