

# CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY

Adopted: August 6, 2017

The First Christian Church of The Dalles, Oregon

909 Court Street, The Dalles, OR 97058

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## Policy Statement

The First Christian Church of The Dalles, Oregon (the “Church”) is committed to the prevention of child sexual abuse. Accordingly, the Church has adopted this policy to protect the children to whom the Church ministers. All Church ministers, elders, staff and volunteers working with children in any capacity shall abide by this policy.

## Definitions

*Adult* – a person age 18 or older.

*Child* - a person under the age of 18.

*Child Sexual Abuse* – means using or attempting to use a child for sexual gratification. Child sexual abuse may or may not involve touching, and includes any sexual contact or sexual interaction between a child and an adult, including but not limited to those sex crimes described in ORS chapter 163 and the following: risqué jokes, sexual innuendo, unacceptable visual contact, unwelcome casual touch, sexual insults, unwelcome and inappropriate hugs and kisses, and sexually suggestive pictures.

*CPS* – Child Protective Services is the division of DHS that responds to child abuse reports.

*DHS* – Oregon Department of Human Services.

*Mandatory Reporters* – Statutorily designated persons who are required by law to immediately report suspected child abuse, including child sexual abuse, to DHS or law enforcement. For the Church, this specifically includes ministers and all Church employees. In addition, many non-employee Church members and attenders may be mandatory reporters due to their occupations or activities outside the Church.

## Consent

Under Oregon law, **CHILDREN ARE INCAPABLE OF CONSENTING TO A SEXUAL ACT.** Accordingly, sexual interaction with a child is considered forced.

## Children and Youth Ministry Safety Guidelines

1. At least two adults will be present when working with children, including but not limited to the nursery, children’s church, Sunday School and youth group.
2. When working with children in a classroom, the door will remain unlocked.
3. Visitors who have not been approved to work in the Church’s children and youth ministries by first completing the screening and training process described herein will not be allowed to remain in a classroom with children.

4. An adult may not transport a child alone to or from any church-related program or activity unless the child is a member of that adult's family.
5. Screening and Training. All volunteers working with children must:
  - a. Be members of the Church who regularly attend the Church's weekend worship services;
  - b. Complete and submit a Children's Ministry Volunteer Application Packet, including reading and agreeing to abide by this Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Policy and passing a background check;
  - c. Be approved to work in Children's Ministry by a minister employed by the Church; and
  - d. Successfully complete applicable volunteer training, which may include child sexual abuse prevention and mandatory reporter training.

### Reporting

It is the policy of this Church to encourage all Church members and regular attenders, whether or not they are mandatory reporters, to report suspected child abuse, including child sexual abuse, of any child who has had contact with the Church to a Church minister.

In addition, members and regular attenders are urged to report suspected abuse to DHS or law enforcement. If the member or regular attender is a mandatory reporter, it is expected that they will report suspected abuse to DHS or law enforcement in accordance with their legal obligation to do so.

**YOU SHOULD REPORT ANY REASONABLE SUSPICION OF CHILD ABUSE, INCLUDING CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE; YOU DO NOT HAVE TO PROVE IT. IF YOU SUSPECT THAT A CHILD WHO HAS HAD CONTACT WITH THE CHURCH HAS BEEN ABUSED, PLEASE PROMPTLY DO THE FOLLOWING:**

1. **NOTIFY ONE OF OUR CHURCH MINISTERS AND**
2. **REPORT SUSPECTED ABUSE TO DHS OR LAW ENFORCEMENT.**

Below are child abuse reporting telephone numbers and office hours for Wasco County, Oregon.

DAYTIME	OFFICE HOURS	AFTER HOURS
<b>Toll-free number for DHS:</b> 1-855-503-SAFE (7233) <b>Dedicated child abuse hotline:</b> 855-541-0042 <b>Local DHS Office:</b> 541-298-5136	Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.	<b>Dial 911</b> or <b>Wasco County Sheriff:</b> 541-296-5454

Awareness and Compliance

A copy of this Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Policy will be distributed and made accessible to church members and attenders as follows:

1. A link to the policy can be found on the Church’s website and in the monthly Church newsletter.
2. Copies of the policy will be available in the information kiosk in the Fireside Room.
3. At least once each year, an announcement will be made reminding members and regular attenders how and where they may obtain a copy of this Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Policy.

The Senior Minister will be responsible for ensuring that this policy is distributed as described above and has been complied with by all church employees and volunteers working with children.

**I have carefully read and understand this Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Policy and agree to abide by its terms.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature

*NOTE: All completed Children’s Ministry Volunteer Application Packets, including signed Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Policies and background check records, will be kept in a locked cabinet in the Church office. Access to these records will be limited to ministerial staff. A request for release of information related to a specific individual must be made in writing to ministerial staff and will be granted only upon recommendation of the ministerial staff and approval by the Church Elders.*