

## VOLUNTEER BEHAVIOURAL POLICY

### Statement of Commitment.

The congregation of Pickering Village United Church (PVUC) is committed to providing a safe, respectful environment for worship, work, recreation and learning. It is our mutual wish to resolve any issues that arise by discussion, understanding and accommodation. If that is not possible this document provides a process to follow.

This is a living document which will be changed from time to time. This document does not intend to detail what is right or wrong in any given circumstance as that is set out in the United Church Handbook (Faithful Footsteps) and two brochures "A Tender Trust" and "Trustworthy Care". Matters that relate to potential criminal conduct should be referred to the appropriate authorities.

This document will come into effect on Jan. 1, 2020. It will replace the existing Volunteer Behavioural Policy. Those who have entered into rental agreements with the church will remain under the guidance of the prior Behavioural Policy until they renew their contracts. At that time they will be given a copy of this policy so they can shape their conduct accordingly. Those entering contracts to lease space after Jan. 1, 2020 will be given a copy of this document to follow..

This document sets out how we, as a church community, will deal with any concerns about the conduct of our members, adherents, staff, contract personnel, and visitors at the church or during church sponsored events. Though PVUC is not responsible for the conduct of outside groups, or those who rent space from PVUC, it is expected that such groups will conduct their activities in a safe and respectful way. In the event that information is received that such is not the case their right to be here and/or lease may be terminated. PVUC does not monitor the conduct of outside groups.

In addition, this document sets out some screening processes for PVUC volunteers and the process to be followed in the event of any complaints.

Where this document and attachments lack any process or there is an inconsistency, the Abuse Protocol Committee, has the authority to fill any gap. Any such decision by the Abuse Protocol Committee is subject to review by the Church Council.

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Definitions.

For the purpose of this policy the following definitions will apply.

**Abuse Protocol Committee:** This is a committee to handle any allegations relating to PVUC volunteers or staff that have been brought to their attention regarding alleged misconduct or abuse. The members of the committee consist of a chair, a member at large, the chair of the Christian Education Committee,, and a person appointed by the chair, at the time an incident is brought to the attention of the committee. That appointed person will have experience in the area of concern and knowledge of United Church of Canada policies. The committee will handle all referred situations in accordance with the United Church of Canada guidelines.

**Children/Child:** For the purpose of this Policy, that includes those 11 years old and under.

**Complainant:** Any individual who wishes to raise a concern about the conduct of a PVUC individual or group.

**Concern:** The written and signed complaint, submitted by anyone relating to the conduct of a PVUC individual or group, while involved in PVUC activities, that the complainant feels is misconduct or abusive in nature. (See 3e attached.)

**Incident Report:** A document that will be completed by a committee chair or the Abuse Protocol committee, upon the receipt of a concern. (See 3d attached. )

**Living Document:** This is a document that is reviewed on a continuous basis and is open to be amended by the Church Council at any time.

“Outside” Groups: For the purposes of this policy are those who use the PVUC premises with consent whether it is obtained by the payment of a fee or by permission, and are not a PVUC group. They operate independently of PVUC.

Responsible Person: Persons who are approved by the Chair of a PVUC committee or the Church Council to assist in PVUC Church programmes or activities.

Volunteer: For the purposes of this Policy is a person at least 12 years old who has been formally recognized by the Chair of any PVUC Committee and who has offered their services to PVUC without remuneration.

Vulnerable Person: For the purpose of this policy, refers to a person who is a child or youth, or who is an individual who is or may be unable to take care of themselves, or is unable to protect themselves against harm or exploitation by reason of age, illness, trauma or disability or any other reason.

Youth: For the purpose of this policy, includes those from the age of 12 to the age of 18 years.

## PART 1: Procedures

### A. Volunteers:

If a chair wishes volunteers will complete a volunteer information form (see 3a attached) and provide it to the Chair of the committee for which they are volunteering. Regardless of whether a form is filled in all volunteers will review this policy and agree to adhere to its terms.

### B. Volunteers and vulnerable people:

Volunteers who may frequently be involved with vulnerable people (eg. Sunday School staff,) on or off PVUC property, or who do pastoral care visits with individuals on behalf of PVUC, must provide a completed Volunteer Information Form (see 3a attached), two references (see 3b attached), and a police record check before commencing that involvement. . Each year before Jan. 25 the volunteer will certify in writing to the team leader or chairman that there has been no change in the police record and that they are not facing any criminal charges . (see form 3(i) . Every 5 years a volunteer, who may be involved with vulnerable people, will provide a new police record check. The cost of the police record checks will be paid by the committee requesting the check.

Police record checks may be requested by the Church Council relating to other volunteers or Church personnel.

### C. Committee Chairs

Committee Chairs will review the volunteer application form and requested references, if any, and police record checks, if obtained, to ensure that the volunteer is suitable for a position. When the

committee chair has completed the review, the references if any, and the police record information, 5. If any, will be provided to the chair of the M and P committee to be kept in a locked confidential filing cabinet on church premises. The M and P chair will provide the documents to the Chair of the Committee, who provided the information, upon request. All information relating to any volunteer can be destroyed 5 years after the person ceased to be a volunteer at PVUC.

The Chair will provide a copy of the Behavioural policy to all of the prospective and active volunteers to review. At this time Committee volunteers other than C.E. and Pastoral care are not required to provide references or a police record check but committee chairs can make that request if it is felt to be in the best interests of PVUC.

Chairs will provide written confirmation annually that this Procedure has been communicated to all volunteers, and that this Procedure is being followed to the best of the Committee chair's knowledge. (See 3c attached). That confirmation is to be provided each year at the Council Meeting following the Annual General Meeting.

#### D. Sunday School and Youth Groups.

If a child or youth has a behaviour problem in a class the child or youth will be separated from the group and the parent, guardian or person who brought the child to the church or church outing will be notified of the problem and asked to take custody of the child.

An incident form, ( see 3d attached), will be completed recording the behaviour problems. The form will be maintained in a locked drawer by the Sunday School Coordinator. In the event a locked drawer is not available the chair of M and P will provide secure space.

Behaviour problems will be discussed by the Sunday School Coordinator, and the volunteer involved, and with parents or guardians of the child/youth. The coordinator may include the volunteer in the discussions with the parents or guardians of the child/youth if that is felt to be best. The discussion process will be documented using the incident report form (see 3d attached).

A responsible person should accompany a child, where possible, to other areas of the church if they are separated from where the group is located. Where possible a second responsible person is to remain with the group. Where a second responsible person is not available to assist, the responsible person accompanying the child must leave the door to the room where the unattended group is located open. The responsible person must also notify the responsible person in the next nearest room that they will be away from the room for a short period of time. The door of the nearest room is to be kept open until the responsible person returns to the unattended room.

#### E. Vulnerable persons

When in the presence of vulnerable persons in a Sunday School/Youth program, volunteers must not operate in isolation and must have access to other responsible persons.

#### F. Ministry and Personnel (M and P)

6.

The Ministry and Personnel committee chair will set up a locked filing cabinet in a secure location to keep materials provided by other Committee chairs and will provide the materials on the request of the chair of the committee who provided the documents. Records relating to volunteers need only be retained until 5 years after the person ceased to be a volunteer and may be destroyed after that time.

#### G. Bookings Committee

The bookings committee or their designate will provide a copy of The Bookings Form Letter (appendix 3 e) and the Facility User Agreement (3f) to those wishing to book space at PVUC. The document will be signed as required if space is to be rented. The chair of the Booking Committee may make changes in attachments 3e and 3f as required with no prior approval by the Church Council.

#### H. Outside Groups.

Non Church affiliated individuals or groups using PVUC facilities must be respectful of the property of PVUC and of other users of the facility. Their use of the space is independent of PVUC and is bound by The Agreement with the Booking Committee and the terms of the Facility User Agreement. (See 3 g and h).

#### I. Church Council

The Church Council must approve any changes to the Volunteer Behavioural Policy or the attached forms. The one exception to the need for Church Council approval to changes relates to Form 3g (The Bookings Form letter and form 3 h (Facility User Agreement) which can be amended by the Booking Committee with no need for the approval of the Church Council.

The Church Council must be advised at the Church Council meeting after the Annual General Meeting that the Volunteer Behavioural Procedure has been communicated to all volunteers and is being adhered to by all volunteers to the best of the Committee Chair's knowledge.

### Part 2 Concern Process

Where possible any signed concern will be dealt with informally. Those who are not satisfied with the outcome of an informal process before the Committee chair will be entitled to raise the matter with the Abuse Protocol Committee for consideration. The goal of this process is to work together to resolve any differences. Those involved may seek the assistance of any other PVUC employees, members or adherents.

## A. Complainant

7.

Anyone wishing to raise a concern relating to the conduct of a PVUC group or individual will do so in writing using the Concern form (attached as 3d). The form will be provided to the Committee chair who's committee or committee member is the subject of concern. In the event the concern relates to the Chair of that committee the concern should be provided to the chair of the Abuse Protocol Committee. In the event the complainant is not satisfied with the result achieved through the consideration of the Committee Chair they can ask for a reconsideration of the decision by the Abuse Protocol Committee. This can be done by filing a signed Concern Transfer Form (see 3f attached) with the chairman of the Abuse Protocol Committee. In the event the initial decision was made by the Abuse Protocol Committee as a result of a concern about a Committee Chair the complainant can ask for a reconsideration of the decision by the Church Council by filing a Concern Transfer Form.

## B. Committee Chairs.

The chairs will review all concerns raised regarding the conduct of their committee or anyone working on that committee. They will ensure that the concern and incident reports are completed. In the event that the concern relates to a member of the committee the Chair can attempt to mediate the issue. In the event the concern relates to the chair of the committee it will be referred directly to the Abuse Protocol Committee chair.

If a committee chair determines that a review of the Volunteer Behavioural Policy or some other form of intervention or mediation is sufficient in the circumstances the Volunteer may remain in the position. A request for a reconsideration, of any committee chair's decision in this regard, may be brought to the Abuse Protocol Committee by the volunteer who was the subject of the concern.

In the event that a person who raised a concern is not satisfied with the outcome arrived at by the committee chair they can ask that the matter be referred to the Abuse Protocol Committee. The committee chair will refer the matter to the Abuse Protocol Committee and will provide all documentation on the issue.

## C. Abuse Protocol Committee

The Abuse Protocol Committee will consider any matter that is referred to the Committee by a Committee Chair or that is a concern raised about the conduct of a Committee Chair or that is a request for a reconsideration by the complainant or by the involved volunteer. Again the hope is that any concerns can be dealt with in a manner that supports a positive result for PVUC. We all wish to do our work in a respectful fashion and if we fall short of that standard on occasion we expect all parties to attempt to resolve issues as our church would expect. It is, however, understood that there will be occasions where such a result is not achievable and where a volunteer may have to be removed from their position.

All committees will provide any information requested by the Abuse Protocol Committee.

## D. Confidentiality

8.

All Ministry Personnel, staff, and chairs of committees will maintain confidentiality of any and all incidents brought to their attention, except where it is required to provide the information to the Abuse Protocol Committee. Notice to the Abuse Protocol Committee or any investigative authorities will not be considered a breach of confidentiality but a duty of reporting.

### Part 3 Forms

- 3a PVUC volunteer information form
- 3b Reference form
- 3c Confirmation form
- 3d Incident form
- 3e Concern form
- 3f Concern transfer form
- 3g Bookings Form Letter
- 3h Facility User Agreement

### Part 4. Concern flow chart

Concern goes to Committee Chair or Abuse Protocol Committee.

Incident Form is completed.

If initial decision was made by a Committee Chair or the Abuse Protocol the volunteer a complainant can use the Concern transfer form to seek a reconsideration of the decision by the Abuse Protocol Committee or if the initial decision was that of the Abuse Protocol Committee to the Church Council.

### Part 5.. Media Consideration

Under no circumstances should a public statement be made to the media by anyone other than the Abuse Protocol Committee's appointee. All media request are to be handled by the Abuse Protocol's appointee who will respond only under the advice of a lawyer or the United Church of Canada.