

Clarks Valley Zion E. C. Church - Child Abuse Prevention Policy Recruiting and Selecting Church Workers: Policy and Procedures

1. All **volunteers** who work with children and youth (paid or volunteer) who are 18 years of age or older must have Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance and Criminal History Check completed. **In addition, volunteers who have not been a continuous resident of PA for the past 10 years or who are a paid employee of the church must complete a FBI clearance.**
2. In order to work with children/youth at Clarks Valley Zion E.C. Church workers must:
 - a. have a clean Child Abuse History Clearance
 - b. have Criminal History Check reviewed by Pastor. Pastor will consult with Official Board president and/or Sunday School Superintendent regarding any criminal history check that comes back with a record
 - c. meet with pastor if Criminal History Check reveals a criminal record
 - d. sign the Child Abuse Prevention Policy (CAPP)
 - e. have been actively involved in the life of Clarks Valley Zion E.C. Church for 6 months. (Six month Waiting Period Administration: This waiting period can be initiated at any Christian Education Meeting. C.E. meetings are typically held every 2 months. The candidate's name will be added in the meeting notes and will denote the start of the six month waiting period. If another initiation date is desired, the committee needs to agree on the initiation date prior to its inclusion in the meeting's minutes.
3. All paid and/or volunteer staff must be provided a Child Abuse Prevention Policy (CAPP) and Arrest/Conviction Report Form to read and sign annually for Recertification. Every January, CAPP volunteers must complete the 2 forms and return by the end of January to keep current. If an individual fails to return forms by January 31st, that individual will no longer be able to volunteer with the children or youth until they attend a CAPP training session and sign forms.
4. Training/Certification classes will be offered at least twice a year, **or as needed**, for both new volunteers or for individuals needing recertification. No one will be permitted to work with children or youth until training/certification session has been completed.
5. Each appropriate ministry leader shall ensure that all workers on their team are currently certified.
6. The Church Secretary shall compile and maintain a current list of all ministry workers who signed the CAPP form, participated in training, and have Child Abuse Clearance and Criminal Background Check completed and approved. The Church Secretary will distribute the list to all Ministry Leaders.
7. All records of workers' clearances and signed CAPP forms shall be separately maintained by the Church Secretary in a confidential manner and in a secure location with limited access.
8. CAPP committee (Pastor, Official Board President, Sunday School General Superintendent, Sunday School Junior Dept. Superintendent) will annually review this policy and the procedures established within it. When changes are made, ministry leaders will communicate them to all employees and volunteers affected by the policy changes.

REPORTING AND RESPONSE PROCEDURES FOR CHURCH WORKERS

1. Any suspected abuse must be **immediately** reported to Childline as required by CPSL-Child protective Services Law (1-800-932-0313) and the CY-47 Report of Suspected Child Abuse completed and sent to Dauphin County Children and Youth **within 48 hours**.
A copy of CY-47 must be copied and submitted to the pastor or in the alternative either the official board president and/or Sunday School Superintendent immediately.
2. All Ministry Leaders shall be familiar with the CPSL-Child protective Services Law - Title 23 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated statutes chapter 63 (relating to the Child Protective Services Law) in regards to reporting possible child abuse.
3. In the event it should become necessary, a designated spokesperson may be empowered by the Official Board. This spokesperson may be designated to address issues relating to media, the public and the congregation in a manner prescribed by the Official Board. Their reporting shall be based on:
 - a. The Child Abuse Prevention Policy of Clarks Valley Zion E.C. Church
 - b. The reporting procedures based on the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (CPSL)
 - c. Use an attorney when answering investigative questions from police/service agencies
 - d. Work with our insurance company.
4. Steps to follow if an allegation occurs:
 - a. Volunteer will immediately report incident to Childline as required by CPSL-Child protective Services Law (1-800-932-0313) and the CY-47 Report of Suspected Child Abuse completed and sent to Dauphin County Children and Youth **within 48 hours**.
 - b. Volunteer will report incident and give a copy of CY-47 submitted to the pastor or in the alternative either the official board president and/or Sunday School Superintendent immediately.
 - b. Volunteer shall document all efforts at handling incident
 - c. The pastor will report the incident immediately to:
 1. Official Board president and/or Sunday School Superintendent
 2. Church attorney
 3. Church insurance company
 - d. If the suspected abuse occurs at a church event or on church property confront the accused only after the safety of the child/youth is assured.
 - e. Take allegations seriously.
 - f. If the accused is a church volunteer they will be relieved of their duties pending an investigation of the alleged activities of the allegations. If the individual is a paid employee of the church, a decision either to maintain or suspend income pending an outcome of the investigation shall be determined by the pastor and official board.