

Bethel College Mennonite Church Abuse Prevention and Response Policy

Originally approved by the Bethel College Mennonite Church congregation on November 21, 2021; revised April 19, 2026

Introduction

Bethel College Mennonite Church (BCMC) seeks to provide a healthy and protective environment for all in our midst. We seek to care for and support persons who have experienced abuse and sexual violence. We acknowledge that churches and related church agencies are places where abuse occurs. We also acknowledge that we do not know people's prior experiences and traumas. In 2024 a national survey of 3300 adults in the US led by the Newcombe Institute of Tulane University and conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago found that "most women (82%) and nearly half of all men (42%) have experienced sexual harassment or assault in their lifetime" (<https://stopstreetharassment.org/our-work/nationalstudy/2024metoostudy/>). Findings about sexual abuse and harassment in churches are difficult to interpret because of underreporting, but there is little evidence that these rates are lower within churches (<https://www.levinsimes.com/blog/sexual-abuse-in-churches-statistics>).

BCMC commits to work toward the prevention of abuse. When abuse occurs, we commit to address it in a way that centers around the needs of survivors. We commit to allowing each adult survivor to guide the process. More than a policy is needed to confront sexual violence in our church. This policy is not an end in itself, it is a framework to use as a guide when responding to the unique needs of each survivor and situation. Upholding the needs of survivors is less about policy and more about actions and attitudes toward compassion and care for survivors.

This policy has been developed to:

- Reduce the risk of incidents of abuse
- Cultivate a safe place for reporting
- Create a clear direction for a trauma-informed response to abuse reports
- Offer a safe place for healing
- Develop a supportive community
- Educate BCMC regarding abuse, trauma, power dynamics, etc.

The Abuse Prevention and Response Committee (APRC) will work with the Faith Formation Commission to monitor and implement this policy and is accountable to the Church Board.

Institutional Practices and Accountability

- Representatives from the APRC will initiate individual or group meetings to address program concerns or individual needs as they arise.
- The APRC will make sure prevention guidelines are being followed.

- This policy will be posted on the church website. Hard copies will be located in the church office and library.
- The APRC will review this policy annually and update it as needed. Substantial updates will be taken to the Church Board for approval.
- Community reporting information and resources will be posted in all bathrooms.

Terms Used in this Policy

Accountability Partners: Made up of Congregants assigned by the APRC. Two (or more if applicable) Accountability Partners will be assigned to offenders. Accountability Partner roles will be to communicate and respond to questions from the offender, be present with the offender while on church property, and offer spiritual support to the offender.

Approved Adult: Any adult (including Employees) who works with minors or vulnerable adults, and has met the criteria outlined in this policy.

Care Team or Support Person: Made up of Congregants assigned by the APRC. One (or more if applicable) Care Team members will be assigned to a survivor(s). In the event a collective trauma is taking place within our congregation that is triggering to survivors, a care team can also be formed for survivors as a group or individually. The Care Team member roles will be to provide spiritual and emotional support, communicate with and respond to questions, requests and other needs as they arise. The APRC may assign additional Care Team members to respond to the spiritual and emotional support of other congregants impacted.

Congregant: In this policy, any individual claiming BCMC as their church, whether a full member, a wider-fellowship member, or a non-member that participates in the life of BCMC.

Leadership Roles: In this policy, any individual (paid or voluntary), that sits on any committees or commissions, or works with children and youth.

Offender: In this policy “offender” refers to any individual who has a current or historical record of substantiated abuse from a legal, third party, or church investigation (asked to sign a limited access agreement at another congregation or organization) or for whom a report of abuse had been filed.

Survivor: In this policy “survivor” refers to the person who has disclosed abuse or the person someone suspects has suffered abuse.

Vulnerable Adult: In this policy “vulnerable adult” refers to a person over the age of 18 who is unable to independently care for themselves or protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.

Developing a Supportive Community: Guiding Principles

- **Awareness of Power Dynamics:** Like many social structures, our church contains power dynamics. These dynamics create the capacity to influence another person's actions, beliefs, or behavior. Examples of situations that create power dynamics include age, leadership status, economic status, privilege, family connections, and length of attendance at BCMC. We commit together to not use our power to harm others and to take responsibility for the harm we cause unintentionally.
- **Awareness of Triggers:** When people plan to share information or biblical/theological content that directly engages issues of abuse, a content warning will be provided to the congregation and such material will be shared in a respectful, trauma-informed manner.
- **Healthy Boundaries:** We commit to maintaining appropriate physical, emotional, spiritual, and sexual boundaries, and to take action when boundaries are threatened or violated.
- **Practicing Consent:** Consent refers to the permission each individual gives to others for something to happen. Because we do not know the depth of everyone's stories and past experiences, we will practice respect and consent with touch and participation. Consent must be freely given, reversible at any moment, enthusiastic and not coerced, regarding something specific in the moment, and informed by the person giving consent (e.g., children or a person under the influence of alcohol/drugs should not be assumed to be able to give consent).
- **Trauma-Informed Practices:** Individuals who have experienced abuse are our family members, our friends, our co-workers, members of our congregations, and others we know and love, and we understand they will carry the trauma of abuse for the rest of their lives. Unexpectedly reliving painful memories without mental preparedness, or consent to do so, can further harm a survivor. Knowing this, we commit to our continued growth of being a trauma-informed congregation.
- **Transparency and Truth-telling:** A courage to pursue and honor the truth, no matter how uncomfortable. Sexual assault and abuse is disturbingly common in our society. We must believe victims when they share events that have happened to them, no matter how hard or uncomfortable it may make us. We must honor the courage a victim has in coming forward.
- **Rejection of Victim Blaming:** Victim blaming holds the victim accountable for the crime that was committed against them. This happens anytime someone questions what a victim could have done to prevent the crime that happened to them. The crime would not have happened, however, if there was not a perpetrator. We commit to avoid blaming victims as we receive and process reports of abuse.

I. ABUSE PREVENTION

A. Guidelines for Working with Minors

1. **Consent will be practiced.** Physical contact will be a choice for recipients, allowing children and adults to have the opportunity to not participate. A verbal or nonverbal “no” will always be respected. Physical touch will not include excessive body contact or contact for extended periods of time.
2. **No physical discipline** (hitting, slapping, spanking) will be used. Yelling and other forms of verbal abuse are also prohibited. A child’s behavior is a way for them to communicate something to the adults around them. When we look at their behavior as a way to communicate something, we take responsibility to figure out what a child needs rather than blaming them for their behavior. We will practice redirection for the child and respectful verbal communication as a way to guide the child’s behavior. The parent or guardian will be contacted if more support is needed.
3. **Two unrelated Approved Adults** (immediate family group) will be present during any church activity involving minors, except in the case of:
 - a. The Mentor Program - The one-to-one nature of the mentor program constitutes a unique exception to this guideline.
 - b. Nursery during worship - One Approved Adult Volunteer and one unrelated Approved Minor Volunteer may serve in the nursery during worship.
4. **One-to-one mentoring** activities will be publicly visible to others. Mentors and legal guardian(s) will set communication expectations at the beginning of the relationship. Before private one-to-one contact between an Approved Adult and minor occurs (e.g. transportation, coffee shop meeting, frisbee golf, etc.), a legal guardian(s) is to be informed (e.g. phone call, text, or email). Because one-to-one relationships can open avenues for grooming behavior to take place, we will work towards regular education and communication with volunteers, families, and minors about healthy relationships and boundaries.
5. **Interruptible locations.** There will be a window in the door of all offices and classrooms. Any conversations that need to happen one-to-one between an adult and minor will take place in an “interruptible location” (e.g. nursery where there are windows for others to observe, a private corner of the sanctuary, the front yard of the church).
6. **Bathroom protocol.** Minors will be encouraged to use bathroom facilities before and after classes or other programs. Any Approved Adult other than the child’s caregiver assisting a minor in the bathroom will stand outside the door. If a minor needs assistance, a second Approved Adult will be present. It is recommended, when possible, that two Approved Adults (if no legal guardian(s) is present) will be present when changing diapers or checking for injuries under minor’s clothing or diapers. The Approved Adults present will notify the legal guardian(s) that the contact or bathroom visit occurred.
7. **Off-property activities or overnight** functions involving minors will be scheduled with knowledge of the Faith Formation Commission and written

approval of a legal guardian(s). At least two unrelated Approved Adults will be present.

B. Approved Adult Volunteers

1. Volunteer Training and Accountability
 - a. Approved Adult Volunteers must have an active and positive involvement at BCMC for at least six months prior to submitting a Volunteer Registration Form. Exceptions must be approved by the APRC. (examples: Interns, IVEPers, MVS, college students)
 - b. All volunteers interested in working with children or youth must complete the following:
 - i. Annually
 1. Participate in APRC-Approved Annual Volunteer Training
 - ii. Every 3 years
 1. Complete Volunteer Registration Forms
 2. Sign the Abuse Prevention Covenant
 3. Undergo an APRC-approved background check
 4. Name checked against the Mennonite Abuse Prevention List
 - c. Approved Adult Volunteers who work with minors will be at least five years older than those they are helping.
 - d. Minors may volunteer to help with children's programs under the supervision of two Approved Adults.
 - i. An exception: Approved Minors may serve as nursery workers under the supervision of one Approved Adult.

C. Pastoral and Congregational Care

1. Usual settings for one-to-one pastoral care visits by designated employees and Deacons include the following: a public place, a church office with a window for observation, an individual's residence within a care facility, or a person's home with awareness by another member of the staff. Pastors will work together to provide support and accountability for pastoral care relationships. If the recipient is a minor, no one-on-one meetings will happen without prior consent of a legal guardian.
2. Employees shall not engage in long-term counseling (no more than 3-4 visits), but rather refer persons to a counseling agency. Employees and Deacons may remain in supportive contact with persons requiring specialized psychological, medical, or legal counsel, but will not attempt to provide such counsel themselves.
3. Anyone who is appointed to provide pastoral and congregational care is required to give adequate attention to their own spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being to maintain a healthy attitude towards ministry. The Staff Congregation Relations Committee (SCRC) will be responsible for monitoring this.

D. BCMC Digital Communication Guidelines

1. Website

- Church staff and volunteers will not post any individual's personal information on a public website or social media post. Personal information includes: contact information, hospitalizations, health concerns, and other private matters.
- Photos of members, including children, may be used in public formats except for those who have notified the Office and Facilities Manager that they would not like their photo used publicly. In captions, only first names will be used and all names of minors will be omitted.

2. Social Media (blogs, Facebook, etc.)

- No BCMC social media sites are to be created or maintained by individuals not employed or contracted by BCMC without permission of church leadership.
- BCMC congregants are asked to be sensitive and refrain from disclosing any confidential information when posting, sharing, tagging, or revealing other participants' involvement without their expressed permission.
- Adults should not post any pictures or videos of BCMC minors on their personal social media accounts without a guardian's permission.
- BCMC participants who prefer not to be tagged on BCMC social media are asked to notify the church office.

3. Electronic Communication with Minors

- Adults will not communicate with minors one-on-one in any digital form including email, texting, and private messages via social media. An exception to this practice can be made for mentors with their mentees with permission from parents/guardians.

II. ABUSE RESPONSE

Guiding questions: How do we honor the disclosure of abuse? How do we honor this survivor and not retraumatize them while keeping the community safe? How do we keep the needs of the survivor as the central focus at all times?

A. When abuse is reported and/or credibly suspected and the victim is under the age of 18:

If a reporter would like assistance with any of the following steps, they can contact a pastor or representative from APRC for assistance. One can call the church office (316-283-2667) for help locating the contact information of pastors and current APRC members.

1. If the minor has serious injuries or is in immediate danger the reporter will call 911 or the appropriate local medical facility and/or law enforcement.
2. The person disclosed to or who has suspicions (reporter) will make the following reports as soon as possible:

- a. Report to the 24-hour hotline of the Kansas Protection Report Center 1-800-922-5330. The reporter can also call 911 or notify the police for a more immediate response to the situation as KPRC may not be able to address the report quickly. It is important that KPRC has an official report on file.
 - b. Contact a pastor or member of APRC to alert them to the allegations. APRC can provide assistance and support as needed.
 - c. The reporter or a representative from APRC will notify a non-offending member of the minor's family if it is safe to do so.
3. The APRC will inform church board leadership about the report that was made.
4. The APRC will offer to assemble a Care Team or provide a support person as soon as possible who will respond to the survivor's wellbeing and their non-accused family members. The survivor and their support will be consulted throughout the whole process.
5. The APRC and/or a pastor will follow up with the person who made the report as soon as possible to acquire and clarify information as well as provide spiritual care.
6. The APRC will document all information received about the reported or suspected abuse and actions taken. At least 2 people will work together whenever possible.
7. In addition, if the offender is part of the BCMC community and in consultation with the respective legal guardian(s) and appointed Care Team member(s), the APRC will notify the offender of the report and offer to find Accountability Partners.
8. If the offender is active in the church community, the APRC will act to immediately suspend their church voluntary assignment/duties, and evaluate their in-person attendance.
9. Close relatives of the survivor or offender will not be appointed to a caring or accountability role in the process.
10. Unless there is concern about interfering with the KPRC investigations/process, and in consultation with the respective legal guardian(s) and appointed Care Team member(s), the APRC will inform congregants of the report and make an open call for other survivors to come forward. Verbal and written notification will take place and will include outside resources for reporting and/or counseling. Any known survivors in the congregation will be notified before informing the whole congregation. A content warning will be issued in case individuals would like the option to not be present during a verbal announcement.
11. The pastors will work with the APRC to coordinate with other congregational and community resources as needed to assure that ongoing care is provided for others affected, triggered, or retraumatized by the report.
12. The APRC will inform Western District Conference and any other outside institutions in which the offender is involved (e.g. Their church, Camp Mennoscah, Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp).
13. When information has been substantiated, the APRC will make sure the survivor and Care Team know before reporting to other organizations.

14. If reports of abuse are substantiated and the offender desires to remain part of the church, the APRC will ask the offender to sign a Limited Access Agreement.
15. The APRC and pastors will attend to the emotional and spiritual needs that arise throughout and after the process, always mindful of how the congregational process could impact and retraumatize survivors in our congregation.

If the victim or offender is not connected to BCMC, we encourage people who received a report of abuse or suspect abuse to follow steps 1 and 2 and any other steps that make sense to the specific case.

B. When abuse is reported and/or credibly suspected where the survivor is an adult:

1. The reporter will seek consent of the adult survivor before reporting to local authorities, the APRC, or a pastor.
2. If you are the survivor, you are encouraged to pursue any or all of the following:
 - a. The survivor or the person who received the disclosure of abuse (Reporter) will, with survivor's permission, disclose concern with a representative from the APRC and/or a pastor. All efforts will be made to assure immediate safety and make sure any medical needs are addressed. The APRC and/or reporter will support the survivor in connecting with a safety plan and community services (e.g. advocacy, sexual violence crisis center, trauma-informed counseling) to help meet identified needs.
 - b. The survivor will choose whether or not to involve law enforcement. In the case that the abuse involves a vulnerable adult, it will be reported to the KPRC (1-800-922-5330) and/or local Police, or respective state authorities.
 - c. If it is safe to do so and with the permission of the survivor:
 - i. The offender will be notified of the report.
 - ii. If the offender is active in the church community, the APRC will act to immediately suspend their in-person attendance, church voluntary assignment/duties, and assign an Accountability Partner(s) within the congregation.
 - d. In situations where the adult survivor does not grant permission, APRC may still take actions if they believe the offender threatens the safety of BCMC participants. APRC will consult an outside expert before taking these actions and communicate intended actions with the survivor ahead of time.
 - e. Any and/or all of the above procedure steps listed in the abuse of a minor will be taken with direction and/or consent of the adult survivor.
3. The APRC will honor their story by assisting the survivor in seeking survivor-centered community resources.
 - a. Refer the survivor to outside organizations for additional assistance. (e.g. provide resources for trauma-informed counseling, refer them to survivor advocacy agencies, ask them what they need).
 - b. Documentation will be kept indefinitely in a secure location in case others come forward or when this survivor is ready to go public.

- c. The APRC will continue to consider other steps to keep the wider community safe on a case-by-case basis.

C. When the report of abuse involves a BCMC employee or credentialed person.

1. If you believe that a minister has engaged in misconduct or abuse, contact the Western District Conference (WDC) Safety Liaison at WDCConferenceSafety@mennowdc.org or 316-283-6300; or contact the Mennonite Church USA Denominational Minister for Church Safety at MichaelD@MennoniteUSA.org or (574) 523-3045.
2. The APRC will immediately inform the Staff Congregation Relations Committee (SCRC). The SCRC, with consultation from APRC and WDC (and third-party counsel if applicable), will immediately suspend the employee from all church duties. The SCRC will determine how and when to make an appropriate announcement to the congregation regarding the allegation and immediate suspension.
3. SCRC, with consultation from the APRC and WDC (and third-party counsel if applicable) will take the lead in ensuring that steps in this policy are followed. This includes assigning an appointed designee to be in direct communication with the employee during the process.
4. In the event a report of abuse by a credentialed individual in the congregation not currently employed by BCMC is made, the APRC will immediately inform WDC and church board leadership.
5. The procedure steps listed in the above sections for reporting will be followed accordingly.

D. When BCMC receives a concern regarding a person who may pose a safety risk for any reason and wishes to participate at BCMC:

1. The APRC will verify the information out of an abundance of caution. This will be done by checking the criminal and court records and other organizations that may have information about an offender and by other appropriate means.
2. Survivors and parents/guardians will be consulted in the process of asking the offender to sign a Limited Access Agreement. Such an agreement will be required in order for the offender to participate in congregational life and worship. The example Limited Access Agreement in the appendix is considered the baseline for such a document. Further restrictions may be added. The congregation will be informed of the reported safety concerns of this offender.
3. If it is known that the offender will attend or is attending another congregation, a designated APRC member will contact and inform that congregation of the situation and nature of the abuse.

E. When APRC is aware of people who pose a potential threat to the physical and/or emotional well-being of other church participants:

1. This portion of the policy applies in situations where there is no formal complaint or official offense. Concerns may arise from informal reports and/or personal observation.

2. APRC will inform pastors and designated ushers if such a person is present for worship or other church events. Those who are aware of this person's presence will be prepared to peacefully intervene as appropriate if problematic behavior occurs.

F. Maintaining Records

1. The APRC is responsible for maintaining records required for this policy.
2. Any records related to reports of incidents of abuse will be kept in a secure digital database or locked file cabinet and will be kept indefinitely in case future reports are related to people involved in past reports.
3. Individuals with access to the key for the physical records may include APRC Chair, Pastors, Deacon Commission Chair, Church Moderator, and SCRC Chair.
4. Volunteer Registration Form and background check records will be kept on file in a secure digital database.

III. APPENDICES AND FORMS

A. Definitions

Abuse of power: Improper use of authority by someone who has more authority than those with whom they are interacting.

Child Abuse: Any physical injury, physical neglect, emotional injury, or sexual act inflicted upon a child.

Domestic Violence: Violent or aggressive behavior within the home, typically involving the violent abuse of a partner.

Emotional Abuse: Attempting to control a person through the use of derogatory language, threats, intimidation, frequent insults/put-downs, manipulation, and gaslighting (intentionally undermining someone's reality). This may be spoken and/or unspoken cruelty.

Grooming: Grooming behaviors can take place online or in-person. People who use grooming behaviors are often trusted people in the community and in their victim's life. Grooming takes place in many different forms, but tends to follow similar patterns:

- **Victim selection:** Finding possible victims who are easy to access or more vulnerable.
- **Gaining access and isolating victims:** Abusers will find ways to isolate possible victims and separate them from others.
- **Trust development and keeping secrets:** Abusers will work to gain trust through special attention, gift-giving, and sharing of secrets.
- **Desensitization to touch and discussion of sexual topics:** Abusers will start out with "harmless" physical touch (hugging, wrestling, tickling, etc.)

in order to move toward more sexual touch (massages, touching of private areas, etc.). Abusers may also discuss sexual relationships or topics to introduce opportunities for more sexual contact.

- **Attempt by abusers to make their behavior seem natural:** In order to avoid raising suspicion. Look for signs in relationships that include secrecy, undue influence or control, or pushing personal boundaries.
- This list was taken from RAINN, *Grooming: Know the Warning Signs*. You can learn more from their article here:
<https://www.rainn.org/news/grooming-know-warning-signs>

Harassment: Any repeated or continuing uninvited actions.

- **Sexual:** Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or verbal or physical conduct or written communication of an intimidating, hostile, inappropriate, or offensive nature.
- **Verbal:** Harsh or insulting language directed at a person. The most common way verbal abuse is used is in an attempt to control behaviors, thoughts, or feelings of another human being. Verbal abuse/harassment can also be subtle and there can be non-verbal abuse/harassment as well.
- **Media:** Harassment directed at a person or group through text, social media, email, or other electronic communication.

Incest: Sexual relations between people who are too closely related to marry each other (parent, child, sibling, grandparent, uncle/aunt, etc.)

Marital Rape: Sexual relations with one's partner without their consent. Consent needs to be given each time people engage in sexual relations.

Neglect: Endangering a person's health, welfare, or safety through negligence -- failure or threatened failure to meet their needs.

Non-consensual sexual contact: When a person, however slight, touches any part of someone else's body without their consent and/or by force. Sexual contact includes touching the breast, buttock, groin, or genitals or is any other bodily contact done in a sexual manner.

Physical Abuse: Infliction of physical harm or the causation of a child's deterioration. This may include, but shall not be limited to, maltreatment or exploiting a child to the extent the child's health is endangered.

Retraumatization: A conscience or unconscious reminder of past trauma that results in re-experiencing the initial trauma event. It can be triggered by a situation, an attitude or expression, or by certain environments that replicate the dynamics of the original trauma.

Sexual Abuse: When any person is forced, tricked, persuaded, enticed, or coerced into any sexual contact or interaction for the sexual stimulation of the abuser, or another person.

Sexual Assault: Any type of sexual contact or behavior that occurs without the consent of the recipient. This includes when a person is forced, coerced, or manipulated into any unwanted sexual activity. The recipient reserves the right to change their mind at any point, even if they previously said yes. The absence of “no” does not equal “yes”. Each sexual encounter should include an enthusiastic “yes” by all involved.

Sexual Violence: Any sexual act or attempt to obtain sexual act or unwanted sexual comments or acts that are directed against a person’s sexuality using coercion by anyone.

Spiritual Abuse: Any attempt to exert power and/or control over someone using religion, faith, or beliefs. This can also happen when sexual abuse is mishandled in the church. In *The Subtle Power of Spiritual Abuse*, David Johnson and Jeff VanVonderen describe spiritual abuse with the following:

It’s possible to become so determined to defend a spiritual place of authority, a doctrine or a way of doing things that you wound and abuse anyone who questions, or disagrees, or doesn’t ‘behave’ spiritually the way you want them to. When your words and actions tear down another, or attack or weaken a person’s standing as a Christian – to gratify you, your position or your beliefs while at the same time weakening or harming another – that is spiritual abuse.

Stalking: Engaging in a course of conduct (i.e. repetitive and/or menacing pursuit, following or interference with the peace and/or safety) at a specific individual that would cause a reasonable person to fear for their safety or the safety of others and suffer substantial emotional stress.

Trigger: Anything that might cause a person to recall a traumatic experience and put them back into the original event. This can then cause people to experience overwhelming emotions, physical symptoms, or thoughts. Triggers can happen on a subconscious level and people may not realize they are being triggered right away or why they may be feeling the way they are feeling.

Trauma: The emotional and physical harm resulting from violent conflict, natural disasters or societal structures. It can affect individuals, families, communities and societies and can fuel continuing cycles of violence and prevent sustainable rebuilding. Trauma affects the body, brain, beliefs and behaviors of individuals, communities and societies. Here are a few examples of trauma, but there are many different kinds of trauma that are not covered below.

- Acute trauma: Is a powerful experience (e.g. natural disaster), but it has a time limit.

- Chronic trauma: Happens over a long period of time (e.g. poverty, racism, abuse), and there is no safe place to go.
- Communal trauma: Shared by a group of people (e.g. natural disasters, pandemics).
- Complex trauma: Occurs over a long period of time and there is no safe place to retreat (e.g. caregivers are abusers).

Trauma Informed: Realizes the widespread impact of trauma and understands the potential path for recovery. Recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma in those involved with the system. Being trauma informed will require constant attention, caring awareness, sensitivity, and a cultural change at the organizational level. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends incorporating these 6 guiding principles when taking a trauma informed approach: safety; trustworthiness and transparency; peer support; collaboration and mutuality; empowerment, voice and choice; and cultural, historical, and gender issues.

B. Bethel College Mennonite Church Volunteer Registration Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____

Date of birth (must be 18 years or older): _____

Occupation: _____

Employer (If Applicable): _____

What volunteer role are you primarily interested in? _____

Why are you interested in working with children and youth?

What qualities do you have that would help you work with children/youth?

Have you ever been charged, convicted of, or pled guilty to a crime, either a misdemeanor or a felony (including, but not limited to drug related charges, child abuse, other crimes of violence, or theft)? No Yes

If yes, please explain fully: _____

Have you ever been involved with an incident of abuse or neglect that would impact your ability to follow this policy and guidelines? No Yes

If yes, please explain fully: _____

Have you ever been charged or accused of an ethics violation in relation to your occupation or while working with children/youth? No Yes

If yes, please explain fully: _____

C. Abuse Prevention Covenant

BCMC is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all who participate in ministries and activities sponsored by the church. The following policy statements reflect our congregation’s commitment to preserving this church as a holy place of safety and protection for all who would enter. BCMC commits to be a place in which all people can experience the love of God through healthy relationships with others.

Please answer each of the following questions by circling your response:

- 1. As a Volunteer / Employee in this congregation, do you agree to observe and abide by BCMC’s Abuse Prevention and Response Policy?
yes / no

- 2. As a Volunteer / Employee in this congregation, do you agree to observe the Two Adult guidelines as stated in this policy? yes / no

- 3. As a Volunteer / Employee in this congregation, do you agree to promptly report abusive or concerning behavior to the APRC? yes / no

- 4. As a Volunteer / Employee of this congregation, do you agree to inform the pastor (before beginning your assignment) if you have ever been convicted of or committed abuse or a violent crime? yes / no

- 5. As a Volunteer/Employee of this congregation, do you understand that failure to complete a background authorization form when requested could result in immediate suspension/and or termination of duties or position?
yes / no

I have read and agree to observe and abide by the Abuse Prevention and Response Policy, and I agree to observe and abide by the policies set forth above.

Your signature: _____ Date: _____

Print Full Name: _____

D. Limited Access Agreement (example)

***Note: This is a baseline agreement. Further restrictions may be added.**

Based on credible, corroborated, and/or multiple reports of abuse that we have received, we have concerns about your involvement at Bethel College Mennonite Church. The following guidelines are designed to reduce the risk to both you and others.

We welcome you as part of this congregation and your participation will be limited to ensure the safety of others.

I, _____, am entering this Limited Access Agreement with Bethel College Mennonite Church. It will be in effect for the duration of my participation with the church, unless the Abuse Prevention and Response Committee (APRC) revises or cancels it.

Guidelines

1. I will work with my accountability partners to create a safety plan that will include opportunities for growth for myself, care for myself when I interact with others, and that will hold myself accountable when I may be in a situation that could harm others
2. I will work with the 2 or 3 designated accountability partners. One of these persons will be with me each time I am participating in a church event. Family members or former abusers will not be assigned to be accountability partners.
3. I will not serve as a volunteer with children or youth. I will not serve on Church Board, Deacons Commission, Abuse Prevention and Response Committee, or any other committee or commission that works with children or youth (e.g. Faith Formation Commission, Education Service and Scholarship Committee, Bethel College Relations Team)
4. I will not engage with minors, vulnerable adults, or young adults.
5. I will write an APRC approved statement about my history of abuse. This statement will be shared with all active church participants.
6. I acknowledge that new participants to the church will be notified by a pastor of this information within two months of beginning to regularly attend the church.
7. If I re-offend, I understand that I will no longer be welcome to attend worship and congregational events of the church.
8. If I violate any part of this agreement, I will meet with my accountability partners, a pastor, and a representative from the APRC to discuss the violation and adapt my safety plan in order to change my behavior in the future.
9. After three violations, I understand I will no longer be welcome to attend worship and congregational events of the church.

I have reviewed this covenant and agree to abide by its provisions

_____ Signature	_____ Print	_____ Date
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We, the designated representative of BCMC, have met with the party to this covenant to review the provisions of this covenant and its attachments.

_____ Pastor	_____ Print	_____ Date
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_____ Congregational Moderator	_____ Print	_____ Date
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_____ APRC Chair	_____ Print	_____ Date
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_____ Accountability Partner 1	_____ Print	_____ Date
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_____ Accountability Partner 2	_____ Print	_____ Date
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_____ Accountability Partner 3	_____ Print	_____ Date
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F. Resources

Medical:

SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner) nurses are specially trained in the comprehensive care of a sexual assault survivor.

- NMC Health, 600 Medical Center Dr, Newton, KS 67114 **(316) 283-2700**
NMC Health does not have any trained SANE and refers patients to Wichita
- Wesley Medical Center (offers SANE exam) **316-962-2000**
- Via Christi Hospital (offers SANE exam) **316-268-5000**
- Hutchinson Hospital (offers SANE exam) **620-665-2000 option 3**

Safety:

- Police Department (Emergency) **911**
- North Newton Police Department **316-283-3191**

Reporting:

- Report suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation of a child or adult 24/7:
 - KPRC: Kansas Protection Report Center **800-922-5330**
- North Newton Police Department **316-283-3191**
- Western District Conference (ministerial misconduct)
<http://mennowdc.org/report-ministerial-misconduct-abuse/>

Survivor Advocacy and Counseling

- Safe Hope Shelter 24-hour helpline **316-217-1880** or **833-217-6004**
- National Sexual Assault Hotline **800-656-4673**
- Prairie View (mental health services and counseling) **316-284-6400**
- Into Account <https://intoaccount.org/survivors/>
- Wichita Area Sexual Assault Center Crisis Line **316-263-3002** or **877-927-2248**
- Prairie View Crisis Line **800-362-0180**
- National Suicide Hotline **800-273-8255**
- CASA: A Voice for Children **316-284-6909**

Medical & Legal Advocacy:

- Wichita Area Sexual Assault Center **316-263-0185**
- Kansas Legal Services **800-723-6953**

Other Resources:

National Human Trafficking Resource Center **1-888-373-7888**