Safe Church Policy and Procedures Concerning Abuse Prevention

Policy Prohibiting Abuse, Exploitation and Harassment

- Statement of Policy
- Ministerial Conduct
- Ministerial Code of Conduct for Protection of Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adults
- Definitions

Procedures Prohibiting Abuse, Exploitation and Harassment

- Commencing and Continuing Ministry

  Requirements for Authorized Minister, Employees and Governing Body Leaders

  - Before beginning their duties, all Governing Body will submit an authorized volunteer application/disclosure form (Exhibit A).
  - Authorized ministers and employees will complete an employment application (Exhibit B) and employment disclosure form (Exhibit C).
  - Prior to being presented as a nominee to the congregation, Governing Body leaders will be personally interviewed by a member of the People Team to assess the suitability of their character and qualifications for the position they seek.
  - Candidates being considered for paid employment will be personally interviewed by an interview team to assess the suitability of their character and qualifications for the position they seek.
  - Prior to extending an employment offer, reference checks will be completed with current and previous employers.
  - The church will conduct a registered sex offender review for employees, authorized ministers, and ministers working regularly with vulnerable persons, children and youth by searching their name on the Department of Justice website at www.nsopr.gov. Searches will be completed for any state where the applicant has resided during the past seven (7) years. This registered sex offender review will be repeated on an annual basis.

Additional Requirements for Vulnerable Persons, Child and Youth Ministry

Peace United Church of Christ is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment in which young people can learn about and experience God’s love. In order to promote this, we have established the following guidelines in addition to the general requirements for ministers who regularly work with children and youth ministry as well as those working with vulnerable persons of the church. This includes, but is not limited to, teachers, chaperones for overnight stays, employees, youth leaders, nursery assistants, shepherd’s assistants, and members of the care partners circle.

- We expect that those who volunteer to work with minors will have been members of
Peace United Church of Christ for at least six months or, if not members, regularly and frequently associated with Peace United Church of Christ for at least a year (12 consecutive months).

- Before beginning their duties, all employees, authorized ministers, and ministers working regularly with vulnerable persons, children and youth will submit an authorized children and youth volunteer application/disclosure form (Exhibit D).

- The church will conduct a registered sex offender review for employees, authorized ministers, and ministers working regularly with vulnerable persons, children and youth by searching their names on the Department of Justice website at www.nsopr.gov. Searches will be completed for any state where the applicant has resided during the past seven (7) years. This registered sex offender review will be repeated on an annual basis.

- Written permission to conduct a background check shall be obtained from each applicant prior to executing the check. Background checks also include:
  - Multistate criminal records search
  - Social security number trace
  - County criminal records search for every county where the applicant has lived or worked for the past seven years

- Driving or motor vehicle records check if the person may be transporting children or youth.

**Requirements for Transferring Ministers**

- Ministers who transfer within the United Church of Christ of Missouri and apply for or are asked to or who do undertake a minister position are required to undergo the same requirements outlined in the above section (Commencing and Continuing Ministry). This requirement may be met through a transfer of a copy of their personnel file to Peace United Church of Christ.

- **Training and Education Requirements**

  - Child abuse prevention education and training is required for all ministers who regularly work with or around children or youth before they start their work with children or youth or, if that is not possible, child abuse awareness training before they start their work and the rest of the training within three months of starting.
  
  - All volunteers and employees who occasionally work with children and youth will receive orientation regarding safe church policy and procedures.
  
  - Authorized ministers of the church will attend all boundary workshops required by UCC Mid-South Conference, or will attend at least one workshop on this topic every three years, whichever is more frequent.

- **Monitoring and Supervision**

  - Program Guidelines
  - Minister Supervision and Behavioral Guidelines
  - Counseling Requirements for Authorized Ministers and Ministers
- Registered Sex Offender Policy
  - Policy
  - Approval & Supervision

- Responding to Problems
  - Reporting and Responding to Inappropriate Behaviors or Policy Violations
  - Reporting Suspected Abuse or Neglect of Children or Youth
  - Procedures for Handling Complaints of Sexual Exploitation or Harassment

- Roles and Responsibilities

**Forms**

- Exhibit A - Peace United Church of Christ Authorized Volunteer Application and Disclosure Form
- Exhibit B - Peace United Church of Christ Employment Application
- Exhibit C - Peace United Church of Christ Employment Disclosure Form
- Exhibit D - Peace United Church of Christ Authorized Children and Youth Volunteer Application and Disclosure Form
- Exhibit E – Peace UCC Covenant for Children/Youth
- Exhibit F – Peace UCC Covenant for Parent/Guardian of Children/Youth
- Exhibit G – Guidelines for Appropriate Affection
- Exhibit H – Guidelines for Electronic Media Usage
- Exhibit I – Medical Release Form
- Exhibit J – Transportation Release Form
- Exhibit K – Confidential Notice of Concern