



POLICY
FOR
THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Policy approved by the Diocesan Board on 6/2020

This document is a statement for the Diocese of Central New York, setting forth expectations for its leaders in their relationships with children and youth. The purpose of this policy as written, is to foster the highest standards of behavior in ministry settings within the Diocese. The policy applies to all ministries in this Diocese and includes the following:

- “Screening and Training Protocols” (Appendix A), which explains the level of screening and training required before engaging in ministry with children and youth;
- A description of requisite training that is specialized and tailored to ministry role and function;
- Behavioral standards designed to ensure that children and youth and all who engage in ministry with them are treated with dignity and respect in all settings; and
- “Recommended Practices and Guidelines for Social Media and Electronic Communications” (Appendix B).

No policy can foresee every possible circumstance to which it may be applied. Whenever applicable, questions of civil, criminal, and/or ecclesiastical discipline and employment offenses should be addressed with the relevant authorities immediately. Please contact the Office of the Bishop for consultation and resources if assistance is needed.

Links to additional Diocesan Safe Church policies: For the Prevention of Sexual Harassment and Sexual Exploitation and For the Protection of Vulnerable Adults

This policy includes the following segments:

- I. Definitions
- II. Application and Screening
- III. Education and Training
- IV. Monitoring and Supervision of Programs
- V. Responding to Concerns
- VI. Policy Adoption, Implementation, and Audit

Appendix A—Screening and Training Protocols

Appendix B—Recommended Practices and Guidelines for Social Media and Electronic Communications with Children and Youth

I. DEFINITIONS

NOTE: These definitions reflect our understanding of terms describing gender identity and sexuality, which are evolving as this policy is being written.

Adult: Anyone who is 18 years or older and not in high school.¹

Bullying: Behavior that intimidates, humiliates, offends, degrades, or harms another person, whether verbal, psychological, social, physical, or otherwise.

Child: Anyone under the age of 12 years.¹

Cisgender: An adjective describing a person whose sense of personal identity and gender corresponds with their gender or sex assigned at birth. This is an evolving term, as our understanding and language around gender identity and sexuality expands and matures.

Driver: Anyone age 21 and older, who is regularly scheduled to drive to and from events.

Gender Non-binary: An umbrella term for people who identify their gender as neither male nor female. These people might identify as both (“bigender”), neither (“agender”), a mix between the two (“genderfluid”), or unsure of their gender (“genderqueer”). This is an evolving term, as our understanding and language around gender identity and sexuality expands and matures.

Intake Officer: The person(s) designated by each diocese to receive information regarding an offense for which a member of the clergy may be held accountable under *Title IV of the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church*, which sets out the disciplinary process for clergy. Anyone may contact an Intake Officer to report concerns: <https://cnyepiscopal.org/resources/formation/safechurch/#intake>

Leader: A person, adult or youth, who, for the benefit of another, engages in ministry without responsibility for oversight of others engaged in that same ministry. Examples include Sunday school teachers, camp counselors, and program team.

LGBTQ+: An acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, and others. It refers to people whose gender identities vary from their gender or sex assigned at birth, or whose sexual orientations differ from the heterosexual majority. (The “+” is an effort to include additional identities.) This is an evolving term, as our understanding and language around gender identity and sexuality expands and matures.

Mandated Reporter: A person who is required by New York State law to report reasonable suspicions of abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation of vulnerable populations to the appropriate state agency. It is imperative to know the requirements of applicable state laws. Typically, individuals who are not mandated to report suspicion of abuse may make a report to the appropriate state agency, even though not legally required to do so. Link to Summary Guide to Mandated Reporters in New York State: <https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/publications/Pub1159.pdf>

Office of Children & Family Services: A social services program provided by state and local governments serving children and their families who are in need of assistance. Child Protective Services receive and investigate reports of suspected abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Off-site: Any location other than the sponsoring Episcopal Church, institutional facility, or campus.

Organizations: All institutions for which the Diocese or congregations have legal or fiduciary responsibility (such as diocesan departments, commissions, conference and retreat centers, adult day care centers, retirement communities, religious orders, congregations, schools, et cetera).

Overnight: Any event that starts on one calendar day and ends on a different calendar day.

Pastoral Relationship: Any relationship (1) between a Member of the Clergy and any person to whom the Member of the Clergy provides or has provided counseling, pastoral care, spiritual direction, or spiritual guidance, or any person from whom said Member of the Clergy has received information within the Rite of Reconciliation of a Penitent, or (2) between a lay minister and any person to whom the lay minister is offering prayer or ministry, or any person from whom the lay minister has received sensitive, personal, or confidential information in the course of offering ministry.

Programs: Official activities and programs sponsored by The Episcopal Church and its Provinces, Dioceses, and congregations (examples include: The Episcopal Youth Event, Provincial Youth Events, Happening, Pilgrimages, Mission Experiences, New Beginnings, camp programs, Acolyte Festival, etc.).

Public Records Check: A search of documents and data available to the public including criminal and civil court records, credit reports, and driving records from the department of motor vehicles. Typically such searches are conducted by a third party with expertise in this area.

Responsible Person: The person designated as being accountable for compliance with this policy for an event or program.

Sacramental Use: Consecrated or unconsecrated wine used in the setting of Eucharist.

Sexual Misconduct: Sexual misconduct shall mean (a) sexual abuse, (b) sexual behavior engaged in by a person in authority with a person for whom the sexual behavior is unwelcome or who does not consent to the sexual behavior, or by force, intimidation, coercion or manipulation, or (c) sexual behavior at the request of, acquiesced to or by a person in authority with an employee, volunteer, student or counselee of that person in authority or in the same congregation as the person in authority, or a person with whom the person in authority has a pastoral relationship.

Supervisor: A person who has oversight responsibilities for a ministry program and/or leaders in a ministry program.

Title IV: A section of the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church pertaining to clergy professional standards, accountability, and ecclesiastical discipline.

Transgender: An adjective describing a person whose sense of personal identity and gender does not correspond with the gender or sex assigned to them at birth. This is an evolving term, as our understanding and language around gender identity and sexuality expands and matures.

Training: Organized activity designed to provide information and/or instructions to strengthen and enhance the recipient's understanding, capacity, and exercise of ministry.

Safeguarding God's People: A standard of training that will foster a culture of safety and inclusion for all people that includes a broad overview of issues of vulnerability, power, and healthy boundaries. This training is designed to equip all people to live out their Baptismal Covenant.

Youth: Anyone who is at least 12 years old, but not yet 18 years old. A youth may also be an individual who is 18 years old or older, and still in high school.¹

II. APPLICATION AND SCREENING

The Diocese, congregations, and other Organizations are required to screen all persons according to the standards in the "Screening and Training Protocols" (Appendix B).

A. Public Records Checks

- Congregations and other Organizations shall use a provider approved by the diocese to conduct public records checks. Such checks must be completed before the employee or volunteer begins interacting with children and youth;
- Criminal public records checks shall include all available criminal records and sex offender registries;
- A Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) records check is needed if transporting children and youth as part of, or an extension of, ministry of the church or for a church-sponsored event (see Section VI. J);
- A credit check is required for check-signing authority;
- Public records checks must be updated at least every five years.

B. Additional Screening Requirements

¹ Ages established in accordance with generally accepted definitions in the United States. These ages may vary across the wider Episcopal Church.

Written application, interview, and reference verification are required before serving in certain roles and ministries as specified in “Screening and Training Protocols” (Appendix B). Where required, these components are generally conducted in the following order:

- Submission of a completed written application to serve in a specified role with a clearly defined written job description. The application includes verifiable personal information;
- Personal interview;
- Reference verification conducted by congregations and other Organizations to verify personal information and check references listed in the application (people who know but are not related to the applicant); and
- Maintenance of these records as described below.

Potential Supervisors must be known and active in the congregation for at least six months before engaging in ministry with children and youth—unless they have passed public records checks and reference checks pursuant to the “Screening and Training Protocols” (Appendix B).

III. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Training shall be appropriate to each person’s function according to the “Screening and Training Protocols” (Appendix B).

All Leaders shall have Safeguarding God’s People training that fosters a culture of safety and inclusion for all people and covers a broad overview of issues of vulnerability, power, and healthy boundaries. Safeguarding God’s People is designed to equip all people to live out their Baptismal Covenant. All members of the Episcopal Church shall have access to this training.

In addition to Safeguarding God’s People, all Supervisors and those with oversight responsibilities for ministry programs and/or other adults who engage in ministry with children and youth shall have Specialized Training that is tailored to their role and ministry function.

Depending on role and responsibility, Specialized Training should include the following:

- The prevention, identification, and response to all forms of abuse and neglect;
- Vulnerability within the pastoral relationship;
- An introduction to gender non-binary;
- The needs of LGBTQ+ children and youth;
- The ways that children and youth can engage in self-advocacy; and
- The needs of differently-abled children and youth.

Certification of training shall be renewed every 5 years.

The Diocese, congregations, and other Organizations with responsibility for programs with, services for, or ministries to children and youth shall keep records sufficient to evidence compliance with this policy.

IV. MONITORING AND SUPERVISION OF PROGRAMS

A Responsible Person shall monitor and supervise the behavior of adults, children, and youth to ensure appropriate behavior and healthy boundaries.

All people who minister to children and youth must have ongoing supervision. Ongoing supervision should consist of regular check-ins by the Supervisor, who may be parish clergy or a team leader. Such supervision shall review the scope, accountability, and responsibility of the ministry with the person engaged in the ministry. Each person engaged in such ministry should know who supervises their ministry and how to contact the Supervisor at all times.

The Diocese, congregations, and Organizations shall ensure that all people who minister to children and youth receive prior training as to the scope, accountability, and responsibility of the ministry.

The Diocese, congregations, and Organizations shall maintain an up-to-date list of persons approved to minister to children and youth. This list shall include contact information for the individuals listed and be kept in the Organization's office or other place where records are kept.

A. Unrelated Adults Required

There shall be a minimum of two unrelated adults (at least two years older than the eldest participant) present at ministry settings and events designed for children and youth. If unanticipated circumstances result in an adult being alone with children or youth, that adult shall report those circumstances to the Supervisor, clergy-in-charge, senior warden, or Responsible Person as soon as possible.

One adult may be sufficient in well-monitored, visually accessible program space on the church grounds, such as a Sunday School classroom, provided that another adult can maintain visual contact with the adult program leader. This can be accomplished by designating an individual to conduct frequent random checks of classrooms and unlocked spaces throughout the building(s). See also sections regarding "Overnight Programs" and "Transportation."

B. Creating Safe Space for Children and Youth

To create a safe space, it is necessary to anticipate and avoid circumstances in which children and youth are exposed to inappropriate consumables, materials, unmonitored adult contact, or unsupervised peer contact. For example:

- Alcoholic Beverages—Alcohol (sacramental or otherwise) shall not be stored in publicly accessible areas of the church buildings

- Computers and Electronic Devices—Children and youth shall have adequate supervision when using electronic devices belonging to Dioceses, congregations, and other Organizations. Devices shall have adequate password protection. Each user shall have their own account and password. See Appendix B: “Recommended Practices and Guidelines for Social Media and Electronic Communications”
- Persons with Keys and Access to Locked Spaces—anyone with keys or electronic access to church buildings shall meet all the requirements for screening and training according to “Screening and Training Protocols” (Appendix A).
- Unused Spaces—Spaces not in use should not be readily accessible to unauthorized persons. Given the vast differences in facilities, each Diocese, congregation, and other Organization should determine how best to meet this standard.

C. One-to-One Conversations with Children or Youth

When one-to-one conversations occur between an adult and a child or youth, another unrelated adult is to be either present or capable of visually monitoring the conversation.

Examples include the following:

- Planned or unplanned on-site conversations can take place in a public location, away from where others can hear but in view of other adults.
- Planned off-site conversations/meetings can take place in a public place (such as a coffee shop or restaurant) in view of other adults. A Responsible Person shall be informed about the appointment or plans in advance.

Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed if a child or youth discloses a situation pertaining to abuse, neglect, self-harm, or exploitation.

Impulsive, secluded, or secretive activity, online or in person, with children or youth may foster a high-risk situation, and is therefore to be avoided. See **Recommended Practices and Guidelines for Social Media and Electronic Communications** (Appendix C).

D. Basic Needs

No one is to be deprived of the basic human needs of food, drinking water, shelter, sleep, access to restrooms, safety, and clothing at any event.

Exceptions may be made for programs intended to teach children or youth about poverty, need, and hunger, such as an intentional fasting program. In these cases, children and youth must agree to participate in writing, and parents or guardians must give written permission that includes certification that the youth or child does not have a medical condition that would put the participant at risk by fasting or missing sleep. Participants who wish to withdraw or who are unable to complete the program must have their basic needs met immediately.

E. Inclusiveness

No one shall be denied rights, status, or access to an equal place in the life, worship, and governance of any program or activity because of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, differing abilities, or socio-economic class. To the furthest extent possible, all spaces and settings for programs, activities, and ministry shall be accessible.

The Diocese of Central New York seeks to support all children and youth by providing reasonable alternative arrangements regardless of state law to address safety and comfort.

Transgender, genderqueer, or gender non-binary children or youth who express the need or desire for increased privacy should be provided with reasonable alternative arrangements. Reasonable alternative arrangements may include the use of a private area, a separate changing schedule, or use of a single stall restroom. Any alternative arrangement should be provided in a way that protects the child's or youth's ability to keep their gender status confidential. They should not be required to use a locker room or restroom that conflicts with their gender identity.

Safe bathroom/shower facilities will be provided by gender or specific times will be assigned to use of a single facility.

Adults should either have separate shower facilities or shower at other times than the youth. Separate dressing facilities should also be provided. See section on "Overnight Programs."

F. Violence and Weapons

- No one is to strike, hit, or otherwise physically threaten or harm anyone at any time.
- Bullying of any kind by anyone is prohibited.
- Children and youth shall not have weapons of any kind at any event or program for children or youth. Exceptions to this restriction may be made for camp programs or other specific programs with prior approval.
- Report suspected violations immediately. See "Suspected Violations of This Policy (VII.B)

G. Behavioral Standards for Adults in Ministry with Children and Youth

Adults who work with children and youth are expected to model the patterns of healthy relationships that children and youth deserve in all settings. Interactions should meet all requirements outlined above, and adults should be discouraged from initiating a private relationship with any unrelated child or youth from the church away from sanctioned church activities.

DOs

Adults are encouraged to do the following:

- Have ongoing spiritual practices, which might include daily prayer, regular participation in corporate worship, and Bible study;
- Spend time with and listen to children and youth and advocate for their ministry within the Body of Christ;
- Offer appropriate physical expressions of care, which may include high fives; fist bumps; hand-holding while walking with small children or in prayer; brief touching of shoulders, hands, or arms, handshakes; “laying on of hands” under appropriate pastoral supervision; and brief hugs and arms around shoulders; and
- Model appropriate affection with other adults and be accountable to the community for behavior.

DON'Ts

Adults shall not, under any circumstances, do the following:

- Provide children or youth with marijuana, non-sacramental alcohol, or excessive sacramental wine (more than a sip) drugs, cigarettes, tobacco products, e-cigarettes, vapes, or pornography;
- Arrive under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or misused legal drugs at any children’s or youth event or when they are responsible for children or youth at an event;
- Consume non-sacramental alcohol or illegal drugs or misuse legal drugs at any children’s or youth event or when they are responsible for children or youth at an event;
- Engage in illegal behavior or permit other adults, children, or youth to engage in illegal behavior;
- Engage in any sexual, romantic, illicit, or secretive relationship or conduct with any child or youth; or
- Apart from planned, pre-approved educational programs, discuss their own sexual activities, fantasies, or their own use or abuse of drugs or alcohol with children or youth.

Anyone who suspects a violation of these policies shall take steps as outlined in Section VII. Responding to Concerns.

H. Special Considerations for Off-site Programming

Off-site programs, trips, and events are a welcome and often necessary means for spiritual,

social, and emotional development of children and youth. They also present additional challenges for maintaining best practices for safe and healthy ministry. The expectations for safe space, as described above, should be observed off-site. In the event of uncertainty about application of the policy, the Responsible Person should contact their Supervisor with the relevant queries. Because of unique risks that can't always be anticipated, it is important to obtain permissions and manage documentation as described below.

1. Registration, Waivers, and Release Forms

- All children, youth, and adults shall complete and sign a registration form and a waiver and release form before participating in any programs. Confidentially must be preserved with respect to medical and other sensitive information in the forms. Such forms can encompass a program year.
- There must be a parent/guardian's signature on all waiver and release forms for minors. Please check with your bishop's office concerning whether digital signatures are acceptable in your state.
- Completed waiver and release forms shall be stored in a secure location on-site or online. Please check with your bishop's office concerning whether such forms may be saved electronically and the length of time the forms must be saved.
- Permission slips shall be provided for each off-site event and shall be signed by the parent/guardian.
- Prior permission for a minor to be photographed or recorded on film, videotape, audiotape, or other electronic media is required from a parent/guardian.
- Written parental approval is required prior to viewing any movie, whether off-site or on-site, rated "PG-13" or above or participating in any conversation or program containing sexually explicit or violent content.

2. First Aid and Medications

- Current certification in First Aid, CPR, and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) operation is strongly encouraged for those who work with children and youth.
- A record must be kept for all medication or first aid given to a participant. This record shall include the participant's name, the date and time of service, the name of the person administering medication or treatment, and a description of the medication, dosage, and/or treatment given.
- All medications (prescription and over the counter) belonging to minors shall be given to the Responsible Person, unless otherwise agreed upon by the parents and the Responsible Person. Exceptions may include inhalers, epi-pens, and birth-control pills.
- Only the Responsible Person, or their adult designee, shall administer

medications.

3. Supervision

At any gathering of children or youth, there shall be at least two unrelated adults with one being age 25 or older, preferably reflecting the sex and gender identity of the participants.

Minimum ratios of adult to child/youth shall be in accordance with American Camp Association (ACA) guidelines as follows:

- 5 years and younger—1 adult for each 5 overnight-participants and 1 adult for each 6 day-participants
- 6–8 years—1:6 for overnight, and 1:8 for day
- 9–14 years—1:8 for overnight and 1:10 for day
- 15–18 years—1:10 for overnight and 1:12 for day

Additional adults can provide skills, mentorship, support, encouragement, spiritual guidance and joy.

4. Insurance

All trips to off-site destinations must have adequate insurance in case of emergency. For more information, contact your insurance broker.

5. Overnight Programs

In overnight programming, particular attention will be given to historically excluded or unrecognized people, such as LGBTQ+ and differently-abled individuals. In a situation of unequal power and safety, preferences of these individuals merit additional consideration, accommodation, and action to ensure participant privacy, maximization of social integration of all participants, minimization of stigmatization of any participants, equal opportunity to participate, and safety of all participants.

Other guidelines for overnight programs:

- The safe use of restrooms and showers by all participants requires the Diocese, congregations, and other organizations to consider numerous factors, including, but not limited to age, sex, gender identity and expression, and privacy. Adults should have separate showers or separate times for showers.
- Overnight programs shall provide safe, supervised sleeping arrangements.
 - No bed, cot, or sleeping bag shall have more than one person sleeping in it.
 - Supervision by two unrelated adults is required in any space where one or more youth are sleeping.
 - It is acceptable for all participants to sleep in the same open area when dressing rooms and bathrooms provide appropriate privacy.

- Participants shall have access to three substantial meals each full day and access to sufficient water.

Best practice guidelines for hotel stays include the following:

- One child or youth per bed, including cots, pullouts or hide-a-beds, and rollaway beds;
- At least 2 children or 2 youth in each room;
- Adult supervisors or chaperones have rooms on the same floor, scattered among the rooms containing children or youth and at least one adult room is by the stairs or elevators;
- Adult leader assigns rooms and room occupants; and
- Adults may not sleep in a hotel room with an unrelated child or youth.

J. Transportation

For the health and safety of all participants, the following practices shall be followed.

1. For events that originate and/or terminate at a Diocesan facility, all drivers must be at least 21 years of age and provide Event Leader with proof of insurance and a valid driver's license.
2. All drivers and riders must comply with state laws including seat belt and cell phone usage.
3. Parents/guardians are responsible for the transportation and safety of their children and/or youth to and from the event. This responsibility includes the transportation of any other passengers in their vehicle.

K. Camps and Retreat Centers

All camps, camping programs, and retreat centers of the diocese shall follow the guidelines for off-site programming established in this policy. In addition, camps should aim to follow American Camp Association standards to the best of the camp's ability.

L. Travel

Travel with children and youth presents amazing opportunities for participants to experience the church and the world on a larger scale with vastly different perspectives of faith communities and their contexts. It also presents challenges to normal safety protocols and opportunities for creativity if managed well. The following policies will help groups prepare for a variety of potential scenarios, as well as for domestic and international travel.

1. Adult Leaders and Chaperones

- Minimum ratios of adult to youth need to be greater due to the possibility of leaving an adult behind with a participant in the event of a medical emergency.

- 9–14 years—1:5
- 15–18 years—1:7
- Regardless of group size, no group should travel with fewer than three adult chaperones.
- One adult of a minimum age of 25 should serve as the travel administrator who is responsible for all aspects of the trip, including carrying all necessary documentation, contacts, and forms including:
 - Medical releases
 - Media releases
 - Community covenant
 - Emergency contacts
 - Itineraries
 - Cash and/or credit card capacity to address emergencies
- It is a best practice that one adult of a minimum age of 25 should hold a current medical certification to manage administration of necessary and permissible medications, administer immediate and necessary first aid, and judge medical situations to determine if care of an individual needs to be taken to a higher level of care. When this is not possible, one person should be designated to supervise the administration of medications as instructed on medical release forms, and a clinic near the destination should be identified ahead of time in order to respond to health emergencies as rapidly as possible.
- Acceptable medical certifications include the following:
 - Wilderness Medical Response
 - Outdoor Emergency Care
 - Emergency Medical Technician/Paramedic
 - Nurse—RN/LPN/Nurse Practitioner
 - Physician’s Assistant
 - Medical Doctor
- Best practice is to designate an adult to serve as back-up to the travel administrator and as back-up for simple first aid and administration of prescriptions. These could be the same person. A copy of all documents should be left with an accountable person at the Diocesan, congregation, or Organization office. That person should also serve as the local emergency contact person for communications between the traveling group and families at home.
- Insurance for Travel

- Short-term trip or supplemental insurance, available through most church and Organization policies as an added rider, must be secured at least one month prior to travel.
- It is recommended that all travelers carry evidence of personal health insurance by virtue of a copy of the actual card provided to the insured person.
- Because not all individuals have access to affordable and adequate health insurance, it is recommended that health insurance be added to trip insurance.
- International Considerations
 - Check in with the U.S. Department of State on travel requirements, including visas.
 - Make certain that every traveler's passport is valid for at least six months beyond your return date.
 - Determine whether or not vaccinations are required and/or recommended for entry into specific countries.
 - Arrange to have at least two cellphones with the group that will have active coverage in the destination(s). Make a backup plan for communication with the responsible person at home.
 - A more thorough list of international travel considerations with links to U.S. and global organizations can be found in the *Youth in Mission Manual* here: http://www.episcopalchurch.org/files/7-traveling_7.pdf

V. RESPONDING TO CONCERNS

A. Suspected Abuse, Neglect, or Exploitation of Children and Youth

Any adult who has reason to suspect that abuse, neglect, or exploitation of children or youth has taken place is strongly encouraged (and all mandated reporters are required) to contact the state's Child Protective Services. Link to Summary Guide of Mandated Reporters in NYS: <https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/publications/Pub1159.pdf>. In addition, anyone who has reason to suspect that abuse, neglect, or exploitation of children or youth has taken place within a facility or program of the Diocese, congregation, or other Organization, should immediately inform one of more or the following:

- The Bishop's Office in the case of the Diocese
- Member of the clergy-in-charge or the senior warden in the case of a congregation
- The director, head, or other governing officer in the case of other Organizations; and/or
- The Intake Officer in case a member of the clergy is suspected of abuse, neglect and/or exploitation

B. Suspected Violations of this Policy

Anyone who suspects a violation of these policies shall immediately report the violation to the Responsible Person, member of the clergy in charge and senior warden.

Clergy in charge receiving reports of violations of this policy shall be responsible for providing appropriate pastoral care to all those affected and appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or unpaid ministry with the Church. If the Responsible Person is a lay person, they are responsible to ensure that appropriate pastoral care is provided for all.

Anyone who knows of a violation of these policies by a member of the clergy shall immediately report the violation to the bishop's office and/or the Intake Officer. Anyone can make a report to an Intake Officer.

The bishop, hearing reports of violations by clergy, or by laity at diocesan events, shall be responsible for providing appropriate pastoral care to all those affected and appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action, up to and including canonical disciplinary action, as provided by Title IV of the Constitutions and Canons, and/or termination of employment or unpaid ministry with the Diocese.

C. Local Resources for Response

Each Diocese, congregation, or Organization shall provide a list of local resources that can give information and assistance to anyone concerned about circumstances that may violate this policy. Such resources with contact information shall include the following:

- Responsible Person(s) for programs and ministries with children and youth;
- Clergy in charge of a congregation;
- Wardens;
- Bishop;
- Intake Officer(s); and
- Child Protective Services.

VI. Congregation and Organization Adoption, Implementation, and Audit

Congregations and Organizations must adopt a *Policy for the Protection of children and youth* that is consistent with, and/or exceeds, the requirements in this diocesan policy.

Where permitted by their governing body, congregations and Organizations may adopt site-specific variations from this policy which shall be described in detail, including the circumstances under which those variations are to be permitted and their rationale. This approval shall be recorded in the minutes of the vestry or governing body.

The *Policy for the Protection of Children and Youth* shall be posted in an area where activities take place, and shall be given to all adults, guardians, and all paid and unpaid persons who minister to children or youth. These policies shall include the names and phone numbers of the member of the clergy in charge, the senior warden, and a contact person in the bishop's office.

Each congregation and Organization is required to conduct a Safe Church Self-Audit annually to confirm compliance with safe church policies and report said audit to the bishop's office.

Procedures to be confirmed by audit will include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Public records checks, application forms, and records of screening and reference verification of paid and unpaid persons;
- Records of compliance with "Screening and Training Protocols" (Appendix B);
- Procedures for responding to concerns and incidents; and
- Evidence of compliance with "safe space" requirements.

APPENDIX A – SCREENING AND TRAINING PROTOCOLS

The following are minimum requirements for Church employees and volunteers. Individual organizations may choose to add additional training or background checks. Parishes are encouraged to require a background check for any volunteer with unsupervised access to children and youth.

Screening and Training Chart	Ministry Function	Public Records Report	“Safeguarding God’s Children” Training ³
Staff & Contracted Employees (not covered below)		X	X
	Church Employees	X	X
	Contractors (Form 1099)	Depends ⁴	X
	Church Employees Unpaid	X	X
	Clergy	X	X
	Diocesan Employees	X	X
	Diocesan Staff - unpaid	x	X
Program Supervisors			
	Choir Director (Child/Youth/Adult)	X	X
	Commissioned Ministry Teams (Acolyte, Altar Guild, etc....)		X
	Director of Religious Education	X	X
	VBS Director or Camp Director	X	X
	Youth Minister	X	X
	Acolyte Leader		X
Program Participants (non-supervisory)			
	Acolyte Mentor/Leader		X
	Choir Parents		
	Church School Teacher		X
	Nursery Worker - unpaid		X
	VBS Teacher/Helper		X
	Teenage Assistants		
	Musicians who work with youth	X	X
Off-site¹	Camp Counselor	X	X
	Confirmation Mentors		X
	Lay Chaplains	X	X
	Pastoral Care Teams		X
Overnight²	Youth Group Leaders	X	X
	Drivers		X
	Event Leader (Adult or Teen)		X
Key Access			

	Altar Guild	Recommended	X
	Treasurer	Criminal & Credit	X
	Vestry		X
	Wardens	Criminal & Credit	X
	Building Hosts	Recommended	
Home Visitors			
	Eucharistic Visitors	X	X
	Home Visitors	X	X
	Stephen Ministers	X	X
	Church Staff -unpaid	X	X

¹Off-site: Any location other than the sponsoring Episcopal Church institution, facility, or campus.

²Overnight: Any event that starts on one calendar day and ends on a different calendar day.

³Safeguarding Training must be renewed every 5 years.

⁴Any contractor having unsupervised access and/or contact with children or youth.

APPENDIX B—POLICIES FOR DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS

Social media shapes the lives of young people and has the potential to empower ministry. In the virtual world, healthy boundaries and safe church practices must be adhered to as they are in the physical world. The Episcopal Diocese of Central New York's Policy for the Protection of Children and Youth and Vulnerable Adults applies online as it does in person.

Protection of Children and Youth in Digital Communications

Additionally, the Episcopal Diocese of Central New York will adhere to the following practices in our digital communications with children and youth:

- obtain parental permission for each child or youth for using photos or videos for ministry purposes
- Prohibit "tagging" of children or youth on social media and use of the child's full name in photo or video caption; use of child's first name or nickname is acceptable with parental permission
- When possible, send communication to entire groups or in public places on social media rather than in private message
- Copy parents/ guardians on individual email and text conversations with youth
- Inform parents/guardians of all digital platforms used to interact with youth
- Disclose ongoing digital pastoral communications with children and youth (such as social media messages or emails) to parents/guardians, youth ministry coordinators, and supervisors
- Adults should not initiate "friend" or "follow" requests with children or youth from personal accounts and should be consistent in practices of responding to "friend" or "follow" requests from minors on personal accounts
- For policies pertaining to digital groups designed for youth, please see "Oversight of digital groups" below
- If an interaction occurs that is not covered by these policies, the Safe Church Coordinator, in consultation with those involved, will refer to the practices and guidelines recommended by the Episcopal Church in a policy that goes into effect on Jan. 1, 2019, accessible here: https://www.forma.church/uploads/files/model-policy-for-the-protection-of-children-and-youth-2018_125.pdf

Ownership of Diocesan accounts and platforms

The Episcopal Diocese of Central New York owns all websites and social media accounts, groups, and platforms representing the Diocese or its ministries/initiatives and multiple administrators or supervisors (including at least one diocesan staff members) will have administrative access to each website, account, platform, or group.

All accounts, groups, platforms, etc. of the Diocese will be overseen by the director of communications and no accounts, groups, platforms purporting to represent the Diocese or its ministries/initiatives may be created except with approval of the director of communications.

The Diocese does not have the responsibility to review or monitor personal pages or groups that are not sponsored by the Diocese.

Photography and videography

The Episcopal Diocese of Central New York will inform participants that they are being photographed or recorded for ministry purposes.

The Diocese will obtain parent/guardian permission for each child or youth before using photos or videos of that child/young person for ministry purposes.

Oversight of digital groups

All digital groups owned by the Diocese or its ministries will be governed by a covenant to include the following:

- definition of appropriate and inappropriate behavior of members, including prohibition of bullying, abusive language, graphic imagery, discussion of sexual acts or illegal activities, etc.
- who may join and/or view the group activity, when participants should leave the group, and if/when the group will be disbanded
- description of the content that can be posted/shared/published in the group
- prohibition of tagging photos and videos of children and youth
- notification that diocesan Safe Church policies will be followed and
- consequences for breaking the covenant.

All digital groups owned by the diocese will have at least two moderators, including one member of the diocesan staff. Moderators are responsible for administering the group, ensuring adherence to the group covenant, and fostering conversations in accordance with the purpose of the group.

Groups may be closed (i.e. content/discussions accessible only to approved members), but not “hidden” or “secret” (i.e. group visible by invitation only).

Inappropriate material posted in digital groups will be deleted, addressed, and reported in accordance with diocesan Safe Church policies and legal requirements.

For groups designed for youth, the following additional guidelines apply:

- Groups designed for youth will have at least two unrelated adult administrators, including one diocesan staff member, and at least two youth administrators who are youth currently participating in diocesan youth programming
- Groups designed for youth will be open to parents of current youth members
- Adult leaders of youth groups and youth who are no longer participating in diocesan youth programming due to departure, ineligibility, aging out, etc. will be removed from groups designed for youth.