

Guidelines for Safe Church Policies

Some ideas on what to include:

1. A forward reason for the policy- including what you want to accomplish e.g. preventing situations that may invite child abuse or neglect.
2. An introduction- Biblical/theological with possible Biblical quotes.
3. What does the policy cover? Which groups of people will be included- consider all of the programs which serve children and youth.
4. Who is in charge of policy and who will administer, keep the documentation.
5. Definitions- e.g. abuse, neglect, minors, etc. be specific and limit the number
6. Reporting mandates according to CPS that includes report to insurance companies, and synod office.
7. Criminal Background checks and child abuse checks.
8. Rules for the supervision of children – What are your rules and conditions? - e.g. 2 adult rule.
9. Training required for staff and volunteers.
10. Electronic Communication- computer, texting and social sites
11. Worshipping sex offenders, covenant agreements
12. Separate documents- applications, release for background check, release for medical issues, youth activities, overnights, driving record check, special information for friends of participants, protection orders.
13. Updating older policies and training materials
14. Sharing policy with insurance company and congregational lawyer.
15. After enacting the policy, remember to follow the policy in making decisions.

Note: See ELCA.org/safe place or safe haven