

Linglestown Life is a  
**SAFE SANCTUARY**

# POLICIES & PROCEDURES

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Linglestown Life United Methodist church is part of the  
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This policy is based upon the policy developed by Susquehanna Conference of the United  
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# Lingelstown Life UMC

## Safe Sanctuaries Policy

### INTRODUCTION

In 1996, the General Conference of the United Methodist Church adopted the resolution, Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse in the Church. This resolution, reaffirmed at every General Conference since then, became the impetus for annual conferences and congregations to develop and implement abuse risk reduction policies. Heeding Christ's call to all people to love and serve one another (John 13:15,34); to serve those most vulnerable in his name, even the "least of these" (Matthew 25:40); and to welcome all in Christ's name (Matthew 18:5), the Lingelstown Life United Methodist Church, in cooperation with the Susquehanna Conference of the United Methodist Church, has developed this *Safe Sanctuaries<sup>1</sup> Policy* with accompanying procedures to reduce the risks of abuse to children, youth, and vulnerable adults, as well as to protect the staff and volunteers in these ministry areas.

This *Safe Sanctuaries Policy* comes out of the guiding covenant of Susquehanna Conference, "...acknowledging that it is by God's grace that we live together in covenant agreement"<sup>2</sup>, and focuses on the following covenant agreements:

- We covenant together as a conference to diligently seek God's will as we endeavor to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world; and,
- We covenant to do no harm by words or actions.<sup>3</sup>

The physical and emotional safety, as well as the spiritual growth of all God's children is a priority of Lingelstown Life UMC whereby we embrace a commitment to the holistic well-being of each child, youth and adult entrusted to us. As recognized in the 1996 General Conference resolution: Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse in the Church:

Tragically, churches have not always been safe places for children. Child sexual abuse and exploitation, and ritual abuse occur in churches, large and small, urban and rural. The problem cuts across all economic, cultural, and racial lines. It is real, and it appears to be increasing. Most annual conferences can cite specific incidents of child sexual abuse and exploitation within churches. Virtually every congregation has among its members adult survivors of early sexual trauma. Such incidents are devastating to all who are involved: the child, the family, the local church, and its leaders. Increasingly, churches are torn apart by the legal, emotional, and monetary consequences of litigation following allegations of abuse.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Melton, Joy Thornburg. *Safe Sanctuaries, Reducing the Risk of Abuse in the Church*. 2008. Discipleship Resources: Nashville, TN

<sup>2</sup> Vision Team of the Central Pa and Wyoming Conferences, *Birthing a New Annual Conference, Our Guiding Covenant*. LINK Dec 2008/Jan 2009, page 1. Central PA Publication: Mechanicsburg, PA

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

<sup>4</sup> The Book of Resolutions of the United Methodist Church, 1996 (p.384); 2004 (p.201). The United Methodist Publishing House: Nashville, TN  
Revised May 20, 2018

## DEFINITIONS

1. A child is anyone under the age of 18 years.
2. A youth is a colloquial term used in our ministries to mean middle and high school age students.
3. An adult is anyone 18 years of age or older.
4. A vulnerable adult is any person, 18 years and older, who because of physical or mental infirmity or emotional disability or other physical, mental, or emotional dysfunction may be vulnerable to maltreatment.
5. Child Abuse is defined under Pennsylvania's Child Protective Services Law 23 PA.C.S.A §6303  
(b)(1) to mean any of the following:
  - (i) any recent act or failure to act by a perpetrator which causes nonaccidental serious physical injury to a child under 18 years of age.
  - (ii) an act or failure to act by a perpetrator which causes nonaccidental serious mental injury to or sexual abuse or sexual exploitation of a child under 18 years of age.
  - (iii) any recent act, failure to act, or series of acts or failures to act by a perpetrator which creates an imminent risk of serious physical injury to or sexual abuse or sexual exploitation of a child under 18 years of age.
  - (iv) serious physical neglect by a perpetrator constituting prolonged or repeated lack of supervision or the failure to provide essentials of life, including adequate medical care, which endangers a child's life or development or impairs the child's functioning.  
(b)(2) No child shall be deemed to be physically or mentally abused based on injuries that result solely from environmental factors that are beyond the control of the parent or person responsible for the child's welfare, such as inadequate housing, furnishings, income, clothing, and medical care.  
(b)(3) also provides that, "If, upon investigation, the county agency determines that a child has not been provided needed medical or surgical care because of seriously held religious beliefs of the child's parents, guardian, or person responsible for the child's welfare, which beliefs are consistent with those of a bona fide religion, the child shall not be deemed to be physically or mentally abused. The county agency shall closely monitor the child and shall seek court-ordered medical intervention when the lack of medical or surgical care threatens the child's life or long-term health.
6. A Mandated Reporter is an individual, paid or unpaid, who, on the basis of the individual's role as an integral part of a regularly scheduled program, activity or service, accepts responsibility for a child/youth. See Section D: Reporting Abuse for further information regarding vulnerable adults.
7. A Staff Person is a person who works in ministry at LLUMC, with or without compensation, and is accountable to the Lead Pastor.
8. A Volunteer is a person who works in ministry at LLUMC without compensation and is accountable to a staff person.
9. A Floater/Roamer is an adult designated to move in and out of rooms during activities requiring Safe Sanctuary supervision in order to satisfy the two-adult rule.
10. A Visitor is a parent, relative, guardian, or invited guest who is not counted in the two-adult rule but is present at a children/youth/vulnerable adult activity for a specific reason.

11. A Teen Helper is a youth ages 14-17 not counted in the two-adult rule. Teen helpers do not provide discipline or change diapers, would not be left in charge of children, or take a child to the bathroom.
12. The Minister of Safe Sanctuaries is a LLUMC staff person who administers the *Safe Sanctuaries Policy*.
13. Staff Ministries are events/activities/projects that organically originate from a specific ministry area and are supervised by a LLUMC staff person.
14. A Family Ministry event/activity/project is one specifically approved by the staff of LLUMC where children/youth/vulnerable adults may be participating.
15. An LLUMC Approved Event is an event/activity/project that falls under the umbrella of a Staff Ministry or a Family Ministry event, where children/youth/vulnerable adults may be present as participants.
16. An LLUMC Approved Event Leader is a staff person or Volunteer who is responsible for seeing that all church policies are followed at an approved LLUMC activity or event.
17. A Sponsored/Contracted Group and Private Event is any organization/activity that is either sponsored by LLUMC or is contracted to meet at LLUMC.
18. Nursery School is Linglestown Christian Nursery School (LCNS).
19. The Susquehanna Conference Response Team is a group of people trained in handling situations of abuse. They assist congregations, camps, and events in dealing with the recovery process.

## Section A: SCREENING WORKERS

- A1. Ministry Descriptions are required
- a. A Ministry Description shall be available for each position for which a volunteer or staff person applies.
- A2. Six Month Hospitality Rule is required
- a. At Linglestown Life volunteers shall demonstrate an active relationship with our church for at least six (6) months before being invited to serve in children/youth/vulnerable adult ministries.
  - b. New staff hires including Nursery School shall demonstrate an active relationship with a local church of at least six months and shall provide references deemed adequate by the hiring supervisor to replace this six-month waiting period when the position involves children/youth/vulnerable adults.
- A3. Safe Sanctuaries Application is required
- a. Once A2 has been satisfied, ALL PERSONS who desire to participate in ministry where there is regular and direct contact with children/youth/vulnerable adults shall be required to fill out a **Safe Sanctuaries Application**.
- A4. An interview based on the application shall be conducted for all staff and volunteers
- a. All volunteers shall be interviewed by the Minister of Safe Sanctuaries and/or a trained Staff person in charge of the ministry area in which the person is applying.
  - b. All paid or volunteer staff persons shall be interviewed by the Lead Pastor and/or Minister of Safe Sanctuaries.
  - c. Each new pastor shall be interviewed by the Minister of Safe Sanctuaries.
  - d. Interview guidelines are found in the Supporting Documents.
- A5. Background Checks are required
- a. FOR PAID STAFF the following documents must be obtained:
    - (1) The PA Request for Criminal Record Check dated less than one year prior to the date of the application, and
    - (2) The PA Child Abuse History Clearance form dated less than one year prior to the date of the application, and
    - (3) An FBI clearance dated less than one year prior to the date of the application.
  - b. FOR VOLUNTEERS the following documents must be obtained:
    - (1) The PA Request for Criminal Records Check dated less than one year prior to the date of the application, and
    - (2) The PA Child Abuse History Clearance form dated less than one year prior to the date of the application, and
    - (3) A PA Disclosure Statement Application for Volunteers form. IF said applicant has not lived in the state of Pennsylvania for the last 10 consecutive years prior to the date of the application, then an FBI clearance will also be required.
  - c. All staff and volunteers shall submit new background clearances every 60 months.

- d. FOR DRIVERS OF CHILDREN, YOUTH OR VULNERABLE ADULTS MUST SUBMIT the following documents must be given to ministry person in charge:
  - (1) Proof of age; drivers must be 25 years or older.
  - (2) A completed PA DOT Bureau of Driver Licensing 10 year Driving Record ([www.dot.state.pa.us](http://www.dot.state.pa.us)) dated less than 2 months prior to the application for volunteers and staff that will be driving children/youth.
  - (3) A copy of the potential driver's current Driver's license.
  - (4) A copy of the potential driver's vehicle's proof of insurance if driving a personal vehicle.
  - (5) If out of state, A Driver's Record from the state in which applicant holds a license.
  - (6) LLUMC reserves the option to ask volunteers/staff to repeat Driver's Record Histories annually.
- e. Automobile insurance coverage
  - (1) When paid staff or volunteers drive their own car:  
When volunteers drive their own vehicle on church sponsored events, the volunteer's own auto insurance is the coverage. The conference and/or church insurance is not responsible. The following are the minimum recommended limits:
    - \$100,000/\$300,000 Bodily Injury
    - \$100,000 Property
 (As an example, if I am driving and hit another vehicle with 6 people in it and hurt them, the most the policy will pay to any one person is \$100,000 and regardless of the number of people injured, the policy will not pay more than \$300,000.)
  - (2) When paid staff or volunteers drive a church owned vehicle or a church leased vehicle the driver would be covered by the Conference Insurance policy.
    - (i) When paid staff or volunteers drive a church owned or leased 15 passenger van, drivers must take additional safety courses per our insurance carrier.
- f. Moving Violations That Would/Should Keep persons from driving children/youth/vulnerable adults
  - (1) Within three years:
    - No more than 2 violations and/or accidents
    - No more than 3 vehicle related suspensions/reinstatements
  - (2) Within five years:
    - No DUI
    - No reckless driving convictions
    - No felony driving convictions
  - (3) Avoid drivers that also have a conviction for:
    - Passing a school bus
    - Using an auto in the commission of a felony

#### A6. Personnel Files shall be kept for each applicant

- a. For employees, the Safe Sanctuaries Application and supporting documents shall be placed in their Employee file, stored either in Pastor's office or LCNS Director's office.
- b. For volunteers, the Safe Sanctuaries Application and supporting documents shall be placed in the Safe Sanctuaries file cabinet.

- c. Supporting documents may include reference checks, clearances, and driving credentials.

## A7. Teen Helpers may be utilized

Teen Helpers, ages 14-17, can be a valuable resource for ministry teams as regular helpers. They must be screened in the following ways:

- a. Six month hospitality rule (see A2 above)
- b. Teen Volunteer Application (see A3 above)
- c. Interview will be conducted during the application review (see A4 above)

## A8. Worker Disqualifications

- a. Whether disclosed voluntarily or by result of the security background check, the following convictions will automatically disqualify any person from participating in ministries with children/youth/vulnerable adults:

PA Law Title 23, 6344 (c) Any conviction for:

Criminal homicide, aggravated assault, stalking, kidnapping, unlawful restraint, rape, statutory sexual assault, involuntary deviate sexual intercourse, sexual assault, aggravated indecent assault, indecent assault, indecent exposure, incest, concealing death of child, endangering welfare of children, dealing in infant children, prostitution and related offenses, obscene and other sexual material and performances, corruption of minors, sexual abuse of children, felony offense for controlled substance, drug device and cosmetic act.

- b. Individuals who have been convicted of any form of child abuse or whose name appears on Megan's List, may not be present at any Approved LLUMC Events where children/youth/ vulnerable adults may be present.
- c. LLUMC reserves the right to disqualify candidates failing to meet additional ministry standards.



## SECTION B: TRAINING

- B1. Training is required at the time of application and renewal
- a. As part of the Application process the *Safe Sanctuaries Policy* shall be reviewed and the applicant shall sign a Covenant and agree to follow procedures outlined in our *Safe Sanctuaries Policy* and written materials.
  - b. Clearances must be updated every 60 months to be valid.
  - c. A refresher course shall be offered annually to review specifics of the policy.

## SECTION C: EVENT SUPERVISION

Supervision procedures are designed to reduce the possibility of abuse to the children/youth/vulnerable adults and to protect staff persons and volunteers from unwarranted accusations. The type of activity will determine the amount of supervision required and the kind and amount of equipment needed.

### C1. Staff Ministries

- a. At activities/events/projects created by a LLUMC staff person within his or her ministry area, the staff person is responsible for seeing that all equipment is adequate, safe, and appropriate for the activity and age of participants, and that all church policies are followed, including the *Safe Sanctuaries Policy* when applicable. The staff person is the Approved Event Leader.
- b. The LLUMC staff person/Approved Event Leader or his/her designee are responsible for children/youth/vulnerable adults when they are participants.
- c. Examples are youth group, teen bells, adult choirs with youth, confirmation, Singing Sprouts, Sunday School, and visitation ministry.

### C2. Family Ministries

- a. When children/youth are present at an LLUMC Approved Event, they must be under the direct supervision of their parent/guardian/authorized adult or under the supervision of the LLUMC Approved Event Leader and are not allowed to roam freely in the church or on the church campus. The LLUMC Approved Event Leader is responsible for seeing that all equipment is adequate, safe, and appropriate for the activity and age of participants, and that all church policies are followed, including the *Safe Sanctuaries Policy* when applicable.
- b. Examples include volunteering as a family for the Hospitality ministry, the Trustee Clean-Up Day, the Peach Festival, a parade/float committee, coming to an Advent/Lenten project, or attending a movie night.

### C3. Registration Forms and Participation Records are Required

- a. When a child/youth is a participant at any LLUMC Approved Activity and is not under the direct supervision of a parent or guardian, then an accurate student registration must be maintained. For children, this registration should include, at a minimum, the child's name, the name and phone number of a parent/guardian, a list of authorized adults who may pick up the child, and the name and phone number of at least one adult emergency contact. For youth, this record should include, at a minimum, the youth's name, the name and phone number of a parent/guardian, and the name and phone number of at least one adult emergency contact. Include food or non-food allergies/intolerances and inquire if there are any accommodations that a child may need. Include a statement that photographs/videos are taken in the normal course of ministry and an occasional image may be taken of your child and used in promotional church venues. In addition to this minimum information include these statements.
- b. When a child/youth is a participant at any LLUMC Approved Activity and is not under the direct supervision of a parent or guardian, then an accurate participation record must be maintained. This record should include, at a minimum, the child's name, the date/hours/location of the activity, the

names of all other persons present, and the time each person present arrived and departed from the event.

- c. Registration and Participation Records shall be maintained and file by the LLUMC Approved Event Leader.

#### C4. Incident Reports are required.

- a. If possible, within 24 hours of an incident a report must be recorded and filed with the church Administrative Assistant.
- b. An incident is an unusual event that warrants a written description. Examples include an injury that mandates first aid, a physical altercation between participants, odd behavior exhibited by a participant.

#### C5. Arrival and Dismissal procedures

- a. Upon arrival at any LLUMC Approved Activity, a child's responsible adult shall sign the activity's participation record on behalf of the child.
- b. Upon arrival at any LLUMC Approved Activity, a youth shall sign the activity's participation record.
- c. Upon dismissal/departure from an LLUMC Approved Activity, a child's parent/authorized adult/teen (per the student registration) must sign the participation record before the child is released by the Approved Activity Leader, and must record the actual time of departure.
- d. Upon dismissal/departure from an LLUMC Approved Activity, a youth must sign the participation record and record the actual time of departure.
- e. A volunteer or staff person must remain on site at any event when a child/youth remains until an appropriate adult has retrieved them.
- f. The Approved Activity leader should make sure that departure times are accurate on the participation record when a child/youth leaves earlier than the event's pre-designated end time.

#### C6. Visitors

- a. Visitors are welcome at LLUMC/LCNS children/youth meetings and events.
- b. Visitors never qualify as an approved supervisor of an activity or event.
- c. Visitors should be included on participation records.

#### C7. Windows are in all classroom doors

- a. All activities should occur in open view.
- b. Each room or space where children/youth/vulnerable adults are being cared for shall have a window in the door.
- c. When necessary for proper supervision, a door shall be left open. An example is when an adult is taking a child to a restroom.

#### C8. The two-adult rule

Abusers thrive on secrecy, isolation and their ability to manipulate victims. When abusers know they will never have the chance to be alone with potential victims, they will quickly lose interest. The two-adult rule also helps protect LLUMC/LCNS staff persons and volunteers from false allegations.

- a. No child/youth will be left unsupervised while attending a LLUMC/LCNS Approved Activity.
- b. Minimum supervisory standards will include the “two-adult rule”. The two-adult rule requires that no matter the size of the group, there will always be two unrelated adults present who are Safe Sanctuary compliant. The second adult could be a “floater/roamer” who moves in and out of rooms.
- c. Two related people may serve together, but a third person should be present as well. This may include the presence of an adult “floater/roamer” that moves in and out of rooms.
- d. This does not include vulnerable adult ministries although the “two adult” rule is preferable.

#### C9. Workers wear identification

- a. When supervising a LLUMC/LCNS Approved Activity, adults shall wear a nametag designating them as a Safe Sanctuaries compliant adult.

#### C10. “Five-years-older” rule

- a. No person shall supervise an age group unless he/she is 5 years older than the children/youth being supervised.

#### C10. Adult/child ratios for on-site ministries

- a. 2 adults for every 12 children 3 months to age 2.5
- b. 2 adults for every 20 children age 2.5 through age 4
- c. 2 adults for every 20 children kindergarten through fifth grade
- d. 2 adults for every 25 children ages sixth to twelfth grade
- e. LCNS: 2 adults for every 10 children age 2
- f. LCNS: 2 adults for every 14 children ages 3-5

#### C12. Outdoor and Other Activities

- a. Should the LLUMC Approved Event occur in a setting which makes it difficult to comply with this Policy, the LLUMC Approved Event Leader shall take appropriate measures to make sure that the setting suits the activity, and the children/youth are properly supervised.

#### C13. Considerations for off-site and overnight events

- a. The following minimum ratios will be maintained for LLUMC Approved off-site/overnight events (in addition to the Two Adult Rule):
  - (1) In co-ed groups, both male and female adults must be present.
  - (2) Kindergarten through grade 5 – 1:5 (one adult to every five children).
  - (3) Youth 6-12 grade – 1:10 (one adult to every ten youth).
  - (4) Vulnerable adults – 1:2 (one adult to every two vulnerable adults).
- b. Advance notice will be given to parents/legal guardians prior to off-site/overnight events, and will include: date, time, and location, the means of transportation, and a summary of activities and events. Specific parental/legal guardian's approval for off-site/overnight events is required.

- c. All medications and medication instructions shall be given to a designated adult prior to the trip for disbursement as appropriate, and will be enclosed in its original container (including prescription medications). Exception: Epipens and inhalers may be carried by child/youth/vulnerable adults, with the understanding that they will be secured and out of sight unless needed. Due to the nature of these medications, adult leaders will be aware that the child(ren)/youth(s)/vulnerable adult(s) is carrying medication, and will be familiar with how to use an Epipen and inhaler in case of emergency.
- d. Appropriate buddy systems, check-in times, and appropriate male and female adult supervision need to be established for each ministry or event. The Approved Event Leader will assure the setting (and any equipment used) is appropriate for the event, and by implementing the above-named measures, will minimize risk of incident or injury to all participants. During events where direct adult supervision is not feasible 24/7, the buddy system shall be incorporated. The buddy system requires children/youth to move from place to place with a minimum of 2 persons of the same gender or 3 or more persons of mixed gender.
- e. It is recommended that event coordinators attempt to secure at least one (1) adult with current certification in First Aid and CPR for each trip or event, and that all adult leadership participating in the event is aware of the identity of such person(s).
- g. For overnight children/youth/vulnerable adult events:
  - (1) There will be separate sleeping areas for males and females.  
At least two adults will be present in each sleeping area, and will be of the same gender as the children/youth/vulnerable adult in that area.
  - (2) Sleeping areas should be pre-arranged by staff person or event coordinator prior to event.
  - (3) Random rounds will be conducted by adult leaders throughout the nighttime sleeping hours of all sleeping areas.
  - (4) Separate shower and bathrooms facilities are highly encouraged. When separate facilities are not possible, procedures for use of the facility will be conveyed to all event participants by the staff person or event coordinator.
  - (5) If children/youth/vulnerable adults are found to be in violation of a Participation Covenant, the situation will be handled by the Approved Event Leader as deemed appropriate. Said action may result in the parent/legal guardian(s) of the participant being notified regardless of the time of day/night, and the participant may be required to leave the event. Adults must respect the privacy of children/youth/vulnerable adult, during such situations as changing, showering, etc., and should intrude only to the extent that health or safety may require. Adults must protect their own privacy in similar situations as well.
- h. Transportation
  - (1) If the Two Non-related Adult Rule is not feasible to maintain, drivers will make reasonable effort to not transport less than two (2) participants at a time. Each vehicle should have a first aid kit, and one (1) seatbelt per occupant. Drivers will practice safe driving procedures such as assuring

that all passengers remain properly secured throughout the trip, and by obeying all posted speed laws and regulations. The event's coordinator should provide as necessary any appropriate maps, directions, and emergency contact numbers to each driver, as well as a communication plan for contacting assistance should an emergency arise.

- (2) These procedures do not apply to those persons who are employees of independent contractors who are involved in Youth events such as bus drivers of contracted bus lines.
- (3) No children under the age of 4 shall ride in the church van. Children ages 4 to 7 or up to 40 pounds must be in a booster seat.
- (4) For maximum safety, the church van should have one driver and 9 passengers.
- (5) Caution shall be used in loading the van with luggage, etc. to assure even distribution of the load.

#### C14. Open Door Counseling

Counseling sessions conducted behind closed doors are a breeding ground for false allegations of abuse. Closed doors also make it too easy for the child abuser to have the privacy and isolation he or she needs.

- a. At any counseling sessions with children or youth, the door of the room used should remain open for the entire session. Ideally, the session will be conducted at a time when others are nearby, even if they are not within listening distance.
- b. Counseling sessions should be limited to two or three if the problems have not been solved. If you do not believe you are sufficiently qualified, refer the child/youth to another counselor. In this way, if you cannot successfully help the youth, you will at least not unduly delay the counseling process with someone else. (Safe Sanctuaries, p 88)

## SECTION D: REPORTING ABUSE

A quick, compassionate, and unified response to an alleged or actual incident of abuse is necessary and expected by any LLUMC staff or Safe Sanctuary screened volunteer. All allegations are to be taken seriously. In all cases of reported or observed abuse at a LLUMC event, the entire staff of that event, paid and/or volunteer, shall be at the service of all official investigating agencies if called upon.

### D1. Mandated reporters for children/youth

- a. A mandated reporter must make a report of suspected child abuse when reasonable cause exists to suspect that a child is a victim of abuse and
- b. receives a specific disclosure that an identifiable child is the victim of child abuse and/or
- c. receives a specific disclosure from an individual 14 years of age or older that he/she has committed child abuse. (From susumc policy)

### D2. Report to Childline and your Supervisor

- a. The mandated reporter is required to report the incident immediately to PA Childline and Abuse Registry (1-800-932-0313) and simultaneously to the staff person in charge of the children/youth activity or Lead Pastor if the person in charge is not available. If the Lead Pastor is the accused, report to your supervisor who shall report to the District Superintendent.
- b. Said reporter shall then complete and send PA CY47 form (available on [www.keepkidsafe.pa.gov](http://www.keepkidsafe.pa.gov)) to the local Children and Youth Services agency within 48 hours, giving a copy to the staff person in charge of the children/youth activity.

### D3. Reports to Adult Abuse Hotline and your Supervisor

- a. In 2010, the Adult Protective Services (APS) Law, Act 70 of 2010, was enacted to provide protective services to adults between 18 and 59 years of age who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. The Department of Human Services supports this act. The APS Law establishes a program of protective services in order to detect, prevent, reduce and eliminate abuse, neglect, exploitation and abandonment of adults in need.
- b. The Older Adults Protective Services Act protects Pennsylvanians 60 years of age and older against physical, emotional, or financial abuse as well as exploitation, neglect, or abandonment.
- c. Reporting of abuse is mandatory for employees and administrators in care settings. Reporting abuse is voluntary and anonymous for the general public, and the law protects all reporters from retaliation and civil or criminal liability.
- d. Any person who believes that an older adult or an adult with a disability is being abused, neglected, exploited, or abandoned may file a confidential report at any time with any Area Agency on Aging or by calling the statewide abuse hotline at (800) 490-8505. If someone is at imminent risk, please contact your local law enforcement immediately. The Area Agencies on Aging receive

reports 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and are responsible to investigate within 72 hours.

- e. You should simultaneously report to the LLUMC Approved Event Leader, or if not available, to the Lead Pastor.

Retrieved on 10-6-17 from

[www.dhs.pa.gov/citizens/reportabuse/dhsadultprotectiveservices/](http://www.dhs.pa.gov/citizens/reportabuse/dhsadultprotectiveservices/) and  
[www.aging.pa.gov/aging-services/Pages/Protective-Services.aspx](http://www.aging.pa.gov/aging-services/Pages/Protective-Services.aspx)

#### D4. Supervisor Reporting Duties

- a. The staff person in charge of the children/youth/vulnerable adult activity in which the alleged abuse was observed or disclosed shall immediately attempt to obtain necessary information such as the name of the alleged victim and his or her address and family information.
- b. The parent/legal guardian of the child/youth will be notified unless they have been named as the alleged perpetrator of the abuse.
- c. The Lead Pastor is to be informed immediately before or as soon as possible after the making of a report.
- d. The Lead Pastor or Minister of Safe Sanctuaries shall inform District Superintendent, who will inform the Bishop, the insurance company and the Conference Media person if needed.
- e. If the alleged abuser is the Pastor, the staff person in charge and/or the Minister of Safe Sanctuaries shall immediately inform the Chairperson of Staff Parish and the District Superintendent.
- f. The Lead Pastor shall handle all media communications on behalf of the church until the Conference Director of Communications becomes the primary media spokesperson.
- g. If the Lead Pastor is the alleged abuser, the Conference Director of Communications becomes the primary media spokesperson

#### D5. Response when the accused is in ministry

- a. Any person who is the subject of an accusation will be required to refrain from all children/youth/vulnerable adult activities until the incident is resolved.
- b. In any removal of a person from any children/youth/vulnerable adult activities, care should be taken to handle this in a discreet and confidential manner, recognizing that an investigation is still being conducted.
- c. Persons who are accused of abuse if on site will be immediately and discreetly removed from the ministry setting (both the alleged abuser and the victim to separate locations or areas) until the situation is resolved. This is to protect all persons involved, including the accused.
- d. Pastoral support should be arranged by the Lead Pastor.

#### D6. Response to victim

- a. The alleged victim (and any other potential victims if the abuse has allegedly taken place on site) should be calmly moved to another safe place on site in view of at least two other non-related adults. Someone safe and familiar should stay with the victim at all times. It is important to let the victim verbalize the allegations in his or her own words, being careful to limit questions asked of children/youth/vulnerable adults.



- b. The person to whom the disclosure was made should inform the victim in an age appropriate way that a report will be made to appropriate legal authorities.
- c. Should the victim be in need of immediate medical attention, a call should be made for medical transport by ambulance.
- d. The parents/legal guardians of any victim under the age of 18 should be notified. It may not be appropriate to contact the parents/legal guardians if they are the alleged perpetrators of the abuse, in which event the person designated as the reporter should be contacted and should handle contacting the parents/legal guardians when appropriate.
- e. If the victim is 18 years or older, a report should be made to local law enforcement directly.
- f. Once the allegations have been reported, the person to whom the allegations were made should not discuss the matter with other persons except law enforcement or designated state investigators. To do so could cause irreparable harm to the victims, their families, and the community.
- g. As directed by the Office of the Bishop, the Conference Response Team may be called upon to assist in a given situation.

## D7. Media Procedures for Church, District, and Conference staff

- a. Handling Telephone Calls from Reporters
  - (1) Take a written message (don't transfer to voicemail without taking message)
  - (2) Get reporter's name, media outlet, direct phone #, and deadline
  - (3) Ask for topic of story
  - (4) Explain that a church spokesperson will return call
  - (5) Don't answer questions yourself
  - (6) Be polite, but firm
  - (7) Keep a log or written record of media calls. An appropriate "Please Hold" response might say "I want to make sure we give you the most accurate and up-to-date information. Our (conference communicator) or (pastor) or (appropriate person) can best help you. If you give me your contact information, deadline and topic that you're calling about, I'll have that person return your call as soon as possible."
- b. Handling Reporters On-site
  - (1) Refer questions to pastor, conference communicator or district superintendent.
  - (2) Again, be polite but firm.
  - (3) Do not communicate in any way your personal opinion. - Don't make any attempt to speak "off the record."
  - (4) Don't ever respond with "no comment."
- c. Handling Casual Conversations or Question about a Crisis
  - (1) Don't speculate, repeat unconfirmed information or express personal opinions
  - (2) Don't feel that you are obligated to answer questions
  - (3) Do respond with a brief, positive, general statement

Contact information for Conference Director of Communications:  
 Shawn M. Gilgore; Office phone: 800-874-8474 or 717-766-7441  
 Retrieved from [www.susumc.org](http://www.susumc.org), 12-1-16

## **SECTION E. COMMUNICATION & TECHNOLOGY FOR VOLUNTEERS**

Excellent ministry can take place using modern technology. Modern technology may include but is not limited to computers, email, mobile phones, voice mail, fax machines and the internet. With any form of communication there are inherent risks which cause lines to blur among work, personal life, and church relationships. An LLUMC volunteer is an extension of our church family, whether on or off duty.

### **E1. Children/youth/vulnerable adult volunteers must:**

- a. be respectful in all communications related to or referencing their ministry duties.
- b. obtain advance written parent/legal guardian permission for communications such as photos, videos, email, telephone, etc.
- c. assume anything and everything in email/internet/social media is public information.
- d. protect the privacy of children/youth/vulnerable adults by refraining from posting or disseminating information regarding activities without permission from the staff person in charge.
- e. be aware that any non-face-to-face communications between adults and children/youth should have appropriate boundaries, be transparent and be within the realm of ministry duties.
- f. be very careful not to cause harm to the staff, pastors, members or ministries of Linglestown Life.

### **E2. Children/youth/vulnerable adult volunteers must not:**

- a. violate the laws governing defamation, discrimination, harassment or copyright and fair use of proprietary or confidential information.
- b. use obscenities, profanity or vulgar language in any communications.
- c. communicate with images or language activities that are inconsistent with Christian values. Examples may include sexual behavior, use of illegal drugs, inappropriate use of alcohol, harassment and bullying, threats to stalk, haze, or physically injure another person, or comments that are derogatory with respect to race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or disability.

### **E3. Paid staff should refer to the LLUMC Staff Reference Manual.**

## SECTION F: SPONSORED/CONTRACTED GROUPS AND PRIVATE EVENTS

Linglestown Life United Methodist Church has a Safe Sanctuaries policy and requires all groups or individuals that use our facilities to follow that policy or provide their policy that is similar to ours. If your event involves children, youth or vulnerable adults please review our Safe Sanctuaries policy on our website or contact the church office for a copy of the policy.

### F1. Sponsored and contracted groups shall have a child/youth/vulnerable adult protection plan

- a. Non-LLUMC groups shall maintain their own personnel files. LLUMC reserves the right to obtain an explanation of the non-LLUMC's record-keeping process and, upon written request of the Lead Pastor, to be given copies of documents applicable to programs conducted at LLUMC.
- b. The non-LLUMC groups must either follow the LLUMC *Safe Sanctuaries policy* or have a similar policy to LLUMC. A copy of the non-LLUMC policy or a link to it should be included with the User Agreement and shall be reviewed for sufficiency by the Minister of Safe Sanctuaries. The Minister of Safe Sanctuaries shall be the person in charge of training any organization who chooses to use LLUMC policy for their protection.
- c. The organization shall annually give a signed statement of compliance on the Facilities Form.
- d. Examples of sponsored groups are Boy Scouts, Girls Scouts, and Brownies.
- e. Examples of on-going contracted groups are AAU basketball and Special Olympics, Rock and Mineral Club, Music in the Parks, YMCA, etc.

### F2. Private events involving Children/Youth/Vulnerable Adults on LLUMC property shall be supervised

- a. When children/youth/vulnerable adults are in the church or on church grounds for a private event, they must be under the direct supervision of their parent/guardian or designated adult in charge at all times and in the specific space rented. They are not allowed to roam freely in the church or on the church campus.
- b. Examples of private events are: when a family rents the facility for a birthday or anniversary party.

### F3. Doing Ecumenical Children/Youth Ministry

- a. If Linglestown Life does ecumenical ministry, it is important that all of the churches, whether United Methodist or not, write, adopt and implement Safe Sanctuary procedures. If any part of the ecumenical ministry chooses not to have or follow Safe Sanctuary policies, Linglestown Life will not participate.

### F4. Notification procedure

- a. The designated adult in charge of a sponsored/contracted group or private event at LLUMC should immediately notify the Lead Pastor if a report is made to ChildLine in the course of the event at Linglestown Life.