

**First Lutheran Church
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52403**

**Child and Youth Safety Policy
Addressing Physical and Sexual Misconduct
Guidelines for Staff and Volunteers**

1. Purpose

First Lutheran Church has a long-standing tradition of providing a safe and stimulating environment for members, workers, guests, children, and youth. First Lutheran Church recognizes that situations involving abuse may arise despite the existence and execution of a prevention policy. This policy reflects our commitment to provide protective care of all children, youth, volunteers, staff, members, and guests who participate in our programs and use our facilities.

2. Definition of Child Abuse

In accordance with Chapter 232 of the Iowa Administrative Code, and Chapter 709 of the Iowa Criminal Code, the victim of child abuse is a person under the age of 18 who has suffered one or more of the following categories: physical abuse, denial of critical care, presence of illegal drugs, manufacturing or possession of a dangerous substance, mental injury, child prostitution, sexual abuse, bestiality, and cohabitation with a registered sex offender.

3. Policy Administration

The Director of Children and Family Ministry, Director of Teen Ministry, Director of Support Services, and the Senior pastor shall co-administer this policy and be responsible for compliance with it.

- 3.1. Current policy administration information can be found in Appendix A.
- 3.2. Policy administrator information shall be updated or verified annually.

4. Eligibility, Application, and Screening

- 4.1. Eligibility: Those wishing to volunteer with children or youth must have been active in the life of the congregation for at least 6 months and successfully completed the application and screening process, or been otherwise approved by the Director of Teen Ministry and/or Director of Children and Family Ministry.

- 4.2 Definitions: For purposes of this policy “children” are defined as being in the fifth (5th) grade or younger, “youth” are defined as middle and high school age, and “adults” are defined as those who are 18 years of age or older.
- 4.3. Age Restrictions: All those working with children must be at least a 6th grader and be at least three years older than the oldest child they will be working with. They must be working alongside two (2) adults using the “two adult” rule in section 5.1. Anyone age 15-17 can be considered an adult if working alongside an adult.
- 4.3.1. All those working with Middle School youth must be in 9th grade or above. Youth working with Middle School students must be working alongside two (2) adults using the “two adult” rule in section 5.1.
- 4.3.2. All those working with High School youth must be at least one year out of High School. They must be working alongside two (2) adults and use the “two adult” rule in section 5.1. All volunteers must be at least three years older than the oldest youth they will be working with.
- 4.4. Application and Screening Process: Those wishing to volunteer with children or youth must complete an application form and undergo a screening process described below before beginning their volunteer position.
- 4.4.1. Background checks are required for all adults, young adults, and youth working with children or youth, on or off church property and involved in church sanctioned events. These checks should include, but not necessarily be limited to, sex offender registry, Iowa courts, and personal references. Background checks for youth working with children will include only the sex offender registry.
- 4.4.2. To be considered continuously active, volunteers must complete or certify an application form every year and attend the annual training.
- 4.5 Satisfactory Completion of Screening for Volunteers: A satisfactory completion of screening for volunteers shall constitute:
- 4.5.1 No known history of abuse/molestation of children, youth or adults.
- 4.5.2 No negative personal references.
- 4.5.3 Experience working with children or youth, or satisfactory demonstration of ability to learn and understand the position applied for.

4.5.4 Active in the life of First Lutheran at least 6 months or more, or have been otherwise approved by the Director of Teen Ministry and/or Director of Children and Family Ministry.

4.6. Unsatisfactory Completion of Screening for Volunteers: The following findings will warrant the exclusion of the applicant from service to children or youth.

4.6.1. Prior conviction of either sexual or physical abuse.

4.6.2 The following findings may warrant the exclusion of the applicant from service to children or youth.

4.6.2.1 Other findings of a criminal record (a case-by-case review should be conducted).

4.6.2.2 Negative personal references (evaluation will be made on a case-by-case basis).

Note: In the event of a negative decision, the volunteer will be offered other alternatives. The assigned pastor will counsel the individual to insure their worth within the body of Christ is evident and help them apply their gifts in other ministries and mission work within First Lutheran Church.

4.7. Training: Training in Child Safety is required for all volunteers before they begin working with children and youth. This training will be offered by First Lutheran, at the direction of the Director of Children and Family Ministry and/or the Director of Teen Ministry, and focus on our Child Safety Policy, fire and severe weather policies, and issues such as boundaries, safe touch, and identifying child abuse.

4.7.1. All volunteers 15 years of age or older will be required to attend training prior to working with youth and children.

4.7.2. All other volunteers will attend training on the Child Safety Policy in a depth determined to be appropriate by the Director of Children and Family Ministry and/or Director of Teen Ministry.

4.7.3. Upon completion of the training, volunteers will sign a document stating that they have read, understand, and intend to follow the Child Safety Policy.

4.7.4. Volunteers who are not continuously active (as defined in 4.4.3) must be re-screened and trained as outlined in Section 4 before returning to youth or children ministry.

- 4.8. Continued Screening: All volunteers are required to be re-screened (according to section 4.4 and following) every five years as long as they are continuously active (as defined in 4.4.2).

5. Policies and Procedures

- 5.1. All staff and volunteers will observe the “two adult” rule, which requires an adult working with youth and children to be paired with another adult. Except in an extreme emergency, the two adults will remain within eyesight of each other at all times when working with youth and children.
- 5.2. When children need to use the restroom, they will ask permission from their teacher and proceed to the restroom. One of the teachers from the room will stand at the classroom door to make sure that the child gets to the restroom while also being visible to the other teacher and the rest of the class. When the child is finished using the restroom, both the teacher and the child will return to the classroom. Volunteers are not allowed to change diapers. Staff changing diapers will follow the posted procedures.
- 5.3 There may be occasions when a volunteer or staff member will need to meet alone with a student or group of students. On those occasions, the volunteer or staff member is encouraged to use one or more of the following safeguards:
- 5.3.1. Meet in a public space.
 - 5.3.2. Have an adult present outside of the meeting space with the door open and clear visibility.
 - 5.3.3. If it is absolutely necessary to meet with a youth or child privately behind closed doors, the staff member or volunteer will first call or talk to the parents or guardian and gain their specific permission to meet privately with their child. It is not necessary to tell the parent or guardian the subject matter of the conversation.
- 5.4 On occasion a situation may arise in which the second adult, as required in the “two adult” rule of Section 5.1, is not available. In such a situation, the Director of Teen Ministry, Director of Children and Family Ministry or his/her designee, shall take reasonable steps to ensure that this Child Safety Policy is otherwise followed.
- 5.5. Sign-in procedures will be in place for parents, guardians, or their designee to follow as approved by the Director of Children and Family Ministry, and/or the Director of Teen Ministry. In the case of a parent/guardian failing to pick up their children from their assigned classrooms in a timely manner, the children may be

moved to a common area where they will remain until they are picked up by a parent or guardian. While in the common area, they will be supervised using the “two adult” rule as described in section 5.1.

- 5.6. All classrooms will be inspected to be sure that a safe environment is provided.
- 5.7. All staff and volunteers will be required to wear a church issued name badge with their name clearly visible during Sunday School hours, Confirmation hours, and other church sponsored events which are held at First Lutheran Church.
- 5.8. The Adult to children/youth ratio for any children/youth activity will ideally be no greater than 1:16.
- 5.9. Physical Contact: Physical contact in disciplinary situations is not permitted, unless it is clearly necessary to protect yourself, others, or the individual in question.
 - 5.9.1: Safe touch: Touching should be in response to the need of the child, not the need of the adult. Touching should be with the child’s permission. Resistance to touching must be respected. Touching must never include the breast, buttocks, or groin. Touching should be done in the open, not in private. Touching should have a brief, limited duration. A child’s comfort level with touching is influenced by factors such as age, developmental stages, social and emotional well-being, life experiences, gender, etc. all of which change over time.
- 5.10. Transportation: Volunteers and staff may be called upon to transport children or youth to and from church activities. All drivers will be twenty-five (25) years old or older, have completed the screening requirements in section 4. above, have enough seat belts in use for all those traveling in their car, and have a valid driver’s license and proof of insurance.
 - 5.10.1. If a youth or child needs a ride home by a volunteer or staff member due to them missing their ride, or their parent/guardian failed to pick them up, the parents/guardian must first be called and give their permission for the volunteer or staff member to provide transportation for the youth or child. The parent/guardian will be given the approximate time their child or youth will be leaving with the volunteer or staff member, and the approximate time they can expect them to arrive at their home. The driver must have met the screening, driver’s license, and insurance requirements contained in Section 4 and Section 5.10.1. above.
- 5.11. Overnight Rules: For any church activity that involves overnight stays with a co-educational group of children or youth, at a minimum, one adult female and one adult male must chaperone the group. In consultation with the assigned pastor, the

ratio of adult to children or youth will be determined in advance. In any event the ratio cannot be greater than 1:16.

6. Responding to an Incident

- 6.1. **Accidents:** Any time a staff member, or volunteer, witnesses an accident in which someone under their care is hurt they must complete an *Accident/Incident Report Form* and turn it in to their supervisor. All reports must ultimately go to the Director of Teen Ministry, Director of Children and Family Ministry, Director of Support Services, and the Senior Pastor as soon as possible. The accident/incident will also be reported to the parents and/or guardians.
- 6.2. **Incident reporting:** All allegations of incidents falling under the definition of child abuse must be reported. In the case of the report of suspected abuse or neglect the actions to be taken are:
 - 6.2.1. Remove the victim from the situation and make sure that they are safe. THIS IS THE PRIMARY CONCERN.
 - 6.2.2. Notify the Director of Teen Ministry, Director of Children's Ministry, Director of Support Services and/or assigned pastor of the incident as appropriate. This is the end of the responsibility of the volunteer unless otherwise instructed by a policy administrator. Volunteers should not share any information about a report to anyone other than a policy administrator.
 - 6.2.3. The Senior Pastor will always be notified of a report. This notification will come from the Director of Teen Ministry, Director of Children and Family Ministry, and/or the Director of Support Services.
 - 6.2.4. The staff member that will be signing the *Report of Suspected Incident of Youth/Child Abuse* will remove the accused from contact with other children or youth.
 - 6.2.5. The staff member notified fills out the *Report of Suspected Incident of Youth/Child Abuse* immediately.
 - 6.2.6. The staff member signing the *Report of Suspected Incident of Youth/Child Abuse* in consultation with the assigned pastor and the church's attorney is responsible for proper notification of the following: Parents, Senior Pastor, law enforcement (police or sheriff as appropriate) and insurance or

other authorities as appropriate.

6.3. Response to allegations: Our guiding principle in all things is to deal with the allegations by taking it seriously, securing the well-being of the victim, making every effort to maintain confidentiality, and seeking to reach out to both the accuser and the accused in Christian love. As in 6.2.2., the responsibility of the volunteer ends once an incident is reported. Volunteers should not share any information about a report to anyone other than a policy administrator.

6.3.1. The official spokesperson in the event of an incident is the church's attorney. All communications will be cleared by the church's attorney. All other persons involved in the incident should offer no comment to any party without the permission of the church's attorney.

6.4. The accused: During the time of the investigation the accused will be removed from contact with all children or youth until completion of the investigation.

Appendix A

Policy Administrator Information

Senior Pastor

Steve Knudson
1000 3rd Ave SE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52403
319-365-1494 (work); 319-333-4984 (cell)
stevek@firstlutherancr.org

Director of Support Services

Gordon Epping
1000 3rd Ave SE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52402
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gordone@firstlutherancr.org

Director of Children and Family Ministries

Marissa Letscher
1000 3rd Ave SE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52403
319-365-1494 (work); 319-360-8632 (cell)
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Director of Teen Ministry

Michael Beckmann
1000 3rd Ave SE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52403
319-365-1494 (work); 507-202-8628 (cell)
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Church's Designated Attorney

Thomas Wolle
Simmons, Perrine, Moyer, Bergmann, PLC
115 3rd Street SE Ste 1200
Cedar Rapids, IA 52403
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Accident/Incident Report Form

Date of incident: _____ Time of incident: _____

Name of the person injured: _____ Age: _____

Address of person: _____

Parent or guardian (if minor): _____

Describe the injury or incident : _____

Name of person (or people) who witnessed the incident:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Describe the incident and the action taken to address the injury. Please include a timeline summary of actions.

Incident reported to (staff member name and title):

Signature of Person Making the Report Date

Signature of Injured (or guardian) Date

White copy: to injured (or parent/guardian if injured is a minor)
Yellow copy: retained by FLC

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SEVERE WEATHER POLICY

Storm/Tornado Warning:

Situation: When a tornado or severe storm warning is declared and public warning systems are activated, all church activities will cease. The public warning signal is a five-minute, steady siren blast.

Definition: Tornado Watch means that conditions are favorable for a tornado or severe weather. A Tornado Warning means that a tornado has been sighted in the area.

Action Steps: The person in charge of each area or activity shall inform the group that all persons must immediately, in an orderly fashion, go to designated safety areas within the church. A staff member or adult volunteer may be the person-in-charge under variable circumstances. Each is empowered to lead, and in cooperation with other staff members and volunteers, to do the following:

1. Use the manual public address system located in the Simplex voice control panel located at the administrative entrance to make the following announcement: **THIS IS A SEVERE STORM ALERT. PLEASE PROCEED IN AN ORDERLY MANNER TO THE FELLOWSHIP CENTER OR BASEMENT FLOOR HALLWAY.**
2. All available staff members should give assistance and direction.
3. Do **NOT** use the elevator.
4. Handicapped individuals may be directed to restrooms on any floor if time and assistance at stairways are not available.
5. Encourage people to stay away from windows and doors with glass panels. Instruct them to sit in a “tuck” position.
6. Account for all people. Maintain order. Explain that if a power outage occurs, the Fire Alarm signal/message will activate automatically. Do **NOT** try to silence it.
7. After danger has passed, the person in charge should announce over the PA: **THE STORM ALERT IS OVER. PLEASE RETURN TO YOUR ROOM OR ACTIVITY.**
8. A staff member will silence and reset fire alarm per procedure, if necessary.

-OVER-

Medical Emergency:

Situation: If a tornado strikes, or in case of medical emergency, the lives and safety of people will take precedence over structures and artifacts. Persons with first aid knowledge or medical training are encouraged to help victims.

Action Steps: Do not move injured person(s), but relocate others to the DaVita Dialysis parking lot located across from the church on 3rd Avenue SE. Account for all people at this re-assembly site. Do **NOT** enter sections of the building which have been damaged.

- 1) Aid victim(s) as needed.
- 2) Call 9-911 and REPORT WHAT YOU KNOW.
- 3) Tell the 911 Operator that you are calling from First Lutheran Church, 1000 3rd Avenues SE.
- 4) Tell the 911 Operator which door to send emergency personnel (3rd Ave Main, 1st Floor East Side, Administrative or Canopy entrance(s).
- 5) Send someone to guide emergency personnel to victim(s).
- 6) Follow all directions given by emergency personnel.

Other Emergencies/Situations:

Other situations will be handled in accordance with the best judgement of a church staff member or other adult present. In circumstances where a personal injury has taken place, follow the above Action Steps. After emergency evacuation has been completed, please complete an *Accident/Incident Report Form*, in accordance with the Child Safety Policy. This statement is needed for insurance purposes. It should summarize who, what, where, when and why. The completed *Accident/Incident Report Form* shall be turned in to the Director of Support Services and the Senior Pastor.

Adopted by the Congregation Council on April 27, 2000 for implementation on June 1, 2000.

/weather emergency

Fire Policy

First Lutheran Church
Cedar Rapids IA

Statement of Belief

The leadership of First Lutheran Church of Cedar Rapids, Iowa believes that the lives and safety of its members and guests are more important than the church's building, fixtures and personal property, or the personal property of its members and guests.

Fire Procedures

1. If you see fire or smell smoke, pull the nearest fire alarm or dial 9-911 (from hallway or narthex phones) to alert the fire department, and leave the building in an orderly manner using the nearest safe exit. **Do not use the elevator.**
2. If the fire alarm sounds, exit the building in an orderly manner using the nearest safe exit. **Do not use the elevator.** Please help those around you who may require assistance.
3. Lay and staff leaders, as available, will assist in the evacuation. Do not return to the building until the fire department captain, a pastor or leader authorizes you to do so.
4. If you are 18 years of age or older, please go to the DaVita Dialysis parking lot directly south of the church on 3rd Ave and remain a safe distance from emergency vehicles.
5. If you are 17 years of age, or younger, and not with your parents, please go to the east-side of the PCI building adjacent to Parking Lot B, remaining with your group. Follow directions from your leader. Your leader will reunite you with an adult member of your family when they come to the alternate parking lot for you.
6. All evacuees shall remain in place until an 'all-clear' or further instructions are given by the staff person in charge. Children and youth can be released to parents or guardians once volunteer leaders have accounted for each individual.

-- Adopted by the Congregation Council on September 19, 2006 for immediate implementation.