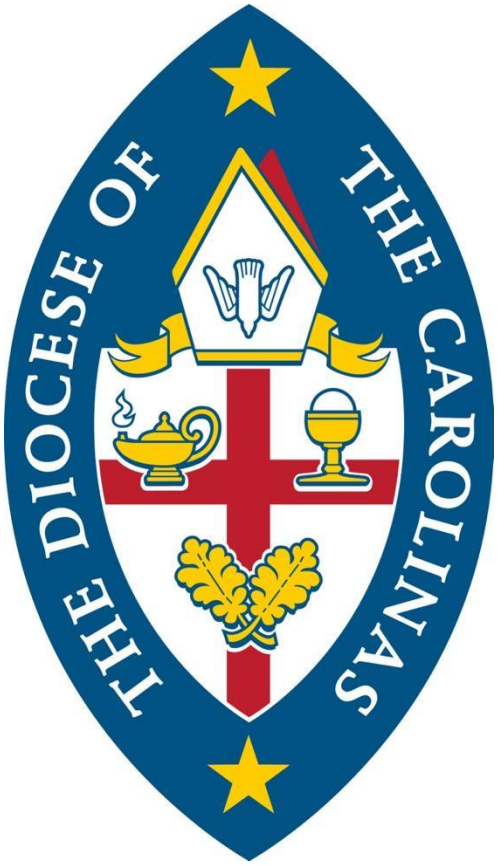

Safeguarding Our People:

A policy for the Protection of Children and Adults

Anglican Diocese of the Carolinas

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Table of Contents

Overview 3
- Purpose of the Policy
- Diocesan Safeguarding Committee
- Responsibility for the Policy
- Policy Summary
- Definitions

Awareness 10
- Screening
- Training

Interaction Expectations 14
- Communication
- Interacting Appropriately with Adults
- Compromised Adults
- Counseling
- Spiritual Direction
- Physical Interaction with Minors
- Supervisory Plans for Children/Youth

Reporting Procedures 31
- Reporting
- Reporting Flow Chart
- Allegations Against Laity
- Allegations Against Clergy or Diocesan Employees
- Allegations Against Bishops

Compliance 38
- Policy Oversight
- Compliance Documentation
- Exemptions to Policy

Resources 42

Overview

PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

This document provides requirements, instruction, best practices, and standards of care and vigilance, to direct and inform the clergy and laity in the churches of the Diocese of the Carolinas, regarding the proper safeguarding of those entrusted to you.

THE DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE

The Bishop, in collaboration with the Standing Committee, establishes a Safeguarding Committee, which is responsible for the creation and promulgation of the Diocesan Policy for the Protection of Children and Adults, under the authority and oversight of the Bishop and the Standing Committee in accordance with the canons of the Diocese.

From time to time, at least annually, the committee will review and, if necessary, revise the policy in light of practical experiences, medical and other scholarly research, legal developments, and other relevant considerations.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS POLICY

The Rector, rather than the diocese or the Anglican Church in North America, has overall responsibility for the administration of this policy within the parish, mission, or church plant he leads and for providing all reports requested by the diocese. In the absence of a Rector, the priest-in-charge, lay leader, or the Senior Warden is responsible. Duties may be delegated, except in those areas specifically delineating action by the Rector.

POLICY SUMMARY

The Diocese of the Carolinas requires that each church (see definition) must have in place the following procedures for preventing misconduct and/or abuse of both adults and children. This minimum standard applies even if there are no children currently in attendance at church events. All churches must comply to be prepared for children/youth or compromised adults to join their congregation. Below are the key points to remember from this policy:

AWARENESS

- All clergy, employees, vestry, and Child and Youth Workers (see definition below) must be screened, background checked, and trained on this policy prior to serving
- All clergy, employees, vestry, and Child and Youth Workers must complete the sexual abuse prevention training prior to serving
- Documentation for laity is maintained by the church; the Diocese maintains documentation for clergy

INTERACTION

- Two-adult rule (or rule of three) must be used at all times
- Pastoral counseling limited to 5 sessions or fewer per person.
- Verbal interaction should be kind, clean, legal, and age-appropriate
- Default for all interactions should be hands off, especially with restroom policies, affection, and discipline; remain in public view; kids are never alone; be open to parents being present; follow Supervisory Plans and other polices outlined below (medical, restroom, transportation, overnight, off-campus, responding and reporting); provide a safe environment; follow the recommended ratio of Certified Adults to children or youth

REPORTING

- Any report of misconduct or abuse are to be reported to the proper authorities immediately
- Allegations against clergy are to be reported directly to the Diocese Reports Receivers through the Diocesan website; allegations against a Bishop are to be reported to the Provincial Office (misconduct@anglicanchurch.net)
- Allegations against all lay persons are to be reported directly to senior church leadership (Rector, priest-in-charge, or Senior Warden)

COMPLIANCE

- Churches are responsible for all documentation regarding screening, training, and implementation for non-clergy employees, vestry, and Child and Youth Workers, in compliance with this policy and with their insurance carrier's requirements.
- The Diocese is responsible for all documentation regarding screening, training, and implementation for clergy, in compliance with this policy and with the diocesan insurance carrier's requirements
- Documentation is to be completed, submitted, and filed no later than 1 September of each year.

DEFINITIONS

The Bishop and the Diocese strictly prohibit all types of abuse (as defined in this document), by any member of the clergy, anyone pursuing ordained ministry, any employee, staff person, vestry member, or by any Child and Youth Worker (as defined) working in any capacity for the Diocese or any diocesan related institution/church in this Diocese.

For the purpose of this policy, please note the interpretation of the following terms:

- **Abuse*:** interactions in which one person behaves in a cruel, violent, demeaning, or invasive manner toward another person which causes or is likely to cause harm or injury. The term encompasses physical, sexual, and psychological (emotional) mistreatment.
  - **Child Abuse:** any willful act or threatened act resulting in any physical, mental, or sexual injury or harm that causes, or is likely to cause, the child's physical, mental, or emotional health to be significantly impaired. Abuse of a child includes acts and/or omissions. Corporal discipline of a child by a parent or legal custodian for disciplinary purposes does not necessarily constitute abuse when it does not result in harm to the child. Each state and the District of Columbia have their own definition of what constitutes child abuse

under civil and criminal laws, and each church in the diocese should be familiar with the relevant laws and legal definitions in its jurisdiction. This information is easily obtained through the Department of Children and Families, or like entities, within each state.
- **Pastoral Abuse:** Pastoral abuse may be found when a person with spiritual authority demonstrates a pattern of control, intimidation, manipulation, coercion, isolation, elitism, censorship of decision making, exploitation, or the use of the name of God to get someone to do something inconsistent with Scripture or our foundational documents. This pattern may include the use of spiritual truths or Scripture to harm others. Pastoral abuse is unacceptable in our churches (see Matthew 7, Matthew 11, Matthew 23).

*Adapted from the American Psychological Association: https://dictionary.apa.org/abuse
*As a helpful resource, recognizing such laws can change over time, please visit the following website to view links to the child abuse reporting laws in each jurisdiction: https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/laws-policies/state/

- **Advocates:** person(s) selected by the complainant with consent of the Bishop, or appointed by the Bishop if the complainant desires, to assist the complainant(s) in understanding and participating in the disciplinary processes of the church, including obtaining assistance to formulate and submit a complaint that conforms to the canons. Advocates are not legal advisors or pastors.
- **Bishop:** the Bishop of the Diocese, but also includes the ecclesiastical entity authorized to act in the absence of the Bishop, such as the Standing Committee.
- **Certified Adult:** an adult (18 years or older) who has gone through the full screening and training process outlined in this policy. All clergy (including those seeking ordination or transfer), employees, and vestry members are required to be certified. All Child and Youth Workers are required to be certified prior to serving with children or youth.
- **Chaplain:** the spiritual advisor to the complainant, or to the respondent, selected by the complainant or respondent, or appointed by the Bishop if the complainant or respondent desires.
- **Child or Youth:** any unmarried person under the age of majority under state law-who has not been emancipated by order of the court. In most cases, "child" refers to infants through elementary school, and "youth" refers to middle/junior high through high school-aged minors.
- **Child and Youth Worker:** adult volunteers and paid childcare workers who serve in children and youth activities in diocesan institutions, programs, and churches. This includes teachers in Sunday school classrooms or discipleship groups; it also includes anyone who has access to children in a supervisory capacity even if they are not the primary teacher. All Child and Youth Workers must be certified. All supervision of minors must include two Certified, unrelated Adults in every room.
- **Children's Ministry Director:** the person overseeing children's ministry in a congregation, whether employee or volunteer.
- **Church:** all fellowships, congregations, parishes, church plants, and other worshiping entities admitted to the Diocese.
- **Clergy:** ordained ministers as well as those pursuing ordained ministry (including aspirants, postulants, candidates, ordinands, and transfers) in our diocese, whether employed or non-stipendiary.

- **Complainant:** the person making an allegation.
- **Compromised Adult:** a person 18 years of age or older who has a physical or mental condition which substantially impairs the person from adequately providing for his or her own care or protection. This includes a person who is impaired in the ability to adequately provide for the person's own care or protection because of the infirmities of aging including, but not limited to, organic brain damage, advanced age, and physical, mental, or emotional dysfunction. A resident of a facility is a compromised adult. (Each state defines this slightly differently; see the Reporting section for links to mandatory reporting requirements by state.)
- **Consent:** when someone agrees, gives permission, or says yes to sexual, romantic or emotional activity with another person. Consent is always freely given and all people in a sexual, romantic, or emotional situation must feel that they are able to say yes or to stop the sexual, romantic, or emotional activity at any point. There is a power dynamic when people have authority, and this may undermine the validity of consent. For example, there is a difference in power between a supervisor and a subordinate employee that could undermine the validity of consent. The fact that sexual activity is initiated by someone other than the church worker does not relieve that worker of responsibility, nor does it make sexual activity under those circumstances acceptable. Under no circumstances can a child, youth, or compromised adult give consent.
- **Consultants:** person(s) appointed by the Bishop to consult with and advise the respondent accused of misconduct/abuse and his or her legal advisors at reasonable times prior to the issuance of a Presentment. The consultant should be knowledgeable in the canons of the ACNA and shall explain the rights of the respondent and the alternatives. The selection of the consultant may take into account the complainant's needs/requests.
- **Dating Relationships:** consensual relationships of clergy or employees with a parishioner in which two parties are exploring a consensual relationship that may lead to Christian marriage. In such situations, the relationship is to be conducted with the knowledge of the Rector (or Bishop in the case of clergy). Non-clergy consensual dating between individuals not involved in supervisory relationships are excluded from the definition of sexual exploitation. Clergy have the duty to report any dating relationship with a parishioner to their Bishop.
- **Director of Safeguarding:** the person who oversees the Safeguarding Team for the Diocese and all diocesan safeguarding policies, training, prevention, and response functions.
- **Diocesan Report Receiver:** an unbiased receiver who is trained to respond to allegations of misconduct/abuse made through the designated diocesan Safeguarding website (https://adoc.church/safeguarding-adoc-churches/). They are trained to deploy predetermined notification policies, depending upon the written allegation submitted. Per the ACNA Title 1, Canon 5, Section 9, each diocese shall appoint at least two Diocesan Reports Receivers to receive reports of misconduct. In no event shall any Chancellor of the Diocese serve as a Diocesan Reports Receiver.
- **Misconduct:** any violation or misuse of procedures, policies, practices, or processes by an individual or group to improperly control or manipulate others within a church.
- **Parish Safeguarding Coordinator:** a person appointed by his or her congregation to coordinate safeguarding efforts within the parish. Every church (see definition) is required to have a Parish Safeguarding Coordinator.

- **Rector:** the person in charge of a parish, including instances where such person has a title other than Rector (such as vicar, priest-in-charge, pastor, deacon, or church planter).
- **Respondent:** anyone who is accused of misconduct or abuse.
- **Safeguarding Team:** is a committee under the authority of the Standing Committee. The Safeguarding Team members are appointed by the Bishop in consultation with the Standing Committee and Director of Safeguarding. The team is drawn from psychologists, counselors, attorneys, and members of the clergy or other persons appointed by the Bishop to oversee the policies and procedures regarding misconduct or abuse in the Diocese. The Safeguarding Team oversees training, provides prevention methods and resources, responds to inquiries, helps handle responses to crises, and recommends policy changes.
- **Sexual misconduct:** includes a range of unwelcome and unwanted sexual conduct, including grooming; verbal, emotional, and/or physical sexual harassment; sexual assault; molestation; and all forms of sexual violence. Sexual misconduct is not restricted to intercourse but includes a wide range of inappropriate behaviors including inappropriate emotional intimacy, as well as the following:

  Sexual misconduct against minors/compromised adults: sexual misconduct against any person, including but not limited to, any sexual involvement or sexual contact with a person who is a minor or is a compromised adult.

  Sexual malfeasance: any sexual activity within a professional ministerial relationship that constitutes a misuse of the ministerial position, including inappropriate emotional intimacy.

  Grooming: a technique used to break down barriers of protection. Abusers will use grooming techniques to gain trust, continually testing boundaries in such a way that inappropriate behavior seeps into the relationship without consent or even acknowledgement. Grooming usually includes gaining access through trust, targeting a particular type of person as a victim, slowly eroding boundaries, and employing methods to keep the victim quiet.

  Sexual harassment: sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, quid pro quo behavior, sexually motivated physical contact or other unwelcome verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature; including but not limited to, sexually oriented humor or language, questions or comments about sexual behavior or preference, undesired physical contact, inappropriate comments about clothing or physical appearance, or repeated requests for social engagements. This applies with children and with adults where there is an employment, mentoring, or collegial relationship between the persons involved.

  This might include:

  - Inappropriate touching;
  - Sexually oriented comments about an individual's body;
  - Sending sexually explicit or offensive communications (e.g., text messages, emails, social media messages or posts);
  - Voyeurism, including viewing or displaying objects or pictures that are sexual in nature;
  - Submission to such sexual conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, or their continued status in an institution;

- Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such an individual;
- Conduct that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment; or
- Subjecting an individual to sexual jokes or inappropriate touching, or display of sexual visuals that insult, degrade, and/or sexually exploit men, women, or children

Sexual coercion: the use of physical or emotional power to gain sexual gratification.
Sexual exploitation of adults: including but not limited to, the development of or the attempt to develop, a sexual relationship between a member of the clergy, employee, or volunteer affiliated with the Diocese of the Carolinas and a person with whom he/she has a pastoral or supervisory relationship, whether or not there is apparent consent from the individual. Sexual exploitation includes activity during the course of a pastoral relationship such as sexual involvement or sexually demeaning comments. The apparent consent of a possible victim to the sexual or romantic relationship seldom determines whether there has been sexual exploitation. Consensual dating between individuals who are not clergy and are not in a supervisory relationship are excluded from this definition.
Sexual exploitation of children: including, but not limited to, obscene or pornographic photographing, filming or depiction of children for commercial purposes or exploitation, the employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement, or coercion of any child to engage in or assist any other person to engage in any sexually explicit conduct, or any simulation of any sexually explicit conduct for the purpose of producing any visual depiction of any sexually explicit conduct, or the rape, molestation, incest, prostitution, or other form of sexual exploitation of children.

- **Youth Director:** the person overseeing youth ministry in a congregation, whether employee or volunteer.

For the purposes of this policy:

- The Diocese must take seriously and provide a timely response to all allegations of misconduct/abuse within the church.
- The Bishop holds both pastoral and disciplinary responsibilities. When addressing allegations of misconduct/abuse by a person or persons within the Church, the Bishop must carefully avoid being the person to provide pastoral care to either the complainant or the accused. The Bishop and the Safeguarding Team may provide additional care to respondent(s), complainant(s), and church(es) involved. He may also utilize Advocates, Chaplains, and/or Consultants to share in practical and pastoral care for them.
- A person can be wrongly accused of misconduct or abuse.
- Whenever a parent/guardian is in the physical presence of their minor child, full responsibility for that child belongs to the parent/guardian, even if clergy, employees, vestry and/or a Child and Youth Worker are also present.
- The Bishop must not be the only one to assess or evaluate the substance of allegations. Please read the Reporting section of this document carefully to understand the procedure for inquiries and investigations.

- Leaders who learn of misconduct or abuse by their clergy or lay leaders have an ethical responsibility to follow up on this information by reporting the information to the appropriate ecclesiastical authorities and, as required by State law, legal authorities.

Awareness

While education about misconduct and abuse is only one part of what is required to build an environment that protects adults and children from abuse, awareness and clarity about various aspects of misconduct are essential to create a healthy church that seeks to protect its people.

SCREENING

One of the foundational steps to protecting our people from abuse is the careful screening of clergy, employees, vestry, and Child and Youth Workers. Screening is designed to expose any potential concerns regarding high-risk offenders before they ever set foot in one of our ministries. This includes background checks, reference checks, interviews, and minimum attendance periods. These requirements are completed to do all we can to create a safe environment for our people.

The following table summarizes who must be screened, by when, and where to keep documentation:

	SCREENING			
	Background Check		Application/ References/ Interview	
Role	Required	When	Required	Who Keeps Record?
Clergy (includes Transfers & Postulants)	Yes	Prior to ordination, transfer, and/or hire; 3 year renewal	Yes	Diocese
Employees	Yes	Prior to hire; 2 year renewal	Yes	Church
Vestry	Yes	Prior to term; 2 year renewal	No	Church
Child and Youth Worker	Yes	Prior to serving; 2 year renewal	Yes	Church

Screening includes the following procedures:

- **Background checks** – this includes all clergy, employees, vestry, and Child and Youth Workers in diocesan institutions, programs, and congregations. Background checks must be completed prior to serving, hire, ordination or transfer (as applicable), and in compliance with the insurance carrier's requirements.

  Non-clergy employees, vestry, and Child and Youth Workers can complete their background checks through Protect My Ministry using the ACNA negotiated rate

(https://www.protectmyministry.com/integrated-partners/partner-acna/), or through an equivalent program. This must include:

- criminal history check,
- sex offender registry check,
- and, as appropriate, DMV driving license check (see "Transportation" below).

The screening of clergy is the responsibility of the Diocesan office. Clergy seeking canonical residence or license must be background checked through Protect My Ministry or other diocesan-approved screening providers prior to the acceptance of Letters Dimissory or issuance of a License. It is the responsibility of the church to notify the diocesan office to begin a background check as soon as the vestry has decided who they would like to call as rector. A call must not be considered final until the results of the background check are received.

Clergy background checks must include:

- Inquiries of all Bishops having past or present canonical authority over the individual.
- All schools attended by the individual during the past five years.
- All employers of the individual during the past five years. If the individual has had more than one employer for over five years, then inquiries must be made of the two most recent employers. In the case of clergy who have served as Rector, "employer" shall be the Senior Wardens of congregations served during the past five years.
- Motor Vehicle record check.
- Credit Bureau check.
- Sexual Misconduct and Criminal Record Check.
- Local criminal history records check through local law enforcement agencies.
- Statewide criminal history records check through the appropriate state law enforcement agencies.
- References from immediate supervisors at the three most recent places of employment and results documented.
- Each member of the clergy domiciled or licensed in the Diocese are required to update and pay for their background check on a three-year rotating schedule to be administered by the Diocese. Their church may choose to pay this fee.

It is the responsibility of all clergy to cooperate fully in all aspects of the screening process and to submit in a timely manner all documents needed to complete such checks.

- **Church Attendance** – It is strongly recommended that Vestry and Children's and Youth volunteers complete a six-month minimum attendance prior to appointment, which includes active participation in the life of the church, including Sunday morning worship.

- **Application** – For employment and for all volunteers who work with children or youth, the church must:
  have the applicant fill out a complete application (see the ADOC Safeguarding Resource webpage [https://adoc.church/resources-to-assist-in-safeguarding/] for a sample application) which includes:
    - whether or not they, or any immediate family member or person living in their household, have been convicted of, pled nolo contender to, had adjudication withheld for, or have an active arrest for any crime involving abuse or neglect;
    - whether or not they have been diagnosed with any paraphiliac psychological condition;

  conduct-criminal history and the National Sexual Offender Registry checks;
  secure references
    - Employees: immediate supervisors at the two most recent places of employment and a personal reference
    - Volunteers: two personal references and a professional reference (Previous Pastor, Teacher, Professor, Coach, etc.);

  check the applicant's references and document results;
  conduct a face-to-face interview.
- Rectors, Children's Directors, and Youth Directors should familiarize themselves with effective screening practices and recognizing high-risk applicants. *Protect My Ministry, Brotherhood Mutual, and Ministry Safe* each offer training on skilled screening for employees.
- **Prior Sexual Offenders:** The Diocese strictly prohibits interaction with children and youth under the age of 18 at any church-sponsored or church-related activity or program, on or off church property, by anyone with a civil or criminal record of child sexual abuse or other sexual crime(s), or who has admitted committing prior sexual abuse as defined in this policy. For further guidance about receiving known sexual offenders at church, please contact the Director of Safeguarding.

TRAINING

Clergy, employees, vestry, and Child and Youth Workers must be properly trained to care for those they serve in ministry. This training includes learning job functions, but also education on recommended practices outlined in this policy to ensure the environment is safe for our people. Child sexual abuse awareness training by *Protect My Ministry* (or another approved online training program such as *Ministry Safe*) must be completed online, while an overview of the Diocesan policy may be done in-person. This training must be renewed every two years. Additionally, all clergy are required to complete Keeping Our Sacred Trust online training every five years.

This table summarizes who must be trained and when:

	Abuse Prevention online course			Safeguarding Our People Policy Training		
Role	**Req'd?**	**When?**	**Who Keeps Record?**	**Req'd?**	**When?**	**Who Keeps Record?**
Clergy Transfers & Postulants	Yes	Prior to term; 2yr renewal	Diocese	Yes	W/in 6 mo; 2yr renewal	Diocese
Employees	Yes	Prior to term; 2yr renewal	Church	Yes	W/in 6 mo; 2yr renewal	Church
Vestry	Yes	Prior to term; 2yr renewal	Church	Yes	W/in 6 mo; 2yr renewal	Church
Child & Youth Workers	Yes	Prior to term; 2yr renewal	Church	Yes	W/in 6 mo; 2yr renewal	Church
Clergy (con't)	Keeping Our Sacred Trust Training			Every 5 years		

- **Sexual Abuse Awareness Training:** The first portion of the safeguarding training is currently completed through *Protect My Ministry* (or another approved module) and must be completed online. This training must be renewed every two years and must be completed prior to ordination, transfer, and/or hire for clergy, prior to hire for employees, prior to term for vestry, and prior to serving for Child and Youth Workers.
- **Safeguarding Our People Policy Training:** The second portion of safeguarding training is conducted in person by your church's Parish Safeguarding Coordinator or designated leader. This training covers the content in this policy and must be renewed every two years. Churches must keep records of this bi-annual training. Video Conferences may be utilized to complete this training.
- **Individual Policy Acknowledgement:** In addition to completing this training, all Clergy, employees, vestry and Child and Youth Workers must certify that they have read the diocesan policy by use of a signed Individual Receipt of Policies Acknowledgement Form (see the ADOC Safeguarding Resource webpage [https://adoc.church/resources-to-assist-in-safeguarding/] for a sample form).
- **Keeping Our Sacred Trust Training** (Clergy only): Every five years, clergy must refresh this training.

Interaction Expectations

INTERACTION

Christian ministry relies not only on right belief but also on right behavior, including interacting with those in the church and in the community. All allegations of misconduct or abuse will likely result from personal interactions. Therefore, it is important for churches to establish communities of health that reinforce appropriate boundaries, build trust, demonstrate care and respect, and seek justice for those who abuse these. This section outlines guidelines for communication, counseling, spiritual formation and discipleship, interaction with minors and adults, and supervisory procedures for minors and adults.

Please note the following as it applies to issues of Interaction:

- Because same-sex attraction exists both in society and within the church, it should not be assumed that interactions between individuals of the same gender are inherently safer than interactions between males and females. The same safeguarding requirements and best practices must be applied in both cases.
- Youth-on-Youth, Youth-on-Child, and Child-on-Child abuse are the most common occurrences of abuse. While this form of abuse is outside the scope of this policy, Church Leaders and those who work with children and youth must be aware of this issue and do what is feasible to guard against it occurring.
- It is not harassment or a hostile environment when a leader communicates verbally or nonverbally, or takes action, including appropriate discipline, to uphold the biblical, orthodox, and historic Christian faith as expressed in the Holy Scriptures, the Book of Common Prayer, the ACNA Constitution and Canons, and the Anglican formularies, unless such verbal or nonverbal communication, or action is inappropriate and inconsistent with the standards of conduct set forth in the same authorities.

Issues of Interaction, including various forms of harassment, may be matters of pastoral or legal concern, or both. The Diocese must take both into account when reviewing a situation of potential abuse and distinguish between those implications when appropriate.

Verbal interactions among Clergy, employees, vestry, Child and Youth Workers must be edifying, respectful, and must refrain from inappropriate topics. Specifically, the following are inappropriate:

- **Intimidation:** behavior directed toward an individual with the intention of causing fear, including forcing someone to do something they do not want to do out of fear.
- **Nonverbal Harassment:** includes distribution, display or use of any written or graphic material that ridicules, denigrates, insults, belittles or shows hostility toward an individual or group because of nationality, national origin, race, color, religion, age, biological sex, pregnancy, appearance, mental or physical disability, marital or other legally protected status. This also includes graphic gestures and making sexual gestures through hand or body movements.

- **Verbal Harassment:** includes unreasonable statements or comments that are offensive regarding a person's nationality, national origin, race, color, religion, age, biological sex, pregnancy, appearance, mental or physical disability, marital status, or any other status protected by applicable federal or state law. This includes but is not limited to epithets, slurs and negative stereotyping.
- **Hostile Work Environment:** when harassment, bullying, or unfair treatment of an individual is based on race, color, religion, sex (including sexual orientation, gender, or pregnancy), national origin, age, disability, or genetic information. This harassment can be verbal, written, or behavioral.
- **Inappropriate Use of Technology:** sending sexually explicit or offensive communications (e.g., text messages, emails, social media messages or posts) is included in the definition of harassment. The Diocese of the Carolinas will not tolerate violations of this standard. Church Leaders must use personal interaction, both on and off social media, as avenues to model appropriate behavior and language. Their online behavior reflects on both Christ and the Church.

Dating relationships: Church employees or clergy entering a dating relationship (as defined by this policy) with a parishioner must notify the Rector (or Bishop in the case of clergy) of said relationship. Because of the power differential involved between those in spiritual leadership and those they shepherd, dating relationships between Church Leaders or Clergy and parishioners must be entered into with utmost care and intention.

Relating well in addressing Sexuality and Gender: Church Leaders must treat all people as individuals made in the image of God. It is essential that Church Leaders strive to build an environment that does not harass, discriminate, intimidate, or devalue God's creation. The Diocese of the Carolinas recognizes that same-sex sexual relationships are sinful, but so also is pornography, fornication and adultery, as well as non-sexual sins such as greed, disregard for the poor, and self-righteousness.

The call to pastoral ministry includes the charge to lead with gentleness, scriptural clarity, and a desire to seek the lost. To hold to, proclaim, and act in accordance with the biblical, orthodox, and historic Christian faith is not in and of itself abuse or harassment. To be both pastoral and orthodox can be difficult. Church Leaders must remember that, "Humanity's essential identity is found in communion with God and not in sexual activity."

Therefore, to provide pastoral ministry to those facing same-sex attraction or gender dysphoria, the following are recommended:

- For overnight events, the church's leadership team and the parent/guardian of the student should outline an agreed upon Supervisory Plan designed to safeguard all participants.
- Churches, if their facilities allow, should offer a family (non-gendered) bathroom as an act of hospitality.
- Churches, Child and Youth Workers, and Child and Youth Leaders should endeavor to make sure all students do not feel isolated, but rather included, welcomed, valued, and respected. This is essential, especially at meals, morning and evening scheduled events, and spontaneous moments. Ongoing and open communication with parents who have child-specific concerns is encouraged.

Pornography creation, viewing, or distribution: printed or visual material containing the explicit description or display of sexual organs or activity, intended to stimulate erotic rather than aesthetic or emotional feelings. All clergy are required to abstain from creating, viewing, or distributing pornography at all times, not just while working or in church facilities. Any clergy or church staff members struggling in this area should reach out to a Bishop or the Director of Safeguarding for a referral to meet with a confidential counselor who specializes in sexual addiction recovery. This care is offered at a subsidized rate and without the involvement of the Bishop unless clergy fail to follow through with a recovery plan.

It is never appropriate to view pornography. When pornographic images or videos include a person under the age of legal majority (18), it is considered child sexual exploitation/abuse, and a crime under federal and state law. There is never an expectation of personal privacy when using technological equipment owned by a church or church entity or within the context of ministry.

Additional considerations for communication with children and youth: Verbal interactions between leaders and children must be encouraging, constructive, and mindful of the mission of aiding parents in the spiritual growth and development of their children. To this end, clergy, employees, vestry, and Child and Youth Workers must avoid talking to children or parents in a way that is, or could be, construed by any reasonable observer as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. In addition, clergy, employees, vestry, and Child and Youth Workers must refrain from using vulgar language in the presence of children. Concerns about children must be directed to parents or legal guardians, the appropriate ministry leader, and the clergy. Concerns about Child and Youth Workers must be directed to the Children's or Youth Director and reported when necessary.

Clergy, employees, vestry, and Child and Youth Workers must avoid engaging in any sexually oriented communications with children. They must also refrain from discussing any inappropriate or explicit information about their own personal relationships, dating, or sexual activities with any child in the program. Clergy, employees, vestry, and Child and Youth Workers must report any sexually-oriented communications involving a child to the appropriate ministry leader or the clergy.

- **Sexually-Oriented Materials:** Staff members and volunteers may employ (subject to limitations imposed by the Rector) age-appropriate materials when leading discussions dealing with human sexuality or sexual abuse prevention. Any prospective material must be made available for review for the parents of participants. Prior to introducing these materials, notice must be provided to parents to allow an opt-out should there be concerns or objections.
- **Technology and Youth**: Social media avenues are important ways for youth ministry staff and volunteer leaders to connect with students. Their world is often constructed around social media, for better or worse. Having personal interactions in this venue allows adults to model appropriate behavior in social media, and it forms valuable connections with students.

  The Diocese strongly recommends that each church have a proactive policy for social media and other forms of electronic communication in the context of children's and youth ministry. Clergy, staff members, and volunteers must refrain from connecting with students on social media when students are younger than the minimum age as established by each social media outlet (usually 13).

Virtual spaces are to be treated the same as in-person spaces. This means the following applies:

- Two Certified, unrelated, Adults must be online with one youth (known as the two-adult rule).
- In situations where only one Certified Adult can be present, a minimum of two students must also be present (called the "Rule of Three").
- Participants must be appropriately clothed.
- Conversation must be within "public" view. For example: Online conference calls are not completed in bedrooms and parents are aware that the student is in conversation with the leaders.
- Use group apps rather than private messages.
- In text and email exchanges with a youth, Youth Workers must copy another Youth Worker or the child's parent in messages they send.

For those students under 13 (this is the usual minimum age for social media platforms by the platforms themselves), get parent permission for any communication and welcome the parents into that environment.

- **Photography:** Churches must not use photos of children without prior parental permission. This can be obtained by including a consent statement on programming registrations that are signed by the parent/guardian. Photos, either in print or online, must not contain personally identifying information about children.

INTERACTING APPROPRIATELY WITH ADULTS

The Particular Challenge of Protecting Adults from Abuse and Misconduct

The need to protect children from abuse is almost universally recognized in church communities. There is growing recognition, however, that mistreatment of adults is also an issue that must be addressed. There are four characteristics of adults that make addressing misconduct and abuse more complex:

1. There is a wider range of ages and life stages—with more nuanced developmental milestones informing capacities and needs—in adult populations as compared with children and youth.
2. There are fewer standardized legal requirements for mistreatment of adults. While minors under the age of eighteen are covered by mandated reporting laws with clear legal definitions, these reporting laws do not always apply to adult populations.
3. There is more nuance in even healthy adult relationships, which can make the task of identifying violations more difficult.
4. The greater capacity for agency in the lives of adults has confused the right placement of responsibility when an individual experiences mistreatment. In the past, adults who attempted to report violations often received a message, subtle or otherwise, that they must

be to blame for the violation. This is frequently the result of a misunderstanding of the dynamics of unequal authority in the pastoral relationship.

The nature of pastoral ministry itself provides additional complexity. Unlike other types of helping professionals who may encounter the people they serve in a single setting, ordained clergy are naturally intimately involved in family life across multiple settings (church, home, hospital) and frequently meet with congregants in informal settings such as coffee shops or cafés. This increased informality can create ambiguity, necessitating a need for greater clarity about what healthy versus unhealthy involvement looks like in these less formal settings. A clergy member has a greater level of authority and influence within a church community because of this reach; they and their people are not peers with equal agency. As a result of this unequal influence, this policy recognizes that any adult can be the recipient of abusive behavior or misconduct dynamics.

Additional Considerations Regarding Compromised Adults

"Compromised Adults" is both a legal category and a subset of "all adults" that includes those who may need special attention. A Compromised Adult has a physical, intellectual, or neurocognitive condition that leads to impaired capacity, either in decision-making or in the ability to care for oneself physically, or both. Because of these impairments, Compromised Adults by definition have less capacity for self-protection and personal agency. For this reason, they require an additional layer of protection. In some of the states in the Diocese, Compromised Adults are covered by mandated reporting law. However, that is not always the case. Not every state has the same reporting requirements. Every church in the Diocese shall determine if their state has mandated reporting laws for elder abuse or the abuse of Compromised Adults in their state and, if so, know when they are required to report.

While the particular vulnerability of Compromised Adults is generally more evident, it is important to recognize that disability happens on a spectrum and not all adults have the same needs regarding protection. Some adults who fit these categories retain full decision-making capacity while others may be so incapacitated as to need full-time care. Thus, it is important to both assess and uphold the decision-making capacity of each individual when it comes to reporting abuse and misconduct.

Compromised Adults: Physical, Intellectual, and/or Neurocognitive Disabilities and Frail Elderly

Clergy chaplains and pastors providing care to those in facilities or homes are to follow the guidelines previously set forth in this document about good care, as well as to familiarize themselves with the reporting requirements in their state. Rectors have the responsibility to ensure that lay leaders working with compromised individuals have the training and sensitivity necessary to treat these individuals with dignity and to respond appropriately to their needs during times of ministry.

Mistreatment by caregivers, especially neglect, is a major concern for elderly adults. The difficulty with recognizing neglect is that it occurs in more private or easily hidden settings, and the care recipient may have difficulty discerning or communicating the misconduct. While pastoral leaders are rarely in a position of providing direct care, they are often in situations where they may come in

contact with mistreated or neglected elders or interact with their caregivers. For this reason, this policy recommends all pastoral leaders, clergy or lay, be educated about the types and signs of elder mistreatment they are likely to encounter.

- Mistreatment can be physical, emotional, sexual, verbal, financial.
- Neglect can be seen in any setting: home, nursing homes, long-term care and assisted living facilities, and even hospitals.
- Perpetrators of elder neglect can be family members, home caregivers, acquaintances, or professionals entrusted with an elder's care. In other words, those individuals who are or have become trusted in the caretaking relationship.
- The instances of self-reporting of neglect are rare. Signs of elder abuse include poor hygiene, (including soiled clothing or lack of bathing), poorly maintained medical equipment, habitually untreated medical conditions or lack of preventive care by a physician, failure to give all prescribed medications, malnutrition, or dehydration.
- Prevention of elder abuse mainly depends on awareness of the signs of abuse and neglect. Conducting regular pastoral visits to shut-ins or those without nearby family can help identify concerns early.
- Pastoral leaders also set the tone in fostering a supportive and respectful environment in the congregation, where older adults feel safe and valued, surrounded by caring individuals.

Compromised Adults: Emotional and/or Psychiatric Difficulties

Although not necessarily in the same manner or degree as adults with disabilities, adults with emotional and psychiatric difficulties may share some of the traits of compromised functioning in their ability to discern appropriate boundaries and handle stressors in interpersonal relationships.

- While a person's compromised psychiatric state may not be immediately apparent, once identified, pastors should encourage and support an appropriate level of involvement from outside medical and/or mental health practitioners and exercise a higher degree of caution in verbal and behavioral interactions.
- Rectors have the responsibility to ensure that lay leaders working with compromised individuals have the training and sensitivity necessary to treat these individuals with dignity and to respond appropriately to their needs during times of ministry.

PASTORAL ABUSE

Pastoral abuse occurs when a spiritual leader in a position of authority relative to the receiving party utilizes their position (or perceived position) of authority to justify misconduct or abuse. This includes, but is not limited to, patterns of abuse such as manipulation and exploitation, intimidation, censorship, requirements for secrecy and silence, coercion, control through the use of sacred texts or teaching, requirements of obedience to the abuser, the suggestion that the abuser has a "divine" position in order to maintain power or control, isolation as a means of punishment, superiority and elitism, and patterns of behavior such as blaming, shaming, or shunning. It is unacceptable for any Diocesan clergy to pastorally abuse their parishioners as it is considered conduct unbecoming to the sacred calling of one in holy orders.

Regarding discipline, clergy are subject to disciplinary action upon committing one of the following offenses (see the Anglican Church in North America's *Constitution and Canons*):

- Teaching any doctrine contrary to the doctrine of the Anglican Church in North America;
- Willful or negligent dereliction of any duty of the clergy;
- Conduct unbecoming to the sacred calling of one in holy orders;
- The commission of any other canonical offense by means of an abuse of ecclesiastical office.

People sometimes disagree with clergy or find themselves subject to accountability or church discipline (which, in and of itself, can be a healthy part of discipleship). This does not equate to pastoral abuse. It is expected that clergy teach and uphold the doctrine of the church. Please consult the following for more information regarding the expectations of clergy:

- The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament.
- *The Book of Common Prayer* (2019): The ordination vows (found under Episcopal Services) outline the expectation for faithful diligence in upholding the doctrine and discipline of Christ.
- *To Be a Christian* (2020): The ACNA Catechism outlines confession, absolution, and forgiveness, as well as describes the Church's authority.
- *The 39 Articles of Religion:* The ACNA upholds the 39 Articles of 1571 and their amendments which explain our views on the Sacraments as well as the expectation of clergy. In particular, the recognition that clergy are imperfect and should be examined carefully and removed if necessary.
- *The Jerusalem Declaration:* This 2008 declaration outlines our beliefs and expectations regarding Christian living, Sacraments, the authoritative standard of clerical orders, stewardship, unity, and our fidelity to orthodoxy.
- The ACNA's Constitution and Canons and the Diocesan Constitution and Canons.

Each congregation's leaders are asked consistently to raise awareness about abuse prevention and safeguarding practices by normalizing the following principles:

Transparency: It can be difficult clearly to state what you think, feel, or see happening, but it is a sign of emotional health to speak up when something is wrong. No one can improve or eradicate inappropriate behavior without exposing the issue. Avoid triangulation and protection of individuals who are acting inappropriately. (Triangulation is a common situation that may occur when there has been a breakdown in communication between two parties, leading them to vent to a third person, e.g., clergy or team leader, who ends up bearing the emotional weight of the conflict and may also be forced to act as a messenger between the two.) Acting inappropriately includes but is not limited to pornography use, gossip, an affair, bullying, sexual jokes or comments, flirting, etc.

Choose the Light: Bringing issues like porn addiction, gossip, an affair, bullying, sexual jokes, etc. into the light is always the path towards healing, accountability, sanctification, and emotional health.

See Something, Say Something: If something is a concern to you, bring it to the appropriate leaders detailed within this document; including more than one leader in the discussion encourages accountability, transparency, and appropriate resolution.

COUNSELING

One of the expectations of all clergy and other pastoral caregivers serving in the Diocese is that they offer pastoral counseling to members of the congregation if/when necessary and appropriate. Pastoral counseling occurs when church personnel offer spiritual direction or advice concerning moral or spiritual matters. Pastoral counseling typically covers singular issues or questions, conflict management, confession, crisis counseling, premarital counseling and marriage counseling. Clergy and other pastoral caregivers must limit counseling to a maximum of six sessions per person/issue over a 12-month period. If those crises continue beyond six sessions, or if there is a need for ongoing counseling, clergy and other pastoral caregivers must refer the parishioner to a certified or licensed professional. (An exemption to the limit on counseling sessions is provided for those clergy who are either licensed counselors or who hold a graduate degree in pastoral counseling.)

Any clergy or staff member charging fees for counseling must possess appropriate professional credentials and proof of separate professional liability insurance, including coverage for sexual misconduct. Such persons offering paid spiritual direction or professional counseling must submit that ministry for approval by the Rector (or, in the case of the Rector, the Bishop). Clergy must inform parishioners in advance of counseling that they are morally and spiritually obliged to report criminal or illegal activity.

During any pastoral counseling sessions, clergy and pastoral caregivers must maintain an environment that minimizes any existence, or appearance, of potentially inappropriate behavior or exploitation. It is also advised that clergy consult with the Bishop and/or refer to Diocesan policy on boundaries in pastoral counseling, including as they pertain to matters such as mandatory reporting and the seal of the confessional.

Exploitation occurs when church personnel take advantage of the pastoral counseling relationship for the benefit of the pastoral counselor. Sexual exploitation includes sexual contact between church personnel and the recipient of the pastoral counseling services, regardless of who initiates the contact. Under certain circumstances, it is advisable to bring another pastor or staff member into a conversation or session - for example, if a counseling session raises the possibility of possible illegal activity or abuse, or if someone is making allegations or disclosing abuse or illegal activity. All clergy, employees, vestry, and Child and Youth Workers must maintain healthy boundaries and strive for emotionally healthy relationships.

Pastoral counseling must always be respectful and consistent with the intent to provide a safe and comfortable environment. Pastoral counseling must be conducted in appropriate settings at appropriate times and must not be held at places or times that would cause confusion about the nature of the relationship for the person being counseled.

Additionally, all clergy, employees, vestry, and Child and Youth Workers must maintain a physical environment that minimizes any appearance of potentially inappropriate behavior at all times, including when traveling or participating in events held at the church after business hours. To facilitate this, the following are recommended:

- Interactions with parishioners are conducted in public view.
- Doors to rooms used for pastoral care contain windows.

- Employees do not share hotel rooms when traveling.
- One-on-one pastoral counseling is not conducted in private living quarters.

SPIRITUAL FORMATION, SPIRITUAL DIRECTION, & DISCIPLESHIP

As Christians, we are encouraged to seek discipleship opportunities. This frequently manifests in 1:1, 1:2, or 1:3 relationships where participants meet regularly for a long-term partnership. This is not the same situation as pastoral counseling, which is intended for a singular focus and therefore is limited in scope. If a partnership of spiritual formation, spiritual direction-or discipleship is entered into long-term, clergy must follow these safeguarding practices:

- Ensure this relationship is brought into the light among the leadership team of the church by informing multiple people of this partnership;
- Bring the spiritual direction or discipleship relationship into the light by informing the office of the bishop, if one clergy person is offering long-term spiritual direction or discipleship to another clergy person;
- Meet in a public place, not alone in one another's private living quarters;
- Follow all guidelines regarding interaction and physical contact contained in this policy;
- Define the parameters of the relationship at the first meeting, articulating how one might discontinue the relationship without further explanation at any time;
- Communicate to whom the participant should report if he or she has any concerns (including the names and numbers of senior leadership, the bishop, or the Diocesan Abuse Reporting Portal);

Additionally, these best practices are recommended:

- Meet quarterly to discuss the process and its benefits to the church, as well as for accountability, if there are multiple people offering long-term spiritual direction or discipleship in your church;
- Conduct the spiritual direction or discipleship relationships by using the same biological sex participants in groups of at least 3 people;
- Consider utilizing a signed waiver that outlines expectations, specifically protecting clarity regarding confession, confidentiality, and mandatory reporting;
- Include prayer and the study of Scripture in your regular time together.

Spiritual Formation, Spiritual Direction & Discipleship with Youth: If spiritual formation, discipleship or spiritual direction with a youth is entered into long-term, Youth Workers must follow these safeguarding practices, in addition to those above:

- Gain the parent/guardian's consent;
- Meet in a predictable location at a predictable time (same time/place each occurrence);
- Follow all requirements outlined in this policy for interaction with youth (regarding awareness, screening, interaction, and reporting).

In order to protect the emotional and spiritual health of everyone involved, all clergy, Youth Directors and Children's Ministry Directors should also seek regular spiritual direction to ensure accountability and a strong support system.

PHYSICAL INTERACTION WITH MINORS

Clergy, employees, vestry, and Child and Youth Workers often have a powerful relationship of trust with the people to whom they minister. Betrayal of that trust through violation of sexual, emotional, and relational boundaries causes great emotional and spiritual harm. Such behavior is a denial of our calling as Christians and may be a violation of the law. We must take every step to prevent it, and to respond with swift justice should misconduct or abuse occur.

Physical contact must be for the benefit of the child, and never be based upon the emotional needs of clergy, employees, vestry, or Child and Youth Workers.

Discipline: All Child and Youth Workers are prohibited from using physical discipline in any manner for behavioral management of children. No form of physical discipline is acceptable. This restriction applies even to parents who are serving in the role of a Child or Youth Workers in a classroom setting or during a program where their child is also present. This restriction does not apply to those parents outside of those specific classroom or program times or to parents in the church who are not serving as Child or Youth Workers.

This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behaviors by children. Child and Youth Workers must only discipline children using time-outs and other non-physical methods of behavior management. In some rare circumstances, physical restraint may be necessary to prevent self-injury by the child and/or harm to others or to property. Uncontrollable or unusual behavior must be reported immediately to parents, the Children's Ministry Director or Youth Director, and clergy.

Appropriate physical affection between Child and Youth Workers and children is important for children's development and is generally suitable in the church setting.

The following table gives examples of appropriate and inappropriate physical affection:

Appropriate physical affection may include:	Inappropriate physical affection may include:
High-fives	Wrestling
Handshakes	Tickling
Fist bumps	Sitting in laps (except nursery-aged children)
Thumbs up	Kissing in any form
Side hugs	Initiating full frontal hugs
Smiling	Forcing unwanted physical affection
Pats on the back/shoulder	Caressing

Inappropriate touching and inappropriate displays of affection are forbidden. Any inappropriate behavior by anyone must be reported immediately to (1) the Rector and/or clergy in charge, **and** (2) the Senior Warden. If the allegation is against the Rector, notify the Bishop, the Senior Warden and the supervisor or other clergy. Any suspected abuse should be reported to law enforcement as well as the Rector and Senior Warden immediately.

Physical contact and affection must be given only in observable places. It is much less likely that touch will be inappropriate or misinterpreted when physical contact is open to observation. Physical contact in any form must not give even the appearance of wrongdoing. In order to foster trust at all times, Child and Youth workers' personal behavior and conduct must be above reproach as to convey the character of Christ.

Do not force physical contact, touch, or affection on a reluctant child. A child's preference not to be touched must be respected at all times.

SUPERVISORY PLANS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH EVENTS

Supervisory Plans are required for all Children and Youth programs and events. The purpose of the written supervisory plan for any given activity is to give direction to clergy, employees, vestry, and Child and Youth Workers, to ensure appropriate measures are in place to meet the diocesan standard for supervision. All Child and Youth Workers for the activity need to be informed of the contents of the supervisory plan. Children's Ministry Directors and Youth Directors must provide a copy of the plan for all leaders of the event (and parents depending on the activity). See the ADOC Safeguarding Resource webpage (https://adoc.church/resources-to-assist-in-safeguarding/) for sample versions of Supervisory Plans.

Onsite Supervisory Plans must include the following:

- A description of the nature of the activity
- The details of the registration process and registration form
- The personnel responsible for running the activity
- The required ratio of Certified Adults to children [each congregation should consult their individual sate required ratios as they many differ from those given below]:
  - Infants: 2 adults for up to 8
  - Young toddlers: 2 adults for up to 12
  - 2 and 3 years: 2 adults for up to 16
  - 4 years: 2 adults for up to 20
  - School age: 2 adults for up to 40
  - Mixed age group: ratio for the youngest child in the group
- The physical environment, any hazards, and a plan to mitigate said hazards
- Bathroom procedures, including showering procedures if applicable
- First aid and medication procedures
- The procedure for the reporting of discipline concerns
- The procedure for the release of children

Offsite Supervisory Plans must include all of the items listed above in the onsite Supervisory Plan, plus the following, which are described in more detail on the pages following:

- Offsite transportation plan
- Dining arrangements
- Sleeping arrangements
- Showering procedures

MONITORING PROCEDURES

Monitoring helps detect problems before they turn into an incident of abuse and protects against wrongful allegations of abuse. Research confirms that offsite activities increase the risk of abuse. Clergy, employees, vestry, and Child and Youth Workers must be diligent in monitoring and supervising children's and youth activities in all settings at all times.

Monitoring procedures must include, but are not limited to:

- All children and youth classes and activities must be designed to be supervised by two or more Certified Unrelated Adult leaders (known as the two-adult rule);
    - Please note the following regarding this requirement:
        - While we strongly support and encourage married couples to serve together in Children's and Youth ministries, they alone cannot meet the "Two Certified Unrelated Adult" requirement. In this case, the couple would count as one adult and you would need a third Certified Unrelated Adult to meet the requirement. This is not meant to keep married couples from serving together, but to provide our children the appropriate level of safeguarding while in our care.
        - While we also support and encourage the inclusion of appropriately mature youth serving in the Children's Ministry, as minors they cannot count towards the "Two Certified Unrelated Adult" requirement. This is not meant to keep youth from serving, but to provide our children the appropriate level of safeguarding while in our care.
- No child must ever be left unattended in the building or on the property before, during, or following a church activity;
- Clergy, employees, vestry, and Child and Youth Workers must not conduct unobserved meetings or interactions with children. In a discipleship or mentoring relationship, the interactions must take place in a public place or where other persons are present;
- Clergy, employees, vestry, and Child and Youth workers must watch for policy violations and report any violation to the appropriate supervisor, as described in the Reporting section;
- Children's Ministry and Youth Directors must provide an open invitation to parents to visit at any time unannounced. These parents are not to be in supervision of children nor should they interact with any child but their own during these visits;
- Children's Ministry and Youth Directors must conduct a careful review of new programs and/or significant changes to a program structure for compliance with the Safeguarding policy;
- Child and Youth workers must keep all interactions with children in full view of others at all times;
- Churches should keep unused rooms locked, when possible;
- Churches must keep children and youth in supervised areas within the church building and property during all church sponsored events;

- Children's and Youth Ministry Directors must have in place a written Supervisory Plan for all onsite and offsite educational, pastoral, recreational, or any other programs that involve youth or children.

It is also recommended that churches make use of an Incident Report form to document all:

1. Injuries requiring first aid or medical attention;
2. Extreme behavioral problems or those requiring discipline of any kind;
3. Peer-on-Peer issues that require adult intervention;
4. Potential boundary crossing or grooming behaviors;
5. and all Safeguarding policy violations that occur within your church's programs and ministries.

See the ADOC Safeguarding resource page (https://adoc.church/resources-to-assist-in-safeguarding/) for a sample Incident Report form.

RESTROOM USE

Because preschool, nursery, and special needs children may require complete assistance with their bathroom activities, all clergy, employees, vestry, and Child and Youth Workers must observe the following policies:

Diapering

- Only screened and trained nursery workers or the child's parent or legal guardian will undertake the diapering of children of either biological sex. (Churches are encouraged to be sensitive to the fact that nationally one out of every four women has survived some form of child sexual abuse, typically by a male offender. Taking this statistical research into account, churches may determine that diapering, toilet training, and restroom monitoring will only be done by Certified Adult female staff/volunteers or the child's parent/guardian.)
- Changing of diapers must be done in plain sight of other nursery workers; children must not be left unattended while being changed.
- Children must be re-diapered and re-clothed immediately upon the completion of changing their soiled diaper.

Toilet Training

- No child will be forced to toilet train.
- Parental permission must be obtained before any toilet training efforts are approached.
- Only Certified Adult nursery workers or the child's parent or legal guardian will participate in toilet training efforts with children.
- When children are assisted in bathrooms the stall door must be left partially open.
- Preschool-aged children must never be left unattended in bathrooms.
- Children may be assisted in straightening their clothing before returning to the room with other children, if necessary.
- Accidents must be handled by reassuring the child and completing the changing of diapers or underwear and clothing.

Elementary Aged Children

- Elementary-age children may be accompanied to the restroom for supervision and assistance when needed. (However, children should receive the minimum amount of assistance needed based upon their individual capabilities.) Triads of the same-aged/biological sex-buddy system may also be used.
- Child and Youth Workers must take steps to avoid being alone with one child in the restroom. If a Child and Youth Workers must go into the restroom to check on an individual child, he or she should seek out another worker to accompany him/her. If another Child and Youth Worker is not available to accompany, he/she must go to the exterior bathroom door, knock, and ask if the child needs assistance. If the child requires assistance, the Child and Youth Worker must leave the exterior bathroom door open when entering the bathroom area and try to verbally assist the child in completing his/her activities, while the child remains behind the door of the bathroom stall.

MEDICATION AND FIRST AID

All medication should be administered by the child's parent or guardian. Child and Youth Workers may administer medication as authorized by the child's parent and consistent with the Supervisory Plan. The medication must be in the original packaging, including over-the-counter medication.

In case of an emergency, a Child or Youth Worker may administer first aid to a child as consistent with the Supervisory Plan. Parents must be notified whenever medication or first aid has been administered. Call 911 in emergency or life-threatening circumstances.

THE RELEASE OF CHILDREN

Any time that a child has been entrusted to a Child and Youth Worker, the church incurs responsibility for the safety and well-being of the child, including the release of the child back to the parent/guardian. Therefore, churches must develop and follow written procedures to ensure the proper release of children to their parents or guardians. (The Director of Safeguarding can assist churches in determining the proper procedures for their specific ministry setting.)

Child and Youth Workers are responsible for releasing children in their care at the close of services or activities only to parents, legal guardians, or other persons designated by parents or legal guardians. It is presumed that a person who drops off a child or student has authority to pick up the child. Teenagers who drive themselves and/or a sibling to youth activities are presumed to do so with the permission of their parents.

If Child and Youth Workers are uncertain of the propriety of releasing a child, they must immediately contact their ministry supervisor before releasing the child.

TRANSPORTATION

Adults in the church may on occasion be needed to provide transportation for children and youth for church sponsored activities and events. The following guidelines must be observed during the transportation of children and youth:

- All adults responsible for driving minors to a sponsored activity must provide to the church copies of valid driver's licenses, vehicle registration, and proof of insurance.

- All adults responsible for driving minors to church sponsored events or activities must have undergone an insurance approved background check including a DMV record check (this is a small add-on charge), as indicated under the "Screening" section above.
- When utilizing parents only as drivers of minors to a church sponsored event or activity, these parents must meet the previous two requirements and complete the online Abuse Prevention training (as outlined under "Training"), but do not need the In-Person Policy training.
- All adults responsible for driving minors to church sponsored events or activities must make use of seat belts and/or child safety seats that meet federal safety standards for all occupants.
- Churches must consult with their insurance provider regarding the minimum age for adult drivers. Under no circumstances will anyone under the age of 18 be allowed to drive children or youth as part of an event.
- When traveling with minors in a vehicle, as part of a church sponsored event, the two-adult rule (two Certified Adults, unrelated) is the preferred safeguarding standard.
  In cases where only one adult is available, a minimum of two students must also be present (known as the rule of three).
  Exceptions to the preceding are made for parent/child or other familial situations.
  If there is an extenuating circumstance causing only one adult and one child to travel together in an automobile, the Child or Youth Worker must obtain written permission from the child's parent or legal guardian. This written permission must include when and where the child is to be transported and be signed by the parent/guardian. If written permission from the parent/guardian is unobtainable, the Child or Youth worker must obtain verbal permission and document, in writing, when and where the child is to be transported and from whom they received verbal permission. The child or youth must be transported in the back seat of the vehicle in such circumstances.
  In emergencies, the Children's Ministry Director or Youth Director may alter the preceding requirements. In these cases, the Rector must be notified.
- Drivers must not use cell phones while transporting children or youth. For navigation, music, relevant calls, or messages, a non-driving adult leader or other passenger must handle the cell phone.
- Child and Youth Workers must transport children and youth directly to their destination. Drivers must not make unscheduled stops in non-public places. Stops for meals, refueling, and restroom breaks must be done as a group (i.e. all vehicles must travel together and stop together, whenever possible).
- Those organizing the event must avoid transportation circumstances that leave only one child in transport.
- Adults must avoid physical contact with children while in vehicles. Drivers, or other adult leaders, may assist with child seats and seat belts.
- No one under age 25 may drive vehicles rented by a church unless explicitly allowed by the rental agreement.

- No drivers under age 25 may drive church-owned vehicles unless explicitly covered by the church's auto insurance policy.

- If a family situation necessitates a special circumstance, the family may sign a waiver stating the deviance from the Diocesan or church policy; this waiver must note the family's acceptance of responsibility

OVERNIGHT EVENTS (INCLUDING LOCK-INS, MISSION TRIPS, RETREATS AND CAMPS)

- Overnight Events have the highest risk for abuse of any program or event that most churches will conduct. By the very nature of these events (unsupervised times and location, easy access to victims) the potential for both adult-on-child and peer-on-peer abuse is high. Proper safeguards must be taken to prevent abuse from occurring during these higher risk events.
- The two-adult rule (two Certified, unrelated Adults) is the preferred Safeguarding practice and should be followed. A single student must not be alone with one adult. If a situation arises where only one adult is present, a minimum of two students must also be present (known as the rule of three).
- All leaders and volunteers must be Certified Adults (must have previously completed the church's screening and training process).
- Overnight sleeping arrangements must be submitted in writing to and approved by the Rector prior to the event or activity.
- As long as any students are awake for a prolonged amount of time, two adult leaders must be awake and monitoring students to ensure safe behavior.
- Leaders must check with parents and use wise judgment regarding PG or PG-13 movies. R-rated movies require Rector and parental approval.
- All participants and Leaders must wear appropriately modest sleeping attire; both tops and bottoms.
- In the event of a sleepover on campus that involves both boys and girls, boys and girls must sleep in separate rooms, properly supervised by Certified Adult leaders of the same biological sex.
- When the sleeping accommodations allow it, leaders must monitor sleeping students by periodically conducting visual bed checks to ensure that sleeping students remain in designated sleeping places. During bed checks, leaders must never physically touch a student.
- Leaders must sleep in the same room as students, or in an adjoining room with the door between the rooms kept open, whenever the provided facilities allow it.
- In the event that overnight arrangements do not include standard beds, each leader and student must use single sleeping bags or blankets. In these instances, a "one-person-to-one bag or blanket" rule must be observed.
- Any overnight event must include an on-site or off-site plan in accordance with above.

OFF-CAMPUS, NON-SPONSORED YOUTH ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

Due to the nature of contact work within youth groups, situations may arise where a Child and Youth Workers organizes a social event off-campus. These events usually are not sponsored by the church and may only be open to certain youth due to the nature of contact work. It is recommended that these events remain in compliance with the Diocesan policy and with the individual church's policy, specifically with regard to the two-adult rule (two Certified Adults, unrelated). It is consistent with best practices and research, protects the church, the leader, and the children involved.

ON-CAMPUS, NON-SPONSORED, ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

Due to the nature of facilities and shared ministry, a situation might arise where church facilities are used by non-sponsored groups for activities and events (such as Young Life, the Boy Scouts, parties, etc.). These events may choose to offer childcare on their own, utilizing the facilities available. All churches must consult their insurance policy regarding these types of activities and be in compliance with the restrictions and recommendations in that insurance policy. All churches must use a Facilities Agreement that clearly articulates the outside organization's responsibility and liability for their program and leaders for every instance of an outside group using the church's facilities.

NUDITY

Child and Youth Workers must never be nude in the presence of children in their care. If there is a situation that may call for or contemplate the possibility of nudity (i.e., changing clothes during a pool party, a weekend or overnight retreat, etc.), the Children's Ministry Director or Youth Director must detail rotation procedures for Leaders for showering or changing clothes in the Supervisory Plan for the scheduled event. Children should also be encouraged to avoid nudity and utilize rotation procedures so as to be sensitive to body image issues and same-sex attraction.

ADDICTIVE SUBSTANCES

While in the supervision of children, Child and Youth Workers must not use tobacco products or be under the influence of alcohol. The possession or use of any illegal (or illegally obtained) drugs or pornographic materials is never appropriate for leaders or clergy of the Diocese.

HOME GROUP PROCEDURES

The Diocese and its churches do not exercise control or responsibility over home groups (defined as a small group meeting in a home for discipleship such as Bible study, worship, fellowship, etc.) in the area of safeguarding. The care and protection of children in such settings is always the responsibility of the parents/guardians of each child. Leaders of home groups organized by churches should be encouraged to read this policy, take the child abuse training provided, and consider supervisory plans for their events, including:

- Supervision by two screened and trained (unrelated) Certified Adults;
- The safety of the environment;
- Restroom procedures specific to the environment and needs of children.

Reporting Procedures

REPORTING

Anyone who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect, that a child or compromised adult has been abused, abandoned, neglected, or exploited in violation of the law must immediately contact the appropriate state authorities. All reports are confidential; access to these reports is limited by specific criteria described in the appropriate state's statute(s). (If a non-compromised adult discloses abuse, it is important to support him or her in their decision to make their own report to legal authorities.)

- For information on how to report abuse of children or compromised adults in your state, see How to Report Abuse by State (https://adoc.church/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/How-to-Report-Abuse-by-State.pdf). Also located on the ADOC Safeguarding Resource website (https://adoc.church/resources-to-assist-in-safeguarding/).

Reporting is time sensitive and may not be covered by your church's insurance policy if not completed within 24 hours. Following a report to local authorities, the Diocese also provides confidential reporting mechanisms to document incidents and to follow their protocols. Diocesan reporting is done through the Abuse Reporting Portal (https://adoc.church/reporting-portal/). A sample incident report can be found on the Safeguarding Resources page (https://adoc.church/resources-to-assist-in-safeguarding/).

At times, when a church leader receiving reports of misconduct/abuse puts together the separate pieces of information provided by different parties, the leader may discern a pattern or recognize information that triggers further investigation and/or a report to state authorities. (Such internal church reporting procedures are not intended to supersede any applicable legal reporting requirements.)

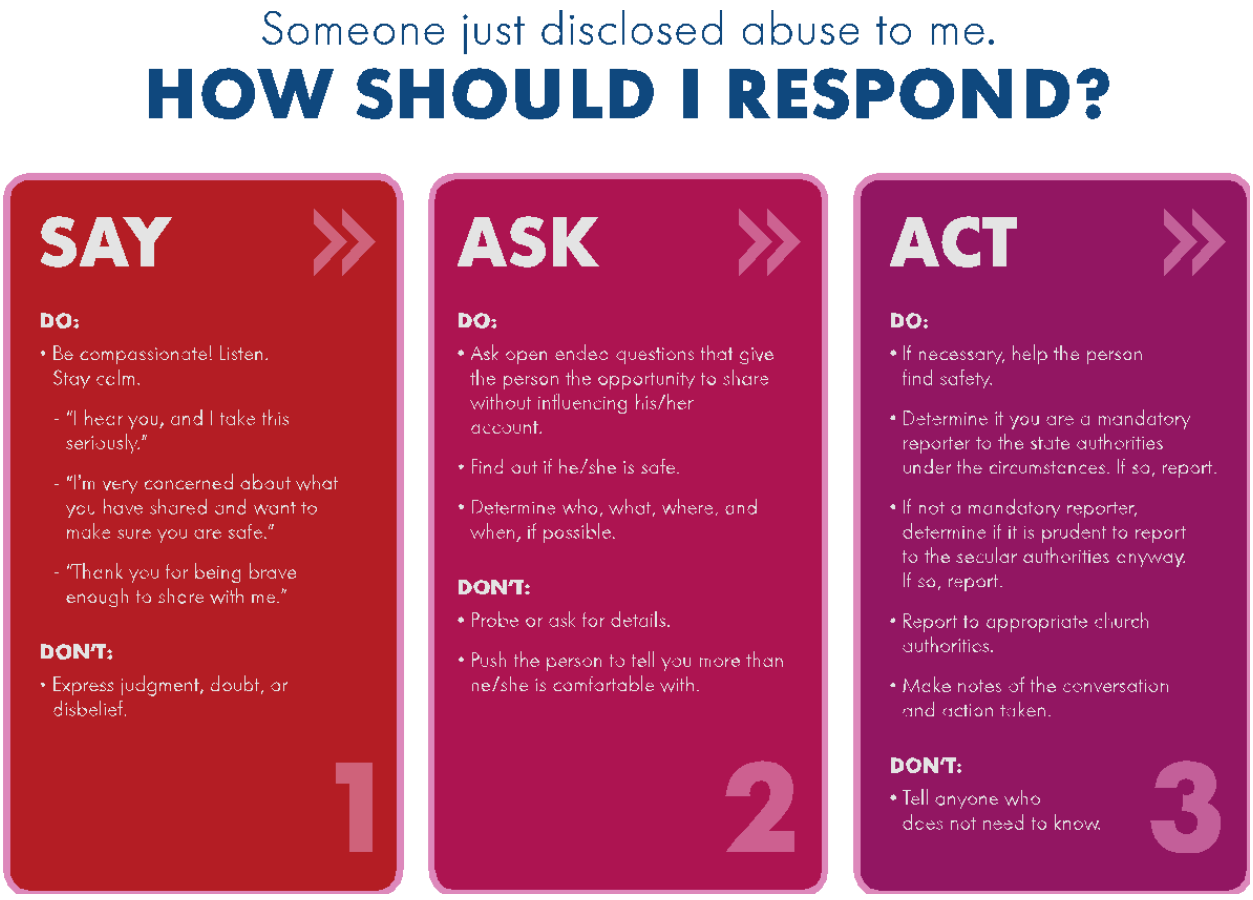
Throughout any inquiry or investigation, it is the responsibility of the Bishop to ensure that the following steps are being taken (though these steps should not be undertaken by the Bishop directly, in the case of a conflict of interest): (1) reach out to, and care for, any complainants (an Advocate, Chaplain, and/or a response team may be utilized in pastoral care); (2) alleged offenders must be treated with dignity and care; (3) maintain confidentiality, utilizing maximum discretion in all communications and subsequent actions.

The moment someone discloses abuse, the primary responsibility of the listener is to enable a safe environment for the person disclosing the information. If reasonably possible, ask a Certified Adult, or other responsible adult, to join in listening to the account. If someone begins a conversation by implying he or she is about to disclose, and asks you if you can keep a secret, it is recommended that you remind him or her that your primary job is to keep them safe and sometimes that means getting help, and for that reason you cannot promise you will keep it secret.

Whenever someone discloses abuse, the following is recommended:

1. Listen! Do not probe or ask for details. Allow the person to tell you only what he/she is comfortable to share. Ask open ended questions like "Is there anything else you would like to share with me?" If possible, reflect back to the person what you have heard for the sake of clarity.

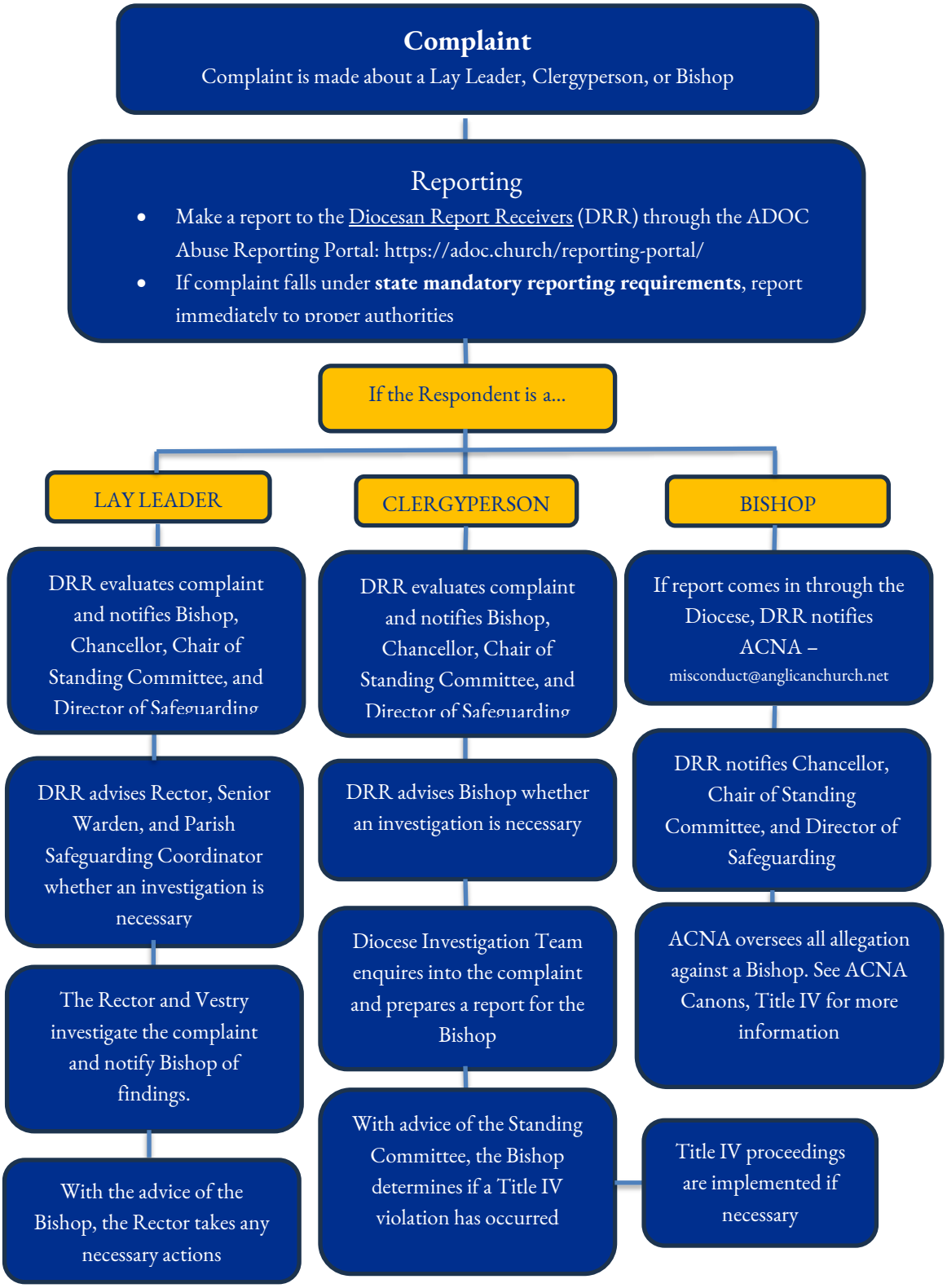
2. Avoid expressing doubt or disbelief, judgment of the person, or shock or outrage. Be calm and compassionate.
3. Find out if the person is safe and/or has a safe place to go. Help him/her get to safety, if needed.
4. Some helpful things to say may include:
    (i) "I hear you, and I take this seriously."
    (ii) "I care about you and want to make sure you are safe."
    (iii) "Thank you for being brave enough to share this with me."
5. Reassure the person that you will hold their story in confidence insofar as you are able, letting them know that you may, legally or otherwise, be required to report what has been disclosed.
6. Determine if you need to report the allegation. Ask for help from appropriate guides (e.g. the Director of Safeguarding), if needed. If the complainant is an adult, offer to help them understand their own options for reporting. If the complainant/victim is a child and you are still unsure of your duty to report, the best practice would be to report the allegation.
7. After the conversation, immediately take down notes of the conversation. Keep these notes in a safe and secure location to preserve confidentiality.



For responding to and reporting child abuse specifically, see the sample procedures on responding to and reporting child abuse on the [ADOC Safeguarding Resource webpage](https://adoc.church/resources-to-assist-in-safeguarding/) (https://adoc.church/resources-to-assist-in-safeguarding/).

REPORTING FLOW CHART

Minor conflict should be handled within the church. For potential issues of misconduct or abuse, the following reporting procedures are to be followed:



ALLEGATIONS INVOLVING A LAY PERSON

If someone discloses abuse, it is not the responsibility of the recipient of that information to investigate or verify; he or she must report to the proper ecclesiastical and legal authorities who will investigate.

In all cases, the complainant must be assured that the church is concerned and that the complaint will be investigated promptly and thoroughly. The initial verbal response must not convey doubt.

Any clergy involved in the process must not, at any time following the first receipt of the complaint, hear the sacramental confession of any person(s) involved. The clergy must comply with the reporting and notification requirements as contained in the diocesan, parish or other liability policies for insurance claims.

1. When the complainant is a minor/compromised adult:
    a. Any report received regarding the abuse of a minor or compromised adult must be reported to the appropriate civil authorities consistent with applicable laws and subject to constitutional and statutory exemptions and protections. ACNA Canons: Title I, Canon 5.9.1
    b. The Rector and Senior Warden must be informed.
    c. If a person accused of abuse is not the child's parent or guardian or otherwise a member of the household, the Rector or designee must contact the child's parents/guardians and offer support from the church.
    d. Because there are legal implications, the person reporting must then submit a report using the ADOC Abuse Reporting Portal (https://adoc.church/reporting-portal/). The Diocesan Reports Receivers will deploy notification procedures including the Bishop, Chancellor, Chair of the Standing Committee, and the Director of Safeguarding. The Director of Safeguarding can assist with documentation and expansion of inquiry, if necessary.
    e. The church's legal counsel must also be notified.
2. When the complainant is an adult:
    a. Offer support in the form of helping the complainant to understand their options for reporting to legal authorities, and letting them know you'll stand with them in doing so.
    b. Allegations of adult misconduct/abuse against a non-clergy leader must be reported to the Rector and the Senior Warden.
    c. The Rector and Vestry are responsible for the church's investigative and disciplinary procedures regarding adult misconduct/abuse allegations against lay leaders. The Rector and Vestry must fully document, in writing, all aspects of any inquiry or investigation. Churches must retain this documentation in accordance with the church's documentation policy.
    d. Once an allegation has been made, the Rector or Senior Warden must contact the Bishop for transparency and accountability and to report their findings. The Diocese is available for guidance and templates for documentation.
    e. Allegations of adult misconduct/abuse against a non-clergy lay leader of the Diocese or Child and Youth Worker serving in a diocesan program must be reported immediately to the Diocesan Reports Receivers using the ADOC Abuse Reporting Portal (https://adoc.church/reporting-portal/).

If the Diocese receives a complaint against a lay person, "the Diocesan Reports Receivers shall inform the bishop. The Diocesan Reports Receivers shall also, in consultation with the bishop, inform a Warden and/or the member of the clergy in charge of the congregation such layperson attends or in which the alleged misconduct occurred for the matter to be addressed at the level of the congregation with support, as needed, from the diocese." ACNA Canon I.5.9.4

Suspension of employment or volunteer activities:

1. The alleged offender's church-related employment or volunteer activity may be suspended by the Rector/person in charge of the church, after consultation with the bishop, until such time as the allegations of misconduct or abuse are resolved. (In cases of alleged sexual abuse/misconduct, best practice includes removing the accused's access to other potential victims).
2. This leave of absence is without prejudice (i.e., it does not imply guilt or innocence of the person under investigation). Payment of salary and benefits an employee may be discontinued at the discretion of the church-related employer only after consultation with the Bishop.
3. In cases of alleged sexual abuse by a person in leadership (e.g. a Sunday school teacher or Child or Youth worker), after a report has been made and after a suspension has been put in place, it is advisable to consider how best to inform the congregation of the allegation while keeping the identity of the survivor in confidence. For example, holding an in-person conversation or meeting allows for maximal transparency in the process, protects the informed consent of congregants who might interact with the respondent, and makes space for other potential survivors to come forward. All communications should be done after consultation with legal authorities. For specific counsel about what and how to disclose in a congregational setting, contact the Director of Safeguarding.

ALLEGATIONS INVOLVING CLERGY

If someone discloses abuse, it is not the responsibility of the recipient of that information to investigate or verify; they must report to the proper ecclesiastical and legal authorities who will investigate. In all cases, the complainant must be assured that the church is concerned and that the complaint will be investigated promptly and thoroughly. The initial, verbal response must not convey doubt.

The Bishop, clergy, or anyone who may subsequently be involved in the process, must not, at any time following the first receipt of the complaint, hear the sacramental confession of any person(s) involved. The Bishop and clergy must comply with the reporting and notification requirements as contained in the diocesan, parish or other liability policies for insurance claims. Any member of the clergy who believes himself or herself to be accused of misconduct/abuse may request the Bishop to begin formal inquiry.

When the complainant is a minor/compromised adult:

a. Any report received regarding the abuse of a minor or compromised adult must be reported to the appropriate civil authorities consistent with applicable laws and subject to constitutional and statutory exemptions and protections. ACNA Canon I.5.9.1

b. Any complaint of misconduct/abuse by any member of the clergy under the authority of the Bishop must also be reported immediately to the Diocesan Reports Receivers using the ADOC Abuse Reporting Portal (https://adoc.church/reporting-portal/).
    i. The Diocesan Reports Receiver must assure the complainant that the Diocese is concerned and that the complaint will be investigated promptly and thoroughly.
    ii. The Diocesan Reports Receivers "shall evaluate the report in a timely manner and…recommend to the Bishop whether the report discloses reasonable grounds to believe an offense under the ACNA Canons Title IV has been committed. With the advice of the Standing Committee (or its designated subcommittee), the Bishop shall determine whether a report of misconduct should be dismissed or if such report should proceed to investigation." ACNA Canon I.5.9.2.
        1. If determined necessary, the Diocesan Reports Investigation Committee should begin a canonical investigation of the complaint and, upon completion, "make a recommendation to the Ecclesiastical authority as to whether further juridical process should be pursued." ACNA Canon IV.3.3.1
        2. "If a report is dismissed, the reporting party must be promptly notified of such dismissal." ACNA Canon I.5.9.2.
        3. The Diocese must facilitate provision of pastoral care for those making reports that are not dismissed, as well as for the clergy who are subject of such reports. ACNA Canon I.5.9.3
        4. If further juridical process is recommended, the Diocese must follow additional process and standards set forth in the ACNA and Diocesan Canons.

When the complainant is an adult:

a. All of section 1.b. in the preceding paragraph applies.
b. All reports of pastoral abuse (see definition) must be reported to the Diocesan Report Receivers through the ADOC Abuse Reporting Portal (https://adoc.church/reporting-portal/) or by bringing the matter to the attention of their supervising clergy or Bishop.

Suspension of employment or leadership:

a. The alleged clergy offender may be inhibited by the Bishop under ACNA Canons until such time as the allegations of misconduct/abuse are resolved.
b. This inhibition is without prejudice (i.e. does not imply guilt or innocence of the person under investigation). Payment of salary and benefits to the clergy member may be discontinued at the discretion of the church-related employer after consultation with the Bishop.

ALLEGATIONS INVOLVING THE BISHOP

Any person believing that the Bishop has engaged in any misconduct/abuse should immediately submit an allegation using this form (https://anglicanchurch.net/acna-form-to-report-misconduct-by-a-bishop/) or in writing via email at misconduct@anglicanchurch.net.

a. A member of the Provincial Safeguarding Response and Care Team will follow up confidentially on the report.
b. For more information on the process followed for allegations involving a bishop, please see ACNA Canons - Title IV, canon 4.

CARING FOR THE COMMUNITY

Incidents of child abuse, and the secrecy that often surrounds them, can cause devastating harm to the survivors as well as to the church. Therefore, where current or past child abuse has been perpetrated by clergy, employees, vestry, or Child and Youth Workers of the church, the church must provide consultation to encourage the discussion of such incidents and to provide a means to facilitate healing within the church. Contact the Director of Safeguarding to discuss the best way to provide care for your congregation following an incident of abuse. On the ADOC Safeguarding Resource webpage (https://adoc.church/resources-to-assist-in-safeguarding/), "Caring for the Community" provides a suggested model for congregational trauma debriefing.

Compliance

The Bishop, the Director of Safeguarding, and the Standing Committee are responsible for the creation and promulgation of the diocesan "Policy for the Protection of Children and Adults," in accordance with the canons of the Diocese.

The Standing Committee, in conjunction with the Safeguarding Team, will annually update and revise the Policy in light of practical experiences, medical and other scholarly research, legal developments, and other relevant considerations.

The Rector has overall responsibility for the compliance and administration of this policy within the church he leads and for providing all reports requested by the Diocese.

The Anglican Diocese of the Carolinas requires that, at a minimum, each church (see definition) is expected to have in place these four procedures with regard to adults and children:

Procedure 1: Awareness
Procedure 2: Behavioral Expectations
Procedure 3: Reporting
Procedure 4: Compliance

POLICY OVERSIGHT

The Diocesan Office is responsible for:

- upholding the Constitution and Canons of the ACNA and maintaining/upholding the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese;
- setting additional, clear diocesan policies and procedures;
- following through on those policies and procedures to provide a consistent and transparent process;
- reporting to relevant law enforcement authorities in conformity with applicable law.

Clergy are responsible for:

- knowing and abiding by the Diocesan policies and procedures;
- ensuring that timely training, and resulting written acknowledgements, occur for all parties identified within these policies who are under their supervision;
- reporting to the Diocesan Report Receivers any allegation of clergy misconduct/abuse;
- reporting to relevant law enforcement authorities in conformity with applicable law;
- providing proof of compliance of all Safeguarding policies and procedures to the Diocesan office upon request.

Rectors and Wardens are responsible for:

- maintaining record keeping of all procedures outlined in this document;

- upholding the policies set forth in this document, which represent an appropriate standard of care, by adopting them as their own;
- reconciling this policy with the conditions of your particular congregation's insurance coverage and the need for a contextualized policy, ensuring the conditions to your insurance coverage are met;
- reviewing your insurance policy and calling the diocesan Director of Safeguarding if you have any questions;
- providing proof of compliance of all policies and procedures to the Director of Safeguarding upon request.

Employees, vestry, and Child and Youth Workers are responsible for:

- abiding by the Diocesan policies;
- reporting to the Rector and Senior Warden any allegation of employee/lay person misconduct or abuse, and reporting allegations of clergy misconduct/abuse to the Diocesan Report Receivers;
- reporting to relevant law enforcement authorities in conformity with applicable law.

COMPLIANCE WITH DIOCESAN POLICY

The requirements outlined in this Diocesan policy must be followed by each congregation. If an individual church's optional addendum to this policy includes additional, reasonable safety measures, all clergy, employees, vestry, and Child and Youth Workers of that church will be held accountable to that addendum as well as this policy.

COMPLIANCE WITH INSURANCE POLICY

In some cases, insurance companies require a response within a specific timeframe or the institution forfeits coverage. A congregation's adoption of written standards of conduct may also be required by insurers as a condition of coverage. Strong warranty language in some policies requires careful compliance on the part of insured entities. Failure to comply with policy standards could result in denial of insurance coverage in the event of a claim. The Diocese assumes no responsibility for a church's non-compliance with their insurance carrier's policy.

COMPLIANCE DOCUMENTATION

Churches are responsible for tracking the screening and training requirements for all non-clergy Certified Adults in their church. The Diocesan office is responsible for tracking the screening and training of clergy, Diocesan employees, and Diocesan Child and Youth Workers.

a. All churches must update their rosters of clergy, employees, vestry, and Child and Youth Workers at the start of each ministry year.
b. The Rector of each church submits a signed certificate of compliance to the Diocese by September 1st of each year (see the ADOC Safeguarding website for this certificate).

Anyone considered a leader in the Diocese or in any of the Diocesan churches (including fellowships, church plants, congregations, or missions), is expected to sign an individual policy

acknowledgement annually, see the ADOC Safeguarding Resource webpage (https://adoc.church/resources-to-assist-in-safeguarding/) for a sample form. This includes all Diocesan staff and clergy, vestry members, and any Child and Youth Workers. (Clergy and postulants must submit this form to the ADOC Director of Safeguarding for diocesan records; all relevant church staff, volunteers, and vestry must submit their individual policy acknowledgement to their Parish Safeguarding Coordinator.)

The Rector of every church associated with the Diocese is required to fill out one Congregational Compliance Certificate by September 1st of each year. Failure to certify full compliance by the deadline will result in a notice of non-compliance being sent to the Rector. Upon notification, the parish will have 30 days to comply, after which the matter goes to the Standing Committee for further action.

This policy is provided to the churches and congregations in the Anglican Diocese of the Carolinas as minimum expectations.

Revised versions of this policy will be distributed to each congregation in May of each calendar year with the understanding that the congregation has until 1 September to come into compliance with any changes.

It is the responsibility of the Rector of each church to ensure all clergy, employees, vestry, and Child and Youth Workers are made aware of the church's policies and that those who are required to complete approved training do so.

To help you understand who is responsible for which compliance forms and when, please see the following table:

Form	Due	To Whom?
Individual Policy Acknowledgement	Annually	Parish Safeguarding Coordinator
Congregational Compliance Certificate	Annually, NLT 1 September	Diocesan Director of Safeguarding

EXEMPTIONS TO POLICY

Recognizing that some of the requirements contained in this policy may be burdensome in specific ministry settings, the following process for the approval for exemptions to the policy is provided.

Unless otherwise noted in the policy, any request for exemption to the requirements contained within this policy must be submitted by the Rector to the Bishop and Standing Committee for approval during a scheduled Standing Committee meeting. The request for exemption, reason for the exemption, and approval/denial by the Bishop and Standing Committee must be noted in the Standing Committee meeting minutes.

If, due to an emergency or unforeseen circumstance, pre-approval by the Bishop and Standing Committee is not possible, the Rector must notify the Bishop of the one-time exemption to the policy and the reason for the exemption.

All approved exemptions to the requirements contained in this policy must also be reported by the Rector to the ADOC Director of Safeguarding. The Director of Safeguarding will keep a file of all exemptions to policy within the diocese. The Director of Safeguarding may contact Rectors for further details and to provide coaching on ways to meet the requirements of this policy without the need for exemption.

All exemptions to this policy are an acceptance of risk. By implementing exemptions to this policy, the Rector is accepting the associated risks on behalf of his church. Churches must ensure that any approved exemptions to this policy remain in compliance with their insurance policy.

Resources

The Anglican Diocese of the Carolinas has provided the resources mentioned in this policy and many others to assist churches and clergy, employees, vestry, and Child and Youth Workers in their protection of individual members of each congregation. To find these resources go to the ADOC Safeguarding Resource website (https://adoc.church/resources-to-assist-in-safeguarding/).

The Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) has also provided safeguarding resources on their Safeguarding website (https://anglicanchurch.net/safeguarding-in-our-churches/)

If there is a resource that would assist you in safeguarding at your church, that we have not yet provided, contact the ADOC Director of Safeguarding with your request.

O merciful Creator, your loving hand is open wide to satisfy the needs of every living creature:

Make us always thankful for your loving providence, and give us grace to honor you with all that you have entrusted to us; that we, remembering the account we must one day give, may be faithful stewards of your good gifts; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. ***Amen.***

©*Book of Common Prayer*, 2019, Prayer 22