

BIC Protection Policies - Minimum Requirements Checklist

State clear intentions for the policies including specifically committing to:

- ☐ Providing a safe environment by preventing harm to those in our care, and;
- ☐ Protecting our children's and youth ministry workers from false allegations, and;
- ☐ Enforcing zero tolerance for abuse or neglect.

Commit to staying accountable to the policies, including:

- ☐ a regular (at least annual) audit of the policies, where a report is given to the Church Board.

Outline the plan for enforcing the policies, including:

- ☐ Defining responsibilities by name and/or role for enforcing each aspect of the policies. (ie. who screens a new volunteer, who is responsible for the forms and maintenance of records, etc).

Outline the screening process, including:

- ☐ mandated screening for all volunteers and church roles working with vulnerable persons
- ☐ a signed ministry application
- ☐ vulnerable sector screening (renewed at least every 5 years)
- ☐ a minimum of 2 reference checks
- ☐ a minimum 6-month attendance rule
- ☐ an interview
- ☐ policy training (at onboarding + annual refresher training)

Outline the importance of parent/guardian permission and when it applies, including:

- ☐ Having all permission be given in written form (ie. paper or digital, where it can be kept on file)
- ☐ Collecting general parent/guardian permission, contact info, and the child(ren)'s basic medical info, for regular ministry programming where screened Workers will assume supervision of their child(ren), following a regular and predictable schedule
- ☐ Collecting additional parent/guardian permission and emergency contact info for off-site trips and/or one-time events
- ☐ Collecting specific permission for Workers to drive their child(ren) on a specified date/time.
- ☐ Collecting specific permission to connect over approved social media platforms.
- ☐ Collecting specific permission to diaper and/or help a child in the bathroom.

- ☐ Collecting specific permission to take photos/videos of their child(ren) at official ministry events.

Outline appropriate in person and online supervision guidelines, including:

- ☐ A “two-adult rule” where two unrelated screened adult workers are present for group supervision; and/or
- ☐ An “open door/window policy” where all individual group rooms have an unobstructed window and/or an open door to remain visible to designated monitors who periodically circulate from room to room during ministry programming
- ☐ Outline appropriate supervision ratios based on age
- ☐ A social media policy for online interactions between youth and Workers prohibiting private messaging and outlining appropriate communication, content and confidentiality (ie. keeping messaging to daytime hours, naming any restricted platforms, requiring parent/guardian permission for their child(ren) to connect online, etc.)

***Three exceptions to the supervision guidelines:**

- ☐ Washrooms - write age appropriate supervision policies around this.
- ☐ Transportation - one Worker with multiple students is acceptable, just never have a Worker alone with a student.
- ☐ Mentoring - write specific policies for this situation, including a written membership agreement that everyone involved agrees to and signs.

Create safe and healthy environments for ministry, including:

- ☐ Enforce controlled access specifically to nursery facilities
- ☐ Enforce secure sign-in/sign-out from birth to Grade 5 where an authorized adult is pre-approved and identifiable
- ☐ Enforce a Visitors/Occasional Observers protocol in the case of any unscreened adult attending programming for any reason
- ☐ Provide guidelines for appropriate/inappropriate touch based on age group
- ☐ Provide guidelines for discipline and classroom management, including a policy strictly prohibiting corporal punishment
- ☐ Provide a set of policies addressing health, safety, and sanitation issues to prevent child neglect (for example: guidelines related to illness, administering medications, basic first aid, allergies, etc)
- ☐ Post any life-threatening allergies in the child’s classroom, along with the response protocol
- ☐ Outline a photography/videography policy that includes avoiding individual photography of any minors.
- ☐ Mandate that any drivers have their full G license
- ☐ Outline protocols for overnight trips with minors, including guidelines for appropriate changing and sleeping arrangements, as well as getting the trip pre-approved by either another church staff member and/or the Church Board
- ☐ Enforce a strict policy prohibiting program participants from having unsupervised internet access

Document & retain important information, including:

- ☐ Record attendance for any ministry gathering, and keep it on file indefinitely.

- ☐ Complete and retain incident report forms for anything note-worthy.
- ☐ Keep all confidential information collected for child/youth ministries on file indefinitely (including Police Checks, volunteer screening files, and permission forms).

Take abuse seriously by:

- ☐ Providing clear definitions for: physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, child neglect, inappropriate touching and improper discipline
- ☐ Strictly prohibiting romantic relationships between a Worker and a program participant.
- ☐ Enforcing a set of procedures dealing with appropriate/inappropriate relationships
- ☐ Giving staff and Workers clear instructions to report ANY behaviour which seems abusive or inappropriate
- ☐ Enforcing a clear protocol for reporting and responding to allegations or complaints of any form of abuse, including:
 - ☐ immediately completing an incident report form
 - ☐ outlining which authorities incidents are to be reported to
 - ☐ fulfilling statutory reporting obligations to child protective agencies or police authorities
 - ☐ a compassionate response to the alleged victim and their family, without admitting legal liability or making public statements prior to obtaining legal counsel
 - ☐ maintaining confidentiality for the alleged victim and alleged perpetrator
 - ☐ immediately suspending the alleged perpetrator pending outcome of investigation
 - ☐ consulting a lawyer and reporting the incident to the insurance company