

Safety Advisory First Lutheran (SAFE) Committee Policies and Procedures

Mission Statement

Because God embraces all people with His love, we believe that everyone should be safe from all forms of abuse and neglect especially in His church. We, the members of First Evangelical Lutheran Church, will be advocates for all who participate in our ministries, and we will establish clearly defined safeguards, policies and procedures for their protection.

Goals

- To assure that our church is a safe place for all, especially for children, seniors, and the developmentally disabled.
- To protect the staff and volunteers of our church from potential false allegations or abuse.
- To lower our church's legal risk by establishing a program that meets the test of reasonable care.
- To design a program that meets the above goals while maintaining the integrity of church programs and staffing needs.

Prevention of Child Abuse Within the Church

A single incident of child abuse or molestation can devastate a church. 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 are often considered responsible for allowing the incident to happen. There is also the enormous potential for legal liability for the church, its officers and leaders, and governing body. Most tragic of all is the emotional trauma to the victim and the victim's family.

Incidents of child molestation can and do occur in the church with increasing frequency. Part of the reason is that churches have been all too willing, without any screening process whatsoever, to welcome anyone expressing an interest in working in a volunteer capacity with. By nature churches are trusting, forgiving, and unsuspecting institutions. These very qualities have made churches targets of child molesters.

Churches and institutions must openly recognize that child abuse does occur and discuss the importance of protecting children and young people from such abuse. The church can be proactive in its response to this concern by being educated on these issues, being familiar with church policy, and adopting guidelines.

We will utilize several abuse prevention measures in an effort to create the safest possible environment within our church. These measures include screening of staff and volunteers, supervision of church activities and workers, provision of regular training on child abuse issues, use of team teaching and chaperoning standards for appropriate classroom order, and classroom safety and accessibility.

Each volunteer working with minors will be asked to sign a statement indicating that he/she has never been convicted of or pleaded guilty or no contest to physical or sexual abuse of a minor. Anyone who has had a child abuse conviction or a conviction that has been expunged, as well as anyone refusing to sign the statement, will not be permitted to work with children. Although this

policy may unfairly exclude someone who could safely work with children, we believe it is best to err on the side of the children's safety.

In addition, before beginning such service, all volunteers serving in high risk ministries must have signed a statement indicating they have read and understand the policies and practices for prevention of child abuse.

Community group leaders of children or youth who use the church facilities are required to read the policies and sign the acknowledgment form.

POLICY ON SEXUAL MISCONDUCT
FOR FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH,
803 THIRD AVENUE, LONGMONT, CO

In order to protect our members, our staff, and our church, and to promote the prevention of child abuse, First Evangelical Lutheran Church, hereafter known as FELC, has instituted the following policies and procedures regarding sexual misconduct.

WORKER SELECTION

I. Definitions

A. Workers:

A worker is considered to be anyone who works under the auspices of FELC whether this individual is in a paid position or a volunteer worker.

1. **Staff** are paid employees of FELC.
2. **Volunteer – High Risk (HR)** are those individuals who work on a regular basis in ministries designated as High Risk.
3. **Volunteer – Low Risk (LR)** are those individuals who work in ministries considered of lower risk, i.e., office receptionist, ushers, etc.).
4. **Youth Volunteers** are those individuals ages 12 – 17 years, who work exclusively with children and always in conjunction with a second Volunteer-HR.
5. **Nonmember Volunteers** are those individuals who have not met the criteria for membership.
6. **Program Coordinator** is always a paid Staff Person under whose authority a specific ministry program is conducted.

B. High Risk (HR) Ministries are those which involve but are not limited to:

- Contact with minors, seniors, or the developmentally disabled
- One-on-one contact, i.e., counseling
- Off-site activities
- Overnight stays
- Transportation in church and/or personal vehicles

C. Children are those persons from infancy through 5th grade.

D. **Youth** are those persons who are in 6th grade through 12th grade.

E. **Membership**, as defined in Chapter 8 of the Constitution and Bylaws of FELC, denotes an individual who has met one or more of the following criteria:

- Baptized in this congregation
- Confirmed in this congregation
- Received by affirmation of faith
- Received by certificate of transfer from another Lutheran congregation
- Received as Associate Member

II. **Worker Screening Procedures**

A. All workers in High Risk Ministry require screening.

1. **Staff**, including clergy, shall meet the following screening requirements:

- a. All staff shall complete an employment application with a screening form.
- b. Identity shall be confirmed with a copy of a state drivers license or other photographic identification kept on file.
- c. References shall be checked by phone or letter.
- d. SAFE policies and procedures will be reviewed during the hiring interview.
- e. Background checks.

2. **Volunteer – HR** are those individuals who serve on a regular basis in High Risk Ministry shall meet the following screening requirements:

- a. Demonstrate a commitment to FELC and its mission statement.
- b. Fill out appropriate forms for position.
- c. Identity shall be confirmed by a copy of a state drivers license or other photographic identification kept on file.
- d. References appropriate to volunteer position will be contacted.
- e. Background checks.

NOTE: The Church Council, S.A.F.E. Members, and FELC Financial Officers, as leaders of the congregation, shall undergo a thorough screening as a Volunteer HR as described above.

3. **Volunteer – LR** are those individuals who serve in Low Risk ministries and shall meet the following screening requirements:

- a. Demonstrate a commitment to FELC and its mission statement.
- b. Fill out appropriate forms for position.
- c. Provide references from FELC membership

4. **Youth Volunteers** (12 – 17 years) are those individuals who serve primarily with children (infant through 5th grade) and always in conjunction with a second Volunteer – HR and shall meet the following screening requirements:

- a. Demonstrate a commitment to FELC and its mission statement.
- b. Fill out appropriate forms for position.
- c. Provide references from FELC membership
- d. Participate in training and orientation appropriate for a person in contact with children by supervising ministry.

5. **Nonmember Volunteers** are those individuals who have not met the criteria for membership as defined in Chapter 8 of the Constitution and Bylaws of FELC.

a. Nonmember volunteers may serve in any of the positions described above, provided they meet all of the defined requirements.

b. **Nonmember Volunteers must be made aware that FELC insurance policies will not protect them in the case of legal litigation.**

B. All workers, paid and volunteer, in High Risk Ministry, following training and orientation in FELC Policy on Sexual Misconduct, shall sign an agreement to follow said policies.

C. All workers, paid and volunteer, in High Risk Ministry, shall sign a statement indicating that he/she has never been convicted of or pleaded guilty or no contest to physical or sexual abuse.

D. Those who have been convicted of or have pleaded guilty or no contest to physical or sexual abuse will not be allowed to work in a High Risk Ministry.

III. Managing Confidential Written Information

A. *Warning Labels* as follows:

Warning --- Confidential Information

This document contains confidential information that may be reviewed only by those agents authorized by Church Council. No other persons are authorized to review this

document. Persons who review, duplicate, distribute or disclose any portion of this document without authorization may face one or more of the following consequences:

1. *If an employee: termination of employment*
2. *If a volunteer: dismissal from any official position within the church*
3. *Possible criminal liability*
4. *Possible civil liability*

B. *Locked file.* The screening documents shall be placed in a locked file located in the church safe. Keys to the secured file shall be in the possession of the staff liaison to the SAFE Committee and the Senior Pastor.

C. *Notification of church staff.* Church staff shall be warned that unauthorized access to confidential information including employment screening documents will be grounds for immediate dismissal.

D. *Disposal Policy:*

(a) *For individuals who are hired.* All employment documents pertaining to the applicant who is hired should be retained permanently by the church in a confidential file. Once the person is no longer in the employment of the church, all confidential forms and documents should be placed in a sealed envelope and retained in a locked file.

(b) *For individuals who apply but are not hired.* All employment applications shall be kept for a period of three years. These documents serve as evidence if an allegation of discrimination occurs. Following that period, these materials should be shredded and disposed of by the staff liaison to the SAFE Committee.

(c) Forms will be kept on file for 3 years for volunteers and 5 years for staff.

IV. Evaluating Risk

In an effort to maintain the confidentiality of all volunteers and applicants for employment FELC has determined that a limited number of people should have access to confidential, written information. However, to achieve our goal to protect people and reduce legal risk, prudence dictates that we have all the counsel necessary to make informed decisions.

A. Persons Authorized to Evaluate Risk

Following are those agents of Church Council who are authorized to evaluate the information collected:

1. The staff liaison to the SAFE Committee
2. The Program Coordinator (staff) of the associated ministry in cases of volunteers
3. Senior Pastor
4. Legal counsel
5. Insurance counsel

Access to information will be limited to:

- Staff liaison to the SAFE Committee and Senior Pastor for paid personnel and volunteers

B. Procedure for Evaluating Risk

NOTE: In cases of sexual misconduct a perpetrator should never be allowed to work with minors or other vulnerable persons.

If a church receives any information from an applicant or reference suggesting that the applicant may pose a risk to harm others, then the church must proceed with caution a) by evaluating all of the evidence using the criteria listed below and b) by seeking professional counsel. The goal in this process is to make an informed judgment about the suitability of this applicant for service in a given area.

a) In evaluating evidence the following should be considered:

1. *Type of misconduct* – Does the type of offense relate to the position that the applicant wants to fill?

2. *Chronic behavior* – Repeated behavior should be given careful consideration as there is potential for repeated offenses. Chronic behavior may be determined by the duration of a person's misconduct, the number of incidents, or the number of victims.

3. *When the prior incident occurred* – The length of time that has passed since the misconduct occurred will be taken into account, **except** in the cases of sexual misconduct.

4. *Relationship of trust* – Misconduct occurring in the context of a relationship of trust should be viewed more seriously.

5. *Arrest without conviction* – Churches should only ask applicants about criminal convictions and not arrests. If, however, a criminal case that is pending is known to the church it is an area that needs further screening.

If a decision to accept or reject an applicant is determined the identity of the applicant in question will be protected and the circumstances of risk will be the topic considered.

(The Worker Selection portion of the Policy on Sexual Misconduct was adopted by the Council of First Evangelical Lutheran Church on October 9, 2001. Minor revisions were approved by the Council on August 13, 2002. Revisions were adopted by the Council on May 12, 2009.)

WORKER SUPERVISION

FELC will use reasonable care in selecting workers (as defined on page 3), but there is still the possibility of liability for emotional and physical damage sustained during church activities. In response FELC has adopted the following supervisory policies and procedures for all ministry involving minors to create a safe environment. They are to be followed by every volunteer and employee serving in ministries working with children, youth, and/or seniors at FELC.

I. Guidelines for a Safe Environment

Christian ministry is a ministry that may involve physical touch and emotional closeness. Those who work with people know the value of an affirming hug and the need for people to have other people with whom they can share confidences, especially when they are hurting. The Christian community affirms that touching one another and sharing emotional burdens are important means of communicating God's love. First Lutheran encourages appropriate touch; however, at the same time it prohibits inappropriate touch or other means of sexual exploitation.

Appropriate Touch

Use of touch must be gentle and passive, not aggressive.

Use of touch should be conscious and not haphazard. The touch should be one that gently reminds a child in correction, quiets a child in pain, or affirms a child in a positive manner.

Use of touch should be limited to placing a hand on a child's shoulders, hands, arms, head, upper back.

Appropriate touch is done in group settings. Touching one another by hugging, holding hands, (with children), or putting an arm around the shoulders are reassuring gestures that show you care.

One way to keep touch from being misinterpreted by a single youth is to show the same genuine affection to many youth.

Inappropriate Touch

Use of touch must be non-demanding. This means that hugs and kisses should not be asked for by workers, and they should not be forced upon a person.

Avoid touch in situations that could be misinterpreted as sexual advances. For example, touching while in the water is inappropriate because it is hidden.

Sexual touch, defined as contact with penis, vagina, buttocks, breast or chest area, whether under or over clothing, and kissing, is never allowed.

Leaders should not elicit inappropriate sexually explicit conversation with anyone. Showing sexually explicit material to youth is not allowed, i.e. videos. No discussion of the leaders own sexual experience is allowed.

It is the responsibility of the adult in charge to stop any touching that is repetitive or seems inappropriate or sexual harassment, i.e. jokes, sexually oriented comments, innuendo, gestures, drawings, and notes. If necessary, seek the help of staff or other adult workers.

The help of another responsible adult should be requested if a young person is behaving (touching or speaking) in a way that is making the adult leader uncomfortable and they are unsure as to how to handle the situation.

Adults holding older children on the lap or carrying younger children on the shoulders is not appropriate.

A child must never be struck for the purpose of discipline or for any other reason.

Two Adult Rule**

- Two adults must be present during all church activities involving minors (infant – 12th grade).
- One adult must be a staff person or a “Volunteer-HR”.
- Two adult leaders must be present for overnight stays. For groups of both sexes one leader must be a male and one a female.
- For all mission trips a staff person is required to participate.
- Two “Youth Volunteers” may be used but only in conjunction with adult supervision and only in activities involving children defined as infant through fifth grade.

** Two adult rule is in place but there will be times when a child may unavoidably be alone with a leader for a short time. (i.e. if one of the leaders is unable to be there at the last minute.)

Discipline

- Positive verbal directives telling the child what you want them to do should be used by leaders or those in charge.
- Time-out and notifying parents are acceptable methods of control.
- Spanking, ridicule, handling roughly, striking, kicking, shaming, withholding food or restroom privileges, and verbal or emotional abuse are not acceptable.

Classrooms

- Unimpeded visibility into a classroom is accomplished through:
- Classroom doors with windows of shatterproof glass, or
- Classroom doors which are left open when occupied.

Random visits will be made to all classrooms by the Program Coordinator.

- Parents of the children served, the clergy, or administrative and professional staff of the church have the right to visit any program at any time unannounced.

Parental Permission

- Written parental or custodial permission with a medical release form is mandatory:
- for the rare occasions when there is a legitimate reason to depart from the “Two Adult Rule”. Prior to the occasion the Program Coordinator must be notified and he/she must first obtain the consent of the child’s parent or guardian.
- for all counseling of a minor including Youth Peer Ministry.
- for all occasions requiring transportation in church or private vehicles.
- for participation in athletic activity in the FELC Friendship Center. (Use the *Consent for Treatment* form.)
- for all off-site programs and events.
- for all overnight events.
- for all mission trips.

Permission is implied by attendance:

- for programs and classes taking place on FELC properties.

Adequate Personnel

- The desirable ratio of children and youth to adult leaders is 5 to 1.
- The desirable ratio for nursery age children is 4 to 1.

Bathroom Breaks

Adult leaders shall:

- Schedule breaks to avoid spontaneous interruptions to class time.
- Keep spontaneous breaks to a minimum, however, allowances may be necessary.
- Send a co-leader with the child who is requesting the break.
- If supervision is not needed, stand in the bathroom doorway with the door open.
- If supervision is needed prop the door open. Do not close the bathroom stall door.
- Avoid touching the child’s genital area.
- Ask another adult in the area to be in visual contact if possible.

Overnights and Day Trips

- Written parental or custodial permission with a medical release form is mandatory.
- All adult leaders must be screened to work in high risk ministry.
- Two adult leaders are required for all events away from church premises.
- Adults and minors must never be together in a one-on-one situation in isolation without parental permission.
- The buddy system should be implemented whenever possible.
- When possible, one male and one female leader should accompany mixed groups.

The following apply to overnight trips:

- Mixed groups on an overnight require one male and one female leader.
- Adults must respect the youth’s right to privacy and personal boundaries while showering and changing.
- Adults must not share a bed with a minor. Adults should avoid being in a bedroom alone with a minor.

Security

Adult leaders are responsible for the safety and security of those in their program while at the church or away from the church.

- All leaders should be aware of other scheduled activities taking place in the area at the same time.
- All leaders should be alert for strangers in the vicinity and should ask them who they are and what they want.
- Supervision of minors will be maintained before and after events until all involved are in the custody of a parent or legal guardian.
- All activities and play must be supervised.

Counseling / Youth Peer Ministry

- Counseling shall be provided only by qualified FELC staff.
- Scheduled, regular counseling with minors requires written parental or custodial permission including a medical release form.
- Counseling with minors should be conducted in an environment that provides visibility to those passing by, such as in a public place (a restaurant or even a hallway) or in a room with a window in the door.
- Meetings with a young person alone in his or her home requires the permission and presence of a parent or guardian. It is never appropriate to be in a minor's bedroom.
- Adequate training shall be provided to all peer counselors. Training will be provided by the Youth Program Coordinator.

Nursery

- A procedure to clearly identify the child and the child's parent or guardian must be used without exception. i.e. "claim check system"

ANY VIOLATION OF THESE GUIDELINES MUST BE REPORTED TO THE APPROPRIATE PROGRAM COORDINATOR IMMEDIATELY AND IT WILL BE INVESTIGATED

II. The Program Coordinator's Supervisory Responsibilities

- To adequately supervise all leaders to ensure that FELC *Guidelines for a Safe Environment* are implemented.
- To make periodic random classroom visits and inspect all areas where adults and children are together for periods of time, remaining aware of areas where abuse might occur.
- To take appropriate action on all complaints and accusations immediately whether presented by staff, adult leaders, parents, or minors and to notify the reporting person of the conclusion.
- To document all complaints and subsequent disciplinary action in writing.

III. The SAFE Committee's Responsibilities

- To ensure that all adult leaders and volunteers are trained on the FELC SAFE Policies and Procedures.
- To ensure that the Policies and Procedures are being followed.
- To ensure that all forms are completed and on file for volunteer positions.

What is Sexual Abuse?

“Any sexual activity with a child – whether in the home by a caretaker, in a day care situation, a foster/residential setting, or in any other setting, including on the street by a person unknown to the child. The abuser may be an adult, and adolescent, or another child.....”

(National Resource Center on Child Sexual Abuse, 1992)

All sexual abuse is an exploitation of a person's vulnerability and powerlessness in which the abuser is fully responsible for the actions. Sexual abuse is criminal behavior.

Since touch can be misconstrued, all workers must know the difference between appropriate and inappropriate touch. Inappropriate contact includes non-touching and touching aspects. They may include but are not limited to:

Non-touching

Verbal Comments i.e. jokes innuendoes
Exposure to pornography
Obscene phone calls
Allowing children to witness sexual activity

Touching

Fondling
Oral, genital/anal penetration
Intercourse
Forcible rape

(The Worker supervision portion of the Policy on Sexual Misconduct was adopted by the Council of First Evangelical Lutheran Church on October 9, 2001. Minor revisions were approved by the Council on August 13, 2002. Revisions were adopted by the Council on May 12, 2009.)

REPORTING OBLIGATIONS

Because it is mandated in Scriptures for the church to protect and care for those who cannot protect and care for themselves, FELC has determined that our staff and volunteers must report any known or reasonably suspected child abuse. Whether an incident or alleged offense takes place on or off FELC premises, it will be considered ministry related because of the minor-involved nature of the FELC program.

When to Report

- When a child alleges abuse and there is no apparent reason to believe the child is being untruthful.
- When an employee or volunteer has reason to believe abuse has occurred.
- When a perpetrator confesses physical or sexual abuse.

Where to Report

Third party sexual abuse is sexual abuse committed by someone unrelated to the victim. Third party sexual abuse and those cases where the suspected perpetrator is 10 years of age or older should be reported to the law enforcement agency in whose jurisdiction the offense is believed to have occurred.

Longmont Police Department 303-651-8501

Intrafamilial sexual abuse is sexual abuse to a child which is committed by a family member or person living in the child's household in a position of trust. Intrafamilial sexual abuse and those cases where the suspected perpetrator is under the age of 10 should be reported to the Sexual Abuse Team based in Boulder County Social Services office.

Boulder County Social Services 303-441-1000

Who should Report

Mandatory reporters

The Colorado Children's Code 19-3-304 lists those professionals who are required by law to report child abuse. * See Attachment.

Permissive reporters

All other persons are permitted by law to report suspected abuse but are not required to do so. Permissive reporters will not be penalized by the state for not reporting instances of child abuse, but they can be sued by any victim for failure to report if they do not report reasonable suspicions.

First Lutheran church has determined that our staff and volunteers will act as mandatory reporters in any known or reasonably suspected case of child abuse.

Immunity from Liability

Any report is confidential and the person making the report is immune from liability for making such a report. *Persons making good faith reports of suspected abuse or neglect are immune from any liability, both civil and criminal unless a court determines that such person's behavior was willful, wanton, and malicious.* (C.R.S. 19-3-309 of the Colorado Children's Code)

Confidentiality of Information

1. Initially all reports are confidential; however if criminal charges are filed in a child abuse case, the reporter's anonymity cannot be guaranteed due to the necessity of court testimony and/or material witness.
2. All FELC staff and volunteers must be sensitive to the need for confidentiality in the handling of this information and, therefore, should only discuss the incident with the persons directly evaluating the situation.

Determination to Report

1. The adult leader working with a suspected victim of sexual abuse must immediately notify the Program Coordinator in which the minor is participating. It is advisable to write down the specifics of the situation as soon as possible.
2. The Program Coordinator after concurrence with the adult leader, hereafter known as the Reporting Person, will contact Social Services for their assessment of whether or not the facts in the case warrant an official report (Sexual Abuse Team Supervisor 303-413-7000).
 - When the answer is "no", there is no need to file a report – then the Program Coordinator must record in writing the supervisor's name, date and time, and a recap of the conversation.
 - When a consensus of opinion is not reached – then the Program Coordinator will inform the Reporting Person that he or she may report unilaterally to the authorities if they still believe reasonable suspicion exists.
 - When the answer is "yes", there is sufficient reason to believe that abuse has taken place – then the Program Coordinator will assist the Reporting Person in making an official report.

How to Report

1. Initial reporting will be accepted orally (i.e. telephone call). The Reporting Person will stay with the facts and avoid making judgments, diagnosis, or accusations.
2. The agency or officer may request a written report. * The attached form *Report of Suspected Child Abuse* should be used when a written report is requested. A copy must be made for the church's confidential files.

(The Reporting Obligation portion of the Policy on Sexual Misconduct was adopted by the Council of First Evangelical Lutheran Church on November 6, 2001. Minor revisions were approved by the Council on August 13, 2002. Revisions were adopted by the Council on May 12, 2009.)

RESPONSE TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

Realistically no practical prevention strategy is 100 percent effective. An accusation of child sexual abuse may occur in any church. Wrong reactions can multiply the pain and liability inherent in an abuse case. In light of this reality, FELC has developed a thorough response plan. In the unfortunate case of an allegation of sexual abuse FELC has determined that our first priority must be the care and safety of the victim. The Program Coordinator or other appropriate staff person will take prompt and immediate action as follows:

The Victim and Family

- Respond to and acknowledge the victim's pain and that of his or her family.
- Promptly notify the child's parent/guardian in accordance with the directions of the relevant state or local agency.
- Assure the child is in a safe environment before the accused is confronted.
- Work with the child, his or her family and the Reporting Person when follow-up is needed.
- Do not admit liability, arrange counseling, or seek to negotiate a settlement. This may void insurance coverage and might be seen as an attempt to hinder prosecution.

The Church

- Notify the Senior Pastor.
- Notify the ELCA bishop of the synod.
- Consult the church's attorney.
- Notify the liability insurance company. Let it be noted that written and verbal reports to insurers are generally non-privileged. They may be divulged in subsequent criminal prosecutions or civil suits.
- Designate one spokesperson for the Church to speak with the media and the congregation in a discrete, informed and diplomatic manner. A clear position statement on child sexual abuse, including the policies and established safeguards of the church, should be presented.

Sample Release to Media

It is with great regret that we acknowledge an accusation of sexual misconduct against one of our volunteers/employees. The accused person has been relieved of his/her duties pending an investigation. We are cooperating to the utmost with the investigating authorities.

First Lutheran Church has been aggressive in an effort to prevent just such an incident. In 2001 a comprehensive Policy on Sexual Misconduct was implemented. That an incident of sexual abuse may have happened in spite of our best efforts greatly saddens us. Our concern and prayers are first and foremost with the victim and family.

RESPONSE GUIDELINES

- Do not prejudge the situation. Do take the allegation seriously.
- Do not attempt an in-depth investigation. Leave this to professionals.
- Do not deny the incident occurred, in the face of clear evidence to the contrary.
- Do not minimize the incident i.e. “it only happened once”.
- Do not present the accused as a repentant sinner who has been rehabilitated.
- Do not blame the victim or the victim’s family.
- Do not admit liability.
- Do not provide in-house counseling.
- Do not spell out details of accusations in public interviews.
- Do not surrender to those who will criticize and condemn the church. This is not the time for “No comment”. Do influence public opinion positively by emphasizing the precautions that were taken and the policies that were implemented.

The Governmental Authorities

- Cooperate to the extent of the law with any legal reporting requirement.
- Cooperate with state and local authorities in the investigation and possible prosecution of such allegations with the presence and guidance of the church attorney.

The Accused

- A volunteer or paid staff person will immediately be relieved of all his or her duties until the investigation is finished.
- Reinstatement of the accused will occur only after all allegations have been cleared to the satisfaction of all persons involved.
- The church will treat the accused with dignity and support.

(The Response to Allegations of Abuse portion of the Policy on Sexual Misconduct was adopted by the Council of First Evangelical Lutheran Church on November 6, 2001. Minor revisions were adopted by the Council on August 13, 2002. Revisions were adopted by the Council on May 12, 2009.)

RISK MANAGEMENT ADVISORY GROUP HISTORY

January 9, 2001 – it was brought to the attention of Church Council that in the case of legal litigation our insurance policies by themselves may not provide the protection we assumed, this being especially true in the case of charges of sexual misconduct involving minors. We were advised by our legal counsel and our insurance provider that we needed to be pro-active in establishing a safe environment at First Evangelical Lutheran Church. In response the Risk Management Advisory Group was formed.

March 13, 2001 – an allocation of funds to implement RMAG recommendations was granted by the Church Council.

May 8, 2001 – the Church Council by a continuing resolution established the Risk Management Advisory Group as a permanent agent of the Church Council, said group to be comprised of seven members as follows:

Three council members

- Each serving for three years
- One new member appointed by Church Council each year
- One council person acting as chairperson

One staff representative to be the Director of Business Administration

Three lay representatives

July 10, 2001 – a motion was made, seconded and carried that RMAG could begin screening staff and high risk volunteers.

October 9, 2001 – Council approved Worker Selection and Worker Supervision portions of Sexual Misconduct Policy as presented by Risk Management Advisory Group.

October 26, 2001 – since the name Risk Management Advisory Group in itself evoked negative reactions in many people, we agreed that another name reflecting “safety” would be an honest representation of what we are about. In response we chose the official name **Safety Advisory – First Evangelical** to reflect our primary role as an advisory group for Church Council. The acronym **S.A.F.E.** will also apply as we individually understand our roles as Safety Advocates for Everyone.

November 6, 2001 – Council approved Reporting Obligations and Response to Allegations of Abuse as presented by S.A.F.E. (Safety Advisory – First Evangelical). This completed the Policy on Sexual Misconduct.

August 13, 2002 – Revisions to Policy

December 9, 2003 – Revisions to Policy

Approval of SAFE Transportation Policy

May 12, 2009 – Revisions to Policy, Volunteer Form, and Driver Form

The staff member is no longer required to be the Director of Business Administration and is referred to as the staff liaison to the SAFE Committee.

REPORT OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

This report serves as a written documentation for the incident below.

Name of Child _____ D.O.B. _____

Age of Child _____ Sex _____ Phone # _____

Parent/Guardian _____ Phone # _____

Address _____
Street City State Zip

School Child Attends _____

Describe the nature and extent of child’s injuries, including observations of previous suspected injuries, statements, dates, and time. Include photographs if available.

Alleged Perpetrator (Supply all information you may have.)

Name _____ Relationship _____

Address _____
Street City State Zip

Report to: _____ Dept of Social Services _____ Law Enforcement

Representative’s Name/Position _____

Reporting Party

Name _____ Relationship _____

Organization _____ Position _____

Additional Information

Describe family composition including siblings’ names and ages, if relevant. Provide information which may be helpful to the protection of the child including his/her present location, any action taken by the Reporting Person, and names of additional witnesses.

Original sent to Child Protection DSS or Law Enforcement
CC kept by Reporting Organization