

ALDRSGATE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
VULNERABLE Population SAFE CHURCH Guidelines
(Revised 12/17)

A. INTRODUCTION

Scripture and our United Methodist tradition inform us in our belief that all of human life is of sacred worth, perhaps children most of all. Hear the words of Jesus in Matthew 18:5-6: "Whoever welcomes [a] child, welcomes me. If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones...it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea."

With The Book of Discipline we affirm that our youth and our children are full human beings in their own right, but because they are particularly vulnerable, they are our sacred trust to whom we have special responsibility (Paragraph 162.III.C.). The Church is particularly accountable to provide a safe environment for youth/children/vulnerable adults (Paragraph 161.II.H.). "Children must be protected from economic, physical, emotional, and sexual exploitation and abuse" of any kind (Paragraph 162.III.C.).

Therefore, as a covenanted Christian community of faith, it is the purpose of Aldersgate United Methodist Church to conduct all youth/children/vulnerable adult related events in ways that promote the safety and spiritual growth of all of our youth/children/vulnerable adults, as well as all of the workers with youth/children/vulnerable adults who support and may also participate in these events.

B. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

This is a glossary of terminology used in this policy *or in policy education programs*. Technical definitions used for clinical purposes may differ. Legal definitions will vary.

Abused or neglected child- a child whose mental or physical health is endangered or threatened by the actions or failure to act by people responsible for the child's care.

Child maltreatment - harm to a child by a caretaker or another person who may come into contact with the child. This includes acts of commission (assault), as well as acts of omission (failure to protect). In other words - physical, emotional, or sexual abuse and neglect.

Child molester- a person who has sexually violated children.

Child Protective Services (CPS) - a generic name for agencies of municipal or state government that investigate child maltreatment and provide services to victims and families. May also be called "social services, human services, child welfare," or similar names. Child protective services work closely with law enforcement and the courts. Most child protective services staff people have in-depth social work and family counseling training.

Child sexual abuse - includes but is not limited to any contact or interaction between a child and an adult when the child is being used for sexual stimulation of the adult person or of a third person. The behavior may or may not involve touching. Sexual behavior between a child and an adult is always considered forced whether or not consented to by the child. Also referred to as "molestation."

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Children - In this policy, children are defined as age zero through 5th grade.

Emotional abuse - may take two forms:

- . Failure to provide love, emotional support, and adult guidance (an act of omission)
- . Conduct that threatens an individual's self-esteem and emotional development, such as humiliating, insulting, or belittling (an act of commission).

Middle School - In this policy, middle school references grades sixth through eighth.

Mandatory reporting - Many states or other jurisdictions have laws that require certain types of caretakers (teachers, social workers, child care workers) to report suspected child maltreatment to child protective services or law enforcement. It is necessary to understand the mandatory reporting requirements that are applicable to us.

Neglect - failure of a caretaker to provide for an individual's basic needs or prevent harm.

Official designated spokesperson - person chosen by the Core Leadership Team (CLT) of the church to be the ONLY person to speak on behalf of the church in a media situation. An alternate will be chosen to be the designated spokesperson in their absence. They will have a previously thought-out and written statement which they will present to the media, and will be trained in how to respond to questions.

Physical abuse - non-accidental injury to an individual, caused by the acts of parents or others.

Policy Supervisor - a selected person who may not be directly dealing with children or youth, but is responsible for overseeing adherence to this policy.

Program Staff- persons hired or selected to direct and run children and/or youth or adult programs within the church.

Risk Management - a field of management in which an organization evaluates the risks it faces and minimizes or transfers risk in order to protect the effectiveness of the organization. Risk management usually includes the purchase of insurance as a part of the overall process.

Senior High – In this policy, senior high are grades ninth through twelfth.

Sexual misconduct- improper, exploitive sexual behavior, relationships, and activities involving children or adults.

Survivors of abuse -Often youth workers choose to refer to people who have experienced abuse as "survivors" instead of "victims." This term helps the abused individuals see themselves as people who are overcoming a problem, rather than as people who are powerless, defined by the abuse they have experienced.

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Vulnerable adult - persons over 18 years of age who are not able to fully protect themselves from exploitation or give consent for sexual activity (due to age, intellectual or physical impairments, or other incapacity).

Worker - any person who has custody or supervision of children/youth/vulnerable adults during church activities, *whether in a paid or a volunteer role*. This includes parents of children/youth who participate in activities.

Youth – In this policy, youth are defined as 6th-12th graders, beginning the summer before one's 6th grade year and ending the fall after one's 12th grade year. During the summer, the grade level of the youth is defined as the grade that they will be entering in the fall.

C. SCOPE

This policy and its provisions shall apply to all paid and unpaid staff, whether lay or clergy, who have any contact with youth/children/vulnerable adults who participate in any church activities or events.

D. PURPOSE

Our congregation's purpose for establishing this youth/children/vulnerable adults' Safe-Church Policy and accompanying procedures is to demonstrate our absolute and unwavering commitment to the physical safety and spiritual growth of all of our children, youth, and vulnerable adults.

E. A HIGHER STANDARD

As ambassadors of Jesus Christ, we must strive to be worthy of a very high standard of trust. For this reason, every worker at Aldersgate United Methodist Church must avoid even the appearance of inappropriate behavior. All workers both paid and volunteer must diligently avoid any contact that could appear wrong to a reasonable observer, even if no misconduct takes place.

F. 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 our youth/children/vulnerable adults, as well as the workers with them. We will follow the reasonable safety measures in the selection and recruitment of workers; we will implement prudent operational procedures in all programs and events; we will educate all of our workers with children, youth, and vulnerable adults regarding the use of all appropriate policies and methods (including methods of discipline); 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 be prepared to respond to media inquiries if an incident occurs. These policies are not intended to create an implied or expressed contract with any person. They are not intended to create a legally enforceable or binding promise or representation.

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**G. PROCEDURE FOR UPDATING AND REVISING THE YOUTH, CHILDREN,
VULNERABLE ADULT SAFE-CHURCH POLICY**

1. Updating/Revising

The Core Leadership Team (CLT) of Aldersgate United Methodist Church shall have the authority to revise and update these policies, on an as-needed basis or at the request of leadership or Policy Supervisor. This policy may be modified or withdrawn by Aldersgate United Methodist Church's CLT at any time.

2. Waiver of Guidelines

Church Guidelines may be waived occasionally for exceptional circumstances. The goal of Aldersgate United Methodist Church is to promote safety while maintaining practical flexibility in children, youth, and vulnerable adult ministry. Waiving policies may only be authorized by the Policy Supervisor and/or in consultation with the program staff person in charge.

I. YOUTH, CHILDREN, VULNERABLE ADULT ACTIVITY GUIDELINES

A. GENERAL SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

1. Parents shall be given advance notice and full information regarding logistical and safety issues surrounding church related activities or meetings for their youth/children/vulnerable adults.
2. Aldersgate United Methodist Church shall be insured for abuse, risk, and facility hazards.
3. Any activity that has a risk factor to it requires the presence of an experienced and/or certified guide or instructor. For example, swimming, river rafting, rock climbing, challenge course, or other risk-related activities. Participation in these activities shall also be properly insured with a certificate of liability, held by Aldersgate United Methodist Church. If the activity is contracted to an outside party, then the contractor shall also be properly insured with a certificate of liability insurance providing a minimum of one million dollars liability coverage limits.
4. Medical permission forms are required from all youth/children/vulnerable adults (and adult supervisors) participating in church events as directed by the director of children, youth, & family ministries. These forms shall accompany the adult coordinator of the event or meeting and shall include a waiver of liability. In the case of an accident that requires medical attention, the person who is responsible for the event or the meeting will use all means possible to contact the parent, guardian or emergency contact while ensuring that the youth/children/vulnerable adults receive the proper care.

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5. There shall be a suitable first aid kit on the premises at all church events and accompanying a qualified adult on all overnight events. *(See #6 for specific qualifications).*
6. Any overnight event shall have, at the least, first aid staff certified in first aid and CPR who can administer minor first aid, dispense medicine as needed, and who are capable of determining whether additional medical attention is necessary. This person is also responsible for reporting all incidents to the Policy Supervisor or pastor.
7. For all overnight events that primarily target minors, all medicine belonging to youth/vulnerable adults including supplements, will be given to the first aid staff at the beginning of the event, and it will then be distributed as appropriate by first aid staff. An on-going log of all medications dispensed and treatments administered shall also be kept. Supervising adults shall secure their own medications, supplements, etc.
8. All participants in an event shall consistently remain in groups of three or more. All children shall have an adult leader present.
9. If anyone notices unrecognized people at an event, the event or meeting coordinator shall be informed as soon as possible.

B. DRIVING REGULATIONS

1. Only those who are 18 or older may drive on event business or during an event. The driver shall be at least 23 years old to carry passengers.
2. The driver shall possess a valid driver's license and proof of insurance.
3. The parent or guardian must provide written permission for a driver approved by Aldersgate UMC to transport children/youth/vulnerable adults to or from church events.
4. Youth are discouraged from driving themselves to overnight events. If, due to extenuating circumstances, a youth needs to drive to an overnight event, keys for the automobile shall be held by the event leader during the event.
5. There shall be no "in and out" privileges for youth/children/vulnerable adults. Exceptions to this rule shall be approved in advance by the event leader.

C. OVERNIGHT EVENTS

AFFIRMATION

The Pacific Northwest Conference sees all persons as individuals of sacred worth, created in the image of God. All persons, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, race, ability, marital status, or sexual orientation are entitled to be protected against intimidation or abuse. We respect the rights of all participants to self-identify their place in gender alignment and roles. Under certain

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circumstances, reasonable efforts to create appropriate personal, overnight accommodations should be made for the safety and comfort of all participants.

1. Boys and girls may not sleep in the same room unless there is no other option as a result of shortages of chaperones or because of the nature of the space. If they are in the same room and there is a divider available, it shall be used to separate the genders. If there is no divider available, boys and girls shall be at least six feet apart from each other.
2. There shall be at least one adult of the same gender in the sleeping quarters. Two adults of the same gender are required if only one youth/child/vulnerable adult of that gender is present.

D. POLICY SUPERVISOR

In the event, Aldersgate does not have an assigned Designated Policy Supervisor, members of the staff and CLT Chairperson will take on responsibility of duties as noted throughout this policy.

1. Aldersgate United Methodist Church shall have a designated Policy Supervisor, who shall see that Washington State Patrol and national background clearances are made for all paid and volunteer staff working with children, youth, and vulnerable adults and that all background checks are stored and secured. (Office Manager for staff / Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministry for volunteers)
2. The Policy Supervisor and/or Safety Advocate shall be responsible for the responsibility of developing, overseeing, and reviewing the training of all staff and volunteers. (Pastor) This training shall be offered at least annually and may include the following subject areas:
 - Appropriate boundary guidelines
 - Types of abuse, the relationship between imbalances of power and abuse
 - Causes and indicators of abuse
 - Prevention and recognition of alleged abuse
 - Reporting procedures
 - What to do when you suspect or discover abuse
 - Understanding the victim and the abuser
 - Working with abuse victims
 - Conference youth/children/vulnerable adult's event policies
 - Media reporting policies
3. The Policy Supervisor, Safety Advocate, as well as one staff member shall be a Conference Designated Safety Officer (DSO) and trained accordingly.
4. The Policy Supervisor (Dir of CYFM) shall be responsible for serving as the resource person on these issues, for receiving reports of guideline misuse or

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reports of abuse and for seeing that all persons who need to know of abuses are informed.

5. The Policy Supervisor (Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministry) shall be responsible for carefully documenting all aspects of an abuse incident on the Abuse Incident Report Form. This report shall be forwarded immediately to the pastor, District Superintendent, and Conference Office, and to any other group who may need to know.
6. If a person reports that they have been abused in another setting, the Policy Supervisor (Pastor) shall consult with the event leaders or other oversight staff and they shall make a determination of who should be informed; which may include CPS, law enforcement, etc. In the case of a minor if the parents are not the subject of the abuse, they should be informed as well.
7. The Policy Supervisor (Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministry) shall be responsible for reviewing Vulnerable Population Safe Church policies at least annually, against current conference and legal standards. He/she will work with the CLT to ensure that these policies are officially revised, as needed.

E. Guidelines FOR SCREENING PAID AND VOLUNTEER STAFF

1. All adults shall pre-register for a conference youth event at least 10 days prior to that event except under extenuating circumstances. The registration shall include the standard screening questions for the National Criminal History Check. These documents need to be sent or called into the Conference Office.
2. All adults who work in a role that places them in direct contact with youth/children/vulnerable adults at Aldersgate UMC without the accompany of another adult shall complete a National Background Check. These documents shall be submitted to the Policy Supervisor (Office Manager for staff / Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministry for volunteers) or his/her designee.
3. All adults who work in a role that places them in direct contact with youth/children/vulnerable adults at Aldersgate UMC only alongside other adults shall complete a WA State Background Check. These documents shall be submitted to the Policy Supervisor (Office Manager for staff / Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministry for volunteers) or his/her designee.
4. Prior to an event, the beginning of each new school year, and when employees are hired, the Policy Supervisor shall work in with the Director of Children, Youth, & Family Ministry and the Office Manager to ensure that checks are completed and up to date for every adult who is/will be involved in the program or staff.
5. A criminal conviction for a sexual offense disqualifies an applicant from working with youth/children/vulnerable adults. Other automatic disqualifiers are

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convictions for incest, rape, assaults involving minors, murder, kidnapping, child pornography, domestic violence to the other parent and physical abuse.

II. CODE OF BEHAVIOR

A. RULES OF GENERAL SUPERVISION FOR ADULTS WORKING WITH YOUTH/CHILDREN/VULNERABLE ADULTS

1. The behavior of adults working with youth/children/vulnerable adults shall reflect the highest standards of Christian maturity, foster trust at all times, and be above reproach. Adults engaged in church-related events or activities with youth/children/vulnerable adults present shall never engage in sexually suggestive behavior or inappropriate touching.
2. Any sexual or sexually suggestive behavior by an adult toward any fellow worker or event participant at a church event where an imbalance of power exists between the acting adult and the other person constitutes an abuse of power. Consent is not a defense to an abuse of power.

Sexual harassment is any unwanted sexual advance, physical or verbal demand, or sexually suggestive behavior which is perceived as demeaning, intimidating or coercive. Prohibited behavior includes unsolicited and unwelcome contact that has sexual or coercive overtones, including:

- a. Sexually suggestive or coercive communication of any kind such as obscene letters, notes or invitations, comments, threats, slurs, epithets, jokes about gender-specific traits or sexual orientation, sexual propositions; wrestling, tickling and back rubs.
 - b. Any bullying or intimidation act whether it is physical contact, such as intentional touching, pinching, brushing against another's body, impeding or blocking movement, assault, coercing sexual intercourse; visual contact, such as leering or staring at another's body, sexually suggestive gesturing, displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, posters, or magazines; or verbal threats, name-calling, or any unwanted gesture.
3. The following guidelines for touching are to be carefully followed by anyone working with youth/children/vulnerable adults:
 - a. Touching should always be initiated by the youth/child/vulnerable adult. The adult should respond to the individual's need for comfort and encouragement and not base touching on their own emotional needs. Appropriate touching by an adult involves holding hands as part of a group activity; touching only the head or shoulders, and/or a side-on or brief hug of the shoulders.

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- b. Touching between an adult and a youth/child/vulnerable adult shall only occur in the presence of other adults.
 - c. A youth/child/vulnerable adult's preference not to be touched should be respected by adults and others. This includes youth to youth, child to child, and vulnerable adult to vulnerable adult.
4. Anytime an adult thinks that their own or another adult's behavior towards a youth/child/vulnerable adult, either touching or verbal, may have been perceived as inappropriate, that adult shall report the behavior to the leader in charge or the Policy Supervisor or Safety Advocate.
5. It is preferred that all interactions with children/youth/vulnerable adults occur in the presence of at least two supervising adults. If this is not possible, the supervising adult shall follow appropriate ratio and "one-on-one" guidelines. In classroom situations, the classroom door shall remain open and there shall be a roamer on premises.
6. All adults shall avoid being alone, one-on-one, with a youth/child/vulnerable adult unless parental permission has been given in writing previously. In cases where it is impossible to avoid direct, one-on-one interactions, the following guidelines shall be observed:
 - a. Private consultations with youth/children/vulnerable adults should be conducted within the sight/supervision of at least one other adult.
 - b. If a private consultation is being conducted in a classroom, there shall be a roamer on premises and the classroom door shall remain open.
 - c. When private consultation is needed between a youth/child/vulnerable adult and an adult, another adult shall be informed of the activity and of the location in which the activity is taking place. The monitoring adult shall strive to ensure that the consultation takes place in a public space within sight of others but not necessarily within hearing range.
 - d. All adults shall avoid one-on-one driving situations with children/youth/vulnerable adults, unless parental permission has been given in writing previously
7. Adults shall respect the privacy of youth/children/vulnerable adults when changing clothing or showering to the extent safety allows. Adults shall not be nude in front of children/youth/vulnerable adults.
8. Youth/children/vulnerable adults shall be supervised at all times by at least one adult who is at least 18 years of age and at least four years older than the oldest youth/child/vulnerable adult who is attending the event as a participant.

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9. When only two adults are required for supervision, the second adult shall not be related, i.e., a spouse, parent, sibling, or child to the first adult.
10. For children under the age of three, there shall be one adult for every four children. For children ages three - 5th grade, there shall be one adult for every six children.
11. *There shall be one adult for every ten youth with middle school events and one adult for every twelve youth with high school events. For combined middle - high school events, middle school ratios will be maintained.*
12. For events involving vulnerable adults, there shall be one adult for every nine vulnerable adults.
13. At an event where middle schoolers are present at least 50% of adults shall be at least 21 or older.
14. Anyone not registered for an registration only event or activity is required to check in and out with the event director.
15. There shall be absolutely no smoking, no drinking of alcohol, use of marijuana, use of illegal drugs, or illicit drugs at or during any church-related activities or events. Any drinking of alcohol or use of illicit or illegal drugs will lead to immediate suspension and removal from the event.
16. Possession of firearms is forbidden.
17. All adults working with youth/children/vulnerable adults shall abide by all laws and regulations applicable to the location of the event.

B. YOUTH/CHILD/VULNERABLE ADULT BEHAVIOR

Prior to any overnight or longer activity or event, youth/children/vulnerable adults shall be required to sign and then abide by a covenant defining appropriate behavior.

III. RESPONSES TO CODE INFRACTIONS AT AN ACTIVITY OR EVENT

A. RESPONDING TO BEHAVIORS THAT HINDER OUR MISSION

In addition to the behaviors that are described above, there are other behaviors that may hinder the mission and purpose of our church or church group. Examples of these incidents include a chaperone that continually undermines program objectives or an event planner who neglects staff training or health and safety concerns, etc. When serious concerns arise:

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1. The event coordinator or leader shall encourage the person raising the concern to talk directly with the person whose behavior is considered detrimental.
2. If the person raising the concern is unwilling or unable to talk directly on their own with the person in question or if the initial conversation is unproductive, then the event coordinator or leader shall meet with the two individuals to seek resolution.
3. If a mutually agreed-upon resolution is not possible, then the event coordinator/leader shall have the authority to prescribe a resolution.
4. Anonymous complaints or evaluations shall be considered unverifiable, and, therefore, will have no foundation for being officially addressed.
5. Persons whose behavior hinders the mission and goals of the ministry or whose negative behavior is repetitive, may face review of their participation in leadership for that behavior by the person or group to whom they are accountable.
6. If the person who is perceived to be hindering the mission is the event coordinator/leader then the person who is raising the concern may report to the Policy Supervisor, pastor, Staff Parish Relations Committee, or person assigned to oversee this leader.
7. The church has the obligation to inform the Annual Conference of all persons whose behavior they deem to be inappropriate for working with youth/children/vulnerable adults. The Conference shall maintain a list of these people in conjunction with the State Patrol forms. The purpose of this list is to screen those who are requesting to work with youth/children/vulnerable adults. The church or Conference is not under obligation to report the reason for placement on the list with anyone other than the accused.

B. RESPONDING TO INCIDENTS INVOLVING PHYSICAL ACCIDENTS

1. The person who witnesses the accident shall share this information with the first aid staff or leader at the event or activity. The first aid staff shall in turn fill out the Accident Report Form, report the incident to the key leaders of the event, and notify the parents of the incident if this is deemed necessary by the first aid staff or leader.
2. The first aid staff and/or the event coordinator/leader is responsible for carefully documenting all aspects of the incident using the Accident/Injury Report form. This report shall be recorded in the log and forwarded immediately to the Policy Supervisor of the church or staff person assigned to oversee this group.
3. The first aid staff and/or the event coordinator/leader is responsible for carefully documenting all aspects of the incident.

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4. The event coordinator/leader shall make contacts as needed with the Conference insurance company and the pastor(s) of the church. This coordinator shall also determine whether there is need for an investigation or additional follow-up.

C. REPORTING ABUSE AND NEGLECT IN THE CHURCH

Staff and volunteers at Aldersgate United Methodist Church, through interactions with children, youth, or vulnerable adults, may find themselves in a position to witness or to discover incidents of actual or suspected abuse and/or neglect. Child Protective Services (CPS) and Adult Protective Services (APS) of the Washington State Department of Social and Health Service are the agencies charged by law to investigate abuse or neglect allegations, in concert with law enforcement agencies if necessary. Suspicions of abuse or neglect of children, youth, or other vulnerable adults **MUST** be reported to the Policy Supervisor and/or event coordinator. If you encounter situations that lead you to suspect that abuse or neglect may have occurred, report it immediately. **DO NOT** investigate on your own; leave that to the professionals who are trained and authorized to conduct such investigations.

At Aldersgate United Methodist Church, the Policy Supervisor and/or event coordinator are the persons to whom reports should be made. These persons shall report allegations or statements immediately to CPS, APS, or law enforcement agencies as appropriate. Legally, clergy are not required to report actual or suspected abuse, but by conscience should choose to do so. Clergy should explain to others who have approached them with reports whether or not they are going to report the incident.

Reports made under these procedures will be kept confidential **BY ALL PARTIES** and will not be released to any party other than proper law enforcement authorities. Records will be maintained in confidential files. Pastors, church staff, District Superintendent, and Bishop will maintain confidentiality of records.

D. RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

1. All reports of abuse shall be treated with utmost seriousness and confidentiality.
2. The highest priority shall be placed on securing the safety of the victim. In no case shall the accused be confronted until the safety of the victim is secured.
3. The person who receives the report of abuse shall immediately share this information with the event coordinator/leader unless the person suspected of abuse is the event leader, then the report should be made to the Policy Supervisor, pastor, or the authorities. The event coordinator/leader or Policy Supervisor is responsible for completing the Alleged Abuse Report Form and for reporting the incident to the key leaders of the event or pastor or authorities.
4. The Policy Supervisor (Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministry) shall be responsible for carefully documenting all aspects of the incident using the Report of Suspected Incident of Abuse. This report shall be forwarded immediately to the pastor.

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5. The person who first hears the allegation of abuse, in partnership with the Policy Supervisor (Pastor), is responsible for reporting to the Child Protective Services or to the appropriate law enforcement agency.
6. The Policy Supervisor (Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministry) shall notify the parents when and if it is clear that it is safe to do so.
7. Any volunteer or hired staff person accused of abuse shall be immediately relieved of duties related to this or any other church event involving youth/children/vulnerable adults and be isolated from further contact with participants, guests and others who may be negatively impacted by the individual's presence until the review process is completed. The individual accused of abuse may not return to these type of duties until the Policy Supervisor has completed a review. This applies whether or not the alleged act of abuse occurred during a church-related event.
8. Whether or not the alleged act occurred during a church-related event, the leader and Policy Supervisor and/or Safety Advocate shall jointly review the incident to determine whether any additional actions are required. They shall also report the incident to appropriate parties (i.e., civil authorities, the Conference insurance company, etc.). All information concerning the incident shall be held in strict confidence by all parties involved.
9. If the incident is put under investigation by appropriate civil authorities, the investigation shall be monitored by the Policy Supervisor (CLT Chairperson) and church officials until there is an outcome. All investigating will be the responsibility of civil authorities.
10. If there is no civil investigation or once the investigation by civil authorities is completed, the Policy Supervisor (CLT Chairperson) and/or leaders shall jointly review the incident to determine whether any further actions are needed.
11. The Policy Supervisor (CLT Chairperson) is responsible for contacting the accused and informing the accused of the nature of the process. The purpose of this meeting is not to interrogate the accused but to discuss the accusation. During meetings with the accused, one other mutually agreed-upon witness shall be present (e.g., a local pastor, district superintendent, the other coordinator, etc.).
12. After conducting a thorough review, the Policy Supervisor (CLT Chairperson) shall report the findings to the accused. If it is determined that the person has committed an act of abuse, the final goal of this process is to establish a future covenant with the offender that regulates his or her behavior at all levels of involvement with the church. This covenant shall include both an agreed-upon record of what offending actions were committed and agreed-upon solutions about what should be done in the future.

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13. If no covenant is established, the accused shall remain removed from working with youth/children/vulnerable adults in the church until mediation is complete.
14. If no covenant is established, the accused may pick one mediator, and the Policy Supervisor (CLT Chairperson) another mediator. These two mediators will then pick a third mediator, and these three people, combined with the accused and the Policy Supervisor, will come to a decision. The mutually-agreed upon mediator will serve as the facilitator for this group.
15. The covenant that governs participation in church-related youth/children/vulnerable adults events shall clearly state that failure to abide by the provisions of the covenant process shall result in permanent removal from working with youth/children/vulnerable adults in the church.
16. All documentation relating to the incident shall be confidentially filed in the Policy Supervisor's (Office Manager) locked files.
17. A list shall be maintained in conjunction with the State Patrol forms at the church and Conference office of those who may not participate in related events involving youth/children/vulnerable adults. The purpose of this list is to screen those who are requesting to work with youth/children/vulnerable adults. The church or Conference is not under obligation to report the reason for placement on the list with anyone other than the accused.
18. If a person is under some form of removal due to violation of any of these policies/guidelines and fails to report the same to a local church when initiating a desire to work with youth/children/vulnerable adults, that person shall be permanently removed from working with youth/children/vulnerable adults at all UMC events.
19. The church's obligations to respond to allegations of abuse go beyond the State's requirements. As Christians, we must also be prepared to respond to others:
 - Faithful response to the survivor — take the allegations very seriously, respect the survivor's privacy, provide sympathetic concern, no blaming the survivor, absolutely no implication that the survivor was in any way responsible for causing the abuse.
 - Faithful response to the Annual Conference — notify PNW Conference authorities (District Superintendent, Bishop) as soon as allegations are received; keep them aware of congregation's actions; notify insurance agent.
 - Faithful response to the media — one person must be designated as spokesperson in advance and have a well-thought out, previously written out response.

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- Faithful response to the accused abuser — acknowledge that the person is of sacred worth. Remove *accused* abuser from position as a worker with youth/children/vulnerable adults until allegations are fully investigated and resolved.

E. RESPONDING TO ILLEGAL BEHAVIOR

Any volunteer or hired staff person accused of felonious activity shall be immediately relieved of duties related to this or any other church-sponsored event and shall be isolated from further contact with participants, guests and others who may be negatively impacted by the individual's presence until the review process is completed. If the felonious activity was not committed during a church-related event, then the Policy Supervisor along with the pastor or leader shall have discretion as to whether immediate or remedial action is required following the same procedures as listed above.

(see III.C.1-19). The individual accused of felonious activity may not return to duties until the church leadership has completed a review.

IV. CRISIS COMMUNICATION

1. A copy of this policy shall be kept on file with clergy, program staff persons, and the official designated spokesperson and an alternative chosen by the CLT.
2. The District Superintendent and Bishop shall be informed of all investigations or allegations of abuse.
3. The official designated spokesperson for the church should be a person who can speak calmly and thoughtfully in the glare of publicity; the person should answer questions honestly without adding extra or unnecessary information. They should be given permission to answer questions by saying, "I or we don't know at this time." NO ONE but the spokesperson is authorized to speak on behalf of the congregation. Spokesperson must be prepared to state the church's policy for the prevention of child abuse, the church's concern for the safety of the survivor and all children, and the procedures the church has followed to reduce the risk of abuse. The spokesperson will have a prepared statement or written notes and not speak extemporaneously. The spokesperson will never make any statement indicating that the church does not take the allegation seriously or in any way blame the survivor.

ALDERSGATE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
VULNERABLE Population SAFE CHURCH Guidelines

AUMC Youth, Children, Vulnerable Adult Safe Church Policy Verification

All staff of both AUMC and ACP, SPR, Trustees, CLT Chairperson and all Sunday School Teachers shall sign this Safe Church Policy.

I, the undersigned, have thoroughly read through the *AUMC Youth, Children, Vulnerable Adult Safe Church Policy*, and agree to fully abide by its guidelines and procedures.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Safe Church Guideline Positions

Policy Supervisor: *Currently Open*

Safety Advocate: *Currently Open*

Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministry: *Jen Hoerber*

Office Manager: *Aya Sato*

Pastoral Staff: *Pastor Wongee Joh*

CLT Chairperson: *Joe Lee*

Official Designated Spokesperson (Trustee Chairperson): *Rich Detering*