

# Child Protection Policy

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Vienna Presbyterian Church

September 1, 2018

**Vienna Presbyterian Church  
Child Protection Policy**

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# **Vienna Presbyterian Church Child Protection Policy**

## **I. PURPOSE, APPLICABILITY, & SCOPE**

### *Purpose*

This policy supersedes all prior VPC children and youth protection policy statements effective upon its adoption by Vienna Presbyterian Church (VPC).

The purpose of the Child Protection Policy (CPP) is to do all that is reasonably possible to protect children from abuse while participating in VPC activities, and to direct procedures for responding to reported allegations and concerns regarding these types of abuse and misconduct.

### *Applicability and Scope*

This policy is intended to protect individuals under the age of 18, 18-year-olds still in high school, and Vulnerable Adults (defined as a person 18 years of age or older with a functional, physical, or mental inability to care for himself/herself), who are participating in activities or programs at VPC or off-campus at an activity sponsored by VPC.

This policy governs all VPC pastors, employees, church officers, volunteers of VPC, preschool staff, independent contractors of VPC who may have direct contact with any of those protected by this policy, all leaders of VPC-sponsored events, and any non-VPC sponsored groups or events using VPC facilities where there is any direct supervisory interaction with those protected by this policy. All such individuals are expected to abide by this policy, will be screened, and will be required to complete training on protecting children from abuse and sexual misconduct. Failure to abide by this policy may result in the termination of employment and/or volunteer service (see Appendix C: Procedures).

The Safety & Security Committee shall have oversight of the CPP and review the policy annually.

## **II. APPROPRIATE INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS**

As employees and volunteers for VPC, you are held to a higher standard by parents, colleagues, and members of the public. We support and endorse a strict policy of respect toward children and vulnerable adults and expect employees and volunteers to act at all times as role models.

At no time during any VPC-sponsored event/program, may any employee or volunteer be alone with a child or children where the employee or volunteer and the child or children are not readily visible to others. VPC adheres to the Two-Adult Policy which means that there must be at least two non-related adult employees and/or volunteers present to supervise all VPC-sponsored programs, classes, or events, whether on or off campus. At no time should an employee or volunteer be alone with an unrelated child without another child, volunteer, or

employee present. The policy is designed for the safety of adults as well as children and Vulnerable Adults, and it is required across all ministry areas with few exceptions, as set forth in Appendix C.

Employees and volunteers should never touch a child in a manner that is sexually explicit, for purposes of sexual gratification or that may otherwise constitute abuse (sexual or otherwise). Further, employees and volunteers should never physically move, grab, or touch a child, or take something from a child, with aggression or because of frustration. This includes, but is by no means limited to, a complete prohibition on corporal punishment of any kind.

If a child does not follow directions as expected, you should communicate clearly your instructions and, if the child does not listen or respond appropriately, you should take appropriate action, which could include any number of responses, such as separating the child from the group; walking up to the child and ensuring that the child clearly sees you communicate with her/him; removing the child from the activity; communicating with the parent after the event, etc. In keeping with these goals, redirection, encouragement, and positivity should be used over criticism, comparison, and negativity. Employees and volunteers are expected to be mindful of both the tone and language used in communicating with children. They deserve our respect and kindness, and verbal abuse, derogatory remarks, and profanity are not permitted.

While we are dealing with young children who may require physical assistance in their daily endeavors (e.g., hand-holding), it is essential that we be extremely thoughtful about personal space, boundaries, and appropriate contact. When engaging in physical contact with a child, please consider how you can adjust the situation to avoid any negative impingement on boundaries—or even the appearance of same. Even minor tweaks in your physical conduct can have a major impact on both the feeling and appearance of safety, which protects both you and the child (e.g., consider the position of your respective bodies during a hug and consider front-to-front hug alternatives, such as “side hugs,” pats on the back, high fives, and fist bumps). Refrain, where possible, from touching areas of the child’s body that would otherwise be covered by a bathing suit or undergarments; this includes a prohibition on patting a child’s bottom.

In addition to our own self-awareness, we must be aware that the needs of children may differ—if a child indicates to you, through words or otherwise, that your presence or touch is imposing or uncomfortable to him or her, please respect that child’s needs and find a way to provide space, adjust the physical circumstances, and reinforce the feeling of safety and security and physical comfort for the child. The tenets in this policy should guide your interactions with children, but also with your peers and other adults in the community. The child’s feeling(s) of safety are also dictated by what they observe you doing with and around others.

Avoid favoritism and the appearance of same by avoiding such individualized attention [e.g., gifts, favors, nicknames, or other actions which may single a child out as preferred (or, which may also run the risk of making that child feel uncomfortable)]. (see Appendix C: Procedures – Guidelines for Working with Children for additional information.)

Communication sent digitally by employees or volunteers is not confidential and may be shared or reposted to be visible to others. Electronic and social media communication formats are subject to the usage and privacy policies of the social media outlet provider, and those policies are subject to change without notice. Interaction in the virtual world should be transparent and should not have hidden or veiled messaging or intent. Volunteers and employees should adhere to these principles to the greatest extent possible.

For communication not associated with specific ministry programs that is based upon relationships developed at VPC, volunteers and employees must seek the approval of a child's parent or guardian prior to responding to a child-initiated communication.

VPC shall not publish or post photos, videos, or audio recordings, or identify a children and/or vulnerable adult by name in print and/or digital media if the parent/guardian has signed a Media Opt-out Form (Attachment 1) or has opted out through a registration form for a special event.

If you witness, hear, or otherwise learn about a violation of this policy, or other situation that may compromise the safety and respectful environment for our children, please inform a Ministry Director, HR, and/or Director of Operations.

### **III. REPORTING AND RESPONDING**

The safety and security of the children entrusted to our care is of primary importance. This policy is created to ensure that all children are safe from harm and injury that may be caused by the action or inaction with adults who are charged with their care.

#### *Allegations of Child Abuse*

VPC is committed to complying with the laws addressing abuse and neglect of children. Virginia law (Appendix B) designates individuals in certain occupations and professions as "mandated reporters." Mandated reporters who know or have reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been or is in immediate danger of being abused or neglected is obligated to report suspected abuse or neglect to the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline. VPC expects all its employees and volunteers – and not just mandated reporters – to immediately inform the Director of Operations of any suspicions of child abuse or neglect. If an allegation or concern is expressed about anyone involved in the reporting process, that person shall be omitted from this process. An Incident Report Form (Attachment 2) will be filed confidentially with Human Resources. As needed, the VPC Response Team will develop a Plan of Action.

VPC recognizes the exemption from reporting child abuse or sexual misconduct directed toward a child set forth in Va. Code Section 63.2-1509A (see Appendix B). As required under this policy, VPC's pastors must report all other incidents of child abuse or sexual misconduct.

Abuse and or neglect may be imposed by a parent/guardian or other adults in the child's life, such as an older sibling, relative or friend of the family. Unfortunately, such abuse or neglect could also be caused by a VPC employee or volunteer. In all of these situations, VPC will act in compliance with the law as well as in a manner that is responsive to the needs of the child and others involved in the matter.

While VPC is committed to acting in compliance with the law, there may exist family circumstances or other factors that may be confidential and therefore not known to all employees or volunteers but should be considered in determining how and when to report to the local department of social services. For example, if the VPC is notified that one parent has very limited visiting rights and may be inclined to abduct the child should those rights be challenged, VPC will want to make certain that the local department of social services is made aware of the concern of abduction and/or that, prior to reporting, the child is in the hands of the other parent or safe adult. In

addition, on occasion incidents exist that on their own, do not create the need to report, but when put together established a clear picture of inappropriate – or even illegal – conduct and are subject to the mandatory reporting obligations.

#### *Boundary Issues and Other Concerns*

Any behaviors that affect the nurturing and safety of children during VPC-sponsored activities that do not fall into the category of abuse or sexual misconduct must be reported. The report shall be made to the appropriate ministry director, a pastor, Human Resources or the Director of Operations. An Incident Report Form (Attachment 2) shall be filed confidentially with Human Resources. As needed, the VPC Response Team will develop a Plan of Action. Custody arrangements and restraining orders will be followed at all times, and a copy of the arrangement or order must be filed with the ministry director.

#### *Confidentiality*

For allegations of child abuse or sexual misconduct, and for boundary issues and other concerns, every effort shall be made to protect the identities of the people involved in a report, and all reported concerns shall be kept confidential to the extent allowed by law. Copies shall not be made of any Incident Report Form, unless the names and any identifying information are redacted. The VPC Response Team and Session shall receive reports with names withheld.

#### *Incident Reports and Process*

Incident Reports must be completed immediately for any injuries on church property or VPC-sanctioned events offsite, any safety issues, any concerns regarding inappropriate behaviors or boundary crossings, or any suspicions or allegations of abuse or neglect. The Safety & Security Committee will provide oversight and monthly monitoring of all Incident Reports involving children and vulnerable adults.

If a report of abuse, sexual misconduct, or boundary crossing involves children and/or vulnerable adults, the VPC Response Team will be called upon to develop a Plan of Action. If an Incident Report concerning a minor or vulnerable adult is determined to be repetitive behavior or symptomatic of a greater concern, the VPC Response Team will be called upon to review the circumstances and develop a Plan of Action. The VPC Response Team will report a summary of the Plan of Action to the full Safety & Security and to Session in redacted form.

VPC prohibits retaliation against any employee or volunteer who reports a good faith concern pursuant to this policy and/or participated in an investigation regarding same.

### **IV. MAINTAINING A RESPONSIBLE & REDEMPTIVE ENVIRONMENT**

At VPC, we seek to live in covenant with God and with one another, and we seek to be a redemptive community to all who participate. Known offenders shall receive the normal pastoral care afforded to any congregant. At no time will a known offender be allowed to interact with children or vulnerable adults.

### **VII. CODE OF CONDUCT**

#### *VPC Pastors, Employees, and Volunteers*

1. Will endeavor to provide appropriate emotional, physical, and spiritual support and care to any child and/or vulnerable adult as defined herein.

2. Will not verbally, emotionally, physically, spiritually, or sexually abuse any child.
3. Will not discipline children by the use of physical punishment or by failing to provide reasonable oversight or care.
4. May use physical restraint only in situations necessary to protect a child or others from harm.
5. Will provide supervision and exercise sound judgment to provide as safe an environment as is reasonably possible.
6. Will observe the Two-Adult Policy in interactions with children as defined in Section IV, "Guidelines for Working with Children."
7. Will not use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, or be impaired by legally prescribed drugs when involved in church-sponsored programs.
8. Will not smoke or use tobacco during church activities. VPC is a smoke-free facility.
9. Will not give individual gifts to VPC children or vulnerable adults without the knowledge and permission of the parent or legal guardian and the appropriate ministry employee.
10. Exhibit a Christian lifestyle in and outside of the church.

## VIII. GLOSSARY

**Adult:** an individual 18 years of age and older.

**Boundary Crossings:** inappropriate behaviors that affect the nurturing and safety of the children and vulnerable adults under VPC's protection. These may include but are not limited to safety issues; inappropriate language, dress, or behavior; substance abuse; and unwise or unsafe decisions.

**Child:** a person considered a minor under the law of the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Commonwealth of Virginia considers anyone under the age of 18 to be a minor. Those whose mental capacity is that of a minor or who are deemed to be legally incompetent shall also be considered as a child for the purposes of this policy. Additionally, for the purposes of this policy, protections will apply to all youth through high school, regardless of age.

**Child Abuse:** a non-accidental injury or pattern of injury to a child inflicted by an adult. Child abuse may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- **Emotional Abuse:** a persistent pattern of behavior by an adult that unreasonably endangers the mental health or emotional development of a child. Examples include ignoring, terrorizing, corrupting, constantly criticizing, constantly demeaning, insulting, or withholding love, guidance, or support on a sustained basis.
- **Neglect:** this occurs when adults responsible for the wellbeing of a child fail to provide reasonable care or oversight for the child. Neglect may include, but is not limited to, the adult responsible not providing the child with sufficient food, clothing, or shelter; failing to keep the child reasonably clean; failing to supervise the child appropriately; failing to act reasonably to protect the child from harm by others; or unreasonably withholding medical care.
- **Physical Abuse:** an injury or pattern of injuries inflicted by an adult on a child that is not accidental. These injuries may include, but are not limited to, swelling, bite marks, cuts, bruises, welts, or any similar pattern injury. It also includes asphyxiation, bone fractures, burns, imprisonment, or death.
- **Sexual Abuse:** the sexual assault or exploitation of a child by an adult. This includes, but is not limited to, any contact or interaction between a child and an adult where the child is being used for the sexual gratification of the adult or of a third person or where the child is being subjected to sexually explicit materials. Sexual abuse may involve numerous acts over a long period of time or may be a single incident. This behavior may or may not involve touching, such as unwanted hugging, inappropriate holding, kissing, or unwanted sexual advances.
- **Sexual Misconduct:** any act of a sexual nature committed by anyone against a minor, including sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct including any type of communication of an intimidating, hostile, or offensive nature.
- **Spiritual Abuse:** using religious references to motivate a child to become involved in a particular action or behavior otherwise prohibited above.

**Child Protective Services (CPS):** a state regulated agency that validates, investigates, and assesses reports of child abuse and neglect in accordance with state statutes.

**Church Officers:** ruling elders, deacons, and other officers designated by the Book of Order. They are not employees of Vienna Presbyterian Church.

**Church-Sponsored Activity:** any gathering either on or off VPC campus that is organized by VPC staff or volunteers. This includes but is not limited to worship, fellowship, retreats, and educational, administrative, pastoral, missional, or recreational events.

**Criminal Background Check:** an investigation of someone's past to assess their character and protect our children and youth. Criminal background checks will include all or some of the following: a Social Security number verification, a National Criminal File search, a Federal Criminal search, a State Criminal File search, County Court searches, and any Sexual Offender Registry available from those places where an individual may have worked or lived since attaining majority.

**Director of Operations:** the person responsible for overseeing the administration of the church.

**Employee:** the comprehensive term for a person who is officially offered and agrees to perform work on a part-time or fulltime basis in exchange for compensation and whose wages are reported on a W-2.

**Human Resources:** the office responsible for managing all provisions of the child protection policy; assisting staff with any safety issues dealing with children and vulnerable adults; tracking training and screening for all volunteers and employees; and housing incident report forms and convening the VPC Response Team, if necessary.

**Independent Contractor:** a person who is officially offered and agrees to perform work or services for VPC in exchange for consideration, whose payment is reported on IRS Form 1099.

**Ministry Director:** the person responsible for planning, developing, and overseeing their respective program at VPC. Examples include the Director of Engagement, Director of Next Gen Ministries, Director of the Preschool, Director of Worship and Music, Director of Missions, and Director of Evangelism.

**Ministry Manager:** a person who is responsible for the day-to-day operation of their respective program that reports to a ministry director. Examples include managers in Childcare, Children's and Student Ministries, and the Worship & Music.

**Ministry Safe:** the VPC-approved sexual abuse prevention-training curriculum. Through the Ministry Safe program, adults and youth are trained to teach children safe and appropriate boundaries and to recognize the dangers and warning signs of abuse. They are also trained on ways to prevent abuse, on the methods of properly reporting suspicions of abuse, and how to respond to allegations of abuse. This training is required bi-annually.

**Pastor:** a person ordained to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament who is called to serve in a particular congregation.

**Plan of Action:** specific strategies prepared by the VPC Response Team during the review of an Incident Report to improve behaviors or situations. The Plan of Action should include information for how the incident will be handled as well as recommended next steps. The VPC Response Team will review the Plan of Action after 90 days for its effectiveness (see Attachment 4 of the CPP).

**Safety & Security Committee:** a committee approved by Session that is charged to enhance the safety and security of Vienna Presbyterian Church; and to ensure the reasonably safe and secure environment for children, youth and vulnerable adults.

**Session:** the body of elders that govern the local church. Session is made up of ruling elders (elected church members) as well as teaching elders (pastors).

**Volunteer:** the term used for those who provide services for children and/or vulnerable adults without benefit or compensation.

**VPC Response Team:** a team of individuals responsible for 1) reviewing Incident Reports that allege abuse or neglect and/or a boundary crossing and 2) creating a Plan of Action. The VPC Response Team shall consist of at least one pastor, a ministry director, Human Resources, Director of Operations, and up to two selected members of the Safety & Security Committee, with legal counsel to be available for consultation. A Safety & Security member shall chair the VPC Response Team.

**Vulnerable Adult:** a person 18 years of age or older with a functional, physical, or mental inability to care for himself/herself.

**Youth Volunteer:** a child, age 16–17 (and 18-year-olds still in high school) who is approved by the Next Gen Director to volunteer or work with children and/or vulnerable adults; and may volunteer and count as an adult in the Adult/Child Ratios. Youth ages 14–15, may volunteer but will not count as an adult in the Adult/Child ratio.

**Youth Employee:** a child, age 16–17 (and 18-year-olds still in high school) who are employed by VPC and approved to work with children and/or vulnerable adults. Youth employees will count as an adult in the Adult/Child ratio.

**Appendix A – CPP Acknowledgment Form**

**Vienna Presbyterian Church  
Child Protection Policy  
Acknowledgment Form**

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Vienna Presbyterian Church Child Protection Policy (CPP) adopted in 2018. I have read the CPP and understand the policy and procedures. If there is any policy or procedure in the CPP that I do not understand, I will seek clarification from Human Resources.

I agree to abide by the principles and policies described in the Vienna Presbyterian Church Child Protection Policy. I understand that failure to do so could lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination of my VPC volunteer services or VPC employment. I also understand that these policies and procedures are continually evaluated and may be amended, modified or terminated at any time.

Please sign and date this form. Return it to Human Resources.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Name (Printed): \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix B – Code of Virginia (Child Abuse and Neglect)**

§ 63.2-1509. Requirement that certain injuries to children be reported by physicians, nurses, teachers, etc.; penalty for failure to report.

A. The following persons who, in their professional or official capacity, have reason to suspect that a child is an abused or neglected child, shall report the matter immediately to the local department of the county or city wherein the child resides or wherein the abuse or neglect is believed to have occurred or to the Department's toll-free child abuse and neglect hotline:

1. Any person licensed to practice medicine or any of the healing arts;
2. Any hospital resident or intern, and any person employed in the nursing profession;
3. Any person employed as a social worker or family-services specialist;
4. Any probation officer;
5. Any teacher or other person employed in a public or private school, kindergarten or nursery school;
6. Any person providing full-time or part-time child care for pay on a regularly planned basis;
7. Any mental health professional;
8. Any law-enforcement officer or animal control officer;
9. Any mediator eligible to receive court referrals pursuant to § 8.01-576.8;
10. Any professional staff person, not previously enumerated, employed by a private or state-operated hospital, institution or facility to which children have been committed or where children have been placed for care and treatment;
11. Any person 18 years of age or older associated with or employed by any public or private organization responsible for the care, custody or control of children;
12. Any person who is designated a court-appointed special advocate pursuant to Article 5 (§ 9.1-151 et seq.) of Chapter 1 of Title 9.1;
13. Any person 18 years of age or older who has received training approved by the Department of Social Services for the purposes of recognizing and reporting child abuse and neglect;
14. Any person employed by a local department as defined in § 63.2-100 who determines eligibility for public assistance;
15. Any emergency medical services provider certified by the Board of Health pursuant to § 32.1-111.5, unless such provider immediately reports the matter directly to the attending physician at the hospital to which the child is transported, who shall make such report forthwith;

16. Any athletic coach, director or other person 18 years of age or older employed by or volunteering with a private sports organization or team;

17. Administrators or employees 18 years of age or older of public or private day camps, youth centers and youth recreation programs; and

18. Any person employed by a public or private institution of higher education other than an attorney who is employed by a public or private institution of higher education as it relates to information gained in the course of providing legal representation to a client.

This subsection shall not apply to any regular minister, priest, rabbi, imam, or duly accredited practitioner of any religious organization or denomination usually referred to as a church as it relates to (i) information required by the doctrine of the religious organization or denomination to be kept in a confidential manner or (ii) information that would be subject to § 8.01-400 or 19.2-271.3 if offered as evidence in court.

If neither the locality in which the child resides nor where the abuse or neglect is believed to have occurred is known, then such report shall be made to the local department of the county or city where the abuse or neglect was discovered or to the Department's toll-free child abuse and neglect hotline.

If an employee of the local department is suspected of abusing or neglecting a child, the report shall be made to the court of the county or city where the abuse or neglect was discovered. Upon receipt of such a report by the court, the judge shall assign the report to a local department that is not the employer of the suspected employee for investigation or family assessment. The judge may consult with the Department in selecting a local department to respond to the report or the complaint.

If the information is received by a teacher, staff member, resident, intern or nurse in the course of professional services in a hospital, school or similar institution, such person may, in place of said report, immediately notify the person in charge of the institution or department, or his designee, who shall make such report forthwith. If the initial report of suspected abuse or neglect is made to the person in charge of the institution or department, or his designee, pursuant to this subsection, such person shall notify the teacher, staff member, resident, intern or nurse who made the initial report when the report of suspected child abuse or neglect is made to the local department or to the Department's toll-free child abuse and neglect hotline, and of the name of the individual receiving the report, and shall forward any communication resulting from the report, including any information about any actions taken regarding the report, to the person who made the initial report.

The initial report may be an oral report but such report shall be reduced to writing by the child abuse coordinator of the local department on a form prescribed by the Board. Any person required to make the report pursuant to this subsection shall disclose all information that is the basis for his suspicion of abuse or neglect of the child and, upon request, shall make available to the child-protective services coordinator and the local department, which is the agency of jurisdiction, any information, records, or reports that document the basis for the report. All persons required by this subsection to report suspected abuse or neglect who maintain a record of a child who is the subject of such a report shall cooperate with the investigating agency and shall make related information, records and reports available to the investigating agency unless such disclosure violates the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. § 1232g). Provision of such information, records, and reports by a health care provider shall not be prohibited by § 8.01-399. Criminal investigative reports received from law-enforcement agencies shall not be further disseminated by the investigating agency nor shall they be subject to public disclosure.

B. For purposes of subsection A, "reason to suspect that a child is abused or neglected" shall include (i) a finding made by a health care provider within six weeks of the birth of a child that the results of toxicology studies of the child indicate the presence of a controlled substance not prescribed for the mother by a physician; (ii) a finding made by a health care provider within six weeks of the birth of a child that the child was born dependent on a controlled substance which was not prescribed by a physician for the mother and has demonstrated withdrawal symptoms; (iii) a diagnosis made by a health care provider at any time following a child's birth that the child has an illness, disease or condition which, to a reasonable degree of medical certainty, is attributable to in utero exposure to a controlled substance which was not prescribed by a physician for the mother or the child; or (iv) a diagnosis made by a health care provider at any time following a child's birth that the child has a fetal alcohol spectrum disorder attributable to in utero exposure to alcohol. When "reason to suspect" is based upon this subsection, such fact shall be included in the report along with the facts relied upon by the person making the report.

C. Any person who makes a report or provides records or information pursuant to subsection A or who testifies in any judicial proceeding arising from such report, records, or information shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability or administrative penalty or sanction on account of such report, records, information, or testimony, unless such person acted in bad faith or with malicious purpose.

D. Any person required to file a report pursuant to this section who fails to do so as soon as possible, but not longer than 24 hours after having reason to suspect a reportable offense of child abuse or neglect, shall be fined not more than \$500 for the first failure and for any subsequent failures not less than \$1,000. In cases evidencing acts of rape, sodomy, or object sexual penetration as defined in Article 7 (§ 18.2-61 et seq.) of Chapter 4 of Title 18.2, a person who knowingly and intentionally fails to make the report required pursuant to this section shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

E. No person shall be required to make a report pursuant to this section if the person has actual knowledge that the same matter has already been reported to the local department or the Department's toll-free child abuse and neglect hotline.

Updated 2014

**Appendix C – CHILD PROTECTION POLICY PROCEDURES**

**CPP Procedures**  
**Vienna Presbyterian Church**

**September 1, 2018**

## **SCREENING PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS**

*See CPP, Section I, Purpose, Applicability, & Scope*

### **Employee Screening**

Please see the VPC Employee Manual for screening procedures. Any candidate for employment who has a past conviction or is pending civil or criminal proceedings involving an allegation of child abuse, neglect, or sexual misconduct shall not be employed by VPC. Any candidate who has been listed on the sex offender registry shall not be employed by VPC.

### **Volunteer Screening**

Adult and youth volunteers who have been active participants at VPC for six months or longer may serve with children or vulnerable adults as defined in the CPP by submitting to a screening process, which consists of the following:

- Completing an application (Attachment 5) that includes a copy of a photo I.D. and three references
- Completing a VPC-approved sexual abuse prevention training prior to serving as a volunteer
- Interviewing with the appropriate ministry staff
- Passing a criminal background check (to be repeated every five years) for applicants age 18 and older

With ministry manager approval, prospective volunteers may observe a class or event up to two times prior to completion of the screening process. During the observation period, the prospective volunteer does not count towards the Two-Adult Policy. Observation periods are not permitted on overnight events.

Any candidate for volunteer service who has a past conviction or pending civil or criminal charges involving an allegation of child abuse, neglect, or sexual misconduct shall not be allowed to volunteer at VPC. Any candidate for volunteer service who has been listed on the sex offender registry shall not be allowed to volunteer at VPC.

### **Independent Contractors**

Contractors hired by VPC who have direct contact with children, youth, or vulnerable adults shall be required to read the CPP and sign the Child Protection Acknowledgment Form (Appendix A) prior to serving under their contract. VPC reserves the right to request a criminal background check. If, through a requested background check or another method of verification, VPC discovers that an independent contractor is listed on the sex offender registry, that contractor shall not be retained by VPC.

### **Leaders of Non-VPC Sponsored Groups & Events Using VPC Facilities**

Leaders of outside groups using VPC facilities must review the CPP and sign the Child Protection Policy Acknowledgement Form (Appendix A) annually as well as the Facilities Use Contract. This includes any group or activity in which children, as defined herein, participate, but it does not include weddings or funerals. VPC reserves the right to request a criminal background check on leaders of non-VPC sponsored groups and events using VPC facilities.

### **Camps, Annual and Special Events, Retreats, and Mission Projects**

The parent or legal guardian of a child attending a camp or Summer Mission Project may attend the trip after completing the screening process as stated above. Parents or legal guardians who are unable to fulfill the

requirement of six months affiliation with VPC must prove involvement with another church for a minimum of six months and have a reference check completed by their current pastor.

### **Tracking for Screening**

Human Resources has overall responsibility for ensuring that all applicable screening steps are completed for volunteers and employees. HR maintains oversight of tracking compliance and houses relevant documents for all employees and volunteers.

Ministry managers are responsible for ensuring that their volunteers are in compliance with screening requirements prior to serving.

## **TRAINING FOR EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS**

*See CPP, Section I, Purpose, Applicability, & Scope*

VPC-approved sexual abuse prevention training (i.e. Ministry Safe) for employees and volunteers must be completed every two years. Ministry specific training should be attended annually.

### **Pastors**

Pastors are responsible for understanding the content of the CPP and having a general knowledge of the related procedures.

- Pastors must be thoroughly familiar with the reporting procedure and their role in it (see *Reporting and Responding Procedures*).
- Whenever they are unavailable, pastors must communicate to staff the person who is their designee for reporting purposes.
- Pastors must complete the VPC-approved sexual abuse prevention training prior to installation, unless they have attended the training within the previous two years. Pastors must repeat sexual abuse prevention training at least every two years.

### **Human Resources (HR)**

Under the supervision of the Director of Operations, HR will stay current regarding the requirements of the Presbytery, the law, and VPC's insurance carrier to track compliance by adhering to the following guidelines:

- Conduct Child Protection training as necessary to keep the staff informed about policy adjustments.
- Work with ministry directors and managers to ensure that the CPP procedures effectively comply with policy.
- Work with ministry directors and managers before special events to review safety procedures, prepare for any special or additional safety concerns an event may require, and track any lessons learned following the event.
- Encourage staff to provide training from outside resources, especially in conjunction with the Safety & Security Committee.
- Have overall responsibility for oversight of tracking compliance with training requirements and house relevant documents for all employees and volunteers

### **Ministry Leaders**

Ministry leaders (i.e. director and/or managers) are to conduct annual ministry specific training for their volunteers. This training includes an overview of the entire CPP and its procedures as they apply to each ministry, as well as other information necessary to carry out programming. The applicable ministry leaders are responsible for tracking annual ministry training of their volunteers. Ministry leaders are responsible for ensuring that their volunteers are in compliance with the CPP and its procedures as they apply to each ministry.

## **Employees**

Employees are responsible for understanding the content of the CPP and how to execute the documented procedures.

- Employees should be trained to be aware of who the designee is for the Director of Operations, pastors, and ministry directors for reporting purposes as well as how to complete an Incident Report Form (Attachment 2).
- Employees should be able to answer questions about the CPP or refer questions to the appropriate ministry staff.
- All employees must complete VPC-approved sexual abuse prevention training within the first week of filling a position, unless they have attended the training within the previous two years. Employees must repeat sexual abuse prevention training at least every two years. Subsequent training may be required.
- Employees must be thoroughly familiar with the *Reporting and Responding Procedures* and their role.
- Employees will be trained in additional areas specific to their ministry.

## **Church Officers**

Church officers must complete VPC-approved sexual abuse prevention training prior to installation, unless they have attended the training within the previous two years. Church officers must repeat sexual abuse prevention training at least every two years. Subsequent training may be required. Church Officers must be thoroughly familiar with the *Reporting and Responding Procedures*.

## **Adult Volunteers and Youth Volunteers**

Volunteers must complete VPC-approved sexual abuse prevention training prior to becoming a volunteer, unless they have attended the training within the previous two years. Volunteers must repeat sexual abuse prevention training at least every two years. Subsequent training may be required. In addition to sexual abuse prevention training, volunteers shall attend annual training for their ministries, which includes a review of the CPP and CPP Procedures as they apply to the ministry, as well as other information necessary to carry out programming.

## **Children**

Children in kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade will receive age-appropriate sexual abuse prevention training and/or program offerings relevant to protecting children and youth annually at VPC. The Children's and Student Ministry Managers are responsible for scheduling this training.

## **GUIDELINES FOR WORKING WITH CHILDREN**

*See CPP, Section II, Appropriate Interactions with Children and Vulnerable Adults*

### **Adult/Child Ratios**

VPC adheres to the following minimum adult to child ratios:

Birth–12 months	1:4
12 months–24 months	1:5
2 years	1:6
3 years–6 years	1:10
7 years–12 years	1:15
12 years–18 years	1:20

The ratios are provided to guide staffing and do not negate the Two-Adult Policy.

### **Two-Adult Policy**

Safe practices are to be observed to the highest degree possible when working with children and/or vulnerable adults at VPC-sponsored events. The Two-Adult Policy means at least two non-related adult employees and/or volunteers must supervise all VPC-sponsored programs, classes, or events whether on or off campus. The adults should be in sight of each other at all times. An employee or volunteer must never be alone with an unrelated child without another child, volunteer, or employee present. If a leader finds him/herself alone with one student for a ministry activity that was planned for a group, the activity should be canceled and the parent notified. Related adults may serve together and fulfill the Two-Adult Policy with Next Gen Director documented approval.

The purpose of the Two-Adult Policy is to ensure the actions of any one leader are known to at least one other leader. The policy is designed for the safety of adults as well as minors and vulnerable adults, it is required across all ministry areas with few exceptions.

### **Exceptions to the Two-Adult Policy**

A leader should never be alone with one student, except in prearranged and approved mentoring meetings. With ministry approval, one adult may meet with a group or child by adhering to the following guidelines:

- ***Communicating with other ministry staff*** – Before the meeting, the leader must provide the ministry manager (or designee) with the name of the student(s), date and time of meeting, location, information on whether the student will be driven by the adult leader, and information on how parental permission was obtained.
- ***Meeting in a visible and/or public location*** – Meetings should take place in a public place (e.g., coffee shop, restaurant, visible park area, etc.) or in a visible area within the church, which has an unobstructed window or open door.

### **Unplanned Situations with Only One Adult**

Occasionally, leaders will find themselves without another adult present due to unforeseen circumstances. If two or more children, students, or vulnerable adults are present, supervision by one adult is acceptable by adhering to the following guidelines:

- ***Communicating with other ministry staff*** – The leader should immediately inform the ministry manager about the situation and include information about location and who is present. The manager will advise the adult leader about what to do (e.g., cancel the activity, proceed with the activity, and notify parents). The adult leader should also immediately contact the manager if the second adult leader arrives or when the students have been released from the activity to their parents.
- ***Meeting in a visible and/or public location*** – Meetings should take place in a visible location with an unobstructed window or open door if indoors. The group leader should be in sight of the entrance so that they are visible from outside the room. Another adult leader should periodically walk by the breakout room to ensure the policies are in effect.

### **Students Serving as Youth Volunteers or Youth Employees**

We encourage senior high school students to serve as volunteers or youth employees for students in younger grades. A youth volunteer or youth employee may count, as one of the adults under the Two-Adult Policy if a non-related adult who is at least 18 and out of high school is also present. It is preferable for the second adult to be a more experienced person who can mentor the youth volunteer. Two youth volunteers or youth employees serving without any other adults present would not satisfy the Two-Adult Policy. The Ministry Manager will provide the youth volunteer with a nametag that has an appropriate label signifying the volunteer's leadership role.

In situations where only one class is being held in a room that is not visible to the public at large (including the preschool and childcare wing), a youth volunteer or youth employee may not serve as one of the adult leaders.

### **Restroom Use for Children Third Grade and Under**

- Encourage parents to have their children use the restroom before and after class.
- If a child in third grade or under must use the restroom during Sunday school, they should go to the restrooms with a peer and one employee or volunteer whenever possible,
- The employee or volunteer who accompanies children to the restroom should ensure that suspicious or unknown individuals are not occupying the restrooms prior to allowing children to use the facilities. The employee or volunteer will wait in the public area outside of the restrooms for the children, and when the children emerge, all return to class together.
- It is permissible for the remaining employee or volunteer to remain in the class space with multiple children for the duration of the restroom visit; they may call on a Children's Ministry employee who may be floating from room to room to assist with restroom supervision.
- Employees and volunteers assisting children younger than age five should leave the doors to the facility ajar. If using a single stall restroom, the bathroom door may be closed at the request of the child, but at all times the employee or volunteer must stand outside of the bathroom door.

### *Special Events at VPC*

Restroom procedures for special events may be modified. However, they must reflect the intent of the CPP never to have a single employee or volunteer alone with an unrelated child in a non-public space, to make sure restrooms are safe for the child to enter, and to provide a comprehensively safe experience throughout the event, including restroom use.

### *Off campus VPC-Sponsored Activities*

Restroom procedures for off campus VPC-sponsored activities may be modified. However, they must reflect the intent of the CPP never to have a single employee or volunteer alone with an unrelated child in a non-public space, to make sure restrooms are safe for the child to enter and exit, and to provide a comprehensively safe experience throughout the event, including restroom use.

## **Sign-in and Sign-out Procedures**

The sign-in and sign-out procedures utilized by VPC are designed to ensure the safety of each child.

### **Childcare Wing**

- New families will be entered in the database through Realm.
- Returning families will use the check-in electronic kiosk to print a name and security/code label.
- If the parent does not have a cell phone, they parent will receive a pager.
- If a child arrives before the manager on duty or if there is only one volunteer in the room, the child may not be dropped off until the manager arrives, or the room is fully staffed.
- Children may not be left alone or with only one volunteer.
- A parent or legal guardian, or related family member who is in at least 4th grade, must drop off and pick up the child.
- The claim check with the printed security code that matches the child's tag is required for pick-up. When a parent arrives to pick up his/her child, compare the child and parent's security code on the label and ensure they are a match, the label does not need to be collected during pick up.

### **Sunday School**

Attendance is to be recorded for children, as well as for teachers and assistants, so that a record of all persons present for each class is maintained.

#### Pre-Kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade

- A parent/guardian or related family member who is in at least 4<sup>th</sup> grade can bring their child/children to the check-in station where he/she shall be electronically checked-in. A nametag and a security label will be given to registered parents/guardians of these children.
- Unregistered guests or members will be added to the database system during check-in and will receive a nametag and security label for their child/children.
- At the end of class, leadership should work together to ensure that all children are released to a parent/guardian or of-age related family member who has the matching security label.

At the beginning and end of class, a designated class teacher or assistant should be responsible for overseeing the check-in and check-out process.

#### 4<sup>th</sup> Grade and Above

- In grades 4 through 12, Sunday school participants may check themselves in and out of class. Families should be encouraged to have a designated meeting spot.

### **Other Ministry Programs & Events**

Attendance is to be recorded for children, volunteers, and/or employees so that a record of all persons present for each session is maintained.

#### Pre-Kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade

- Participants and guests are to be electronically checked-in and claimed by a parent, legal guardian, or related family member who is in at least 4th grade.
- The child can be released to the parent, legal guardian, or related family member who presents the security label that matches the child.
- At the end of class, leadership should work together to ensure that no child leaves a classroom unless a parent/guardian or related family member presents the matching security label.
- Any child whose name does not appear on the event list will be added to the database system during check-in and will receive a nametag and security label.

#### 4<sup>th</sup> Grade and Above

- In grades 4 through 12, participants may sign themselves in and out.

### **Private Meetings**

Private meetings pertaining to a VPC sponsored activity or any activity on VPC property may include but are not limited to private music lessons, tutoring, and small groups. The following rules need to be followed when engaging in a private meeting with a child or youth:

- Meet in a public area (see *Public Areas on VPC Campus* below).
- If a public area is not available, the leader must arrange for a third individual to be at the meeting (e.g. accompanist; the child's friend; the child's parent). If the third individual is an adult, they may sit outside the door of where the meeting is taking place.
- If a third individual cannot be secured for the private meeting not occurring in a public area, then the meeting must be canceled. (Please note that VPC does not recognize any financial responsibility for lost wages.)

If the private meeting occurs regularly, such as in the case of private music lessons, the following guidelines must be followed:

- Provide the legal guardian of the child with a Child Protection Policy for their review.
- Encourage the parent to stay for the lesson.
- Request a public room assignment with the VPC Office Manager.

### *Public Areas on VPC Campus*

- Sanctuary
- Gathering Space
- Great Hall
- Grapevine Bookstore
- Library (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)
- Office Reception Area (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)
- Conference Room (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)
- Activity Center (3<sup>rd</sup> Floor)

### **Publishing Personal Information and Photos**

Parents are to be given the opportunity to opt out their child from being featured in photos, videos, or audio recordings, or being identified by name in print and/or digital media. This can be done by completing a Media Opt-out Form (Attachment 1) and submitting it to the appropriate ministry employee. The opt-out option is to be presented to parents annually at the beginning of the school year or as new students register for programs.

Parents will also be given the opportunity to opt their child out of print and/or digital media on the registration form for a specific event, including special events during worship. If the child is opted out of print and/or digital media on an event registration form, the opt-out only applies to that special event.

VPC cannot control the disclosure or use of photographs or video at events that are open to parents and community members.

### **Guidelines for Electronic Communications with Youth**

Official VPC social media outlets are those bearing the branding of VPC and organized for broad communications. These groups are created and utilized by VPC Staff. All communications using VPC social media are to be focused on church-related events and are not intended for employee or volunteer personal communications or agendas.

- Communication should be limited to Realm Groups; Realm Group Messaging; and email.
- Electronic conversations among students and adult leaders will focus on church-related activities, such as small groups, events, and photos from church events.
- Electronic communications must have at least three individuals (i.e. two adults and a youth; two youths and an adult). Whenever possible, electronic communications should have at least two unrelated adult leaders as well as at least two youth.
- If a youth direct messages or emails an adult without a third individual, the adult must always respond by adding a second adult to the thread, and if the conversation is on a non-Realm platform, the adult should move the conversation into Realm messaging, emailing or group posting.
- Passwords for all VPC social media accounts should be stored on file with Human Resources so that they may be retrieved at any time. All official VPC social media accounts should use strong passwords.
- Through any social media platform (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.), “Friend” requests between an adult and a youth may only be initiated by the youth.
- Adult leaders of groups and former youth members should be immediately removed from any applicable official VPC social networking sites, list serves, Realm Groups, etc., when they move, terminate their position, are no longer a member of the group, or are no longer eligible to participate because they “aged-

out” of a program, Individual relationships (friends) are managed at the discretion of those individuals after amicable departure.

- Student Ministries should maintain a list of active groups. Volunteers creating groups for the purpose of ministry are to notify Student Ministries’ employees of the groups.
- Mobile phone numbers and email addresses for youth may not be shared with others unless the youth has specifically granted consent for their number to be shared.
- VPC adult leaders are prohibited from using any social media that deletes the record of interaction (e.g. Snapchat) when ministering to youth.
- Students should be made aware of guidelines and know how to report concerns.

#### *Guidelines for Emailing Youth*

- Emails sent to youth must include complete sender identification such as an identifying signature that includes name, official title (if applicable), as well as the church name.
- Informational group emails sent to youth must be sent using blind copy or hidden distribution lists in order to prevent unauthorized sharing of email addresses. Emails intended for group discussion need not use “bcc”.
- Forwarded emails, including the names and email addresses of youth, are to be edited to eliminate originating distribution lists unless permission to share addresses has been granted.
- Employees may only send email to youth using VPC email accounts and must retain email communication with youth for a minimum of three years. Personal email accounts may not be used to communicate with youth except in cases of emergency and VPC email is unavailable.
- VPC volunteers may communicate with youth via their personal email accounts provided they adhere to the guidelines listed above.

### **Transportation Requirements**

Volunteers and employees should not transport children without the presence of another individual. However, the Friendship Class may practice adapted procedures for transportation on a case-by-case basis.

Per VPC’s insurance carrier’s current parameters, drivers of insured owned vehicles, as well as non-owned or hired 12- to 15-passenger vans, must meet the following minimum qualifications:

- Not have any alcohol- or drug-related violations for the prior five years
- Have a valid U.S. driver’s license
- Be 25–70 years old, or if a staff member be 21–70 years’ old. An exception for drivers over the age of 70 may be made after obtaining a copy of the individual’s Motor Vehicle Record (MVR) from the DMV and a completed Physician’s Report of Driver Fitness. HR will share the information with VPC’s insurance provider to determine if the driver is eligible.
- Have no major moving violations for the prior three years
- Have no more than one at-fault accident for the prior three years
- Employees and volunteers driving their privately owned vehicle for VPC activities are required to carry personal auto liability coverage. The Commonwealth of Virginia requires the following minimum

coverage:

- Bodily injury/death of one person: \$25,000
- Bodily injury/death of two or more persons: \$50,000
- Property damage: \$20,000

When a volunteer or employee drives children or youth on behalf of VPC, they must abide by the following safe practices:

- The number of passengers shall not exceed the number of seatbelts.
- Each person is required to wear a seatbelt.
- There is adequate space for luggage and equipment, which is stowed securely.
- Cell phone use, including hands-free devices and texting, is prohibited while driving.
- Alcohol and drug use is prohibited.

VPC reserves the right of final approval for all drivers. VPC will provide and/or approve transportation for all planned events (e.g. SMP; Student Ministries small group events; etc.).

#### *Tracking for Transportation*

Any volunteer who drives children, as defined by CPP on behalf of VPC for special events, must complete the VPC Driver Screening Form (Attachment 6) per event and submit it to Human Resources.

Human Resources has overall responsibility for the following:

- Oversight of tracking drivers' forms.
- Oversight of tracking approved drivers.
- Housing relevant documents for all employees and volunteers.

Ministry managers are responsible for ensuring that their volunteers comply with VPC's transportation policies and procedures.

## **REPORTING AND RESPONDING**

*(See CPP, Section III, Reporting and Responding)*

### **Reporting and Responding — Child Abuse or Neglect**

Whenever there is an instance or suspicion that abuse or sexual misconduct toward or against a child may have occurred or may be occurring, it must be reported to the appropriate legal and church authorities. The Director of Operations (DO), pastors, and ministry directors, if they are unavailable, should have a known designee for reporting purposes.

Calls to your local social services department or the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline should never be postponed to gather additional information or to contact other individuals. Child Protective Services (CPS) will discern when an investigation is warranted and will conduct the investigation. The church community does not investigate. Full cooperation with legal authorities is required. Anyone has the right to report any incident of suspected child abuse or neglect directly to the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline at 1-800-552-7096.

#### *Pastors*

- When you receive a report from someone, or you are the initiator of a report, call the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline immediately at 1-800-552-7096. Then notify the DO immediately. This does not include the exceptions set forth in Appendix B: Code of Virginia (Child Abuse and Neglect).
- You also must notify the appropriate ministry director and ensure that an Incident Report Form (Attachment 2) is completed and submitted to the DO within 24 hours.
- You may activate the VPC Response Team. One pastor will serve on the VPC Response Team to assist in developing a Plan of Action in response to the report.

#### *Ministry Directors*

- When you receive a report from someone, or you are the initiator of a report, call the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline immediately at 1-800-552-7096. Then notify the DO or Human Resources immediately.
- Ensure that a completed Incident Report Form (Attachment 2) is submitted to the DO or HR within 24 hours.
- A ministry director will serve on the VPC Response Team, convened by Human Resources (HR), to develop a Plan of Action in response to a report.

#### *Employees and Volunteers*

- When you receive a report from someone, or you are the initiator of a report, call the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline immediately at 1-800-552-7096. Then notify the appropriate ministry director, pastor, or the DO immediately.
- Complete an Incident Report Form (Attachment 2) and submit it to the appropriate ministry director or the DO within 24 hours.

### *Human Resources (HR)*

- When you receive a report from someone, or you are the initiator of a report, call the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline immediately at 1-800-552-7096. Then notify the DO immediately.
- Ensure that a completed Incident Report Form (Attachment 2) is submitted to the DO within 24 hours.
- Completed Incident Report Forms, after being seen by the DO, are submitted to HR and treated confidentially.
- Upon receiving authorization from the DO, contact the VPC Response Team.
- HR will redact Incident Report Forms so that names of accused persons and alleged victims are not discernible prior to review by the VPC Response Team or Session.
- It is HR's responsibility to track incidents, be alert to patterns, and provide periodic statistical reports to the Safety & Security and Session.
- HR will serve on the VPC Response Team to develop a Plan of Action in response to any Incident Report.

### *Director of Operations (DO)*

- Contact the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline at 1-800-552-7096 immediately.
- Immediately, within 24 hours, notify a pastor and the appropriate ministry director.
- Ensure that a completed Incident Report Form (Attachment 2) is submitted for your review within 24 hours. It will subsequently be filed with HR and treated confidentially.
- Contact an attorney, if appropriate.
- Ensure the VPC Response Team has been activated. DO will serve on the VPC Response Team to develop a Plan of Action in response to the report.
- Ensure that the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of any child involved in the incident are informed. If the parent or legal guardian is the alleged perpetrator, they will be informed when appropriate.

## **Reporting and Responding — Inappropriate Behavior or Boundary Crossing**

There may be instances that do not fall into the category of abuse or neglect that may affect the nurturing and safety of the children under VPC's protection. Whenever there is an instance or suspicion of inappropriate behavior or a boundary crossing with a child, it must be reported to the appropriate church authorities. The DO, pastors, and ministry directors, if they are unavailable, should have a known designee for reporting purposes.

### *Pastors and Ministry Directors*

- When you receive a report from someone, or you are the initiator of a report, you should notify the DO within 24 hours.
- You must ensure that an Incident Report Form (Attachment 2) is completed and submitted to the DO within the same 24 hours.
- One pastor and the appropriate ministry director will serve on the VPC Response Team, convened by HR, to develop a Plan of Action in response to the report. The pastor or ministry director receiving the report may activate the VPC Response Team

### *Employees and Volunteers*

- When you receive a report from someone, or you are the initiator of a report, you should notify the appropriate ministry director, pastor, or DO within 24 hours.
- Complete an Incident Report Form (Attachment 2) and submit it to the appropriate ministry director, pastor, or DO within the same 24 hours.

### *Human Resources*

- When you receive a report from someone, or you are the initiator of a report, you should contact the DO within 24 hours.
- Ensure that a completed Incident Report Form (see Attachment 2) is submitted to the DO within the same 24 hours.
- Completed Incident Report Forms, after being seen by the DO, are submitted to HR and treated confidentially.
- Upon receiving authorization from the DO, HR will convene the VPC Response Team. HR will serve on the VPC Response Team to develop a Plan of Action in response to the report.
- HR will redact Incident Report Forms so that names of accused persons and alleged victims are not discernible prior to review by the VPC Response Team or Session.
- It is HR's responsibility to track incidents, be alert to patterns, and provide periodic statistical reports to the Safety & Security Committee and Session.

### *Director of Operations (DO)*

- Notify a pastor and the appropriate ministry director within 24 hours.
- Ensure that a completed Incident Report Form (Attachment 2) is submitted for your review within 24 hours. It must subsequently be filed with HR and treated confidentially.
- Ensure the VPC Response Team has been activated. DO will serve on the VPC Response Team to develop a Plan of Action in response to the report.
- Ensure that the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of any child involved in the incident are informed. If the parent or legal guardian is the alleged perpetrator, they will be informed when appropriate.

### **VPC Response Team**

Once the VPC Response Team is called, one member of the Safety & Security Committee, as appointed by the Safety & Security Committee Chair, will preside over the team to ensure independence. The chair of the VPC Response Team may at any time call upon the Session Executive Committee if the situation warrants. Duties of the VPC Response Team include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Adhere to the Response Team Suggested Guidelines (Attachment 3) while developing a Plan of Action (Attachment 4).
- Recommend immediate action to eliminate any dangerous or potentially dangerous situations.
- Designate a record keeper for the duration of the Response Team to keep a log of all communications and meetings of the VPC Response Team.

The agreed upon and signed Plan of Action will be submitted to the appropriate ministry director, overseeing Pastor, the parties responsible for implementation, the DO, and HR. At this point, the VPC Response Team has concluded their work and all documents will be filed with HR in a secure location. The Safety & Security

Committee and Session will be informed of the suggested Plan of Action. The names and any other identifying information of those involved will be redacted from the report(s).

At completion of the allotted time period, as stated in the Plan of Action, the VPC Response Team Chair will follow-up with the responsible parties and ensure the suggested Plan of Action has been completed or will collect a report of the alternative actions taken. Session will be informed when the Plan of Action is completed.

In the case where an allegation is made against anyone who has a role in the reporting process, that person is omitted from the process. Reports should be communicated to an alternative volunteer, employee, director, or pastor.

**Attachment 1 – VPC Media Opt-Out Form**

**VPC MEDIA OPT-OUT FORM**

Please submit a separate form annually for each child you are opting out.

VPC may feature your child in photos, videos, or audio recordings, or identify them by name in print and/or digital media. VPC will assume that it has your permission to do so unless you indicate otherwise by checking the box below.

Do not use photos, videos, or audio recordings of my child, or my child’s name in any media.

*Please note: VPC cannot control the disclosure or use of photographs or video taken by participants at events that are open to parents and community members. We encourage all parents to use social media sites responsibly.*

Child’s FULL NAME \_\_\_\_\_

Child’s Birth Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent(s)’ FULL NAME \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Parents’ E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person Submitting Form \_\_\_\_\_

Parent(s)’ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Updated 9/1/2017

## Attachment 2 – VPC Incident Report Form

### Incident Report Form

This form should be completed to report any injury on church property or off campus for a VPC sponsored event, safety issues, concerns regarding inappropriate behaviors or boundary crossings, or suspicions or allegations of abuse or neglect. If this form concerns boundary crossings or allegations of abuse, it is considered CONFIDENTIAL and should be submitted immediately to the appropriate ministry director, a pastor, Human Resources or the Director of Operations. At no time will this report be delayed to gain additional details. Confidential reports will not be copied except at the direction of the Director of Operations or HR. All staff and adult volunteers are required by VPC and by law to report any situation that presents a clear instance of suspicion of abuse or neglect of a child, youth, or vulnerable adult.

(Attach separate sheet if necessary.)

<b>Type of Incident:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Allegation of Abuse or Neglect</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Boundary Crossing</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Safety Issue</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Injury or Health Concern</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other Concerns</b>
Date of Incident:			Time of Incident:		
Reporting Person (First and Last Name):					
Location of Incident:					
Describe the incident(s) as reported, including the first and last name(s), ages, and relationship to VPC of those involved in the incident:					
Was any action taken at the time of the incident(s)? If so, please explain:					
Additional information:					
Name:		Signature		Date:	

Disposition of Incident:

Office Use Only		
Incident Report Form Reviewed By:		
	Date	Initials
Director of Operations	_____	_____
Human Resources	_____	_____
Committee Oversight	_____	_____
Ministry Director	_____	_____

## **Attachment 3 –Response Team Suggested Guidelines**

### **Response Team Suggested Guidelines**

A Response Team may be activated at the request of VPC leadership in order to provide an unbiased, confidential incident review and suggested Plan of Action. Because the nature of incidents varies widely, these steps are meant to serve as guidelines with the understanding that adaptations may occur due to circumstances. The VPC Child Protection Policy and its' Procedures should be consulted throughout the process.

#### **Assess**

- Collect first-person statement(s), including a timeline within the first 24 hours. If police or Child Protective Services are involved, cooperate fully with their instructions.
- Recommend immediate action to eliminate any dangerous or potentially dangerous situations (i.e. rope off the playground or institute administrative leave).
- Provide assistance to individuals involved in obtaining counseling services or referrals for additional resources as needed.

#### **Notify**

- Identify and contact appropriate personnel, families and entities. These may include:
  - police / Child Protective Services
  - church / pastors / Session Exec Committee
  - affected family members
  - legal counsel
  - communications consultant
  - insurance carrier

#### **Review**

- Conduct a fact-finding review of the incident(s) and determine areas of concern, where changes are needed to the current system or policy, or where human error occurred.
- Document all Response Team discussions, meetings, and findings.

#### **Inform**

- Release information through one source. Protect the privacy of ALL involved.
- Consider legal counsel prior to media contact or prior to giving statements beyond the Response Team, Leadership Team, or Session.

#### **Correct**

- Prepare a Plan of Action that addresses the issues discovered in the review.

#### **Report**

- Submit the suggested Plan of Action to the specific ministry director and overseeing Pastor, the parties responsible for implementation, the Director of Operations, and HR.
- Inform the Safety & Security and Session of the Plan of Action.

#### **Check**

- At completion of allotted time period, follow-up with responsible parties and ensure the suggested Plan of Action has been completed. Note any alternative actions taken.
- Report back to the Safety & Security and Session regarding the completed Plan of Action and determine its effectiveness.

Updated 7/27/2018

**Attachment 4 – Recommended Plan of Action**

**Recommended Plan of Action – Response Team**

- I. Brief summary of incident including date and ministry involved. Names are not necessary in this portion.
- II. Response Team meeting dates and notes regarding any variation to suggested format.
- III. Plan of Action should include specific strategies and responsible parties can be named. This recommendation can be multiple pages and the timeline(s) can be specific dates or as suggested.

<b>Corrective Action</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Who is Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
i.e. Improve Procedures	•		Immediate Implementation
Additional safety measures to be taken	•		90 days from Plan of Action approval
Safety & Security Committee	•		90 days from Plan of Action approval

VI. Signature of Plan of Action approval:

Chair of Response Team: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Ministry Director or Responsible Party: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature Confirming Satisfactory Implementation:

Safety & Security Chair: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(90 days from POA approval)

## Attachment 5 –Volunteer Application Form

**Vienna Presbyterian Church**  
**Ministry Volunteer Application Form**  
 124 Park Street NE ● Vienna, VA 22180  
 703.938.9050 ● viennapres.org

Office Use Only		
	Date	Initials
App Received	_____	_____
Refs Checked	_____	_____
Background Completed	_____	_____
Abuse Safety	_____	_____
Final Approval	_____	_____
Form updated 7/27/2018		

**This application is to be completed by all volunteers who desire a volunteer position with VPC. This form is being used to help the church provide a safe, nurturing, Christian environment for those who participate in our programs and use our facilities.**

**Once your application is complete, sign and place in a sealed envelope addressed to the attention of Human Resources at VPC. Return either by US Mail, or during business hours, to the receptionist’s desk on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.**

To protect your privacy, we suggest you do not FAX the completed form to the church.

<b>Section A: To be completed by all applicants.</b>	
Name:	
Complete Address:	How long at this address?
Complete Previous Address (if you have resided at your current address less than 2 years):	
List any additional counties in which you have resided in the last 10 years:	
Primary E-mail:	Home Phone:
Alternative E-mail:	Cell Phone:
	Work Phone:
How long have you been attending VPC?	VPC Member <input type="checkbox"/> Non Member <input type="checkbox"/> Regular Attendee <input type="checkbox"/>
If applicable, list the name and address of other churches you attended regularly during the past 5 years (not including VPC):	
Please list any VPC activities in which you have been or are currently involved over the past 5 years:	
Please list any leadership/volunteer experience:	
Please list any relevant talents, training, education, etc.:	
Please choose your preference; check all that apply:	
Nursery <input type="checkbox"/> Preschool <input type="checkbox"/> Grades K - 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Grades 4 - 6 <input type="checkbox"/>	
Grades 7 - 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Grades 9 – 12 <input type="checkbox"/> Friendship Ministries <input type="checkbox"/> ESOL <input type="checkbox"/> BELONG! <input type="checkbox"/>	

**Section B: To be completed by all applicants.****Name:****Personal References:** Give the name, address, phone numbers, and e-mail of 3 people who are not relatives and who have known you for at least one year. At least one reference must be someone not connected to Vienna Presbyterian Church.

Name:	Home Phone:
Address:	Cell Phone:
	E-mail:
Name:	Home Phone:
Address:	Cell Phone:
	E-mail:
Name:	Home Phone:
Address:	Cell Phone:
	E-mail:

**(If you are age 17 and younger please skip the rest of this section and move to Section C.)***If you are age 18 and older, upon receipt of your completed volunteer application you will receive an email containing a link. Please follow the link to confidentially enter your information for a criminal background check.*If you are age 18 and older, have you been convicted of or pled guilty to or no contest to any traffic violations in the last five years?  
No  Yes 

If yes, please explain.

If you are age 18 and older, have you ever been charged or convicted of a crime? No  Yes 

If yes, when and please explain the conviction. A criminal conviction will not necessarily be a bar to volunteering.

**Applicant's Statement:**

The information provided in this application is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. I authorize VPC to contact the churches and references provided regarding my character and ability to work in the VPC Community. I authorize Vienna Presbyterian Church to conduct a criminal background investigation as a condition of my volunteering. I understand that any information pertaining to the criminal background check will remain confidential and the property of Vienna Presbyterian Church.

I agree to follow the Child Protection Policy and to refrain from inappropriate conduct in the performance of my services on behalf of VPC. I understand that any violation of this policy, including the Code of Conduct, may result in my termination of volunteer service.

Applicant's Printed Name:

Applicant's Signature:

Date:

**Please supply a photographic identification to be attached to this form (a copy of valid driver's license or photo if no license issued).****Section C: To be completed by all applicants age 17 and younger.**

DOB (mm/dd/yy):

**Applicant's Statement:** The information provided in this application is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. I agree to follow the Child Protection Policy and to refrain from inappropriate conduct in the performance of my services on behalf of VPC. I understand that any violation of this policy, including the Code of Conduct, may result in my termination of volunteer service.

Applicant's Printed Name:

Applicant's Signature:

Date:

**Parental Consent:** I give permission for my child, \_\_\_\_\_, to volunteer at VPC..

Parent's Printed Name:

Parent's Signature:

Date:

**Attachment 6 – VPC Driver Screening Form**  
**Driver Screening Form**

This application is to be completed by all volunteers who will drive on behalf of Vienna Presbyterian Church. Once your application is complete, sign and return to VPC, in a sealed envelope to the attention of Human Resources.

Driver’s name (as shown on license): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Driver’s license state and number: \_\_\_\_\_

Ministry Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Is this a commercial driver license?  Yes  No

Which vehicle will you be driving? Make: \_\_\_\_\_ Model: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

**In the past three years:**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Have you been at fault for any accidents?   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2. Have you had any moving traffic violations?   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 3. Have you had any insurance company cancel or refuse to provide you with auto insurance?                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4. Have you had your driver’s license revoked, suspended or restricted?  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 5. Have you had any physical impairments other than corrective glasses?  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 6. Have you ever been charged with or convicted of “driving while intoxicated” or “driving under the influence”? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |

If any question(s) 1–6 have been answered with “yes,” please provide full details below: (dates, descriptions, amounts, or other explanation).

**Applicant’s Statement:**

The information provided in this application is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. I will abide by the Transportation Requirements outlined in the Child Protection Policy, and I meet all the qualifications for driving as outlined under “Transportation Requirements” in section IV of the Child Protection Policy. I authorize VPC to obtain my driving record, should it be required. I certify that I am an adult holding a driver’s license, and that my personal vehicle is adequately insured for the state in which it is registered.

Applicant’s Printed Name:	
Applicant’s Signature:	Date:

Updated 3/2018