



**Skyview Presbyterian Church, Inc.**  
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## **CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY**

(March 2015 Revision)

Christ our Lord and Redeemer has commanded us to love and care for others' well being as much as our own (Mark 12:29-31). His apostle Paul, through his letter to the elders at Ephesus, has admonished us: "Keep watch over yourselves and over all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has given you charge, as shepherds of the church of the Lord" (Acts 20:28). We are given, therefore, the solemn and joyous responsibility to care for and protect everyone among us.

To lead in this effort, the Session has set forth in this document a policy for implementation by all members of Skyview Presbyterian Church and all other persons employed by or volunteering in the service of the church. Policies, procedures and authorization of a background check are set forth herein to help make this implementation possible. Staff and Volunteers must read this document carefully and become familiar with its contents.

### **POLICY**

It is our policy at Skyview Presbyterian Church that all of our staff and Volunteers who work with Children and Youth through Skyview, are expected to maintain the integrity of ministerial relationships, caregiving relationships, and professional employment relationships at all times. Abuse of Minors, whether sexual or other, violates these relationships, and violates our responsibility to protect any vulnerable person from harm. We cannot and will not tolerate any such abuses, and we are committed to safeguarding all persons entrusted to the care of Skyview Presbyterian Church and its professional and volunteer leaders, teachers and caregivers.

We will do our utmost to respond quickly and with pastoral concern, guided by the standards of Christ, to incidents of abuse or related misconduct both within Skyview and elsewhere that are supervised by staff or under the auspices of Skyview Presbyterian Church.

### **PURPOSES OF THIS DOCUMENT**

This policy has been adopted for use by staff and Volunteers of Skyview Presbyterian Church:

1. To establish specific requirements and guidelines for safeguarding our Minors while they are entrusted to the care of Skyview on the church property, or involved in activities elsewhere under the direction and supervision of Skyview Presbyterian Church staff or Volunteers;
2. To help protect Skyview Presbyterian Church from charges of negligent supervision of its Minors;

3. To demonstrate pastoral concern for victims and those accused of abuse or other misconduct;
4. To provide a framework for addressing situations not specifically covered by this policy, making exceptions where appropriate, and interpreting this policy in a common-sense manner.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT**

The members and parents of Minors at Skyview Presbyterian Church consider the protection of our Minors to be very important. These Minors have been entrusted to Skyview for activities, so it is imperative that thoughtfully considered measures be taken to reduce the potential for exposing our Minors to the risk of abuse, whether sexual or other. To minimize the possibility of risk in this regard, the following measures are to be applied for the purpose of being selective of staff and Volunteers to work with our Children and Youth.

Persons known to have had prior incidents of sexual misconduct or abuse may not participate in a Children or Youth ministry program of Skyview Presbyterian Church without sessional approval.

## **AUTHORIZATION FOR BACKGROUND CHECK**

All staff and Volunteers who work with Children and Youth as part of Skyview Presbyterian Church ministries must sign a release form authorizing a background check. A background check is to be completed on the Worker at the discretion of the elder/staff member (or elder's designee). Results of the background check are to be sent to the office of Skyview Presbyterian Church. The Director of Children's Ministry will review background checks and alert the pastor/session of any results that indicate problematic offenses. Completed background checks will be kept confidential and secured for seven years.

## **STAFF AND VOLUNTEER SUPERVISION**

The pastor/session will conduct interviews of all paid staff prior to their participation in Children and Youth ministries. The Director of Children's Ministries will maintain ongoing supervision of Volunteers participating in Children's ministries.

## **DEFINITIONS:**

**ADULT:** a person eighteen (18) years of age or older.

**MINOR:** a person under the age of eighteen (18) years.

**CHILD:** a person under the age of twelve (12) years.

**YOUTH:** a person from the age of twelve (12) years through the age of seventeen (17) years. This term also includes special needs adults who are in need of the protections provided by this policy.

**VOLUNTEER:** a person providing services at Skyview but not employed by the session or presbytery for those services.

**WORKER:** any staff or Volunteer assigned work related to Children and Youth ministries at Skyview.

## **PROCEDURES FOR PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

1. **ORIENTATION:** All Workers will be required to attend an orientation regarding this policy. Future training may be provided at the discretion of the Session.
2. **SIX MONTH RULE:** All Volunteers must have been active participants at Skyview for a minimum of six months prior to working with Minors. This may be waived if the Volunteer is interviewed and approved by an elder.
3. **TWO-PERSON RULE:** A minimum of two Workers, one of which must be an adult, must be present when Minors are present. This rule applies to all church-sponsored activities occurring on church property.
4. **CHURCH-SPONSORED ACTIVITIES IN MEMBER HOMES:** The ministry leader must assure that there is appropriate care for children attending these activities. Informal activities or events taking place in member's homes do not constitute a church-sponsored activity. Church-sponsored activities are those advertised or promoted through official church communications, and thus are sanctioned by the church.
5. **OFF-SITE DAY TRIPS:** The two-person rule applies in all circumstances.
6. **OVERNIGHT ACTIVITIES:** A minimum of two unrelated Adults must be present as chaperones at an overnight activity. If the Youth are both male and female, the chaperones must be both male and female. Male and female attendees at events must not share the same sleeping quarters and should have separate access to bathroom facilities.
7. **TRANSPORTATION:** Families are encouraged to arrange their own transportation. If groups of Minors are to be transported, only an Adult may be the driver. Two Adults are preferred, but one Adult may drive Minors as long as more than one Minor is in the vehicle.
8. **CHILDREN MUST NEVER BE LEFT UNATTENDED.** Children in the nursery through 5th grade must not be dismissed from the activity unless dismissed by a parent, another person designated by the parent, or Worker.
9. **CHILD ABUSE:** Workers must report suspected or observed Child abuse to an elder or pastor (see Response Procedures).
10. **OPEN-DOOR POLICY:** All events involving Minors must have an "open door policy," which means that doors should remain open or unlocked except in the case of a prearranged "Lock-In". Clergy or other appropriate Adults should be free to attend, drop-

in or observe any activity involving Minors. Efforts will be made to ensure that outside classroom doors shall remain locked when not in use.

11. MENTORING: All church-sanctioned one-on-one mentoring/discipleship of minors requires parental notification and consent in advance of meetings held on or off of church property.

## **DOCUMENTATION**

The Director of Children's Ministries is responsible for documenting implementation of and adherence to these policies and procedures.

## **RESPONSE PROCEDURES TO ALLEGED ABUSE**

The following procedures are intended for use by Skyview Presbyterian Church when an accusation of abuse, whether sexual misconduct or other, is made involving a Worker at Skyview. An accusation against a pastor is to be handled through the Rocky Mountain Presbytery as prescribed in the PCA Book of Church Order, Chapter 34.

### **A. General Response Procedures**

It is important to note that the following reporting procedure is the ideal procedure. In some circumstances, it may be impossible to follow these steps precisely. In such cases, those who are involved should take the most appropriate steps following the spirit of this policy and these procedures.

1. The victim, or first person learning of an incident of alleged abuse, is to contact an elder or pastor. If a person other than an elder has received the report, the person is to contact an elder or pastor as soon as possible.
2. An elder or pastor must make a report of the alleged abuse to a local health and human services office. Once a report has been filed, no further interview of the alleged victim, the accused, any witness, or anyone to whom a report was made is to be done by anyone associated with Skyview Presbyterian Church.

Accusations of sexual misconduct should never be taken lightly or disregarded and allowed to circulate without concern for the integrity and reputation of the accuser, the accused, and of Skyview. Accusations should be dealt with as matters of highest confidentiality to the extent possible, both before and after they have been submitted to appropriate authorities. All parties should be advised that while confidentiality will be respected to the extent possible, it cannot be guaranteed. In addition, disclosure to the membership, when appropriate, of accusations and the Church's response should be made in a sensitive and thoughtful manner. The parties involved will be advised and consulted prior to disclosure to the congregation.

Any inquiries from the media regarding an incident of child abuse or sexual misconduct must be directed to the pastor unless he is the accused, in which case inquiries must be directed to the Stated Clerk of Presbytery. Questions from the media shall not be addressed by any other

member of the staff, the session, or other representatives of Skyview Presbyterian Church.

Copies of any documentation of the incident or the report shall be maintained in a permanent and secure file in the Church.

In cases of sexual misconduct within the church, the Church or session must not:

- A. Advocate for any party involved;
- B. Act as legal counsel for any party involved;
- C. Determine guilt or innocence of the accused; or
- D. Provide direct counseling to the alleged victim or the accused.

**B. If a Staff Member is the Accused**

Above procedures should be followed.

Upon receiving the complaint from the alleged victim, the accused staff member should be placed on administrative leave until such accusation is resolved.







## BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION AUTHORITY

I hereby authorize Skyview Presbyterian Church, Inc. or its agent to investigate my background to determine any and all information of concern to my record, whether same is of record or not.

Additionally, I hereby authorize any investigation of my personal history, including, but not limited to a credit history, driving history, educational background, military record, criminal records and I also authorize previous employers, and any references provided by me or ascertained by investigation, to release information about my performance, integrity, general character, and any other job specific information requested. I authorize the release of this information by the appropriate agencies to the investigating service. I understand this may include a workers compensation claims search after a conditional job offer has been made. I also understand I may be required to take a drug test before or during employment.

This authorization, in original or copy form, shall be valid for this and for any future reports and updates that may be requested.

### PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ **SSN:** \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Other Names or SSN Used: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Apt.: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Phone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Driver's License#: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ **\*DOB:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

*\*DOB and SSN are only used for identification purposes in screening inquiries*

Best Telephone Contact #\*: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address\*: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*These will only be used if further information is required to complete your report*

### LIST ALL ADDRESSES FOR PAST 7 YEARS: ( check here if more on reverse or attached)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address DATES: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  
from to

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address DATES: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  
from to

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

**MAY WE CONTACT YOUR CURRENT EMPLOYER?**  **YES**  **NO**

**HAVE YOU EVER BEEN CONVICTED OF A CRIME?**  **YES**  **NO**

*This includes but is not limited to pleas of guilty, nolo contendere, no contest, adjudication withheld, and pre-trial intervention programs. If YES show details including date, charge, county, disposition on reverse. Convictions are considered based upon the type of offense, the date, whether the circumstances are relevant to the job you seek.*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_