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**Myers Park Presbyterian
Church
CHILD AND YOUTH
PROTECTION POLICY**

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CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY

I. PURPOSE, APPLICABILITY, SCOPE AND POLICY TERMS

Purpose

This policy is intended:

- To be faithful to our baptismal vows as we seek to welcome children and remove stumbling blocks.
- To provide a safe and secure environment for children and youth at MPPC.
- To protect children and youth from sexual, physical, and emotional abuse while participating in MPPC activities.
- To provide a mechanism to deal with reported concerns and subsequent actions.
- To guide MPPC as an institution in the conduct of its employees and volunteers and prevent incidents and allegations of child abuse.
- To protect adult volunteers and employees from unwarranted allegations of child abuse.

This policy addresses five components of child and youth protection:

1. Screening applicants for employment and volunteer service for a history of behavior potentially detrimental to children and youth.
2. Training both employees and volunteers and children and youth in the child and youth protection policy and in appropriate supervision and chaperoning.
3. Reporting allegations and/or concerns regarding child and youth protection issues
4. Responding to allegations and/or concerns regarding child and youth protection issues.
5. Addressing known offenders as members of MPPC

Applicability

This policy applies to persons including MPPC employees and volunteers participating in all children and youth programs of MPPC, including but not limited to:

- Sunday school classes
- Children and youth fellowship programs
- Weekday School
- Children and youth choirs
- Church sponsored retreats, mission trips, etc
- Vacation Church Camp
- Wellness Ministry and its sponsored activities.
- Church sponsored athletic teams
- Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts
- Outreach, such as CROSS, community service, etc.
- Nurseries and child care

Scope

Who is Covered by this Policy?

This policy supercedes all prior MPPC child and youth protection policy statements.

All employees of Myers Park Presbyterian Church, including the staff of the Weekday School, are governed by this policy, which relates specifically to the Personnel Manual's reference to "Child Protection Policy." With regard to any employee(s) of MPPC, perceived conflicts or ambiguities in interpretation and application of this policy shall be resolved by the Director of Administration and Head of Staff.

Generally, MPPC does not directly control independent contractors, however, all independent contractors who work with MPPC children and youth are governed by this policy.

All volunteer leaders of Myers Park Presbyterian Church who work with children and youth are governed by this policy.

115 **What Does the Policy Require?**
116

- 117 1. All employees and volunteers shall abide by the Code of Conduct.
118
119 2. Each person must assume responsibility for his/her own actions in working with
120 children and youth and for attending training offered on child and youth protection.
121
122 3. An individual may be terminated from employment and/or volunteer service for
123 failure to observe and abide by this policy. This action may be taken regardless of
124 the outcome of any investigation if the Head of Staff, Administrator, Personnel
125 Committee, or CYP Steering Committee determine that the Child and Youth
126 Protection Policy and procedures have not been followed.
127

128 **Outside Groups Using MPPC Facilities**
129

130 All leaders of non-MPPC sponsored groups and events using MPPC facilities, which have
131 direct supervision of children and youth, are expected to adhere to these policies. Upon
132 receipt of the policy from MPPC, the leaders must review the Child and Youth Protection
133 Policy and sign the Outside Group Leaders Release Form to acknowledge their review of it
134 and to confirm their agreement to follow the policy. This includes but is not limited to groups
135 such as: AA, ALANON, NA, CODA, UNCC Reading Enrichment Programs, Birthday
136 Parties scheduled through Wellness, etc.
137

138 Given the nature of the outside groups that use MPPC facilities, MPPC will not perform
139 background checks, seek personal and professional references, review employment records,
140 or obtain civil and criminal records for such groups. Leaders of outside groups will be
141 invited to attend MPPC's frequently scheduled training classes and are expected to conduct
142 their own due diligence in this regard.
143

144 **Policy Terms (glossary):**
145

146 **Employee** – Any person who works for salary or wages at Myers Park Presbyterian Church
147 (MPPC) (e.g. staff, MPPC Weekday School employees, custodians.)
148

149 **Leader** – An adult member designated by the sponsoring organization, with responsibility
150 for children and/or youth. The adult must be a minimum of 18 years of age and at least 4
151 years older than the oldest child or youth they supervise. Leaders of overnight trips must
152 be at least 22 years of age, with at least half the leaders 25 years of age or older.
153

154 **Church Sponsored Activity** - Includes any and all gatherings that arise from MPPC-
155 generated worship, educational, fellowship, administrative, pastoral, mission or
156 recreational events. These events include on-campus and off-campus gatherings.
157

158 **Child or Youth** – Persons under 18 years old and considered a minor under the law. This
159 term shall also include legally incompetent persons. A Child is 5th grade and younger.
160 Youth are 6th grade-18 years old.
161

162 **Head of Staff** – the Senior Pastor of Myers Park Presbyterian Church.
163

164 **Child and Youth Protection Steering Committee (The Steering Committee)** A three- five
165 person team which meets to oversee the policy's implementation, to monitor compliance, to
166 recommend policy changes and clarifications, to provide frontline evaluation of concerns,
167 making recommendations to the appropriate decision-making persons/entities, and to provide
168 routine interpretation and training. Members include the Executive Pastor, the Operations
169 Director, Associate Pastors for Children and Youth, and one layperson.
170

171 **Adult Leadership Form** – This form tracks compliance of adult leadership for ministries that
172 supervise children and/or youth.
173
174

176 **Child Abuse** – A non-accidental injury or pattern of injuries to a child. Child abuse may include:
177 **Neglect** – Occurs when the adults responsible for the well-being of a child fail to provide for the
178 child. Neglect may include not giving food, clothing, shelter; failure to keep children clean; lack
179 of supervision and withholding medical care.
180

181 **Physical Abuse** – An injury or pattern of injuries that happen to a child that are not accidental.
182 These injuries may include beatings, burns, bruises, bites, welts, strangulation, broken bones or
183 death.
184

185 **Sexual Abuse** – Sexual abuse is the sexual assault or exploitation of children. Sexual abuse may
186 consist of numerous acts over a long period of time or a single incident. Children can be
187 victimized from infancy through adolescence. Typically, the perpetrator keeps the child from
188 disclosing the abuse through intimidation, threats, and rewards.
189

190 **Emotional Abuse** – Chronic and persistent acts by an adult that endanger the mental health or
191 emotional development of a child including rejection, ignoring, terrorizing, corrupting, constant
192 criticism, mean remarks, insults and giving little or no love, guidance and support.
193

194 **Spiritual Abuse** – Using religious references to shame or by guilt to motivate a child into a
195 particular action or behavior.
196

197 **II. SCREENING OF EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS**

- 199 1. Personal interviews, application forms, personal and professional references,
200 employment records, background checks (both criminal and civil) are required for all
201 employees. Background checks will be done on MPPC leaders. Information gained by
202 these means will be used to determine eligibility to work with children and youth.
- 203 2. Interviews, reference checks, employment records, and criminal and civil background
204 checks are to be documented in writing, and become confidential church property.
205 These records will not be released to any party except with the written approval of the
206 Head of Staff or Administrator. These records will be made available to the employee
207 or volunteer, but not a candidate for employment, if a written request is made to the
208 Head of Staff or Administrator.
- 209 3. In addition, all current and potential employees and volunteers will be required to sign
210 the Employee and Volunteer Ministry Application Form at the beginning of their
211 service and again every three years. This statement is a supplement to the personal
212 application, and is maintained in the employee's personnel file or in departmental
213 notebooks of volunteer forms.
- 214 4. For Employees: Any candidate for employment who has a past conviction of or
215 pending proceeding addressing an allegation of child abuse or neglect cannot be
216 employed by Myers Park Presbyterian Church without the express written approval of
217 the Personnel Committee, including the Head of Staff and Administrator. The
218 Personnel Committee, including the Head of Staff and Administrator, will consider the
219 available information related to the circumstances of the situation in order to make a
220 determination about the employment of the individual in question. Active substance
221 abuse or a conviction for any of the following will automatically disqualify an
222 individual from employment with children or youth: pedophilic behavior, incest, rape,
223 assaults, indecent exposure, pornography, sodomy or abuse of a minor.
- 224 5. For Leaders: Any candidate for leader service who has a past conviction of or pending
225 proceeding addressing an allegation of child abuse or neglect cannot work with children
226 and youth at Myers Park Presbyterian Church. Active substance abuse or a conviction
227 for any of the following will automatically disqualify an individual from service with
228 children and youth: pedophilic behavior, incest, rape, assaults, indecent exposure,
229 pornography, sodomy, or abuse of a minor. The CYP Steering Committee will inform
230 any leader applicant denied the opportunity to serve with children and youth the
231 reason(s) for disqualification and how to access information relevant to the decision.
232

234 **III. SUPERVISION**

235
236 **Two-Adult Policy**

237 At least two adults will supervise all church sponsored programs and activities involving children
238 and youth whether on or off campus. Adults must remain in sight of one another at all times except
239 in emergency situations. It is permissible for one adult driver to transport several children and youth
240 in a single vehicle in a convoy of vehicles traveling to or from an event.

241
242 Since spouses cannot be compelled to testify against one another in a court of law, husbands and
243 wives count as one adult. Adults in leadership roles are expected to avoid situations where they are
244 alone with children and youth by having leadership teams of at least two adults for all activities. The
245 presence of two or more adults prevents awkward circumstances where child abuse could occur or be
246 alleged, allows shared leadership, and facilitates appropriate discipline. This two-adult policy
247 extends to all overnight and off campus-related events. Under no circumstances can one adult alone
248 take or accompany children or youth on an overnight outing.

249
250 When one-on-one interactions between children and youth and employee/volunteers are necessary
251 (e.g. in emergency situations), care must be taken to conduct the meeting in an environment that
252 provides visibility by other adults. Another adult must have knowledge of the employee/volunteer's
253 whereabouts and with whom they are meeting.

254
255 Situations where a single adult is alone with a single child or youth are to be avoided at all times. If a
256 situation arises in which an adult is alone with a child or youth (i.e. an emergency situation) the adult
257 should notify another adult in a leadership role before and/or after the period during which he/she is
258 alone with the child or youth.

259
260 **Adult/Child/Youth Ratios**

- 261 • The required adult/child/youth ratios for chaperones for any ministry with children or youth that
262 is held within a contained classroom shall be 1:10, however, best practices highly recommends
263 1:4. Gender balance is suggested.
- 264 • The required adult/child/youth ratios for chaperones for any ministry with children or youth that
265 is held in the gym, outside, on the lawn or off campus shall be 1:6. Gender balance
266 (proportionate number of male and female chaperones) is suggested.
- 267 • The required adult/child/youth ratios for chaperones for overnight trips shall be 1:6, however,
268 best practices highly recommends 1:4. Gender balance (at least two male and two female adult
269 chaperones) is required.

270
271 **Open Door Policy**

272 Doors to rooms in which children and youth are present are to remain open. If noise increases to a
273 level that disturbs other classes, the door may be shut as long as there is clear glass in at least half the
274 door, nothing impedes vision through the glass, and at least two adults are present. Employees and
275 volunteers are expected to avoid any situation in which they could be alone with children and youth
276 or out of sight of others except in emergency situations. This is to protect:

- 277 a) children against situations in which abuse might occur, and
- 278 b) adults against false accusations of child abuse.

279
280 **Six Months Policy**

281 Any person in a leadership position with children or youth must have been a member of MPPC for at
282 least six months. Any exceptions must be approved by the CYP Steering Committee for each specific
283 volunteer opportunity. No exceptions will be granted for overnight situations. A waiver form is to be
284 submitted for each exception requested. See the Child and Youth Protection Waiver Form attached.

292 **Training for Adults**

293 All employees, all church officers, and any leaders, who work with children and youth, are required
294 to attend a training session and sign the relevant documents regarding child and youth protection.
295 The church will offer regular training opportunities. This training will include the following:

- 296 • The need for the Child Protection Policy
- 297 • Definition of child abuse
- 298 • Preconditions for child sexual abuse to occur
- 299 • Definition of inappropriate conduct
- 300 • Church policies governing working with children and youth
- 301 • Two Adult Policy
- 302 • Open Door Policy
- 303 • Procedures for reporting allegations and/or concerns regarding child and youth protection issues
- 304 • Procedures for responding to allegations and/or concerns regarding child and youth protection
- 305 issues
- 306 • Supervising and chaperoning children and/or youth

307
308 Following successful completion of the above training and approval of their application, employees
309 and volunteers may be deemed eligible to work with children and youth at MPPC. Training sessions
310 must be renewed every three years and background checks will be renewed every three years, or at
311 the discretion of the Steering Committee.

312
313 **Training for Children and Youth**

314 Parents bear the primary responsibility for teaching their children about child and youth protection
315 and safety issues. Nonetheless, from time to time, MPPC may offer age- appropriate educational
316 opportunities for children and youth to provide them with necessary information about child and
317 youth protection issues, including their right to be free from unwelcome and inappropriate touching
318 or remarks, how to report their concerns, and church policies regarding their safety. Parents will be
319 advised prior to any such educational sessions.

320
321 **Adult Leadership Form**

322 All departments that engage in ministries with children and/or youth are required to submit an Adult
323 Leadership Form to the Executive Pastor’s office for the CYP Steering Committee in order to
324 document compliance with this policy. This form tracks membership status, compliance with
325 training, ensures proper ratios, acknowledges background checks and transportation requirement
326 compliance. A separate form must be submitted for each activity, event, trip or ministry. If two
327 different age groups are attending the same ministry, two separate forms must be completed and
328 submitted. Overnight ministries must submit the ALF no later than one month before the activity,
329 event, trip or ministry. Non-overnight ministries must submit the ALF no later than two weeks before
330 the activity, event, trip or ministry.

331
332 **Code of Conduct**

- 333 1. MPPC employees and leaders will not verbally, emotionally, physically or sexually abuse
334 children.
- 335 2. MPPC employees and leaders will not discipline children by use of physical punishment or
336 by failing to provide the necessities of care.
- 337 3. MPPC employees and leaders may use physical restraint only in situations necessary to
338 protect the child or others from harm.
- 339 4. MPPC employees and leaders will provide proper supervision and exercise sound judgment
340 in providing a safe environment at all times.
- 341 5. MPPC employees and leaders will avoid situations during MPPC programs where they
342 would be alone with a single child and cannot be observed or monitored by others. As
343 adults supervise children, they should space themselves in a way that other adults can see
344 them.
- 345 6. MPPC employees and leaders are expected to observe the Two-Adult Policy and Open
346 Door Policy in their interaction with children and youth at all times except in an emergency
347 situations.

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7. Restroom supervision:
 - MPPC employees and leaders will always use proper supervision when children are using public bathrooms to ensure their safety.
 - MPPC employees and leaders will call on leaders who may be “floating” from room to room to assist with restroom supervision in order to maintain the two-adult rule.
 - MPPC employees and leaders will make sure suspicious or unknown individuals are not occupying the restroom before allowing children to use the facilities.
 - Children will be sent in pairs, and whenever possible, with MPPC employees and leaders. MPPC employees and leaders will stand in the doorway while children are using the restroom in visual sight of another adult. This policy allows privacy for the children and protection for the MPPC employees and leaders (i.e. not being alone with a child).
 - If MPPC employees and leaders are assisting younger children, doors to the facility must remain open.
 8. MPPC employees and leaders will respect the rights of children and youth not to be touched in ways that make them feel uncomfortable, and their right to say no. Adults will discourage children from touching others in an inappropriate manner.
 9. MPPC employees and leaders should be alert to the physical and emotional state of children entering the program. Any signs of injury or possible child abuse must be reported to the Associate Pastor for Children and their Families or the Associate Pastor for Youth and Their Families who will report to the CYP Steering Committee and the Head of Staff or the Administrator of MPPC. If the Associate Pastors mentioned above are not available, MPPC employees and leaders should call the church on-call pastor at any time in order to report. (704.376.3695)
 10. MPPC employees and leaders should release children (fifth grade and younger) only to the authorized parent, guardian, or other individual authorized in writing by the parent or guardian.
 11. Using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, or being impaired by legally prescribed drugs during church working hours or church sponsored programs is prohibited.
 12. Smoking is allowed only in designated areas. Smoking or use of tobacco during church programs is prohibited.
 13. Profanity, inappropriate language or jokes, and any kind of harassment in the presence of children or parents is prohibited.
 14. MPPC employees and leaders will not share inappropriate details of their personal life or ask children to share inappropriate details through any form of communication: written, verbal or electronic.
 15. MPPC employees and adult leaders may not date program participants under 18 years of age.
 16. Because gift giving can be a form of “buying” silence or loyalty, gift giving must be done on a group basis and for specific occasions only (e.g. baptism, 3rd grade Bibles, confirmation and graduation). MPPC employees and leaders are not allowed to give gifts to individual children or youth without knowledge and permission of parents and MPPC minister / department head.
 17. MPPC employees and leaders are required to read, sign and adhere to all policies related to identifying, documenting, and reporting child abuse and attend training sessions on the subject, as instructed by a supervisor.
 18. MPPC employees and leaders are required to report to the Head of Staff or Administrator any circumstances that under this policy affect their ability to work with children and youth.

407 **IV. SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

408
409 **Communicating with Children and Youth**

- 410 • **Privacy Settings.** Set stringent privacy settings on any social networking profile if you are
- 411 an adult ministering to children and youth.
- 412 • **Youth Leaders.** Grant the Associate Pastor for Youth and their Families full access to your
- 413 profile and correspondence if you accept friend requests from minors or youth associated
- 414 with our community of faith.
- 415 • **Abuse and Neglect.** Remember material on any site (church-affiliated or not) that raises
- 416 suspicion that a child has been or will be abused/neglected/exploited should be immediately
- 417 reported to the clergy and/or the Department of Social Services (DSS).
- 418 • **Two-Person Rule.** Note that any and all private communication between a child/youth and
- 419 adult must include two adults, preferably one being the Associate Pastor for Youth and their
- 420 Families or the Associate Pastor for Children and their Families.
- 421 • **Group Page.** Keep in mind that the best way to communicate is through a group page set up
- 422 by the church. Tie events to the group page.
- 423
- 424 • **Limit Commentary on Pictures.** Remember, if you are an adult, limit comments to just
- 425 one or two photographs on a child/youth’s page. Otherwise it can be perceived as intrusive
- 426 and make the child/youth feel uncomfortable.
- 427

428 **Groups on Social Networking Sites – Youth**

- 429 • **It Takes Two.** Be sure each group has at least two unrelated adult administrators as well as
- 430 at least two youth participants.
- 431 • **Closed Versus Hidden.** Choose closed, not “hidden” groups, for youth.
- 432 • **Inviting Youth.** Let youth take the lead when it comes to group invitations. Youth
- 433 administrators should invite their peers, unless a youth specifically asks you to invite
- 434 him/her.
- 435 • **Appropriate Content.** Create behavioral covenants to govern appropriate content for an
- 436 online youth group.
- 437 • **Consequences.** Report any material on any site (whether affiliated with the church or not)
- 438 that raises suspicion that a child has been or will be abused/neglected/exploited to the clergy
- 439 and/or the North Carolina Division of Social Services (DSS). If the material is on a church-
- 440 affiliated site, that material should be documented for church records and then removed
- 441 from the site after consultation with DSS and/or police.
- 442 • **Inappropriate Behavior.** Address any content that depicts inappropriate behavior during a
- 443 church-sponsored event or activity with fellow youth leaders and parents.
- 444 • **Open to parents.** Open social networking groups for youth to current members’ parents.
- 445 • **Former Youth Workers.** Remove former adult leaders and youth members from digital
- 446 communication via the church’s social networking sites after youth “age-out” of a program
- 447 or leaders depart from their current positions.
- 448

449 **V. REPORTING**

450 The law and this MPPC policy make the responsibility for reporting Child Abuse and Suspicions of

451 Child Abuse very clear. See Section IV and V of this policy for guidance and direction regarding

452 reporting of and responding to Child Abuse and Suspicions of Child Abuse

453

454 **A. Allegations**

- 455 1. Every employee and leader of Myers Park Presbyterian Church is required to
- 456 report any situation which presents a suspicion that child abuse may have occurred. Such
- 457 report shall be made to the Associate Pastor for Children and their Families or the Associate
- 458 Pastor for Youth and Their Families, in no case more than 24 hours after such occurrence,
- 459 who will report to the CYP Steering Committee and the Head of Staff or the Administrator.
- 460

- 462 2. Any report of child abuse made by a child about their care by a parent, guardian, youth,
463 adult, or MPPC staff employee or leader, despite how unlikely such report may seem, must
464 be relayed to the Associate Pastor for Children and their Families or the Associate Pastor for
465 Youth and Their Families who will report to the CYP Steering Committee, and Head of
466 Staff or the Administrator of MPPC.
467 3. The Pastor or Administrator shall, as required by law, report the situation to the
468 Mecklenburg County Department of Social Services or other local authorities for
469 investigation.
470 4. All concerns and reporting shall be kept confidential.
471 5. Concerns may be left at the confidential email address at concerns@myersparkpres.org or
472 after-hours by calling the pastor on-call at 704-376-3695.
473

474 **B. Concerns**

475 From time to time issues arise regarding the conduct of our children, youth and adults
476 at MPPC, and the Children and Youth Ministry Programs that are not clearly abuse related issues but
477 impinge upon child and youth protection and safety, and may require attention and review.
478 Sometimes patterns and trends of a questionable nature may be noticed. This section provides a
479 means to report such issues other than Child Abuse in a manner that will assure the issues, patterns,
480 or trends are recorded for subsequent review, addressed, and resolved.
481

482 Examples of issues reported might include:

- 483 • lack of adherence to the Child and Youth Protection Policy;
- 484 • observations of inappropriate class or group conduct or activities during
485 MPPC sponsored events for Children and Youth;
- 486 • potentially inadequate, inappropriate, or unwise leadership of children and youth Ministry
487 Activities.
488

- 489 1. All adults, youth and children are encouraged to report any issues. These are to be reported as
490 soon as possible to the responsible adult leadership at the time the issue is observed. Such
491 notification may be oral.
- 492 2. When it is appropriate or more comfortable, anyone who wishes to have a concern addressed is
493 encouraged to bring the issue to the attention of the Associate Pastor for Children and Families
494 and/or the Associate Pastor for Youth and Their Families either verbally or in writing. All
495 disciples are encouraged to be responsible in identifying issues.
- 496 3. Specific concerns shall be communicated to the Child and Youth Protection Policy Steering
497 Committee in a timely manner. The Steering Committee is available to hear concerns from any
498 member or employee of MPPC related to protection and safety concerns of children and youth.
- 499 4. You may also send concerns to concerns@myersparkpres.org.
500

501 **VI. RESPONDING**

502 **A. Allegations**

504 In the event of an allegation of child abuse, the following procedures shall be followed at
505 Myers Park Presbyterian Church:

- 506 1. Every allegation shall be taken seriously. Adequate care, respect, and confidentiality shall
507 be offered to alleged victims and perpetrators until the allegation is substantiated or cleared.
- 508 2. The Administrator will immediately contact the MPPC attorney and liability insurance
509 carrier.
- 510 3. In consultation with the MPPC attorney the following may be appropriate:
511 a. The Head of Staff may notify the parent(s) or legal guardian of the alleged victim.
512 b. The Head of Staff and/or the Administrator may notify the accused individual.
513

514
515

- 517 4. Written documentation, relating to the matter, shall be kept in a confidential file.
 518 a. The Head of Staff, Administrator and/or the Personnel Committee may
 519 complete an internal investigation in addition to that which will be carried out by the
 520 authorities, following the required notifications.
 521 b. An individual accused of child abuse may be placed on leave from his/her
 522 responsibilities at the discretion of the Head of Staff, Administrator or Personnel
 523 Committee. For employees, this may be with or without pay.
 524 c. To protect the child or youth from further possible abuse or harassment, MPPC will
 525 prohibit the accused individual access to the alleged victim and other children and
 526 youth in ministries sponsored by MPPC.
 527 d. In the event of an unsubstantiated allegation, the Head of Staff or the Administrator will
 528 make a determination as to whether the individual will be allowed to return to work as
 529 an employee or volunteer at the Church. They will consider the individual's likely
 530 effectiveness in working with children/youth following an allegation and investigation
 531 of child abuse. An employee has the right to appeal the decision to the Personnel
 532 Committee. A volunteer has the right to appeal the decision to the Clerk of Session
 533 who will address the situation with the Session in the appropriate time and manner.
 534 5. MPPC employees and volunteers are expected to cooperate fully with the investigation
 535 authorities, with guidance from the MPPC attorney.
 536 6. All MPPC employees and volunteers will refer any inquiries regarding the situation to the
 537 CYP Steering Committee. The Head of Staff, or his/her designee, shall be the
 538 only person authorized to release any information regarding an allegation except where the
 539 law requires others to release information, such as to a protective services investigator or a
 540 police officer.
 541 7. All MPPC employees and volunteers are expected to avoid denial, minimization, or blame
 542 during the period of investigation of the allegation.
 543

544 **B. Concerns**

- 545 1. Every report of a concern regarding the children or youth of MPPC shall be evaluated
 546 to determine if it in fact represents a report or a suspicion of Child Abuse. Such concerns
 547 will be processed as described by this policy.
 548 2. The Child and Youth Protection Steering Committee shall evaluate any report of a concern
 549 related to child and youth protection and safety, even if it does not fall under the legal
 550 definition of abuse or its suspicion, to assure proper follow up on the issue.
 551 3. All concerns reported shall be documented and maintained for long term review of notable
 552 trends or patterns of unacceptable activity by the Steering Committee. If a trend or pattern
 553 develops the Steering Committee will determine appropriate action. If a conflict of interest
 554 is noted during the review, other church staff will perform the review.
 555 Over a longer term, the file of written concerns shall be reviewed in summary form by the
 556 Steering Committee.
 557

558 **VII. ADDRESSING KNOWN OFFENDERS WHO ARE MEMBERS**

559 At Myers Park Presbyterian Church, we seek to live in covenant with God and with one another and to
 560 be a redemptive community to all who are members. We also acknowledge that redemptive action and
 561 responsible action can, at times, be in tension or even in seeming opposition. We embrace this fact as a
 562 natural part of seeking to be the church in the world.

563 We adopt these procedures for ministering to those among us who are known offenders of children and
 564 youth while maintaining our focus on protecting the children and youth of our church

- 565 1. Known offenders will be encouraged to make their status and any terms of probation known to
 566 the Pastor.
 567 2. The Steering Committee will appoint a group of 3-5 members to establish appropriate
 568 boundaries, in writing, governing the life of the offender within the church, including areas on
 569 campus where he/she may go unaccompanied. Group members will receive training in
 570 protection of children and youth and in dealing with known offenders. No decisions made by
 571 this group will conflict with any provisions of the MPPC Child and Youth Protection Policy.
 572 3. The known offender will give written acknowledgement and acceptance of MPPC's Child and
 573 Youth Protection Policy and of the boundaries imposed.
 574 4. At no time is a known offender to be assigned to ministries with children and youth.
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5. At no time is a known offender to congregate with children and youth
6. At no time is a known offender allowed in areas of the church or grounds dedicated to children and youth or in use primarily by children and youth.
7. As circumstances warrant, the Steering Committee may identify a known offender to church employees and leaders whose ministries should be informed of this fact.
8. Known offenders will receive the normal pastoral care afforded any member.
9. Should a known offender disregard the terms established in this policy , or should a known offender disregard any boundaries or conditions set by the Steering Committee and his/her appointed group, the violation will be handled through the Rules of Discipline in the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S .A.).

END OF POLICY