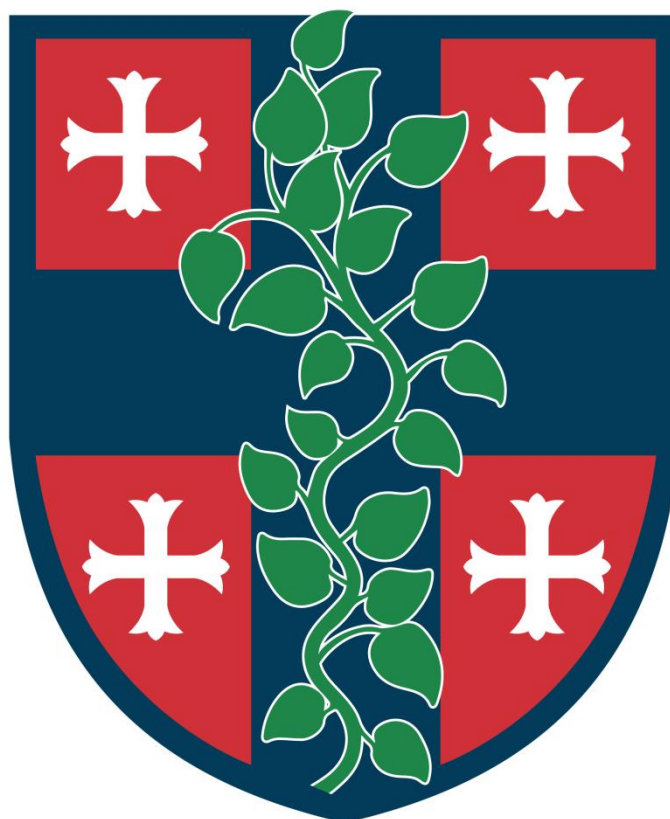


EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
SAFE CHURCH POLICY AND PROCEDURES



*For the sacred care of our youngest members
Respecting the dignity of every human being*

January 2015

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BUILDING A SAFE CHURCH COMMUNITY

PREAMBLE

In our Baptismal Covenant we promise:

To seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving our neighbor as ourselves

To strive for justice and peace among all people

To respect the dignity of every human being

Living into these baptismal promises requires not only God's grace but our willingness to examine the quality and conduct of our relationships within and outside of the context of our local church settings. All the baptized are to represent Christ and to proclaim by word and deed the Good News of God's tender love for all humanity. Our conduct in relationships is one of the most important ways in which this vocation is carried out.

Any ministry relationship, whether with clergy or lay leaders, children or adults, involves authority and trust. Recognizing this is the first step to preventing abuse. When trust is broken or authority is misused, thus denying others their God-given dignity and human stature, then a sacred obligation is broken. Harm is done to individuals, congregations, society, and the cause of the Gospel. Whenever this occurs, the church must act within the baptismal covenant with clarity and compassion.

We want our churches to be places where people can go for prayer, counseling, sacraments and community. We intend these sacred places to be springs of living water where people will find refreshment, healing and inspiration. The wider society has a right to expect the Church to be a safe place: safe physically, safe spiritually, and safe emotionally.

What follows in this document are best practices for building safe church communities. The Episcopal Church of New Hampshire is aligned with the wider Episcopal Church's use of sound education and training programs to be attended at least every three years by Clergy, Wardens, Treasurers, Lay employees and any paid staff members, Eucharistic Visitors, Pastoral Visitors, Stephen Ministers, EFM Mentors, Safe Church Ministers, any Postulants or Candidates, **all** volunteers who regularly work with children or youth and everyone, paid or volunteer, who is engaged in any other high risk area of service.

The Episcopal Church of New Hampshire strongly encourages **all other leaders and members of our congregations** to attend safe church training to learn about prevention practices and how to deal with any possible allegation of misconduct or abuse within their church community.

There are two parts to this document: (1) Protecting children and youth, elders, and all vulnerable persons; and (2) Protecting adults in the workplace and in pastoral relationships. In addition, there are *Guidelines for Social Media* in Appendix A that we have adopted for use by our youth groups and congregations.

This policy is adopted in compliance with 2003 General Convention resolution Boo8. Its purpose is to make our Church a safe place: safe for those who worship, safe for those who work in the church, safe for those who minister, safe for those who come in need, safe for children, and safe for all who seek or serve Christ. It helps us live into the fullness of our Baptismal Covenant. Our Diocesan Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Rob Hirschfeld, requires that every congregation in the Episcopal Church of

New Hampshire participate in this important training as, *together*, we build safe church communities.

In the rare circumstance that there is any deviation from this established policy, clergy or lay leaders are required to discuss the situation with the Canon to the Ordinary.

Part I: For the Sacred Care of our Youngest Members: Protection for our Children and Youth

Screening and Selection for Ministry with Children and Youth

Screening is an essential element in keeping children and youth safe. It is an opportunity to prevent a molester from having contact with children and youth in church programs.

Parishes are required to conduct public records checks on ALL existing and future employees and all existing and future volunteers who regularly work with children or youth. Parishes are to use a company designated by the diocese to conduct public records checks and are to conduct such checks by Secure Search.

The Diocese does background checks on all clergy who are deployed or licensed to officiate within the Diocese. The Diocese does background checks on any diocesan employees or volunteers who regularly work with children or youth.

All those working with children or youth must complete and sign an application form (See samples, Appendix B), which specifically includes a request for personal references, information concerning any prior adjudication in regard to sexual misconduct and acknowledgement of the church's right to conduct a confidential background check.

Background checks include the following:

- The written application
- A public records check
- An interview
- Reference checks

It is the responsibility of each Vestry/Bishop's Committee to ensure that the following individuals receive Safe Church Training every three years: Wardens, Clergy, Treasurers, Lay Employees, Eucharistic Visitors, Pastoral Visitors, Stephen Ministers, EFM Mentors, Safe Church Ministers, Volunteers who regularly work with children or youth and all paid Staff Members. Vestry members are encouraged to attend training but are not required to do so.

Any adult (18+ years and at least one full year past high school graduation) attending an overnight event must have completed safe church training and is filed with their Rector or Clergy Person in Charge. The Clergy must sign off on the adult's registration form (Appendix C) and must also have an adult advisor registration form completed

Volunteers should *not* be permitted to work with children or youth until they have been known to the clergy or congregation for at least six months.

No convicted sex offender should ever be involved with children. No person accused of being a sex offender should be involved with youth or children until the investigation is complete and the person has been cleared.

Background check reports are retained in the congregation in secure files viewed only by the Rector/Vicar.

Behavioral Standards for Ministry with Children or Youth

Adults shall not:

- a. provide children or youth with non-sacramental alcohol, illegal drugs or pornography;
- b. consume non-sacramental alcohol or illegal drugs or misuse of legal drugs at any children's or youth event;
- c. be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or the misuse of legal drugs at any children's or youth event;
- d. engage in illegal behavior or permit other adults or children or youth to engage in illegal behavior;
- e. engage in any sexual, romantic, illicit or secretive relationship or conduct with any child or youth;
- f. Discuss their own sexual activities or fantasies with children or youth.
- g. Firearms and concealed weapons are prohibited at any church activity. Rectors may make special exceptions for off-duty police officers or others required to carry firearms.

Adults model appropriate behaviors to children and youth. Adults are expected to model positive nurturing relationships that include no profane language and no practical jokes that would be physically or emotionally harmful.

Adults are to use the "Standards for Appropriate Affection" [below] to talk about touch and boundaries at all events and gatherings, establishing principles of respectful behavior while at the same time teaching appropriate touch and boundaries.

It is inappropriate for a leader or any adult to be alone with a child if out of sight of another adult.

Secret meetings and activities with a child, children or youth are inappropriate.

Physical punishment or discipline, harsh language, degrading punishment, hazing or bullying should never be used or allowed.

Standards for Interacting with Children and Youth

The following standards of positive and appropriate forms of affection and inappropriate forms of affection are to be carefully followed by all adults working around or with children and youth:

Positive and appropriate forms of interaction include:

- Brief hugs
- Pats on the shoulder or back
- Handshakes
- “High-fives”
- Verbal praise
- Touching hands, faces, shoulders and arms of children or youth
- Arms around shoulders
- Holding hands while walking with small children
- Sitting beside small children
- Kneeling or bending down for brief hugs with small children
- Holding hands during prayer

Inappropriate forms of interaction include:

- Lengthy embraces
- Kisses
- Holding children other than infants or toddlers on the lap
- Touching bottoms, chests or genital areas other than for appropriate diapering or toileting of infants and toddlers
- Showing affection in isolated areas such as bedrooms, closets, staff only areas or other private rooms
- Occupying a bed with a child or youth
- Touching knees or legs of children or youth
- Wrestling with children or youth
- Tickling children or youth
- Piggyback rides
- Any type of massage given by a child or youth to an adult
- Any type of massage given by an adult to a child or youth
- Any form of unwanted affection
- Comments or compliments, spoken, written, or electronic, that relate to physique or body development, i.e. “You sure are developing,” or “You look hot in those jeans.”
- Snapping bras or giving wedgies or similar touch, whether or not it is covered by other clothing
- Giving gifts or money that show favoritism to individual children or youth
- Private meals alone with individual children or youth

Adults should not dress, undress, bathe or shower in the presence of youth and adults should not be in the room where youth dress, undress, bath or shower.

If a child or youth needs to undress (for example, to get into a costume or for first aid) call another adult of the same gender as the child to be nearby. Be intentional about safe church practices for trips to the bathroom for those who need assistance.

Monitoring Programs and Interactions with Children and Youth

At all events and ministries for children and youth there will be at least two, unrelated adults present. If unanticipated circumstances result in an adult being alone with children or youths, that adult will immediately report those circumstances to the Rector or Senior Warden. It may be appropriate for a Sunday School class to have only one teacher so long as at least one other adult can maintain visual contact with the teacher.

Parents should be given appropriate details for all events or activities.

The following are recommended standard ratios of adults to children and youth throughout every event and/or gathering:

Infant to 3 years of age:	2 adults for every 8 children	Maximum Group Size is 8
3 to 5 years of age:	2 adults for every 10	Maximum Group Size is 10
6-18 years of age:	2 adults for every 13 children or youth	No Maximum Group Size

When there are both boys and girls, it is best if both male and female leaders are present; in an overnight event, where there are male and female participants, this is mandatory.

If a situation should arise in which a child or youth must be alone with an adult, they should remain in the sight of another adult.

The spirit of the policy is that at no time should one adult be alone with one or more children. If a situation arises where the second adult must be out of the designated area, another adult should be in the line of vision of the remaining adult at all times.

A media release must be signed for pictures to be displayed on the diocesan Web site, in the diocesan newspaper, or any flyer or publication for the Diocese of New Hampshire. Names of minors are never used with photographs.

Use rooms that are visible through glass doors or leave doors open.

Show only age appropriate videos and movies. Appropriate means the movie or video is reviewed and screened for sexual content, language, violence and overall message.

G rated films may be shown.

PG videos and movies should not be shown to anyone under the age of 13. PG13 movies and videos should not be shown to anyone under the age of 13. In addition, parents should be made aware of and approve any PG 13 videos or movies prior to showing it.

If a youth comes to any diocesan activity or event intoxicated (from either drugs or alcohol), arrange to have the person taken home and consult with the event coordinator as to further intervention.

All adults attending diocesan youth events or activities are mandatory reporters and are required to report abuse or suspected abuse immediately as outlined in diocesan policy.

Additional Standards for Programs in Congregations

It may be appropriate for a Sunday School class to have only one teacher as long as at least one other adult can maintain visual contact with the teacher.

Any new programs, trips or events that involve children or youth must be given prior approval by the clergy, and the vestry should be notified in advance of the event.

All events for children or youth will be made public and no event for children or youth will take place in a private residence without prior approval by the clergy.

Adults who work with children or youth within a congregation are discouraged from having a separate and private relationship with any unrelated child from church away from sanctioned church youth activities, unless that relationship is known to the clergy.

Each parish/worshipping community appoints a Safe Church Minister whose responsibility it is to ensure that training is up to date for those requiring it. Who is current on safe church issues and training (Appendix D). The Safe Church Minister should be consulted by the clergy, vestry members or others on safe church matters, and should report all questionable or non-standard arrangements to the clergy or a Warden. It is required that the Safe Church Minister and the Vestry regularly conduct a "safe church audit" to review practices and policies within the congregation (Appendix E).

A congregation's policies should include the names and phone numbers of the clergy, Senior Warden, parish Safe Church Minister, and contact person in the Bishop's Office. A congregation's computers should have adequate password protection.

Congregations should have clear guidelines and adequate supervision (by parish staff or authorized persons) of anyone using a computer to access the Internet. Any activity on a congregation's computer *should not be* considered private and may be accessed by authorized persons.

Maintain an "open door policy," that parents or clergy always have the right to visit and observe a class or program at any time unannounced.

Standards for Overnight Activities and Events

Each participant must submit a completed and signed permission form to the event coordinator to attend an event or activity [see sample, Appendix F]. Parents and guardians should be given information about the event and be provided emergency contact information in advance. Prior to an off-site event, a list of participants with parental contact information should be given to the diocesan office for diocesan events or to the church office for congregational events.

All medications, including prescription and over the counter, must be in the original container with clear instructions and the participant's name. Medications are collected upon arrival and returned at the end of the event. Medications are locked in a lock box and administered by a designated adult.

Sleeping and Rooming Arrangements for Overnight Activities or Events:

If sleeping in parish hall, gym floor, or large room; males and females must have separate areas to sleep in.

In a hotel or conference center or tent/camper setting:

- Ideally, there should be no fewer than 3 same gender youth per room.
- Choose hotels that have rooms open to the interior of the building rather than to the outside.
- If possible make arrangements so that an adult room is between two youth rooms (no sharing adjoining bathrooms).
- Each youth must have a separate bed, bedding and/or sleeping bag.
- Adults should sleep in modest attire in order to be able to respond quickly to emergency needs.
- Schedule hall monitoring periodically throughout the night.
- Create a rooming list that provides the location where each child, youth, and adult is rooming. Post it in ways that are accessible to everyone at the event, but not to the general public.
- Males may not enter a room where females are sleeping and females may not enter a room where males are sleeping.

Transportation

Anyone transporting children or youth must complete an Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire Transportation Permission Form (found on page 36 of this document) and be screened by a Motor Vehicle Records search for Driving While Intoxicated or any reckless citation prior to transporting children or youth. The form and screening records are then filed in the diocesan office.

Parents must give written permission for any transportation of children or youth.

If children or youth are to be picked up by someone other than a parent or guardian, or dropped off somewhere other than their home, the parent or guardian should indicate that person's name and phone number on the permission form.

At the conclusion of an event, two adult leaders should stay with children and youth until every child and youth has been picked-up. Never leave a child or youth alone waiting for a ride home.

Education and Training

Parishes will send parish employees and volunteers who work with children or youth to training on how to prevent child abuse and promote healthy boundaries in church settings. Each parish should maintain a record of those who have attended such training. The Safe Church Training is offered on a regular basis throughout the year at various locations. Further information is listed through our website or by contacting Canon Hannah Anderson (handerson@nehiscopal.org (603) 224-1914 ext.126).

The Diocese requires all clergy and employees and volunteers who work with children or youth at diocesan event to attend training on how to prevent child abuse and promote healthy boundaries in church settings. The Diocese maintains records of those who attend the training.

The Diocese offers the requisite training. Individuals should be re-trained every three years. The Bishop's office approves curriculum and trainers for the requisite training. Current training should be available for those who screen, train or supervise those who regularly work with children or youth. The curriculum (revised in summer, 2013) includes on-line preparation, workshop participation, use of DVD's and appropriate case studies for the material presented by our Safe Church Trainers.

Responding to Concerns

Anyone who knows of a violation of these policies will immediately report the violation to the Rector and senior warden. Anyone who knows of a violation of these policies by a clergy person will immediately report the violation to the Bishop's office.

Anyone who has reason to suspect that child abuse has taken place at church or in another setting is strongly encouraged to tell their parish priest or another member of ordained clergy. Any mandated reporter who has reason to suspect that child abuse has taken place will report it to the appropriate civil authority.

Rectors hearing reports of violations of this policy are responsible for providing appropriate pastoral care to all those affected and appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or volunteer ministry with the church.

The Bishop, hearing reports of violations by clergy, or by adults at diocesan events, is responsible for providing appropriate pastoral care to all those affected and appropriate remedial and /or disciplinary action, up to and including canonical disciplinary action.

CONTACT INFORMATION

The Diocesan Contact for Safe Church Policy is Canon Hannah Anderson. She may be reached at: 603-224-1914 ext. 126 or at handerson@nhepiscopal.org

The phone number for the New Hampshire Department of Children, Youth and Families is 1-800-894-5533 (M-F 8 am--4:30 pm). Outside of those hours contact your local police department.

Part II: Respecting the Dignity of Every Human Being: Protecting Adults in the Workplace and in Pastoral Relationships

PREAMBLE

The Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire affirms the principle that its employees, members and those who avail themselves of its ministries have a right to be free from sexual harassment by any minister or employee. The diocese does not tolerate sexual harassment in any form and does not condone any conduct which creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive worship or work environment. Any conduct which is determined to be sexual harassment is a violation of our baptismal vow “to respect the dignity of every human being” and will result in appropriate disciplinary action which may include termination of employment and the presentment of clerics.

The goal to make the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of New Hampshire a healthy and safe place for everyone to worship, work and serve our Lord is ambitious. Faith flourishes when all people know that church leaders, ordained and lay, can be trusted. This document sets forth programs and practices in the diocese that offer support to ordained ministers and lay leaders in earning, maintaining and nurturing this trust.

Calling, Interviewing, and Placing Gifted Ordained Ministers to Serve in this Diocese

The Bishop seeks to identify and recruit gifted ordained ministers to serve in this diocese. The goal is to match gifts, talents, and experience of the ordained minister with the needs, opportunities, and challenges of the parish.

The Deployment Office works with priests, search consultants, parish search committees, vestries and congregations. Referrals and recommendations for new ordained leadership come from a variety of sources including the Episcopal Church Deployment Office, Transition Ministry Conference, a network of deployment officers in other dioceses, clergy self-referrals, and referrals from members of the congregation seeking.

The Diocese seeks the following qualities in candidates:

Holiness – Is there a lively sense of Christ’s presence in the life of this person? Do others join in recognizing what we see? How can the gifts that this person might bring to new ministry be described?

Competence – Ministry requires a variety of talents and skills. Does this person demonstrate the gifts and skills for ministry that the parish requires? Does this person’s leadership style meet parish needs? Will this person be able to build up the parish? Will this person be able to strengthen and encourage God’s people in the parish? Can these skills and talents be further developed through training and formation?

Stability of Life – Extending a call is an investment of hope and trust by the Church in a person. Does this person demonstrate personal maturity and stability that point toward fruitful future ministry?

Supporting Ordained Ministers with Programs to Promote Personal Wellness and Self-care.

Wellness and self-care are personal responsibilities for all who serve in the Church. The Diocese encourages all clergy to observe generally recognized wellness practices. These include such things as:

- Weekly days off, sabbatical time, and vacations as specified in letters of agreement
- Participation in colleague and/or mentoring groups
- Participation in some form of ongoing supervision
- Spiritual direction
- Retreats
- Individual counseling
- Regular medical exams
- Regular physical exercise
- Nurturing relationships with other clergy in the diocese
- Attending to financial wellness

Diocesan Offerings to Support Clergy Wellness.

The Diocese of New Hampshire offers a variety of services and resources to support and encourage wellness and self-care for ordained ministers and their families. The following is a partial list of some of these offerings:

- *Pastoral Situations and Emergencies* – The Bishop and diocesan staff want to be in regular pastoral contact with all clergy who serve in the diocese in times of any pastoral need, as well as in times of emergency. This is a top priority. When pastoral situations arise, the Bishop and diocesan staff are ready to assist. Please contact the Bishop's office any time if pastoral needs arise.
- *The Fresh Start Program* – All priests beginning new ministries in the Diocese of New Hampshire are expected to participate in the Fresh Start Program. This program provides support and information for priests during the first two years of a new ministry.
- *Continuing Education* – Time and funding for continuing education are written into the letters of agreement defining ministries in the diocese.
- *Clergy Development* – Opportunities for clergy development are regularly offered by the diocese in the form of clergy days and clergy conferences. These are designed by the Clergy Development Committee in consultation with Bishop Rob Hirschfeld.
- *Sabbaticals (Refresher Leave)* – Time and funding for sabbaticals are written into the letters of agreement defining ministries in the diocese. All clergy thinking about or planning a sabbatical must be in contact with the Canon to the Ordinary at least one year in advance of the commencement of the anticipated sabbatical.

For further information on any of these opportunities, please contact the Diocesan Office: (603) 224-1914.

Offering Safe Church Training for Ordained Ministers, Church Employees, Lay Ministers/Volunteers, Wardens and Vestry Members

In an effort to increase the physical, emotional and spiritual safety of our parishes and ministries, the Diocese offers a variety of safe church training for all members of the Church: laypersons, bishops, priests, deacons, church employees (paid or volunteer), Eucharistic visitors (licensed by the Bishop), pastoral leaders, anyone who is involved with children or youth activities (paid or volunteer), Wardens, other lay leaders and those who work with the elderly.

Comprehensive Safe Church Training is offered for adults who have never attended a safe church training in this diocese. This training provides information to increase awareness of healthy practices and boundaries to enhance the safety of our parishes and ministries for children and adults. This training is offered on an ongoing basis at locations across the diocese.

Safe Church Recertification Workshops are offered throughout the diocese. We require recertification every *three* years for laity and clergy.

Documentation of attendance at both Comprehensive Safe Church Training and Recertification Workshop by ordained ministers is kept at Diocesan House. Separate Safe Church Workshops are offered for Clergy.

Documentation of attendance at both Comprehensive Safe Church Training and Recertification Workshop by laity are maintained within each parish. The person recording this information is safe-church trained and appointed by the clergy.

Training for Diocesan Employees: All diocesan employees are required to attend Comprehensive Safe Church Training within three months of commencement of employment.

Offering Guidelines for Ordained Ministry and Lay Ministry that are Clear, Compassionate, and Fair.

Guidelines for Ordained Ministry

The relationship of clergy and parishioner can be a powerful relationship in the lives of both, and can be integral to a parishioner's faith journey. A parishioner puts his or her trust in a cleric. In this relationship of trust, the cleric has a professional and moral responsibility to put the interest of the other person above his or her own needs. This relationship can become complex, and in some cases seriously impaired. It is the cleric's responsibility to maintain the integrity of this relationship.

The diocese offers the following Guidelines for Ministry to assist and support ordained ministers in maintaining the integrity of relationships in which they offer ministry. It is expected that all ordained clergy and lay leaders in the diocese will be familiar with and seek to follow these guidelines. These guidelines do not include all diocesan policies or contingencies. An attempt has been made to refer to additional diocesan policies where appropriate.

Clergy are welcome to contact their Bishop as they seek to follow these guidelines, particularly if they are encountering struggles in so doing. In addition, clergy may also call on members of the bishop's staff for consultation and assistance.

Clergy in the Diocese of New Hampshire are expected to: Treat themselves with dignity and respect by taking good care of themselves.

This includes:

- Regular and consistent incorporation of wellness and self-care practices in their life. (See the section above on Wellness Practices and resources listed there.)
- Setting appropriate limits with parishioners as to when they are available, and boundaries in the relationship. If a parishioner violates boundaries by going beyond what is appropriate in the clergy-parishioner relationship (e.g. seeking to romanticize the relationship, demanding inordinate amounts of attention, seeking to meet with you alone, sending you too many and/or inappropriate e- mail messages, or does anything that makes you feel uncomfortable or unsafe), firmly and clearly communicate what behavior is acceptable and what is not. Some parishioners do not change their behavior in spite of a cleric's efforts to explain why change is needed. In such cases, clergy are welcome to seek consultation by contacting the Bishop's Office or the Canon to the Ordinary.
- Addressing conflicts that may arise between an ordained minister and a parishioner, group of parishioners or lay leaders, in healthy ways. This includes seeking to maintain appropriate boundaries in relationships, communicating clearly and directly to those with whom you are in conflict, seeking nurture and support for yourself outside the parish, and possibly seeking assistance from someone trained in conflict resolution. If you are struggling with conflict in your parish, you may seek consultation by contacting the Office of Canon to the Ordinary.

Complying with diocesan policies regarding ministry with children, youth and the elderly.

The Safe Church Policy for the Protection of Children and Youth sets forth behavioral standards for all adults engaged in ministries with children or youth throughout the diocese. This policy also sets standards for screening and selection of staff and volunteers who work with children and youth, the monitoring of programs for children and youth, and responding to concerns. Ultimately, ordained leadership in each parish is responsible for compliance with this policy within the parish.

Ministry and contact with the elderly is also an area of concern in Safe Church Training which is addressed through the use of a DVD, *The Golden Years*.

In addition, we have endorsed a Guideline of the use of Social Media from the Diocese of Connecticut that we believe is essential to incorporate into our ministry with children and youth. It can be found in Appendix A.

Comply with “Behavioral Standards for Ministry with Children or Youth”.

All Adults, whether ordained or lay, will not:

- a. provide children or youth with non-sacramental alcohol, illegal drugs or pornography,
- b. consume non-sacramental alcohol or illegal drugs or misuse legal drugs at any children’s or youth event,
- c. be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or the misuse of legal drugs at any children’s or youth event,
- d. engage in illegal behavior or permit other adults or children or youth to engage in illegal behavior,
- e. engage in any sexual, romantic, illicit or secretive relationship or conduct with any child or youth,
- f. discuss their own sexual activities or fantasies with children or youth.

In addition, whenever an adult is offering any type of ministry or engaged in any type of church related activity with a child or youth there shall be at least two, unrelated adults present.

Refrain from dual relationships.

Dual relationships in a church setting occur when clergy attempt to relate to a person on two levels at the same time. This can happen when clergy attempt to relate to an individual both personally and professionally (i.e., as cleric and parishioner, and at the same time in some other role such as supervisor and parish employee.) Dual relationships diminish the effectiveness of ministry. To avoid dual relationships:

- We strongly discourage hiring parishioners to serve in paid staff positions. (Please contact the Bishop’s Office if this is the case.)
- We strongly discourage a clergy spouse, partner or family member to serve on parish staff as a lay employee, or as a parish officer or vestry member in the parish where the related clergy person serves. (Please note this in Vestry Minutes and/or contact the Bishop’s Office.)
- Avoid intimate personal business or relationships with parishioners and others to whom you minister.
- Do not sexualize any relationship with parishioners or others to whom you minister.
- Develop personal relationships with people outside of the parish to whom you do not offer ministry.
- Accept only token gifts from parishioners and others to whom you minister. Be cautious of the ramifications of accepting major gifts.
- Refuse to accept loans of any kind from parishioners and others to whom you minister.
- Refuse to agree to be named as a beneficiary or to act as an administrator or executor in a parishioner’s will or that of anyone to whom you minister.

- *Maintain confidentiality* of information shared in the pastoral relationship. This means that clergy will not tell other people personal information a parishioner shares, unless that parishioner gives permission. However, the legal obligation of mandated reporting requires clergy to disclose information to the appropriate state agency in specific situations, except when the cleric learns the information within the bounds of the sacrament of confession.
- *Comply with legally mandated reporting requirements* regarding the suspected abuse and/or neglect of children, the elderly and vulnerable adults. In New Hampshire, clergy are mandated reporters of suspected abuse and/or neglect of children, elderly and vulnerable adults. If you have any questions about mandated reporting, please contact the Canon to the Ordinary.
- *Restrict involvement in the evaluation of mental health or substance abuse issues* to no more than three sessions. By the third session, referral if necessary should be made to other service providers for further evaluation and/or treatment. The limit of three sessions does not apply to premarital conversations.
- *Refrain from treating mental health or substance abuse issues* unless you are licensed or certified, and insured to do so. Clergy are not to treat anyone who is a member or attends a parish in which the cleric is serving.
- *Comply with the responsibilities of being an employer* if you are the cleric in charge with paid staff. This includes making decisions regarding hiring, supervision, record keeping, and termination, either for cause or due to financial restrictions. It also includes responding to any and all allegations of misconduct by employees in a timely and appropriate manner. If you need information about the role of employer, please contact the Canon for Mission Resources.
- *Comply with financial practices* as set forth by The Diocese of New Hampshire and Episcopal Church. This includes conducting an annual audit of all accounts, including clergy discretionary and special ministry funds, and ensuring that the financial systems within your parish, such as money counters and those authorized to sign checks, are in accordance with the internal practices recommended by the Diocese and the Episcopal Church. If you have any questions regarding financial practices, contact the Canon for Mission Resources.
- *Bring resolution to relationships with parishioners when ordained ministry at a parish ends.* When it comes time to leave a parish, it is expected that clergy will bring resolution to relationships with all parishioners in a manner that is healthy for the cleric, the cleric's family, as well as the parish. The cleric will meet with the Canon to the Ordinary and the Bishop for an exit interview. *It is expected that once a cleric's service at a parish ends, he or she will no longer perform any clergy functions for any members of that parish or others affiliated with the parish, and will not worship at that parish. In addition, it is expected that the cleric will not communicate with former parishioners about matters involving the parish, and will not meet with any members of the parish for any reason during the interim period and until new ordained leadership is fully integrated into the life of the parish.*
- *Participate in Diocesan Events.* It is a diocesan expectation that clergy attend diocesan convention and other regular diocesan events such as Clergy Days and Clergy Conferences. Participation in ordinations and celebrations of new ministry are strongly encouraged.

Guidelines for Lay Ministry

Lay ministers may be engaged in ministry by serving as elected parish leaders, by serving in leadership roles in worship (chalice bearer, lecturer) or by serving in other ministries offered through the church. All lay ministers are expected to respect the dignity of others when offering ministry. Many of the guidelines offered above for ordained ministry apply to lay ministry as well. For example, lay ministers are expected to maintain appropriate confidentiality, as well as accept only token gifts, and refuse to accept loans from those to whom ministry is offered. Many of the guidelines for lay ministry are further discussed in Safe Church Training.

All adults offering ministry to children or youth are expected to comply with the Behavioral Standards for Ministry with Children or Youth. These standards are fully set out in the diocesan *Safe Church Policy for the Protection of Children and Youth*.

Responding to all allegations regarding misconduct by ordained clergy with sensitivity and compassion toward all involved

The Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire seeks to respond to all allegations of clergy misconduct in an appropriate, sensitive and timely manner. This includes allegations of sexual misconduct, as well as other forms of professional boundary violations.

The fidelity of pastoral trust is essential to nurturing spiritual growth. Pastoral trust is broken when a person offering ministry engages in misconduct by acting in ways to meet his or her own needs, including sexualizing the relationship with the person to whom ministry is offered, instead of acting to meet the appropriate needs of the person receiving ministry.

Definitions:

Clergy Sexual Misconduct is defined by the Diocese of New Hampshire to include any kind of sexual interaction in a pastoral or professional relationship. The sexual interaction may range from covert and subtle exploitation to the overt use of physical force. It includes sexual abuse, sexual harassment and sexual exploitation. Clergy sexual misconduct includes inappropriate sexual relationships with other clergy as well as lay persons. Clergy sexual misconduct is wrong.

The Diocese of New Hampshire adopts the 70th General Convention of the Episcopal Church definitions on sexual misconduct as follows:

Sexual Abuse: Sexual involvement or conduct by a cleric or other church employee or volunteer with a person who is a minor or is legally incompetent.

Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome or unwanted sexually oriented humor or language, questions or comments about sexual behavior or preference, physical contact, inappropriate comments about clothing or physical appearance, or repeated requests for social engagements, in a situation where there is an employment, mentor or colleague relationship between persons involved.

Sexual Exploitation: A betrayal or trust in a pastoral relationship by the development, or the attempted development, of a sexual or romantic relationship between the cleric or other church worker and a person with whom she or he has a pastoral or fiduciary relationship, whether or not there is apparent consent from the individual.

Raising Allegations of Clergy Misconduct:

Any complaint or concern about clergy misconduct is to be reported to the Canon to the Ordinary in the Bishop's Office by phone, letter or e-mail.

When applicable, the response to resolve allegations of misconduct is made in accordance with the provisions of Title IV, the purpose of which is 'to support members in their life in Christ and seek to resolve conflicts by promoting healing, repentance, forgiveness, restitution, justice, amendment of life and reconciliation among all involved or affected. This Title applies to Members of the Clergy, who have by their vows at ordination accepted additional responsibilities and accountabilities for doctrine, discipline, worship and obedience' (Canon IV.1).

The diocese seeks to provide pastoral support to both the person raising allegations of misconduct and the clergy person. When appropriate, pastoral assistance to families, the congregation and church leaders is also offered.

Responding to inappropriate conduct by parish employees, lay leaders and parishioners

Just as ordained ministers can violate pastoral trust, parish employees, lay leaders, and other lay ministers can also act in ways that violate trust which is essential to effective ministry.

A parish employee or lay leader can betray their position of trust by acting in ways to meet their own needs rather than to further the ministry with which they are entrusted. For example, a person could learn confidential financial information about a parishioner in the context of offering ministry and then use that information to his or her own personal advantage. Or, a lay leader might learn of another parishioner's personal crisis in the context of offering ministry and seek to sexualize the relationship with the parishioner while the parishioner is in a vulnerable state.

A parishioner who is not currently serving as a lay leader can violate the trust and safety of other parishioners or parish employees by acting inappropriately such as by sexually harassing a parish employee or, by sexually harassing a parishioner at worship services or other church related functions.

The definition of sexual misconduct, which includes sexual abuse, sexual harassment and sexual exploitation (as defined in the preceding section) apply to lay ministers as well as ordained ministers.

A betrayal of trust or inappropriate conduct by lay ministers needs an appropriate and timely response. The authority to respond to these situations lies with the ordained minister of the parish. The diocese is available for consultation on processes that may be followed to assist in the resolution of allegations as well as practices that may assist the parish in healing from a betrayal of trust by a lay minister. For more information, please contact the Canon to the Ordinary

Social Media and Other Forms of Digital Communication

The amount of information available online continues to expand. While most online communication once took place through e-mail or instant messaging services, now more and more content is being shared publically and is widely visible. Sites like Twitter, Facebook, and blogs can provide considerable benefits for churches. These social networking services come with certain risks. Understanding how these websites work and should be used is helpful in avoiding the pitfalls of social media.

Congregations are encouraged to develop specific guidelines and policies relating to their use of social media both within and outside of the congregation. With gratitude for the work and generosity of the Office of Pastoral Response of the Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut for developing these guidelines and the Connecticut Conference of United Church of Christ, upon which the guidelines are based, the following suggested practices and guidelines for use of social networking websites and other forms of digital communication are offered as a resource to that end.

Suggested Practices & Guidelines for Use of Social Networking Websites & Other Forms of Digital Communication

As an ever increasing number of people use and prefer digital communication over other forms, it is essential that the church be present in this mission field. Social networking sites, on-the-spot communication devices and email can enhance communication, faith sharing and deepen relationship. The following recommended practices and guidelines apply commonly accepted principles of healthy boundaries and safe church to the virtual world of digital networking and communication.

Commonly Accepted Principles of Healthy Boundaries and Safe Church

- Adults have more power than children and youth.
- Clergy have more power than people with whom they have a pastoral relationship.
- The mutuality of friendship cannot exist when there is a disparity of power.
- Two unrelated adults must be able to maintain visual contact with each other any time they engage in ministry with children or youth.
- Windows in doors allow transparency of interactions with children, youth and adults who may be vulnerable.

General Information about Digital Communications

- All communication sent digitally (email, social networking sites, notes or posts, etc.) is NOT CONFIDENTIAL and may be shared or reposted to others.
- Interactions in the virtual world need to be transparent, as a window in the door provides transparency in the physical world.
- In the virtual world healthy boundaries and safe church practices must be adhered to as they are in the physical world.
- In the virtual world, "friend" can mean anyone with whom you are willing to communicate through that medium. In the physical world, friend can mean much more in terms of intimacy, self-disclosure, mutuality and expectations for relationship.
- Laws regarding mandated reporting of suspected abuse/ neglect/ exploitation of children, youth, elders and vulnerable populations apply in the virtual world as they do in the physical world.

Recommended Practices and Guidelines for Interactions with Children and Youth:

Social Networking Sites-Relationships

1. Adults who minister to children and youth are strongly encouraged to set very stringent privacy settings on any social networking profile. Individual personal profiles are to be used to interact with real friends, family and peers. Adults should not submit "friend" requests to minors or youth. Youth may not be able to decline such requests due to the disparity of power between youth and adults. Youth may ask to be "friends", and adults should discern the level of contact they want to maintain with youth prior to responding to these requests.
2. If an adult chooses to accept friend requests from minors or youth who are associated with their community of faith, other adult leaders must have full access to all aspects of that adult's profile and correspondence.
3. Adults who want to connect via a social networking website with youth to who they minister are strongly encouraged to set up a closed group account that youth may join. Youth requesting to "friend" an adult can then be invited to join this group rather than be accepted as a friend on an adult's personal profile account. The purpose of these two separate accounts/profiles is to create a line of privacy and maintain healthy boundaries with youth and real family, friends and colleagues.
4. Any material on any site (whether affiliated with the church or not) that raises suspicion that a child has been or will be abused/ neglected/ exploited should be immediately reported to the clergy and/ or the Department of Children and Families (DCF). If the material is on a church affiliated site, that material should be documented for church records and then removed from the site after consultation with DCF and/ or police. The DCF hotline is 800-894-5533 (In-State only) or 603-271-6562.

Social Networking Sites-Groups

1. Closed groups, but not "hidden" groups, should be used for youth groups (J2A, Rite 13, administrators, confirmation, pilgrimage, mission trips, etc.).
2. Groups should have at least two unrelated adult administrators as well as at least two youth.
3. Invitations to youth to join the group should be made by youth administrators, unless a youth previously asked an adult administrator to invite him/her to join the group.
4. Behavioral covenants should be created to govern what content is appropriate and inappropriate for an online youth group.
5. Any material on any site (whether affiliated with the church or not) that raises suspicion that a child has been or will be abused/ neglected/ exploited should be immediately reported to the clergy and/ or DCF. If the material is on a church affiliated site, that material should be documented for church records and then removed from the site after consultation with DCF and/ or police.
6. Inappropriate material that does not raise suspicion that a child has been or will be abused/neglected/exploited should immediately be removed from the site.
7. Any content that details inappropriate behavior (outside of the bounds of the established behavioral covenant) during a church sponsored event or activity should be addressed by adult youth leaders and parents.
8. Social networking groups for youth should be open to parents of current members.
9. Parents should be informed that the content of youth pages or groups that are not sponsored by the church are NOT within the purview of adult youth leaders.

10. Adult leaders of youth groups and former youth members who, due to departure, removal from position, or are no longer eligible because they "aged-out" of a program should be immediately removed from digital communication with youth groups via social networking sites, list serves, etc.

Recommended Practices and Guidelines for Interactions with Adults:

Social Networking Sites-Relationships

1. Clergy are strongly encouraged to set very stringent privacy settings on any social networking profile to shield both adult and youth members from viewing content that may be inappropriate.
2. Individual personal profiles of clergy are to be used to interact with real friends, family and peers. Clergy should not submit "friend" requests to parishioners and others to whom they minister. The disparity of power may not give the other person the ability to decline such request.
3. Clergy who want to connect via a social networking website with parishioners are strongly encouraged to set up a group account that all parishioners may join. The purpose of having a personal profile and parish group is to create a line of privacy and maintain healthy boundaries with parishioners and real family, friends and colleagues.
4. Clergy should consider the impact of declining a "friend" request from parishioners. These encounters may create a tension in "real world" relationships. Clergy can direct "friend" requests from parishioners to the parish's group page.
5. Clergy who work directly with youth are encouraged to establish church sponsored digital communications groups to maintain contact with youth members.
6. When a cleric's ministry at a parish or other ministry setting ends, the cleric should remove parishioners as "friends" or contacts in all forms of digital communications.

Recommendations for digital communications and content:

Behavioral Covenants

1. Covenants should acknowledge that materials posted on Church Sponsored sites (and/ or group pages) are NOT CONFIDENTIAL.
2. Covenants should acknowledge that content deemed inappropriate will be removed from the site or group page.
3. Covenants for communities of faith should address the following issues:
 - Appropriate language
 - Eligibility of membership to join a social networking group. Things to consider include whether you have to be a member of a parish or youth group and whether there are age requirements/restrictions for participation for youth groups.
 - Loss of eligibility of membership and removal from the social networking group. Consider how and when members will be removed from the group due to moving away, leaving the faith community, becoming too old for youth group, clergy leaving to minister to another parish or exclusion from ministry positions for other reasons
 - Who, how and when may photos be tagged (members identified by name; for example, individuals may tag themselves in photos but should not tag others)

- Appropriate and inappropriate behavior of members (bullying, pictures that depict abuse, violence, sexual acts, etc.) and the consequence for inappropriate behavior.
- Compliance with mandated reporting laws regarding suspected abuse.

Recommendations for Video Chats, Blogs or Video Blogs

1. Adults should refrain from initiating video chats with youth.
2. Participants in a video chat or blog should consider what will be shown in the video such as their surroundings, their clothing/ state of dress, etc.
3. All transcripts of on-line text chats, video chats, blogs or video blogs should be saved when possible.
4. All clergy and adults engaged in ministry with youth should consider the content and nature of any post that will be read by or visible to youth. Your voice is often considered the voice of the church.

Recommendations for Publishing/Posting Content Online

1. Congregations must inform participants when they are being videoed because church buildings are not considered public space.
2. Any faith community that distributes video of its worship services or activities on the Web or via other broadcast media MUST post signs that indicate the service will be broadcast.
3. All communities of faith should take care to secure signed Media Release forms from adults and guardians of minor children who will or may participate in activities that may be photographed or videoed for distribution.
4. Photos that are published on church sponsored sites should not include name or contact information for minor children or youth.

Recommendations for Use of Email or Texting (Includes Twitter)

1. Email can be an appropriate and effective means of communicating basic factual information such as the time of an event, agenda for a meeting, text of a document, etc.
2. Email is not an appropriate communication method for matters that are pastorally or legally sensitive, emotionally charged or require extensive conversation.
3. If an email message is longer than a couple of sentences, then the matter might more properly be addressed via live conversation
4. Humor and sarcasm can be easily misinterpreted in an email.
5. All email users should take a moment to consider the ramifications of their message before clicking on the "send" or "reply to all" button.

Additional resources for congregations to develop specific guidelines and practices for social networking include:

www.churchsafety.com

provides general information about setting up a church website.

www.justinwise.net/social-media

includes the Ultimate List of Social Media Policies for Churches and Ministries and denominational templates.

Social Networking for Youth

Social networking sites, chat rooms, virtual worlds, and blogs are how teens and tweens socialize online. It is important for adults to teach them how to navigate these spaces safely. Those who minister with our children in the church setting also should know about safe networking skills and sites for children and youth. Among the pitfalls that come with online socializing are sharing too much information or posting comments, photos, or videos that can damage a reputation or hurt someone's feelings

Bullying and boundaries are also to be considered in the area of social networking. The best safe church practices should always be considered and utilized when there is communication via social networking sites or discussion of its use.

Those who minister with our youth need to be especially open and aware of the opportunity to discuss the topics of social networking and bullying. There are many resources for parents and adult leaders that can make a significant impact on keeping our youth safe.

Some suggestions include:

- Remind them that online actions have consequences
- Limit what they share
- Encourage online manners
- Encourage limiting access to profiles
- Encourage parents to talk with their kids about what they are doing online
- Let youth know about the church's practices and guidelines for social media and how it affects them

It is important to remember that best safe church practices should always be considered and utilized when there is communication via social media sites or discussion of its use.

Additional resources:

www.onguardonline.gov (Kids and Socializing Online). www.internetsafety.org

Appendix B

How to use the Following Consent Forms for Accessing Consumer Reports:

1. You may customize this form with your organization logo, address etc. We recommend leaving the language intact as it is compliant for all 50 states.
2. Enter your organization name wherever there are [].
3. Information that is italicized is state specific. If you are not in these states, you may remove this information.
4. Instruct your applicant/volunteer to enter their *full legal name*. IE: Susan instead of Sue.
5. List any other names as Alias or Maiden names.
6. If applicant has a common name, please include middle initial or full middle name for identification purposes.
7. Social Security Numbers are used *only for address history and alias name information*. It will *not* affect your applicant/volunteer credit score nor will it give your organization credit report information. (If you require this information, please contact us for details.)
8. Applicant/Volunteer MUST sign and date *both pages* of this document.
9. Store this signed document in a secure location. It is your legal proof you were given permission to conduct a background screening on the individual.

Please call 866-891-1954, or customerservice@securesearchpro.com if you have any questions.

DISCLOSURE AND AUTHORIZATION FOR EMPLOYER TO ACCESS CONSUMER REPORTS

[Enter organization contact information here]

AUTHORIZATION

I hereby authorize, without reservation, the obtaining of "consumer reports" or "investigative consumer" reports by [_____] at any time after receipt of this authorization and throughout my employment or volunteer service, if applicable. I further authorize and request, without reservation, any present or former employer, school, police department, state or federal agency, financial institution, division of motor vehicles, consumer reporting agencies, or other persons or agencies having knowledge about me to furnish SecureSearch or [_____] with any and all background information in their possession regarding me, so that my employment qualifications may be evaluated and/or reassessed. I also agree that a fax or photocopy of this authorization with my signature should have the same authority as the original.

By signing below, I certify: (1) that I have read and fully understand this disclosure and authorization; (2) that all of the information I am providing is true, complete, correct and accurate; and (3) that I have received the attached Summary of Your Rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act (15 U.S.C. §1681et seq.)

The following is information required in order for [_____] to obtain a complete consumer report:

FULL LEGAL NAME (First, Full Middle Name, last Name)	
SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER	DATE OF BIRTH*
STREET ADDRESS	
CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE	
DRIVER'S LICENSE NUMBER	ISSUING STATE
OTHER OR FORMER NAMES (AKA, Maiden Names, Married Names, Surnames, Etc.)	
CONSUMER'S SIGNATURE	DATE

** This information will be used for background screening purposes only*

Please list all Counties and States you have live in since the age of 18.

County	State	Name Used in County	Date From	Date To

Disclosure

In connection with your application for employment or volunteer service with: [_____] (including any independent contract for services) or when deciding whether to modify or continue your ongoing employment or (if hired) or service, [_____] may obtain a "consumer report" and/or an "Investigative consumer report" on you from SecureSearch, a consumer reporting agency, or from any third party, in strict compliance with both state and federal law. A consumer report is a communication of information by a consumer reporting agency bearing on your credit worthiness, credit standing, credit capacity, character, general reputation, personal characteristics, or mode of living which is used or expected to be used for purposes of serving as a factor in establishing your current and/or continuing eligibility for employment purposes. An investigative consumer report is a report obtained through personal interviews with individuals who may have knowledge of your character, general reputation, personal characteristics, or mode of living. The consumer reports or investigative consumer reports may contain information regarding your credit history(if applicable to position), criminal records, driving history records, education records, previous employment history ,social security traces, military records, professional licensure records, drug testing, government records, and other types of background information. You further understand that these reports may contain information concerning the reasons for termination of past employment. You are hereby notified that you have the right to make a timely request for the nature and scope of any investigative consumer report. You are further notified that, prior to being denied employment based in whole or in part on information obtained in the consumer report, you will be provided a copy of the report, the name, address and telephone number of the consumer reporting agency and a description in writing of your rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act. Inquiries to **SecureSearch should be directed to SecureSearch; Consumer Disputes; 558 Castle Pines Pkwy. #84-137, Castle Rock, CO 80108. 1(866) 891-1954.**

1. Have you ever been convicted or plead guilty before a court of any federal, state, or municipal criminal offense? (Excluding minor traffic violations) Yes No
If Yes, please explain:

2. Have you ever received deferred adjudication or similar disposition for any federal, state or municipal criminal offense?
Yes No If Yes, please explain:

3. Have you ever received probation or community supervision for any federal, state or municipal criminal offense?
Yes No If Yes, please explain:

4. Have you ever been convicted of any criminal offense In a country outside the jurisdiction of the United States?
Yes No If Yes, please explain:

5. As of the date of this authorization, do you have any pending criminal charges against you?
Yes No If Yes, please explain:

6. Have you ever served in the US Military? Yes No
7. If you answered YES to the above question, did you receive a DD214?
Yes No If Yes, can you present the document? Yes No
8. If you answered YES to the above question 6, did you receive an honorable discharge?
Yes No If No, please explain:

Consumer Signature

Date

DISCLOSURE AND AUTHORIZATION FOR EMPLOYER TO ACCESS CONSUMER REPORTS

(For Minors)

[Enter organization contact information here]

AUTHORIZATION

I hereby authorize, without reservation, the obtaining of "consumer reports" or "investigative consumer" reports by [_____] at any time after receipt of this authorization and throughout my employment or volunteer service, if applicable. I further authorize and request, without reservation, any present or former employer, school, police department, state or federal agency, financial institution, division of motor vehicles, consumer reporting agencies, or other persons or agencies having knowledge about me to furnish SecureSearch or [_____] with any and all background information in their possession regarding me, so that my employment qualifications may be evaluated and/or reassessed. I also agree that a fax or photocopy of this authorization with my signature should have the same authority as the original.

By signing below, I certify: (1) that I have read and fully understand this disclosure and authorization; (2) that all of the information I am providing is true, complete, correct and accurate; and (3) that I have received the attached Summary of Your Rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act (15 U.S.C. §1681et seq.)

The following is information required in order for [_____] to obtain a complete consumer report:

FULL LEGAL NAME (First, Full Middle Name, Last Name)	
STREET ADDRESS	
CITY STATE ZIP	COUNTY
SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER	DATE OF BIRTH *
DRIVER'S LICENSE NUMBER	ISSUING STATE
OTHER OR FORMER NAMES (AKA, Maiden Names, Married Names, Surnames, Etc.)	
_____ CONSUMER'S SIGNATURE	_____ DATE
_____ PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN SIGNATURE	_____ DATE
<p><i>By signing this form the Parent or Legal Guardian agrees and attests to the fact that the minor being screened has never plead guilty or been convicted of a juvenile or adult crime and that no cases are currently pending a court decision.</i></p>	

*This information will be used for background screening purposes only

Disclosure

In connection with your application for employment or volunteer service with: [_____] (including any independent contract for services) or when deciding whether to modify or continue your ongoing employment or (if hired) or service, [_____] may obtain a "consumer report" and/or an "Investigative consumer report" on you from SecureSearch, a consumer reporting agency, or from any third party, in strict compliance with both state and federal law. A consumer report is a communication of information by a consumer reporting agency bearing on your credit worthiness, credit standing, credit capacity, character, general reputation, personal characteristics, or mode of living which is used or expected to be used for purposes of serving as a factor in establishing your current and/or continuing eligibility for employment purposes. An investigative consumer report is a report obtained through personal interviews with individuals who may have knowledge of your character, general reputation, personal characteristics, or mode of living. The consumer reports or investigative consumer reports may contain information regarding your credit history (if applicable to position), criminal records, driving history records, education records, previous employment history, social security traces, military records, professional licensure records, drug testing, government records, and other types of background information. You further understand that these reports may contain information concerning the reasons for termination of past employment. You are hereby notified that you have the right to make a timely request for the nature and scope of any investigative consumer report. You are further notified that, prior to being denied employment based in whole or in part on information obtained in the consumer report, you will be provided a copy of the report, the name, address and telephone number of the consumer reporting agency and a description in writing of your rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act. Inquiries to SecureSearch should be directed to **SecureSearch; Consumer Disputes; 558 Castle Pines Pkwy. #84-137, Castle Rock, CO 80108. 1(866) 891-1954.**

Consumer Signature

Date

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature

Date

DISCLOSURE AND AUTHORIZATION FOR VOLUNTEERS

[IMPORTANT – PLEASE READ CAREFULLY BEFORE SIGNING AUTHORIZATION]

DISCLOSURE REGARDING BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION

In connection with your application to volunteer with [_____], which may be deemed "employment purposes" under the Fair Credit Reporting Act, you may be the subject of a "consumer report" and/or an "investigative consumer report" which may include information about your character, general reputation, personal characteristics, and/or mode of living, and which can involve personal interviews with sources such as your neighbors, friends or associates. These reports may contain information regarding your credit history, criminal history, social security verification, motor vehicle records ("driving records"), verification of your education or employment history, military records, professional licensure records, drug testing, or other background checks. Credit history will only be requested where such information is substantially related to the duties and responsibilities of the position for which you are applying. These reports may contain information concerning the reasons for termination of past employment. You have the right, upon written request made within a reasonable time, to request whether a consumer report has been run about you, and disclosure of the nature and scope of any investigative consumer report and to request a copy of your report. Please be advised that the nature and scope of the most common form of investigative consumer report obtained with regard to applicants for volunteer services is an investigation into your education and/or employment history conducted by SecureSearch, Consumer Disputes, 558 Castle Pines Pkwy., #84-137, Castle Rock, CO 80108, (866) 891-1954, www.securesearchpro.com, or another outside organization. The scope of this notice and authorization is all encompassing, however, allowing the Company to obtain from any outside organization all manner of consumer reports and investigative consumer reports now and throughout the course of your volunteer service to the extent permitted by law. As a result, you should carefully consider whether to exercise your right to request disclosure of the nature and scope of any investigative consumer report.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND AUTHORIZATION

AUTHORIZATION

I acknowledge receipt of the DISCLOSURE REGARDING BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION AND A SUMMARY OF YOUR RIGHTS UNDER THE FAIR CREDIT REPORTING ACT and certify that I have read and understand both of those documents. I hereby authorize, without reservation, the obtaining of "consumer reports" or "investigative consumer" reports by [_____] at any time after receipt of this authorization and throughout my volunteer service, if applicable. I further authorize and request, without reservation, any present or former employer, school or university (public or private), any law enforcement agency, administrator, state or federal agency, institution, division of motor vehicles, information service bureau, insurance company, consumer reporting agencies, or other persons or agencies to furnish any and all background information requested by **SecureSearch, Consumer Disputes, 558 Castle Pines Pkwy., #84-137, Castle Rock, CO 80108, (866) 891-1954, www.securesearchpro.com**, another outside organization acting on behalf of the Company, and/or the Company itself. I also agree that a fax, electronic or photocopy of this Authorization with my signature shall be as valid as the original

The following is information required in order for [_____] to obtain a complete consumer report:

FULL LEGAL NAME (First, Full Middle Name, last Name)	
SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER	DATE OF BIRTH*
STREET ADDRESS	
CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE	
DRIVER'S LICENSE NUMBER	ISSUING STATE
OTHER OR FORMER NAMES (AKA, Maiden Names, Married Names, Surnames, Etc.)	

CONSUMER'S SIGNATURE	DATE
----------------------	------

* This information will be used for background screening purposes only.

Please list all Counties and States you have live in since the age of 18.

County	State	Name Used in County	Date From	Date To

Appendix C

ADULT ADVISOR REGISTRATION FORM

Event Name _____

Event Date _____

Event Location _____

Name of Adult Advisor _____ Gender Female Male

Home Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Parish _____

Rector's Name _____ Rector's Signature _____

**Community Agreement for All Participants
(Read and sign before attending the youth event.)**

Throughout the youth event, I agree:

1. Not to bring or use illegally controlled substances, including drugs and alcoholic beverages. Adult leaders must be made aware before the event of the use of prescription drugs. The possession and use of tobacco or any tobacco product is prohibited, including cigarettes. I understand that my parent/guardian will be notified and I will automatically be sent home at my own expense if I violate this agreement;
2. to respect the needs and property of others; and not to participate in any inappropriate sexual or violent behavior;
3. to participate in all scheduled activities including community chores, and not to leave the grounds without the permission of an adult advisor; and
4. try to have fun!

I understand that agreements 1, 2, 3 and 4 are designed to make the youth event the best and safest event possible for everyone and that if I violate any of these agreements the leadership team, including the Diocesan Youth Missioner, will have the authority to determine appropriate consequences.

In accordance with Diocese of New Hampshire Safe Church policy, I agree not to:

- a. provide children or youth with non-sacramental alcohol, illegal drugs or pornography;
- b. consume non-sacramental alcohol or illegal drugs or misuse of legal drugs at any children's or youth event;
- c. be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or the misuse of legal drugs at any children's or youth event;
- d. engage in illegal behavior or permit other adults or children or youth to engage in illegal behavior;
- e. engage in any sexual, romantic, illicit or secretive relationship or conduct with any child or youth;
- f. discuss my own sexual activities or fantasies with children or youth.

Firearms and concealed weapons are prohibited at any church activity. Rectors may make special exceptions for off-duty police officers or others required to carry firearms.

Parishes are required to do background checks on all existing and future employees and all existing and future volunteers who regularly work with children or youth.

I understand that all of this is designed to make the youth event the best and safest event possible for everyone and that if I violate any of these agreements the leadership team will have the authority to determine appropriate consequences.

I have read the above and agree to live by these standards for throughout this event.

Participant's Signature

Date

YOUTH REGISTRATION FORM

Event Name _____

Event Date _____

Event Location _____

Name _____ Date of Birth _____ Grade _____

Gender Female Male Home Phone _____ Parish _____

Parent/Guardian _____ Phone _____

Street _____ City _____ Zip _____

Community Agreement for All Participants
(Read and sign before attending the youth event.)

Throughout the youth event, I agree:

1. Not to bring or use illegally controlled substances, including drugs and alcoholic beverages. Adult leaders must be made aware before the event of the use of prescription drugs. The possession and use of tobacco or any tobacco product is prohibited, including cigarettes. I understand that my parent/guardian will be notified and I will automatically be sent home at my own expense if I violate this agreement;
2. to respect the needs and property of others; and not to participate in any inappropriate sexual or violent behavior;
3. to participate in all scheduled activities including community chores, and not to leave the grounds without the permission of an adult advisor; and
4. try to have fun!

I understand that agreements 1, 2, 3 and 4 are designed to make the youth event the best and safest event possible for everyone and that if I violate any of these agreements the leadership team, including the Diocesan Youth Missioner, will have the authority to determine appropriate consequences.

In accordance with Diocese of New Hampshire Safe Church policy, I agree not to:

I have read the above and agree to live by these standards for throughout this event.

Participant's Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian's Signature

Date

Name _____ Parish _____

MEDICAL RELEASE

_____ has my permission to attend the youth event at

Full name of minor

_____ I understand that the event will be under the supervision and direction of adult leaders and sponsors approved by the Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire. I waive any claim against the Diocese/Church and its approved leaders or sponsors. In case of medical emergency, I understand every reasonable effort will be made to contact me. If I/we cannot be reached, I/we, the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of, a minor, hereby authorize and consent to the physician selected by the approved leader, sponsor or chaperone to hospitalize and select proper treatment including but not limited to injection, anesthesia or surgery for my child.

Date _____ Signature _____ Relationship _____

Family Physician _____ Phone _____

Family Dentist _____ Phone _____

Insurance Company _____ Phone _____

Name of Policyholder _____ Policy # _____

(please attach a copy of participant's medical card, if available)

Drug or Food Allergies _____

Medications _____

Special Needs (including dietary) _____

If I can't be reached, contact _____

Phone _____ Relationship _____

Second Emergency Contact _____

Phone _____ Relationship _____

Youth Media and photo release form

The undersigned participant does agree to grant to The Church named above permission to record on film, videotape, or audio tape, his or her participation at the Youth events. He or she further agrees that any or all of the material recorded may be used, in any form, as part of any future production(s) made by the Church named above and that such use shall be without payment of fees, royalties, special credit, or other compensation. This form shall be valid until such time that it is revoked by the undersigned.

Participant's Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian's Signature

Date

EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE TRANSPORTATION PERMISSION FORM

I grant my child _____ permission to be transported by drivers in compliance with Safe Church Policy in the Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire to or from programs related to a parish or the Diocese.

Parent will drive if needed: Yes _____ No _____
How many can travel in your car with seatbelts? (Please include the driver) _____

The undersigned parent agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire or any of its Advisors from any claim for damages resulting to my child, unless said injuries were proven to be the result of the negligence of the Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire or its Advisors or agents.

Furthermore, I agree to allow my child to receive medical treatment that might result from injuries received, providing such treatment is advised by a licensed physician. I accept full responsibility for all cost of such emergency treatment.

Youth Member Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

I give permission for my child to have his/her picture taken for the purpose of the Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire usage in Newsletters and/or the NH Diocesan web site. __yes __no.

MEDICAL INFORMATION:

Is your child allergic to anything? _____ If yes, to what: _____

Treatment required: _____

Is your child on medication: _____ If yes, what and why _____

Dosage and frequency _____

Can your child administer this her/himself? _____

Family Physician _____ Phone # _____

Family Dentist _____ Phone # _____

Family Phone Number: _____

Emergency contact: _____ Phone # _____

Medical Plan Information (company & policy number if applicable) _____

THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR DIOCESAN YOUTH EVENTS

adopted by the Bishop and Diocesan Council
June 13, 2013

Throughout our scriptural tradition and interpretation, God calls us as stewards to care and nurture creation and all that is in it. As Christians, we believe that Jesus modeled for us the full potential of building healthy, honest and compassionate relationships rooted in justice and peace for the world. According to our baptismal covenant, as Christians “we will strive for justice and peace among all people and respect the dignity of every human being.”

Youth and children are not just our future; they are with us now, and they are essential in our present life and ministry. Consequently, the Diocese of New Hampshire recognizes its responsibility to provide a safe and secure environment for all participants at diocesan sponsored programs involving youth.

The diocese is committed to open communication and dialogue on all these issues. The standards will be evaluated and updated as needed. Anyone interested in further information regarding these standards may contact The Rev. Canon Hannah Anderson at the diocesan office, (603) 224-1914 ext. 126.

STANDARDS

(For all Diocesan Youth Ministry (DYM) sponsored programs)

These standards apply to all Diocesan Youth Ministry sponsored events. For the purpose of this document, youth is understood to be any person under the age of 18. Adult is understood to mean any person 18 years of age or older.

1. **FORMS.** All participants or staff of any age must complete and sign a registration form and the community agreement on it before participating in each Diocesan Youth Ministry sponsored event. All youth must have a parent/guardian's signature on the completed medical permission form.
2. **ADULT LEADERS.** (advisors, chaperones, counselors, program leaders, chaplains) must be at least 18 years of age and at least two years older than the oldest eligible youth participant. No youth event in the diocese shall have fewer than two adult advisors. The diocese will adhere to the national church standard which requires at least one adult for every five youth. The adult leadership will reflect the gender make up of the youth attending, so that if there are male and female youth, there must be male and female adult advisors. Experienced adult youth workers are to be included with adults who are newcomers to youth ministry.
3. **ATTENDANCE.** All participants must remain at the event through its entirety. Late arrivals and early departures must be negotiated with the Diocesan Youth Coordinator before an event begins. Only registered participants may attend the event. This is intended to provide a safe and secure environment for all participants and to honor the integrity of the community that forms when people gather.
4. **DISCRIMINATION.** We will abide by the Diocesan Affirmative Action Policy. "It is the policy of the Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire to provide equal employment and volunteer services opportunities to all persons without regard to race, color, age, sex, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, or those who have AIDS, AIDS Related Complex (ARC), or who test positive for the HIV antibody; national origin or ancestry, qualified handicapped or veteran status; in all employment matters, including hiring, training, compensation, promotions, transfers, terminations, or retirement practices; except with respect to those bona fide instances which require active Episcopal Church membership. Further, this policy shall apply, as appropriate, to appointments to all Boards and Commissions."
5. **SMOKING.** There shall be no smoking. The possession and use of tobacco or any tobacco products is prohibited.
6. **ALCOHOL AND DRUGS.** No legally controlled substances, including drugs and alcoholic beverages, may be used or be in the possession of any adults or youth at DYM sponsored events. If a person violates this agreement she/he will be sent home at her/his own expense. Adult leaders must be made aware before any event of the use of prescription drugs by any participating youth. (Note: Wine is permitted for use in the celebration of the Eucharist.)
7. **TRAINING.** All adult and youth members of the Diocesan Youth Committee, and all adult advisors sent by their parishes, must complete the six-hour diocesan training for the prevention of adult sexual misconduct and child abuse. In addition, adult members of the Diocesan Youth Committee and adult advisors must complete all of the forms found in the appendices A, B, C of the Diocese of New Hampshire Safe Church Policy.

All adult advisors must send copies of their training certification and completed forms from the manual to the Diocesan Youth Coordinator prior to any event.

Any person convicted of prior incidents of sexual misconduct or abuse will not be used in any capacity for DYM sponsored events. Any person who is accused of improper behavior will be removed from positions that would give him/her access to youth, until the situation is satisfactorily resolved.

8. **SEXUAL MISCONDUCT.** No form of sexual misconduct will be tolerated. Sexual misconduct includes, but is not limited to: sexual abuse, sexual molestation, sexual harassment, and sexual exploitation. In addition, presenting sexually provocative material or language outside an educational setting is considered inappropriate. (Youth leaders must use their discretion in planning programs).
9. **ABUSE.** Physical abuse is defined as deliberate bodily harm of a person by another. Emotional abuse is the spoken or unspoken devaluing of another, such as, name calling, or indicating that he/she is worthless. Sexual abuse is any sexual involvement or sexual contact between a youth and an adult or between youth when there is an unequal distribution of power, such as, when one person is significantly older, larger, stronger, or holds more authority. Such abuse is unacceptable behavior and may be grounds for sending a perpetrator home from an event.
10. **BASIC NEEDS.** We want DYM programs to be fun and refreshing. No one is to be deprived of the basic human needs of food, shelter, sleep, safety and clothing at any event.
11. **REPORTING.** Any person who believes he/she has experienced improper behavior is urged to report it to the proper authorities: an adult leader, Diocesan Youth Coordinator and/or the Pastoral Response Coordinator of the diocese as soon as possible. Any adult advisor who receives a report of suspected or actual misconduct must report it to the proper authorities listed above. Questions about child abuse reporting may be directed to the New Hampshire Department of Children and Families 1-800-894-5533 or The Rev. Canon Hannah Anderson, Canon to the Ordinary, 224-1914 ext. 126.
12. **ACCOMMODATION.** All overnight programs will provide safe, supervised sleeping arrangements. This will mean gender-specific sleeping areas. A single adult and a single youth will never sleep alone together. In addition, separate bathroom/shower facilities by gender (or specific times to use a single facility) will be provided

Appendix D

Ministry Description for the Position of Safe Church Minister

Objective:

The objective of the Safe Church Minister is to ensure that Safe Church practices and policies are clearly communicated for every congregation and faithfully followed in the life and practices of the congregation.

Responsibilities:

- § Be informed and remain current on the Safe Church policy as established by the Bishop's office.
- § See to it that the local congregation adopts a Safe Church policy that at minimum meets the Diocesan standard. (This policy should be ratified by the vestry/Bishop's committee of the local congregation.)
- § Be responsible for the clear display of the congregation's policy so that all members might have ample opportunity to be informed of this policy.
- § Serve as consultant to the clergy person and vestry/Bishop's committee regarding Safe Church practices.
- § Serve as overseer of these practices, reporting all questionable or non-standard practices to the clergy person or warden.
- § Ensure that all required screening has occurred for those mandated by the Safe Church Policy. (This does not mean that the Safe Church Minister should have access to the screening results.)
- § Ensure that those mandated by the Safe Church policy have attended the necessary Diocesan trainings.
- § Ensure that the annual Safe Church audit is completed as required.
- § Cooperate with convocation peers when appropriate, including assisting nearby congregations in the completion of their own annual audit.
- § Communicate with the Diocesan Safe Church Coordinator when necessary.

Qualifications:

- § Completion of Diocesan Safe Church training.
- § Active member (lay or ordained) of the congregation (excluding the rector/vicar)
- § Successful completion of mandated background checks

For questions regarding Safe Church records and training schedules, contact Lynn Eaton, leaton@nhepiscopal.org. For questions regarding Safe Church policy, practice and training curriculum, contact The Rev. Canon Hannah Anderson, handerson@nhepiscopal.org or by phone at 603-224-1914 ext. 126.

Appendix E

SAFE CHURCH AUDIT FORM FOR CALENDAR YEAR *(year)*

Submit to the Bishop's Office by *(date)*

CONGREGATION _____ LOCATION _____

I. MANDATED CRIMINAL AND MOTOR VEHICLE BACKGROUND CHECKS – required for all employees, safe church ministers, volunteers who regularly work with children, wardens and treasurers.

Please list (use separate sheet if necessary)	(√)	NH Criminal <u>Complete</u>	DMV <u>Complete</u>	SecureSearch <u>Complete</u>
All Employees				
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Volunteers who regularly work with children or youth				
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wardens				
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Treasurer				
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safe Church Minister				
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<u>NH Criminal Complete</u>	<u>DMV Complete</u>	<u>SecureSearch Complete</u>
Eucharistic Visitors, Pastoral Visitors, etc.			
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If background checks are pending or incomplete, attached separate sheet with explanation.

II. MANDATED SAFE CHURCH TRAININGS

Wardens, lay employees, Eucharistic visitors, pastoral visitors, Stephen ministers, EFM mentors, all regular Sunday school teachers, nursery workers, and volunteers who regularly work with children or youth are required to attend the Diocesan Safe Church trainings (includes initial and refresher trainings.).

Have all mandated members complied with this requirement? Yes No

If not, please list those individuals who have not yet attended training. *(use a separate sheet if needed)*

	(√) Employee	Warden	Volunteer
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

III. Has your congregation adopted the diocesan Safe Church Policy & Procedures and registered additional requirements with the Bishop’s Office? (as outlined on page 3 of the Diocesan Safe Church Policy)
 Yes No

If not, when do you expect it to be adopted? _____

Please briefly describe how you have communicated your safe church policy with the wider congregation.

Where is your policy displayed for the congregation to review?

IV. The Safe Church Minister for 2014 will be _____

Safe Church Minister contact information (mailing address, phone numbers, email address):

V. Has your congregation fully complied with the Safe Church policies and practices over the past year?

Yes No

If there are areas where you are out of compliance, please identify and explain. *(use a separate sheet if needed)*

VI. Is there anything else you'd like to share with the Bishop's Office and Safe Church Trainers as they seek to make our diocese a safe community? *(use a separate sheet if needed)*

VII. Please list non-church groups using/meeting in your church buildings. (i.e. scouts, daycare, pre-school, AA, etc.) *(use a separate sheet if needed)*

	Meet daily, weekly, monthly?	Insurance Certificate on file at church?
_____	_____	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
_____	_____	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
_____	_____	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
_____	_____	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
_____	_____	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
_____	_____	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
_____	_____	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

SIGNATURES

_____	_____	_____
Safe Church Minister	Print Name	Date

_____	_____	_____
Vestry/Bishop's Committee Member	Print Name	Date

_____	_____	_____
Rector/Vicar/Priest-in-Charge	Print Name	Date

For questions regarding Safe Church records, questions and schedules, contact Lynn Eaton, leaton@nhepiscopal.org. For questions regarding Safe Church policy, practice and training curriculum, contact Hannah Anderson, handerson@nhepisocopal.org. They may be reached by phone at 603-224-1914 ext. 126.

DIOCESE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
SAFE CHURCH POLICY
2013-2014

CONGREGATION CONTACTS FOR

(NAME OF CONGREGATION/MISSION)

OUR RECTOR/PRIEST IS _____

HOME PHONE: _____ WORK PHONE: _____

CELL PHONE: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

OUR SENIOR WARDEN IS: _____

HOME PHONE: _____ WORK PHONE: _____

CELL PHONE: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

OUR SAFE CHURCH MINISTER IS: _____

HOME PHONE: _____ WORK PHONE: _____

CELL PHONE: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

IF ADDITIONS ARE MADE TO THIS DIOCESAN SAFE CHURCH POLICY AND ADOPTED BY YOUR CONGREGATION, PLEASE LIST THOSE ADDITIONS BELOW (OR ON A SEPARATE SHEET) AND SUBMIT THEM TO THE BISHOP'S OFFICE.

SAFE-CHURCH SURVEY TOOL FOR USE DURING ANNUAL AUDIT

CHURCH

Because the church remains darkened through most of the week, the only time that doors from either the outside or the narthex should be unlocked is when someone—either staff or authorized volunteers—is present in the church. The doors should never be left unlocked when the lights are off and all people have left the space.

CHOIR ROOM

The unsecured access doorway to the church and its emergency exits must remain unlocked at all times. This requires that there be two adults trained in safe-church policy be present in the choir room whenever children or youth gather in that space. The door to the narthex must remain locked at all times unless authorized people—staff or volunteer—are present.

HANDICAPPED BATH

This room presents a particular exposure to allow for abuse to occur. Because it cannot be locked, thereby preventing legitimate use of the room, adults present must monitor closely the use of this room by children or youth.

NARTHEX

Use of this entryway by groups using the parish house is to be discouraged. Sight lines do not readily allow for supervised use of this hall and stairway. Therefore, the exterior door should remain locked, even when the Great Hall or downstairs classrooms are in use by parish or outside groups.

BASEMENT HALLWAY

This area presents a particular exposure to allow for abuse to occur, especially in the area of the wide storage shelf under the stairway. Short of securing this area with an additional doorway, the storage shelf should be utilized for storage of boxes or other items, effectively reducing its exposure to abuse of children and youths in that area.

BASEMENT

This area presents a high degree of exposure for abuse to occur. Therefore, the doors to the basement storage area and archive room should remain locked at all times. This is especially important when the exterior doors to the Church, the Narthex and Parish House are left unlocked.

CELLAR

This area also presents a high degree of exposure for abuse to occur. Therefore, the door to the cellar should remain locked unless one of the sextons is present in the cellar itself. This is especially important when the exterior doors to the Narthex or Parish House are left unlocked.

CLASSROOMS

The doors to the three classrooms must remain unlocked at all times. This requires that there be two adults trained in safe-church policy present in the classroom area whenever children or youth gather in that space. The doors to the classrooms must remain open at all times unless authorized people—staff or volunteer—are present.

NURSERY

The door to the nursery must remain locked at all times. When a child is delivered to the nursery, the parents must register them with the nursery caregiver, and sign the child out when they return to pick up their child. A list of persons authorized to deliver or retrieve each child must be on file with the nursery caregiver. When children are present, two adults trained in safe-church policy must be present in the nursery regardless whenever one or more children are placed in the care of the nursery staff.

GREAT HALL

The doors to the Great Hall must remain unlocked at all times. This requires that there be two adults trained in safe-church policy present in the classroom area whenever children or youth gather in that space.

THE STORAGE CLOSET ABOVE THE GREAT HALL

This area presents a high degree of exposure for abuse to occur. Therefore, the doors to the closet should remain locked at all times.

THE KITCHEN

This area also presents a high degree of exposure for abuse to occur. Therefore the door to the kitchen should remain unlocked and open as much as possible. Two adults trained in safe-church policy must be present in the kitchen whenever children or youth gather in that space.

LIBRARY

When left unlocked, this area also presents a high degree of exposure for abuse to occur. Therefore the door to the library should be locked at all times, remaining unlocked only when staff or authorized volunteers are present in the room itself. Two adults trained in safe-church policy must be present in the library whenever children or youth gather in that space.

PARISH HALL STAIRWAY

All groups using the parish house are required to use this entryway. Even so, sight lines do not readily allow for supervised use of this hall and stairway. Therefore, the exterior door should remain locked as much as is possible, even when the Great Hall or downstairs classrooms are in use by parish or outside groups.

PARISH OFFICE

When left unlocked, this area also presents a high degree of exposure for abuse to occur. This room may remain unlocked only when staff members or authorized volunteers are present in the office. Otherwise, the room should be locked.

OTHER OFFICES

When left unlocked, these areas also present a high degree of exposure for abuse to occur. These rooms may remain unlocked only when staff members or authorized volunteers are present in the office. Otherwise, the rooms should be locked.

PARISH HOUSE BATHROOMS

These rooms present a particular exposure to allow for abuse to occur. Because they cannot be locked, thereby preventing legitimate use of the rooms, adults present must monitor closely the use of these rooms by children or youth.

THE STORAGE CLOSET UNDER THE PARISH HOUSE STAIRWAY

This area presents a high degree of exposure for abuse to occur. Therefore, the door to the closet should remain locked at all times.

CHURCH HOUSE CLASSROOMS

This area presents an extremely high degree of exposure for abuse to occur. The door to these rooms may remain unlocked only when staff members or authorized volunteers are present. Otherwise, the space should be locked. This requires that there be two adults trained in safe-church policy present in the classroom area whenever children or youth gather in that space.

This survey form may be customized to reflect areas in your church building.

Appendix to Safe Church Policy

Resource for Congregations

Acknowledgment, Release, and Signature for Inclusion in Application or with Church Deployment Office Form

To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this application is complete and accurate. I understand that providing false information is grounds for not hiring me or choosing me for a volunteer position or for my discharge if I have already been hired or chosen. I authorize any person or organization, whether or not identified in this application, to provide any information concerning my previous employment, education, credit history, driving record, criminal conviction record, sexual offender registry or other qualifications for my employment or volunteering. I also authorize _____ [Congregation] to request and receive such information.

If hired or chosen, I agree to be bound by _____ [Congregation's] policies and procedures, including but not limited to its ***Policies for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Sexual Exploitation of Adults and Code of Conduct for Persons Having Pastoral Relationships***. I understand that these may be changed, withdrawn, added to or interpreted at any time at the _____ [Congregation's] sole discretion and without prior notice to me.

I also understand that my employment or volunteering may be terminated, or any offer or acceptance of employment or volunteering withdrawn, at any time, with or without cause, and with or without prior notice at the option of _____ [Congregation] or myself. Nothing contained in this application or in any pre-employment or pre-volunteering communication is intended to or creates a contract between myself and _____ [Congregation] for employment, volunteering or the providing of any benefit.

I have read and understand the above provisions.

Applicant's Signature _____ Date _____

Clergy/Warden Signature _____ Date _____