

JOHN N. MCEACHERN MEMORIAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



McEachern Memorial

A United Methodist Church

Safe Sanctuary Abuse Policy

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Overview of Training Sessions

Safe Sanctuary training sessions shall include an explanation and a discussion of the following topics:

- Who and Why We Protect
- Terminology
- The Risk
 - Profile of a Child Molester
 - The Facts
- Types and signs of abuse
- How Do We Provide a Safe Campus?
 - McEachern Memorial United Methodist Church Policies
 - Guidelines for Prevention
- Procedures for reporting accidents, incidents or suspected abuse (FORMS)

Definitions of Frequently Used Terminology

(As it relates to this document only)

1. Employed Staff Member: A staff member who receives pay for either full-time or part-time work at the church.
2. Volunteer: An adult seeking involvement with children, students under the age of 18, and/or vulnerable adults who has been a member of this congregation for at least 6 months or a constituent member for at least 12 months, with the exception of Recreation Ministry volunteers. All staff and volunteers must have a background check and be Safe Sanctuary trained.
3. Supervisory Volunteer: An individual seeking a supervisory role with children/students/vulnerable adults who has 1) been a member of this congregation for at least 12 months or 2) has had prior supervisory experience with children/students and is defined above as a volunteer. Before serving, all individuals desiring supervisory volunteer status are subject to approval by corresponding ministry director.
4. Student Staff or Volunteer: An individual who is at least 14 (except during VBS, when a student between the ages of 12-14 may serve in the capacity of an assistant to an adult only). All student staff/volunteers must have prior approval from the director of children's ministries, student ministries and/or church ministry staff and must be paired with at least one adult.
5. The Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS): Falls under the Georgia Department of Human Resources and is responsible for welfare and employment support, protecting children, foster care and other services to strengthen families.
6. Adult: Anyone who is 18 years of age or older.
7. Child /Student: Anyone who is under 18 years of age or has the mental capacity of such age is considered a child or student.
8. Vulnerable Adult: Anyone aged 18 or over who is, or may be, in need of community services due to age, illness or a mental or physical disability; who is, or may be, unable to take care of himself/herself, or unable to protect himself/herself against significant harm or exploitation.
9. Accident: When an unintentional act occurs and a child or any other person is hurt.
10. Incident: When an action is observed that does not require reporting to DFCS, but does require attention and/or recording/reporting.
11. Suspected Abuse: When one sees, has been told of, or suspects someone has been abused in some way

Requirements of Volunteers and Supervisory Volunteers

Protection is required of us:

- For the protection of our children, students and vulnerable adults
- For the protection of all workers, paid or volunteer who work with our children, students and vulnerable adults (in case of false allegations of wrongdoing)
- For the protection of the church reputation and finances
- By the General Conference mandate of 1996, 2000, and 2004, the 2008 Book of Discipline and paragraph 3084 in the 2012 book of resolutions as well as paragraph 162c in our social principles.
- But more importantly, it is required in Scripture, Mark 9:37 – Jesus said, “Whoever welcomes one such child in my name, welcomes me...”

1. Individuals must meet the criteria set forth under “Definition of Frequently Used Terminology” in this policy.
2. Individuals must submit to a full background check. Background checks are processed through Trak-1. The background check includes a criminal and driving record check. A new background check will be done every 3 years providing there has been no change of status.
3. Individuals must agree to take a random drug test, if called to do so.

Exceptions to requirements #2 and #3 include summer camp workers who are under 18 years of age. Personal references will be obtained on those under 18 years of age and approved by the director of the corresponding ministry area.

Training of Staff and Volunteers

1. All volunteers and employed staff members are required to be Safe Sanctuary trained every year. First time trainees must attend a “live” training session. “Live” sessions are scheduled frequently. Check the website for training dates, times and locations. www.mceachernumc.org
2. All employed staff and volunteers shall attend a Safe Sanctuary training session within 60 days of their first day of service as administered by the church and prior to any off site trips. If there is not a training session scheduled within this time frame, a training video will be provided in the interim to be viewed at church.
3. Each employed staff member and volunteer attending a “live” class will receive a copy of this policy and are required to sign a statement certifying receipt. Additionally, each trainee attending a “live” class is required to complete a Background Consent form. Background checks will be updated every three years. Record of abuse training and signed statement will be kept on file in the administrative office.
4. Background reports are confidential. Staff reports and volunteer reports are received and filed by the Sr. Associate Pastor.

5. Once trainees have attended a “live” class, they may renew their Safe Sanctuary training online for the next two years. On the following year, trainees are required to attend another “live” class and complete a new Background Consent form. For example, first time trainees who must attend a “live” training class in 2015 may renew their certificate online in 2016 and 2017. In 2018, they are required to attend a “live” class and complete a new Background Consent form.

Knowing the Facts

It is important to be familiar with a few statistics concerning the incidence of abuse in the church:

1. ChildHelp USA reports that there are more than three million incidents of physical abuse and/or neglect per year in the U.S. affecting 6.3 million children, which equates to 1 every 10 seconds around the clock.
2. Reports also indicate that 1640 deaths are attributed to child abuse and/or neglect each year. Studies have estimated that one out of three girls is sexually abused before the age of 18. Incidence of abuse peaks with victim age 8-12 years old. Similarly, studies indicate one out of seven boys have been sexually abused before the age of 18. Abuse often occurs in ongoing relationships. Even more frightening is that these numbers may be underestimated since many children are reluctant to report abuse. In light of the statistics, it is a logical conclusion that any organization involved with children is a place where abuse could occur.
3. Additional statistics state:
 - 36% of women and 14% of men in prison were abused as children.
 - 60% of people in drug rehabilitation reported being abused or neglected as children.
 - 30% of abused and neglected children will later abuse their own.

The Profile of a Child Molester

Who is the typical child molester? Often, we assume that molesters are “strangers wearing trench coats” or “dirty old men.” These stereotypes not only are inaccurate, but they dangerously contribute to a false sense of security. Researchers in the field of child sexual abuse currently indicate that no one profile fits the various perpetrator of abuse. Church leaders can become preoccupied screening stereotypes, while not suspecting the real molester could be an active adult or teen in the church. Consider the following:

- Over 80 percent of the time, the abuser is someone known to the victim
- The majority of offenders are between the ages of 20-30 years old.
- 20 percent of sex offenders begin their activity before the age of 18
- Child abusers often are married and have children
- 1 in 4 offenders is a member of the individual’s family or one entrusted with care of the person
- About half are friends of child or family
- 2 out of 3 who are caught and punished abuse again

What is Abuse?

The depth and breadth of the problem of abuse is far greater than can be effectively addressed within this resource. For our purposes, we must limit our focus to the prevention of abuse in the church and its related organizations.

Types of Abuse

Generally, abuse is categorized in six primary forms:

1. Physical abuse
2. Emotional abuse
3. Sexual abuse
4. Ritual abuse
5. Neglect
6. Elder/Financial abuse

1. Physical abuse: Abuse in which a person deliberately and intentionally causes bodily harm to a child. Examples may include violent battery with a weapon (knife, belt, strap, etc.), burning, shaking, kicking, choking, fracturing bones, and any of a wide variety of non-accidental injuries to a child's body.
2. Emotional abuse: Abuse in which a person exposes a child to spoken and/or unspoken violence or emotional cruelty. Emotional abuse sends a message to the child of worthlessness, badness, and being not only unloved, but undeserving of love and care. Children exposed to emotional abuse may have experienced being locked in a closet, being deprived of any sign of parental affection, being constantly told they are bad or stupid, or being allowed or forced to abuse alcohol or drugs. Emotional abuse is often very difficult to prove and is devastating to the victim. Emotional abuse includes bullying, which is the conscious, willful and deliberate hostile activity intended to harm, induce fear through the threat of further aggression, and create terror. Includes both "in-person" and cyber-bullying.
 - A. Bullying is aggressive behavior that is intentional, is repeated over time, and involves an imbalance of power or strength.
 - B. Physical bullying – when one person engages in physical force against another person such as hitting, punching, pushing, kicking, pinching, or restraining another.
 - C. Verbal bullying – when someone uses their words to hurt another, such as by belittles or calling another hurtful names.
 - D. Nonverbal or relational bullying – when one person manipulates a relationship or desired relationship to harm another person. This type of bullying also includes intimating another person by using gestures.
3. Sexual abuse: Abuse in which sexual contact between a child and an adult (or another older and more powerful student) occurs. The child is never truly capable of consenting to or resisting such contact and/or such sexual acts. Often, the child is physically and psychologically dependent upon the perpetrator of the abuse. Examples of sexual abuse may include fondling, intercourse, incest and the exploitation of and exposure to child pornography or prostitution.
4. Ritual abuse: Abuse in which physical, sexual, or psychological violations of a child are inflicted regularly, intentionally, and in a stylized way by a person or persons responsible for the child's welfare. The abuser may appeal to some higher authority or power to justify the abuse. The abuse may include cruel treatment of animals or repeated threats of harm to the child, other persons, and animals. Reports of ritual abuse are often extremely horrifying and may seem too grim to be true. Children making such reports must not be ignored.
5. Neglect: Abuse in which a person endangers a child's health, safety, or welfare through negligence. Neglect may include withholding food, clothing, medical care, education, and even affection and affirmation of the child's self-worth. This is perhaps the most common form of abuse. Neglect includes abandonment which is the desertion of a child or vulnerable elder by one who has assumed responsibility for care or custody of that person.
6. Elder abuse: Elders are defined as anyone over 65 years old. Elder abuse can be either physical, financial, or by using exploitation. Exploitation can include the unauthorized or misuse of funds or property or assets belonging to the elder by force, misrepresentation or illegal means.

Possible Signs of Child Abuse

Children suffering from abuse often will not tell anyone about it. Therefore, it is important to be able to recognize other signs of abuse. The following characteristics may be Possible Signs of abuse, although they are not necessarily proof. Individually, any one of the Possible Signs may be a sign of a number of other more or less serious problems. When these Possible Signs are observed in a child, they can be considered as warnings and lead you to investigate the situation further.

Possible Signs of Physical Abuse

1. Hostile and aggressive behavior toward others
2. Fearfulness of parents and/or other adults
3. Destructive behavior toward self, others, and/or property
4. Inexplicable fractures or bruises inappropriate for child's developmental stage
5. Burns, facial injuries, pattern of repetitious bruises

Possible Signs of Emotional Abuse

1. Exhibits severe depression and/or withdrawal
2. Exhibits severe lack of self-esteem
3. Threatens or attempts suicide
4. Speech and/or eating disorders
5. Goes to extremes to seek adult approval
6. Extreme passive/aggressive behavior patterns

Possible Signs of Sexual Abuse

1. Unusually advance sexual knowledge and/or behavior for child's age and developmental stage
2. Depression – cries often for no apparent reason
3. Promiscuous behavior
4. Difficulty walking or sitting
5. Bruised/bleeding in vaginal or anal areas
6. Exhibits frequent headaches, stomachaches, extreme fatigue
7. Sexually transmitted diseases

In addition to these Possible Signs, children who have been sexually abused at church may exhibit some of the following:

1. Unusual nervousness or anxiety about being left in the nursery or Sunday School class
2. Reluctance to participate in church activities that were previously enthusiastically approached
3. Comments such as “I don't want to be alone with ___” in reference to a childcare worker or teacher
4. Nightmares including a childcare worker or teacher as a frightening character
5. Unexplained hostility toward a childcare worker or teacher

Possible Signs of Ritual Abuse

1. Disruptions of memory and consciousness
2. Unexplained mistrust and mood swings

3. Flashbacks
4. Fear of the dark, especially at sundown or a full moon
5. Nightmares or sleep disorders
6. Any of the symptoms of sexual abuse

Possible Signs of Neglect

1. Failure to thrive
2. Pattern of inappropriate dress for climate
3. Beggars or steals food; chronic hunger
4. Depression
5. Untreated medical conditions
6. Poor hygiene
7. Signs of over or under-medicated
8. In children, signs that education is neglected

Possible Signs of Elder Abuse

1. Sudden changes in financial situation
2. Caregiver* belittles, threatens, exerts excessive power and control
3. Strained relationships, frequent arguments between elder and caregiver
4. Bruises, pressure marks, abrasions, burns, broken bones
5. Bedsores, unattended medical needs, poor hygiene, unusual weight loss

* “Caregiver” can be family member or paid worker

Possible Signs of Abuse Occurred at Church

1. Unusual anxiety about going to Sunday school
2. Reluctance to participate in activities that were previously enjoyed
3. Comments that one does not want to be alone with a given person
4. Nightmares of a frightening experience with a worker
5. Unexplained hostility toward worker

Prevention Guidelines

In order to provide adequate supervision to ensure the safety and well being of children participating in activities in the programs of the church, the following ratios are recommended:

(Note: these ratios fall above the state requirements and should be in alignment with current policies in the areas already in place)

Nursery/Childcare/Children's Classes

1. Infants 1:3 infants (under 12 months)
2. Toddlers 1:5 toddlers (through age 2)
3. Early Childhood 1:8 preschool (3yr. - K)
4. Elementary 1:10 (1st – 5th grade)

Special Events, Field Trips and Overnights

1. Children 1st-5th grade 1:4-6 children
2. Students 6th -8th grade 1:5-7 students
3. Students 9th-12th grade 1:6-8 students
1:10-12 students – for large group activities on site

For overnight activities, provide adequate same gender ratios.

Weekday Preschool 3 YR - K

1. Three Year Old 1:10 children
2. Four Year Old 1:12 children
3. Kindergarten 1:12 children

Weekday Preschool Infant – 2 YR

1. Infants 1:3 infants
2. One year old 1:5 toddlers
3. Two year old 1:6-8 toddlers

Summer Camps

1. Children 3-K 1:10 (with additional support staff)
2. Children 1st-5th grade 1:10 children (see field trip guidelines for off campus trips)

Recreation

1:10

Ratios for multiple sports activities that are simultaneously on the basketball court, soccer fields, and baseball fields can be determined by the total number of children to total number of adults rather than per team. However, if the children are taken by individual teams into classrooms for devotions the two adult rule must be followed.

In addition to the ratios, the following guidelines shall be used when planning supervision for all church gatherings where children will be in attendance:

1. Two adult rule: There must be two adults in each classroom for all gatherings, which take place within the church building with the exception of Sunday mornings and high attendance events such as Wednesday evenings and Sunday evening activities during which time there are additional Sunday School Superintendents, Chairpersons, Chaperones, etc, attending to the need of children and student programs/activities.
2. An adult is considered to be anyone 18 years of age or older and five years older than the group for whom they are providing supervision. Volunteers or workers under 18 years of age must be paired with an adult. Summer Camp Directors must be at least 22 years of age.
3. Married couples only count as one unit thus requiring another adult to be present to meet recommended ratios.
4. Appropriate Touch – use a side hug, high five, or a pat on the back. Never give a full frontal hug.
5. All activities/programs involving children/students should occur in a room with a windowed door or a “half door” of which the top half is left open or a full non windowed door must be left open.
6. Groups of fewer than four persons should be in open visible areas and not meet in closed rooms or obscured places.
7. Unauthorized visitors will not be allowed to remain with the group.
8. Children should not be allowed to leave the designated meeting area without written permission and supervision. Children should only be released to an appropriate adult.
9. Children/Students should be in a designated program area or be with a parent or in childcare.
10. Parents should sign child into the room of the program/activity (third grade and under). If the child is moved to a different room or area for any reason, parents will be informed of new location for pickup.
11. All trips for children and students through grade 12 will require a written and signed document of parental permission for groups who leave the church property.
12. On overnight trips in hotels, adults and students will have separate rooms. Creative monitoring is essential and should be determined prior to arrival. If lodging is in a cabin with multiple beds, at least two adults must be present.
13. For offsite trips, the drivers should have at least 2 student riders in the vehicle and another adult. Plan for everyone to meet at the location or provide transportation from the church with adults driving.
14. Periodically, local trips for students may be taken for which verbal permission will be sought if written consent was not obtained. The supervisory volunteer or staff person will speak with the parent or guardian confirming that the student may participate in the activity with church sponsored transportation to and from. The supervisory volunteer or staff person shall document the activity, date, permission granted and from whom. (i.e. shopping mall, local ice cream shop etc.)
15. Attendees at off-site events will be monitored by adult chaperones upon arrival and departure of the property and premises in accordance with the proper ratios as stated herein.
16. Provision will be made to have access to a telephone for emergency purposes at all times.

17. As a means of good record keeping and communication between parents, staff and any volunteers, the enclosed Accident Report Form will be filed with the Director of the corresponding ministry area.
18. Social Media - Social media refers to the use of web-based and mobile technologies to advance interactive communication—both public and private uses—and to include instant messaging, texting, emailing, and video chatting. We strongly encourages employees and volunteers to refrain from electronic communication and/or social media use with children in our care. However, if these interactions are part of programming or otherwise unavoidable, this organization offers the following guidelines:
 - A. Employees who use social networking sites, such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, blogs, micro blogging, etc.... are expected to monitor their pages so only material representing the highest ideals of the Christian faith appear. It is acceptable to access social networking sites when performing job related tasks. Refrain from comments that are, or could be construed by any observer to be, harsh, coercive, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, humiliating, and/or sexually-oriented conversations or discussions about sexual activities. Refrain from private messages between employees and volunteers and children in our care and posting inappropriate pictures or inappropriate comments on pictures.
 - B. As an employee of a “voluntary association”, McEachern MUMC requires employees to allow unlimited access to their sites by their immediate supervisor and the pastoral staff.
 - C. When you post on your own Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc., please be mindful of the following: McEachern expects good judgment in all situations.
 - D. Post in a way that will reflect positively on our church, our staff, and our clergy. Post and interact in a way that will enhance your reputation, the reputation of others, and the reputation of McEachern.
 - E. In the United Methodist Church, the first rule of ministry (and of posting) is “Do no harm.” (from page 37-38 of the McEachern Memorial Staff Handbook, 2023)
 - F. It is advisable for administrators to create a public social media page for your program to communicate through this public page instead of individually to others. All public media pages will be monitored and any posts that violate our policies will be removed. This page is public so that all communications can be seen by parents and guardians.
 - G. We encourage “office hours” for which employees should send or respond to electronic communications.
 - H. Employees and volunteers should keep communications professional in nature and limit discussion to programmatic purposes

Procedures for Responding to Private Communication

- A. Keep responses brief and replying only with intent to provide information on events, such as times, place of event, what is needed to attend, etc. Alert a supervisor about any private communication that is received and construed as inappropriate, then allow supervisor to document and handle going forward.
- B. If a child reveals abuse or inappropriate interactions with an adult or another child, you must report this information to a supervisor who will report to law enforcement immediately.
- C. Each employee and volunteer is required to adhere to the above Electronic Communications and Social Media Conduct and sign that they have read, understand, and agree.

Special Overnight Activities and Trips

1. Written and signed parental permission shall be obtained for groups who leave the church property. If a child/student brings a friend the evening of an event without a permission form, the parent or guardian will be called for permission and speak to the supervisory volunteer or staff person to go on the outing.
2. Children and student events away from the church campus and/or an overnight event held at the church require strict adherence to the policy ratios for supervision.
3. There shall always be two adult chaperones, or more depending on ratios, responsible for monitoring behaviors and shall report any inappropriate behavior. At no time is any adult to be left alone with a child or teen.
4. In any overnight situation, adults must not sleep in the same bed with a child or teen. Exceptions are only for a father and son or a mother and daughter.
5. Headcounts should be taken each time there is movement from one area to another.

Diapering and Restroom Activity (“Potty Policy”)

Diapering of infants and toddlers should be done in a visible area with another adult present.

Toddlers and preschoolers need to be allowed as much independence as possible when using the restroom. The building facility will dictate how much direct adult supervision is required.

- when the restroom is attached to the classroom
- when a single toilet restroom is located away from the classroom
- when a multi-stalled public restroom is used

Young children in the early stages of becoming “potty trained” may require adult assistance, especially in the case of “accidents.” When an adult helps with the incidents, special care and common sense is necessary. Tell another adult that you are assisting the child in need, and inform the parent what was done.

Older children should not be sent to a multi-stalled public restroom alone. It is advisable that an adult accompany at least two children, check the restroom before sending the children in. Stand outside, allowing children complete independence. In case of an emergency and a child needs adult help, care must be taken to avoid having an adult alone with a child in a stall, if possible.

Discipline Recommendations to Assist You

1. Use positive words.
2. Establish rules and expectations.
3. When in need of communicating bad news to a parent or guardian, remember the “sandwich rule” - good news, bad news, good news.
4. Involve church staff whenever necessary or if you are not sure of what to do in any circumstance.
5. Plan strategy for dealing with one who is a threat to safety of self or others.

Procedures for Reporting Alleged Abuse

Should an adult in charge suspect abuse or a child, student, or vulnerable adult report abuse by any member of the church staff, volunteer or employed staff, OR by any person present at a church-sponsored meeting or activity, be prepared to immediately do the following:

1. Take all necessary steps to ensure the safety of the child, student, or vulnerable adult. The safety of the child/student/vulnerable adult must be the church’s primary concern. Do not confront the accused abuser with anger and hostility. Treat the accused with dignity, but immediately remove him or her from further involvement with children, students or vulnerable adults and report the same.
2. The adult in charge (employed staff or supervisory volunteer) shall document the incident in writing. Documentation will include a written record of the steps taken by the church in response to the allegations of abuse. Documentation shall be signed and dated.
3. Notify the Sr. Pastor or Sr. Associate Pastor, the ministry area director and parents, if appropriately safe for the victim. If any of these reporting persons is the accused, that individual will not be notified at this time.
4. If “reasonable cause” is established, the reporting adult along with the Sr. Pastor or Sr. Associate Pastor or ministry area director shall be required to notify the Georgia Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS).
5. In emergency situations, the reporting adult shall notify the proper law enforcement in emergency cases and/or Georgia Department of Family and Children’s Services (DFCS) immediately. The Sr. Pastor and the ministry area supervisor should be notified as well.
6. The Sr. Pastor, will instruct notification to the following persons:
 - a. District Superintendent

- b. Insurance Carrier
 - c. Attorney to file report
 - d. Pastoral Care Consultant
1. Provide counseling if desired
 2. Offer appropriate referrals
 7. Only the designated spokesperson, MMUMC church Lay Leader, will make any necessary public statements or responses.

A brief and honest statement will be prepared by a staff person that can be made to the congregation without giving unnecessary details, placing blame, interfering with the victim's privacy, or violating any confidentiality concerns.

8. Be prepared to cooperate fully with the investigation conducted by law enforcement officials or child protective services.

See it...Report it!

Suspected Abuse Perpetrated Away from Church Property and Non-Church Related Events

If an adult in a supervisory position suspects OR a child or student reports abuse occurring away from church-sponsored functions, the following procedures shall apply:

1. The adult in charge shall document the incident. The documentation shall be signed, dated, and turned into the ministry area director.
2. Notify the Sr. Pastor, the ministry area director, and the parents. If any of these reporting people is the accused, that individual will not be notified at this time.
3. If "reasonable cause" is established, the Sr. Pastor shall require notification of the Georgia Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS).

Georgia Code: The following is what is written in the Georgia Legal Code 19-7-5, Code Section 10-14-96

A. “The purpose of this Code section is to provide for the protection of children whose health and welfare are adversely affected and further threatened by the conduct of those responsible for their care and protection. It is intended that the mandatory reporting of such cases will cause the protective services of the state to be brought to bear on the situation in an effort to prevent further abuses, to protect and enhance the welfare of these children, and to preserve family life wherever possible.”...

B. “Child” is any person under age 18.

“Child abuse” means:

1. Physical injury or death, not accidental, by parent or caretaker.
2. Neglect or exploitation by same.
3. Sexual abuse of a child
4. Sexual exploitation of a child
5. However, no child who in good faith is being treated by spiritual means through prayer because of religious beliefs shall be considered “abused”.

C. Those required to report:

1. Physicians, nurses, hospital personnel
2. Dentists
3. Psychologists
4. Professional counselors, social workers or marriage & family therapists
5. School Teachers
6. School Administrators
7. School guidance counselors
8. Child welfare agency personnel
9. Child service organization personnel
10. Law enforcement personnel

D. Persons who are required to report abuse shall notify the person in charge of that facility, or a designated delegate. That person shall report or cause a report to be made in accordance with the Code. Once report has been made to the person in charge/delegate, the initial reporter is said to have fully complied with the law.

Any other person, other than those specified above may report or cause reports to be made.

What is the reporting procedure?

(e) "An oral report, shall be made as soon as possible by telephone or otherwise, and followed by a report in writing, if requested, to a child welfare agency providing protective services, as designated by the Department of Human Resources" or appropriate police authority. If DHR has reasonable cause to believe that the report shows evidence of child abuse, then the agency shall immediately notify police or district attorney.

(f) any person partnership, firm, corporation, association, hospital or other entity making a report to a child welfare agency or police authority pursuant to this Code section or any other law or participating in an judicial proceeding shall in so doing be immune from any civil or criminal liability.

(g) Suspected child abuse is required to be reported even if communication with the child is made privileged or confidential by law.

(h) "Any person or official required by subsection C of this Code section to report a suspected case of child abuse who knowingly and willfully fails to do so shall be guilty of a misdemeanor."

(i) A report of child abuse shall not be subject to public inspection even though such report is contained in closed records compiled for law enforcement or prosecution purposes unless:

- 1) Needed in a court case
- 2) Superior court in the county permits inspection of records for legitimate research for educational, scientific, or public purposes

The superior court to which an application is made shall not grant the application unless:

(A) Application includes description of research project with a statement of info required, the purpose the project needs the info and the methodology to make sure the info is not arbitrarily sought.

(B) Applicant must show legitimacy of project

(C) Names and addresses of individuals, other than officials, employees, or agents of agencies receiving or investigating a report of abuse which is the subject of the report, shall be deleted from any info released unless the court determines that having the names and addresses open for review is essential to the research and the child, through his or her representative, gives permission to release the information.

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Web Sites

<http://www.childabuse.org>

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Videos:

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Boy Scouts of America, *Student Protection Guidelines for Volunteer Leaders & Parents for Basic Training*. Audiovisual Service, P.O. Box 152079, Irving, TX 75015-2079. AV-09V010

Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence, *Bless Our Children: Preventing Sexual Abuse*. 206-634-1903.

Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence, *Hear Their Cries: Religious Responses to Child Abuse*. 206-634-1903

EcuFilm, *Ask Before Your Hug: Sexual Harassment in the Church*, 1-800-251-4091.

The United Methodist Church. *Caring Shepherds*. Available from the Risk Management Department of the General Council on Finance and Administration of the United Methodist Church, 847-869-3345.



McEachern Memorial
A United Methodist Church

INCIDENT REPORT

This form is to be completed by the person witnessing an incident involving questionable behavior involving a worker with a child or youth. Please print all information.

Date of Incident: _____ Time of Incident: _____

Name of Child/Youth Involved: _____ Age: _____

Address of Child/Youth: _____

Location of Incident: _____

Parent or Guardian: _____

Names of those who witnessed the incident:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Describe Incident:

Print name of person filing report: _____

Signature of Incident Reporter Date



McEachern Memorial
A United Methodist Church

REPORT OF SUSPECTED INCIDENT OF ABUSE

It is imperative that the person completing this form be familiar with the state law reporting requirements before taking any action or completing this report.

Name of worker observing/receiving disclosure of abuse: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Victim's Name: _____

Victim's Age/Date of Birth: _____

Date & Place of witnessed activity or initial conversation with victim: _____

Victim's Statement: _____

Name of person accused of abuse: _____

Relationship of accused to victim: _____

Name of Pastor/Ministry Supervisor to whom you reported: _____

Date/Time: _____

Summary: _____

The following should be completed by the Pastor/ministry Supervisor in charge:

Name of parent/guardian to whom reported: _____

Date/Time: _____

Summary: _____

▪ Call to Department of Family and Children Services:

Spoke with: _____ Date/Time: _____

Summary: _____

▪ Call to Local Law Enforcement:

Spoke with: _____ Date/Time: _____

Summary: _____

Other Contacts or Action Taken:



McEachern Memorial
A United Methodist Church

ACCIDENT REPORT FORM

(Please print all information)

Date of Accident: _____ Time of Accident: _____

Name of Injured: _____ Age: _____

Address of Injured: _____

Location of Accident: _____

Parent or Guardian: _____

Names of those who witnessed the accident:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Describe Accident:

Medical Treatment Given:

Signature of Accident Reporter

Date

Para informacion en espanol, visite www.consumerfinance.gov/learnmore o escribe a la Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, 1700 G Street N.W., Washington, DC 20006.

**McEachern Memorial United Methodist Church
4075 Macland Road
Powder Springs, GA 30127
770-943-3008**

McEachern Memorial United Methodist Church will obtain a background check. You acknowledge and understand that in connection with your volunteer or employment application with McEachern Memorial United Methodist Church (including any independent contract for services) or when deciding whether to modify or continue your ongoing involvement, we may obtain a “consumer report” and/or “investigative consumer report” on you from Trak-1, a consumer reporting agency, or from any third party, in strict compliance with both state and federal law.

A Summary of Your Rights Under the Fair Credit Reporting Act

The federal Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) promotes the accuracy, fairness, and privacy of information in the files of consumer reporting agencies. There are many types of consumer reporting agencies, including credit bureaus and specialty agencies (such as agencies that sell information about check writing histories, medical records, and rental history records). Here is a summary of your major rights under the FCRA. **For more information, including information about additional rights, go to www.consumerfinance.gov/learnmore or write to: Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, 1700 G Street N.W., Washington, DC 20006.**

- **You must be told if information in your file has been used against you.** Anyone who uses a credit report or another type of consumer report to deny your application for credit, insurance, or employment – or to take another adverse action against you – must tell you, and must give you the name, address, and phone number of the agency that provided the information.
- **You have the right to know what is in your file.** You may request and obtain all the information about you in the files of a consumer reporting agency (your “file disclosure”). You will be required to provide proper identification, which may include your Social Security number. In many cases, the disclosure will be free. You are entitled to a free file disclosure if:
 - a person has taken adverse action against you because of information in your credit report;
 - you are the victim of identity theft and place a fraud alert in your file;
 - your file contains inaccurate information as a result of fraud;
 - you are on public assistance;
 - you are unemployed but expect to apply for employment within 60 days.

In addition, all consumers are entitled to one free disclosure every 12 months upon request from each nationwide credit bureau and from nationwide specialty consumer reporting agencies. See www.consumerfinance.gov/learnmore for additional information.

- **You have the right to ask for a credit score.** Credit scores are numerical summaries of your credit-worthiness based on information from credit bureaus. You may request a credit score from consumer reporting agencies that create scores or distribute scores used in residential real property loans, but you will have to pay for it. In some mortgage transactions, you will receive credit score information for free from the mortgage lender.

- **You have the right to dispute incomplete or inaccurate information.** If you identify information in your file that is incomplete or inaccurate, and report it to the consumer reporting agency, the agency must investigate unless your dispute is frivolous. See www.consumerfinance.gov/learnmore for an explanation of dispute procedures.
- **Consumer reporting agencies must correct or delete inaccurate, incomplete, or unverifiable information.** Inaccurate, incomplete or unverifiable information must be removed or corrected, usually within 30 days. However, a consumer reporting agency may continue to report information it has verified as accurate.
- **Consumer reporting agencies may not report outdated negative information.** In most cases, a consumer reporting agency may not report negative information that is more than seven years old, or bankruptcies that are more than 10 years old.
- **Access to your file is limited.** A consumer reporting agency may provide information about you only to people with a valid need – usually to consider an application with a creditor, insurer, employer, landlord, or other business. The FCRA specifies those with a valid need for access.
- **You must give your consent for reports to be provided to employers.** A consumer reporting agency may not give out information about you to your employer, or a potential employer, without your written consent given to the employer. Written consent generally is not required in the trucking industry. For more information, go to www.consumerfinance.gov/learnmore.
- **You may limit “prescreened” offers of credit and insurance you get based on information in your credit report.** Unsolicited “prescreened” offers for credit and insurance must include a toll-free phone number you can call if you choose to remove your name and address from the lists these offers are based on. You may opt-out with the nationwide credit bureaus at 1-888-567-8688.
- **You may seek damages from violators.** If a consumer reporting agency, or, in some cases, a user of consumer reports or a furnisher of information to a consumer reporting agency violates the FCRA, you may be able to sue in state or federal court.
- **Identity theft victims and active duty military personnel have additional rights.** For more information, visit www.consumerfinance.gov/learnmore.



McEachern Memorial

A United Methodist Church

www.mceachernumc.org

Record of Receipt

I, _____, an employed staff member and/or volunteer at

(Print Full Legal Name)

John N. McEachern Memorial United Methodist Church, have received a copy of the Safe Sanctuary Abuse Policy. This policy includes the Electronic Communication and Social Media Code of Conduct. I have read the policy and the Code of Conduct and agree to comply with the policies set forth within.

Email Address

Cell or Home Phone

Signature

Date

Primary Area(s) of Service: _____

McEachern Memorial United Methodist Church
4075 Macland Road, Powder Springs, GA 30127



McEachern Memorial

A United Methodist Church

www.mceachernumc.org

APPLICANT AUTHORIZATION AND CONSENT FOR RELEASE AND DISCLOSURE

We welcome your service at McEachern Memorial United Methodist Church (referred to as "MMUMC"). We recognize that the success of our ministries is the result of the quality of the employees/volunteers in our church. In pursuit of excellence, we require that all employees and volunteers who serve children, youth, senior adults, or anyone with developmental disabilities consent to and authorize our request for a criminal background check.

This release and authorization acknowledges that McEachern Memorial United Methodist Church and Trak-1, a consumer reporting agency, may conduct a verification of education, motor vehicle records and criminal history for volunteers. Additional requirements of employees include previous employment/work history, contacting personal references, you providing a urine/breath/blood specimen to be tested for the presence of drugs or alcohol, and to receive any criminal history record pertaining to you which may be in the files of any federal, state, county or local criminal justice agency in any State and/or other information deemed necessary to fulfill the job requirements may be retrieved.

I authorize Trak-1 and any of its designated representatives to disclose orally, electronically, and in writing the results of this verification process and/or interview to the designated authorized representatives of McEachern Memorial United Methodist Church.

I RELEASE and agree to hold harmless MMUMC, its Senior Pastor, pastors, its officers, employees, volunteers, and its SPRC from any and all liability arising in any way from such use, review, disclosure or discussion. According to the Federal Fair credit Reporting Act, I am entitled to know if adverse action is taken based on information obtained by MMUMC and to receive, orally, written or electronically, a copy of the consumer report.

To avoid a delay in processing, please PRINT clearly and do not omit information!

Full Name: _____ Ministry Area: _____
(As it appears on your Driver's License)

Date of Birth: _____ Email Address: _____

Current Address: _____

City: _____ County: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Please list any residences in states other than GA during the past 7 years:

City: _____ County: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Yrs/Mos. _____

City: _____ County: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Yrs/Mos. _____

City: _____ County: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Yrs/Mos. _____

This information is provided voluntarily and is true and complete to the best of my knowledge. It will be used for identification purposes in verifying information for background verification.

Signature _____ Date _____ Phone _____

McEachern Memorial United Methodist Church
4075 Macland Road, Powder Springs, GA 30127