

SAFE SANCTUARIES LOCAL CHURCH ACCOUNTABILITY FORM

Use the following list to help your congregation assess its policy needs for the prevention of child abuse in your church. Read each statement, and mark the appropriate response in the column to the right. By completing the form, you will be able to see at a glance the areas needing attention.

STATEMENT	YES	NO	UNSURE
BACKGROUND & REFERENCE CHECKS: We screen and check references for all adults, volunteer or paid persons, whether laity or clergy, who have any direct or indirect contact with children, youth or vulnerable adults who participate in any activities or events sponsored by our church.			
SIX-MONTH RULE: All of our volunteers who have direct or indirect contact with children, youth or vulnerable adults who participate in any activities or events sponsored by our church have been affiliated with the church for at least 6 months prior to volunteering.			
TRAINING: We train at least annually all volunteer and/or paid workers with children, youth, or vulnerable adults in how to carry out our policies to prevent abuse and to recognize indicators of abuse.			
TWO-ADULT RULE: We utilize the “two-adult rule” during all children, youth or vulnerable adult activities or events sponsored by our church. For large groups we require at least one adult chaperone for every six children to actively supervise the participants.			
RULE OF THREE: When the two-adult rule cannot be implemented, we use the Rule of Three. This requires at least 3 individuals (at least one being an adult) be present during activities.			
FIVE YEAR REQUIREMENT: We do not allow anyone to supervise children who is not at least five years older than the children or youth with whom he/she is working.			
VISIBILITY: Each room or space where children, youth or vulnerable adults are being cared for has a window in the door or the door is left open during activities or events.			
REPORTING: We have a clear reporting procedure for a suspected incident of abuse that follows the requirements of our policy and the state law.			
RESPONSE PLAN: We have a clearly defined response plan to be implemented in case an allegation of abuse is made against someone in our church.			
COMMITMENT: We take our policies to prevent abuse seriously, and we are committed to their enforcement for the safety and security of all our children, youth and the adults who work with them.			
POLICY: We have reviewed and submitted our full policy to our District Superintendent (see explanation on next page).			

APPROVED AT THE 2022 ANNUAL CONFERENCE SESSION: Every local church shall revisit and update as necessary their Safe Sanctuaries policy by Dec. 31, 2023. Every local church shall provide a copy of their policy to their District Superintendent at their annual charge conference meeting in the Fall of 2022 or 2023. The Conference policy can serve as a guide for local churches. We strongly encourage churches to consider adding a section for technology and social media use best practices. In addition, we recommend churches contact their insurance provider to ensure necessary coverage and language in their policy. Additional resources can be found at www.sgaumc.org/safesanctuaries.