
Protection of Children, Youth and Other Vulnerable Persons

A policy to assist in ministering to our children, our youth,
and other Vulnerable Persons by fostering a safe
environment

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Resurrection,
Halifax, Nova Scotia

As approved and adopted by
the Council of the congregation
on March , 2007

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SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

A. UNDERSTANDING THE NEED

Reducing The Risk Of Sexual Abuse Of Vulnerable Persons

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Resurrection (Resurrection) has a mandate to minister to individuals, families, adults, youth and children. Children by nature are trusting and possess a childhood innocence that is a God given gift. As a result they readily place their faith in adults who care for them. In that context, Resurrection recognizes that sexual abuse of minors and vulnerable persons constitutes a hideous breach of trust in a human relationship, a breach that can have devastating consequences for all involved. In response, it is Resurrection's commitment and responsibility to safeguard that trust by providing reasonable protective care to all preschoolers, children, youth and other vulnerable persons (Vulnerable Persons) involved in ministries or programs of Resurrection.

It Can Happen In Any Church

Incidents of abuse can occur in any church - including Resurrection. Churches have traditionally accepted the services of anyone expressing an interest in working as a volunteer with children, youth or other vulnerable persons. Of note, researchers in the field of child sexual abuse currently indicate that no single profile fits the various perpetrators of abuse. Historical statistics also indicate that if child abuse occurred in a church, a respected member would likely be the perpetrator.

B. PRESENTATION OF THE POLICY

The topic of abuse and the introduction of the Policy to Protect Children, Youth and Other Vulnerable Persons (the Policy) in Resurrection will create a variety of reactions among church members. Many will solidly support the adoption of the Policy. Some will have questions while some may have reservations.

The need for such a policy will be presented in introductory sessions and opportunity for feedback will be provided. During the presentation of the Policy, the following key points will be made:

- Sexual abuse can happen in the church.
- One incident can devastate a child, a family and the church.
- The legal liabilities can be enormous.
- Church leaders may be held liable.
- A policy can reduce risk through relatively simple procedures.

On an ongoing basis, members of the congregation will be kept informed of the key issues pertaining to abuse and why a decision was made to establish this Policy. This will continue to nurture a commitment within the church membership to maintain a safe environment for all Vulnerable Persons. The climate in these presentations will be one of hope. The church community will realize that Resurrection is taking action to address the real needs of our community. The focus will be upon the great responsibility God has given to us to care for our children.

C. IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

This policy was developed to reflect the 2007 organizational construct and physical building layout of Resurrection. The Policy will be reviewed regularly (at least every three years) and amended as required.

Administrative and minor changes to the Policy will be made electronically and posted on the church bulletin board and/or the Resurrection website. Any significant changes to this Policy will be communicated as required and will include issuance of an updated hard-copy.

D. DEFINITIONS

Child – Someone who is under 19 years of age.

Employee - A person who receives a salary from Resurrection and who has been appointed or otherwise designated as responsible for any ministry or activity involving Vulnerable Persons.

Sexual Abuse - The use of one's authority or power, either explicitly or implicitly, to coerce, threaten, force, or persuade another person into sexual activities, or to punish a person for their refusal to participate in sexual activities.

Vulnerable Person – Any child, or youth, or an adult who is by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness, unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

Volunteer – A person, not a paid employee, who has been appointed or otherwise designated as responsible for any ministry or activity involving Vulnerable Persons, but does not include Youth.

Youth – A subset of the “child” age group that would include ages from post elementary age (11) up to and including age 18.

E. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Resurrection is grateful to the many resources and policies in place including ELCIC's Protection of Children, Youth and Other Vulnerable People - Policy and CEASE (Clergy and Educator Abuse Survivors Empowered) on both of which this Policy heavily draws.

SECTION II: COMMITMENTS AND GENERAL PHILOSOPHY

A. COMMITMENTS

Resurrection makes the following commitments to Vulnerable Persons, and those who minister to and with them:

1. All Employees and Volunteers who work with Vulnerable Persons will be screened using the guidelines in Section IV of this Policy. Of note, individuals who have committed physical or sexual abuse, whether or not convicted, will not be permitted to be involved in these types of ministry.
2. The Church Council will set aside 30 minutes annually to review the scope and intent of the Policy.
3. All Employees and Volunteers who work with Vulnerable Persons will be made familiar with the guidelines contained in this Policy.
4. All Employees and Volunteers who work with preschoolers, children and youth will be made familiar with the definition of child sexual abuse.
5. The policies to prevent sexual abuse are regarded seriously and will be enforced.

B. GENERAL PHILOSOPHY

For everyone's protection, an Employee or Volunteer should never place him/herself in the situation of being alone with a Vulnerable Person. The best supervisory model would have two unrelated Employees or Volunteers, preferably one male and one female, present during activities involving Vulnerable Persons.

However, it is recognized that this best model is often not realistic or practical and therefore this Policy aims to ensure that whenever an Employee or Volunteer works with one or more Vulnerable Persons, additional support and supervision is provided through an environment of openness. In particular, no spaces in which activities involving Vulnerable Persons are taking place will be locked, and other members of Resurrection

will be free to, and are indeed encouraged to, look into or enter those spaces at any time (without unduly disrupting learning and other activities). Spaces with doors that need to be closed will have windows installed in the doors.

SECTION III: STAFFING AND SUPERVISION GUIDELINES

Resurrection Employees and Volunteers should always conduct themselves appropriately, being an example of integrity, respect and honesty to those in their care. The desire is to provide a safe and loving environment where Vulnerable Persons feel comfortable and are protected.

A. GENERAL

1. When Supervision is Required

Programs that involve Vulnerable Persons must always include adequate supervision. Supervision should also be maintained before and after the event until all Vulnerable Persons are in the custody of their parents or legal guardians.

2. Who Can Provide Supervision

- (a) Official supervision shall only be provided by Employees or Volunteers as defined in this Policy.
- (b) Youth assistants and adult assistants may be involved in activities in conjunction with, but not in place of, the designated or appointed Employee or Volunteer.

3. Parental Permission

Consent of a parent or legal guardian must be obtained before transporting a Vulnerable Person.

Written consent must be obtained before holding overnight events. Something as simple as an email to Resurrection, a hand written note, or a drop-off sheet signed by the parent or guardian at the commencement of the activity, will be sufficient written consent.

Verbal consent should be obtained in cases where an Employee or Volunteer knows in advance that they will be alone with a Vulnerable Person for an activity.

B. NURSERY, SUNDAY SCHOOL AND CONFIRMATION CLASSES

The Policy as it applies to the Nursery, Sunday School and Confirmation Classes reflects that there is generally only one teacher available for each group or classroom. As such, and as described in the General Philosophy section, the Policy strives to maintain an open environment where others within the church building can freely move around and look into or enter classroom spaces at will.

1. All Sunday School and Nursery staff must be approved Employees or Volunteers (as per this Policy).
2. Children should never be left unattended. Parents should not drop off a child in a classroom without an Employee or Volunteer present.
3. Sunday School classroom doors may be closed to limit noise, but shall not in any circumstances be locked.
4. The nursery will be staffed by at least one Employee or Volunteer. The top half of the nursery door shall remain open (unless circumstance require it to be closed for a very short time).
5. A sign-up sheet indicating child's name, parent's name and parent's location should be provided in the nursery. (*This is a voluntary form and remains a parent's/ primary care-giver's responsibility to make use of this form.*)
6. Pre-school children should be released only to a parent, guardian, or adult family member known to the Volunteer.
7. The duty Church Council member shall:
 - (a) shortly after 10:00 AM on each Sunday morning, walk past the rooms where Sunday School is in session, and look in through the window to ensure each class is properly staffed and supervised ;
 - (b) ensure the Allen Street door, the wheelchair ramp door, and the kitchen door are locked prohibiting access from the outside within 10 minutes after church service starts;
 - (c) visit the Nursery at least once during the service.
8. Confirmation Faith Buddies or other congregational mentors that have one on one relationships with Vulnerable Persons should, whenever possible, meet with their protégé in the church building. If meetings are scheduled away from the

church, then those meetings should be in a public environment such as Tim Horton's, a park setting, a library or a community centre.

9. When in doubt, confer with the pastor or a church council member.

C. DAY ACTIVITIES AWAY FROM CHURCH PREMISES, AND OVERNIGHT EVENTS

1. Activities conducted on or away from church property shall be pre-approved by Resurrection's pastor or the President or Vice-President of church council. In giving approval, attention should be paid to the nature of the activity and the supervisory model being envisioned. Without this approval, the activity will not be deemed a Resurrection activity.
2. Parents must be notified at least one week prior to the activity.
3. Day activities away from church premises should generally have a minimum of two Employees or Volunteers, and a minimum ratio of one Employee or Volunteer for every five children or one Employee or Volunteer for every nine youths.
4. Overnight activities must have two Employees or Volunteers, preferably unrelated, with a minimum ratio of one Employee or Volunteer for every five children or one Employee or Volunteer for every nine youths. Each Employee or Volunteer must have an assigned group of children/youth for whom they will be responsible during the overnight event.
5. When transporting Vulnerable Persons is involved in an activity, all drivers must have a valid driver's license and current automobile insurance. Adherence to Nova Scotia motor vehicle car seat and seatbelt regulations is also essential.
6. When in doubt, confer with the pastor or a church council member.

D. WASHROOM GUIDELINES

Parents are to be encouraged to take their children to visit the washroom prior to each class or service. This recommendation is to be communicated to parents at the beginning of each new school year, and throughout the year to newcomers.

It is also noted that the washroom guidelines are drafted to reflect that Resurrection does not have any washrooms with cubicles. All washrooms are for the use of one person at a time.

1. Nursery

As a general rule, Volunteers in the nursery will not be expected to change diapers. Accordingly, the following rules and steps will apply:

- (a) Determine if a parent or primary caregiver is available. If not, diaper changing must always take place where the person doing the diaper changing is in an open area where another Volunteer or adult can see.
- (b) Youth assistants must have appropriate training before being permitted to change diapers.

2. Preschool and ages 5-7

- (a) All children under 5, and most children under 7, should not be sent to the washroom alone.
- (b) The Employee or Volunteer should never be alone with a child in a washroom with the door shut. If one child must go to the washroom, the Employee or Volunteer should escort the child to the washroom and prop the outside door open, remain outside the washroom door and wait for the child before escorting him or her back to the classroom.
- (c) When preschool children need assistance in the washroom, the Employee or Volunteer may enter to assist only when the door remains open or ajar. The Employee or Volunteer should **NEVER** enter the washroom of a child over 5 years of age.
- (d) In light of the fact that most abusers are male, and for the protection of male Employees or Volunteers, it would be wise for men to avoid assisting boys or girls of any age in the washrooms. (This does not preclude a male from escorting children to the washroom and remaining outside).

E. PROPER DISPLAY OF AFFECTION

Touch is an essential responsibility in nurturing lives. Employees and Volunteers need to be aware of, and sensitive to, differences in sexual development, cultural differences, family backgrounds, individual personalities, and special needs. Physical contact with children should be age and developmentally appropriate.

The following guidelines are recommended as healthy and positive displays of God's love.

Appropriate Touch

Love and caring can be expressed in the following appropriate ways:

- Bend down to the child's eye level and speak kindly; listen to him or her carefully
- Take a child's hand and lead him or her to an activity
- Put an arm around the shoulder of a child who needs quieting or comforting
- Take both of the child's hands as you say, "You did such a good job!" (or "I'm so glad to see you. We've missed you!" etc.)
- Pat a child on the head, hand, shoulder or back to affirm him or her
- Hold a child by the shoulders or hand to keep his or her attention while you redirect the child's behaviour
- Gently hold a child's chin to help him or her focus on what you are saying
- Hold and console a preschool child who is crying

Inappropriate Touch

Employees and Volunteers should avoid:

- Kissing a child or coaxing a child to kiss you
- Extended hugging
- Tickling
- Touching a child in any area that would normally be covered by a bathing suit (except when assisting a child with toileting as outlined previously)
- Carrying or having older children sit on your lap.

SECTION IV: SCREENING PROCEDURES

A. WHO MUST UNDERGO SCREENING

1. Employees (salaried staff)

Employees must comply with the same screening process as Volunteers, with the exception that for Employees the police records check is mandatory.

2. Volunteers

Prospective as well as current volunteers for ministry with Vulnerable Persons must all follow the structured and systemic screening process that is described below. This applies, except where noted, even to long term church members involved in ministry with Vulnerable Persons.

Note: The employee or prospective or current volunteer will be referred to in the remainder of Section IV as the Applicant.

B. WHO CARRIES OUT THE SCREENING

The church council of Resurrection will, when needed, appoint one or more members of council as council representatives in the screening process of Employee or Volunteers. The same council representative(s) shall be involved in all aspects of a particular Employee or Volunteer's application.

The pastor of Resurrection shall be involved in each screening process, except that neither the pastor nor the council representative(s) must be related to the Employee or current or prospective volunteer being screened.

On occasions when Resurrection may not have a Pastor, church council will simply appoint two church council representatives as the Screening Committee.

Together, the pastor and the council representative(s) shall be designated the Screening Committee for the application in which they are involved.

C. SCREENING PROCESS

Further details on the Volunteer Application Form, Personal Interview, Reference Check, and Police Records Check follow this listing.

- 1. The Applicant must complete and sign the Volunteer Application Form that forms part of this Policy.**
- 2. The Applicant must have been an active participant of a Resurrection congregation, ministry or office for a period of six months.** This requirement may be waived by the Screening Committee where the Applicant is transferring in from another church and has a letter of recommendation signed by the minister of that church.

3. The Applicant must attend at a session to review this Policy.

All Applicants for ministry with Vulnerable Persons must attend a session to review this Policy. These sessions will be offered at least once annually, and may be offered on an individual basis if convenient.

A copy of the Policy will be posted on Resurrection's website and a paper copy will also be offered to all Applicants with the expectation that they read the material and become familiar with the contents.

4. The Applicant must participate in a private interview.

5. Resurrection will conduct a reference check.

6. Resurrection may, at its option, conduct a police records check.

D. EXPLANATIONS OF COMPONENTS OF SCREENING PROCESS

Volunteer Application Form

The Volunteer Application Form forms part of this Policy and is attached here in Appendix A. Every Applicant, whether an employee or a volunteer and regardless of length of membership or service at Resurrection, must complete the Volunteer Application Form.

Once completed, the application form is strictly confidential and is to be accessed only by the Applicant, the pastor, an authorized member of council or, in the event of legal proceedings, by other authorized persons.

Personal Interview

This interview, conducted by the Screening Committee, provides an opportunity to review an Applicant's application in a personal setting. The interviewers can ask follow-up questions and questions of clarification. The interview will allow the Applicant the opportunity to ask questions about various children's ministries and the reasons behind our child protection procedures. Suggestions for appropriate types of questions during the interview process can be found at: ELCIC - Policy , or the Sample Questions which are attached here in Appendix B.

Reference Check

Three personal references are requested on the Volunteer Application Form. References that are acceptable are limited to the following:

- Former or present pastor;
- Long-time friend (minimum of 5 years);

- One parent (for minors);
- Teacher (for minors);
- Congregational member (who has sufficient strength of relationship to comment on the individual's personal habits and character);
- Employer or colleague.

At least two of these references will be contacted by a member of the Screening Committee and asked to affirm the appointment of the Applicant. The person making the contacts, the date, and a summary of the reference's comments will all be recorded as part of the formal screening process and will become part of the individual's Volunteer Placement File.

Police Records Check

The right to ask for a police records check for Applicants is reserved by Resurrection. However, all employees (salaried staff) will submit to a police records check for their own protection and for the protection of the church.

A police records check will always be required in those instances where someone is a new resident or unknown to the church community or where the Applicant's references cannot be fully verified. Minors (under 16 years of age) are exempt from a police records check.

The cost for a police records check requested by Resurrection will be borne by the church. The Applicant will pay the fee for the service, and will be reimbursed by the church reimbursement procedure in place.

The police records check report is to be reviewed only by the Screening Committee. If there is no criminal record of any sort, the Applicant may be considered for ongoing service in the church. If there is a record or information which raises some concern, the Screening Committee will meet to discuss and resolve the matter.

If the offense is other than child or sexual abuse, the Applicant may proceed with ministry in the church provided all members of the Screening Committee agree.

The following are criteria to consider when evaluating the information:

- The number and type of convictions;
- The age and circumstances of the offender at the time of the offense;
- The length of time between past criminal activity and the present;
- The conduct and circumstances of the individual since the offense; and
- The likelihood of the individual repeating the offense.

Disqualification

If any offense is related to the abuse of children or is of a sexual nature, the prospective Applicant will not be approved for ministry with Vulnerable Persons at Resurrection. Other crimes would strongly suggest that a person should not be considered for work with Vulnerable Persons at Resurrection.

At the same time, some crimes would not result in automatic disqualification because they would not suggest a risk of abuse or molestation. For example, some property offenses would not be included in this list, particularly if the offense occurred long ago and the individual has a long history of impeccable behaviour.

Question - Will religious conversion make a difference for someone who has been guilty of past abuse? **Answer – Absolutely not.** Occasionally, a person may freely admit to a prior incident, but insist that they have since had a conversion experience and that they now present no risk whatever. Simply put, placing a known abuser in a position involving access to children, youth or other vulnerable people is taking an enormous risk, a risk Resurrection is not prepared to assume. The safest course is to encourage such an individual to work in the church, but in a position not involving access to children, youth or other vulnerable people. This is a reasonable accommodation of the individual's desire to serve in Resurrection.

The information contained in the police records check report is considered strictly confidential. A copy of any police records check report will be kept in the confidential, secure Volunteer Placement File in a sealed envelope indicating “To be opened only by the Pastor or authorized member of council, and only after approval by a motion of council”.

E. APPLICATION APPROVAL OR DISAPPROVAL

The Screening Committee will monitor the status of the application process. Completed material will ultimately be placed in a secure Volunteer Placement File containing:

- Volunteer Application Form
- Volunteer Interview Form (signed by Applicant, and Screening Committee)
- Police records check report (if required)

Approval

An Applicant becomes an approved Employee or Volunteer once all members of the Screening Committee sign the bottom of the interview form and annotate accordingly the application is “approved”. All volunteer application materials will be kept in a confidential, secure Volunteer Placement File for a minimum of 7 years.

SECTION V: MONITORING OF THE POLICY

Ministry leaders - especially the pastor, Sunday School coordinators, Christian education committee members, and youth advisors - will review the guidelines set out in the Policy as part of program planning.

This monitoring will examine the following:

- Have Employees and Volunteers been trained regarding this Policy?
- Are Employees and Volunteers following the required Policy?
- What obstacles exist to compliance with this Policy?
- What is the level of cooperation?
- Do sufficient materials exist for training and information?
- Is the Policy current and readily available?

If problems exist in with the wording or the implementation of the Policy, they should be brought to the attention of the pastor, or church council. Helpful revisions that do not sacrifice the integrity of the Policy are welcomed.

If it is observed that an Employee or Volunteer is not following the Policy and there is zero chance there was abuse, the pastor and a church council representative should promptly discuss the incident(s) with the Employee or Volunteer.

SECTION VI: ACCOUNTABILITY AND THE REPORTING OF ABUSE

Immediately after the occurrence of an incident of abuse, the appropriate authorities will be notified. As soon as possible after receiving notice of such an incident, the church council of Resurrection will convene a meeting to determine the appropriate steps to be taken and to designate one or more members as authorized to speak to the incident or to otherwise assist in the reporting process.

Resurrection will avoid any interference when a report of abuse has been filed with the appropriate authorities. The pastor or the designated church council representative will ask the agency how the congregation can assist in helping and supporting the hurting victim and his or her family. Pastoral care will be offered to the victim and those suspected or guilty of abuse. This does not exclude the need for individuals to receive professional counselling.

Resurrection will also abide fully with the procedure in reporting an abuse incident, leaving the follow-up legal process to the authorities invested with that responsibility.

Resurrection will also temper comments, keep an open mind, and provide the alleged perpetrator(s) appropriate counsel and emotional support.

A. INCIDENT REPORTING PROCEDURES

Abuse or neglect need not have already occurred for a child to be in need of protection; it is not necessary to wait until a child has been harmed to intervene.

Anyone who has concerns or reasonable grounds regarding the safety of a child must report it to the pastor or a member of church council.

Subsequent calls will include:

- a. the contact with the appropriate child protection agency,
- b. the church's legal advisor.

Where a rostered minister is the object of an allegation, the President of Church Council will contact the Bishop.

Discuss Suspicious Behaviour Immediately

Any inappropriate conduct or relationships between an Employee or Volunteer and a Vulnerable Person must be confronted immediately and investigated. Warnings for failure to follow procedures must be issued promptly. The Employee or Volunteer's services should be suspended immediately not only for an allegation of a sufficient gravity but also when the Pastor or the designated church council representative need to better understand a situation.

When An Allegation Occurs

If any person has concern for the safety or well-being of any child, youth or other Vulnerable Person in the Resurrection s/he should report it immediately to the pastor or a church council member.

If the alleged perpetrator is an Employee or Volunteer in Resurrection, s/he will be advised of the allegation and be immediately suspended from his or her duties. S/he will be advised to seek legal counsel, and above all to refrain from contacting the victim. Pastoral care and support will be offered to all involved, including the alleged perpetrator.

Responding To A Vulnerable Person

When a Vulnerable Person first comes to you, be sure to take his or her word seriously. Don't deny the problem, but stay calm and listen to the individual. Give emotional support, reminding the individual that he or she is not at fault. Tell the individual that he or she was right in telling you about the problem. **Do not promise** the individual that "you will not tell anyone."

B. CONFIDENTIALITY

In these matters it is important to keep the information restricted to those who need to be advised. This means that all suspicions of abuse should be directed only to the pastor or a church council member. The only claim of confidentiality which overrides the legal duty to report may be that of solicitor-client privilege.

C. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PASTOR AND CHURCH COUNCIL

As soon as possible after an incident is disclosed:

1. the church council of Resurrection will convene a meeting to determine the appropriate steps to be taken and to designate one or more members as authorized to speak to the incident or to otherwise assist in the reporting process;
2. the pastor or designated council member will, in conversation with the person who has made the disclosure, complete the Suspected Abuse Report Form (Appendix C of this Policy);
3. the pastor or designated council member will advise the person who has made the disclosure to maintain his/her own detailed notes including names, dates, times, places, etc.;
4. the pastor or designated council member will contact appropriate authorities or ensure they are or have been contacted. An in-depth investigation will be left to professionals who are familiar with such cases;
5. the pastor and church council will take the allegations seriously without prejudging the situation and reach out to the victim and the victim's family. Showing care and support help to prevent further hurt and extending whatever pastoral resources are appropriate. The care and safety of the victim is the first priority;
6. the pastor and church council will treat the accused with dignity and support. If the accused is an approved Volunteer, that person should be suspended from his or her duties until the investigation is finished. If the person is an Employee, arrangements should be made to either maintain or suspend his or her income until the allegations are cleared or substantiated.
7. Report follow-up: This aspect is a critical component of the process, but may happen over a long period of time. The pastor or designated church council member can liaise with both legal authorities, police, and synod resources to appropriately document the issue and capture needed information.

D. PROTECTION FROM LIABILITY

Church personnel are required to immediately report to the appropriate local authorities any suspected case of child abuse.

As part of a child protection investigation, social workers are required under the Child and Family Services Act to assess:

- the child's current state of health;
- their sense of safety and their views of abuse;
- previous abuse, neglect or harm; and
- the ability of the parent(s) to care for and protect the child.

The social worker is entitled to whatever information is needed to complete an investigation. If denied access to a record, they can seek a court order.

CONFIDENTIAL when completed - to be accessed only by the applicant, or members of the Screening Committee

APPENDIX A: VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM

Thank you very much for considering assisting with the youth and children ministry of this congregation. The following background information is necessary to help reduce the risk of abuse and to protect children, youth, volunteers and you.

Contact Information

Name:

Phone:

Email:

Address:

Personal Information

Age and Date of Birth:

Are you a member or an active participant of Resurrection of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada? YES NO If yes, for how long?

Previous church membership:

Volunteer Ministries in Which You Are Interested

Please list the volunteer ministry(ies) in which you are interested:

What time commitment can you make?

Education/Employment/Skills

High School (name, year graduated):

College/University (name, indicate year graduated and degree):

Occupation:

Employer:

Hobbies/Interests:

Skills:

Do you have: CPR training YES NO

CONFIDENTIAL when completed - to be accessed only by the applicant, or members of the Screening Committee

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First-Aid Training YES NO

Do you have any other training received or courses taken that would assist you for ministry with children, youth or other vulnerable people? YES NO

If yes, please describe:

Description of volunteer experience with children (include descriptions of your gifts, and what non-church activities you have done involving children):

Do you have any physical conditions that would prevent you from performing certain types of activities (lifting children, playing sports...)? YES NO If yes, please explain:

References and Personal History

References: Please provide the names of three individuals who know you and who can provide a reference for you. If you are under 19, you may use the name of a parent and/or teacher; otherwise, the references must not be related to you. If possible, please include at least one reference from someone at Resurrection. All people listed as references should be informed of that you have so listed them. References that are acceptable are limited to the following:

- Former or present pastor;
- Long-time friend (minimum of 5 years);
- One parent (for minors);
- Teacher (for minors);
- Congregational member (who has sufficient strength of relationship to comment on the individual's personal habits and character);
- Employer or colleague.

Reference 1: Name:
Relationship:
Address:
Phone:

Reference 2: Name:
Relationship:
Address:
Phone:

CONFIDENTIAL when completed - to be accessed only by the applicant, or members of the Screening Committee

CONFIDENTIAL when completed - to be accessed only by the applicant, or members of the Screening Committee

Reference 3: Name:
Relationship:
Address:
Phone:

Were you ever the victim of child abuse or sexual molestation as a child? YES NO (You may refuse to answer this question, or may discuss your answer in confidence with the Pastor rather than answering on this form. Answering yes, or leaving the question unanswered will not automatically disqualify an applicant for work with youth or children.)

Have you ever been accused of sexual misconduct with a minor? YES NO

Conviction for a Criminal Offense

Answering "yes" to the following question will not necessarily preclude your involvement in volunteer ministry. A meeting will be arranged with the pastor/church council member to discuss the circumstances.

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offense for which a pardon has not been granted? YES NO

Applicant's Statement

I hereby acknowledge that the information contained in this Volunteer Application Form is correct to the best of my knowledge. I authorize any people listed as references to provide any information they may have regarding my character and fitness for ministry.

I will provide Resurrection with the results of a *police records* check if one is required.

I agree to adhere to the guidelines contained in this Policy.

Your signature on this form confirms your understanding and agreement that in the event allegations of criminal or sexual misconduct arise regarding your conduct should you willingly serve in the ministry of any or all of the above-described capacity(ies), Resurrection will fully cooperate with any investigation.

(Once completed, this document is strictly confidential and is to be accessed only by the

CONFIDENTIAL when completed - to be accessed only by the applicant, or members of the Screening Committee

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Applicant, the pastor, the designated church council member and, in the event of legal proceedings, by those involved in the investigation with legal authority to view.)

Applicant's Name: _____

Applicant's Signature: _____

Date:

This application is Approved/ Not Approved

Date:

1st Screening Committee Member's Name: _____

1st Screening Committee Member's signature: _____

2nd Screening Committee Member's Name: _____

2nd Screening Committee Member's signature: _____

3rd Screening Committee Member's Name: _____

3rd Screening Committee Member's signature: _____

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APPENDIX B: SAMPLE QUESTIONS

The following questions may be helpful in evaluating the appropriateness of Applicants who will work with Vulnerable Persons. The comments that follow each question provide reasons for the type of questions used. Of note, these questions are simply suggestions and in no way represent a comprehensive repository of subject areas that should be covered. Members of the Screening Committee should be flexible in their preparations for each interview and formulate a line of questions following review of each Volunteer Application Form.

1. How long have you lived in this community?

- Long term residents usually have community connections and commitment.
- Short term residents should give you the opportunity to talk about past experiences and relationships including family relationships, jobs and reasons for moving.
- It may be helpful to ask for references from people who have known applicant for a long time.

2. Why do you want to work with (name relevant segment of Resurrection's ministry)?

- Do they like Vulnerable Persons?
- Do they work well with children/youth?
- Are children comfortable around you? Children can sense if people really like them.
- Beware of those who have an axe to grind regarding children and discipline, for example.
- Sense of satisfaction?
- What is their motivation?

3. Would your experience as a child have an impact on your working with children in this position?

- Look for body language and tone of voice.
- Be aware of anxiety about relationship with parents and siblings.
- Talk about current family relationships.
- Talk about childhood discipline and punishment. Will his/her ideas create conflict?
- Assess carefully (but not necessarily exclude) those who have experienced abusive, dysfunctional childhood. Try to be sure this does not interfere with the ability to help others rather than helping themselves recover or project their feelings on the children.

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4. How would your current relationships with family and friends impact your work with children in this position?

- You are looking for interpersonal relationships with families-family stress, death, divorce, separation, violent relationships.
- Beware of those who have no adult friends and those who say "children are my best friends" or "I'd rather be with kids than adults."

5. Have you had personal experience with child abuse? (Verbal, sexual physical, religious, emotional)

- Watch for those who express strong emotions. They may not be ready to work with children.
- If they have resolved issues through therapy, family, education or support systems, they can be helpful to children.

6. Has an issue or suspicion ever been raised that you may have abused or molested or touched a child inappropriately? How was it resolved?

- If yes, this person is a high risk!
- Be up front and tell them that for their own protection as well as the children's, volunteering to work with adults is much safer.
- If a person has molested a child in any way, that person should NEVER be allowed to work with children.

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APPENDIX C: SUSPECTED ABUSE REPORT FORM

This form is to be completed by a pastor or designated church council member.

Date:

Name of Victim:

Address:

Phone Number:

Name of Person Filing Report:

Name of Person Receiving Report:

Nature of Suspected Abuse (physical, sexual, emotional, neglect):

Indications of Suspected Abuse (facts, physical signs, course of events...):

Action Taken (include date and time):

The above information will serve as a guide and will be necessary if a report is filed with the police and/or the appropriate authorities. All information is kept **strictly** confidential.

Signature of person reporting:

Pastor/Church Council member's signature: