

What are our Diocesan policies?

The Episcopal Diocese of Upper South Carolina has established the following policies regarding misconduct. These Diocesan policies apply in all activities conducted in the name of this Diocese, its parishes, missions, commissions, committees, and task. They are, in many cases, more rigorous than the requirements of civil and criminal law. This rigor reflects the Diocese's commitment to limit the opportunity for misconduct and to respond seriously to it when it occurs. All church personnel, lay and ordained, paid and unpaid, are responsible for knowing and following these Diocesan policies:

THE FOLLOWING INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS ARE PROHIBITED:

- Any behavior defined within this document as "Sexual Misconduct" or "Sexual Battery."
- Absent a marriage relationship, any sexual contact between a ministry-provider and the recipient of that care.
- Any sexual contact between an adult and a "minor" (as defined in S.C. Code Ann. 45-2-20-3) or a "vulnerable adult."
- Any behavior defined within this document as "Sexual Harassment," specifically including inappropriate sexual language or behavior where an employment, mentor or colleague relationship exists.
- Physical abuse or crimes of sexual violence and non-consensual criminal sexual behavior.
- Non-physical abuse or non-violent crimes such as child pornography, voyeurism and exhibitionism.
- Participation in any ministry with children or teenagers by anyone with a history of child abuse, with a criminal record of child abuse, or with a diagnosis of a "Paraphilic Disorder" as defined by the American Psychiatric Association in DMS-5. Such individuals are forbidden access to children, youth and vulnerable adults and are prohibited from engaging in any ministry with them.

What are our Diocesan policies? (cont.)

ADDITIONAL POLICIES FOR CHILD AND YOUTH MINISTRY:

- Church leaders must recognize the power differential that exists between them and the recipients of their pastoral ministrations. Church leaders are not to exploit the trust and dependency of persons entrusted to their care.
- Due to canonical responsibilities, is the policy of this diocese that ordained clergy cannot facilitate Safeguarding God's People trainings in their own congregations.
- All church personnel must understand that while appropriate personal relationships have potential for enhancing ministry and parish life, some attractions and relationships may be hurtful to individuals and the community-at-large.
- Consent to an inappropriate sexual or romantic relationship does not make that relationship appropriate under Diocesan policies. Church personnel have an independent obligation under Diocesan policies to abstain from inappropriate relationships, regardless of who consents or initiates them.
- All church personnel must be aware of the need for prudence. In their relationships with others, they may be vulnerable to sexually aggressive, even predatory persons who may seek them out in the parish, at conferences, or elsewhere.
- Church Personnel who transfer within the Diocese of Upper South Carolina and apply for or are asked to or who do undertake a position working with or around children, youth or vulnerable adults are required to undergo the complete screening and selection process. This requirement may be met through a transfer of a copy of their personnel file to the new congregation, school, agency, or program together with completion of a new application, individual interview and reference checks with the congregations, schools, agencies or other programs for which the applicant has worked since the screening was last done as shown in the applicant's personnel file.
- Face-to-Face Safeguarding God's People education and training is required for all Church personnel who regularly work with or around children, youth or vulnerable adults before they start their work or, if that is not possible, applicant may participate in the full online Safeguarding God's People training before they start their work and participate in a face-to-face training.
- No person, except in the case of paid staff members who have completed all appropriate checks, will be allowed to work with children, youth or vulnerable adults until the person has been known to the clergy and congregation for at least 6 months. Family members could be present to supervise or assist their family members alone.
- As defined in Resolution A158 (2015): Church personnel are prohibited from the use, possession, distribution, or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or the misuse of legal drugs while participating in or assisting with programs or activities specifically for children, youth or vulnerable adults. Alcohol may be consumed when used sacramentally or in fellowship activities for adults when a non-alcoholic alternative is made available.
- Church Personnel are prohibited from dating or becoming romantically involved with a child, youth or vulnerable adult.

What are our Diocesan policies? (cont.)

- Church Personnel are prohibited from having sexual contact with a child, youth or vulnerable adult.
- Church Personnel are prohibited from possessing any sexually oriented materials (magazines, cards, videos, films, clothing, etc.) on church property or in the presence of children, youth or vulnerable adults except as expressly permitted as part of a pre-authorized educational program.
- Church Personnel are prohibited from using the internet to view or download any sexually oriented materials on church property or in the presence of children, youth or vulnerable adults.
- Church Personnel are prohibited from discussing their own sexual activities, including dreams and fantasies, or discussing their use of sexually oriented or explicit materials such as pornography, videos or materials on or from the internet, with children, youth, or vulnerable adults.
- Church Personnel are prohibited from using physical punishment in any way for behavior management of children and youth. No form of physical discipline is acceptable. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force. Physical force may only be used to stop a behavior that may cause immediate harm to the individual or to a child, youth or vulnerable adult.
- Church Personnel are prohibited from participating in or allowing others to conduct any hazing activities.
- An up-to-date list of approved congregation-sponsored programs for children and youth will be maintained in the church office or other place where church records are kept.
- Church Personnel are not permitted to develop new activities for children and youth without approval from the rector or canonical equivalent. Requests to develop new activities should be submitted in writing to the rector. The rector will consider whether the plan for a new activity includes adequate adult supervision.
- All doors in rooms where meetings occur are to have windows in them. If doors do not have windows, they should be locked from the outside when not in use or open when the room is in use.
- All Church Personnel must also be aware that even appropriate actions may be misunderstood or misrepresented. It is therefore important that lay adult leaders ensure that they are not left alone with any child, youth or vulnerable adult. When private conversations are necessary for pastoral care, a ministry provider should be seated within line of sight of another adult such as through a glass window or an open door. Clergy, likewise, should avoid situations where their being alone with an adult parishioner might raise an issue of inappropriateness.
- All Church Personnel must seek counsel from their priest or the Bishop if they are at risk of acting on sexual or romantic attraction to a parishioner, counselee, or counselor.
- All Church Personnel have an ethical obligation to respond to the knowledge of sexually exploitative behavior of colleagues by reporting the information to the appropriate authorities and by seeking the counsel and pastoral guidance of a spiritual advisor.

What are our Diocesan policies? (cont.)

- All clergy, counselors, and child care workers in a childcare center, are required by state law to report to local authorities any instance of child neglect or child abuse “when in the person’s professional capacity the person has received information which gives the person reason to believe that a child has been or may be abused or neglected as defined in S.C. Code Section 63-7-20.” (S.C. Code Section 63-7-310 (A)). Any other person “who has a reason to believe that a child’s physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse and neglect may, and is encouraged to report.” (S.C. Code Section 63-7-310 (c)).
- Any driver should be able to provide evidence of having sufficient liability insurance coverage in force to meet minimum South Carolina requirements. A driver’s record should not reflect any reckless behaviors or a pattern of regularly disobeying the traffic laws of South Carolina within the last 10 years.

Day events WITH CHILDREN/YOUTH, (On-campus):

- Ratio 1:7 with a minimum of 2 adults. Both genders should be represented among participants and the adult chaperones should be unrelated.

Day (off-campus), or Overnight (any location) WITH CHILDREN/YOUTH:

- Ratio: 1:5, a minimum of 2 unrelated adults present, and at least one gender for each gender represented.
- Rooms may be shared only by family members of the same gender; Adult and child/youth sleeping quarters must be separate, separate bathing areas except in the following situations:
 - In barrack or gym type facilities where there are separate facilities for youth and adults to change and separate bathing facilities or separate bathing times.
 - In barrack or cabin type settings, males and females should sleep in separate facilities. It is preferred that adults sleep separately from the children/youth and that children/youth should be grouped together according to their age within a 2 year span.
 - In gym type facilities, males and females may sleep in the same room, if it is partitioned. In these settings, there should be at least two adults present for each gender and ratios must be maintained.
 - Consideration should be given how proper ratios can be maintained during these events, asking questions of organizer, etc.
- Adults are responsible for the young people 24/7, even though they need to sleep, too. In keeping with the “rule of three,” if a child wakes up an adult in the night, that adult should wake another adult before dealing with whatever situation has awakened the child.
- All youth events must provide eight hours of scheduled time for sleep on all overnight events.
- Adult youth personnel, who are not family members, may not share a room with a youth or a group of youth where some of the youth are not their family members.
- If an event is overnight with youth of both sexes, at least one male and one female adult leader must be present.

What are our Diocesan policies? (cont.)

- Transportation: It is preferred that there be two adults in every vehicle. In cases when traveling with multiple vehicles, one adult may be in the car with multiple youth as long as they remain in line of sight of each other. All passengers should wear a seatbelt. Drivers should not use a cell phone or electronic device when the vehicle is in motion.
- Youth can not drive themselves or others during a church sponsored event.
- Parents or guardians must complete written permission forms before church personnel can transport children and youth for a church sponsored activity.

FOR ALL EVENTS WITH CHILDREN/YOUTH:

- Anyone involved in youth ministry leadership on the Diocesan level is expected to be involved in his or her local parish or mission.
- A youth should never be left in the exclusive care of one adult. In cases of adult/youth meetings, the adult must remain in a visual line of sight by another adult.
- All youth events operate under an open door policy: Clergy, staff, parents, and church members have the right to observe any event at any time, with or without advance notice.
- Children and Youth personnel should meet on a regular basis with their supervisors to openly discuss problems, accountability, and policies.
- Families and leaders will receive this Safeguarding God's People Policy Manual. Parents will be strongly encouraged to discuss Safeguarding God's People policies and issues with their children and youth.
- At times when confidential youth and adult conferences are needed, another adult, preferably a parent of the youth, must be notified of the place and time of consultation. When private conversations are necessary for pastoral care, a ministry provider should be seated within line of sight of another adult such as through a glass window or an open door.
- Older minor children may not be left solely responsible for the care of young children, except in a school setting where parents have provided written consent of the release of a minor to a minor.
- There should be no consumption of drugs or alcohol, except sacramentally, by children, youth or adults at any event.
- At all times, a fully stocked first aid kit must be accessible and at least one in each vehicle.
- Age requirements for adult chaperones: 22 to chaperone Youth Group with High School youth. 18 for any elementary age children or middle school youth.
- Teens may assist in nurseries and children Sunday schools if there is at least a 4 year gap between the oldest child and the teenager. These teens would not be counted in the ratio of adult:child.
- Any teens who are in the assisting role are required to take Safeguarding God's People training.
- Infant diapering be in line of sight of other adults.
- If a child needs assistance in the restroom, an adult should assist in line of sight of another adult.
- Electronic devices are not allowed in areas where showering or changing is likely to occur.
- Church Personnel will respond to children and youth with respect, consideration and equal treatment, regardless of sex, race, religion, sexual orientation, culture or socio-economic status. Church Personnel will portray a positive role model for children and youth by maintaining an attitude of respect, patience, and maturity. They will avoid even the appearance of favoritism.