



Peerless Road Church Child, Youth, and Worker Protection Policy

Produced by:

*The Church of God of Prophecy International Offices Administrative Committee
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Introduction

The Spiritual and Moral Responsibility of the Church

The Gospel of Mark records that when people brought little children to Jesus, He took them in His arms, put His hands on them, and blessed them. As a church, it is our desire to bring children to Jesus too.

In the church, we recognize that we are a reflection of God's love to those in our care, and we take our responsibility to them seriously. In our ministry to children, we must follow carefully what the Scriptures teach:

1. "Avoid every kind of evil" (1 Thessalonians 5:22, *NIV*).
2. "But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people" (Ephesians 5:3, *NIV*).
3. "But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea" (Matthew 18:6, *NIV*).
4. "If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan" (Matthew 18:15–17, *NIV*).

These guidelines are therefore set forth to provide a safe and nurturing environment in which we can bring our children to the Savior. We seek to provide quality care and instruction in our ministry to the family. All of our guidelines are designed to protect and promote growth in God for each child and adult involved.





Chapter 1

Understanding the Need

Reducing the Risk of Child Sexual Abuse

Peerless Road Church has a mandate to minister to individuals, families, adults, youth, and children. In that context, it emphasizes the sanctity of human life and the importance and worth of each individual as a child of God.

The disturbing and traumatic rise of physical and sexual abuse of children has claimed the attention of our nation and society. Unfortunately, churches that have children's programs are not insulated from this alarming trend, and we have, therefore, developed the Children and Youth Ministry Guidelines and the Children and Youth Ministry Resource Guide.

We believe that childhood innocence is a gift given by God. Children are naturally trusting. Children readily place their faith in adults who care for them. It is our responsibility as a church to safeguard that trust. Childhood innocence is a gift that we must protect within our church.

It Can Happen in Any Church

Incidents of abuse can occur in any church, including ours. Churches have traditionally accepted the services of anyone expressing an interest in working as a volunteer with children or youth. Churches are by nature trusting and unsuspecting institutions. Asking sensitive questions of those who are giving their time and talent can be seen as distasteful by church leaders. No one wants to offend potential workers, especially longtime church members with a history of good service. These qualities can make a church susceptible to incidents of child abuse.

Few topics create more emotion than that of child abuse, especially if it is sexual in nature.

Impact

A single incident of child abuse can devastate a church and divide the congregation. Members become outraged and bewildered. Parents question whether their own children have been victimized. The viability of the church's youth and children's programs is jeopardized. And church leaders face blame and guilt for allowing the incident to happen.

Ed begins attending First Church. After a few weeks, he volunteers to work with the youth group. Church staff members do not know Ed, but they are delighted to have another worker. He is put to work immediately. The youth group has an overnight activity a few months later. Following the activity, two minors report that they were sexually molested by Ed. The parents of one of the minors contact a lawyer, and a \$3 million lawsuit is brought against Ed, the church, and the church board. The parents claim that the church (and the church board) acted negligently by not doing any background investigation before using Ed as a volunteer worker.



Such incidents often result in massive media attention, sometimes on a national scale. Television stations conduct live interviews from church property on the evening news. Front-page stories hit the local paper. Community residents begin to associate the church with the incident of abuse. But far more tragic is the emotional trauma to the victim and the victim's family, and the enormous potential legal liability the church faces. If a trial ensues, the issue stays alive in the media for months, sometimes even years.

In making sure that the Peerless Road Church is a safe place, we endeavour to do the following:

- *Protect God's children—the creation of a secure, safe environment for our children/youth is of utmost importance (Matthew 18:1-6).*
- *Protect the workers from false accusation, litigation, and potential loss of ministry/career.*
- *Protect the congregations, state/regional/national offices, and the International Offices.*



Chapter 2

Understanding Child Abuse

“Child abuse” is defined as follows:

- It can be physical, emotional, or sexual.
- All child abuse involves the misuse of power.
- Misuse of power takes place when people take advantage of the authority or power they have over vulnerable people.
- Vulnerable people include adults with physical or mental disabilities and children.

Physical Abuse is using physical force or action that results, or could result, in injury to a child or youth. It is more than reasonable discipline. Sometimes, injury is caused by overdiscipline. Injuring a child or youth is not acceptable, regardless of differing cultural standards on discipline.

Emotional Abuse is a pattern of hurting a child’s feelings to the point of damaging his or her self-respect. It includes verbal attacks on the child, insults, humiliation, or rejection. A child or youth who is emotionally harmed may demonstrate severe anxiety, depression, withdrawal, or self-destructive or aggressive behavior.

Sexual Abuse occurs when someone uses a child or youth for sexual stimulation or gratification. Sexual activity between children or youth may also be sexual abuse if older or more powerful children or youth take sexual advantage of those who are younger or less powerful.

Child sexual abuse includes behavior that involves touching and nontouching aspects.

Types of sexual abuse that involve touching include the following:

- *Fondling—this includes the suggestion that an adult should see and/or touch a child’s body to monitor development.*
- *Oral, genital, and anal penetration*
- *Intercourse*
- *Forcible rape*

Types of sexual abuse that do not involve touching include the following:

- *Verbal comments*
- *Pornographic videos*
- *Obscene phone calls*
- *Exhibitionism*
- *Allowing children to either hear about or witness sexual activity*

For symptoms of abuse and sexual abuse, see Appendix 2A.





Chapter 3

The Church's Legal Vulnerability

Why Churches Are Susceptible

Churches have unique features that can make them susceptible to incidents of child abuse. This risk increases dramatically for overnight activities.

Access: Child abusers are attracted to an institution in which they have immediate access to potential victims in an atmosphere of complete trust.

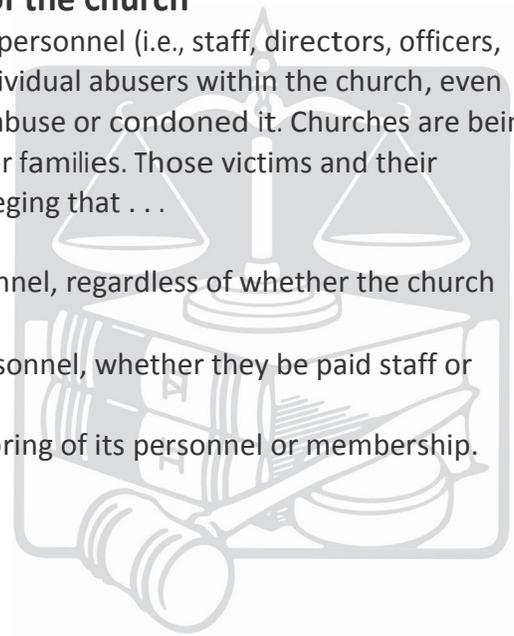
Need: Most churches struggle to get adequate help for children and youth programs. Recruiting nursery workers, for example, can become an unending effort. Turnover among volunteer workers is also high. A willing volunteer worker provides welcome relief.

Churches need to understand the extent of their liability. Churches are not “guarantors” of the safety and well-being of children. They are not absolutely liable for every injury that occurs on their premises or in the course of their activities. Generally, they are responsible only for those injuries that result from their negligence. Victims of abuse who have sued a church often allege that the church was negligent in not adequately screening applicants or for not providing adequate supervision.

The Civil and Legal Liability of the Church

Increasingly, and often more dramatically, the church and its personnel (i.e., staff, directors, officers, and ministers) are being held accountable for the acts of individual abusers within the church, even though neither the church nor its leaders were aware of the abuse or condoned it. Churches are being sued in civil courts for damages sustained by victims and their families. Those victims and their families are attempting to hold churches accountable by alleging that . . .

- The church is vicariously liable for the acts of its personnel, regardless of whether the church was itself negligent or even knew of the abuse.
- The church was negligent in its hiring or accepting personnel, whether they be paid staff or volunteer staff.
- The church was negligent in the supervising or monitoring of its personnel or membership. (Church and the Law Update, June 1994).



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Chapter 4

Peerless Road Church

Child, Youth, and Worker Protection Policy

As approved by the Finance and Administrative Committee of Peerless Road Church, 2012

The ministries of Peerless Road Church desire to be a safe place for all children and adults who attend any activity or ministry. It is an unfortunate reality that each year prepubescent and postpubescent children are victimized by adults who in some cases are individuals they know and trust. There are also reports that, in some cases, children are victimized by other children. The church is not immune to the potential for such abuse or neglect of children, either by its members or by those in leadership positions. Such abuses are not limited to a particular ethnic, religious, or cultural group; in fact, incidents of child abuse seem to cross every people group. This *Child, Youth, and Worker Protection Policy* reflects the Peerless Road Church’s commitment to protect children from harm. The policy applies to all volunteer and compensated workers of Peerless Road Church.

The policy is intended to clearly state that the Peerless Road Church will not tolerate child abuse or neglect. Your cooperation in this policy not only reflects your concern about children’s safety, but also your willingness to take steps toward halting child abuse and its detrimental effects.

For the safety and protection of our children and workers, all people who participate in church-sponsored activities with children will be required to comply with this policy.

Appropriate Touch

“Good touch” is important to each of us. Children do not grow and thrive without the good touch of others. Touch was important to Jesus as He healed people and comforted them. Our Christian tradition shares love with each other through hugs, placing an arm around another’s shoulder, or squeezing a hand to say, “You are loved.”

It is imperative that the Christian community not lose the importance of “good touch.” We need to continue to express Christian love in appropriate ways with children. To a child who is upset, a warm hug and kind word can be most comforting. In the midst of our caution, let us not forget that a good touch is just that—good!



Definitions

In this policy, the following definitions will apply:

1. **Child:** Any person under the age of 18.
2. **Special-needs person:** Any adult or child requiring direct adult supervision as a result of mental or physical limitations.
3. **Adult:** Any person age 18 and over.
4. **Child abuse and neglect:** Physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, or neglect of a child by an adult or adolescent caregiver responsible for the child's welfare.
5. **Physical abuse:** Maltreatment that results in physical injury, including, but not limited to, bruises, cuts, welts, fractures, and internal injuries.
6. **Emotional abuse:** Maltreatment that results in impaired psychological growth and development, including, but not limited to, belittling, rejection, constant unequal treatment, verbal assaults, excessive demands on a child's performance, and isolation from normal social activities.
7. **Sexual abuse:** Maltreatment that consists of sexual contact or interactions with a child, including, but not limited to, physical contact (fondling, genital/oral stimulation, sexual intercourse) and nonphysical contact (exhibitionism, child prostitution, pornography, and voyeurism).
8. **Neglect:** Failure or inattention on the part of the caregiver to provide for a child's basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, medical care, and supervision.
9. **Compensated workers:** Hourly, salaried, part-time or full-time employees who work with children at any church-sponsored activity.
10. **Volunteer workers:** Any noncompensated individual who works with children at any church-sponsored activity.
11. **Caregiver:** Any compensated or volunteer worker, seventh grade or older.
12. **Mandated reporter:** Any person with responsibility for the care of children is a mandated reporter. If a caregiver has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been or may be subjected to abuse or neglect, or observes a child being subjected to conditions or circumstances that would reasonably result in abuse or neglect, that person shall immediately report or cause a report to be made to the Department of Children and Family Services or other comparable agency of the civil authorities. Because of the international scope of the ministries of the Church of God of Prophecy, this policy must be implemented through the appropriate general presbyter, who will work in consultation with the state/national overseer. This will call for investigation of the controlling legal authority and the laws of the particular state or nation. A good source for this information in the United States would be the Attorney General's Office of the particular state, or the equivalent authority in nations.

Special note: Some states have passed legislation that has been signed into law REQUIRING the reporting to proper authorities. In most cases, there are specific legal guidelines for the prosecution of those who fail to report, which will often mandate certain fines and incarceration. In addition, there exists a substantial risk of exposure to civil litigation.



Screening for Volunteer and Compensated Workers

The following procedures reflect our commitment to provide protective care for all children and caregivers who participate in church-sponsored activities:

1. Volunteer workers must be regular attendees of Peerless Road Church for at least six months.
2. All volunteer and compensated workers must complete the following procedures before participating in any church-sponsored children's activities:
 - A. All volunteer and compensated workers must complete a Peerless Road Church Children and Youth Worker Application form. References will be checked.
 - B. An interview will be conducted by the pastors and directors of Peerless Road Children and Youth Ministries. We also recommend that the coordinator for the specific ministry be involved in the interview.
 - C. All individuals working with children and youth under the age of 18 must attend orientation/training activities appropriate to the level of the volunteer or compensated worker.
3. Applicants must sign a written acknowledgement stating they have received and reviewed a copy of the *Peerless Road Church Child, Youth, and Worker Protection Policy*.
4. All volunteer and compensated workers shall be screened by a background check for the purpose of obtaining information regarding criminal history or abuse findings. This check must include the state sex offender's registry.
5. Any adult member of the congregation, volunteer, or compensated worker who has been convicted of a crime against a child or a violent crime against another adult shall not provide service in any Peerless Road Church church-sponsored activity or program for children or special-needs persons.

Those who have been convicted of either sexual or physical abuse can be forgiven for and cleansed of their sin. However, sin does have consequences, and while such individuals may serve in certain other areas of ministry, they will be prohibited from serving in the children's and special-needs ministries in Peerless Road Church.

6. This application and the results of any screening shall be kept confidential by authorized church staff unless it is required to be released for legal reasons.



General Policies for Supervision of Caregivers

Children's Ministries (Birth–Sixth Grade)

1. Caregivers shall not engage in any form of physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect.
2. Every effort will be made to have a minimum of two adults working together with children. In a Bible study or similar teaching environment, it is acceptable to have individual classes/ groups with only one adult caregiver, provided there are other adults present in the general area. This protects the children and the adults, as well as provides a safer situation in the event of an accident or emergency.
3. The windows of classroom doors shall remain uncovered to allow a clear view of classroom activities.
4. When possible, children are to be encouraged to take care of their own bathroom needs. Should assistance be required, another adult or caregiver should be present.
5. Children must be released to the parent or guardian. Individuals other than the child's parents or guardians must be authorized to pick up the child.
6. A positive approach to discipline shall be practiced. Clear, consistent, age-appropriate limits will be established to help the children function appropriately.
7. The pastor and Children's Ministries directors must approve any activities that are held off-site. Parent or guardian permission shall be obtained, and there shall be a minimum of two adult caregivers present.
8. Organized events on-site or off-site of Peerless Road Church shall be staffed with a minimum ratio of 1:10, adult caregiver to child. Overnight events that are attended by children of both genders must be chaperoned by adult caregivers of both genders.



Youth Ministries (Seventh Grade–Twelfth Grade)

1. Caregivers shall not engage in any form of physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect.
2. Every effort will be made to have a minimum of two adults working together with children or students. In a Bible study or similar teaching environment, it is acceptable to have individual classes/groups with only one adult caregiver, provided there are other adults present in the general area. This protects the children and the adults, as well as provides a safer situation in the event of an accident or emergency.
3. Organized events on-site or off-site shall be staffed with a minimum ratio of 1:10, adult caregiver to child.
4. The pastor and Youth Ministries director must approve any activities held off-site.
5. Overnight events that are attended by youth of both genders must be chaperoned by adult caregivers of both genders.
6. A positive approach to discipline shall be practiced. Clear, consistent, age-appropriate limits shall be established.
7. It is recognized that certain counseling and ministerial situations may preclude the presence of two adult caregivers and that the general guidelines for supervision of caregivers should not restrict situations where individual counsel and guidance is necessary. In this case, the door must be left open or the window of the door shall remain uncovered.
8. For camps, retreats, or similar activities, two adult caregivers shall work as a team when it is not possible to have two adults in the same sleeping room. The team approach shall be encouraged and coordinated by the supervisory staff person.
9. The supervisory staff person shall be aware of and responsible for such activities.



Reporting Suspected Abuse or Neglect

Peerless Road Church has determined that it is the responsibility of the pastoral staff to report all cases of suspected child abuse or neglect to the proper legal authorities within 24 hours of it being discovered. When it becomes necessary to report suspected child abuse or neglect, the protection of children must be the most important concern. The state/national overseer must be notified immediately.

As a caregiver, you are a mandated reporter of child abuse or neglect. It is the legal responsibility of a mandated reporter to report all cases of child abuse or neglect he or she observes, and furthermore, to report visible signs of alleged abuse or neglect. Failure to report could lead to liability on the part of Peerless Road Church, the observer, or both. The confidentiality of the pastor/attendee relationship is very important. Reporting probable cause of child abuse or neglect has the potential for helping individuals receive help for a previous problem and may prevent further harm to self and others.

What is probable cause? Probable cause means that the available facts, when viewed in the light of the surrounding circumstances, would cause a reasonable person to believe a child was abused or neglected. A report based on probable cause does not require proof that abuse or neglect has actually occurred; rather, it is a request for an assessment of the condition of a child.

Because we believe children are our most important concern, Peerless Road Church has adopted the following guidelines for reporting suspected abuse:

1. Upon observing or suspecting abuse, the caregiver shall immediately do the following:
 - a. Make sure the child's safety and comfort are secured.
 - b. Make sure the suspected abuser is safely away from the children.
2. Report the abuse or neglect promptly to the pastor or director of Children's Ministries and/or the director of Youth Ministris. To preserve confidentiality, it is important to discuss the incident initially only with any of these four individuals.



Response of the Church of God of Prophecy

The primary function of Peerless Road Church in responding to allegations of sexual abuse or neglect is to attempt to provide pastoral care to all who are affected, attempt to ensure the safety and protection of individuals who have been or may be harmed, seek healing by providing pastoral care and other needed assistance to all who are affected, and, to the extent possible, respect the privacy and rights of the parties involved and the confidentiality of communications.

If Peerless Road Church receives an allegation of child abuse or neglect, the pastors will respond with the utmost concern to the victim, parent, or other party making such an allegation. The accused will be treated with dignity and support. Without clear and convincing evidence to the contrary, Peerless Road Church will assume that such complaints are made in good faith. Those making such complaints should have no doubt that Peerless Road Church takes them seriously and will take appropriate action.

If an alleged abuser contacts the church officials about a complaint, Peerless Road Church personnel may confirm that they have received such a complaint only if they are certain the alleged abuser already knows this. They should avoid discussing the allegations or making any further comments until the proper authorities have an opportunity to conduct their investigation. They should not identify the alleged victim or complainant during an investigation.

If the media or other parties contact a church official about a pending allegation of child abuse, they should be referred to the pastor. Only the pastor or his designee shall make comments about the allegation.



Responsibilities of Peerless Road Church Pastoral Staff

In accordance with the Church's position that child abuse and neglect shall not be tolerated, the pastoral staff shall do the following:

1. Take all allegations of child abuse and/or neglect seriously.
2. Document all efforts at handling the incident.
3. Contact the Department of Children and Family Services or its equivalent agency within 24 hours. In many cases, the governing law enforcement agencies may have investigators specifically designated to investigate such claims. Do not attempt an in-depth investigation. This should be left to professionals who are familiar with these cases.
4. Report the incident immediately to the church insurance company and attorney.
5. Do not try to handle this without professional outside assistance.
6. Notify the parents or guardians.
7. Do not confront the accused until the safety of the child or special-needs person is secured.
8. Do not prejudge the situation, but take the allegations seriously, and reach out to the victim and the victim's family. Showing care and support will help to prevent further hurt. Extend whatever pastoral resources are needed. Remember that the care and safety of the victim is the first priority.
9. Treat the accused with dignity and support. If the accused is a caregiver, that person should be relieved temporarily of his or her duties until the investigation is finished.
10. Use the text of a prepared public statement to answer the press and to convey news to the congregation. Be careful to safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of all involved.

Commonly Asked Questions

Is a criminal background check really necessary?

Sadly, the culture in which we live dictates that we must take drastic preventive measures to protect the children and youth whose care we've been entrusted with. Furthermore, there are litigation issues: A church that hasn't performed background checks faces the risk of catastrophic financial penalties in the event that an allegation of abuse within the church leads to a conviction or out-of-court settlement.



Who needs to submit a Children’s and Youth Workers Application and a permission to Obtain a Background Check form?

Any church employee or volunteer who will have direct contact with any child or youth (less than 18 years of age), either on or off the church sites, during any church-related ministries must complete both of these forms.

Once I complete and sign these forms, to whom do I give them?

Give your completed forms to the director of Children’s Ministries, director of Youth Ministries, or pastor.

I am concerned about confidentiality and privacy issues. Who will see my application, and more important, who will see the results of my background check?

Only those individuals listed above, along with our church’s administrative support staff, will see your application and the results of your criminal background check. All information will be kept in a secured filing cabinet in the church office.

I am not presently involved in any church volunteer work that involves young people. Should I submit an application and give permission for a background check?

Because the addition of programs to minister to these young people is ongoing, the demand for volunteers is always on the increase. Even though you may not be currently involved in such a ministry, it’s a good idea to go ahead and submit your forms now. In the event that you do volunteer work at some point in the future, we will already have your forms on file and can do the background check immediately before the volunteer work begins.

What is a “U.S. Criminal Record Indicator” database search?

The U.S. Criminal Record Indicator is the most comprehensive and current search available in the United States. The U.S. Criminal Record Indicator database search examines the Department of Public Safety, Department of Corrections, Administrative Office of the Courts, Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, and/or the Department of Criminal Justice files and records, and other applicable government agencies where available. Currently, this search includes information from 39 states plus multiple online county records.

Why do I have to list my Social Security Number (SSN)?

There are a couple of reasons. The first is that your SSN is the primary key for all databases affiliated with a background check. The second reason is that your SSN is used to verify the following crucial information:

- Whether the SSN is validly issued
- To whom the SSN belongs
- In which year and state the SSN was issued
- The current and other known or previous addresses to that SSN



The SSN verification process can reveal that the number belongs to another individual, has more than one name associated with it (i.e., produces other aliases) including maiden and divorced names, is associated with fraud, is not a validly issued SSN, belongs to a deceased person, produces additional addresses not stated by the application/request form, or if that individual has other SSNs.

Anyone can give a false identification by using another person's Social Security number. This search ensures that the individual is who he or she says. The Social Security search is provided in the Basic Search along with the National Criminal Indicator search.

What criteria from the background check will determine whether or not someone is approved for volunteer or paid staff work? Who makes that decision?

The background check will cite felony and misdemeanor convictions listed in the National Criminal Database Search. The most obvious reason that someone is denied the opportunity to do volunteer work in our church is any prior conviction pertaining to an offense against a child. It is quite unlikely, though, that a person with such a conviction would even submit an application. Misdemeanor convictions, and even some felony convictions, would have little or no negative impact in determining a person's worthiness as a church volunteer. To put it another way, the only determining factor in evaluating someone's criminal record is the likelihood of him or her posing a threat to our young people.

In the event a felony conviction turns up on the report, the pastor, with the appropriate state/national overseer, will decide whether the person is allowed to work as a volunteer or paid staff.

Some Final Thoughts . . .

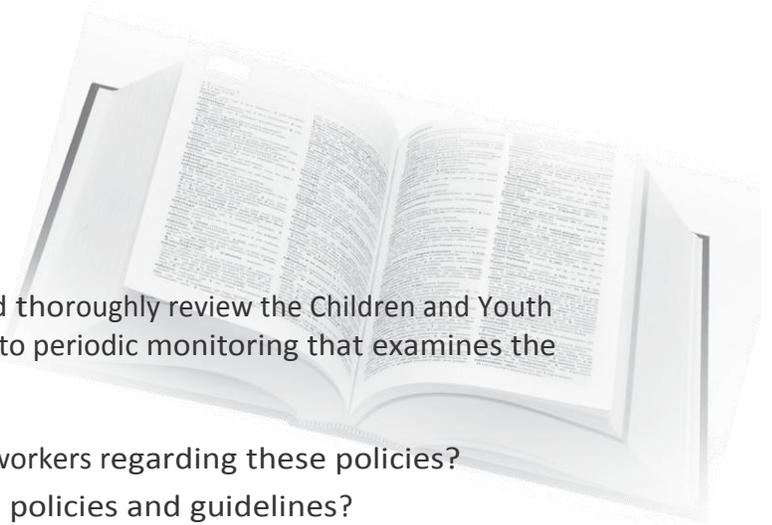
Please know that the intent of the background check is to protect the children in our church . . . period. Its purpose is not to cause you personal embarrassment by dredging up past mistakes or wrong choices. Regrettably, it is impossible to implement a viable screening plan without a bit of scrutiny into some personal background information.

Throughout the entire process of developing the *Child, Youth, and Worker Protection Policy* for our church, a tremendous amount of concern and sensitivity has been shown in regard to matters of confidentiality. Much effort has been put into implementing screening procedures that limit the number of people who have visible access to private information. Please know that as the screening process evolves during the next several years, the leadership of the Peerless Road Church will remain committed to the task of administering screening procedures with utmost regard to your privacy.



Chapter 5

Monitoring the Policy



Department heads and/or ministry leaders should thoroughly review the Children and Youth Ministry Guidelines, and attention must be given to periodic monitoring that examines the following?

- Has each department trained its workers regarding these policies?
- Are workers following the required policies and guidelines?
- What obstacles exist in complying with the policies?
- What is the level of cooperation?
- Do sufficient materials exist for training and information?
- Are the policies printed and available?

Thoroughly discuss each guideline with your department heads and/or ministry leaders. Work through all concerns. If problems exist in the policies, they should be brought to the attention of the appropriate person. Consider revisions, but changes must not sacrifice the integrity of the program. Work at developing a sense of unity before educating workers and volunteers. Also work with the provincial authorities by giving them opportunity to review the policy to ensure completeness and legal compliance.

Regularly scheduled training and updating programs will be made available each year, and additional classes will be scheduled as required.



Chapter 6

Accountability

If it is proven that a ministry person has committed child abuse, the church will practice discipline according to Matthew 18:15–17, beginning with the pastor in consultation with the state/regional/national bishop. The church must avoid any undue interference when a report of child abuse has been filed. The church should consider how it could assist in helping and supporting the hurting child and his or her family. The church should maintain frequent communication and supportive relationships with those suspected or guilty of child abuse as long as these persons exhibit a willingness to listen, change, and look to Christ for help. This does not exclude the need for hurting individuals to receive professional counseling.

An accusation of child sexual abuse may occur in any church. Wrong reactions can multiply the pain and liability inherent in an abuse case.



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Appendix 1A

MINISTRY COVENANT

The Meaning of This Covenant:

I understand that a covenant is a promise, that it is not merely a mutual acquaintance but a commitment to responsibility and action.

Acknowledgment of What Ministry Looks Like:

Here at Peerless Road Church, we believe that ANY PERSON WHO PARTICIPATES IN ANY FORM OF SERVICE TO THIS BODY, NO MATTER HOW MENIAL IT MAY APPEAR TO BE, IS INVOLVED IN MINISTRY LEADERSHIP. WE FURTHER BELIEVE THAT God intended THESE MINISTRIES be carried out in the spirit of a servant. Although our talents, personalities, and gifts may vary, Scripture clearly teaches a leadership style that is uniquely Christian. It has been given to us by the Lord of the church. Jesus has demonstrated this leadership style and commanded us to do likewise.

“Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross” (Philippians 2:3-8, NASB).

Servant leadership is much more than a leadership style we act out and master like other management styles. Servant leadership begins with the heart, with our attitude, and with our motives. A servant-leader can be characterized by submission, love, compassion, persistence in the pursuit of God’s will, and self-sacrifice. Reflections from Scripture on servanthood are the following: John 6:38-40; 15:12, 13; 17; 1 Corinthians 13; and Philippians 2:3-8.

Qualifications for Ministry at Peerless Road Church:

A life that qualifies FOR MINISTRY LEADERSHIP exhibits personal morality and character consistent with the Bible. While recognizing that grace abounds in our experience with Christ, and that in Christ there is forgiveness for moral failure, it is also recognized that biblical principles and standards are what qualify and empower an individual to lead.



Models, not just rhetoric, change people. Our primary mandate is to “make disciples, teaching them to obey” (Matthew 28:19). Modeling biblical truth and standards gives those who are young (in age or faith) an example to follow, an illustration of what it means to be a Christian. It gives the church community confidence in the integrity of their church and the quality of our vision.

Accepting the Responsibility of Modeling a Biblical Lifestyle:

Code of Ethics

- I understand that consistent modeling requires diligence in the pursuit of the biblical lifestyle. There are some things that we can do to renew ourselves from the inside-out. There is a need to “keep short accounts with God” (confession). We must be sensitive to sin so that we can easily identify it and recognize its presence in our own lives. We must immediately go to God and ask forgiveness.
- Believing that God is calling me to serve children or youth, I will do the following:
- My first priority in teaching/supervising/leading children or youth will be to seek the welfare of the children/youth physically, socially, educationally, and spiritually.
- I will also try to understand and respect the child/youth cultural backgrounds.
- I will give the parent(s) full information about the program I am teaching/supervising/leading and what time it begins and ends.
- I will not do anything that will damage a child’s/youth’s trust. I will try to protect the child/youth from all forms of abuse while he or she is in my care.
- If I suspect that a child/youth may be hurt by the abusive actions or attitudes of another person, I will report that suspicion to a responsible person so that it can be investigated properly.
- I will answer a child’s/youth’s questions openly and honestly.
- I will work with the children/youth to set some agreed guidelines for acceptable behavior within the group. I will expect the children/youth to act on the basis of those guidelines, and if a child/youth consistently breaks them, I will seek help from parents and others to assist me in responding to the child/youth.
- If a child/youth is distressed, I will try to offer comfort and help. I will encourage the child/youth to find the appropriate help for their needs.
- I will pray for each child/youth regularly and let him/her know that I care.
- I understand that if my character or morals should be inappropriate and/or criminal at any time during my volunteer service, my service will be terminated without expressed cause or prior notice, regardless of other oral or written statements prior to, at, or following the date of volunteer service.

Signed _____ Date _____

Volunteer/Staff Position _____ Supervisor _____



Appendix 2A

SYMPTOMS OF ABUSE AND SEXUAL ABUSE

Church workers and staff should be alert to the physical signs of abuse and sexual abuse, as well as to behavioral and verbal signs that a victim may exhibit.

A one-time event would not necessarily constitute a potential abuse case; sudden unexplained changes, however, would warrant investigation. Some of the more common signs are summarized below.

Physical signs may include the following:

- Lacerations and bruises
- Nightmares
- Irritation, pain, or injury to the genital area
- Difficulty with urination
- Bedwetting
- Discomfort when sitting
- Torn or bloody underclothing
- Pregnancy
- Venereal disease

Behavioral signs may include the following:

- Anxiety when approaching church or nursery area
- Nervous or hostile behavior toward adults
- Sexual self-consciousness
- “Acting out” sexual behavior
- Extreme withdrawal from church activities and friends

Verbal signs may include the following statements:

- I don’t like (*names a particular person*).
- (*Particular person*) does things to me when we’re alone.
- I don’t like to be alone with (*particular person*).
- (*Particular person*) fooled around with me.



The Effects of Child Sexual Abuse

Child sexual abuse robs children of their childhood and can potentially scar its young victims for life. Too often in the past, the effects of abuse were minimized or dismissed. Children were viewed as being resilient. Recent research has shown that children can suffer significant pain from even a single abusive incident. Church members must be aware of the pain and long-term suffering that can accompany such abuse. Abused children can display a wide range of negative symptoms in the aftermath of abuse. Abuse can result in abnormal fears, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), aggressive behaviour, sexual “acting out,” depression, diffused sexual identity, and poor self-esteem (Ksendall- Tackett, Williams, and Finkelhor, 1991).The incidence of sexually transmitted disease is also a possible outcome.

“The personal violation of child sexual abuse causes the victim to experience many losses . . . including loss of childhood memories, loss of healthy social contact, loss of the opportunity to learn, loss of bodily integrity, loss of identity and self-esteem, loss of trust, loss of sexual maturity, and loss of self-determination. All of these personal violations mean that victims of child sexual abuse lose the child’s right to a normal childhood. In adulthood, it may also mean the loss of the capacity to appreciate sexual intimacy as nurturing, holy, and loving” (The Report of the Winter Commission, 1990, Vol.1, p.118)

The degree of damage depends upon several factors, including the intensity, duration, and frequency of the abuse. In addition, the relationship of the perpetrator to the child matters. If the abuser is a known and trusted authority figure in the child’s life, the degree of impact increases dramatically.

Consequences of child sexual abuse can plague victims into adulthood. Outcome studies of adult survivors of child sexual abuse suggest the following effects: sexual dysfunction, eating disorders, substance abuse, promiscuity, disassociation from emotions, and possible perpetration of sexual abuse on others. When church leaders, pastors, and respected congregational workers perpetrate the abuse, lifelong religious confusion and deep feelings of enmity toward God and the church can occur.

The Profile of a Child Abuser

Who is the typical child molester? Some church leaders assume that abusers are “strangers wearing trench coats” or “dirty, old men.” These stereotypes not only are inaccurate, but they dangerously contribute to a false sense of security. Researchers in the field of child sexual abuse currently indicate that no one profile fits the various perpetrators of abuse. Church leaders can become preoccupied screening stereotypes while not suspecting the real molester could be an active adult or teen in the church.

Bob sat dejectedly before the church board. His broad shoulders slumped as he tearfully retold his story. Bob has been sexually molesting his 13-year-old daughter for the last two years. This activity may have gone undetected except that Bob tried to abuse his daughter’s girlfriend while chaperoning a Sunday school activity. The girl reported the incident to her parents, and Bob was apprehended. The church leaders hearing this confession sat in disbelief. How could Bob, a successful businessman, husband, father of three children, and respected church worker, commit such actions?



Consider the Following

If abuse occurs in the church, a respected member will most likely be the molester. Emphasis upon “stranger danger” will leave the church ill-prepared. While it’s uncomfortable even to consider this, the most likely assailants include Sunday school teachers, religious educators, nursery or preschool workers, teachers in a church-operated school, camp counselors, scout leaders, “concerned” adults who volunteer to transport children to church, and clergy. Trusted adults—male or female—can easily mislead children, and most incidents of child sexual abuse take place in the context of an ongoing relationship between the abuser and the child.



Appendix 2B

REPORT FORM Suspected Child Abuse

DATE _____

Name of Child _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____

Name of Person Filing Report _____

Name of Person Receiving Report _____

Nature of Suspected Abuse: (Physical, Sexual, Emotional, Neglect) _____

Indications of Suspected Abuse: (Including Facts, Physical Signs and Course of Events Where Necessary)

Action Taken: (Including Date and Time)

The above information will serve as a guide and will be necessary if a formal report is filed with the police or appropriate government agency. All information received is to be kept **STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL**.

Signed _____ Signed _____
(Person Reporting) (Pastor)



Appendix 2C

FOLLOW-UP REPORT Suspected Child Abuse

Name of Child _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____

Name of Person Who Filed Initial Report _____

Name of Person Receiving Report _____

Conclusions _____

Action Taken: (Including Date and Time) _____

The above information will serve as a guide and will be necessary if a formal report is filed with the police or appropriate government agency. All information received is to be kept **STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL**.

Signed _____
(Pastor)

Date _____



Appendix 2D

WAIVER & MEDICAL RELEASE FORM Field Trips and Special Events

Activity _____ Date _____

Chaperones _____

Name of Child _____ Age _____

Address _____

Phone _____ School _____

Does your child have any severe allergies (bee stings, food, penicillin, other drugs)? YES _____ NO _____

If yes, please explain: _____

Does your child have any life-threatening allergies? YES _____ NO _____

If yes, please explain: _____

Is your child bringing any medication with him or her (antibiotics, ventilator, ritalin)? YES _____ NO _____

If yes, please explain: _____

Does your child have any physical, emotional, mental, or behavioral concerns or limitations that our staff should be aware of? YES _____ NO _____

If yes, please explain: _____

Precautions are taken for the safety and health of your child, but in the event of accident or sickness, the Peerless Road Church, its staff, and its volunteers are hereby released from any liability. In the event that your child requires special medication, X-rays, or treatment, the parents/guardians will be notified immediately.

Your child must be covered by medical or health insurance.

Name of Health Insurance Provider _____

Insurance ID Number _____

Name of the Family Physician _____ Physician's Phone Number _____

Parent's/Guardian's Signature

Date



Appendix 2E

WAIVER & MEDICAL RELEASE FORM Overnight Events

Activity _____ Date _____

Chaperones _____

Name of Child _____ Age _____

Address _____

Phone _____ School _____

Does your child have any severe allergies (bee stings, food, penicillin, other drugs)? YES _____ NO _____

If yes, please explain: _____

Does your child have any life-threatening allergies? YES _____ NO _____

If yes, please explain: _____

Is your child bringing any medication with him or her (antibiotics, ventilator, ritalin)? YES _____ NO _____

If yes, please explain: _____

Does your child have any physical, emotional, mental, or behavioral concerns or limitations that our staff should be aware of? YES _____ NO _____

If yes, please explain: _____

Circle if your child currently, or within the last three months, has had any of the following:

- | | | | |
|--------------|---------------|-----------|--------------------|
| Appendicitis | Diabetes | Hay Fever | Mumps |
| Asthma | Ear Infection | Hepatitis | Severe Stomachache |
| Epilepsy | Measles (Red) | Sinusitis | Bedwetting |
| Chicken Pox | Fainting | | Tonsillitis |

Other: _____

Date of Last Tetanus Shot: _____

Precautions are taken for the safety and health of your child, but in the event of accident or sickness, the Church of God of Prophecy, its staff, and its volunteers are hereby released from any liability.



In the event that your child requires special medication, X-rays, or treatment, the parents/guardians will be notified immediately.

In case of surgical emergency, I hereby give permission to the physician selected by the church to hospitalize, secure proper treatment for, and to order injection, anesthesia, or surgery for my child as named above.

Your child must be covered by health or medical insurance.

Name of Health Insurance Provider: _____

Insurance ID Number: _____

Name of Family Physician _____ Physician's Phone Number _____

Parent's/Guardian's Signature

Date



Appendix 3A

MINISTRY LEADERSHIP VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM FOR MINISTRIES TO CHILDREN AND YOUTH

(INFORMATION RECEIVED IS STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL)

In our desire to reduce the risk of abuse within our church ministries, we believe this information is necessary to protect our children and to protect our volunteers. Thank you in advance for your understanding.

Personal Information

Full Name _____ Male ___Female___

Phone Number (Res.) _____(Bus.)_____

Address _____Postal Code_____

E-mail Address _____

Single
 Married
 Engaged
 Separated
 Divorced
 Remarried
 Widow/Widower

Date of Birth _____

Spouse's Name _____

Occupation and/or Employer _____

Hobbies, Interests, or Skills _____

Spiritual History

How long have you attended the church? _____ Member? Yes ___No ___

When did you accept Christ as your Savior? _____

Have you been baptized in water? Yes ___No ___



Church Attendance Background

Churches I have attended in the last five years are as follows:

1. Name of Church _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Dates Attended _____ Member or Adherent _____

2. Name of Church _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Dates Attended _____ Member or Adherent _____

Present and Previous Ministry Experience

1. Name of Church _____

Dates and Description of Ministry _____

Pastor or Ministry Supervisor _____ Phone _____

2. Name of Church _____

Dates and Description of Ministry _____

Pastor or Ministry Supervisor _____ Phone _____

3. Name of Church _____

Dates and Description of Ministry _____

Pastor or Ministry Supervisor _____ Phone _____

Lifestyle

In order to provide a safe and secure environment for our children, we believe it is necessary to include the following questions as part of our application process. All information will be kept strictly confidential. (Police may access this information under warrant, if requested.) Answering "yes" to any of the questions may not necessarily preclude your involvement in ministry. **A meeting will be arranged with the appropriate person/people so that you may discuss the circumstances.** Thank you in advance for your understanding.



If any of the following circumstances apply to you, please check:

- Have been convicted of a criminal offense involving children?
- Have been convicted of a sexually related crime?
- Have been convicted of an abuse-related crime?
- Have been hospitalized or treated for alcohol or substance abuse?
- Have any communicable disease?
- In treatment for any form of mental illness.

Do you have any physical conditions that would prevent you from performing certain types of activities (lifting children, playing sports)? If so, please explain.

References

Please provide the names of three individuals, excluding relatives, who could provide a reference for you. If you are a minor, you may use the name of a parent and/or teacher. If possible, include at least one reference from the church.

1. Name of Reference _____

Address _____ Phone _____

2. Name of Reference _____

Address _____ Phone _____

3. Name of Reference _____

Address _____ Phone _____



Ministry profile

In answering the following, please don't be too humble as the purpose of this section is for you to declare your strengths so that your gifting will be put to the best use possible.

Mark the areas in which you desire to . . .

- **oversee** (put an "O" in the box).
- **assist** (put an "A" in the box).
- **receive training** (put a "T" in the box).

<input type="checkbox"/> Nursery a.m. ___ p.m. ___ <input type="checkbox"/> Evening Child Care (to 36 months) <input type="checkbox"/> Children's Church (Preschool) <input type="checkbox"/> Children's Sunday School (Preschool) <input type="checkbox"/> Children's Sunday School (Elementary) <input type="checkbox"/> Children's Open Sessions <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Sunday School <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Mid-week <input type="checkbox"/> Meetings/Activities <input type="checkbox"/> Vacation Bible School <input type="checkbox"/> Kid's Choir <input type="checkbox"/> Prayer <input type="checkbox"/> Promotions/Contests	<input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment <input type="checkbox"/> Missions Presentations <input type="checkbox"/> Parenting Classes <input type="checkbox"/> Crafts <input type="checkbox"/> Drama/Puppets <input type="checkbox"/> Administration/Office <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ <p style="text-align: center;">* Do not hesitate to mark more than one area with the same letter. You can show your preference by placing a number with the letter by your preference.</p>
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Applicant's Statement

I hereby acknowledge that the information contained in this application for ministry is correct to the best of my knowledge. I authorize any references or churches listed in this application to give you any information they may have regarding my character and fitness for children's ministry, and I release all such references from liability for any damage that may result from furnishing such evaluation to you. I also grant my permission for the Church of God of Prophecy to perform a personal Criminal Record Check for the purpose of my protection against any false allegations and for the protection of those I serve. I consent to such an investigation with the understanding that the results will be kept in utmost confidence. I further agree to adhere to the Children, Youth Ministry Guidelines as adopted by the Church of God of Prophecy.

(Applicant's Name—Please Print)

(Date)

(Signature)



Appendix 3B

CONFIDENTIAL RECORD OF CHURCH CONTACT
With a Reference or Church Identified by an Applicant for Children’s Work

Name of Applicant _____

<i>Reference or Church Contacted</i>	<i>Date of Contact</i>	<i>Person Contacting the Reference or Church</i>	<i>Method of Contact (telephone, letter, personal conversation)</i>	<i>Summary of Contact</i>
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Appendix 3C

EMPLOYEE/VOLUNTEER Initial Clearance Checklist

- Application for Ministries to Children and Youth completed and signed
- Application/instructions for Criminal Record Check given to applicant
- Reference Contact Form completed and signed; file copy for all contacts
- Criminal Records Report completed and received from authorities
- Interview Form completed and signed
- Driver's Record Check (if required) received
- All of the above in order, reviewed, and cleared for applicant to serve in the Children's and Youth Ministries at Peerless Road Church.

Signature of Pastor or Authorized Department Head _____

Date _____

If this cannot be signed at this time because of an unsatisfactory response in any of the above categories, it must be referred to the pastor of that department before any further discussion with the applicant.

- I acknowledge receipt of the Peerless Road Church Children and Youth Ministry Guidelines.

Signature _____ Date _____

Training on Policy Completed Date _____



