

**Jefferson Avenue Presbyterian Church**  
**“Keep our Children and Youth Safe” Policy**  
**For Employees and Volunteers who work with Children and Youth**

The church must do all that it can to prevent any harm coming to our children when they have been entrusted to church employees and volunteers. In response, the Session has developed this “Keep our Children and Youth Safe” policy to evaluate, instruct, monitor and protect child care/youth workers (employed or volunteer) at Jefferson Avenue Presbyterian Church.

**1. The Purpose for a “Keep our Children and Youth Safe” Policy for Child Care/Youth Workers in the Church.**

The purpose of this policy is to strengthen screening procedures for, and supervision of, child care and/or youth workers and to establish procedures for responding to accusations and situations of suspected sexual/physical/verbal misconduct. This policy is also intended to protect the confidentiality of all involved.

The Presbytery of Detroit is strongly urging each of its member churches to develop appropriate policies for this area of congregational life.

**2. Essential Elements of the “Keep our Children and Youth Safe” Policy for Child Care/Youth Workers**

**A. Screening Process (risk reduction and reducing likelihood of negligence)**

1. Confirm identity of new or unknown person(s)
  - a. Driver's license
  - b. Other photographic identification
2. Administer application form(s) (see appendix)
  - a. Ask confidential questions about any sexual harassment, molestation or abuse of a minor
  - b. Include signed statement indicating that the applicant has read, understands and is willing to uphold the church's “Keep our Children and Youth Safe” policy
3. Follow up with reference checks
  - a. Request 2 non-family references
  - c. Contact previous places of employment in which person worked with youth and make written record of conversations
4. Background check
  - a. Request confidential police background checks of potential child care/youth workers 18 years and older
  - b. Check interstate computer networks to discover if there is any previous sexual/physical/verbal misconduct with children/youth

**B. Supervision**

1. Apprise child care/youth workers of “Keep our Children and Youth Safe” policy
  - a. Distribute and go over policy upon hiring
  - b. Review periodically
2. Non-teaching adult staff member will periodically visit each classroom unannounced during class time.
3. Educate child care/youth workers about signs and symptoms of potential sexual/physical/verbal abuse.

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### C. Responding to Accusations and Suspected Problems

1. Report any suspicions (noting time, location and circumstances,) in writing to Director of Children and Youth Ministries, Pastor, or Chair of Children and Youth Ministries committee or Personnel Committee
2. Remove immediately a child care/youth worker if a child abuse accusation is made against him/her.
  - c. Reinstatement is dependent upon outcome of investigation into the allegations
  - d. An employee's salary will be continued until the investigation/action is complete
3. Immediate response by the supervisor
  - a. Written interview of alleged victim(s)
  - b. Contact pastor and Session to apprise of situation
  - c. Contact church's General Counsel to appraise the situation
  - d. Contact church's insurance carrier to document the situation
  - e. Contact local civil authorities to document the event
  - f. Keep written log of specific steps taken to deal with situation
4. Extended response to the situation
  - a. Response team called into active service by the contacted Elder, Director or Pastor
  - b. Members of response team to include the following: pastor/head of staff, two members of the Session, the church's General Counsel and the chair of Children and Youth Ministries and/or Personnel and Administration committees
  - c. Under guidance of pastor/head of staff, General Counsel, insurance carrier and civil authorities, the response team will conduct preliminary investigation into allegations, recommend appropriate action(s) to the Session with regard to the situation and appoint a sole spokesperson

### 3. The Administration of this Policy

Ultimately, the responsibility for the implementation of this policy lies with the Session. It is appropriate, however, for the Session to delegate the administration of this policy to the Children and Youth Ministries Committee and the church's professional staff.

All allegations of sexual/physical/verbal abuse by a child care/youth worker shall be brought to the confidential attention of the Session, the head of staff, the church's General Counsel, the church's insurance carrier and the appropriate civil authorities.

Every attempt shall be made to maintain the confidentiality of all involved.

### 4. Acknowledgement

I, \_\_\_\_\_ have read and understood this "Keep our Children and Youth Safe" Policy.  
(print name)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Duplicate – Give Copy to Signer and keep original**

Please complete and return in a sealed envelope with a copy of your Driver's License.

## Jefferson Avenue Presbyterian Church "Keep our Children and Youth Safe" Information Form For Volunteers working with Children and Youth

The disturbing and traumatic rise of physical and sexual abuse of children has claimed the attention of our nation and Society. The following policies reflect our commitment to provide protective care of all children, youth, and volunteers who participate in church sponsored activities.

- a. Any person who has been convicted of either child sexual or physical abuse should not volunteer service in any church activity or program for children or youth.
- b. A survivor of childhood sexual or physical abuse needs the love and acceptance of this church family. An individual with such a history should discuss his/her desire to work with children or youth with the Pastor/Head of Staff before engaging in any volunteer service.
- c. A volunteer should immediately report to their supervisor any behaviors that seem abusive or inappropriate

This form is to be completed by all volunteers for any position involving the supervision or custody of minors. It is used to help the church provide a safe and secure environment for those children and youth who participate in our programs and use our facilities.

### PERSONAL

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First Middle.

Present Address. \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Nos. Work ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Home ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

What type of youth or children's work do you prefer? Please explain:

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What is the date you would be available to begin \_\_\_\_\_

What is the minimum length of commitment you can make? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a crime involving children or youth? \_\_\_No \_\_\_Yes (If yes, please explain. (attach a separate page, if necessary)

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**Volunteer Information Form (continued, page 2)**

Do you have a current Driver's License? \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_ Yes

If yes, please list your Driver's License number \_\_\_\_\_

**Church History and Prior Youth Work**

Name of Church of which you are a member \_\_\_\_\_

List (name and address) of churches, other than JAPC, you have attended regularly during the past five years.

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List all previous church work involving youth (list each church's name and address, work performed, and dates)

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List all previous non-church work involving youth (list organization's name and address, work performed, and dates)

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List any gifts, callings, training, education, or other factors that have prepared you for children or youth work

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**Two Personal References** (not former employers or relatives)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

**Volunteer Information Form (continued, page 3)**

As a church volunteer, do you agree to observe all church policies regarding working with children or youth?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No

**Volunteer Affidavit**

The information contained in this form is correct to the best of my knowledge. I authorize any references or churches listed in this form to give you any information (including opinions) that they may have regarding my character and fitness for children or youth work.

In consideration of the receipt and evaluation of this form by Jefferson Avenue Presbyterian Church, I hereby release any individual, church, youth organization, charity, employer, reference, or any other person or organization, including record custodians, both collectively and individually, of any and all liability for damages of whatever kind or nature which may at any time result to me, my heirs, or family, on account of compliance or any attempts to comply, with this authorization.

I waive any right that I may have to inspect any information provided about me by any person or organization identified by me in this form.

I agree to be bound by the Bylaws and policies of Jefferson Avenue Presbyterian Church and to refrain from unscriptural conduct in the performance of my services on behalf of the church.

I further state that I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THE FOREGOING RELEASE AND KNOW THE CONTENTS THEREOF AND I SIGN THIS RELEASE AS MY OWN FREE ACT. I acknowledge that this is a legally binding agreement that I have read and that I do understand.

Volunteer's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Witness \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Witness \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Jefferson Avenue Presbyterian Church**  
**“Keep our Children and Youth Safe” Information Form**  
**For Potential Church Employees**

This is not an employment application form. Persons seeking a position in the church as a paid employee will be required to complete an employment application in addition to this screening form

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First Middle.

Present Address. \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Nos. Work ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Home ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

The disturbing and traumatic rise of physical and sexual abuse of children has claimed the attention of our church, nation and Society. The following policies reflect our commitment to provide protective care of all children, youth, volunteers and employees who participate in church sponsored activities.

An individual who has been convicted of child sexual or physical abuse should not seek employment in any church activity or program where children or youth are present.

An applicant wishing to secure employment to work with, or around, youth and children is required to submit to a police background investigation and other reference checks.

An employee working with children should observe the "two person" rule. This requires that an adult employee is never alone with children or youth without an adult partner.

Employees should immediately report to their Supervisor and/or Pastor/Head of Staff any behavior that seems abusive or inappropriate.

**Please Answer Each Question. Your Response will be Kept Fully Confidential.**

1. As a church employee, do you agree to observe all church policies regarding working with children or youth?  
\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No
2. Have you ever been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a crime involving children or youth?  
\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No
3. Have you read, understand and agree to abide by the church's "Protect our Children and Youth" Policy?  
\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No
4. Do you have a current Driver's License? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

If yes, please list your Driver's License number \_\_\_\_\_

**Two Personal References** (not former employers or relatives)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

(Over)

### **Applicant Affidavit**

This information contained in this form is correct to the best of my knowledge. I authorize any employment or personal references to give you any information (including opinions) that they may have regarding my character and fitness to work with, or be around, children and youth.

In consideration of the receipt and evaluation of this form by Jefferson Avenue Presbyterian Church, I hereby release any individual, church, youth organization, charity, employer, reference, or any other person or organization, including record custodians, both collectively and individually, of any and all liability for damages of whatever kind or nature which may at any time result to me, my heirs, or family, on account of compliance or any attempts to comply, with this authorization.

I waive any right that I may have to inspect any information provided about me by any person or organization identified by me in this form.

I agree to be bound by the Bylaws and policies of Jefferson Avenue Presbyterian Church and to refrain from immoral and illegal conduct in the performance of my services on behalf of the church.

I further state that I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THE FOREGOING RELEASE AND KNOW THE CONTENTS THEREOF AND I SIGN THIS RELEASE AS MY OWN FREE ACT. I acknowledge that this is a legally binding agreement that I have read and that I do understand.

Applicant Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Witness \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Witness \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Jefferson Avenue Presbyterian Church  
PERSONAL REFERENCE FORM**

Name of Applicant \_\_\_\_\_

Reference's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**TO BE COMPLETED BY PERSONAL REFERENCE**

**Instructions:** The above applicant has applied to work with minors at Jefferson Avenue Presbyterian Church. In order to determine their compatibility with the proposed assignment, we are asking that you take a few minutes to complete this reference form and return it to the church. A pre-addressed, stamped envelope has been provided for your convenience. Thank you for your cooperation.

1. In what capacity do you know the applicant?
2. How long have you known the applicant?
3. On a scale of 1 to 10 (with 1 being a low rating and 10 a high rating) please rate the applicant on each of the following characteristics. If you have insufficient knowledge to comment on a particular characteristic, please leave it blank.

Characteristic	Rating	Comments
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ability to work well with others

personal motivation & initiative

dependability

trustworthiness

attitude

pride in one's work

personal follow-through

religious commitment

4. Are you aware of any facts or characteristics demonstrating that the applicant should not be considered by our church to work with minors?  Yes  No If yes, please explain. (Use extra paper if necessary)

5. Based on your knowledge of the applicant's character and background, which of the following best reflects your evaluation of the applicant's suitability for working with minors:

Highly recommend  Recommend  Neutral  Do not recommend  No opinion

Please provide any additional comments concerning the suitability of this applicant below or on a separate sheet of paper. Thank you for your time and input.

I signify by my signature that the information I have provided is true to the best of my recollection.

\_\_\_\_\_



Signature

Date

**Send completed form to:**

**Personnel & Administration Committee  
Jefferson Avenue Presbyterian Church,  
8625 E. Jefferson Avenue, Detroit, MI 48214**

**If you have questions, contact us at: (313) 822-3456**

