

CHILD, YOUTH, & VULNERABLE ADULT PROTECTION POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tacoma, WA

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These sources—as they appeared in 2024—have informed the writing of this document:

- Risk Reduction Policy - St. Mark's Lutheran Church by the Narrows, Tacoma, WA
- Pierce County YMCA and SWWA Synod Policies by Allison Kies
- Sex Offender Policy - Peace Lutheran Church, Tacoma, WA
- Ministry Safe, <https://ministriesafe.com/>
- Washington State Legislature

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I. Introduction

Peace Lutheran Church (PLC) is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of children, youth, and vulnerable adults in our community. Peace recognizes its responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practices and to protect children, youth, and vulnerable adults from harm, abuse and exploitation. PLC acknowledges its duty to respond appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse. Paid staff and volunteers will work together to encourage the development of an ethos which embraces differences and diversity and respects the rights of children, youth and adults. Children and their families are welcome and encouraged to be a part of the community of Peace. To help protect children, youth, and vulnerable adults, PLC has adopted the following child, youth and vulnerable adult policies and procedures. It is expected that all PLC paid staff and volunteers understand and implement these guidelines to help prevent abuse against children, youth, and vulnerable adults.

II. Purpose

The following procedures describe best practices to enhance safety for all individuals involved in PLC ministry activities. The intent of these best practices is to:

1. Provide a safe and secure environment for children, youth, vulnerable adults, members, volunteers, visitors, and paid staff.
2. Reduce the risk of abuse toward children, youth, and vulnerable adults.
3. Assist PLC in evaluating a person's suitability to supervise, facilitate, and/or participate in activities involving children, youth, and vulnerable adults.
4. Establish a transparent screening process for PLC paid staff and volunteers who supervise or facilitate PLC ministry activities.
5. Establish a protocol for reports and responses to abuse allegations aligned with PLC's mission, vision, and values, as well as relevant laws.
6. Reduce the possibility of false accusations of abuse made against volunteers and paid staff.

We hereby resolve to put into practice the procedures set forth herein with the intent to:

1. Safeguard the children, youth, and vulnerable adults of our church from abuse and neglect.
2. Respond to all allegations in a fair and compassionate manner.
3. Protect church staff and volunteers from potential false allegations of abuse.
4. Limit the extent of PLC's legal risk and liability.
5. Strengthen protocols for safety of all individuals within our Christian educational and programmatic children's, youth and intergenerational ministries.

III. Definitions

1. Peace Lutheran Church definitions

The following terms used herein are defined as follows:

- **Paid Staff:** any Pastor, minister, preacher, deacon, leader or employee who is paid.
- **Volunteers:** any volunteer staff or lay worker, including committees, Church Council, and leaders who are not paid.
- **Children/Youth/Minor:** any person who has not reached their 18th birthday or the age of majority as defined by state law at the time of participating in a given ministry activity.
- **Nursery Age:** birth through age 3.
- **Children's Ministry:** serves any person from birth through age 12 with ministry activities designed for participants up through 5th grade.
- **Youth Ministry:** serves any person ages 13 through 18 with ministry activities designed for participants from 6th through 12th grade.
- **Adult:** any person who has reached their 18th birthday or as defined by state law.
- **Vulnerable Adult:** an adult who has reached their 18th birthday but who, due to documented mental or bodily disability, cannot take care of themselves without help from others.
- **Rule of Three:** at least two adults must be present with a single child, youth, or vulnerable adult OR at least two children, youth, or vulnerable adults must be present with a single adult.
- **Gender:** female, male and terms related to gender in this policy refer to each person's gender identity as they recognize it.

2. Types of Abuse (as defined in the Washington State Law)

- **"Abuse or neglect"** means sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation as defined in RCW [18.130.460](#), or injury of a child by any person under circumstances which cause harm to the child's health, welfare, or safety, excluding conduct permitted under RCW [9A.16.100](#); or the negligent treatment or maltreatment of a child by a person responsible for or providing care to the child. An abused child is a child who has been subjected to child abuse or neglect as defined in this section. **"Child"** or **"children"** according to Washington State Law means any person under the age of 18 years of age.
- **"Neglect"** means failure by a caretaker, either deliberately or through negligence or inability, to take those actions necessary to provide a child or vulnerable adult with minimally adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care, supervision, emotional stability and growth or other essential care.
- **"Physical abuse"** means the willful action of inflicting bodily injury or physical mistreatment. Physical abuse includes, but is not limited to, striking with or without an object, slapping, pinching, choking, kicking, shoving, prodding, or the use of chemical restraints or physical restraints except as described in section [388-107-0420](#).

- **"Sexual abuse"** means any form of nonconsensual sexual contact, including, but not limited to, unwanted or inappropriate touching, rape, sodomy, sexual coercion, sexually explicit photographing, and sexual harassment. Sexual contact may include interactions that do not involve touching, including but not limited to sending a child or vulnerable adult sexually explicit messages, or cuing or encouraging them to perform sexual acts. Sexual abuse includes any sexual contact between a staff person or volunteer and a child, youth, or vulnerable adult, whether or not it is consensual.
- **"Mental abuse"** means any willful action or inaction of mental or verbal abuse. Mental abuse includes, but is not limited to, coercion, harassment, inappropriately isolating a child or vulnerable adult from family, friends, or regular activity, and verbal assault that includes ridiculing, intimidating, yelling, or swearing; see section [388-107-0001](#).
- **"Emotional Abuse"** means mental or emotional injury that results in an observable and material impairment in the child or youth, or vulnerable adult's growth, development, or psychological functioning.

3. Bullying

Bullying is aggressive behavior that is intentional, is repeated over time, and involves an imbalance of power or strength. Anyone who sees an act of bullying, and who then encourages it, is engaging in bullying. Bullying can take on various forms, including:

1. **Physical bullying** – when one person engages in physical force against another person, such as by hitting, punching, pushing, kicking, pinching, or restraining another.
2. **Verbal bullying** – when someone uses their words to hurt another, such as by belittling or calling another hurtful names.
3. **Nonverbal or relational bullying** – when one person manipulates a relationship or desired relationship to harm another person. This includes social exclusion, friendship manipulation, or gossip. This type of bullying also includes intimidating another person by using gestures.
4. **Sexualized bullying** – when bullying involves behaviors that are sexual in nature. Sexualized bullying behaviors include sexting, bullying that involves exposures of private body parts, and verbal bullying involving sexualized language or innuendos.
5. **Cyberbullying** – the intentional and overt act of aggression toward another person by way of any technological tool, such as email, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, social media, website or blog postings. Cyberbullying can involve:
 - a. Sending mean, vulgar, or threatening messages or images.
 - b. Posting sensitive, private information about another person.
 - c. Pretending to be someone else in order to make that person look bad.
 - d. Intentionally excluding someone from an online group.
 - e. Hazing – an activity expected of someone joining or participating in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers that person regardless of that person's willingness to participate.
 - f. Use of artificial intelligence (AI) to impersonate or create false imagery or audio of other individuals.

IV. Selection and Screening of Church Staff and Volunteers

In an effort to create a safe and caring environment within our church, each PLC staff person and volunteer who supervises, facilitates, or participates in PLC ministry activities with children, youth, or vulnerable adults will be screened and will be trained on children, youth, and vulnerable adult protection practices.

The procedure for selecting and screening is as follows:

1. Each person being considered to work with children, youth, and vulnerable adults in one-on-one settings and overnight activities within church ministry programs, whether as a volunteer or paid staff person, shall be required to go through a background check and review safety policies and procedures.
2. Before placing the volunteer or staff in a position of responsibility, the Pastor, church staff member, or lay person responsible for the ministry will review the staff applicant or volunteer. See Appendix 1 for record of contact with a reference for a staff or volunteer applicant.
 - a. The results of the hiring interview or volunteer engagement should be kept confidential and only disclosed to those persons requiring this information in order to make a decision as to whether the applicant should be approved as a staff or volunteer.
3. Each person applying to work with children, youth, and vulnerable adults shall authorize the church to conduct a criminal records check. PLC will conduct a Washington State Patrol background check for Sunday school teachers, nursery attendants, and other volunteers who supervise or facilitate ministry activities. PLC will conduct a national background check for paid staff and volunteers whose ministry activities include one-on-one mentoring or counseling with children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults and/or overnight events with children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults. PLC reserves the right to reject a person from working with children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults based on the results of a background check.
4. Volunteers working with children, youth, and vulnerable adults should be visible participants in the congregational life of PLC for a minimum of 6 months before being considered for supervision or facilitation of PLC ministry activities.
5. Background checks can be no more than 12 months old for regular volunteers leading classes and involved in programs with children, youth, and vulnerable adults.
6. The Church Council Executive Committee and/or Pastor may set additional screening, such as fingerprinting, national background check, and performance standards for paid staff.

In the unfortunate situation where PLC determines that an applicant should not work with children, youth, and vulnerable adults, PLC shall notify the individual privately and keep both the decision and reasoning confidential.

V. Code of Conduct for Adult Staff and Volunteers with Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adults

The following policies are intended to assist staff and volunteers in making decisions about interactions with children, youth, and vulnerable adults. For clarification of any guideline, or to inquire about behaviors not addressed here, staff should contact their supervisor. If volunteers have questions or need clarification, they should contact the staff overseeing the ministry activity.

Confirmed abuse will result in PLC immediately removing and banning the individual from PLC ministry activities. All reported allegations of abuse, suspicious behavior, or inappropriate behavior during a PLC ministry activity, will be reviewed by the Pastor and Church Council President in a timely manner. *(See section X: Response by Church Workers to Allegations of Abuse, page 19-21, and Appendix 6: Report of Suspected Incident of Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Abuse, page 31-33.)* Behaviors in violation of expectations detailed in any section of this policy will be handled according to relevant provisions in any section of this policy. PLC will fully cooperate with authorities if allegations of abuse are made that require investigation.

The Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policies and Procedures outlines specific expectations of the staff and volunteers. *(Appendix 2: Code of Conduct for Adults, page 23-24 provides an abbreviated version of our policies and best practices.)*

1. Staff and Volunteer Behavior

Staff and Volunteers will:

- A. Treat all others with respect at all times.
- B. Not discriminate or display prejudice based on gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, age, religion, or culture.
- C. Adhere to uniform standards of displaying affection, *(See VI: Policies and Best Practices, 1. Physical Contact Guidelines, page 8-9.)* and will use discretion when showing affection toward others (such as a spouse or partner) in the presence of children, youth, and vulnerable adults.
- D. Adhere to uniform standards of appropriate and inappropriate verbal interactions. *(See VI: Policies and Best Practices, 2. Verbal Interactions. page 9.)*
- E. Respect the right of children, youth, and vulnerable adults to not be touched in ways that make them feel uncomfortable and their right to say no. Children, youth, and vulnerable adults are not to be touched in areas of their bodies that would be covered by a bathing suit.

Staff and Volunteers will not:

- A. Stare at or comment on the bodies of children, youth, and vulnerable adults.
- B. Date or become romantically involved with children, youth, and vulnerable adults.

- C. Use or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs in the presence of children, youth, and vulnerable adults during PLC ministry activities.
- D. Smoke, vape or use tobacco in the presence of children, youth, and vulnerable adults or parents/guardians during working hours.
- E. Have sexually explicit materials, including printed or online pornography, on our church property or during church trips off property.
- F. Use profanity, tell inappropriate jokes, share intimate details of one’s personal life, or behave in ways that would be perceived as harassment in the presence of children, youth, and vulnerable adults or parents/guardians.
- G. Have secrets with children, youth, and vulnerable adults. Staff and Volunteers will only give gifts with prior permission from a guardian.
- H. Arrange to be alone with children, youth, and vulnerable adults they meet in PLC ministry activities outside of the church. Any exceptions require a written consent (e.g., text, email, or waiver) from parents/guardians.
- I. Transport children, youth, and vulnerable adults in their own vehicles. Any exceptions require written consent (e.g., text, email, or waiver) from parent/guardians or an emergency contact authorized by parent/guardians.
- J. Engage in inappropriate electronic communication with children, youth, and vulnerable adults. (See VI: Policies and Best Practices, 4. Offsite Contact, page 10-11.)

VI. Policies and Best Practices

The section describes best practices related to behaviors when supervising and/or facilitating a PLC ministry activity. The intent of knowing and following best practices is to develop and support safe, positive, nurturing environments for all individuals during PLC ministry activities.

1. Physical Contact Guidelines

PLC expects appropriate physical contact with children, youth, and vulnerable adults and prohibits inappropriate displays of physical contact. Some inappropriate physical interactions listed below may be child-initiated. In these cases, staff and volunteers should redirect the child to a more appropriate behavior.

Best practices for appropriate and inappropriate physical interactions include:

Appropriate Physical Interactions	Inappropriate Physical Interactions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● *Side hugs ● *Shoulder-to-shoulder hugs ● Pats on the shoulder or back ● Handshakes and fist bumps ● High-fives and hand slapping ● Verbal praise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Full-frontal hugs ● Kisses ● Touching hair, pats on head ● Showing affection in isolated area ● Lap sitting or holding *except for when Nursery aged child initiates

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Touching hands, shoulders, and arms ● Arms around shoulders ● *Holding hands (with young children in escorting situations) <p>* initiated by child or youth, or adult should ask for consent to hug child and initiate a side hug</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wrestling ● Piggyback rides ● Tickling ● Allowing a child, youth, or vulnerable adult to cling to an employee's or volunteer's leg ● Any type of massage given or received ● Any form of affection that is unwanted by the child, youth, or vulnerable adult, or the staff or volunteer ● Compliments relating to physique or body development ● Touching bottom, chest, or genital areas
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2. Verbal Interactions

Staff and volunteers are prohibited from speaking to children, youth, and vulnerable adults in a way that is, or could be construed by any observer, as harsh, coercive, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. Staff and volunteers must not initiate sexually oriented conversations with children, youth, or vulnerable adults. Staff and volunteers are not permitted to discuss their own sexual activities with children, youth, and vulnerable adults.

Best practices for appropriate and inappropriate verbal interactions include:

Appropriate Verbal Interactions	Inappropriate Verbal Interactions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Positive reinforcement ● Appropriate jokes ● Encouragement ● Praise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Name-calling ● Discussing sexual encounters in any way ● Involving children, youth, or vulnerable adults in the personal problems or issues of staff and volunteers ● Secrets ● Cursing ● Off-color or sexual jokes ● Shaming ● Belittling ● Harsh language that may frighten, threaten or humiliate children, youth, or vulnerable adults ● Derogatory remarks about the child, youth, or vulnerable adult or their family

3. One-on-One Interactions

Most abuse occurs when an adult is alone with a child, youth, or vulnerable adult. In order to protect the PLC staff, volunteers, and program participants, at no time may a staff person or volunteer be alone with a single child where they cannot be observed by others unless approved in advance by the Pastor or supervisor. When staff or volunteers supervise children, they should space themselves in a way that other staff, volunteers or other participants can see them.

In those situations where one-on-one interactions are approved, staff and volunteers should observe the following additional guidelines:

Additional Guidelines for One-on-One Interactions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● When meeting one-on-one with a youth, always do so in a public place in full view of others. Examples: At church: multipurpose room and open office doors. Outside of church: coffee shop, restaurant, parks, public events. ● Avoid physical affection that can be misinterpreted. Examples of appropriate affection may include: pats on the shoulder, high-fives, and handshakes. ● If meeting in a room or office, leave the door open, keep windows unobstructed, or move to an area that can be easily observed by others passing by. ● Inform other staff and volunteers that you are alone with a youth and ask them to randomly drop in. ● Document and immediately report any unusual incidents, including disclosures of abuse or maltreatment, behavior problems and how they were handled, injuries, or any interactions that might be misinterpreted.

4. Off-Site Contact

If off-site contacts occur, PLC considers the following as examples of appropriate and inappropriate contact. Neither of these lists is considered comprehensive or exhaustive, but rather lists common examples of appropriate and inappropriate off-site contact and communication:

Appropriate Electronic Communication	Inappropriate Electronic Communication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● With parents/guardians' permission and consent from individual youth, youth and staff/volunteer may be in private text conversation ● Communicating through PLC's page(s) on Facebook or other approved public forums 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Harsh, coercive, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning or humiliating comments ● Sexually oriented conversations ● Staff posting pictures of church participants on personal social media sites

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff will keep any social media profiles private and will not follow children, youth, or vulnerable adults from their personal accounts ● Posting photos with parents/guardians' permission of church participants on official PLC social media sites. See Appendix 8 for photo release form. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Posting inappropriate comments on pictures or posts ● "Friending" participants on "private" profile social networking sites
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5. Cell Phone Usage

Staff and volunteers will limit personal phone usage when working with children, youth, and vulnerable adults.

6. Gift Giving

Gift-giving can also show preference for one individual over another and develop unhealthy relationships. For these reasons giving gifts to groups of children, youth, and vulnerable adults is generally preferred over individual gifts—either is acceptable only under the following circumstances:

- Parent/guardian gives prior permission.
- Supervisor is notified.

7. Registered Sex Offenders

PLC affirms the restorative justice and reconciliation of God's love to every individual person, even with harmful actions in their pasts.

- We believe no person's past should exclude them from Christian community, so long as their presence does not threaten the safety of that community.
- We believe this makes our community safer because it provides an opportunity for people already in our midst to be honest about their past and provides them with support and accountability to assure children, youth, and vulnerable adults are safe.

At the core of these policies and procedures is God's just love which calls us to maintain healthy boundaries. By implementing these measures, PLC aims to create a secure environment for all attendees while fulfilling legal obligations related to the presence of registered sex offenders in the building.

It is the desire of PLC to extend its ministry to all persons while continuing to provide for the safety of all who attend. Our first priority is to protect children, youth, and vulnerable adults from abuse, and the church will take steps to exclude unsafe individuals if necessary. However, we hope this policy for registered sex offenders can be utilized in order to provide a proactive process that will allow some to be a part of our church community who might normally be turned away.

When the Pastor or any member of the church leadership is informed that a registered sex offender is seeking to attend or is attending the church, the following steps will be taken to manage risk as the church lives out its call to minister to all people:

1. In compliance with Section IV. Selection and Screening of Church Staff and Volunteers, 3. page 6, the individual will not be allowed to volunteer or participate in programs focused on children, youth, or vulnerable adults.
2. Once identified, The PLC Pastor and a congregational representative will start an evaluative process beginning with a meeting with the individual to discuss their past, learn about the therapy they have undergone and evidence of behavior changes in line with best practices for safe contact with children, youth, and vulnerable adults, and consider their legal restrictions.
 - a. This process may include consultations with the Department of Corrections (DOC), lawyers, social workers, and/or psychologists.
 - b. This individual will provide an electronic or hard copy of the individual's court orders to the Pastor and congregational representative at this meeting.
3. If the individual has already been attending services of the church, the identity of the individual will also be immediately disclosed to the Council, which will arrange for a designated person to escort this individual on Sunday mornings. A covenant agreement signed by the individual, the PLC Pastor, and PLC Council President will detail further expectations of church and individual going forward.
4. After the information-gathering meeting, the Pastor will communicate with the Council (at their next meeting, via a special meeting, or via email) and give a recommendation on how to proceed.
5. The Church Council will review the materials collected by the PLC pastor and congregational representative, and decide whether or not to extend a covenant agreement to the individual.
6. If the Council and Pastor decide to proceed, the church staff and Council will create a covenant agreement. (*Appendix 4: Registered Sex Offender Covenant Agreement, p. 27-28.*) This covenant will be created according to the specificities of the individual's case and crimes. The covenant will include but is not limited to:
 - a. The individual's name, contact information, and sex offender classification
 - b. Where the person can be in the church and at what times, and supervision requirements even if not required by law.
 - c. Parole or reporting officer's name and contact information
 - d. Procedures if covenant is broken
 - e. Signatures from individual, Pastor and PLC Council President
7. Once the covenant is created, the Pastor and/or leadership representatives (must be 2 people) will meet with the individual to go over the information and sign the covenant.
 - a. Once the covenant is signed, the Council and staff will be notified of its stipulations and be responsible for making sure it is being followed.
 - b. If covenant requirements are not met by the individual, actions outlined in their covenant should be applied. (*See Appendix 4: Registered Sex Offender Covenant Agreement, p. 27, section 8, a-d.*)

8. If, for any reason, the Pastor and/or Council decide that this individual should not be invited to attend church services, he/she will be notified within one week of the information-gathering meeting and will not be allowed on church property.
9. If the covenant is broken, the person(s) witnessing the breach will notify the Pastor and/or a member of Council immediately.

VII. Supervision and Monitoring of Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adults

The recommended best practice at PLC is to maintain the Rule of Three during Sunday School. The following best practices are intended to promote and maximize the safety of all children, youth, vulnerable adults, staff, and volunteers at PLC ministry activities:

1. Staff and volunteers shall never leave a child, youth, or vulnerable adult unsupervised.
2. As staff and volunteers supervise children, youth, and vulnerable adults they should space themselves in a way that other staff or volunteers can see them. Staff and volunteers will use the Rule of 3 and avoid working one-on-one with youth in a private setting. Staff and volunteers will use common areas when working with individual children, youth, and vulnerable adults.
3. If Godly Play or Children's Worship Time were to have only one child, it would be recommended to cancel class for the day and have children remain with parents/guardians.
4. If an older child (age 10 and above) will be the only participant in a class, then the teacher must ask them before class begins if they would prefer to participate in the class or stay in adult education with their parents/guardians. If the child wants to participate in class, confirm this with the child's parents/guardians and proceed with the class.
5. Staff and volunteers are expected to model respect, patience, courtesy, tact, and maturity when working with children, youth, and vulnerable adults.
6. Staff and volunteers will not abuse children, youth, and vulnerable adults in any way including (but not limited to) the following:
 - a. Physical abuse: hitting, spanking, shaking, slapping, unnecessary restraints
 - b. Verbal abuse: degrading, threatening, cursing
 - c. Sexual abuse: inappropriate touching, exposing oneself, sexually oriented conversations
 - d. Mental abuse: shaming, humiliation, cruelty
 - e. Neglect: withholding food, water, shelter, basic care
7. Staff and volunteers are expected to use positive techniques of guidance, including but not limited to: redirection, positive reinforcement, and encouragement rather than techniques such as, but not limited to: competition, comparison, bribery, and criticism. Staff and volunteers will have age-appropriate expectations for participant behavior and maintain environments that minimize the need for discipline.

8. Physical restraint is used only in predetermined situations necessary to protect children, youth, and vulnerable adults or others from harm, only administered in a prescribed manner, and must be documented in writing.
9. PLC will respond to the mistreatment of a peer by another peer. This includes, but is not limited to, harassment, intimidation, and bullying, and to the extent that such actions are disruptive, PLC will respond as needed to mitigate harm and restore relationships to the extent possible.
10. All staff and volunteers are responsible for knowing and upholding all provisions of the Code of Conduct for Youth contained in Appendix 3.

1. Facility Monitoring

It is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers to ensure that all locations accessible by participants and visitors are properly and consistently monitored. The best practice is for the supervisor and/or designated volunteer to be regularly moving through accessible locations and noting behaviors during programs involving children, youth, and vulnerable adults.

A. Checking People into the Facility

When anyone who is not staff (members, guests, residents, construction workers, maintenance, cleaning crews, etc.) enters the facility during operational hours (Tuesday-Friday, 9 am-5 pm), they must check in with the front desk.

When possible, create one point of entry and exit for monitoring those coming in and out of the building.

2. Ratios

Each program should follow the ratio requirements that relate directly to the goals of the program and the design of the program area. PLC will have at least 2 adults (at a minimum one of the adults should be at least 5 years older than the oldest youth in attendance) at events away from the PLC-owned facilities. Every effort will be made to maintain a 1 to 8 adult to youth ratio for events designed for ages 12-18 (middle and high school youth). If the minimum ratios cannot be met, then the event will be canceled.

The Rule of Three will be applied in PLC ministry activities with children, youth, and vulnerable adults for their protection and for the protection of staff and volunteers.

The Nursery will have one background-checked staff; if more than 5 children are in the Nursery there should be an additional volunteer or staff that has been background-checked and trained.

3. Monitoring Best Practices

PLC requires a parent or legal guardian to complete a child or youth registration form which includes permission, liability waiver, parent/guardian contact information, at least one emergency contact, and important information to participate in regular activities and programs at PLC.

4. Parent/Guardian Role

Parents/guardians are ultimately responsible for their child(ren) while in the PLC facility or activities. If parents/guardians are not able to be present with their child(ren), they will designate another adult, who cannot be a staff person, to supervise their child(ren). This designated adult must be made known to the staff or volunteers overseeing the program. See Appendix 9 for child drop-off liability release form.

5. Train All Staff and Volunteers

All staff and volunteers will be trained to greet children, youth, and vulnerable adults who enter the facility; to direct children, youth, and vulnerable adults to the structured activities or authorized areas; and to redirect children, youth, and vulnerable adults who are not in an authorized area or who are not participating in a structured activity.

Ultimately, all children, youth, and vulnerable adults must be supervised at all times, regardless of age. They may be supervised directly in structured activities and indirectly when they are in authorized areas.

6. Open Door Policy

Parents/guardians, volunteers, or staff of the church may visit and observe the program at any time for brief check-ins to be comfortable with their child(ren) participating in programs at PLC. This is meant to be infrequent so as to not disrupt programs or to make children or youth uncomfortable.

7. Nursery Sign-in/Sign-out

Parents/guardians leaving child(ren) at the Nursery who are infants through 3 years of age will sign in the child and leave a phone number where they can be immediately contacted, indicate if snacks can be given to the child, and note any allergies. Parents/guardians will agree to pick up their child(ren) promptly at the end of worship and to check their phone throughout worship in case they are needed. The person picking up child(ren) from the Nursery must also sign them out. No child should ever be left unattended.

8. Trip and Retreat Supervision

In the event of trips organized by the church or overnight events planned or attended by the church, these are the best practices and policies to follow:

A. Off-Site Activities

The off-site procedures include:

- Requiring supervisor approval for all off-site activities.
- Requiring parents/guardians approval.
- Specifying staff-to-youth ratios for the activity.
- Requiring staff and youth to be easily identifiable.
- Specific bathroom and locker room procedures as applicable to the outing.
- Transportation procedures.
- Instructions for a supervisor to observe the off-site activities at scheduled times and random intervals.
- Specific accommodations, supports, and/or certifications to ensure safety based on the location and type of activity (e.g., Amusement parks, Water Parks, Arcades).

B. Trips and Retreat Supervision of Youth

There shall be at least two adults present for all trips, retreats, and other times youth gather away from the church building. No adults other than the approved staff and volunteers will join the trip whether it is in the home of a PLC member or elsewhere. There shall be at least one male identifying and one female identifying adult 5 years older than the oldest youth participant at multigender overnight events. At single-gender overnight events, at least one of the two or more adults present will be of the same gender and 5 years older than the oldest participating youth.

In situations where two adults are not available per room where youth are staying overnight, no adult should stay alone in a specific room with youth. In those circumstances where adults are not staying in the rooms with youth, measures should be taken to assure the youth's safety and supervision, such as adult hall monitors, and periodic room checks by two adults. When possible, the two adults will be of the same gender as those being checked. Parents/guardians should be made aware of housing accommodations.

The person in charge of each trip and/or retreat shall carry permission slips including permission for emergency medical care. (*Appendix 7: Children and Youth Ministry Permission Form, p. 34.*)

Guidelines for Adult Volunteers for Trips and Retreats:

- Must be at least 18 years of age for in-church activities and at least 21 years of age for activities off the church property, or meet the requirements of the host site if different.
- A National background check will be required of all adults who wish to be chaperones for overnight PLC ministry activities.

- At least one adult or youth on-site must have current First-Aid/CPR Certification.
- A minimum of 2 adults must be present at every youth event.
- Events held away from PLC will have at most 8 youths per each adult chaperone.
- Events held at PLC will have an adult to youth ratio of 1 to 8 for all youth events.
- If the minimum ratios cannot be met, the event will be canceled,
- All volunteers shall be given adequate information and preparation before each event.

Overnights at the Church Facility:

- Physical boundaries within the church must be clearly defined and shared with all participants.
- Assign each staff/volunteer to a specific group of youth to supervise. Each staff should then maintain a roll sheet that lists all of the youth in their group. Head counts and roll checks should be conducted routinely throughout the evening.
- Assign staff/volunteers to shared common areas in the PLC facility, such as the bathrooms, entrances and exits, hallways, etc. If it is not possible to assign specific staff to these areas, assign a specific staff/volunteer to conduct periodic facility “walk-throughs.”
- With regard to sleeping arrangements, assign youth to rooms based on gender identities and post staff/volunteers at the entrances and exits to these rooms. If this is not feasible, separate genders by as much space as possible.
- When performing room checks, staff should always go in pairs. Keep female and male staff/volunteers in designated areas.

Overnights Away from the Church Facility:

- Overnight stays at private homes are prohibited unless approved by the Church Council. Even with approval, there must be the Rule of Three.
- Physical boundaries at the off-site location must be clearly defined and explained to youth.
- Assign each staff or volunteer to a specific group of youth to supervise. Each staff member should then maintain a roll sheet that lists all of the youth in their group. Head counts and roll checks should be conducted routinely throughout the event.
- If in a cabin-type setting, the staff or volunteers should be placed in bunks to maximize supervision around the cabin and in a way that decreases the chances of youth leaving or entering cabins without an adult noticing and responding.
- In hotel rooms, assign youth to rooms based on gender identities and age. Staff or volunteers should have their own rooms. If staff or volunteers must share rooms with youth, they must have their own beds and never change clothes in front of youth.
- Staff or volunteers will set and communicate the lights out time.
- All staff or volunteers are to be on duty in the halls or cabins at night until an hour after lights out and all rooms are quiet.

VIII. Transportation

Best practices for transportation to and from PLC ministry activities with PLC owned transportation are as follows:

1. Vehicles will undergo regular maintenance checks to ensure they are in good working condition and comply with all relevant safety standards. Child safety seats will be used for younger children according to Washington state laws and regulations.
2. All church vehicle drivers must be approved and have completed all required training and adhere to Church Vehicle Procedures.
3. All drivers must hold a valid driver's license.
4. Require written parent/guardian permission for all youth on the trip. Chaperones take these permission forms and medical releases with them on the trip.
5. Require chaperones to have a list of the youth on the trip. The chaperones take roll when boarding the vehicle(s), when leaving the vehicle(s), and periodically throughout the trip.
6. Specify chaperone-to-youth ratios. When possible, do not count the driver in the supervision ratio. At least two adults, preferably one of the same gender as the children in the vehicle, will be present during transportation. If two adults cannot be present, it is best practice to keep at least a 2:1 ratio of youth to adults. Parents/guardians should be made aware of any transportation occurring with only 1 adult present.
7. Chaperones sit in seats that permit maximum supervision.
8. Chaperones assign seats for youth to maximize safety and support for all participants.
9. Drivers will not make unauthorized stops.
10. Unusual occurrences are documented in writing by at least one chaperone.
11. If chaperones were to transport individual youth in their personal vehicles, permission from parents/guardians should be obtained. In an emergency situation where parents/guardians cannot be reached, an emergency contact may be called to grant permission if a parent/guardian cannot be contacted in a timely manner.
12. When transporting children, youth, or vulnerable adults in non-church vehicles, staff and volunteers must:
 - a. Notify the pastor and supervisor of all transportation activities.
 - b. Use the Rule of Three.
 - c. Never transport without written permission from parents/guardians.
 - d. Transport directly to their destination with no unauthorized stops.
 - e. Document beginning and ending times and mileage, the names of all present—including other staff and volunteers who are involved in transportation—purpose of the transportation, and destination.
 - f. Avoid unnecessary physical contact while in vehicles.
 - g. Avoid engaging in sensitive conversations.

Pre-trip inspection: Before each trip, staff or volunteers responsible for transportation will conduct a pre-trip inspection of the vehicle to verify its safety and ensure all necessary items, such as first aid kits, emergency contact information/permission slips, and at least one working communication device (mobile phone, etc.) are on hand.

IX. Response by Church Workers to Injuries and Accidents

In order to assure proper attention was given to an injury or accident, the adult supervisor must complete an incident report within 24 hours of the incident whenever a child, youth, or vulnerable adult is injured. (*Appendix 5: Report of Accident or Injury, p. 29.*) Reports will be received by both the Pastor and the Council President. Parents/guardians should be alerted as soon as possible.

X. Response by Church Workers to Allegations of Abuse

At PLC we believe in being honest and transparent in our care for children, youth, and vulnerable adults and choose to safeguard the welfare of all people in our care. As of 7/25/2025 clergy in Washington State are mandated reporters [[SB 5375](#)]. Those who are not mandatory reporters of abuse, Washington State defines as “permissive reporters” [[RCW 74.34.035](#)]. Washington state law encourages persons other than mandatory reporters to make a report when they have reason to believe that abuse, abandonment, neglect, or self-neglect is occurring or has occurred. We ask that you also communicate with your supervisor and Pastor before contacting Child Protective Services.

Staff and volunteers should be trained to be aware of and understand their legal and ethical obligation to recognize and report suspicions of mistreatment and abuse.

Staff and volunteers will:

- Be familiar with the symptoms of child, youth, or vulnerable adult abuse and neglect, including physical, sexual, verbal, and emotional abuse.
- Know and follow PLC’s policies and procedures and report child, youth, or vulnerable adult abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities per state mandated reporter laws. Follow up to ensure that appropriate action has been taken.
- Report concerns or complaints about other staff, volunteers, adults, children, youth, or vulnerable adults to their supervisor or Pastor. (*Appendix 6: Report of Suspected Incident of Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Abuse, p. 31-33.*)

PLC will cooperate fully with the authorities to investigate all cases of alleged abuse. Any staff or volunteer will cooperate to the fullest extent possible in any external investigation by outside authorities or internal investigation conducted by the Council, Pastor, or persons

given investigative authority by PLC. Failure to cooperate fully may be grounds for termination.

1. Best Practices for Staff/Volunteer Response to Incidents of Allegation of Abuse or Inappropriate Behaviors

PLC is dedicated to maintaining zero tolerance for abuse. In the event that staff or volunteers observe any suspicious or inappropriate behaviors, including but not limited to inappropriate behaviors described in this document, on the part of other staff or volunteers, it is their personal responsibility to immediately report their observations. Volunteers report to the staff overseeing the PLC ministry activity, or to the Pastor or Church Council President. Staff report to their supervisor, or to the Pastor or Church Council President.

- A. If you witness abuse, interrupt the behavior immediately.
- B. If abuse is disclosed to you, assure the individual disclosing they were correct to tell you.
- C. Protect the alleged victim from intimidation, retribution, or further abuse.
- D. Immediately report the allegation or incident to the proper church authorities (based on mandatory reporting requirements) and the designated authority.
- E. Be sure to document the incident, disclosure, or any circumstances causing your suspicion of abuse. State only the facts. (*Appendix 6: Report of Suspected Incident of Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Abuse, p. 31-33.*)
- F. Advise the person who reported the behavior that the report is being taken seriously.
- G. It is not your job to investigate the incident but it **IS** your job to report the incident to your supervisor in a timely manner.
- H. Check back to make sure appropriate steps were taken. If not, report again to your supervisor or the designated church authority.

Reporting Procedure:

Once suspicion or allegation has been brought to the Pastor and Church Council President, the Pastor and Church Council President:

1. Notify the proper authorities, Department of Health and Social Services, or a local law enforcement agency in the county in which the child resides or in which the suspected abuse occurred.
2. Notify the parents/guardians of the victim and take whatever steps are necessary to ensure the safety of the child, youth, or vulnerable adult until the parents/guardians arrive. It is important to emphasize that the proper authorities must be notified even if the parents/guardians do not wish the incident to be reported.
 - a. Note: if one or both of the parents/guardians is the alleged abuser, contact the proper authorities. Follow their advice about notification of the parents/guardians.

3. After reporting the suspected abuse to the proper authorities, the Pastor or Church Council President will report the incident to PLC's insurance carrier, and it is recommended to seek legal counsel.
4. Review the file of the staff or volunteer to determine if similar complaints were reported.
5. Once the proper authorities have been contacted and the safety of the child, youth, or vulnerable adult is secured, the Pastor or Church Council President may tell the accused that a report has been made.
 - a. If the accused is a volunteer or paid staff of the church, that person shall be suspended from their duties until the investigation is finished.
 - b. If the accused is a paid staff person of the church, arrangements should be made to either maintain or suspend their salary until the allegations are cleared or substantiated.
6. Any contact with the media should be handled by a predetermined spokesperson (e.g., Pastor or Church Council President). Care will be taken to safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of all involved. The spokesperson should generally convey that the matter is under investigation and any comments made prior to the conclusion of the investigation would be premature.

Based on the information gathered, the following may be required:

1. Increased monitoring or supervision of the staff, volunteer, or program.
2. If the accused is a paid staff or member of the congregation and is found guilty, it is recommended to provide counsel for the congregation. The Church Council will also reevaluate practices and procedures in place to mitigate the recurrence of abuse happening within PLC.
3. If policy violations with children, youth, or vulnerable adults are confirmed, the staff or volunteer may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination and prosecution.
4. If more information is needed, interview and/or survey other staff and volunteers or youth.

XI. Education of Persons Who Work with Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adults

The church shall provide annual scheduled training focused on issues of protection for those working with children, youth, and vulnerable adults. Attendance at this training session shall be required of all staff and volunteers with direct contact with children, youth, and vulnerable adults in the church's ministry. The training may include:

- The definition and recognition of abuse.
- The church's policies on reporting abuse and appropriate forms.
- The purposes of the policy as protection for children, youth, and vulnerable adults and for church staff and volunteers.
- The meaning and importance of confidentiality.
- The maintenance of a positive learning classroom environment, including appropriate discipline, age-level characteristics, and behavior for teachers and leaders.

APPENDIX 1: RECORD OF CONTACT WITH A REFERENCE OR CHURCH IDENTIFIED BY AN APPLICANT FOR VOLUNTEER OR PAID WORK (CONFIDENTIAL)

Name of Applicant: _____

Reference or church contacted (if a church, identify both the church and the person contacted): _____

Date and time of contact: _____

Person contacting the reference or church: _____

Method of contact (phone, letter, and personal conversation): _____

Summary of conversation. Summarize the remarks made by the minister or reference concerning the questions of the applicant's suitability for volunteer or paid work with children/youth and/or adults.

Reference verifier name (print): _____

Signature: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX 2: CODE OF CONDUCT – ADULTS

This code of conduct is based on Peace Lutheran Church's Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policies and Procedures and is to be used with all PLC Staff, Volunteers, Adult leaders, and Youth leaders for the safety and protection of all. Contact your supervisor or the staff leading the ministry activity for clarification or to inquire about behaviors not addressed here.

BACKGROUND CHECK: In working with children, youth, and vulnerable adults at Peace Lutheran Church, I agree to complete a Washington State Patrol Background Check and/or a National Background Check. In addition, I will complete an application and/or interview, as needed, with the appropriate staff person given my interest in a specific ministry related to serving children, youth, or vulnerable adults.

DURING ANY PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH PROGRAM:

- Treat everyone fairly regardless of race, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, age, religion, or culture.
- Ensure that participants travel and go about their activities in **groups of 3 or more**. Staff and Volunteers shall use the **Rule of Three**: at least two adults must be present with a single child, youth, or vulnerable adult OR at least two children, youth, or vulnerable adults must be present with a single adult. Parent/guardian permission will be given on a case by case basis if these parameters cannot be met.
- Never have secrets with or be alone with a single child/youth/VA. Stay where you can be observed by others. One-on-one conversations should be conducted in clear view of others in a room with a window or the door open as appropriate. Parent/guardian permission will be given on a case by case basis if these parameters cannot be met.
- Remember that you are not the parent, peer or sibling. You are a leader, adult and mentor and we thank you for serving in that role.
- All forms of bullying, intimidation and harassment, including verbal, physical and cyber-bullying are prohibited.

GUIDELINES FOR SAFE & HEALTHY INTERACTIONS

At Peace We:

- Provide clear boundaries to create a safe and positive experience for everyone.
- Encourage others verbally with positive redirection and guidance with respect, patience, courtesy, tact and maturity.
- Give high fives and fist bumps, side hugs and pats on the back.
- Share handshakes and big smiles.
- Pay attention to verbal and non-verbal cues of other people and at no time force, belittle or begrudge the other person for opting out of any types of these interactions.

- Always ask before helping with seatbelts, lifejackets, harnesses, bathroom breaks, etc. and as appropriate assist in full view of other students, adults and leaders.
- Ensure children, youth and vulnerable adults are supervised.
- Wear attire appropriate for the activity. Use school dress codes as a guideline.
- Look out for one another. We interrupt abuse immediately, and if we see questionable behavior from any participant or leader we remind each other of the Code of Conduct.
- We report to a supervisor/staff a behavior we see as questionable or outside the Code of Conduct.

At Peace We Do Not:

- Pick up children, youth or vulnerable adults or hold others on our laps—exceptions are made for this in the church nursery when comforting a child in an appropriate manner.
- Give individual gifts—staff and volunteers should only give gifts to groups of children, youth, and vulnerable adults with approval from the Pastor and supervisor and parents/guardians must be notified.
- Touch others in an area that would be covered by a swimsuit.
- Smoke or use alcohol or tobacco in the presence of children, youth, and vulnerable adults or parents/guardians.
- Engage in inappropriate displays of affection or engage in sexual activity.
- Use profanity or physical punishment or any kind of abuse including physical, verbal, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect. Abuse is not tolerated and is cause for dismissal and reporting to city, county and state authorities as needed.
- Contact or have private interactions through social media, computer or other devices with children, youth or VAs in our programs—exceptions can be made on a case by case basis for staff per parent/guardian permission.
- Transport children, youth or VAs without parent/guardian permission and never alone unless it is an emergency and parent/guardian permission has been granted.

Signature: _____

I have read and understood this code of conduct and commit to abiding by these guidelines and policies (name) (date received)

APPENDIX 3: CODE OF CONDUCT – YOUTH

Our guidelines are set for the benefit of everyone who attends Peace Lutheran Church youth events, including invited guests. It is our desire to maintain the highest level of ethics and standards in relationship to conduct and ministry during each meeting.

1. All participants in Peace Lutheran Church's sponsored youth activities shall conduct themselves in a Christian manner. Following the principle of respect for our own body as well as others, the following code of conduct requires that:
 - a. No smoking, alcohol or drug use is allowed.
 - b. No weapons are allowed (e.g., guns, pocket knives, lighters, etc.)
 - c. No sexual activity will occur between participants at activities.
 - d. All participants will refrain from the use of profanity.
 - e. All participants will refrain from gossiping about others.
 - f. Wear attire appropriate for the activity and consistent with school dress codes. If there's any concern, a leader may talk through clothing choices with youth.
 - g. All participants will show respect for each other, leaders, and other participants' property and for the church property, grounds and facility. Any expenses for repairs of damage, due to negligence, shall be the responsibility of the participant and the parent/guardian.
 - h. All participants are expected to participate in all scheduled activities and will stay with the group until dismissed by a leader or the event concludes.
2. Consequences and disciplines for infractions are decided at the time of the offense by the adult leadership and may include, but not be limited to verbal warnings, expulsion from an event and/or referral to the Children's and Youth Committee for further review and action.
3. According to official ELCA guidelines, all youth are bound by the covenant and rules of youth events from portal to portal (from the time they leave the supervision of their parent/guardian to the time they return to the supervision of their parent/guardian).
4. All Peace Lutheran Church youth attending an event must have their medical information on file. It is the responsibility of the youth and the parent/guardian to update their medical information as changes occur. Medical information will be requested annually.
5. Permission slips (*Appendix 7: Children and Youth Ministry Permission Form, p. 34*) are required for every Peace Lutheran Church youth and friend who are attending an event that is held away from the church or any overnight at the church.
 - a. Permission slips will include an emergency phone number where the parent/guardian can be reached during the time of the event.
 - b. If a Peace Lutheran Church youth/friend arrives at an event without a signed permission slip, at the discretion of the event coordinator he/she may contact the parent/guardian and get verbal information and authorization over the phone. If the parent/guardian is not available, the youth is not allowed to attend the event. An adult will be required to stay with the youth until he/she is picked up.
6. Expenses for Peace Lutheran Church sponsored activities may be the shared responsibility between the participant and the church. No one should be denied access to an event because of financial need. Scholarship help, payment plans, and work options are available as alternative options.

7. All movies/films shown at events (away and at the church) must have no higher than a PG13 rating unless previewed by a pastor or adult leadership before it is given approval.
8. Normally, no youth under the age of 21 will be permitted to drive themselves to events held away from Peace Lutheran Church. If, due to extenuating circumstances a youth needs to drive to an away event, written permission must be given by the parent/guardian and they must receive prior approval from the event coordinator. The youth will then be required to check in with the event coordinator at arrival and before leaving the event. Only youth who arrive at the off-site event in the youth's car will be allowed in that car or to leave the event in that car. Generally, no "in and out" privileges will be granted; however, exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
9. On overnight excursions (except lock-ins), whenever possible, separate sleeping areas will be provided by gender.
10. After contact with the parent/guardian, if a youth needs to be sent home early from a youth event due to disciplinary action, all expenses of travel shall be the responsibility of the parent/guardian.
11. At the conclusion of any youth event, the event coordinator and, if possible, one other adult will remain on-site until all youth have been picked up.
12. At the conclusion of any event where the church van or a vehicle is used, participants will help ensure the vehicle is clean.
13. The "buddy system" will be used at any event where the youth are allowed to roam the area by themselves.

APPENDIX 4: REGISTERED SEX OFFENDER COVENANT AGREEMENT

1. The Church Council will know that I am a Level ____ Sex Offender, registered with the police under the terms of the Sex Offenders Act. Peace Lutheran Church leadership will consult with me before any public disclosure of my status.
2. I agree that if I disclose my legal status as a sex offender to anyone at or from Peace Lutheran Church, I will also notify them that I have signed a covenant agreement with the church to assist my efforts to not reoffend.
3. I will give at least 24 hours notice to a predetermined representative of the church if I wish to attend worship services or programs so that the church can assign an escort, if needed.
4. I will never allow myself to be in a situation where I am alone inside Peace Lutheran Church. If I need to use the bathroom, I will ask for a previously arranged escort to come with me to a single-occupant bathroom.
5. I agree that without prior authorization from the Pastor, my presence will be restricted to the multipurpose room during the Breakfast and Faith Education Hour that runs from 9:30 am -10:45 am, in the Sanctuary before and during worship from 8:30 am – 9:45 am or 11:00 – 12:30 pm, and in the multipurpose room for refreshments and fellowship after 11 am worship.
6. I accept that contact may need to be made with my probation officer or reporting officer, if I have one. I agree to sign a release of information so that needed information and communication will be possible.

Name of parole or reporting officer: _____

PO and/or RO Phone #: _____

7. If there are Orders of Protection or other pertinent advisories, I will provide this information to the Pastor and Council. This information and all other documentation (including this Covenant) will be kept in a secure place.
8. I understand that if I do not adhere to these conditions, then I may be subject to these actions:
 - a. Immediate suspension of all privileges to be present in the church building, on its property, or at any church-sponsored events pending an inquiry.
 - b. A meeting at the earliest convenience of the Pastor and Council to discuss the Covenant and the inquiry.
 - c. If there is not a satisfactory resolution, I may be prevented from attending worship services and/or church functions.
 - d. If there is a satisfactory resolution, I will be notified in writing of my reinstated privileges by the Pastor and Council.

9. I understand that any documented concerns by persons in the church will be taken seriously and reported to the Pastor and Council.
10. I understand that if I have any documented concerns regarding persons in the church, they will be taken seriously and reported to the Pastor and Council.
11. I understand that this Covenant will be reviewed and renewed annually for an indefinite period of time and I will be given a copy of it.
12. I recognize that this is a temporary agreement and may be amended if/when Peace Lutheran Church adopts further policy regarding sex offenders in public worship.

Sex Offender Signature: _____

Date: _____

Contact number: _____

Contact email (if applicable): _____

Pastor Signature: _____

Date: _____

Church Council President Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX 5: REPORT OF INJURY OR ACCIDENT

Name of person completing report: _____

Date: _____

Person(s) Involved (include name; age; child, youth, or adult; participant, staff, or volunteer):

Witness(es) to incident:

Name _____ Age _____

Phone _____

Name _____ Age _____

Phone _____

Name _____ Age _____

Phone _____

INCIDENT

Type of Incident (circle): Behavioral Accident Illness Other

Location: _____ Date: _____ Time:

What led up to the incident:

Describe the incident:

What actions were taken after the incident:

In case of injury, complete the following:

Identify type & bodily location of injury:

Was any injury a result of a violation of a rule, order, or law by the injured? Yes No

If yes, describe violation:

List any objects or equipment involved in the injury:

Nature of first aid administered:

Person(s) administering first aid:

Did the injured leave the facility: Yes No

If yes, with whom?

Where were they taken?

FOR CHILDREN/YOUTH PROGRAMS

Were parents/guardians notified? Yes No

Who contacted parents/guardians & when?

Staff person in charge at time of incident:

Staff to participant ratio at time of incident:

If this incident involves alleged child or vulnerable adult abuse:

Was the appropriate state agency notified? Yes No

Date/Time: _____

Person Making Report: _____

State Agency Contact Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

APPENDIX 6: REPORT OF SUSPECTED INCIDENT OF CHILD/YOUTH/VULNERABLE ADULT ABUSE

Name of person (Paid or Volunteer) observing or receiving disclosure of abuse:

Date: _____ Time: _____

Place of observation of disclosure: _____

Brief Description:

Victim's name: _____

Victim's age: _____ Date of birth: _____

School victim attends (if applicable): _____

Parent/Guardian name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Work phone: _____

Date/time place of initial conversation with or report from victim: _____

Victim's statement (please give your detailed summary):

Notification of Pastor

Pastor's name: _____

Date/time: _____

Notification of Church Council President

Church Council President's name: _____

Date/time: _____

Summary of report:

Name of person accused (paid staff, volunteer, other):

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

If accused person is staff or volunteer, date/time/place of initial conversation:

Notes of conversation:

Suspension date/time: _____

Notes of Suspension:

Call to parent(s)/guardian(s), spoke to: _____

Date/time: _____

Notes:

Call to Children and Family Services Division: Child Protective Services-CPS Intake
1-800-422-7517/253-983-6100 After Hours/Weekend: 1-800-422-7517/253-983-6100

Date/time: _____

Name of person contacted: _____

Summary of conversation:

Call to local law enforcement agency

Date/time: _____

Name of person contacted: _____

Summary of conversation:

Other contacts

Date/time: _____

Name of person contacted: _____

Summary of conversation:

Signature of review:

Lead Pastor: _____ Date: _____

Church Council President: _____ Date: _____

Signature of person making this report: _____

Date: _____

Print name: _____

APPENDIX 7: CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRY PERMISSION FORM

I am the parent/guardian of _____, and I hereby grant permission for my child to participate in outings and be transported at events organized by Peace Lutheran Church. I understand that these outings may involve various activities, such as field trips, excursions, and recreational events, and I acknowledge that my child will be supervised by Peace Lutheran Church staff and volunteers.

I acknowledge that Peace Lutheran Church and its representatives will make reasonable efforts to ensure the safety and well-being of my child during these outings. However, I understand that accidents and unforeseen circumstances may occur despite these efforts. As such, I waive any and all liability claims against Peace Lutheran Church, its staff, volunteers, and representatives for any injuries, damages, losses, or expenses incurred as a result of my child's participation in these outings.

In the event of an emergency, I authorize Peace Lutheran Church and its representatives to take any necessary measures, including but not limited to obtaining medical treatment, transportation to a medical facility, and administering first aid, on behalf of my child. I understand that Peace Lutheran Church will make reasonable efforts to contact me or the emergency contact person listed below as soon as possible in such situations.

Emergency Contact Information:

Parent/Guardian Name: _____ Phone: _____

Emergency Contact Name: _____ Phone: _____

Child/Youth Allergy and Medical information:

Known Allergies: _____

Medical Conditions we should be aware of:

Medications, dosages, and times to be taken:

I have read and understood the contents of this permission slip and waiver of liability. By signing below, I acknowledge that I am granting permission for my child to participate in outings organized by Peace Lutheran Church and that I release Peace Lutheran Church from any liability arising from these activities.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please complete this form and return it to Peace Lutheran Church before your child's participation in upcoming outings. Thank you for your cooperation and support.

APPENDIX 8: PHOTO RELEASE – PERMISSION FOR PHOTOS OF CHILD/YOUTH/VULNERABLE ADULT FOR USE IN PUBLICATIONS

www.peacelutherantacoma.org

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

Throughout the year we would like to post pictures of various activities on our website, in our newsletter, and in other print or electronic media, and we would like to make sure that this is okay with you. No child's name will be attached with any of the pictures unless your permission is received. If posting your child's picture is okay with you, please fill out and sign the following:

Child's Name: _____

Child's Age: _____

Parent's Name: _____

I give permission for Peace Lutheran Church to post a group picture or individual photo that includes my child on the Peace Lutheran Church website, in the newsletter, or in other print or electronic media.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX 9: CHILD DROP-OFF LIABILITY RELEASE FORM

Event:

Date(s):

Location: Peace Lutheran Church, 2106 S Cushman, Tacoma, WA 98405

Parent/Guardian Information:

- Name: _____
- Address: _____
- Phone Number: _____
- Email Address: _____

Child(ren) Information:

- Child's Name: _____ Age: _____
- Child's Name: _____ Age: _____
- Child's Name: _____ Age: _____

Release of Liability and Assumption of Risk

I, the undersigned, being the parent or legal guardian of the above-named child(ren), acknowledge and understand that by allowing my child(ren) to participate in the event(s) hosted by Peace Lutheran Church, they will be under the care and supervision of event staff and volunteers, and that I will not be present at the event.

I acknowledge that Peace Lutheran Church will take reasonable measures to ensure the safety and well-being of my child(ren), including but not limited to:

1. Providing appropriate supervision by qualified staff and volunteers.
2. Implementing safety protocols and emergency procedures.

Despite these measures, I understand that there are inherent risks associated with my child(ren)'s participation in events which may include, but are not limited to, accidents, injuries, or exposure to illness.

In consideration of my child(ren) being allowed to participate in the event, I hereby release, discharge, and hold harmless Peace Lutheran Church, its staff, volunteers, and affiliates from

any and all claims, liabilities, or damages arising from or related to any injury, illness, or loss that may occur during or as a result of participation in the event.

I understand that Peace Lutheran Church does not provide medical insurance for participants and that any medical costs incurred as a result of an incident involving my child(ren) will be my responsibility.

Emergency Contact Information:

In the event of an emergency involving my child(ren), please contact:

- Name: _____
- Phone Number: _____

Medical Information:

Please list any allergies, medical conditions, or special needs that Peace Lutheran Church staff should be aware of:

Consent to Medical Treatment

In the event of an emergency, I authorize Peace Lutheran Church staff to obtain medical treatment for my child(ren) as deemed necessary. I agree to be responsible for any medical expenses incurred.

Agreement

By signing below, I affirm that I have read and understood this Liability Release Form and agree to its terms. I understand that this release is binding upon me, my heirs, and assigns.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Emergency Contact Phone Number: _____