
Markham Peoples Community Church

Markham Peoples Community Church

CHILD ABUSE AND SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

CHILD ABUSE AND SEXUAL EXPLOITATION PROTECTION POLICY

dated the 20th day of March, 2011

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**Child Abuse and Sexual Exploitation Protection Policy for
Markham Peoples Community Church**

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**Child Abuse and Sexual Exploitation Protection Policy for
Markham Peoples Community Church**

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SECTION I
DEFINITIONS, PURPOSE AND PREAMBLE

1.01 Definitions

In this Policy, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

Accused shall mean a person against whom a Complaint of Child Abuse or Sexual Exploitation is made pursuant to the terms of this Policy;

Act means the *Child and Family Services Act, 2017, S.O. 2017, c. 14. Sched.1* (the "Act")

Applicant shall mean a person who wishes to work on behalf of the Church either in a paid or volunteer role, with Children, on a full time or part time basis;

Child(ren) shall mean a person or persons, of either sex, who is/are under 16 years of age with respect to the Child Abuse provisions, and who is/are under 18 years of age with respect to the Sexual Exploitation provisions;

Child sex trafficking is as defined by the Child and Family Services Act, 2017, S.O. 2017, c. 14. Sched.1 (the "Act")

(1.1) A child is subjected to child sex trafficking for the purposes of this Part where another person does any of the following for the purposes of sexually exploiting the child:

1. Recruits, transports, transfers, receives, holds, conceals or harbours the child.
2. Exercises control, direction or influence over the movements of the child. 2021, c. 21, Sched. 3, s. 1 (1).

Child in need of protection is as defined by the Child and Family Services Act, 2017, S.O. 2017, c. 14. Sched.1 (the "Act")

(2) A child is in need of protection where,

- (a) the child has suffered physical harm, inflicted by the person having charge of the child or caused by or resulting from that person's,
 - (i) failure to adequately care for, provide for, supervise or protect the child, or
 - (ii) pattern of neglect in caring for, providing for, supervising or protecting the child;
- (b) there is a risk that the child is likely to suffer physical harm inflicted by the person having charge of the child or caused by or resulting from that person's,
 - (i) failure to adequately care for, provide for, supervise or protect the child, or
 - (ii) pattern of neglect in caring for, providing for, supervising or protecting the child;
- (c) the child has been sexually abused or sexually exploited, by the person having charge of the child or by another person where the person having charge of the child

knows or should know of the possibility of sexual abuse or sexual exploitation and fails to protect the child;

- (d) there is a risk that the child is likely to be sexually abused or sexually exploited as described in clause (c);
 - (d.1) the child has been sexually exploited as a result of being subjected to child sex trafficking;
 - (d.2) there is a risk that the child is likely to be sexually exploited as a result of being subjected to child sex trafficking;
- (e) the child requires treatment to cure, prevent or alleviate physical harm or suffering and the child's parent or the person having charge of the child does not provide the treatment or access to the treatment, or, where the child is incapable of consenting to the treatment under the *Health Care Consent Act, 1996* and the parent is a substitute decision-maker for the child, the parent refuses or is unavailable or unable to consent to the treatment on the child's behalf;
- (f) the child has suffered emotional harm, demonstrated by serious,
 - (i) anxiety,
 - (ii) depression,
 - (iii) withdrawal,
 - (iv) self-destructive or aggressive behaviour, or
 - (v) delayed development,and there are reasonable grounds to believe that the emotional harm suffered by the child results from the actions, failure to act or pattern of neglect on the part of the child's parent or the person having charge of the child;
- (g) the child has suffered emotional harm of the kind described in subclause (f) (i), (ii), (iii), (iv) or (v) and the child's parent or the person having charge of the child does not provide services or treatment or access to services or treatment, or, where the child is incapable of consenting to treatment under the *Health Care Consent Act, 1996*, refuses or is unavailable or unable to consent to the treatment to remedy or alleviate the harm;
- (h) there is a risk that the child is likely to suffer emotional harm of the kind described in subclause (f) (i), (ii), (iii), (iv) or (v) resulting from the actions, failure to act or pattern of neglect on the part of the child's parent or the person having charge of the child;
- (i) there is a risk that the child is likely to suffer emotional harm of the kind described in subclause (f) (i), (ii), (iii), (iv) or (v) and that the child's parent or the person having charge of the child does not provide services or treatment or access to services or treatment, or, where the child is incapable of consenting to treatment under the *Health Care Consent Act, 1996*, refuses or is unavailable or unable to consent to treatment to prevent the harm;
- (j) the child suffers from a mental, emotional or developmental condition that, if not remedied, could seriously impair the child's development and the child's parent or the person having charge of the child does not provide treatment or access to

treatment, or where the child is incapable of consenting to treatment under the *Health Care Consent Act, 1996*, refuses or is unavailable or unable to consent to the treatment to remedy or alleviate the condition;

- (k) the child's parent has died or is unavailable to exercise the rights of custody over the child and has not made adequate provision for the child's care and custody, or the child is in a residential placement and the parent refuses or is unable or unwilling to resume the child's care and custody;
- (l) the child is younger than 12 and has killed or seriously injured another person or caused serious damage to another person's property, services or treatment are necessary to prevent a recurrence and the child's parent or the person having charge of the child does not provide services or treatment or access to services or treatment, or, where the child is incapable of consenting to treatment under the *Health Care Consent Act, 1996*, refuses or is unavailable or unable to consent to treatment;
- (m) the child is younger than 12 and has on more than one occasion injured another person or caused loss or damage to another person's property, with the encouragement of the person having charge of the child or because of that person's failure or inability to supervise the child adequately;
- (n) the child's parent is unable to care for the child and the child is brought before the court with the parent's consent and, where the child is 12 or older, with the child's consent, for the matter to be dealt with under this Part; or
- (o) the child is 16 or 17 and a prescribed circumstance or condition exists. 2017, c. 14, Sched. 1, s. 74 (2); 2020, c. 25, Sched. 1, s. 26 (1); 2021, c. 21, Sched. 3, s. 1 (2).

Abuse means

- (1) a state or condition of being physically harmed, sexually abused or sexually exploited. *Child and Family Services Act, 2017, S.O. 2017, c. 14. Sched.1 (the "Act")136 (1)*

Child abuse shall mean

- (2) No person having charge of a child shall,
 - (a) inflict abuse on the child; or
 - (b) by failing to care and provide for or supervise and protect the child adequately,
 - (i) permit the child to suffer abuse, or
 - (ii) permit the child to suffer from a mental, emotional or developmental condition that, if not remedied, could seriously impair the child's development.

Leaving child unattended

- (3) No person having charge of a child younger than 16 shall leave the child without making provision for the child's supervision and care that is reasonable in the circumstances.

Allowing child to loiter, etc.

- (4) No parent of a child younger than 16 shall permit the child to,
 - (a) loiter in a public place between the hours of midnight and 6 a.m.; or
 - (b) be in a place of public entertainment between the hours of midnight and 6 a.m., unless the parent accompanies the child or authorizes a specified individual 18 or older to accompany the child.

Types of abuse:

- (a) **Physical Abuse** occurs when a person purposefully injures or threatens to injure a child more than reasonable discipline, or willfully or neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering to a child. This may take the form of slapping, punching, shaking, kicking, burning, shoving or grabbing. The injury may take the form of bruises, cuts, burns or fractures.
- (b) **Neglect** is persistent or severe neglect of a child or failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold and starvation, or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive. This includes failure to provide a child (where they are able to do so) with the conditions that are culturally accepted as being essential for their physical and emotional development and well-being.
- (c) **Emotional Abuse** is actual or likely persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection resulting in severe adverse effects on the emotional, physical and/or behavioral development of a child. All abuse involves some emotional ill treatment. This category is used where it is the main or sole form of abuse.
- (d) **Sexual Abuse** is the involvement of a child in sexual activity that s/he does not fully comprehend, give informed consent to, or for which s/he is not developmentally prepared and cannot give consent or that violates the laws or social taboos of society. It is evidenced by an activity between a child and an adult or another child who by age or development is in a relationship of responsibility, trust or power, the activity being intended to gratify or satisfy the needs of the other person. It may include, but is not limited to, the inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity, the exploitative use of a child in prostitution or other lawful sexual practices or the exploitative use of pornographic performances and materials.
- (e) **Grooming** generally refers to behavior that makes it easier for an offender to procure a child for sexual activity. It often involves the act of building the trust of children and/or their carers to gain access to children in order to sexually abuse them. For example, grooming includes encouraging romantic feelings or exposing the child to sexual concepts through pornography or other incremental behaviors

to encourage sexual activity.

- (f) **Online Grooming** is the act of sending an electronic message with inappropriate content to a recipient who the sender believes to be less than 18 years of age, with the intention of the recipient engaging in or submitting to sexual activity with another person, including but not necessarily limited to the sender.

Complainant shall mean a Child who makes a Complaint of Child Abuse or Sexual Exploitation under this Policy;

Consent shall mean non-coercive agreement or willingness to participate. Meaningful consent cannot be given by a Child under the age of 18 years of age to engage in sexual activity with a Member as a result of the relationship that exists between them;

Determination shall mean the finding from an investigation undertaken in relation to allegations of Child Abuse and Sexual Exploitation. The remedies and/or sanctions which may be imposed against the Accused as part of the Determination may include, but are not limited to, suspension with or without pay, or termination for cause from the Church, depending on the seriousness and nature of the Complaint. The remedies and/or sanctions to be imposed by the Senior Pastor, or his/her delegate where appropriate shall be in his/her sole discretion. If after an investigation by the Police, the Senior Pastor, or his/her delegate where appropriate, determines that the Complaint was frivolous or vexatious in nature or was made with no basis in fact, then the Senior Pastor, or his/her delegate where appropriate, shall dismiss the Complaint.

Investigation will be the act of the Police receiving written statements from the Child, the Accused and any witnesses in relation to any allegations of Child Abuse or Sexual Misconduct.

Law refers to the legislation governing Child Abuse and Sexual Exploitation relevant and applicable in the jurisdiction where the Church is located;

Members shall mean the pastors, youth pastors, lay pastors, board Members, directors, officers, Members, Sunday School instructors, administrators, pastoral counsellors, youth group leaders, employees, volunteers and/or any other persons who perform duties, either on a paid or on a volunteer basis, or on a full-time or part-time basis, for the Church;

Ministry with Child(ren) shall mean any Member/Child(ren) interaction in Church facilities and/or resulting from Church activities wherever they may be carried out. Any such interaction should be carried out in public areas only and shall be sanctioned by the Senior Pastor or his/her designated representative. Relationships that develop as a result of Ministry with Child(ren) shall not be fostered outside of Church activities

without notice to the appropriate Ministry authority and the express consent of the parents/guardian of the Child(ren);

Non-Volunteer shall mean any person receiving income for their service, or allocation of hours as part of the Church related program;

Parents shall mean the natural or adoptive Parents(s) or legal guardian(s) of a Child under the age of 18 years of age;

Sexual Exploitation shall mean sexual contact or invitation to sexual contact by a Member to a Child, or by anyone in a position of authority, trust or power over that Child, whether there is consent or not from the Child;

Sexual Exploitation may include, but is not limited to, any of the following activities if they occur between a Member and a Child:

- (a) using or engaging in sexually provocative language, acts or conduct towards Child;
- (b) writing sexually lurid, provocative or suggestive correspondence to a Child;
- (c) rough-housing or engaging in conduct which involves physical contact with a Child and which is sexually suggestive in nature;
- (d) kissing, fondling, caressing, patting or pinching a Child;
- (e) engaging in sexual intercourse or other sexual conduct designed to sexually stimulate either the Member or the Child or both;
- (f) using sexual remarks, jokes, innuendo or taunting about a Child's body or sexual orientation;
- (g) uttering, either verbally or in writing, invitations, requests or sexually suggestive remarks;
- (h) leering or engaging in other sexually suggestive activities;
- (i) displaying pornographic or sexually suggestive material to a Child; or
- (j) developing or attempting to develop a sexual relationship between a Member and a child.

Volunteer shall mean a person who undertakes or expresses a willingness to undertake a service without income for their service, or allocation of hours as part of the Church related program;

1.02 **Purpose/Statement of Commitment**

It is the purpose of the Church to:

- (a) provide a safe environment for Children who are in attendance at the Church's facilities or who participate in Church sanctioned activities and programs wherever they may be carried out.

- (b) ensure that as a faith community the Church fulfills its obligations to the safeguard the interests of the Children in our care;
- (c) to ensure the integrity, safety and reputation of Applicants and Members;

To ensure the integrity, safety and reputation of Applicants and Members, this Policy establishes and describes the Church's guidelines and procedures for the prevention of the Abuse and Sexual Exploitation of a Child, and/or deal with concerns and experiences related to Child Abuse and Sexual Exploitation as defined in this Policy. As part of creating and maintaining a safe environment for Children, the Church's guidelines and procedures:

- (i) include screening procedures for all Applicants and Members expected to be in contact with minors, and/or involved in Ministry to Children,
- (ii) outline a code of conduct/standards of behavior expected of all Members;
- (iii) mandate orientation and training programs, and standardization of procedures for all Members expected to be in close and/or significant contact with Children.
- (iv) outline the obligations and procedures to be followed in investigating or reporting knowledge of, reasonable belief or allegations as to occurrences of sexual abuse and or exploitation of the Children entrusted to the care of the Church

1.03 Theological Statement

Jesus came into the world to bring life in all its fullness. As followers of Jesus we are called to show love to one another and to the world (John 13:34-35), to share our gifts and resources, and to build a community of mutuality and respect (Acts 3:44-47). As a Church we have a primary duty to care for those in our community who are marginalized, less powerful, or more vulnerable (Deuteronomy 10:17-19; Isaiah 61:1-2).

God intends that all people enjoy a life free from exploitation and abuse. Created in the image of God, all people have a right to be treated with respect and protected from harm.

Our Church is blessed with the gifts of many who offer leadership as volunteers, staff, and ministry personnel. These people have a special calling to offer their time and talents in congregations, Sunday schools, life groups, programs for children and youth, home visiting, and many other ministries of the church. These people are also called to act with integrity and discipline as they teach and care for the people of God. The church and all of its workers are called to honor the dignity of each person as created in the image of God.

1.04 Preamble

- (a) The Church will not tolerate any form of Child Abuse by its Members. The Church

will respond to allegations of Child Abuse of Children in a swift and compassionate manner in accordance with the terms and conditions of this Policy.

- (b) The Church will not tolerate any form of Sexual Exploitation by its Members of any Child in attendance at Church facilities or who is participating in Church activities wherever they may be carried out.
- (c) For the purposes of this Policy, the Child Abuse provisions are intended to protect and be applicable to Children under 16 years of age. The Sexual Exploitation provision of this Policy are intended to protect and be applicable to Children between 16 and 18 years of age.
- (d) Members will respect the relationship of trust that exists between them and the Children who are their charges. Any Child Abuse or Sexual Exploitation of a Child by a member will be considered a breach of that relationship, regardless of whether the Child allegedly consents to the conduct of the staff member or volunteer.
- (e) Members will take full responsibility for their relationships with Children. Members will carry out their obligations towards Children in an appropriate manner that does not include sexual activities or sexual relationships of any sort whatsoever.
- (f) Members who engage in Child Abuse or Sexual Exploitation of a Child will be subject to discipline, which may include immediate termination for cause of their employment or engagement with the Church, or any other form of sanction deemed appropriate by the Church.
- (g) The Church reserves the right to take all steps it deems necessary to ensure the continuing physical and emotional integrity and well-being of Children who are attending the Church facilities or participating in the activities of the Church, which steps may include contacting the appropriate authorities which may include the Police.

SECTION II

POLICY

2.01 Policy and Procedure as it relates to Child Abuse

(2.01.1) Duty to report child in need of protection

- (a) *Section 125* of the *Act* imposes a duty on any person who believes on reasonable grounds that a Child under the age of 18 is or may be in need of protection to report this belief and the information upon which the belief is based to the Children's Aid

Society ("CAS"). Where a Member reasonably believes that a Child is or may be suffering Child Abuse, it is the legal obligation of the Member to report this belief to the CAS. The Church stresses that this obligation is not only a legal one but is also a moral one in keeping with Christian values.

- (b) Pursuant to their legal and moral obligations, Members will immediately report Child Abuse to the CAS.
- (c) Members are directed to promptly report the Child Abuse to the Senior Pastor and Board Member, in order to ensure that the Church can take all reasonable and appropriate steps to limit the Child Abuse and the threat posed by the Accused if the Accused is a Member or has access to Church facilities or participates in Church activities.
- (d) Members are required to keep the Senior Pastor and Board Member fully informed of any investigation they may be involved in arising from the reporting of Child Abuse, unless they are otherwise directed not to do so by a criminal or civil authority of competent jurisdiction, such as an investigating police force or the CAS.
- (e) The reporting obligations imposed pursuant to *Section 125* of the *Act* are ongoing. Members must report any additional grounds that they might have to suspect that a Child is suffering Child Abuse.

(2.01.2) Ongoing duty to report

- (a) Members who have additional reasonable grounds to suspect one of the matters set out in subsection (2.01.1) shall make a further report under subsection (2.01.1) even if the person has made previous reports with respect to the same child. *2017, c. 14, Sched. 1, s. 125 (2)*.

(2.01.3) Person must report directly

- (a) Members who have a duty to report a matter under subsection (2.01.1) or (2.01.2) shall make the report directly to the society and shall not rely on any other person to report on the person's behalf. *2017, c. 14, Sched. 1, s. 125 (3)*.

(2.01.4) Duty to report does not apply to older children

- (a) Subsections (2.01.1) and (2.01.2) do not apply in respect of a child who is 16 or 17, but a person may make a report under subsection (2.01.1) or (2.01.2) in respect of a child who is 16 or 17 if a prescribed circumstance or condition exists. *2017, c. 14, Sched. 1, s. 125 (4)*.
- (b) While reporting for 16 and 17-year-old youth is not mandatory, the Senior Pastors and/or their designated will contact local CAS when there are concerns about a youth.

(2.01.5) Professional confidentiality

- (a) The professional's duty to report overrides the provisions of any other Provincial statute,

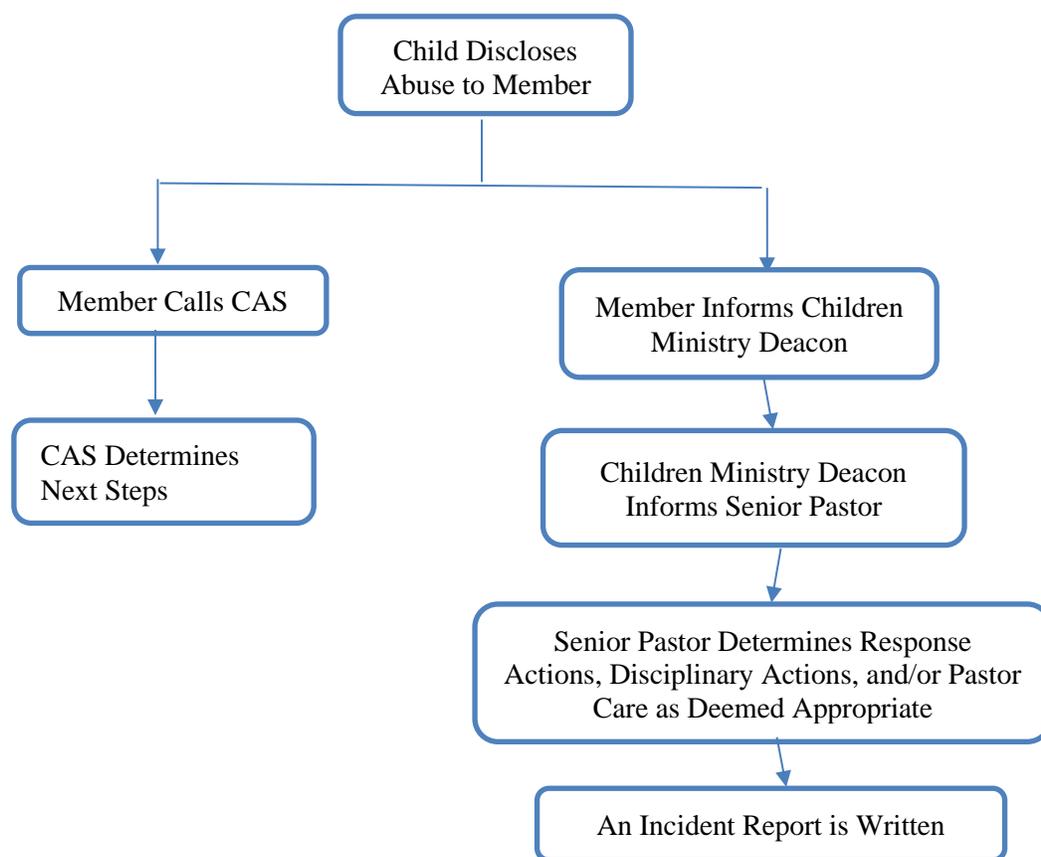
specifically, those provisions that would otherwise prohibit disclosure by the professional or official. That is, the professional must report abuse even when the information is supposed to be confidential or privileged. 2017, c. 14, Sched. 1, s. 125 (6).

(2.01.6) Protection from liability

- (a) This section applies although the information reported may be confidential or privileged, and no action for making the report shall be instituted against a person who acts in accordance with this section unless the person acts maliciously or without reasonable grounds for the suspicion. 2017, c. 14, Sched. 1, s. 125 (10).

(2.01.7) Procedures for reporting suspected child abuse

- (a) Members do not need to be sure that a Child is suffering Child Abuse in order to make a report of Child Abuse to the CAS. If Members are unsure about possible Child Abuse, then they are directed to err on the side of caution and immediately report their concerns to the CAS.
- (b) Volunteers, staff and leaders in child and youth programs of the Church shall be trained to recognize signs and symptoms of abuse. Training will also include learning how to respond to abusive situations. Possible signs and indicators of Child Abuse are stated in Appendix (I) of this Policy.
- (c) The following is a flow chart (I) to assist in the steps to take if child abuse is disclosed to a Member of the Church (volunteers, staff, and leaders).



- (d) The Member who receives the child abuse report is required to inform the CAS by telephone with a follow up letter of reasons to suspect abuse *or* neglect, with a copy to MPCC's Senior Pastor or his/her designate in addition to the Children Ministry Deacon. A letter template with appropriate wording can be found in Appendix III. Failure to send **written** confirmation of the reported allegation could leave the Member in a vulnerable position.
- (e) A list of important contact information for reporting to the relevant authorities about a suspected child abuse can be found in Appendix II.

(2.01.8) Response Duties (Suggested Protocol):

- (a) Upon a possible child abuse is reported to the Senior Pastor, the Senior Pastor, with his/her discretion, will call upon a Response Team (may composed of Children/Youth Pastors, Children Ministry Deacon) to investigate and handle the complaint.
- (b) Notify the Church's insurance agent and legal counsel whenever a reasonable suspicion of child abuse is reported to police officials and the CAS.
- (c) Assign a member of the Response Team who will deal with media enquiries arising in any way from the report of child abuse to police officials and the CAS.
- (d) Assign a pastoral care team for the individuals and families who are party to the allegations. This should only occur after careful consultation with legal counsel (Be cautious not to cause further emotional damage to the abused individual.)
- (e) If deemed necessary, the Response Team will assign members to conduct an independent investigation of charges of child abuse against the appointed volunteer or compensated staff only. Allegations **outside** of the church programs and facilities are not the domain of the Response Team.
- (f) Determine whether the Response Team or the first-hand reporter maintains a liaison with police officials or the CAS.
- (g) If a report of Child Abuse is made against a Member, then the Member will immediately be suspended from performing any services or duties for the Church (with pay, if applicable). The suspension of the Member will remain in effect until the Member is exonerated from any criminal charges arising from the Child Abuse, or any investigation commenced by the CAS and/or the police is completed with a determination that the Child Abuse did not occur. Under these circumstances, the suspension will end and the Member will be entitled to return to performing his or her pre-suspension services or duties.
- (h) If a Member is convicted in a criminal court of Child Abuse, or pleads guilty to some lesser and included offense arising from the Child Abuse, then the Member will immediately be terminated with cause from any services or duties he or she may be performing for the Church.

- (i) Regardless of whether a Member is suspended or terminated, such Member will not take part in Church programs or activities involving children during the Suspension Period or following termination.

2.02 Policy and Procedure as it relates to Sexual Exploitation

- (a) Pursuant to this Policy, if the Child is between the ages of 16 and 18, then Members shall immediately report any acts or complaints of suspected Sexual Exploitation of a Child by a Member to the Police. The steps outlined in Flow Chart I will be followed.
- (b) Members will co-operate with any investigations conducted by the Police, to determine whether Sexual Exploitation has occurred.
- (c) Upon learning of a complaint of Sexual Exploitation (the "Complaint"), the Accused will immediately be suspended from all duties with the Church (with pay, if applicable), to allow for the Police to investigate the Complaint.
- (d) Upon learning of a Complaint, the Senior Pastor may form the Response Team or assign his/her delegate, where appropriate, and shall notify the Church's insurance provider of the Complaint and take charge of the Response Duties Protocol.
- (e) At the conclusion of the Investigation by the Police, the Senior Pastor/Response Team/Senior Pastor's delegate, where appropriate, will render the determination based on the Investigation in writing in relation to the Complaint as well as the remedies and/or sanctions to be imposed, if any, on the Accused as a result of the determination (the "Determination").
- (f) The Investigation by the Police and the Determination arrived at by the Senior Pastor/Response Team/Senior Pastor's delegate, where appropriate, will be kept in the strictest confidence by all the parties involved, unless disclosure is required by law.
- (g) The Determination of the Senior Pastor/Response Team/Senior Pastor's delegate, where appropriate, is final and is not subject to review or appeal.
- (h) If a Member is suspended or terminated to allow an investigation, such member will not take part in Church programs or activities wherever they may be carried out during the Investigation by the Police until a determination has been made.
- (i) If a Member is terminated as a result of inappropriate behavior involving a child participating in Church activities, such Member shall not participate in Church activities or programs wherever they may be carried out following termination.
- (j) Upon receiving a complaint that Sexual Exploitation has occurred, the Senior

Pastor/Response Team/Senior Pastor's delegate, where appropriate, will fully cooperate with any investigations that might be commenced by the appropriate authorities, including the Police.

- (k) The Child will be advised of the counseling services that are available and will be assisted in reporting the Sexual Exploitation to the appropriate authorities if the Child wishes to do so. The Child will be provided with counseling services, if required and requested.
- (l) The remedies and/or sanctions which may be imposed against the Accused as part of the Determination may include, but are not limited to, suspension with or without pay, or termination for cause from the Church, depending on the seriousness and nature of the Complaint. The remedies and/or sanctions to be imposed by the Senior Pastor/Response Team/Senior Pastor's delegate, where appropriate will be in their sole discretion. If the Senior Pastor or his/her delegate where appropriate, determine that the Complaint was frivolous or vexatious in nature or was made with no basis in fact, then the Senior Pastor/Response Team/Senior Pastor's delegate, where appropriate, will dismiss the Complaint.
- (m) A record of the Complaint, the Investigation and the Determination shall be kept in the records of the Child and Accused to be maintained by the Church.

2.03 General Policies for Ministry with Children

- (a) All Pastors, Youth Pastors, Lay Pastors, Board Members, Church Members, Directors, Officers, Sunday School Instructors, Administrators, Pastoral Counselors, Youth Group Facilitators, Employees and Volunteers and/or any other persons who perform duties on a full-time and/or a part-time basis, either in a paid capacity or as a volunteer of the Church (hereinafter referred to as the "Applicant(s)") who wish to work in Ministry with Children on behalf of the Church are required to complete an application form. If the Applicant is younger than 18 years of age, he/she shall use the application form attached which is as Schedule "A," or if the Applicant is 18 years of age or older, he/she shall use the application form which is attached as Schedule "B".
- (b) All Applicants shall be required to reapply to the Church for approval to work in Ministry with Children every **THREE (3)** successive years, and to complete the appropriate application form and Police Records Check then in effect.
- (c) When first applying to work in Ministry with Children on behalf of the Church, all Applicants shall provide three character references (the "References") as part of their application. The References are to be provided in the Applications attached as Schedule "A" and Schedule "B". The Church shall contact and interview the References provided by an Applicant.
- (d) All Applicants will be subject to an interview by the Church. All Applicants who

are 18 years of age or older are required to complete a Criminal Record Release Form. A sample form is attached as Schedule "C", however, most jurisdictions have adopted their own specific forms.

- (e) All Applicants shall be advised by the Church if they have been accepted to work in Ministry with Children on behalf of the Church.
- (f) All Applicants who are accepted by the Church to work in Ministry with Children shall be subject to the authority of the Senior Pastor and shall be referred to in this Policy as Members.
- (g) In working in Ministry with Children there shall be a minimum of two Members present together at all times.
- (h) Ministry with an individual Child shall only be undertaken with the specific written approval of the Parent(s) of the Child.
- (i) No overnight stays by a Child shall be permitted as part of the work with in Ministry with Children unless:
 - (i) a Child who is under the age of 12 stays with either one or both of the Child's Parents; or
 - (ii) a Child who is under the age of 16 but is over the age of 12 stays with either one or both of the Child's Parents, alternatively, the written consent of the Child's Parent(s) to such an overnight stay has been provided on a consent form prepared by the Church from time to time.
- (j) All Members are prohibited from disciplining a Child using any form of physical contact, or emotional or psychological pressure, abuse or intimidation.

The undersigned hereby acknowledges receiving and reading this Child Abuse and Sexual Exploitation Policy and agrees to be bound by its terms.

DATED AT _____, THIS _____ DAY OF _____ 20_____.

Applicant:

Witness:

Name

Name

Signature

Signature

Schedule "A"
Application Form for Applicants Under 18 Years of Age

THIS FORM IS TO BE USED FOR ANY PERSON UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE

Markham Peoples Community Church (the "Church") is committed to providing a safe environment for Children who are in attendance at the Church or are participating in activities of the Church. Therefore it is the policy of Markham Peoples Community Church to screen all Applicants who wish to work in Ministry with Children.

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING:

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

Ministry Position for which you are applying: _____

If this ministry is not available, would you consider a different ministry? Yes No

If yes, which ministries might interest you? _____

Please provide a contact in case there is an emergency:

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____ Relationship to you: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Postal Code: _____

Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____

Email: _____

Why do you want to volunteer for this Ministry position?

What gifts, talents and skills do you bring to this Ministry position?

What life experiences have prepared you for this Ministry position?

Are you willing to participate in Training Days? _____

Are you prepared to attend Training Courses on Ministry with Children?

Have you been involved, or are you presently involved in working with Children's Ministries?

Have you been involved, or are you presently involved in working with Children's Ministries?

What background/training do you have in working in Ministry with Children?

Please give a description of any involvement you have had with Children's Ministries in the last five years.

- I certify that the information that is provided on this Volunteer Information Form is true and complete.
- I understand that this information will remain confidential and is the property of the Church.
- If I have indicated that I would consider volunteering in another area of ministry, then I understand that my name and phone number will be given to the appropriate ministry leader so that she/he may contact me.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent's/Guardian's Consent

I, _____, give my permission for _____ to volunteer at Markham Peoples Community Church (MPCC) and I take responsibility for him/her. I understand that he/she is to participate as

_____ and will be expected to comply with the terms of the Child Abuse and Sexual Exploitation Policy and will be faithful in honoring his/her volunteer commitments.

I also understand that should he/she fail to comply with the Child Abuse and Sexual Exploitation Policy, his/her participation in this position will be terminated immediately.

Signature

Date

Please list three (3) people who know you and can describe your suitability for this ministry. (i.e. a teacher, coach, senior member of the Church, neighbor, etc.)

Please remember to tell these people that the Church will be contacting them.

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____ City: _____ Postal Code: _____
Relationship to you: _____
Email: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____ City: _____ Postal Code: _____
Relationship to you: _____
Email: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____ City: _____ Postal Code: _____
Relationship to you: _____
Email: _____

I, _____, authorize a member of Markham Peoples Community Church to contact the
(Name of Applicant)
Character references which I have listed on this Volunteer Information Form, in order to collect the information
which is appropriate to the Church. I understand that the information obtained will be confidential.

Signature

Date

PLEASE RETURN THIS COMPLETED FORM TO THE CHURCH

Schedule "B"
Volunteer Information Form for Applicants

Markham Peoples Community Church (the "Church") is committed to providing a safe environment for Children who are in attendance at the Church or are participating in activities of the Church. Therefore it is the policy of Markham Peoples Community Church to screen all Applicants who wish to work in Ministry with Children.

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING:

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

Ministry Position for which you are applying: _____

If this ministry is not available, would you consider a different ministry? Yes No

If yes, which ministries might interest you? _____

Please provide a contact in case there is an emergency:

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____ Relationship to you: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Postal Code: _____

Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____

Email: _____

Why do you want to volunteer for this Ministry position?

What gifts, talents and skills do you bring to this Ministry position?

What life experiences have prepared you for this Ministry position?

Have you held a volunteer position with another organization? Yes No

How long have you been a member of this Church?

How did you hear about this Ministry position?

Are you willing to participate in Training Days? _____

Are you prepared to attend Training Courses on Ministry with Children?

Have you been involved, or are you presently involved in working with Children's Ministries?

What background/training do you have in working in Ministry with Children?

Please give a description of any involvement you have had with Children's Ministries in the last five years.

If a position is presented to you, are you prepared to consent to a Vulnerable Sector Screening (VSS)?

Yes No

If yes, please arrange to obtain a Vulnerable Sector Screening.

If no, why not?

Do you have a driver's license: Yes No

If yes, the driver's license number is : _____

Have you been convicted of a criminal offence for which a pardon has not been granted or for which a pardon has been revoked? Yes No

If yes, please provide details: _____

- I certify that the information that is provided on this Volunteer Information Form is true and complete.
- I understand that this information will remain confidential and is the property of the Church.
- If I have indicated that I would consider volunteering in another area of ministry, then I understand that my name and phone number will be given to the appropriate ministry leader so that she/he may contact me.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please list three (3) people who know you and can describe your suitability for this ministry. (i.e. a teacher, coach, senior member of the Church, neighbor, etc.)

Please remember to tell these people that the Church will be contacting them.

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____ City: _____ Postal Code: _____
Relationship to you: _____
Email: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____ City: _____ Postal Code: _____
Relationship to you: _____
Email: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____ City: _____ Postal Code: _____
Relationship to you: _____
Email: _____

I, _____, authorize a member of Markham Peoples Community Church to contact the
(Name of Applicant)
Character references which I have listed on this Volunteer Information Form, in order to collect the information
which is appropriate to the Church. I understand that the information obtained will be confidential.

Signature Date

PLEASE RETURN THIS COMPLETED FORM TO THE CHURCH

*** The most update volunteer application forms can be found in the Breeze Database System:
<https://mpcc.breezechms.com/form/5667c7>

Schedule "C" Vulnerable Sector Screening (VSS)

Different jurisdiction will have different procedure and application form for Vulnerable Sector Screening (VSS). Application letter templates and application form are attached here. The most update version will be available from the respective links (also inserted below) of the different jurisdiction.

Using MPCC letterhead:

(a) For City of Toronto:

Date
Records Management Service
Toronto Police Service – Police Reference Check Program
40 College Street
Toronto, ON
M5G 2J3
Attn: Group Leader

To Whom It May Concern,

This letter is to confirm that we are going to engage XXX, XXX, and XXX (names of volunteers) as a volunteer at the Markham Peoples Community Church's Nursery and Children Ministry. Since the volunteers will be working closely with the children, I would request that you perform a Vulnerable Sector Check. If you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at 905-940-5234 extension 1,2.

Thank you for your prompt response in this matter.

Sincerely



Debby Yip
Administrator

(b) For York Region:

Date:

To Whom It May Concern

This letter is to confirm that we are going to engage XXX as a volunteer at the Markham Peoples Community Church's Nursery and Children Ministry. Since the volunteers will be working closely with the children, I would request that you perform a Vulnerable Sector Check. If you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at 905-940-5234 extension 1,2. Thank you for your prompt response in this matter.

Sincerely



Debby Yip
Administrator

(1) Links for application of VSS:

(a) York Region: <https://www.yrp.ca/en/services/vulnerable-sector-check.asp>

(b) City of Toronto: <https://www.yrp.ca/en/services/vulnerable-sector-check.asp>

Board approval _____, **Year** _____

Appendix (I) Possible Signs and Indicators of Child Abuse

The following signs and types of behavior may be indicators that abuse has taken place. However, in themselves and in isolation they are not evidence of abuse though they may suggest abuse. Thus the possibility should be considered, especially if a child exhibits several of the signs or a pattern emerges of when or how a child exhibits such signs or behavior. Please note that this list is not exhaustive.

(1) Physical Signs of Abuse

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries that occur to the body in places not normally exposed to falls, rough games etc. For example, black eyes, unexplained facial bruising, torn inside upper lip (frenulum)
- Injuries which have not received medical attention
- Neglect: under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, untreated illnesses, listlessness etc
- Reluctance to change for or participate in games or swimming
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains
- Bruises, bites, burns, fractures etc. which do not have an accidental explanation
- Cuts/scratches/substance abuse

(2) Indicators of Possible Sexual Abuse

- Excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and a detailed knowledge of adult sexual behavior
- Inappropriate sexual play/language
- Child who is sexually proactive or seductive with adults
- Severe sleep disturbance
- Disturbed eating patterns e.g. anorexia, bulimia
- Escape attempts e.g. running away, refusing to go home
- Changes in behavior e.g. bed wetting
- Recurrent urinary tract infections

(3) Emotional Signs of Abuse

- Changes or regression in mood or behavior e.g. withdrawal, becoming clingy, aggressive, depressed
- Nervousness
- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden under achievement or lack of concentration
- Attention seeking behavior
- Inappropriate relationships
- Persistent tiredness

Appendix (II) Important contact information

Toronto Children's Aid Society: (416) 924-4646
Catholic Children's Aid Society of Toronto: (416) 395-1500.
For other CASs, dial 411.

In some communities, the CAS is known as "family and children's services" or "child and family services".

Information on line for all of Ontario's CASs at www.oacas.org, the web site of the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies.

Matter is urgent and cannot reach the CAS, call the local police at 911.

Appendix (III) Confidential Child Abuse Report (Sample)

Date

TO: Executive Director,
C.A.S. of Regional CAS

ATTENTION: Name of CAS worker

Parent or family name:

Family member names:

Address:

Telephone:

Child' name and DOB:

Child's name and DOB:

In confirmation of my telephone report of ____ (date) of call I am forwarding the following information:

1. From interviews with the above-named family, I have reason to suspect that there is risk of abuse/neglect to the child(ren). *I have/have not* discussed with the family that I am raising my concerns to you
 - Date: incident:
 - Persons involved:
 - Concerns:
2. I was informed by _____ (name of informant) and _____ (phone number) that _____ (name of person) has experienced abuse/neglect. I am concerned that such a situation is continuing.
3. In the course of my ongoing assessment of the above-named family, it is my understanding that in the past, one or more children in the family have experienced abuse/neglect. I do not feel that there is immediate risk to the child(ren). I anticipate continuing to work with this family. *I have/have not* informed the family that I am raising my concern to you.
4. In my telephone report I also advised you of the name of the person suspected of causing or permitting the suspected abuse.
5. The telephone report and this letter are given to you in compliance with the requirements of Section (125) of the Child and Family Services Act (2017).

Yours Sincerely,

Name, Title, if any

c.c. Senior Pastor, Markham Peoples Community Church or designate

Reference:

Action Canada for Sexual Health & Rights. Policy on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, and Child Protection. Retrieved on May 5, 2023 from <https://www.actioncanadashr.org/about/policy-protection-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse-and-child-protection>.

Ontario Ministry of Child and Youth Services (2017). The Child, Youth and Family Service Act 2017 (CYFSA). Ontario.

Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect: It's Your Duty. Your responsibilities under the Child, Youth and Family Service Act, 2017. Ontario. Ontario.ca/children.

Across Borders for World Evangelism (ABWE) Canada. (2012). ABWE Canada Sexual Misconduct and Child Protection Policy. www.abwe.ca.

The United Church of Canada. (2018). Fifty United Church's Child Protection Policy.

The United Church of Canada. (2020). Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Policy and Procedures.

Canadian Christian Reformed Church. (2019). Sample Policy from a Canadian Christian Reformed Church: Policy and Procedures for Preventing Child/Youth & Senior Abuse and Responding to Allegations of Child/Youth & Senior Abuse. Ontario, Canada.