

Clifford Baptist Church
Policies and Procedures Manual

Child Abuse Prevention Policy (CAPP)

INCLUSIONS:

- Child Abuse Prevention Policy**
- Child Abuse Incident Reporting Procedures**
- Child Abuse Incident Report Form**
- Children and Youth Leader Application**

Introduction:

We live in an age where child abuse is a reality in our society. The church must deal with this issue by taking steps to protect children in our care, maintain parental confidence, and avoid mistaken allegations. Clifford Baptist Church has implemented this policy to accomplish these goals and safeguard our children while promoting a positive, nurturing environment for ministering to them. The following policy will apply to all persons in pastoral, teaching, and supervisory positions at all church organized activities.

Definitions:

Adult: Any person aged 18 or older.

Church organized activities: Any activity or program under the direct organization of Clifford Baptist Church in which children/youth are under the supervision of staff persons or volunteers. The church organized activities excludes activities/programs by outside organizations or individuals held on church property.

Child: Any person under the age of 12 or who has not entered 7th Grade, including Preschool children.

Guardian: Adult responsible for bringing child to church organized activity.

Leaders: Any adult serving in a supervisory capacity over children who are participating in a church sponsored activity. This includes, but is not limited to supervising the Nursery, Sunday School, Extended Session, Vacation Bible School, Field-Trips, Choirs, and Mission Trips.

Preschool Child: Any child who has not completed Kindergarten.

Preschool A (Nursery): Birth to 23 months

Preschool B: 2 to 3 year olds

Preschool C: 4 year olds to the end of Kindergarten (Children remain in Preschool C until the September 1st following Kindergarten.)

Youth: Any person aged 12 to 17, or in 7th thru 12th Grade.

Background Checks:

All compensated employees of Clifford Baptist Church, including the pastoral staff, shall submit to a criminal background check every five years, or more often at the discretion of the Deacon Board.

All volunteers who may serve as a Leader or in a supervisory capacity over children/youth shall submit to a criminal background check every five years, or more often at the discretion of the Deacon Board.

At a minimum, criminal background checks shall include a search of local and state criminal convictions and State sex offender registries, but should include a nation-wide search for criminal convictions and of national sex offender registries.

Under no circumstances shall anyone be approved as a Leader or in a supervisory capacity over children/youth if as an adult they:

- Have been convicted of a sexually related crime;
- Have been convicted of a crime of domestic violence;
- Have been convicted of any offense against a child; or,
- Are subject to a legal protective order currently in effect.
- Have been convicted of any Felony crime of violence.

After submission of the application, but prior to approval of the application, the Nominating Committee may approve the applicant to assist in a non-supervisory position. Such conditional approval is contingent on the National and State Sex Offender Registries.

Criminal background checks are confidential and shall be filed in a secure location in the church office. Once all criminal histories are reviewed, they shall be destroyed either by shredding or burning. These files shall only be available and accessible by the Youth Pastor and **three**¹ administrative assistants approved by the Deacon Board. One administrative assistant will coordinate the scheduling of background checks and the other administrative **assistants** will conduct the background checks. No other person shall be allowed access to these files except by court order.

¹ Amended 3/20/18

Criminal background checks shall not apply to parents/guardians when supervising their own children/youth at church sponsored activities.

Any Leader or person in a supervisory position over children/youth who resigns from their position shall be required to undergo a new criminal background check before being reinstated.

In some cases, certain offenses which could negatively impact an individual's ability to serve depending upon the type of offense, circumstances and length of time since the offense occurred could warrant further investigation to clarify the matter prior to approval or disapproval of an individual for volunteer service.

In the event that a background check reveals an offense which needs more clarification, the Background Administrators may, at their discretion, request additional information from the individual in question in order to better determine eligibility.

All information which may be obtained shall remain strictly confidential.

General Policies:

To protect every child and youth of Clifford Baptist Church, no one under the age of 18 or currently enrolled in high school will be permitted to serve as a Leader or in a supervisory capacity over children/youth.

For the health, safety and benefit of all children, all children and youth are to be in the appropriate class/activity/program according to his/her age. Special requests for exception to this policy shall be handled on an individual basis between the parents/guardians and the appropriate program director and/or pastor.

Leaders shall refrain from allowing their own children and youth to join them in their classrooms unless that child/youth belongs to the designated age group.

In each class/activity/program, there shall be a minimum of two adult leaders that are not married to each other, at least one of which is 21 or older.

Activities are to be conducted with adequate supervision. This includes periodic visits by the program directors, pastors and other adults responsible for the activity.

Leaders should avoid being alone with individual children/youth whenever possible. If a Leader must be alone with a child, permission should be obtained from the child's parent/guardian if possible. If a Leader must be alone with a youth, another Leader will be made known of the meeting and asked to stay nearby.

There should be at least two Leaders present in a class/activity/program at all times. If a Leader encounters a situation where they must be alone in a classroom, they will employ one or more of the following options:

- Stay with the class and leave the door open.
- Ask one of the parents of a child/youth in the class to stay with you.
- Ask another adult to recruit an adult to assist.

Only assigned Leaders may lead activities in the classroom.

Only parents, guardians, or those approved by parents/guardians, may pick up their child from a classroom.

Hitting, spanking, or other forms of punishment involving physical pain are never appropriate at Clifford Baptist Church.

All Leaders are to model the love of Christ while leading children/youth and avoid behavior which may be misconstrued as negative or inappropriate.

In the event that a classroom does not have a door with a window, the door should be kept open whenever possible.

All activities involving children/youth at Clifford Baptist Church are "open door." This means that pastors, parents/guardians, and other church leaders may observe any activity which involves children/youth.

Questionable or inappropriate behavior will be reported immediately to a pastor or program director.

Leaders who disregard these guidelines may be reassigned or relieved from duty at the discretion of the church leadership.

Each class/activity/program will designate age-appropriate pick-up policies that will be instituted and followed by all Leaders.

Directors will make a reasonable effort to assign mixed gender Leaders to each class.

Specific Class/Age Policies:

In the Nursery, there shall be a minimum two adult Leaders who are not married to each other, at least one of which is 21 or older, for the first 5 children and one additional Leader for every 3 additional children.

In all Preschool classes, bathroom breaks and diaper changes shall only be performed by Leaders, parents or guardians.

In all Preschool classes, it is preferred for a same-sex Leader to accompany children to the bathroom. For young children, the bathroom door shall be propped open so that the adult and the child can be seen. For older children, the adult should not enter the stall with the child, but state, "If you need me, I will be waiting right outside the door."

For 1st thru 6th Graders, there shall be a minimum two adult Leaders who are not married to each other, at least one of which is 21 or older, for the first 30 children and one additional Leader for every 10 additional children.

Children in the 1st Grade and older may go to the bathroom without an adult escort.

Children in the 4th Grade and younger need to be picked up from class by an adult.

Parents/guardians will be informed of pick-up policies for special events.

For daytrips and overnight activities/programs, there shall be at least one Leader of each gender for mixed-gender groups.

For all Preschool daytrips, there shall be at least one Leader for each 3 children present.

For all 1st thru 6th Grade daytrips and overnight activities/programs, there shall be at least one Leader for each 5 children present.

For all Youth daytrips, there shall be at least one Leader for each 20 youth present.

For all Youth overnight programs/activities, there shall be at least one Leader for each 10 Youth present.

For overnight activities/programs, male and female children/youth shall have separate sleeping, bathing and dressing areas/facilities.

For overnight activities/programs, there shall be a minimum of one same-sex adult Leader for each sleeping area/room. A same-sex Leader shall remain with the children/youth at all times.

Child Abuse Incident Reporting Procedures

Introduction:

Clifford Baptist Church is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for our children and youth, as well as for employees, volunteers, members and guests. In addition, we are dedicated to providing support to all parties who may become involved in some manner with a child abuse allegation and that this is a responsibility of the church.

In the event that an incident of child abuse is suspected, reported, or comes to our attention, it is our duty to fully cooperate with law enforcement officials and other authorities without reservation. With these commitments in mind, the following reporting guidelines have been developed to help us achieve these goals.

General Procedures:

For purposes of these procedures, "child abuse" is defined as any sexual contact between a child/youth and an adult, or any physical contact that deliberately and intentionally causes harm to a child/youth.

Any person, church member, Leader, Deacon, etc. receiving information that a child has been abused while participating in a church sponsored activity will immediately notify a Pastor.

The Pastor will then make every effort to notify the child's parent/guardian.

The reporting party, the Pastor, and a CAPP administrator or his/her designee will fill out the Incident Report to the best of their ability.

The Pastor will notify local law enforcement of the incident.

The accused Leader will be relieved of their duties with regard to the children of Clifford Baptist Church. Other church and administrative duties during this time will be determined by the Deacon Board.

Dissemination of details and information related to allegations of child abuse and the identity of parties will be limited to Pastors, the Deacon Board, Church Office Staff, and any other necessary parties to ensure the safety and security of all church members.

The official spokesperson for the church in any of these matters will be the Pastor, or his appointee. No other staff members or church members shall speak to the media in their official capacity.

Whether a Leader is returned to service in a supervisory position over children will be determined by the Deacon Board.

Clifford Baptist Church
Child Abuse Incident Report Form

Reporting Party:

Phone Numbers:

Accused Leader:

Leadership Capacity:

Alleged Victim/Child:

Date of Birth:

Parent/Guardian(s):

Reported to Pastor: _____
Name of Pastor ²

Date and Time:

Events Leading To Report (including date and time received):

²Amended 10/16/23

Potential Witnesses to Incident (including contact information):

Signature of Reporting Party:

OFFICE USE ONLY:

- Call to Child's Parent/Guardian

Date and Time: _____

Spoke with: _____

Notes: _____

- Call to Local Law Enforcement

Date and Time: _____

Spoke with: _____

Notes: _____

- Call to Insurance Carrier

Date and Time: _____

Spoke with: _____

Notes: _____
