

Risk Reduction/Safe Sanctuaries Policy
Henning Memorial United Methodist Church

We the congregation of Henning Memorial United Methodist Church recognize that there is no human being that falls outside the Psalmist's claim that we are "fearfully and wonderfully made" by God; "knit together in [our] mother's womb" by the Creator of the universe. Further, we cannot deny that humankind has been deemed "very good" by this very same Creator. This inherent value which we possess, coupled with the Scriptures' admonition to avoid "anything that makes your brother or sister stumble," particularly the "little ones," calls us to also recognize the grievous harm present in all instances of abuse. Such incidents, whether sexual, physical, emotional or harassing in nature, are devastating to all who are involved. God calls us to make Henning Memorial United Methodist Church a safe place, doing all we can to protect children, teens and other vulnerable persons from the devastating effects of abuse. Thus, in covenant with one another, we adopt this policy for the prevention of abuse in our church.

Purpose

Our congregation's purpose for establishing this Risk Reduction/Safe Sanctuaries Policy and accompanying procedures is to demonstrate our absolute and unwavering commitment to the physical safety and spiritual growth of all who come under our care.

Statement of Covenant

Therefore, as a Christian community of faith and a United Methodist congregation, we pledge to conduct the ministry of the gospel in ways that assure the safety and spiritual growth of all of who come under our care. We will follow reasonable safety measures in the selection and recruitment of both staff persons and volunteers; we will implement prudent operational procedures in all programs, ministries and events; we will provide broad education regarding our policies, as well as recognizing the signs of abuse; we will have a clearly defined procedure for reporting a suspected incident of abuse that conforms to the requirements of state law; and we will respond immediately and compassionately to any reported or suspected abuse, again following the requirements of state law and the policies of The Louisiana Conference of the United Methodist Church. The procedures for fulfilling this covenant can be found in the accompanying document called Risk Reduction/Safe Sanctuaries Policy.

Conclusion

In all of our ministries, this congregation is committed to demonstrating the love of Jesus Christ so that every child of God will be "...surrounded by steadfast love, ...established in the faith, and confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal" (Baptismal Covenant II," *United Methodist Hymnal*, p. 44).

I. All persons who volunteer with children/teens through the ministries/activities of Henning Memorial United Methodist Church shall fall into one of the following categories. All paid staff persons shall be at the Level 1 Category. The privacy of personnel and volunteers will be maintained regarding interviews and background checks.

A. **Level 1 personnel** –Level 1 personnel at Henning Memorial United Methodist Church Include but are not limited to: All paid staff persons and volunteers who accompany children or youth away from church premises.

1. Persons at this level are required to:

- Attend, at least annually, risk reduction policy training
- Undergo a criminal background and reference check reviewed by SPR/PPRC.
- If a volunteer, must have been actively involved in the congregation or ministry for a minimum of six months.
Complete a consent form for background check.

B. **Level 2 personnel** –Every volunteer who regularly supervises, or works around, children or youth at Henning Memorial United Methodist Church must be at least at level 2. This includes but is not limited to: Children & youth teachers or mentors.

1. Persons at this level are required to:

1. Attend, at least annually, risk reduction policy training
2. Undergo a non-criminal background check reviewed by a Level 1 person.
3. Be an active participant in the life of the congregation or ministry for at least six months prior to volunteering.
4. Complete a “Volunteer Application” form, which will include the following, verified by a level one person:
 - a. Identification of work area/service to be performed;
 - b. Experience and skills specifically related to the position;
 - c. Personal references;
 - d. Place of (former) employment, including references,
 - e. Address & contact information etc.
 - f. A statement of disclosure of any criminal history or accusations of sexual, physical or emotional abuse, misconduct or harassment.
 - g. A statement agreeing to inform ministry of any arrest for any crime or any allegation of sexual misconduct or abuse of any nature that occurs after the completion of the above referenced statement.
 - h. A statement of consent to verify all information *or* written consent to perform a criminal back ground check.

2. A personal documented interview with the applicant/volunteer signed by a level

- 1 person.
3. a signed copy of the ministry's risk reduction policy
4. Verification of the following:
 - a. employment history for the past five (5) years;
 - b. volunteer work for the past five (5) years;
 - c. church membership history
 - d. former addresses for the past 10 years;

C. **Level 3 personnel** – are volunteers that are used only in emergency or occasional situations. (For Ex: Parents or members helping with events, etc.) Level 3 personnel have been made aware of the risk reduction policy; agree in writing to abide by the policy and to “work” only when level 1 or 2 personnel are present and supervising. Additionally level 3 personnel must be known to, and recommended by, a level 1 or 2 person.

II. All Ministries/activities sponsored by Henning Memorial United Methodist Church shall provide for adequate responsible adult supervision of teens and children.

A. For our purposes here, *an adult must be at least 21 years of age*

B. All classes, studies, workshops, fellowship/recreation opportunities, one on one counseling sessions, private meetings or mentoring, etc with youth or children shall be conducted in a public space or in a space easily observable by others at all times. Thus:

1. a minimum of two unrelated adults must be present as long as a child or teen is in a church facility or on a church sponsored activity
2. The presence of both male and female adult leadership (unrelated) for coed overnight activities is required.

C. Transportation guidelines

1. Medical information/release forms & Permission slips are required for any activity where children and youth are away from Henning Memorial United Methodist Church's main facilities. Additionally, Medical information/release forms & Permission slips are also required for sporting events while on campus.

2. Only registered level 1, 2 or 3 persons are allowed to transport children & youth while on a Henning Memorial United Methodist Church sponsored activity and meet all requirements set forth by the church's insurance carrier, but shall minimally include:

- a. possession of a current, valid driver's license.
- b. proof of insurance at the State minimum limits.
- c. not be otherwise disqualified from driving (i.e., under medication, extremely tired, under the influence of mind altering substances, etc.)

3. Every child/teen being transported on a Henning Memorial United Methodist Church sponsored activity must be securely fastened in a seatbelt, whether a church or personal vehicle is being used. At no time shall the number of passengers exceed the number of useable seatbelts.

4. Safe driving is expected. Including:

- a. Obeying traffic laws
- b. Refraining from horseplay in vehicles
- c. A mechanically sound and inspected vehicle

5. One adult may transport youth or children in a vehicle if:

- a. the presence of more than two youth or children in the vehicle, and
- b. the vehicle is traveling via caravan and/or
- c. having a 3rd party observe and document accurate departure and arrival times.

6. All drivers of vehicles for church or other sponsored events shall be at least twenty-one years of age.

7. Teens driving their own vehicles to a church sponsored event shall not have minor passengers without written permission of both the driver and passenger's parent/guardian.

D. Check in/check-out for all kindergarten aged children and younger is required by authorized parent or designee.

1. Young children should be escorted to events or classrooms by a parent or authorized designee.
2. Any special instructions or restrictions concerning pick-up or release of young children shall be presented in writing by the parent or guardian.

E. Permission forms shall be obtained from parents/legal guardians for all overnight events involving children or youth, at which the parent/guardian is not present.

1. Forms shall contain parental consent for their child's attendance, which will include medical information/release, emergency contact information and a liability release.

F. Parents shall be educated on child safety issues at least annually. Education information will be distributed in written form and/or during specially called classes. The information provided shall include but not be limited to the following:

1. Sharing the ministry's risk reduction policies
2. When and where children may be unattended (for example: at what age and in

which hallways, are they allowed to make their own way to a classroom, activity area, etc.)

3. Educating parents on recognizing, reporting and preventing child abuse

G. A ratio of no less than of 1 adult to every 10 children/youth will be maintained at all Henning Memorial United Methodist Church activities involving children or teens. However, the 2 unrelated adult rule always applies, even when less than 10 children/youth are present.

1. The above ratio is adequate in most cases, however the following should be considered if staffing prohibits/allows or if found to be necessary.

a. 1/3 is more realistic for infants and toddlers

b. 1/8 may be more appropriate for children through the age of 12 or 13.

c. the physical structure of the facilities (whether it lends itself to roaming adult monitors instead of additional staffing).

d. disabilities should also be taken into consideration

H. It is the policy of Henning Memorial United Methodist Church that church staff members and/or trained volunteer observers will make unannounced visits to classes, nurseries, events and gatherings held both on and off campus, for the purpose of monitoring compliance with our policies. SPR/PPRC will be responsible for organizing, implementing and keeping a record of such visits.

I. In addition to the above guidelines, we require at least a five-year age difference between the primary on-site supervisor and the age of those being supervised at any activity involving children or teens. The five-year difference in ages shall apply between the on-site adult in charge and the age of the oldest person supervised. Persons being closer in age to those supervised may be acceptable in assisting the primary on-site supervisor(s). The ratio of those “closer in age than 5 years” to those “meeting the 5-year rule” shall never exceed 3 to 1. Those not meeting the 5-year rule must still comply with all other level 1 or 2 requirements.

III. Ministries involving adults – While there is ample concern and precedent to be concerned about the welfare of children and youth, we also need to be concerned about the adults involved in our ministries, congregations and care. Paid staff, clergy and lay, full and part time, should take precautions to ensure that they do not create situations which place themselves or constituents at risk. The following shall apply:

A. Sexual abuse within the ministerial relationship occurs when a person within a ministerial role of leadership (pastor, educator, counselor, youth leader or other position of leadership) engages in sexual contact or sexualized behavior with a congregant, client, employee, student, staff member, co-worker or volunteer. Sexual abuse within the ministerial relationship involves a betrayal of sacred trust, a violation of the ministerial role and exploitation of those who are vulnerable. Similarly, sexual and gender harassment must be understood as an exploitation of a power relationship rather than as an exclusively sexual or gender issue. **Such exploitation/abuse is strictly prohibited.**

B. One-on-one meetings between adults on behalf of the church/ministry are to be held in a public place where there are others present and observing. This may require open door policies or strategically placed windows that allow both confidentiality and

observation.

C. A written harassment policy shall be provided in writing to all staff and paid persons by SPR/PPRC which shall include but not be limited to the following statements that include polices to protect the staff and the congregation :

1. Unlawful harassment is a form of discrimination that violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other federal authority.
2. Unwelcome verbal or physical conduct based on race, color, religion, sex (whether or not of a sexual nature and including same-gender harassment and gender identity harassment), national origin, age (40 and over), disability (mental or physical), sexual orientation, or retaliation (sometimes collectively referred to as “legally protected characteristics”) constitutes harassment when:
 - a. The conduct is sufficiently severe or pervasive to create a hostile work environment; or
 - b. A supervisor’s harassing conduct results in a tangible change in an employee’s employment status or benefits (for example, demotion, termination, failure to promote, etc.).
3. Hostile work environment harassment occurs when unwelcome comments or conduct based on sex, race or other legally protected characteristics unreasonably interferes with an employee’s work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. Anyone in the workplace might commit this type of harassment – a management official, co-worker, or non-employee, such as a contractor, vendor or guest. The victim can be anyone affected by the conduct, not just the individual at whom the offensive conduct is directed.
4. Examples of actions that may create a sexually hostile environment include:
 - a. Leering, i.e., staring in a sexually suggestive manner
 - b. Making offensive remarks about looks, clothing, body parts
 - c. Touching in a way that may make an employee feel uncomfortable, such as patting, pinching or intentional brushing against another’s body
 - d. Telling sexual or lewd jokes, hanging sexual posters, making sexual gestures, etc
 - e. Sending, forwarding or soliciting sexually suggestive letters, notes, emails, or images
5. Other actions which may result in hostile environment harassment, but are non-sexual in nature, include:
 - a. Use of racially derogatory words, phrases, epithets
 - b. Demonstrations of a racial or ethnic nature such as a use of gestures, pictures or drawings which would offend a particular racial or ethnic group
 - c. Comments about an individual’s skin color or other racial/ethnic characteristics
 - d. Making disparaging remarks about an individual’s gender that are not

sexual in nature

e. Negative comments about an employee's religious beliefs (or lack of religious beliefs)

f. Expressing negative stereotypes regarding an employee's birthplace or ancestry

g. Negative comments regarding an employee's age when referring to employees 40 and over

h. Derogatory or intimidating references to an employee's mental or physical impairment

6. A hostile workplace environment does not include simple teasing, offhand comments, or isolated incidents that are not extremely serious. Rather, the conduct must be so objectively offensive as to alter the conditions of the individual's employment. The conditions of employment are altered only if the harassment culminates in a tangible employment action or is sufficiently severe or pervasive to create a hostile work environment. The rule of thumb used by the courts is the rational person test. Basically, would a rational person view the act as offensive?

D. Sexual/Gender Harassment is strictly prohibited and said prohibition shall be included in the previously mention policy which shall include but be limited to the following statements:

1. Sexual harassment is any unwanted sexual advance or demand, either verbal or physical that is reasonably perceived by the recipient as demeaning, intimidating, or coercive. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. the creation of a hostile or abusive working environment resulting from discrimination on the basis of gender (Book of Discipline, par. 1611).
 - b. intimidating or coercive behavior that threatens or results in a tangible employment action.
2. Gender harassment is behavior that is harassing in nature against a woman because she is a woman or against a man because he is a man.
3. All harassment or possible harassment should be immediately reported to the Pastor or any church leader who will immediately bring it to the attention of SPR/PPRC and the Board of Trustees.

E. Harassment of any nature will not be tolerated. Although the language above intimates a working relationship, the prohibitions also apply to any group or gathering held under the purview of a congregation or ministry.

F. Additional Guidelines – while issues are different for adults than for children and youth, there are concerns regarding adults that need to be considered.

1. All classes, studies, workshops, fellowship/recreation opportunities, one on one counseling sessions, private meetings or mentoring, etc with youth or children shall be conducted in a public space or in a space easily observable by others at

all times.

2. Minimum standards for who is allowed to transport adults in the name of the church shall also be guided in part, by the insurance company's requirements for coverage. Safe driving is expected.
4. One adult transporting another adult in a vehicle is allowed when:
 - a. Traveling via caravan or
 - b. Having a 3rd party observe and document accurate departure and arrival times.
 - c. Both adults voluntarily acknowledge the situation and agree to conduct themselves accordingly.

IV. Other Provisions.

- A. Reporting abuse is required.
 1. Any suspicious or observed sexual misconduct or other abuse or violation of these policies should be reported immediately to SPR/PPRC or uninvolved Senior Pastor.
 2. The church will follow the Louisiana Children's Code stating Louisiana's laws regarding the reporting of suspected abuse. (Regardless of whether or not suspected abuse occurred as a result of church/ministry.)
- B. Any non-church related entity utilizing any facilities controlled by a ministry covered under these policies shall abide by the risk reduction policies of both entities. Thus, the Risk Reduction/Safe Sanctuaries Policy shall be given in writing to any entity utilizing church/ministry facilities prior to the scheduled event or normal operations. A signed document acknowledging the receipt of the policy will be kept on file.
- C. Nothing in this policy is meant to conflict any requirements imposed by the State especially with regards to the Day Care Center.
- D. Photography, computer/internet use, telephone, email, and IM ethics etc. shall be monitored with regards to privacy issues.
- E. Sleeping arrangements at overnight events shall be discussed on a per event basis with church leadership concerned and the resulting rules for that event shall be put in writing by those involved and kept on file.
- F. Behavior/dress, especially for youth should be monitored to avoid problems.
- G. The Church shall schedule education of staff, congregation and volunteers regarding the Risk Reduction/Safe Sanctuaries Policy at regular intervals but not less than annually.
- H. This policy in its entirety shall be reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees to consider any changes for recommendation to the Church Council.

Appendix

Sample Policy Statement on Sexual Harassment

The Henning Memorial United Methodist Church affirms The 2004 Book of Resolutions, Sexual Abuse Within the Ministerial Relationship and Sexual Harassment Within the Church, which states: “Those in positions of authority in the church, both clergy and lay, have been given much responsibility, vested with a sacred trust to maintain an environment that is safe for people to live and grow in God's love. Misconduct of a sexual nature inhibits the full and joyful participation of all in the community of God. Sexual misconduct in church and ministry settings impedes the mission of Jesus Christ. Ministerial leaders have the responsibility not only to avoid actions and words which hurt others, but also to protect the vulnerable against actions or words which cause harm.” In accordance with The 2004 Book of Discipline, ¶161, all human beings, both male and female, are created in the image of God, and thus have been made equal in Christ. As the promise of Galatians 3:26-29, states all are one in Christ, we support equity among all persons without regard to ethnicity, situation, or gender.

Sexual abuse within the ministerial relationship occurs when a person within a ministerial role of leadership (pastor, educator, counselor, youth leader, or other position of leadership) engages in sexual contact or sexualized behavior with a congregant, client, employee, student, staff member, co-worker, or volunteer.

Sexual harassment is “any unwanted sexual comment, advance or demand, either verbal or physical that is reasonably perceived by the recipient as demeaning, intimidating, or coercive. Sexual harassment must be understood as an exploitation of a power relationship rather than as an exclusively sexual issue. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the creation of a hostile or abusive working environment resulting from discrimination on the basis of gender.” (Book of Discipline ¶161).

Gender harassment is behavior that is harassing in nature against a woman because she is a woman and against a man because he is a man.

Sexual abuse within the ministerial relationship involves a betrayal of sacred trust, a violation of the ministerial role, and exploitation of those who are vulnerable. Similarly, gender or sexual harassment are usually understood as exploitations of power relationships rather than as exclusively sexual or gender issues.

Sexual and gender harassment, sexual abuse and misconduct of a sexual nature within the life of the church interfere with its moral mission. Henning Memorial United Methodist Church prohibits and will not tolerate these behaviors, which are sinful, demeaning, abusive, and wrong. The Henning Memorial United Methodist Church commits itself to fair and expedient investigation of any complaint of sexual and gender harassment, sexual abuse or misconduct of a sexual nature within the church and to take action deemed appropriate and in compliance with the Book of Discipline. Further, the Henning Memorial United Methodist Church bears affirmative responsibility to create an environment of hospitality for all persons, male or female, which is free of these sins and encourages respect, equality, and kinship in Christ.

The Henning Memorial United Methodist Church will not retaliate against any person who brings forward a complaint. All staff leaders and members are expected to immediately report any knowledge of harassment, abuse, or misconduct to any one of these persons: Pastor, Chair SPR/PPR, District Superintendent or Bishop. Prompt and appropriate investigation and corrective action will be taken, including discipline. Persons who make false accusations will be disciplined.

While the Henning Memorial United Methodist Church cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality, it will make every reasonable effort to maintain confidentiality by disclosing information about the complaint only on a "need to know" basis and as necessary to promote God's call for justice, reconciliation, and healing.

Anyone who has any questions or concerns about this policy or the issues addressed is encouraged to air those questions or concerns to the SPRC or the Pastor

Who are mandated reporters for suspected or observed incidents of child abuse?

The following information comes from the La Department of Social Services. Three things should be noted:

1. The reporting required here is to the Office of Community Services (OCS) or an appropriate law enforcement agency. A mandated reporter simply notifying her/his supervisor is not adequate without certainty that the supervisor has reported to law enforcement.
2. Law requires these persons to report anytime they are performing their associated duties. For example, if a public school teacher is not employed by the church but volunteers as a Sunday School teacher, he/she is still a mandated reporter because of the duty they are performing.
3. Though Sunday School teachers are not specifically named, the "Teaching or child care provider" category could be widely interpreted to include our Sunday School Teachers, Bible study leaders, etc.

The best practice is always to report suspect incidents of abuse to OCS. The protection of our children should be a primary concern for us whether or not we are "mandated" to report. Policies should contain statements that call for training our volunteers/staff to recognize and report child abuse.

According to the State of Louisiana, mandated reporters are any of the following individuals performing their occupational duties:

- "Health practitioner" is any individual who provides health care services, including a physician, surgeon, physical therapist, dentist, resident, intern, hospital staff member, podiatrist, chiropractor, licensed nurse, nursing aide, dental hygienist, any emergency medical technician, a paramedic, optometrist, medical examiner, or coroner, who diagnoses, examines, or treats a child or his family.
- "Mental health/social service practitioner" is any individual who provides mental health care or social service diagnosis, assessment, counseling, or treatment, including a psychiatrist, psychologist, marriage or family counselor, social worker, member of the clergy, aide, or other individual who provides counseling services to a child or his family.
- "Member of the clergy" is any priest, rabbi, duly ordained clerical deacon or minister,

Christian Science practitioner, or other similarly situated functionary of a religious organization, unless the information of abuse/neglect is learned in a confidential communication.

- “Teaching or child care provider” is any person who provides training and supervision of a child, including any public or private teacher, teacher’s aide, instructional aide, school principal, school staff member, social worker, probation officer, foster home parent, group home or other child care institutional staff member, personnel of residential home facilities, a licensed or unlicensed day care provider, or any individual who provides such services to a child.
- Police officers or law enforcement officials.

VOLUNTEER COVENANT STATEMENT

Since the congregation of Henning Memorial United Methodist Church is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, youth, and volunteers who participate in ministries and activities sponsored by the church, we ask all volunteers to willingly, and without reservation, enter into the following covenant. This covenant is based upon our congregation's commitment to preserving this church as a holy place of safety and protection for all who would enter as expressed in our SSPol.

This is the way, in part, in which we live out our commitment to:

- 1 "reasonable safety measures in the selection and recruitment of both staff persons and volunteers"
- 2 "implement prudent operational procedures in all programs, ministries and events"
- 3 "provide broad education regarding our policies"
- 4 having "a clearly defined procedure for reporting a suspected incident of abuse."

1. No adult who has been convicted of child abuse (either sexual abuse, physical abuse, or emotional abuse) should volunteer to work with children or youth in any church-sponsored activity.
2. Adult survivors of child abuse need the love and support of our congregation. Any adult survivor who desires to volunteer in some capacity to work with children or youth is encouraged to discuss his/her willingness with our church minister before accepting an assignment.
3. All adult volunteers involved with children or youth of our church must have been members of the congregation for at least six months before beginning a volunteer assignment, except under special circumstances as approved by both. SPRC and the Pastor
4. Adult volunteers with children and youth shall observe the "Two-Un-related Adult Rule" at all times so that no adult is ever alone with children or youth. Adult volunteers with children and youth SHALL ATTEND REGULAR TRAINING AND EDUCATIONAL EVENTS provided by the church to keep volunteers informed of church policies and state laws regarding child abuse.
5. Adult volunteers shall immediately intervene and report to their designated supervisor any behavior that seems abusive or inappropriate.

Please answer each of the following questions:

- Yes No 1. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to observe and abide by all church policies regarding working in ministries with children and youth?
- Yes No 2. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to observe the "Two-Adult Rule" at all times?
- Yes No 3. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to abide by the six-month rule before beginning a volunteer assignment?
- Yes No 4. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to participate in training and education events provided by the church related to your volunteer assignment?
- Yes No 5. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to promptly report abusive or inappropriate behavior to your designated supervisor?
- Yes No 6. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to privately discuss with the minister of this congregation any past issues of child abuse that might affect your ability to serve?
- Yes No 7. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to inform the minister of this congregation if you have ever been convicted of child abuse?

I have read this **Volunteer Covenant**, and I agree to observe and abide by the policies set forth above.

Signature of Applicant

Date

Print full name

Safe Sanctuaries Compliance Form

This form shall be completed annually and turned into your District Superintendent, along with a copy of your Safe Sanctuary policy, at your regularly scheduled Church Audit. A copy should also be maintained in your records.

Church _____ District _____

Pastor In Charge _____ Date of this report _____

Date original Safe Sanctuary Policy adopted and by whom (ie, Charge Conference, Board etc):

Most recent date Safe Sanctuary Policy was reviewed/revised & by whom (ie, Charge Conference, Board etc)

Was a copy of your Safe Sanctuary policy provided to those in attendance at your Charge Conference this year? Yes No (circle one)

Please list the date(s) your staff/members were trained on your Safe Sanctuary Policy this year and the names of all those who attended the training(s) (Mark with an * the leader(s) of these trainings. Attach additional pages if necessary and check here [])

Please list all staff/volunteers upon whom a background/reference check was done this year; (Include names and dates only, no results. Attach additional pages if necessary & check here [])

Please list all staff/volunteers upon whom a background/reference check has not been done in the last 2 years; (Attach additional pages if necessary & check here [])

Are plans in place to run background/reference checks on the above mentioned persons? Yes No
If so, by when? _____ If not, why?

Were there any incidents/complaints of abuse/suspected abuse in your church in the last year? Yes No

If so, have they been reported to your District Superintendent? Yes No N/A

Was the Conference Response Team mobilized? Yes No N/A

From La Conference rules:

II. * PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO AN ALLEGATION OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT INVOLVING CLERGY

- A. Assumptions underlying procedures
- a. Allegations will be taken as worthy of full investigation.
 - b. Presumption of innocence shall be maintained until completion of the process. After that, the conclusion reached in the process will apply.
 - c. The protection of those involved, including the alleged victim or victims, the accused and the accused's family, and their congregation or institution shall be sought until all facts have been carefully considered and appropriate actions determined.
- B. Investigation when sexual misconduct is alleged.
- d. Anytime the alleged victim is a child, it is required by law to inform the appropriate authorities immediately.
 - e. The allegation shall be brought to a District Superintendent or the Bishop by the alleged victim or by someone who had knowledge and is willing to pursue a resolution.
 - f. Both the alleged victim and the accused may bring to any meeting or hearing a person to accompany them and shall have the right to advocacy. (§454.1c)
 - g. A District Superintendent shall promptly share the grievance with the Bishop.
 - h. The Bishop or designated representative shall:
 - i. Explain to the alleged victim in the presence of another person chosen by the Bishop the process and the procedures to be followed in response to the grievance. One of these persons shall be the same sex as the alleged victim.
 - ii. Request and assist the alleged victim to provide a written grievance stating the allegations and the related facts.
 - iii. Request permission from the alleged victim to use a written grievance in discussion with accused.
 - iv. Meet with accused clergy (§454.1a) and share the allegations made:
 - 1) Share with him/her the formal written grievance where permission has been given to use it.
 - 2) Explain the process to be followed (§454) and its purpose, emphasizing the presumption of innocence and the right to fair process. (§2622)
 - 3) Request an oral or written response from the accused after informing the accused that he/she may respond to the allegations at a later date, if desired, after consultation with an advisor.
 - 4) Make available a summary of the accused's response to the alleged victim for comment.
 - 5) Seek to substantiate the allegation and ascertain sufficient reason for pursuing or not pursuing the allegations further.
- C. Determination of Sufficient Cause – When the Bishop and supervising District Superintendent determine there is a sufficient cause for a complaint of sexual misconduct, the Bishop or the designated representative shall ask the alleged victim(s) if they wish to participate in or will allow their written grievance to be shared in the Joint Review Process (§454.1c). One of three courses of action shall then be taken:

- a. If a complaint is to be filed with the cooperation of the alleged victim(s), a written signed complaint shall be filed by the District Superintendent or Bishop, with the Chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry (§454.1b);
- b. If there is substantial evidence, but no written grievance from an alleged victim to be used, the Superintendent or Bishop may file a complaint with the Chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry (§454.1b);
- c. If the alleged victim, District Superintendent and Bishop choose not to pursue the grievance or complaint procedure, a note to that effect and any written grievance shall be placed in the clergy person's permanent record by the Bishop in the Bishop's office that potentially serious offenses have been alleged, but were neither conclusively substantiated nor disproved. Any written statement by the accused may also be placed in the file. Any clergy has access to his/her file.

D. After a complaint is formally filed – When a complaint is formally forwarded to the Chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry (§454.1), the following steps will occur expeditiously. The Chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry calls the Joint Review Committee into session and refers the complaint thereto:

- a. In order to protect the right of the accused and to protect the alleged victim(s) and congregation from possible harm, the accused may be placed on Leave of Absence (§448.1).
- b. The clergy person is encouraged to use fair process accorded by the Joint Review Committee. However, throughout the process, the clergy person may withdraw from membership in the Annual Conference under (§453.4 & §2628.2). If withdrawal takes place before formal charges are filed, the credential will be inscribed by the Bishop “withdrawn under complaint of sexual misconduct” and deposited with the Secretary of the Annual Conference. After formal charges have been filed, the credentials will be inscribed “withdrawn under charges of sexual misconduct”. This withdrawal is reported to the Board of Ordained Ministry for confirmation by the clergy Session of the Annual Conference at its next session.

E. The Judicial Process of the United Methodist Church

- a. Joint Review Process – The Joint Review Committee is charged with the responsibility of seeking a resolution of complaint brought against clergy. Its duties and procedures are outlined in (§454.1c). The Joint Review Committee is not a trial procedure, but a hearing. Those against whom charges are brought and the aggrieved are urged to use the avenue of resolution.
- b. The Right of Trial – Those against whom allegations or complaints are brought are innocent until proven guilty and may choose a trial when charged with offences. The trial procedure is outlined in (§454.1d and §2622-2627).

- F. Records – When credentials have been surrendered, the Clergy Session of the Annual Conference shall receive a report (§454.11). Full information of sexual misconduct and subsequent actions taken shall be kept in the clergy person's permanent record in the Bishop's office.

III. PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO AN ALLEGATION OF

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT/ABUSE INVOLVING LAY STAFF/VOLUNTEERS

- A. Assumptions underlying procedures
 - a. Allegations will be taken as worthy of full investigation.
 - b. Presumption of innocence shall be maintained until completion of the process. After that, the conclusion reached in the process will apply.
 - c. The protection of those involved, including the alleged victim or victims, the accused and the accused's family, and their congregation or institution shall be sought until all facts have been carefully considered and appropriate actions determined.
- B. Investigation when sexual misconduct is alleged
 - a. Anytime the alleged victim is a child, it is required by law to inform the appropriate authorities immediately.
 - b. The allegation shall be brought to the pastor or his/her designee by the alleged victim or by someone who had knowledge and is willing to pursue a resolution.
 - c. Both the alleged victim and the accused may bring to any meeting or hearing a person to accompany them and shall have the right to advocacy.
 - d. The pastor shall promptly share the grievance with the District Superintendent.
 - e. The pastor or designated representative shall:
 - i. Explain to the alleged victim in the presence of another person chosen by the pastor the process and the procedures to be followed in response to the grievance. One of these persons shall be the same sex as the alleged victim.
 - ii. Request and assist the alleged victim to provide a written grievance stating the allegations and the related facts.
 - iii. Request permission from the alleged victim to use a written grievance in discussion with accused.
 - iv. Meet with accused and share the allegations made.
 - 1. Share with him/her the formal written grievance where permission has been given to use it.
 - 2. Explain the process to be followed and its purpose, emphasizing the presumption of innocence and the right to fair process.
 - 3. Request an oral or written response from the accused after informing the accused that he/she may respond to the allegations at a later date, if desired, after consultation with an advisor.
 - 4. Make available a summary of the accused's response to the alleged victim for comment.
 - 5. Seek to substantiate the allegation and ascertain sufficient reason for pursuing or not pursuing the allegations further.
- C. Determination of sufficient cause – When the pastor and supervising District Superintendent determine there is a sufficient cause for a complaint of sexual misconduct, the pastor or the designated representative shall inform the complainant and the accused of the conclusion. If the accused is a lay staff member, the following actions, either alone or in combination, may be considered:

- a. Apology to the complainant.
 - b. Oral reprimand.
 - c. Written warning.
 - d. Counseling.
 - e. Transfer or reassignment.
 - f. Demotion.
 - g. Adjustment of salary or bonus.
 - h. Suspension.
 - i. Discharge.
- D. If the conclusion is that no violation occurred or there is insufficient evidence to make a conclusion, the complainant and the accused each should be notified.
- j. The complainant should be advised that the evidence will be preserved and that another investigation will be conducted if further information is provided.
 - k. The complainant should be encouraged to report any future incidents.
 - l. Both parties should be reminded that such conduct is not tolerated, that each complaint is investigated, and, if sexual harassment is found, appropriate measures will be taken to alleviate the situation.
 - m. Each party should be reminded of the prohibition against retaliation.
- E. In the weeks following the investigation, follow-up with the complainant to ascertain whether he/she has experienced any retaliation or further inappropriate behavior from the accused.
- F. In the event discipline was imposed against the accused, follow-up to ensure that the remedial measures imposed have been carried out appropriately.

PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO AN ALLEGATION

OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT OR ABUSE INVOLVING A CHILD

- A. Take the allegation or incident very seriously, respecting the victim's privacy, as well as providing sympathetic concern for the victim and his/her family.
- B. Notify the proper law enforcement or child protective services agency immediately. If this is a case of known abuse, protect any evidence. Be prepared to cooperate fully with the investigation conducted by law enforcement officials or child protective services.
- C. Notify the parents of the victim, provide emergency care (if necessary) for the victim and provide for the safety of the victim until the parents arrive. The care and safety of the victim must be the church's primary concern. Be prepared to follow up with pastoral care for the victim and the victim's family.
- D. Listen to and record what you are being told. If the allegation is being made by the victim, do not try to elicit more information than is being offered.
- E. The accused must immediately be removed from further involvement with children or youth until the allegations are fully investigated and resolved. Do not confront the accused abuser with anger and hostility. The accused should be treated with dignity, acknowledging that he or she is a person of sacred worth, but also acknowledging that the accused must stop the abusive behavior, prayerfully repent, and turn in a new direction. Be prepared to provide pastoral care for the accused abuser.
- F. Notify the annual conference authorities (district superintendent or bishop), the church's insurance agency, and the church's attorney. Conference authorities must be kept aware of the congregation's actions throughout the process.
- G. Keep a written record of the steps taken by the church in response to the allegation. This information must be kept confidential and limited to only those who must know.
- H. Call upon your designated spokesperson to make any necessary statements or responses to the news media. The designated spokesperson should have a prepared, written statement. This person may be the pastor, another staff member, the church's attorney, or a lay member of the church. This person should answer questions honestly without adding extra or unnecessary information. The designated spokesperson should be given permission to answer questions by saying, "I don't know at this time." None but the spokesperson should be authorized to speak to the media on behalf of the congregation.
- I. Prepare a brief and honest statement that can be made to the congregation without giving unnecessary details, placing blame, interfering with the victim's privacy, or violating any confidentiality concerns. The statement should briefly explain the incident and the initial action taken by the church. The statement should not include the identification of the child victim or that of the accused. The statement should include the actions taken to assure the safety of all the children and assure the congregation of its continuing ability to provide ministry to children and youth. The statement should dispel rumors and innuendo and assure everyone that everything possible has been done to provide for the safety of the victim and to enable the safe continuation of the church's ministry. The statement should be made in a carefully planned Congregation Meeting.

In order to facilitate background checks the Conference has contracted with a company called Trak-1 Technologies. This company has a great nationwide reputation and is a partner of UMPACT. What our Conference contract means is that any church/ministry in the conference can sign up with Trak-1 and not be charged the set up/activation fee. There are still fees for each check you run but Trak-1 provides instant results at a great rate.

Keep in mind that you can use any source you want but:

- 1 You need to be sure your provider is checking the La Department of Corrections database not just the national database.
- 2 We recommend the use of Trak-1 because:
 - Of their Partnership with the United Methodist Church.
 - Their use of up to date technology and proper databases.
 - Price
 - Associated services like information storage, release samples and compliance assistance.

To get started with Trak-1 contact them through:

Lindsay McCarty
Account Manager
2705 E. 21st St.
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74114
Toll Free: (877) 779-7003, ext. 153
Phone: (918) 779-7000, ext. 153
Direct Fax: (918) 779-6521
lindsay.mccarty@trak-1.com
www.trak-1.com

Churches will also be receiving an informational packet in the near future. We have provided Trak-1 pricing below. Keep in mind that you will have some paperwork to fill before you begin using their services.

“Exhibit A” to Service Agreement
Pricing

Louisiana Annual Conference

FEES AND PAYMENTS

All prices are subject to change. If prices change, Trak-1 will give Client a 30 day notice.

PRE EMPLOYMENT PACKAGES	PRICE PER SEARCH
<p><u>CHILD PROTECTION PACKAGE</u></p> <p><u>BroadScreen Criminal Search Plus <i>INSTANT!</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •1 Includes: Multi-State Criminal and National Sex Offender Search, OFAC Terrorist Watch List, FBI Most Wanted, DEA, ATF, US Customs, US Marshall, US Secret Service, Americas Most Wanted & Specially Designated Terrorists & Narcotics Traffickers search. (Includes 45 States plus D.C. for Criminal and 50 States plus D.C. for National Sex Offender Registry) Non-covered States currently include: Delaware, Massachusetts, South Dakota, West Virginia and Wyoming. Please note that Criminal Records are available in the above states. Colorado (Co-Courts) search is available at an additional charge. Non-covered states may be able to be accessed through manual state or county searches. Additional Fee Schedule for Non-Instant States Available On Request. •2 This search includes the Oklahoma Supreme Courts Network (OSCN) and the Oklahoma District Court Records (ODCR) <p><u>Social Security Trace <i>INSTANT!</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •3 Using the first name, last name, date of birth & SSN of your applicant, we provide a history of previous addresses and the month and year of birth of every person that has used that SSN. 	\$9.00
<p><u>CHILD PROTECTION PACKAGE +</u></p> <p><u>BroadScreen Criminal Plus with Motor Vehicle Report</u> Includes BroadScreen Criminal Search PLUS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •4 <u>Social Security Trace <i>INSTANT!</i></u> Using the first name, last name, date of birth & SSN of your applicant, we provide a history of previous addresses and the month and year of birth of every person that has used that SSN. •5 Motor Vehicle Report (MVR) reports are <i>instant</i> in most states, but can take up to 48 hours in others. A faxed copy of the applicant's consent may be necessary. <i>MVR state fee guide available upon request but is subject to change. Additional fees apply.</i> 	\$14.50 + state fee on MVR MVR Alone or Add-On \$5.00
<p><u>Single State Search Plus CrimTrak</u> CrimTrak 7 Year 3 County <i>24-72 hour turnaround</i> Using the SSN Trak product, up to 3 county criminal searches are ordered based on last 3 counties of residence in the past 7 years.</p> <p><u>StateScreen - Criminal Search <i>INSTANT!</i></u> Searches criminal history within a single state using a statewide criminal search and sex offense history using National Sexual Offender search. Colorado search is available at an additional charge. Instant results not available in Delaware, Massachusetts, Oklahoma, South Dakota, West Virginia & Wyoming. Non-instant state and county pricing is available upon request.</p>	\$23.00
<p><u>Manual StateWide Criminal Search <i>24-72 hour turnaround</i></u> Single Statewide Criminal Search - Includes criminal history information from selected state operated repository where available.</p>	\$4.00 per state plus state access fees.
<p>A La Carte Items <i>(The below listed items can be added to your package at a discounted rate.)</i></p>	
<p><u>County Criminal Record Search</u> County level criminal searches are the best source for the most recent and up to date case information. A county search will disclose the jurisdiction, type of offense, offense description, case number and case disposition. Many times, a county level search will disclose city violations, code enforcements and felony traffic offenses where permitted by law. All Trak-1 County level criminal searches are FCRA compliant. Additional County fees may apply.</p>	\$10.00 Per County
<p><u>Federal Court Record Search</u> Searches of a Federal Criminal, Civil or Bankruptcy Court can identify otherwise unknown records such as interstate drug or arms trafficking, identity theft, mail fraud, kidnapping or crimes that occur on federal property.</p>	\$8.00
<p><u>Drug & Alcohol Screening</u> Services include Department of Transportation ("DOT") testing, alcohol testing, drug testing, drug testing laboratory services, random selection for drug and/or alcohol testing, blind specimen testing as deemed necessary by TRAK-1 to implement the drug and alcohol policies and procedures of Client.</p>	\$30.00 per applicant
<p><u>Employment Verification <i>Results returned within 72 hours upon receipt of completed application.</i></u> Our research analysts verify dates of employment, position, salary, reason for leaving and obtain a recommendation. In addition, our verification team will interview the applicant's previous or current supervisor to attain vital information relating to attendance and performance. All information attained is in strict compliance with your criteria. Verification only within the United States; International Verifications are available at an additional charge.</p>	\$10.00 Up to 3 Prev. Employers

<p><u>Education Verification</u> <i>Results returned within 72 hours upon receipt of completed application.</i> Our research analysts contact the applicant's indicated University Registrar's Office to verify date of attendance, area of studies and Degrees attained. Verification only within the United States; International Verifications are available at an additional charge.</p>	<p>\$10.00 Per Educational Facility</p>
<p><u>Professional License Verification</u> <i>Results returned within 72 hours upon receipt of completed application.</i> Our research analysts verify professional licensure and certifications, as well as provide the subject's professional standing with applicable regulatory bodies. Based upon the information submitted, we contact the necessary licensing agencies and verify standing, as well as verifying dates of licensure and other critical information. Verification only within the United States; International Verifications are available at an additional charge.</p>	<p>\$10.00 Per License</p>
<p><u>Personal Reference Verification</u> <i>Results returned within 72 hours upon receipt of completed application.</i> Our research analyst contact personal references to attain vital information about the applicant's personality, general reputation in the community and overall character.</p>	<p>\$10.00 Up to 3 Ref.</p>
<p>TOTAL PACKAGE PRICE</p>	

<p>ADMINISTRATIVE FEES</p>	
<p><u>Administrative Client Set-up Fee</u> One time fee allows Trak-1 Representative to provide you with the lowest possible pricing by covering up front certain set costs including account set up and implementation, compliance and vetting, creation and issuance of the username and password and initial an ongoing training and support.</p>	<p>\$ 0 Waived</p>
<p><u>Annual Maintenance Fee</u> Helps Trak-1 continue to make available the high speed connections that allow our data providers to return results rapidly</p>	<p>\$0.00 Waived</p>
<p><u>Invoice Fee</u> Covers the cost of production, mailing, and receiving paper invoices and remittance. Clients electing to receive invoices electronically may be able to avoid this fee.</p>	<p>\$3.50</p>

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