

New Life Church Lutheran Child Protection Policy

January 2020

- Everyone must read the policy on pages 2-4, sign the cover letter (page 1), and return it to the office.
- Those who want to work with children must also sign and return the background check forms (pages 5-6).

Thank you and praise God for all who work with our children. Serving our children and helping them to grow in their faith is an important task. Keeping them safe in a dangerous world is also an important task. For that reason, all persons that offer to volunteer to work with our children will be subject to background and social services checks. Participation in the background and social services check process is voluntary; however, refusal to participate will prevent you from being allowed to volunteer in ministries that directly involve work with children. Whether you work with children or not, everyone will need to sign the cover letter and return it to the church office.

If you choose to work with children, please complete the attached forms (one person per form – if your family needs additional forms, please contact the church office). Be assured that we are conducting these background checks in full accord with Minnesota state law. This includes the following:

- 1) You must be notified that a check will be done.
- 2) You must be given the opportunity to disclose any convictions.
- 3) You may have access to a copy of the background check report and any record that forms the basis of the report.
- 4) You have the ability to challenge the accuracy of the data under the Data Practices Act.
- 5) You must receive notice if you are being denied the position because of the report (reasons for denial may include, but are not limited to: conviction of child abuse crimes, murder, manslaughter, felony assault, any assault against a minor, kidnap, arson, criminal sexual conduct, and prostitution crimes).
- 6) You are not required to directly or indirectly pay for the background check.

In addition to these legal requirements, we want you to know that all background checks (including the information that you provide) will remain strictly confidential. To help ensure that any information that you provide remains confidential, please return completed forms to the black metal box on the counter in the main office.

Thank you for your support as we do our best to take care of the children God has given to us!

I have read and am aware of the policy printed on pages 2-4.

Name (printed)_____

Signature_____

Date_____

New Life Church Lutheran Child Protection Policy

General Purpose Statement/Introduction

New Life Church – Lutheran seeks to provide a safe and secure environment for the children who participate in our programs and activities. By implementing the practices below, our goal is to protect the children of New Life Church – Lutheran from incidents of misconduct or inappropriate behavior while also protecting our staff and volunteers from false accusations.

Definitions

Child/Children – All persons under the age of eighteen (18) years

Worker – Both paid and volunteer persons who work with children

Selection of Workers/Volunteers

Overseeing boards are responsible for granting initial approval to all workers desiring to work with children. All persons who desire to work with the children participating in our programs and activities will be screened. This screening process will include the following:

Criminal Background Check (includes Social Security Number verification, Driver's License verification, sexual offender database search, and national criminal file search) – A national criminal background check is required for all workers, regardless of position, who will have direct and individual or unsupervised contact with the children. Before a background check is initiated, prospective workers will be asked to sign an authorization form allowing New Life Church – Lutheran to perform the check. If an individual declines to sign the authorization form, they will be unable to work with children. What constitutes a disqualifying offense that will keep an individual from working with children will be determined by The Board of Elders on a case-by-case basis in light of all the surrounding circumstances. Generally, convictions for an offense involving children and/or offenses involving violence, dishonesty, illegal substances, indecency, and any conduct contrary to our mission will preclude someone from being permitted to work with children. Failure to disclose a criminal conviction on the application form will also be a disqualifying event. The background check authorization forms and results will be maintained in confidence on file at New Life Church – Lutheran. Background checks shall be performed annually for all potential workers.

Social Services Check (includes results of any completed investigations and notification of any pending investigations) – Before social services check is initiated, prospective workers will be asked to sign an authorization form allowing New Life Church – Lutheran to perform the check. If an individual declines to sign the authorization form, they will be unable to work with children. What constitutes a disqualifying allegation that will keep an individual from working with children will be determined by The Board of Elders on a case-by-case basis in light of all the surrounding circumstances. Generally, investigations for a potential offense involving children and/or violence, dishonesty, illegal substances, indecency and any conduct contrary to our mission will preclude someone from being permitted to work with children. Failure to disclose a criminal conviction on the application form will also be a disqualifying event. The social service check authorization forms and results will be maintained in confidence on file at New Life Church – Lutheran. Social services checks shall be performed annually for all potential workers.

Two Adult Rule

A minimum of two unrelated adult workers will be in attendance at all times when children are being supervised during our programs and activities. We do not allow minors to be alone with one adult on our premises or in any sponsored activity unless in a counseling situation. If we cannot find two approved adults to work with our children, the class or event will be cancelled.

Responding to Allegations of Child Abuse

In the event that an incident of abuse or neglect is alleged to have occurred at New Life Church – Lutheran or during our sponsored programs or activities, the following procedure shall be followed:

- 1) An immediate internal investigation will be initiated. The investigation will be performed by a committee consisting of a minimum of two church officials (Pastor, President, Vice President, Board of Elders Chairman) who are not involved in the alleged incident. With the exception of the alleged offenses listed below, this committee will determine whether or not the civil authorities need to be contacted. The alleged victim will not be a part of this investigation. In the event that the civil authorities (police and/or social services) are notified, New Life Church – Lutheran will comply with the state's requirements regarding mandatory reporting of abuse as the law then exists. New Life Church – Lutheran will fully cooperate with the investigation of the incident by civil authorities.
- 2) The worker or child alleged to be the perpetrator of the abuse or misconduct will immediately be disqualified from working with children or attending events where the alleged victim is present, pending the results of the investigation.
- 3) If appropriate or determined by the investigating committee, the parent or guardian of the child will be notified. If it is determined that an outside investigation is needed, then the parents or guardians **will not** be notified by the church but will be notified by the outside investigators (as mandated by law).
- 4) If necessary, our insurance company will be notified, and we will complete an incident report. Any documents received relating to the incident and/or allegations will immediately be forwarded to the insurance company.
- 5) A pastoral visit will be arranged for those who desire it.
- 6) Any person who is **not** found innocent of the alleged abuse or misconduct will be removed from their position working with children or youth, and the authorities will be notified.

Allegations that require immediate reporting to the civil authorities:

Sexual misconduct/abuse: If the alleged abuse occurs during Social Services business hours, they will be notified first. If the alleged abuse occurs outside Social Services business hours, the police will be notified first. If a family member is involved in the alleged abuse, Social Services will be notified in the county that the alleged abuse occurred. If a non-family member is involved in the alleged abuse, the police will be notified.

Physical abuse

Other Provisions

Open Door Policy

Classroom doors should remain open unless there is a window in the door or a side window beside it. Doors should never be locked while persons are inside the room.

Teenage Workers/Volunteers

Teenage workers/volunteers serve under the authority of supervising adult(s).

Sick Child Policy

It is our desire to provide a healthy and safe environment for all of the children at New Life Church – Lutheran. Parents are encouraged to be considerate of other children when deciding whether to place a child under our care. In general, children with the following symptoms should NOT be brought to New Life Church – Lutheran activities:

- Fever, diarrhea, or vomiting within the last 24 hours while medication free
- Green or yellow runny nose
- Eye, ear, or skin infections
- Other symptoms of communicable or infectious disease

Children who are observed by our workers to be ill will be separated from the other children and the parent or guardian will be contacted to request that the child be picked up.

Medications Policy

It is the policy of New Life Church – Lutheran not to administer either prescription or non-prescription medications to the children under our care. Medications should be administered by a parent at home.

Exceptions to the medication policy may be granted to parents of children with potentially life-threatening conditions (such as asthma or severe allergic reactions). Parents of such children must develop a plan of action with event organizers in advance.

Discipline Policy

It is the policy of New Life Church – Lutheran not to administer corporal punishment. If a child becomes unruly or unmanageable, parents will be notified and instructed to remove the child from the activity.

Restroom Guidelines

Children five years of age and younger should use a classroom bathroom if one is available, if not, the worker(s) should escort the child/children to the bathroom. The workers should check the bathroom first to make sure that it is empty, and then allow the child/children inside. If a child is taking longer than seems necessary, the worker should open the bathroom door and call the child's name. If a child requires assistance, the workers should prop open the bathroom door, and leave the stall door open as they assist the child.

For the protection of all, workers should never be alone with a child in a bathroom with the door closed and never be in a closed bathroom stall with a child. Parents are strongly encouraged to have their children visit the bathroom prior to each class.

Accidental Injuries to Children

In the event that a child or youth is injured while under our care, the following steps should be followed:

- 1) For minor injuries, scrapes, and bruises, worker will provide first aid (Band-Aids, etc.) as appropriate and will notify the child's parent or guardian of the injury at the time the child is picked up from our care.
- 2) For injuries requiring medical treatment beyond simple first aid, the parent and/or guardian will immediately be summoned in addition to the workers supervisor. If warranted by circumstances, 911 will be called.

Training

New Life Church – Lutheran will strive to offer training for all workers and volunteers who will work with children.

Background Check Authorization

New Life Church – Lutheran
6000 N. 148th Street
Hugo, MN 55038
Phone: (651) 429-1975

Name (print):

First	Middle	Last
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Social Security Number:

Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy):

Former Name(s) and Date(s) Used:

Current Address:

Street	City	State	Zip
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Previous Address:

Street	City	State	Zip	Dates Used
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Telephone Number (Home or Cell):

County of Residence:

Driver's License State and Number:

Email Address:

The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I hereby authorize NEW LIFE CHURCH – LUTHERAN and its designated agents and representatives to conduct a comprehensive review of my background causing a consumer report and/or an investigative consumer report to be generated for volunteer purposes. I understand that the scope of the consumer report/investigative consumer report may include, but is not limited to the following areas: verification of social security number, current and previous residences, employment history, educational background, character references, drug testing, civil and criminal history records from any criminal justice agency in any or all federal, state, or county jurisdictions, driving records, birth records, and any other public records.

I further authorize the Department of Public Safety, Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, Department of Corrections, Administrative Office of the Courts, Sexual Offenders Registry, and the Department of Criminal Justice to divulge any and all information, verbal or written, pertaining to me, to NEW LIFE CHURCH – LUTHERAN or its agents. I further authorize the complete release of any records or data pertaining to me that the above-named agencies may have, to include information or data received from other sources.

I hereby release NEW LIFE CHURCH – LUTHERAN, the above-named agencies, and their agents, officials, representatives, or assigned agencies, including officers, employees, or related personnel both individually and collectively, from any and all liability for damages of whatever kind, which may, at any time, result to me, my heirs, family or associates because of compliance with this authorization and request to release.

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

Consent for The Release of Social Services Records

New Life Church – Lutheran
6000 N. 148th Street
Hugo, MN 55038
Phone: (651) 429-1975

Instructions to Subject: Make sure all blanks on this form are completed. Sign this form only if you believe the release of this information is in your best interest. Information cannot be obtained without your signed consent.

Subject's Name (print):

First	Middle	Last
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Former Name(s) and Date(s) Used:

Birthdate (mm/dd/yyyy):

I hereby authorize New Life Church – Lutheran to obtain from (please check all that apply):

- ☐ Washington County Community Services Child Protection Department
- ☐ Chisago County Health & Human Services Child Protection Department
- ☐ Anoka County Human Services Child Protection Department
- ☐ Ramsey County Human Services Division Child Protection Unit
- ☐ Other (please specify county): _____

The following protected information:

- Any information regarding current, ongoing and/or open child protection cases
- Any information regarding any previous, closed and/or settled child protection cases

The purpose for this disclosure is:

To determine eligibility for volunteering to work with children

Subject's Signature

Date

Revocation and Expiration of Consent

I understand I may revoke this consent at any time, except when legal action prevents revocation, by signing below:

Subject's Signature

Date

This consent will automatically expire, without my consent, one year from the date of my signature. I also understand that information disclosed by this consent cannot be released to anyone other than those listed above unless I give written permission.