



**POLICY**  
**FOR**  
**THE PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE ADULTS**

Policy approved by the Diocesan Board on 6/2020

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 Vulnerable Adults

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 Children and Youth

## I. DEFINITIONS

*NOTE: These definitions reflect our understanding of terms describing gender identity and sexuality, which are evolving as these model policies are being written.*

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

**Adult Protective Services:** A social services program provided by New York State under the Office of Children and Family Service serving vulnerable adults and their families who are in need of assistance. Adult Protective Services receive and investigate reports of suspected abuse, neglect and exploitation. Link to Summary Guide of Mandated Reporters in New York State: <https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/publications/Pub1159.pdf>

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

**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.

**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.

**Leader:** A person who, for the benefit of another, engages in ministry without responsibility for oversight of other adults engaged in that same ministry. Examples include: Eucharistic Visitors and members of pastoral care teams.

**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. State laws vary greatly. Generally, state law mandates that either all adults or adults in certain professions report suspected abuse of elders, vulnerable and/or dependent adults. 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 of Mandated Reporters in New York State: <https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/publications/Pub1159.pdf>

**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 (examples include diocesan departments, commissions, conference & 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.

**Public Record 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.

**Residential Facility:** Any institutional or group home setting where a vulnerable adult resides on a permanent or temporary basis such as a nursing home, rehabilitation center, assisted living facility, treatment center or memory care facility.

**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.

**Safeguarding God’s People Training:** 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. The Episcopal Diocese of Central New York offers the following training opportunities based on the “Safeguarding God’s Children” and “Safeguarding God’s People” curricula from the Church Pension Fund.

**Sexual Misconduct:** Sexual misconduct shall mean (a) sexual abuse, (b) sexual behavior engaged in by the 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 the person in authority with an employee, volunteer, student or counselee of the 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.

**Vulnerable Adult:**

- a. Any adult who is infirm or diminished in capacity due to age, illness or disability
- b. Any adult who is ministered to in their home (by Eucharistic Visitors, Pastoral Care Visitors, Stephen Ministers, or others)
- c. Any adult who is wholly or partially dependent upon one or more other persons for emotional, psychological, or physical care or support; such dependency may be temporary as in the case of an accident, illness, or birth of a child
- d. Any adult who by virtue of a crisis, experiences vulnerability leading to dependency on another or lacks agency in a pastoral relationship as in the wake of death of a family member or job loss

## 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). For some positions, screening consists only of a Public Records Check.

- a. Public Records Checks
  1. 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 programmatic interaction with vulnerable adults
  2. Criminal public records checks shall include all available criminal records and sex offender registries
  3. A Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) records check is needed if transporting vulnerable adults as part of, or an extension of, ministry of the church or for a church-sponsored event
  4. A credit check is required of treasurers and those with check-signing authority
  5. Public records checks must be updated at least every five years
- b. Written application, interview, and reference verification are required before serving in certain roles and ministries as specified in the “Screening and Training Protocols” (Appendix B). Where required, these components are generally conducted in the following order:
  1. 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;
  2. Personal interview;
  3. 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
  4. Maintenance of these records as described below.

Potential leaders or supervisors must be known and active in the congregation for at least 6 months before engaging in ministry with vulnerable adults—unless they pass public records checks and reference checks pursuant to the “Screening and Training Protocols” (Appendix A).

Dioceses, congregations, and other Organizations must keep and maintain all application and screening records secure and confidential in the Diocese, church or Organization’s office. This includes a signature by each applicant verifying receipt of a copy of this policy, including any local procedures or variations.

### **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 Children 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 Children Training 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 Children Training, all Supervisors and those with oversight responsibilities for ministry programs and/or other adults who engage in ministry with Vulnerable Adults shall have Specialized Training that is tailored to their role and ministry function.

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

- a. the prevention, identification, and response to all forms of abuse and neglect, including financial exploitation;
- b. mandated and voluntary reporting of suspected abuse, neglect, and exploitation of vulnerable adults;
- c. vulnerability within the pastoral relationship;
- d. an introduction to gender non-binary;
- e. the needs of aging LGBTQ+ individuals who often struggle to find care or residential facilities adequately equipped to meet their needs; and
- f. the ways that vulnerable adults can engage in self-advocacy.

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 vulnerable adults shall keep records sufficient to evidence compliance with this policy.

### **IV. MONITORING AND SUPERVISION OF PROGRAMS**

All people who minister to vulnerable adults and/or have pastoral relationships with others 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 vulnerable adults 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 with their contact information approved to minister to vulnerable adults and/or engage in pastoral relationships with others. This list shall be kept in the Organization's office or other place where records are kept.

It is best practice for those ministering to vulnerable adults to document their visits, including time, place, and any observations or concerns. Such documentation is reviewed by the Supervisor. Confidentiality among clergy and lay ministers is required and all documentation is kept confidential. This documentation promotes continuity of care and transparency in ministry.

All new activities that include pastoral relationships and/or ministry to vulnerable adults shall have a Responsible Person to monitor and supervise all events to ensure appropriate behavior and healthy boundaries.

a. Presence of Unrelated Adults Suggested

While not required, it is best practice for those ministering to vulnerable adults, or in the homes of others, to do so with another trained adult minister present. Those engaged in such ministries should minister in pairs.

If circumstances result in a minister being alone with a vulnerable adult, that minister shall report this to the Supervisor, clergy, senior warden, or Responsible Person as soon as possible.

b. Creating Safe Space for Pastoral Relationships and/or Ministry with Vulnerable Adults

To create a safe space, it is necessary to anticipate and avoid circumstances that could result in exposure of vulnerable adults to undue influence or exploitation. On-site and off-site settings for ministry with vulnerable adults and pastoral relationships and conversations should do the following:

1. Be in places where casual monitoring by others is convenient; and
2. Convey safety and comfort.

c. 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, socio-economic class, or age. To the extent possible, all spaces and settings for programs, activities, and ministry shall be accessible.

The Episcopal Church seeks to support all persons by providing reasonable alternative arrangements regardless of state law to address safety and comfort.

Transgender, genderqueer, or gender non-binary adults 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 adult's ability to keep their transgender status confidential, if they so desire.

Transgender, genderqueer, or gender non-binary adults 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 for the use of a single facility).

d. Violence

1. No one is to strike, hit, or otherwise physically threaten or harm anyone at any time.
2. No one is to control or attempt to control another by bullying, intimidation, threats, verbal/emotional abuse, or isolation from others. Bullying of any kind by anyone is prohibited.
3. Report suspected violations immediately. See “Suspected Violations of this Policy.”

e. Behavioral Standards for Ministry with Vulnerable Adults

All who work with vulnerable adults are expected to model the patterns of healthy relationships. To this end, lay and ordained ministers working with vulnerable adults shall do the following:

1. Take care not to unduly influence a person to whom they minister;
2. Accept only token gifts from those to whom they minister. Ministers given gifts shall report those gifts in writing to their Supervisor, clergy, senior warden, or Responsible Person;
3. Decline to accept loans of any kind from those to whom they minister;
4. Decline to agree to be named as a beneficiary or to act as an administrator or executor in a will of anyone to whom they minister; and
5. Inform Supervisor, clergy, senior warden, or Responsible Person of anything that causes concern for the safety or wellbeing of those to whom they minister.

All who minister to vulnerable adults are encouraged to do the following:

1. Have ongoing spiritual practices, which might include daily prayer, regular participation in corporate worship, and Bible study;
2. Spend time with and listen to vulnerable adults, and advocate for their ministry within the Body of Christ;
3. offer appropriate physical expressions of affection, as long as they are welcomed by the recipient, which may include brief hugs, pats on the shoulder or back, kisses on the cheek, handshakes, holding hands during prayer; and
4. Maintain healthy boundaries when sharing personal information.

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

1. Provide vulnerable adults with non-sacramental alcohol, marijuana, illegal drugs, cigarettes, e-cigarettes, vapes, or pornography;
2. Arrive under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or misuse of legal drugs when they are responsible for or ministering to a vulnerable adult;
3. Consume non-sacramental alcohol or illegal drugs or misuse legal drugs when they are responsible for or ministering to a vulnerable adult;
4. Engage in illegal behavior or permit others to engage in illegal behavior; or
5. Engage in any sexual, romantic, illicit or secretive relationship or conduct with any vulnerable adult.

f. Visits to Private Residences



The safety of all persons and healthy boundaries are essential when visiting a vulnerable adult in a private home. Avoid situations that might compromise privacy; common examples of this include the following:

1. Visiting behind closed bedroom doors;
2. Sitting on the bed of the person being visited; or
3. Visiting a person while they are not fully clothed.

The best practice is to visit in teams of 2 or more. If it is not possible for another adult minister to be present, a member of the vulnerable adult's household should be present. If neither is possible, documentation of the time, duration of visit, general matters discussed, and any pastoral concerns shall be provided to the Supervisor as soon as possible after the visit.

#### g. Visits to Residential Facilities

The safety of all persons and healthy boundaries are also essential when visiting a vulnerable adult in a Residential Facility. Best practices include the following:

1. Facility staff should be informed of the visitor's presence;
2. If a visit takes place out of sight of staff, they should be notified in advance and informed when such meeting is concluded;
3. The door to a resident's private room must remain open during visits;
4. visitors should be mindful that LGBTQ+ residents may not be safe to express their sexual identity or orientation, as staff members may not yet have been trained; and
5. In the event of uncertainty about application of this policy, the visitor is encouraged to contact their Supervisor with the relevant queries.

#### h. Off-site Visits, Events, and Programs

Off-site programs, trips and events are a welcome and often necessary means for spiritual, social, and emotional well-being of vulnerable adults. 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 this policy, the Responsible Person should contact their Supervisor with the relevant queries. Because of the 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

Due to the unique risks of off-site visits, events and programs that cannot always be anticipated, it is important to obtain permissions and manage documentation as described below.

- i. All participants shall complete and sign a registration, waiver and release before participating in any program. Confidentiality must be preserved with respect to medical information.

- ii. There must be a signature on all release and waiver forms. If a person is unable to consent due to impairment or lack of agency then the signature of that person's guardian, spouse or other trusted family member is required. Applicable state law determines whether digital signatures are acceptable.
- iii. Completed release and waiver forms shall be maintained in a secure location on-site. Check with the Bishop's office regarding whether such forms may be saved electronically and how long they must be retained.
- iv. Permission slips shall be provided for each event and shall be signed by the vulnerable adult, guardian, spouse, or other trusted family member.
- v. Prior permission for an individual to be photographed or recorded on film, videotape, audiotape, or other electronic media is required.

## 2. First Aid and Medications

Current certification in First Aid, CPR, and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is strongly encouraged for those who work with vulnerable adults.

If a vulnerable adult requires assistance with medications of any type, then 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.

- i. All medications (prescription and over the counter) belonging to vulnerable adults requiring assistance with medications shall be given to the Responsible Person, unless otherwise agreed upon.
- ii. Only the Responsible Person, or their adult designee, shall administer medications.

### i. 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 proof of insurance and a current driver's license
- 2. A list of those approved to provide transportation to vulnerable adults shall be maintained in the office of the organization;
- 3. Anyone being transported must consent to such transportation beforehand. If a person is unable to consent due to impairment or lack of agency then prior approval by that person's guardian, spouse, or other trusted family member is required; and
- 4. All drivers and riders must comply with state laws including seat belt and cell phone usage.

### j. Insurance for Overseas Pilgrimages and Mission Trips

1. Short-term trip or supplemental insurance, available through most church and Organization's policies as an added rider, must be secured at-least one month prior to travel.
2. 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.
3. Because not all individuals have access to affordable and adequate health insurance, it is recommended that health insurance be added to trip insurance.

k. International Considerations

1. Check in with the U.S. Department of State on travel requirements, including visas.
2. Make certain that every traveler's passport is valid for at least six months beyond your return date.
3. Determine whether or not vaccinations are required and/or recommended for entry into specific countries.
4. Arrange to have at least 2 cell phones with the group that will have active coverage in your destination(s). Make a backup plan for communication with your responsible person at home.

l. Conference and Retreat Centers

All conference and retreat centers of the Diocese, congregations and Organizations shall follow the guidelines for off-site Programming established in this policy.

## V. RESPONDING TO CONCERNS

a. Suspected Abuse, Neglect, or Exploitation of a Vulnerable Adult

Anyone who has reason to suspect that abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a vulnerable adult has taken place, is strongly encouraged, and all mandated reporters are required, to contact the state's Adult Protective Services. In addition, anyone who has reason to suspect that abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a vulnerable adult has taken place within a facility or program of the Diocese, congregation, or other Organization, should immediately inform one of more or the following:

1. The bishop's office in the case of the Diocese;
2. Member of the clergy in charge or the senior warden in the case of a congregation;
3. The director, head, or other governing officer in the case of other Organizations; and/or
4. The Intake Officer (<https://cnyepiscopal.org/resources/formation/safechurch/#intake>) 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

The Diocese can provide additional information and assistance to anyone concerned about circumstances that may violate this policy: <https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/>. Such resources with contact information shall include the following:

1. Responsible Person(s) for programs and ministries with vulnerable adults;
2. Clergy in charge of a congregation;
3. Wardens;
4. Bishop;
5. Intake Officer(s); and
6. Adult Protective Services.

## **VI. POLICY ADOPTION, IMPLEMENTATION, AND AUDIT**

- a. The Diocese is required to conduct a *Safe Church Self-Audit* every three years to confirm compliance with diocesan safe church policies.

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

1. Existence of diocesan policy that is consistent with and/or exceeds the requirements of this model policy;

2. Provision of accessible and appropriate training for all those who work with vulnerable adults in accordance with “Screening and Training Protocols” (Appendix A). Such training shall include, at a minimum, topics identified in this model policy;
3. Verification that each congregation and/or Organization within the diocese has adopted a policy that is consistent with and/or exceeds the diocesan policy; and
4. Verification that each congregation and/or Organization has a process to ensure members access training and conduct public record checks.

b. Congregation and Organization Adoption, Implementation, and Audit

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

Congregations and Organizations shall follow this policy for protection of vulnerable adults and may adopt site-specific variations from diocesan policies, where permitted by vestries or governing bodies, 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 Vulnerable Adults* shall be made available to all adults, guardians, and all paid and unpaid persons who minister to vulnerable adults. 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 to maintain such audit in parish files.

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

1. Public records checks, application forms, and records of screening and reference verification of paid and unpaid persons engaged in ministry with vulnerable adults;
2. Records of compliance with “Screening and Training Protocols” (Appendix A);
3. Procedures for responding to concerns and incidents; and
4. 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 <sup>3</sup>
<b>Staff &amp; Contracted Employees (not covered below)</b>		X	X
	Church Employees	X	X
	Contractors (Form 1099)	Depends <sup>4</sup>	X
	Church Employees Unpaid	X	X
	Clergy	X	X
	Diocesan Employees	X	X
	Diocesan Staff - unpaid	x	X
<b>Program Supervisors</b>			
	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
<b>Program Participants (non-supervisory)</b>			
	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
<b>Off-site<sup>1</sup></b>	Camp Counselor	X	X
	Confirmation Mentors		X
	Lay Chaplains	X	X
	Pastoral Care Teams		X
<b>Overnight<sup>2</sup></b>	Youth Group Leaders	X	X
	Drivers		X
	Event Leader (Adult or Teen)		X
<b>Key Access</b>			
	Altar Guild	Recommended	X
	Treasurer	Criminal & Credit	X
	Vestry		X
	Wardens	Criminal & Credit	X
	Building Hosts	Recommended	
<b>Home Visitors</b>			
	Eucharistic Visitors	X	X
	Home Visitors	X	X
	Stephen Ministers	X	X
	Church Staff -unpaid	X	X

## **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](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.