

**FORM 1 - Information about the "Plan to Protect Policy" - please read this entire document**

- This policy is needed to fulfill the requirements of the church's full insurance coverage.
- In order for us to be covered by this insurance plan, we need the following 4 items from all servants:
  - 1- Complete a Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC)
  - 2- Please review all the pages in this document, and then complete & sign the "Covenant of Care" (please see Form 2)
  - 3- Complete the "Volunteer Application Form" (please see Form 3)
  - 4- Please ask two adults who know you well to each complete a Reference Form for you (please give Form 4 to your references)

**Once the above is completed, the files can be emailed to:** [insurance@stmarkstoronto.ca](mailto:insurance@stmarkstoronto.ca)

-We have to comply with the Policy recommendation (# of Servants per class)

Here are suggested child/youth/vulnerable adult ratios to leaders in a regular program, but additional adults can be helpful if one adult needs to leave the program temporarily.

Age	Ratio
0-18 months	2 adults to 6 children
18 months-2 years	2 adults to 10 children
2-5 years	2 adults to 12 children
Ages 5-14	2 adults to 15 children
Ages 15-18	2 adults to 15 children
Vulnerable adults	2 adults to 10 vulnerable adults

**VI Day Excursions and Overnight Outings**

Here are the minimum recommended participants' ratios to teacher/leader/volunteers on day excursions and overnight outings:

Age	Day Excursions	Overnight Outings
5 or under	2 adults per group of 10	Overnight excursions not recommended
Ages 6-8	2 adults per group of 12	Not recommended for age 6; 4 adults for 20 children for ages 7-8
Ages 9-10	2 adults for every 15 children	2 adults for every 10 children
Ages 10-14	2 adults for every 15 children	2 adults for every 10 children
Ages 15-18	2 adults for every 15 youth	2 adults for every 10 youth
Vulnerable adults	2 adults for 10 vulnerable adults	2 adults for 10 vulnerable adults

-Before an outing activity, the program leader should store a copy of the waiver in the church (can send it to the insurance email address as listed above) and take another copy on the outing.(See Appendix 4)

-If an incident happened, Incident Report Form Should be completed and send to the insurance email (See Appendix 5)

-The servant should familiarize themselves with Appendices 11 & 12

## Appendix 4

### Sample Activity Program Waiver and Medical Release

Note: Before an activity, the program leader should store a copy of this waiver in a safe storage area and take another copy on the outing.

**INSERT YOUR ORGANIZATION NAME HERE:**

Description and location of activity		
Departure date	Returning date	
Full name of participant	Birth date (N/A for adult)	
Full address	City	Prov Postal Code
Parent/guardian/caregiver names		
Circle the number where parent/guardian may be reached when trip is taking place.		
Home/resident phone	Cell	Work
Does the participant have any severe allergies or other medical condition that leaders should be aware of?		
If yes, please list and explain		

All reasonable precautions for the safety and health of the participant will be taken. He/she will be properly supervised in activities. In the event of accident or sickness, (Insert your organization name here), its staff and volunteers are released from any liability.

In the event of injury requiring medical attention, I authorize treatment for the participant and understand that reasonable attempts will be made to contact me, should such a situation occur.

In the event that travel, or activities take place outside this province, I understand that any medical costs incurred by the participant are my responsibility.

The participant must be covered by provincial health insurance or equivalent medical coverage. If the trip is out of province, please give insurance provider and policy number.

Provider	Policy No.
Participant Health card number	
Participant's Family Physician	Phone
Contact person (not parent) in case of emergency and parents/guardians/caregiver cannot be reached	
Name	Phone
Parent/Guardian Signature	Parent/Guardian Name (Print)

## Appendix 5

### Sample General Incident Report Form

Note: Before an activity, the program leader should store a copy of this waiver in a safe storage area and take another copy on the outing.

**CONFIDENTIAL** INSERT YOUR ORGANIZATION NAME HERE:

Report date	Time of report		
Full Name of child/youth/adult			
Age/Grade (N/A for adult)	Date of Birth		
Which of the following most accurately describes the person? M, F, non-binary, prefer not to say			
Full address	City	Prov	Postal Code
Phone (Primary)	Phone (Other)		
Name of Parent/Guardian (for child/youth) or caregiver (for adult)			
Notified	Yes	No	If yes, date/time of notification
Address (if different from above)			
Phone (if different from above)			
Date/time of incident	Location of incident		
Description of incident			
Names/contact of witnesses			
Description of injuries sustained			
Description of action taken			
Additional information you think is relevant			

**Direct quotes from child/youth/adult**

*(Note: If this is an abuse allegation, do not interview the child/youth but report only the comments they share with you.)*

**I hereby confirm that the information provided in this report is accurate to the best of my knowledge.**

Name and position of person making report (please print)			
Full address	City	Prov	Postal Code
Phone (Primary)		Phone (Other)	
Signature of Person making report			Date

Note: If this is an allegation of abuse, it must be reported to a protection agency or police. (See section on reporting procedure.)

Please add any other pertinent information, i.e. photos of location (interior and exterior), or any further detail you believe is relevant.

# Appendix 11

## Understanding Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Abuse

This policy advocates zero tolerance for any form of abuse. This includes abuse that happens to a child/youth/vulnerable adult by a staff member or volunteer. There is also a need for adults within the organization to be sensitive to incidents of abuse that may be happening in the home or social life of a child/youth/vulnerable adult.

Any person who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child/youth is (or may be) in need of protection must report that suspicion to a protective agency or police authority.

A volunteer/leader who hears an allegation of abuse should confide this to a designated authority within the organization. A high ranking official in the organization should be identified as the contact for reporting all cases.

In order to understand and recognize child abuse, the following definitions and indications of emotional, physical and sexual abuse or neglect are listed. Some of the following also apply to vulnerable adults. A more complete description of abuse of vulnerable adults is found below. All organizations are asked to supplement this with information from a provincial/territorial child protection agency.

### What is Child/Youth Abuse?

The term “child abuse” refers to the violence, mistreatment or neglect that a child or adolescent may experience while in the care of someone they either trust or depend on, such as a parent, sibling, other relative, caregiver or guardian. Abuse may take place anywhere and may occur, for example, within the child’s home or that of someone known to the child. There are many different forms of abuse, and a child may be subjected to more than one form:

- Physical abuse may consist of just one incident, or it may happen repeatedly. It involves a deliberately using force against a child in such a way that the child is either injured or is at risk of being injured. Physical abuse includes beating, hitting, shaking, pushing, choking, biting, burning, kicking or assaulting a child with a weapon. It also

includes holding a child under water, or any other dangerous or harmful use of force or restraint.

- Sexual abuse and exploitation involve using a child for sexual purposes. Examples of child sexual abuse include fondling, inviting a child to touch or be touched sexually, intercourse, rape, incest, sodomy, exhibitionism, or involving a child in prostitution or pornography.
- Neglect is often chronic, and it usually involves repeated incidents. It involves failing to provide what a child needs for his or her physical, psychological or emotional development and well-being. For example, neglect includes failing to provide a dependent child with food, clothing, shelter, cleanliness, medical care or protection from harm.
- Emotional abuse involves harming a child’s sense of self-worth. It includes acts (or omissions) that result in, or place a child at risk of, serious behavioural, cognitive, emotional, or mental health problems. For example, emotional abuse may include aggressive verbal threats, social isolation, intimidation, exploitation, or routinely making unreasonable demands. It also includes terrorizing a child or exposing them to family violence.

An abuser may use several different tactics to gain access to a child, exert power and control over them, and prevent them from telling anyone about the abuse or seeking support. A child who is being abused is usually in a position of dependence on the person who is abusing them. Abuse is a misuse of power and a violation of trust. The abuse may happen once, or it may occur in a repeated and escalating pattern over a period of months or years. The abuse may change form over time.

### Abuse of Vulnerable Adults

While some factors may not apply to all vulnerable adults (e.g. the developmentally challenged), most characteristics are equally applicable to all

vulnerable adults. Although individuals may be abused at virtually any life stage — childhood, adolescence, young adulthood, middle age, or old age — the nature and consequences of abuse may differ depending on an individual's situation. Older adults' experiences of abuse, for example, may be related to their living arrangement (they may be living alone, with family members or others, or in an institution). Their experiences may also be linked to their level of reliance on others, including family members or other care providers, for assistance and support in daily living.

### Power Imbalance

Abuse is usually committed by someone who is in a position of power, such as a teacher, activity leader, parent, sponsor, volunteer or priest. In almost all cases, the abuser is known to and is trusted by the victim and their relationship has developed over time. This imbalance of power may also result in the victim suppressing painful memories because of fear or shame; consequently, the power dynamic often serves to keep the victim silent. As a result, cases go unreported, and allegations only surface years after the incident.

## Types of Abuse

### Psychological abuse

Psychological abuse includes attempts to dehumanize or intimidate older adults. Any verbal or non-verbal act that reduces their sense of self-worth or dignity and threatens their psychological and emotional integrity is abuse.

This type of abuse may include, for example:

- Threatening to use violence
- Threatening to abandon them
- Intentionally frightening them
- Making them fear that they will not receive the food or care they need
- Lying to them
- Failing to check allegations of abuse against them

### Financial Abuse

Financial abuse encompasses financial manipulation

or exploitation, including theft, fraud, forgery, or extortion. It includes using an older adult's money or property in a dishonest manner or failing to use an older adult's assets for their welfare. Anytime someone acts without consent in a way that financially or personally benefits one person at the expense of another it is abuse. This type of abuse against an older adult may include, for example:

- Stealing their money, pension cheques or other possessions
- Selling their homes or other property without their permission
- Wrongfully using a Power of Attorney
- Not allowing them to move into a long-term care facility in order to preserve access to their pension
- Failing to pay back borrowed money when asked

### Physical Abuse

Physical abuse includes any act of violence, or the threat of violence,— whether or not it results in physical injury. Intentionally inflicting pain or injury that results in either bodily harm or mental distress is abuse. Physical abuse may include, for example:

- Beating
- Burning or scalding
- Pushing or shoving
- Hitting or slapping
- Rough handling
- Tripping
- Spitting

All forms of sexual abuse are also applicable to older/vulnerable adults.

### What are some potential warning signs of abuse?

Some of the signs that may indicate an older adult is being abused include:

- Depression, fear, anxiety, passivity
- Unexplained, physical injuries
- Dehydration, malnutrition or lack of food
- Poor hygiene, rashes, pressure sores
- Over-sedation

# Appendix 12

## Dealing with Reports of Abuse

There should be a separate policy in place to deal with reports or allegations regarding the abuse of children, youth, and vulnerable adults.

When a child, youth, or vulnerable adult is upset or distressed about a situation, he/she may turn to a trusted adult for support and advice. Often, though, they may be hesitant and shy about discussing what has happened.

Feelings of guilt or shame are common. The volunteer/leader should help the child/youth/vulnerable adult feel safe and understand that they can talk about what happened. A vulnerable adult, disabled or confined, may not be able to tell anyone, so volunteers/leaders or visitors need to be sensitive and aware of any change in appearance/emotion. A listening adult should be supportive and pay attention to what is said. Be cautious about asking questions.

Asking questions can invalidate future statements to police or child welfare authorities and can cause a case to be dismissed in court.

Accept the child/youth/vulnerable adult's story; do not dispute it. Investigating the incident is the responsibility of the protection agency or police. Although it may be difficult, be calm, supportive and helpful.

It is important not to make promises that you cannot keep, such as promising to stop the abuse, punish or remove the offender. Do not promise not to report the incident to the authorities. If you have inadvertently promised to keep what the child/youth/vulnerable adult says confidential, tell him/her that you must tell someone who can help you both.

Note: Any person who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child/youth/vulnerable adult is, or may be in need of protection must report the suspicion to a protective agency or police authority. A leader/volunteer who hears an allegation of abuse should confide this to the leader of the organization or designated member of the executive board of the organization.

## Reporting to a Protection Agency

If the person has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child/youth/vulnerable adult is or may be in need for protection, the person must promptly report the suspicion and the information on which it is based to a children's aid society or other appropriate protection agency.

Professionals or officials must report any suspicion that a child is or has been in need of protection, where such a suspicion arises from information revealed in the course of his or her professional or official duties. By the way of example, in Ontario, professionals who fail to report a suspicion of abuse may be fined up to \$5,000, according to provincial standards. In some provinces such as British Columbia, Newfoundland, Manitoba and Northwest Territories, punishment may be a fine and/or time in prison for failure to report.

## Information Needed by a Protection Agency

When one calls a protection agency, that person should prepare notes on why he/she is calling.

- Ask for an intake screener.
- Give your name and location, or you may remain anonymous.
- State that you are making a report regarding a person you believe to need protection.
- Give your relationship to the person and/or family.
- Indicate what you heard from the child/youth/vulnerable adult, or what you observed.
- Offer facts such as dates, descriptions of the child/youth/vulnerable adult and identifying facts about people who were involved.
- Share knowledge of other agency or community involvement if known.
- Provide any relevant background information.

## Procedure if Contacted by a Protection Agency

1. Any request from a child protection worker (see photo ID or badge to verify identity) should normally be made in person. The worker will want to speak

with the person filing the alleged abuse report and usually to the person to whom the child/youth spoke. If the matter is urgent and those investigating cannot do a personal interview, the investigator may telephone you from his/her office.

2. The child protection agent should identify themselves and provide their business contact phone number.

Record the worker's first and last name.

- Do not give any information at this time. The investigator will explain the process to follow and what information he/she is seeking.
- It is your responsibility to verify that this is indeed a child protection agent. Simply say, "I need to move to another phone. May I phone you back in 30 seconds?" Move to a phone where you can ensure confidentiality.
- When you return the call, provide the necessary information.
- Ask what is to happen next. This is critical as a court order may be warranted and restraining order put in place. The organization should be aware of this. Details do not need to be given.
- Ask when the organization can expect a final report on the case if further information will be required.
- Make clear written notes about what you reported, date, time, phone number and name of investigator. Place in a confidential, locked, metal file cabinet.

### Reporting to the Insurance Carrier

Any allegation of abuse, no matter how minor, should be reported immediately to your organization's insurance company. The prompt reporting of incidents is extremely important because it allows your insurer to intervene and help manage the situation.

### Organizational Response to a Report of Abuse

Disclosure of an incident of alleged abuse is an emotionally charged experience. When an individual discloses that he/she is a victim of alleged abuse, it is important to:

- Assure him/her that he/she will be listened to and be provided with support throughout the process.
- Take the allegations seriously.
- Keep emotions in check; when disbelief or horror is shown, it may result in the individual becoming withdrawn or unwilling to share the experience with you.
- "Listen more, talk less."
- Remind him/her that he/she is in no way at fault for the abuse.
- Affirm that it is always appropriate to tell someone that he/she has been abused.
- Remind him/her that your first priority is his/her protection.
- Reassure him/her that ongoing care will be provided for him/her and his/her family.
- Provide support to him/her; give reassurance that he/she has done the right thing in reporting this incident.
- Report the incident to a designated senior authority within the organization.

### Do Not

- Promise him/her that you will not tell anyone; some secrets should not be kept secret; assure the individual that this information is to be restricted to those who need to be advised.
- Prejudge the situation.
- Take an adversarial approach, or defend the alleged perpetrator by making comments like, "I can't believe they did that."

### Response to the Media

If it is deemed essential to respond to media, a designated individual will be the spokesperson for the organization.

A sample response could be as follows. "All allegations of abuse or harassment are taken seriously. The protection of children/youth/vulnerable adults is a priority of (your organization.) In accordance with civil law, an allegation of abuse has been reported to (insert the name of the appropriate governmental protection agency.)"

## **Statement of Faith and Beliefs**

### **The Church**

The Coptic Orthodox Church adheres to the Nicene Creed. St. Athanasius (296-373 A.D.), the twentieth Pope of the Coptic Church effectively defended the Doctrine of the Lord Jesus Christ's Divinity at the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D.

His affirmation of the doctrine earned him the title; "Father of Orthodoxy" and St. Athanasius "the Apostolic". The term "Coptic" is derived from the Greek "Aigypptos" meaning "Egyptian". When the Arabs arrived in Egypt in the seventh century, they called the Egyptians "qibt". Thus, the Arabic word "qibt" came to mean both "Egyptians" and "Christians".

### **Orthodoxy**

The Coptic Orthodox Church believes that the Holy Trinity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, are equal to each other in one unity; and that the Lord Jesus Christ is the only Savior of the world. Less changes have taken place in the Coptic Church than in any other church whether in the ritual or doctrine aspects and that the succession of the Coptic Patriarchs, Bishops, priests and Deacons has been continuous.

### **What We Believe**

#### **Our mission is a mission of love, the love of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**

The cornerstone of Christianity is love, because God is love. At St. Mark's, we are committed to:

- Show, manifest and become the vessels of the true love of Jesus Christ by welcoming everyone to His Church;
- Make sure everyone feels loved, worthy, and is at home and an active member in the body of our Lord Jesus Christ;
- Pledge ourselves to be servants to others to see the light and love of Jesus Christ in each one of us;
- Proclaim, as a missionary church, the Good News, the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the beliefs of the Orthodox Christian faith, to the non-Christians, non-believers, non-churchgoers, Christians and every person with whom we come in contact;
- Model the body of Christ by including the gifts bestowed by the grace of God on each one of His creation, complementing and completing one another to become the Holy Body of Christ, His church;
- Establish a Christian community interacting in love, directly and on-line, to encourage growing in faith and insure the spiritual growth of every member of the congregation.