

# **DRAFT**

## **Zion Mennonite Church Child and Youth Protection Policy**

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**Seeking congregational approval at Fall 2019 business meeting**

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## Zion Mennonite Church Safe Church Policy Overview

We are called by Christ to live with integrity and love in all our relationships and to avoid exploitation of vulnerable people or the abuse of positions of power within the church or family. This policy overview is based on best practices in caring for children and one another.

### **Purpose For Our Policy**

This policy has been established to:

1. Help assure a safe, loving, and open atmosphere for children, youth, and the adults who work with them, as they worship, study, play, and are nurtured in their Christian faith.
2. Serve as a guide for the prevention of childhood sexual and other abuse by setting and enforcing standards of ethical behavior.
3. Protect adults involved with children and youth activities from mistaken allegations.

This policy stems from our awareness that abuse has been, and continues to be, a major problem in society. Congregations are not immune to this problem; in fact, churches can be especially vulnerable because they are naturally trusting and unsuspecting institutions.

### **Administration Of The Policy**

A Child Protection Team (CPT) will oversee this policy to ensure that it is implemented and followed. The CPT will consist of a designated pastor and three others. (pages 7-8)

### **Key Elements Of The Policy**

1. The most important way to protect children from experiencing sexual abuse is to have more than one adult present at any event for children (anyone under the age of 18). Thus, this policy contains a two-adult rule. These two adults, called "Approved Adults" for the purpose of this policy, will have attended the congregation for at least six months, have undergone background checks, and have received training to understand issues relating to sexual abuse and how to respond if there are suspicions or disclosure of sexual abuse. In a mixed gender group of children, a male and a female Approved Adult will be present. Overnight trips require two Approved Adults per gender. The church will maintain a list of Approved Adults. (pages 8-9)

Approved Adult Requirements		
Children	Day Trip	Overnight Trip
Same Gender	2 Approved Adults	2 Approved Adults
Mixed Gender	1 Male; 1 Female	2 Male; 2 Female

2. Parents will give an annual written permission for children who wish to participate in activities off of church property. Drivers during events must be licensed, insured, and at least 21 years of age. (pages 11-12)
3. Our youth mentoring program will continue and will be an exception to the two-adult rule. Mentors are expected to communicate with parents and plan activities that occur in public spaces during reasonable times of the day. (page 12)
4. Abuse typically occurs in private; therefore, in adherence to best practices, ZMC's key policy states that anyone with a key will not be alone in the church building at any time with a child or youth that is not a relative. (page 32)
5. Our congregation will make space for known sexual offenders to worship God with us, but will do so in a way that keeps our children safe from the risk of harm and that protects the offender from being in a situation where someone might accuse them of improper behavior. The congregation will provide trained supervisors to accompany the offender while they are on church property, and will provide covenant partners who will meet regularly with the offender for spiritual, emotional, and practical support. (page 17-19)
6. ZMC requires church staff to report suspected child abuse and appeals to all congregants to do the same. The policy outlines steps to report suspicions directly to authorities and/or to report to a Pastor or CPT Chair who will then report to authorities. If the suspected perpetrator is from within the congregation, the policy outlines clear steps that the church will follow during any subsequent investigation by authorities. (pages 12-14)
7. A significant piece of the policy relates to ongoing education and training regarding child sexual abuse. Staff and Approved Adults will be expected to attend training arranged for by the CPT every three years. There will be at least one event annually where parents and other congregants will be offered child abuse awareness education. Our children will receive education using the Circles of Grace curriculum. (page 16-17)

Copies of the Child and Youth Protection Policy are available on the back table in the foyer and at [www.zmcva.org](http://www.zmcva.org).

**Zion Mennonite Church  
Child and Youth Protection Policy**

Safe Church Team: Jesse Compagnari, Paul Leaman, Gen Moyer-Groff, Pastor Sarah Piper, Karla Souder

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them,  
for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these."

**Matthew 19:14, Mark 10:14, Luke 18:16**

As a community seeking to know and trust God more fully, we are called to grow as disciples and ambassadors of Christ. By God's grace and power we are transformed by the Holy Spirit to live, worship, and serve so that God's healing and hope flow through us to the world.

**~Zion Mennonite Church Vision Statement**

At Zion Mennonite Church we follow Jesus as we worship God, nurture faith, minister love, and share hope with neighbors near and far.

**~Zion Mennonite Church Mission Statement**

**Theological Statement /Purpose for our Policy**

We believe that each person is created in the image of God and so deserves care, respect, and honor. God calls us to share our lives together in the Church, which is also described as a body in Scripture.<sup>1</sup> In this body, each person is valuable and indispensable. Children, in particular, are vulnerable and deserving of a safe and protected environment, free from abusive situations at all times. Our church is not immune to the effects of sin, and it would be presumptuous for us to assume that child abuse (emotional, physical, and/or sexual) could never occur in our body. We want Zion Mennonite Church's building and programs to serve as a sanctuary and a refuge for all people.

ZMC relies on goodwill and volunteers to mentor, teach, and show God's love as contributors to the body of Christ. This policy intends to reduce volunteer risk and church liability by establishing procedures that meet Safe Church expectations for reasonable care. Our procedures are designed for maintaining a safe environment for all children and their caregivers. We desire clear expectations for appropriate care and supervision of children and youth. We also wish to equip and support the adults who give of their time and selves for our children.

Our church community realizes some people have experienced unsafe environments. We recognize the painful impact of sexual abuse on survivors. Our congregation believes survivors carry strength and courage, and we want to walk with them on their journey of healing while providing a safe place of worship.

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:12-31.

## **Terms Used In This Policy**

**Children** – persons under 18 years of age (legal minor). The references to children in this policy include youth.

**Pastor** – a minister called by God and the congregation.

**Child Protection Team (CPT)** – team that implements and enforces the Child and Youth Protection Policy.

**Approved Adult** – anyone 18 years of age or older who has satisfied the requirements of the Child and Youth Protection Policy. An Approved Adult can be an employee or a non-employee of the congregation.

**Youth Volunteer** – any person under 18 years of age; must work under the supervision of an Approved Adult who is minimally 4 years older. Supervision requires the physical presence of the Approved Adult.

**Teaching Assistant/Helper/Adult Volunteer** – a person who may or may not be a member of the congregation and who has a specific talent or experience to share with children/youth. The supervisory presence of two Approved Adults is required for these roles.

### **The Child Protection Team (CPT)**

The CPT shall consist of a Pastor, a Congregational Leadership Team (CLT) representative, and two at-large members, preferably one of whom is a parent of a child or a children's worker and a second whom is a parent of a youth or a youth worker. At-large members of the CPT will be appointed by the CLT. Members of the CPT are Approved Adults and serve renewable two-year terms. The Chair is chosen by the CPT with approval from the CLT. The Chair will not be a pastor.

The CPT will:

1. Implement and enforce this Child and Youth Protection Policy.
2. Review congregational policy regarding the safety of our children/youth and make recommendations to the CLT for revision.
3. Coordinate training regarding child abuse and the Child and Youth Protection Policy for all Approved Adults.
4. Maintain a list of Approved Adults and disseminate within the church community.
5. Monitor Approved Adults to ensure that policies are being followed.
6. Monitor the Virginia Sex Offender Registry.
7. Keep CLT apprised of all activities of the committee.
8. Discern with the Pastor on the CPT and the Chair of the CPT any areas of concern.

### **Background Check Process**

The Pastor serving on the CPT will:

- Review all Approved Adult applications.

The Administrative Assistant will:

- Collect and forward requests for clearances, with cover letters, to Virginia Department of Social Services (DSS) and the National Criminal Background Check;
- Collect and forward additional FBI fingerprint clearances for staff.

The CPT Chair and the Pastor on the CPT will:

- Review all background checks. Members of the CPT will be consulted regarding concerns.
  - If a person's background check is not approved, the CPT Chair and/or Pastor will meet with the individual.
- Give applicants the Approved Adult Covenant Of Child Protection for review and signature upon clearance and meeting of all Approved Adult qualifications.

The Pastor serving on the CPT will:

- Maintain all clearances.
- Receive and process reports of suspected abuse.
- Make available, upon request of an individual, his/her clearance reports.

The CPT Chair, chosen by the CPT with approval from the CLT, will:

- Ensure that required forms are received for all applicants and proper records are maintained.
- Call meetings as often as needed, but no less than once each year.

### **Selection Of Approved Adults**

To protect the children/youth in our care, the following guidelines are established for those who desire to work with children less than 18 years of age.

Approved Adults must:

1. Attend ZMC for a minimum of 6 months or be pre-approved by a Pastor and CLT.
2. Complete an Approved Adult application form and the required background check forms. Clearances are required for all applicants.
3. Attend a standard initial training session.
4. Sign and comply with the Approved Adult Covenant Of Child Protection.

### **Required Application Forms To Become An Approved Adult**

The following forms are located in the Appendix:

1. ZMC Approved Adult Application
2. Virginia DSS Background Check Form
3. Approved Adult Covenant Of Child Protection

### **Required Clearances**

Church volunteers are not required by the Virginia Code to obtain background checks. However, most churches, including ZMC, have policies requiring volunteers to obtain the following clearances:

- Virginia DSS background check
- National criminal background
- The online national sex offender registry

Volunteers who have obtained the above clearances through other employment may submit copies of such clearances to the CPT as long as they were given within the past two years. Anyone with clearances older than this must obtain new clearances for working with children in the church.

Prospective employees applying to engage in occupations with a significant likelihood of regular contact with children in the form of care, guidance, supervision, or training, must obtain new background checks as a condition of employment. Such employees would include (for example) a Christian Education Director, Youth Pastor, or other church staff expected to have regular contact with children. Virginia Code permits churches to obtain background checks of the employee relying upon fingerprinting. **All church staff with a significant likelihood of contact with children must obtain FBI clearance using fingerprinting.** See <http://www.vsp.state.va.us/Fingerprints-NonCriminal.shtm> to locate a fingerprint processing center.

### **Records**

Applications and related forms for staff and volunteers will be locked in a confidential file under the jurisdiction of the Pastor on the Child Protection Team. Clearances are confidential and will only be made available to the owner, current pastors, and the CPT.

The Pastor on the CPT will maintain these records following these recordkeeping steps:

1. Create a file on church staff and volunteers working with children that contains the Virginia DSS and National Criminal Background Check. The file will be confidential and locked.
2. Retain any records pertaining to staff and volunteers who work with children that may become the subject of legal proceedings; therefore, no such records will be part of any automatic records destruction plan by the church. This includes child and youth registration and permission forms as well as staff and volunteer clearances. Records may be stored electronically.
3. Maintain a master list of all personnel and volunteers who have regular contact with children in the course of their work.
4. Retain copies of all reports, even ones that are superseded by renewed reports, in confidential locked files.

### **General Guidelines For Protection Of Children**

To ensure that a nurturing Christian environment for children is maintained within the congregation, to protect children who participate in activities sponsored by the church from sexual, emotional, and physical abuse, and to protect adults working with children, the congregation has adopted the following policy:

1. **Child Abuse Prohibited:** Adults working with the congregation's children shall not violate that responsibility by committing non-accidental physical or emotional injury, sexual abuse, or serious physical neglect of children, or any other act described as child abuse in this policy or the laws of our state.
2. **Sexual Abuse Prohibited:** Adults working with the congregation's children shall not violate that responsibility by committing any act of sexual abuse. This includes having any interaction with a child where the child is being used for sexual stimulation of the adult or a third person, regardless of whether or not the behavior involves touching. It also includes any other act described as sexual abuse in this policy or the laws of our state.
3. **Two Approved Adults Rule:** Two Approved Adults must be present during any church sponsored activity geared toward children. In a mixed group, a male and a female Approved Adult must be present. (An exception to the "two Approved Adults" policy is in the youth mentoring program – see full description below.)

Helpers, including youth under age 18 caring for children up to age 12, may work under the supervision of Approved Adults. This does not remove the need for the presence of two Approved Adults.

Some circumstances, such as Sunday School, may result in fewer than two Approved Adults being present for an activity. In these circumstances, a designated Approved Adult will circulate outside the classroom area or be within easy reach to provide assistance if needed.

4. **Visibility:** All activities and meetings with children must be conducted in a way that allows visibility. For example, glass areas of doors should be unobstructed, curtains and blinds should be open, and doors without glass should be open. Whenever possible, activities should be conducted in a public place with another person within observable distance.

Children can also be perpetrators of abuse. Therefore, two children with a four or more year age difference should not be in an isolated setting such as a bathroom or an empty classroom without adult supervision.

5. **Bathroom and Diapering:** Children should be encouraged to use the bathroom before or after classes or other activities. This allows parents to assist as needed.

If an Approved Adult needs to take a child to the bathroom, they should be cognizant of their visibility and the child's privacy. For example the adult may stand holding the public bathroom door open while the child enters the toilet stall alone.

*Diapering:* Only the parent may change the child's clothes or diapers.

*Two and Three Year Olds:* An Approved Adult must accompany children to and from the bathroom and inform another adult when this takes place. The adult will assist the child only when necessary. If assistance is needed, the adult must leave the stall door open.

*Preschool:* An Approved Adult must accompany preschoolers to the bathroom. The adult will remain outside the stall. If assistance is required, the Approved Adult should encourage independence but may assist with minimal tasks if necessary (belts, snaps, etc.).

6. **Empty Room Policy:** After an activity, rooms must be checked to ensure that all participants have vacated.
7. **Expressions of Affection:** True expressions of affection toward children can be a manifestation of Christ's love for all of us. A kind word of encouragement or a pat on the back can be a small but significant act for both the adult and the child. However, adults should use discretion when expressing physical affection toward children.
  - Respect a child's refusal of affection. This includes both verbal refusals and non-verbal indicators of discomfort.
  - Be aware of appropriate hand placement.
  - Touches on private areas and kisses on the mouth are prohibited.
  - Physical discipline of any type is prohibited.

#### **Permission Slips, Overnight Activities, Transportation**

8. **Permission Slips:** An annual permission form will be used to give parental allowance for children to participate in non-overnight church sponsored activities. Children must have specific permission to participate in any *overnight* activity. The permission must be written, signed by a parent or guardian, and identify the activity in which the child will be participating. The adult leader may waive the requirement for permission slips where a permission slip serves no useful purpose (for example when a child is accompanied by his or her parent or guardian to the activity).

A Medical Release Form with medical information, emergency phone numbers, and permission for the Approved Adults to make emergency decisions is required for participation in all overnight activities.

- The original completed form will be kept on file in the church office.
  - A copy of the Medical Release must accompany a designated Approved Adult leader.
9. **Overnight Activities:** Overnight activities involving children shall be chaperoned by at least two Approved Adults. Boys and girls will sleep in separate areas with at least two Approved Adults of the same gender directly supervising each group. If the minimum level of supervision cannot be achieved, the activity must be cancelled; this may result in the loss of deposit fees for which the church cannot be responsible.

10. **Transportation of Children:** To transport children *during* a church sponsored event (not to and from the event), ZMC's designated drivers must be licensed, insured, and 21 years of age or older. Approved Adult ratios are required on all trips where transportation is provided.

### **Appropriate Supervision Ratios**

Overnight events, on or off church property, will include a minimum of two Approved Adults. If both genders are participating in an overnight event, two female adults and two male adults are required.

### **Youth Mentoring Program**

ZMC values mentor-mentee relationships because they encourage spiritual growth and maturity of youth, complementing the role of parents. Youth mentors are same-gender Approved Adults chosen by youth and their parents to provide friendship and companionship for youth throughout their teenage years. Because these relationships are an exception to the two Approved Adults policy (see General Guidelines, section 3), parents, mentors, and mentees are encouraged to follow these suggestions:

1. Preference should be given to mentoring in a public place. When mentoring in a private setting, the child's parents should approve the activity.
2. Late evening mentoring is discouraged. In the event of a late evening activity, specific time constraints should be established with parents/guardians and ongoing communication maintained.
3. Mentors are not to engage children in counseling that requires professional help. This would include drug or alcohol addiction, sexual assault, severe problems with parental relationships, sustained depression or chronic anxiety, eating disorders, and suicidal tendencies. The need for formal or professional counseling should be turned over to the pastoral team.

### **Reporting Suspected Child Abuse How "Mandated" Reporting Works In Virginia**

**Anyone may report suspected child abuse.** However, the VA Code imposes a reporting mandate, or requirement, on any individual who comes into contact with children in the course of his or her work or professional practice and has "reason to suspect that a child is abused or neglected." These individuals are known as mandated reporters. Church staff members are not considered to be mandated reporters in VA. **However, for the purposes of Safe Church, we will consider pastors to function as mandated reporters.** Volunteers who are "Approved Adults" are also not considered mandated reporters under the Virginia code; however, best practices in church settings dictate that all such persons immediately report any suspected abuse to the person designated in this policy, who in turn will make the required report. **Our church follows this best practice. The state mandate to report states that persons who in the course of their duties with the organization "have reason to suspect that a child is an abused or neglected child" (VA 63.21509 A) will report this matter immediately; our church extends this mandate to report to all church staff members, clergy, and volunteers working with children.** This applies to all suspected child abuse, not just abuse that has

been perpetrated by someone within the church. Possible abusers could include parents, relatives, older siblings, neighbors, coaches, teachers, family friends, and other children, among others. Furthermore, **a mandated reporter need not make a firsthand observation of the suspected child abuse victim.** Secondhand reports of abuse must be reported to the proper authorities if the reporter has “reasonable cause to suspect” that child abuse has occurred. The Virginia code specifically grants legal immunity to any individual who, in good faith, makes a report of suspected child abuse. Failure to report suspected abuse by a mandated reporter can result in fines or a Class 1 misdemeanor.

### **Internal Guidelines For Reporting Suspected Abuse**

An employee or an Approved Adult who has reasonable cause to suspect that a child/youth under their care, guidance, or supervision, or a child/youth not directly under their care, guidance, or supervision but involved in any church program or activity has been abused by anyone (including but not limited to the child/youth’s family, guardians, an Approved Adult, or a volunteer) shall immediately inform a ZMC Pastor or the CPT Chair and document the suspected abuse by completing a **Suspected Child Abuse Incident Report** for internal church use. (See Appendix).

**The church is not responsible for investigating or determining whether or not abuse has occurred. The standard under the law for reporting is that “a reasonable person has cause to believe the child has been abused.” It may be necessary to ask the child or person alleging the abuse for some clarification solely in order to determine if there is cause to believe abuse may have occurred; however, detailed interviews and extensive questioning with the child and/or the alleged abuser should be conducted by legal authorities, not the church.**

**If a child is injured or in pain, call 911 and seek immediate medical assistance.**

Upon receiving knowledge of suspected abuse, the Pastor and/or CPT Chair will immediately make an oral report by calling the Harrisonburg Rockingham Department of Social Services (DSS) at 540-574-5100 or by calling the Child Protective Services (CPS) Hotline at 1-800-552-7096. The DSS is mandated to contact the local law enforcement agency immediately upon receiving a report of suspected child abuse.

As a community that feels strongly that adults have a responsibility to protect children, any individual is encouraged to contact the CPS Hotline directly if they have cause to believe that a child has been abused. If there is any delay in being able to contact a Pastor or the CPT Chair, the individual should contact the CPS Hotline directly.

The congregation will cooperate fully with government authorities investigating allegations of abuse. The initiative for investigating alleged abuse resides with the DSS and/or law enforcement, and shall not be carried out by the congregation, the pastors, or any other church leadership body.

All allegations of child abuse or serious physical neglect will be taken seriously by pastors and the CPT. These allegations will be treated in strict confidence. All reporting steps taken will be documented,

including a log of phone calls, personal visits, and written reports. Documentation should be kept in a secure file in the church office.

All communications regarding the report of suspected child abuse shall attempt to protect the dignity and privacy of those persons affected by the report including the alleged child/youth victim and the person suspected of child abuse, while at the same time ensuring that persons in responsibility and law enforcement authorities remain fully informed.

#### **Follow-Up, Investigation, And Documentation**

1. Following placement of the call to report suspected abuse to DSS or the CPS Hotline, the child advocate or pastor will inform the parent (provided that **neither** of the custodial parents is suspected of abuse). **If a custodial parent is the alleged abuser, his or her first contact about the allegation should come from either DSS or the police, not the church. If a custodial parent is the alleged abuser, informing either parent before they've had contact with DSS or law enforcement can interfere with the investigation and may pose a significant safety risk to the child. Therefore, church staff and Approved Adults SHALL NOT inform the custodial parents that a report has been made if EITHER of the custodial parents is the alleged abuser.**
2. The church should not enter into discussion with the alleged abuser about the details of the complaint after a report has been filed and during the course of the legal investigation. The alleged abuser will be removed from any position in which he or she has supervisory authority over children pending the completion of the investigation.
3. The insurance company and Virginia Mennonite Conference should be contacted after the report is filed as a matter of routine practice, if the alleged abuse involves a staff person or the abuse occurred on church property or during a church function. The alleged abuser will have his/her ministry restricted to exclude contact with children immediately. If the alleged abuser is employed by the church, they may be placed on leave for a designated period of time during the investigation.

#### **Response To Allegations, Admissions, And Criminal Charges**

Persons who admit to, plead guilty to, or are convicted in a court of law of any form of physical or sexual abuse of a child/youth will be immediately, permanently, and completely disqualified by the CPT from working with children/youth in the congregation. Persons who admit to a Pastor or any member of the CPT any type of physical or sexual abuse of a child/youth but who have not appeared in a court of law will be disqualified from working with children/youth in the congregation.

Allegations of sexual or physical abuse of anyone shall disqualify any person from working with children/youth until an investigation is completed. If an arrest has been made and charges filed by the police for any violent crime, including any physical or sexual abuse of anyone, the volunteer or staff

person will be immediately removed from any susceptible environments with children or vulnerable populations until the investigation and legal process is complete. This serves not only as protection to children and vulnerable others but also as protection for the person alleged to have transgressed, as such a person may be vulnerable to accusations of inappropriate conduct based on perception of risk, which may or may not be well-founded.

The CPT may temporarily or permanently disqualify any person(s) from working with children/youth as the team deems appropriate.

### **Information**

1. The extent to which information will be shared with the congregation will be determined by the pastoral team and others as appropriate. The input of Virginia Mennonite Conference leaders may be consulted in making this decision. When sharing with the congregation, the victim's identity shall be treated confidentially whenever possible, unless the victim has given prior permission otherwise.
2. All necessary parties will cooperate with the investigations made by the police.
3. The CLT will authorize a pastor or designee to act as the official spokesperson for the congregation. Only the authorized person or persons may speak for the congregation to the news media, government agencies, attorneys, or others.

### **Continuing The Ministry Of The Church**

1. Pastoral support will be offered to all parties involved, including those who have made the complaint, the victim, the alleged abuser, each family involved, and the congregation. Decisions about how this support will be given will be made by pastoral staff with consultation as needed with the Elders, CLT, and Care Commission.
2. If the allegations involve pastoral staff, the ministry of the church will need to be maintained while the issue is being addressed. Decisions regarding how this will be accomplished will be made by the CLT, with assistance from Virginia Mennonite Conference.

### **Violations Of Child and Youth Protection Policy**

Alleged violations of the policy, other than abuse, shall be immediately reported to a Pastor. The Pastor will inform the CPT Chair and the CPT will investigate the alleged violations of the policy. If a person(s) is found to be in violation of the policy, the CPT will determine what disqualification or disciplinary action, if any, is necessary.

### **Non-Abuse Allegations Involving a Demonstration of Poor Judgment**

1. The Pastoral Team will hold the offender responsible and accountable for the behavior. Grace and mercy are extended in the context of repentance, accountability, and justice.
2. Education and/or counseling will be expected to correct unhealthy behavior patterns, and the church may consider helping with the cost of sessions.
3. The offender will be removed from susceptible environments for a stated period of time, and not function in any supervisory capacity over children and youth for at least one year, after which an evaluation determining fitness for this ministry should be made by the pastoral team. The 2<sup>nd</sup> such occurrence of demonstration of “poor judgment” will result in the individual being precluded from any future ministry with children.
4. Communication of the action taken with complainant and congregation will occur as needed.

### **Policy On Education And Training**

This policy will be available to the entire congregation at [www.zmcva.org](http://www.zmcva.org) and on the back table in the foyer.

In order to be an Approved Adult, a volunteer or staff member must participate in an initial training that covers recognizing and responding to child abuse, mandated reporting requirements, and church guidelines and practices. A refresher course for all Approved Adults will be held at least every three years. Volunteers or staff who cannot attend sessions in person will be required to review a tape (video, audio) or a power point of the training prior to serving with youth. Adults will not be approved to take care of children alone until after they have completed the required training.

All Approved Adults and staff will receive a copy of the Safe Church Policy Overview, have access to the Child and Youth Protection Policy, and sign ZMC’s Approved Adult Child Protection Covenant.

### **Procedures For Education And Training**

#### **Staff and Volunteers**

1. Training will be offered as a mandatory part of volunteer and pastoral training.
2. Once an individual has participated in the initial training, a refresher training will be required every three years to ensure that the individual's knowledge is current and accurate.
3. The church’s administrative assistant will maintain a record of who has received training and the dates.
4. Training will include the use of professional training materials on child abuse, including specific information about: child sexual abuse, behavioral signs, and how to respond to a disclosure; the grooming process sexual offenders often use to engage children; a review of policies and procedures that are specific to ZMC and pertinent to the work in which the employee or volunteer will be involved; and instruction in the use and completion of the various forms.

### **Parents and other Congregants**

ZMC will periodically offer parent enrichment sessions that include information about the spiritual, psychological, and physical needs of children as well as the impact of trauma and abuse on their development.

### **Children and Youth**

The Circle of Grace Christian education curricula on healthy physical, emotional, and sexual boundaries, including sexual abuse prevention, will be offered periodically. Teachers will be provided with any needed training and materials. The purpose of this curriculum is to provide children and youth with the opportunity to receive age-appropriate information in a faith-based context, to help them to recognize inappropriate conduct on the part of an adult or older child, to empower them to say “no,” and to equip them to tell a safe adult at church, home, or school.

### **Providing Community For Known Sexual Offenders**

***My friends, if anyone is detected in a transgression, you who have received the Spirit should restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness. Bear one another’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. Galatians 6:1-2 (NRSV)***

Individuals who have been adjudicated by a court or child protective services findings as sexual offenders, and/or have admitted to past sexual abuse of children, and who are willing to abide by the guidelines set forth in this policy, are welcome to attend worship services and adult educational activities. Such individuals are hereafter referred to as “offenders.”

The minimum guidelines by which any offender may participate in the life of the congregation are set forth below, and shall be incorporated into a covenant specific for the individual offender and signed by the offender prior to participation.

Depending on the circumstances and at the discretion of the CPT, additional restrictions may be incorporated into an individual covenant. If an individual is on probation or parole, specific provisions related to contact with children, participation in counseling, and others, will be incorporated into the covenant. The individual covenant may also permit participation in additional church activities (other than those involving children) if circumstances warrant.

An individual on probation or parole for a child sexual offense may have restrictions placed on church attendance as part of their probation/parole condition. On occasion, an exception to a “no church attendance” provision of probation or parole may be made by an officer of the court, based on the church’s capacity to manage the offender in a way that keeps them from contact with children. Any individual on probation or parole must provide the Pastor on the CPT with a copy of the probation and parole agreement, including its terms and conditions, as well as the contact information for the parole or probation officer assigned.

1. **Offenders are expected to comply fully** with all restrictions and requirements placed upon them as a result of any legal actions and provide the Pastor on the CPT with copies of any judgments, conditions of parole, or other documents in which restrictions or requirements as a result of convictions or judgments are stated.
2. **Offenders are expected to participate in a professional counseling program** with a therapist certified in the treatment of sex offenders and to follow all recommendations from that therapist. Counseling will continue until the therapist deems it to be complete. The offender will adhere to any follow-up recommendations made upon discharge from counseling. The offender may be asked to periodically sign a limited disclosure authorization for the therapist to verify to the Pastor on the CPT that the individual is in treatment. If treatment was completed prior to the offender connecting with the congregation, consent will be provided to allow the Pastor on the CPT to verify this with the service provider.

In a case of extreme financial hardship where the offender cannot afford counseling and is not required by the court to be in counseling, the Pastor on the CPT will work with the offender to create an alternative plan that may include regular pastoral counseling, participation in a community-based group for sexual offenders, one-on-one mentoring with a congregational member that has received training on working with sexual offenders, or other affordable venues.

3. **Known sexual offenders can never become Approved Adults.**
4. **The CPT will assign a lead supervisor and a team of supervisors of the same gender to the offender.** The lead supervisor serves as the communication link between the offender, supervisors, and the CPT. Supervisors will be adults who are not related to the offender. They will receive training by a professional agency that will include information on sexual offender dynamics, the long-term impact of sexual abuse on victims, and any specific conditions related to participation under the specific covenant established. If the offender is on probation or parole, the training may need to be approved by the officer of the court handling the case.
5. **The CPT will assign a lead covenant partner and a team of covenant partners for the offender.** This small group will provide spiritual, emotional, and practical support and will meet with the offender on a regular basis. The supervisors and covenant partners may not be the same individuals.
6. **The offender may participate in worship in the sanctuary and attend adult Sunday school classes.** The CPT may designate a specific service and time for attendance. Any other activities the offender is permitted to participate in will be detailed in the covenant.
7. **A supervisor must accompany the offender at all times when on church property or at any permitted church activity.**

8. **At no time should the offender deliberately place him or herself in or remain in any location in or around the church facilities in a manner that would cause undue distress to others.**
9. **At least twice each calendar year and as otherwise requested,** the offender shall meet with and report to the Pastor on the CPT, the lead supervisor, and the lead covenant partner regarding status of adherence to these guidelines.
10. **If the offender should decide to relocate membership (or substantially attend) another congregation,** the Pastor on the CPT will seek to inform the leadership of that congregation of the conditions of these guidelines.

### **Supervisors of Sexual Offenders**

**Should the church decide to welcome a known sexual offender into fellowship in accordance with the guidelines established in this policy, a group of supervisors will receive specific training to include the following items prior to welcoming the offender to the congregation.**

If the offender is currently on probation or parole, permission by the supervising county office to include the offender, as well as their approval of the organization providing the training and the curriculum, may be required.

#### **1. Dynamics of sexual offending** (blame, impulsiveness, denial, deception, role of fantasies)

Summary information about different types of offenders

General characteristics of a pedophile: lifestyle issues, access to victims, orientation

The grooming process

Sex offense therapy (brief overview) – Use of polygraph

#### **2. Dynamics of victimization** (shame, secrecy, trauma symptoms)

Defining child sexual abuse under Virginia code

Long and short term consequences of child sexual abuse

#### **3. Role of the supervisor**

Close accompaniment of offender while on church property

Assure no contact with children, including verbal/emotional/physical

Monitor offender compliance with policy & covenant guidelines

#### **4. Specific information about the particular offender,** including any terms of probation or parole, and guidelines agreed to by covenant with the church.

**The church will inform membership of the inclusion of a known sexual offender and the agreed upon guidelines using various means of communication.**

### **Use of Facilities by Outside Organizations**

Outside groups and organizations using the church facilities on a recurring basis are to be made aware of this policy and must adhere to it or must provide evidence of their own policy and procedures, subject to review and acceptance by ZMC.

An adult representative of outside groups will be required to sign a Statement of Compliance for the sponsoring organization before use of the facilities will be granted.

## Zion Mennonite Church

### Application To Become An Approved Adult

This application is a mandatory part of a process to assist the congregation in providing a safe, nurturing, Christian environment for our children/youth. Before completing this application, please read ZMC's Safe Church Policy Overview for a better understanding of our congregation's safety expectations. The four steps of approval are:

1. Attending ZMC for a minimum of 6 months or receiving pre-approval by a Pastor and CLT.
2. Completing an Approved Adult application form and the required clearance forms. Persons with found barrier crimes are ineligible to become an Approved Adult.
3. Attending a standard initial training session.
4. Signing and returning the Approved Adult Covenant of Child Protection.

#### Personal Information

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ (Work) \_\_\_\_\_ (Cell) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Are you 18 years of age or older?     Yes     No

Have you ever been accused of abusing a child/youth?     Yes     No

If yes, please explain.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Church Or Child-Related Work**

List your talents, training, education, and experience that might help enrich the lives of our children/youth. Describe the type of work you prefer.

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Name, city, and state of churches you have attended on a regular basis during the last ten years.

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**Personal References**

Give the name, email, and phone number of two persons, not relatives, who have known you for at least five years.

(1)

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(2)

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## **Applicant Release Of Information, Release Of Liability, And Understandings Of Legal Commitments Of Volunteering**

I understand and agree that the congregation may contact the churches and references identified above and others who may be identified by those listed above. I authorize these references or churches to give you any information (including opinions) that they may have regarding my character and fitness for work with children/youth. I also understand and agree that law enforcement authorities or any other person or entity with access to records of criminal arrests or convictions may be contacted during the consideration of this application. I authorize these law enforcement authorities or any other person or entity to provide information regarding criminal arrests or convictions. In consideration of the receipt and evaluation of this application by the congregation, I hereby release the congregation and any individual, church, youth organization, employer, reference, or any other person or entity, including record custodians, both collectively and individually, from any and all liability for damages of whatever kind or nature which may at any time result to me, my heirs, or family, on account of any person's or entity's disclosure of information about me or the expression of an opinion about me.

I understand that as a volunteer working with children/youth, clearance is required from:

- National Criminal Background Check
- Virginia Department of Social Services
- National Sex Offender Registry

Note, all ZMC staff complete the above, as well as a FBI fingerprint record check.

I have carefully read the foregoing release and understand its content. I will notify a ZMC Pastor if I am arrested or convicted of a criminal offense involving child abuse. I agree that the information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I am signing this statement freely and voluntarily.

Applicant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Virginia Department of Social Services Background Check Form

**VA Department of Social Services**
**Central Registry Release of Information Form**

Office of Background Investigations – Search Unit

 801 East Main Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Richmond, VA 23219-2901

### Search Fee \$10.00

<b>Purpose of Search, Check one:</b>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Adam Walsh Law	<input type="checkbox"/> Adoptive Parent	<input type="checkbox"/> Babysitter/Family Day Care	<input type="checkbox"/> CASA	<input type="checkbox"/> Children's Residential Facility	<input type="checkbox"/> Custody Evaluation
<input type="checkbox"/> Day Care Center	<input type="checkbox"/> Foster Parent	<input type="checkbox"/> Institutional Employee	<input type="checkbox"/> Other Employment	<input type="checkbox"/> School Personnel	<input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer
<input type="checkbox"/> Other					

**MAIL SEARCH RESULTS TO: Agency, Individual or Authorized Agent Requesting Search**

Name	Payment/FIPS Code (Use only if assigned by OBI-CRU)
Address	
City	State
	Zip
Contact Name	Tel.#
	Ext
Contact E-Mail	Mandatory if agency code has been assigned

**PART I: DETAILS OF INDIVIDUAL WHOSE NAME MUST BE SEARCHED**

Last Name	First Name	Full Middle Name – (given at birth) - <b>No initials</b> (if middle name is an initial, indicate "Initial Only")	
Maiden Name (last name before marriage)	Sex <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY)	Race
Driver's License Number or ID #	Social Security Number	Other names used; nicknames, legal names (refer to instruction page)	
Current Address (Include Street # and Apt #)	City	State	Zip

**Applicant's Prior Addresses**

Include Street # and Apt #	City	State	Zip	Start Date (MM/YY)	End Date (MM/YY)

**Marital Status**  Single  Married  Divorced  Widowed  Partner

If married, list current spouse. If previously married, list all previous spouses. If you have never been married, write 'N/A'.

Last Name	First Name	Full Middle Name (given at birth)	Maiden Name	Race	Sex	Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY)
					<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	
					<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	
					<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	

**List all of your children.** If you have none, write 'N/A'. Include all adult children, step and foster children not living with you.

Last Name	First Name	Full Middle Name (given at birth)	Relationship	Sex	Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY)
				<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	
				<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	
				<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	

**Zion Mennonite Church  
Approved Adult Covenant Of Child Protection**

As ZMC's Pastor on the Child Protection Team, I have reviewed the Approved Adult application and required background checks, verified completion of a Child Protection Training program and am pleased to welcome \_\_\_\_\_ as a ZMC Approved Adult.

CPT Pastor: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**The applicant's signature and submission of this covenant to the Administrative Assistant confirms their status as a ZMC Approved Adult.**

I accept the responsibility to nurture the Christian faith and well-being of the children and youth of Zion Mennonite Church and to care for them as Christ cares for me. I have read, understand, and agree to abide by the Child and Youth Protection Policy of Zion Mennonite Church.

I further indicate my understanding and compliance with the following specific conditions set forth in the policy:

- I agree to notify a ZMC Pastor immediately if I am charged with a criminal offense involving child abuse or if I am the subject of an indicated child abuse report.
- I will immediately report any suspected child abuse to a ZMC Pastor or the CPT Chair.
- I will not be alone with a child or youth, other than a relative, while at ZMC or any ZMC activity.

Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Approved Adult Review Of Application And Certifications  
(Completed by CPT Pastor and Chair for Individuals with Findings)**

Applicant's name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Application \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Review \_\_\_\_\_

Findings from Criminal Records Background Check

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Findings from Virginia Department of Social Services Background Check

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Results of reference checks

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Is applicant disqualified from service with children/youth because of any of the criminal record or child abuse reports?

Explain \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Are there any other reasons why this application should not be approved?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I \_\_\_\_\_ approve/deny the application of \_\_\_\_\_

to become an Approved Adult at Zion Mennonite Church upon completion of the required volunteer training and signing the Covenant of Child Protection.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



### Medical Data Form

**Child/Youth Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Physician:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Medical Insurance name and #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Health History:**

**Check those that apply:**

<input type="checkbox"/> Asthma	Allergies (Please list)
<input type="checkbox"/> Convulsions	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Diabetes	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Ear Infections	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Epilepsy	Medicine/Drug Allergies
<input type="checkbox"/> Heart Disease/Defects	_____

**Other Health Related Conditions**

<input type="checkbox"/> Emotional Issues	<input type="checkbox"/> Nosebleeds	<input type="checkbox"/> Wears Glasses
<input type="checkbox"/> Fainting	<input type="checkbox"/> Motion Sickness	<input type="checkbox"/> Wears Contact Lenses
<input type="checkbox"/> Sleep Walking	<input type="checkbox"/> Menstrual Cramps	<input type="checkbox"/> Hearing Impairment
<input type="checkbox"/> Special Dietary Regimen _____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____		

**A COPY OF THIS FORM WILL BE TAKEN ON EVERY ACTIVITY, FIELD TRIP OR OVERNIGHT  
EVENT THAT THIS CHILD/YOUTH ATTENDS.**

**Parent/Guardian Permission for an Overnight Activity  
Zion Mennonite Church**

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Your son/daughter is encouraged to participate in the described overnight activity.

**Name of event:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Destination:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Trip Description:**

**Departure from** **location, date, time**      **Return to** **location, date, time**

**Method of Transportation:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Designated Approved Adult supervisors:**

1. (name) \_\_\_\_\_ cell # \_\_\_\_\_

2. (name) \_\_\_\_\_ cell # \_\_\_\_\_

**Participant's Cost:** \_\_\_\_\_ **(Include any other information about cost here)**

**What to bring:** **(Insert details here)**

If you would like your child/children to participate in this event, please sign and return the permission form below by **(date)**. As the parent or legal guardian, you remain responsible for any legal responsibility which may result from actions taken by the named child/children. KEEP this top section for your information.

-----

**Permission Form for Overnight Activity**

**\*\* Return this lower form by (date)**

I hereby consent to participation by my youth: (name/names) \_\_\_\_\_ in (event name) \_\_\_\_\_ on (event date) \_\_\_\_\_. I understand this event will take place away from ZMC's building and that my youth will be under the supervision of the two Approved Adults (or four Approved Adults if mixed genders will be present) for the trip described above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print parent/guardian name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of parent/guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Indicate **any change** in **Medical Information** which was previously given with the Child/Youth Registration \_\_\_\_\_



## Nursery Guidelines for Parents and Attendants

The nursery of Zion Mennonite Church is designed to provide a place of safety and nurture for our youngest church participants, while allowing their parents to participate in worship services or activities. As such, the following policy is designed to protect the children, parents, and volunteers who participate.

### Parents

- The nursery is only intended for those two years old and younger.
- Children must be signed in to use the nursery.
- Parents/Guardians are responsible for changing their child's diaper or accompanying them to the restroom as needed.
- At least one parent/guardian shall remain in the church while the child is in the nursery. Parents are responsible to pick up children immediately following the worship service or activity.
- Parents should label their infant's belongings- especially diaper bags, bottles/sippy cups, and snack cups. Please attach pacifiers to the child. Do not send snacks that pose a choking hazard or contain nut products.

### Nursery Attendants

- Nursery attendants are to wear the nursery badges provided.
- There must be two nursery attendants present with the children at all times.
- Nursery attendants will either text the parent/guardian or send a foyer monitor to find the parent for diaper changes or to take a child to the bathroom.

A copy of these guidelines will be provided to all parents whose infants attend the nursery and to visitors who may be utilizing ZMC's nursery for the first time.

***Thank you for helping provide a safe, nurturing environment for our youngest church attenders!***

### Key Receipt Form

I understand that, as a person with a key(s) to Zion Mennonite Church, I am responsible for maintaining the safety of the Church environment while any property and/or facility of Zion Mennonite Church is unlocked by the key(s) I hold.

I agree to be entirely responsible for the security of the key(s) and to:

- Not lend the key(s) to anyone, unless a spouse who signs forms below.
- Not tag or otherwise identify the key(s) as providing access to any property and/or facility of Zion Mennonite Church.
- Not duplicate the key(s) to Zion Mennonite Church.
- Not be alone in any room on Zion Mennonite Church's property with a child or youth that is not a relative without parental permission.
- Return the key(s) when I no longer have the responsibility that created a need to have the key(s) or when an authorized representative of Zion Mennonite Church requests such return.
- Check that all doors unlocked by my key are relocked.

I understand that failure to comply with this Key Receipt Form may result in the loss of my privilege to be a key holder at ZMC.

Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (C) \_\_\_\_\_ (W) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

If a key is shared by a spouse, the spouse must sign below and adhere to the same direction as outlined above. It is understood that failure to comply with any of the provisions set forth in this Key Receipt Form may result in the loss of my privilege to be a key holder.

Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (C) \_\_\_\_\_ (W) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*

Date Key Returned: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Key holder: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Authorized Representative of Zion Mennonite Church: \_\_\_\_\_

## Suspected Child Abuse Incident Report For internal church use

Please Note: If you suspect a child has been abused, you are required to immediately report it to a Pastor or the CPT Chair.

Date of Report \_\_\_\_\_ Person Making Report (Please print) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date of Incident \_\_\_\_\_ Approved Adult  Employee  Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of Child/Youth \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Male  Female   
 Parent/Guardian of Child/Youth \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the circumstances under which you became aware of possible abuse. State the names of anyone who witnessed abuse or reported this to you.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Describe any injuries you observed: \_\_\_\_\_

Does the child appear to need immediate medical attention? Yes No Unknown

Approximate date of last known incident of abuse \_\_\_\_\_  Unknown

Did the abuse take place at the church or during a church-related activity? Yes No Unknown

If yes, indicate activity \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Alleged Perpetrator \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Child \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the alleged perpetrator(s) access to the child \_\_\_\_\_

Does this person have a history of violence, mental illness, or substance abuse?

Yes No If yes, please explain \_\_\_\_\_

Reported to Pastor or CPT Chair Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of person making this report \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of person receiving this report \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



- a. If sessions are terminated I will immediately inform the Pastor on the CPT or the CPT Chair.
- b. If such sessions are a condition of my parole or probation, I understand I may be suspended from participation at ZMC until I am back in counseling with another licensed professional counselor that satisfies the conditions set forth by the court.
- c. If treatment is NOT a condition of probation or parole, and I cannot afford counseling because it would create extreme financial hardship, I will discuss my situation with the Pastor on the CPT or the CPT Chair to create an alternative plan that may include community or church based groups, one-on-one mentoring, or other affordable venues.



## What Are The Legal Definitions Of Child Abuse And Neglect?

Virginia Code § 63.2-100 defines an abused or neglected child as any child under 18 years of age:

1. Whose parents or other person responsible for his care creates or inflicts, threatens to create or inflict, or allows to be created or inflicted upon such child a physical or mental injury by other than accidental means, or creates a substantial risk of death, disfigurement, or impairment of bodily or mental functions, including, but not limited to, a child who is with his parent or other person responsible for his care either (i) during the manufacture or attempted manufacture of a Schedule I or II controlled substance, or (ii) during the unlawful sale of such substance by that child's parents or other person responsible for his care, where such manufacture, or attempted manufacture or unlawful sale would constitute a felony violation of § 18.2-248;
2. Whose parents or other person responsible for his care neglects or refuses to provide care necessary for his health. However, no child who in good faith is under treatment solely by spiritual means through prayer in accordance with the tenets and practices of a recognized church or religious denomination shall for that reason alone be considered to be an abused or neglected child. Further, a decision by parents who have legal authority for the child or, in the absence of parents with legal authority for the child, any person with legal authority for the child, who refuses a particular medical treatment for a child with a life-threatening condition shall not be deemed a refusal to provide necessary care if (i) such decision is made jointly by the parents or other person with legal authority and the child; (ii) the child has reached 14 years of age and is sufficiently mature to have an informed opinion on the subject of his medical treatment; (iii) the parents or other person with legal authority and the child have considered alternative treatment options; and (iv) the parents or other person with legal authority and the child believe in good faith that such decision is in the child's best interest. Nothing in this subdivision shall be construed to limit the provisions of § 16.1-278.4;
3. Whose parents or other person responsible for his care abandons such child;
4. Whose parents or other person responsible for his care commits or allows to be committed any act of sexual exploitation or any sexual act upon a child in violation of the law;
5. Who is without parental care or guardianship caused by the unreasonable absence or the mental or physical incapacity of the child's parent, guardian, legal custodian or other person standing in loco parentis;
6. Whose parents or other person responsible for his care creates a substantial risk of physical or mental injury by knowingly leaving the child alone in the same dwelling, including an apartment as defined in § 55-79.2, with a person to whom the child is not related by blood or marriage and who the parent or other person responsible for his care knows has been convicted of an offense against a minor for which registration is required as a violent sexual offender pursuant to § 9.1-902; or
7. Who has been identified as a victim of sex trafficking or severe forms of trafficking as defined in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, 22 U.S.C § 7102 et seq., and in the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015, 42 U.S.C. § 5101 et seq.

**\*NOTE: Virginia law requires that mandated reporters report all cases of suspected child abuse or neglect to child protective services regardless of the abuser/neglector's relationship to the child.**