

## CHILD & YOUTH WORKER APPLICATION FORMS/DOCUMENTS

Dear Applicants,

Thank you for showing interest in our children/youth programs here at Grace BFC. Within this packet you will find all of the information that you need in order to be considered for a volunteer position at Grace. Make sure to fill out the application, detach it from this packet, and place it in my mailbox, but keep the other documents for future reference. We take the care of our children very seriously and expect our volunteers to uphold the standards which have been set in place by the staff and elders of Grace BFC. If you have any questions about the application process, the attached documents, or anything else regarding children & youth ministry, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Blessings,



Dan Phillips  
Director of Children's Ministries  
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### MANDATED REPORTER TRAINING INSTRUCTIONS:

All volunteers are expected to pass mandated reporter training and submit their certification starting January 1<sup>st</sup> 2019. To access the training course, please go to [ilookoutforchildabuse.com](http://ilookoutforchildabuse.com) and register for an account. After completing the training, please print out the certificate of completion and place it in Dan Phillips' mailbox. *The entire training may take 1-2 hours but does not need to be completed in one sitting.*



**Grace Bible Fellowship Church  
CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

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**ADDITIONAL CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES**

Child Abuse Reporting Procedure  
Discipline Involving Children and Youth  
Volunteer Code of Ethics and Rules

**CHILD PROTECTION FORMS**

GBFC Children and Youth Worker Application  
GBFC Child Protection Signature Page  
GBFC Volunteers Staff Mandated Background Clearances  
PA Consent / Release of Information – Authorization for PA Child Abuse History Certification  
Reducing the Risk Application Checklist  
GBFC Child Abuse Incident Report Form  
GBFC Illness and Injury Report Form

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy, adopted by the Board of Elders of Grace Bible Fellowship Church, Wallingford, PA, is to provide a safe and secure environment for all children and youth entrusted to our care and to comply with Pennsylvania State Law.

We want to encourage our children, youth and their families to grow in their relationship with God and one another. A safe and secure environment includes a formal, written policy to help prevent the occurrence of child abuse. The following policy and procedures are for the protection of our children, youth, employees, volunteers and our entire church family.

## SCOPE

This policy will apply to all current and future workers, compensated and/or volunteer, who have responsibility for the welfare of children and youth when they are under our supervision.

## DEFINITIONS

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

**Child, Youth, and Minor** - will be defined as any individual under the age of eighteen or comparable mental capacity.

**Adult** - will be defined as any individual at least eighteen years of age.

**Worker** - will be defined as any adult who serves as a volunteer and/or paid person given the responsibility of working with or caring for minors.

**Junior Worker** - will be defined as any worker under the age of eighteen enlisted to assist with the care of minors.

**Child Abuse** - will be defined as sexual abuse or exploitation of a child. Abuse includes any recent act or failure to act which causes non-accidental serious physical or mental injury to a child. (see "Child Abuse Reporting Procedure" for extended definition)

**Child Sexual Abuse** - will be defined as any sexual activity with a child regardless of the location. The abuser may be an adult, an adolescent, or another child. Child sexual abuse is criminal behavior that involves children in sexual behaviors for which they are not personally, socially, and developmentally ready. Child sexual abuse includes behaviors that involve touching and non-touching aspects. All child sexual abuse is an exploitation of a child's vulnerability and powerlessness in which the abuser is fully responsible for the action. Child sexual abuse may be violent or non-violent.

**Child Protection Designated Representatives (Designated Reps)** – will be defined as the persons appointed by the Elders to oversee and administer all Child Protection policies and procedures for the church. There must be at least two appointed representatives at all times, one of which must be a paid employee of the church.

**Child Clearance Administrator** – will be defined as the person responsible for running background checks and other administrative work related to child protection. The Child Clearance Administrator can be one of the Designated Representatives or can be a separate person appointed by the Elders and reporting directly to one of the Designated Representatives.

**Clearances** – will be defined as all clearances required by the state of Pennsylvania for any adult with responsibility over minors. These may include, but are not limited to, PA child abuse clearances, PA State Police criminal background checks, and fingerprint based federal criminal history checks.

**Church Event** – will be defined as any event that is sponsored and managed by Grace Bible Fellowship Church.

**Guest Speaker** – will be defined as any person who is not a worker but intends on administering a presentation to a group of children or youth for a special event or class.

**Under Care** – A person is considered to be “Under the Care of Grace BFC” when they have been assigned either an Elder, Host Team Member, or other Elder approved member of Grace that they are connected with for the purposes of personal and spiritual care, including walking with them as they connect to Grace. When a person is initially connected with someone to care for them, the office shall record the date and the person assigned to them. That “coming under care” date will be used for any waiting periods required for service in children’s ministry.

## **ADULT WORKER ENLISTMENT**

Any employee of Grace Bible Fellowship Church-who is responsible for the welfare of a child or has direct contact with children, must have the following clearances: State Criminal Background Check, Child Abuse Clearance, FBI Criminal History and any other clearances legally required.

Any volunteer worker responsible for the welfare of a child or having direct contact with children must have all legally required clearances on file with Grace Bible Fellowship Church; These currently include: State Criminal Background Check and Child Abuse Clearance. In addition, a worker must also get an FBI Criminal History completed if they have lived outside Pennsylvania within the last 10 years or they cannot swear in writing that they are not disqualified from serving pursuant to the conditions listed in the WHO SHOULD BE DENIED section of the law and has not been convicted of any of the enumerated offenses, or equivalents from another jurisdiction.

All clearance checks must be conducted by an appropriate agency recognized by the State of PA and verifiable copies must be provided to the church to keep on file. We require that initial clearance checks must have been run within the past 2 years to be accepted. Both employees and workers are required to renew their clearance checks in accordance with Pennsylvania state law. Note that PA State Law allows us to accept clearances run for employment elsewhere as part of our volunteer worker clearances but does not allow us to use clearances run for volunteer work elsewhere for any paid employee of the church.

Only the designated representatives and the child clearance administrator will have access to the criminal background check report. Recommendations will be given by these individual(s) to the appropriate ministry leader as to the qualification of the applicant.

To be cleared as a regular worker in children or youth ministries, an applicant must be under the care of Grace Bible Fellowship Church for a period of no less than six months. A written transfer of membership from another church, with references, may be adequate reason to waive the waiting period. Exceptions to the required waiting time may be granted only by the Board of Elders. To be considered, the worker must have all appropriate background checks completed and references checked prior to being granted an exception.

All worker applications and clearances must be submitted to the church, all required training must be completed, and all forms must be reviewed by at least one of the Designated Representatives before final approval is given to work with minors. Any prospective worker who has prior incidents of sexual misconduct or child abuse will not be allowed to be a worker in our children or youth ministries.

### **JUNIOR WORKER ENLISTMENT**

All perspective junior workers must have submitted written permission from a legal guardian giving them permission to serve in our Children's Ministry and stating that there is no legal or other known reason that would prevent the junior worker from being allowed to work with minors. Junior workers will be approved by one of the designated representatives and complete training before serving.

### **CHILDREN AND YOUTH WORKER APPLICATION FORM**

All workers will be required to complete our Child and Youth Worker Application Form providing personal and confidential information necessary for us to clear them for ministry. All personal information voluntarily disclosed, the results of all security background and reference checks, or the refusal of any person to participate in these will be maintained in the strictest of confidence.

Whether disclosed voluntarily, or as a result of the security background check, the following items, although not an exhaustive list, may disqualify a worker from participating in the leadership, sponsorship, or supervision of any activities or programs with minors:

#### WHO SHOULD BE DENIED

- Anyone who is named in the statewide child abuse database as a perpetrator of a founded report committed within the last five years.
- Anyone whose PA State Police Criminal Background check OR FBI check reveals a conviction for any of the following at any time in the past:
  - Criminal homicide; aggravated assault; stalking; kidnapping; unlawful restraint; rape; statutory sexual assault; involuntary deviate sexual intercourse; sexual assault; aggravated indecent assault; indecent assault; indecent exposure; incest; concealing death of child; endangering welfare of children; dealing in infant children; prostitution and related offenses; obscene and other sexual materials and performances; corruption of minors; sexual abuse of children; OR the attempt, solicitation or conspiracy to commit any of the above offenses;
- Anyone who's PA State Police Criminal Background check OR FBI check reveals a conviction for a drug or drug-related felony in the past five year.

All charges for these crimes, as well as any charges or convictions for other crimes not listed above, will be reviewed by the Designated Representative. The Designated Representative may also deem it wise to deny clearance to someone for items not listed above. In all cases of denial of worker status the reasons for denial should be documented in the applicants file, and the applicant informed of the reasons.

If questions arise from, or exceptions are proposed to, the above, they must be brought to the attention of the Board of Elders. All decisions of the Designated Representative can be appealed to the Board of Elders. The Board of Elders' decision is final.

#### **WORKER AND JUNIOR WORKER TRAINING**

Each new worker and junior worker will be required to read through the child protection policy, child abuse reporting procedure, the Discipline Involving Children and Youth policy, and the Volunteer Code of Ethics and Rules, and certify in writing that he or she has read the documents and is willing to follow the procedures outlined. They must also complete child protection training as prescribed by a designated representative. This training will include a review of the child protection policy and requirements for mandated reporters.

## **WORKER SUPERVISION**

Church staff and volunteer directors will supervise workers on an ongoing basis and make unannounced visits into classes or other program sites from time to time.

All doors to rooms where children are participating in learning or play activities will remain open, be removed, or have a window large enough to view the activities from outside the room.

A minimum of two adult workers will be in attendance at all times when children are being supervised during our programs. Some classes or programs may have only one worker in attendance during the class or program session; in these instances, doors to the classroom should remain open and there should be no fewer than three children with the worker. We do not allow minors to be alone with one adult on our premises or in any sponsored activity unless in a counseling situation.

All junior workers shall work with and be supervised by an approved adult worker

## **INJURY OR ILLNESS**

- Persons who are ill will not be permitted to participate in any ministry activity. An approved substitute must be used to take the place of workers who are ill.
- Participants should be returned to their parent or guardian as soon as illness is discovered. If this is not possible, then the person who is ill should be isolated in a manner that will allow supervision to continue until the person can be returned to their parent or guardian.
- Reasonable steps should be taken to avoid contact by anyone with body fluids.
- Any coordinator/supervisor who becomes aware of an injury to a worker or participant will take steps to ensure proper medical attention is sought for the injured person.
- Persons who have received an injury, which is obviously minor, should be given first aid as needed at the time of injury. If any doubt to the extent of the injury the person's parent or guardian should be notified at the time of the injury and an incident report should be filed with the church.
- Any injury, which may require medical treatment beyond simple first aid, should be given immediate attention: the parent or guardian of the injured person should be immediately notified, and an incident report should be filed with the church. An ambulance should also be called immediately if warranted by the injury.



- If a participant in a ministry activity develops a communicable illness within 24 hours of the activity (i.e. measles) the other participants who attended that activity will be notified by the department head as soon as they are aware of the illness. Also, an incident report should be filed with the church.

## **DISCIPLINE**

The goal of the children and youth programs at Grace Bible Fellowship Church is to provide a safe and beneficial environment for the spiritual growth of children. Our desire is to work alongside the parents in the development of their children and to provide open and honest communication with regard to matters of discipline. Positive behavioral management strategies will be used to direct and redirect children. (See “Discipline Involving Children and Youth” policy)

If any child is misbehaving in a manner that puts other children or themselves in danger, that child will be safely kept away from the other children and the parents will be notified immediately to assist. We reserve the right to temporarily deny child care services to any child who has and continues to pose a threat to themselves or others while under our supervision.

## **ADULT GUESTS**

Occasionally, guest speakers may be used for special events or classes. Guest speakers, whether a regular attendee or not, will be approved at the discretion of the designated representatives and will not be permitted to be responsible for the well-being of any children. There must be two adult workers, aside from the guest speaker, present at all times.

Legal guardians are permitted to stay in a class with their child. However, they will not be given responsibility for any other child(ren) unless they are cleared to be a worker.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Certain special events require the transportation of children to offsite locations. All children must obtain permission in writing from a legal guardian to travel in a car, van, or bus driven by any adult as part of a church sponsored event.

All drivers must be an adult and have submitted clearances to Grace Bible Fellowship Church or to their employer who is being used to hire drivers. No driver is permitted to be alone in a car with any minor during a sponsored event. We will aspire to have two adults in each vehicle for the protection of our children and workers.

Legal guardians are responsible for any transportation to or from the church. Legal guardians should use their own discretion when arranging transportation for their child. Workers must receive verbal or written permission from a legal guardian before driving any child before or after any church event or for any other reason.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Churches that screen employees/volunteers will generate a number of highly confidential documents. It is critical that the confidentiality of these documents be maintained. To insure confidentiality of all personnel forms the following will apply:

All confidential documentation pertaining to employee/ worker information will be kept in a locked file drawer in the church office and folders will be marked CONFIDENTIAL.

All documentation pertaining to reports of child abuse or other files directly related to child protection and safety will be kept in a locked file drawer in the church office and folders will be marked CONFIDENTIAL.

Information on former employees will be placed in a secured envelope and retained in a confidential file.

Church staff must be made aware of the location of all confidential files and warned that unauthorized access to any confidential information will be grounds for dismissal and possible legal action.

The disposal policy for information relating to individuals who apply for but are not hired/permitted to volunteer will comply with EEOC and state laws requiring that they are retained for a period of three years.

All files relating to workers or junior workers that are approved to serve in our ministries shall be kept for as long as they are a part of our church or ministries, and for at least an additional three years.

All files relating to reports of child abuse or other similar claims shall be kept at least as long as all legal statute of limitations or sentencing related to those claims.

All confidential files that are to be disposed of must be shredded by someone with proper authorization to access and administer those files.

## **INSURANCE**

Grace Bible Fellowship Church will obtain a sufficient level of liability insurance that would cover child abuse and sexual misconduct claims. The church will have levels of coverage which are required for limited immunity.

## **REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE**

All suspected child abuse or child sexual abuse MUST be handled immediately in accordance with Grace BFC's "Child Abuse Reporting" procedures (see separate document). This includes compliance with all Pennsylvania State Mandated Reporter laws and any other legal requirements.

## **REPORTING VIOLATIONS TO CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES**

Any violations to this Policy, including but not limited to unauthorized workers interacting with minors, policies not being upheld, suspected falsification of clearances, or charges against any worker that may disqualify them from working with children, should be reported to a Designated Representative who will be responsible to research the claims, follow-up with appropriate workers, place a written account in the Child Protection files, and report back to the Elders and the person making the original complaint.

## **ADMINISTRATION OF, EXCEPTIONS TO, AND CHANGES TO THIS POLICY**

This policy shall be administered by the Designated Representatives. Any questions about the intent of this policy, requests for exceptions, or changes to the policy shall go to the Board of Elders, whose decisions are final. If any part of this policy is found at any time to be in violation of any local, state or federal laws, or if those laws require something not covered in this policy, those laws will supersede and replace the effected sections of this policy.



## VOLUNTEER CODE OF ETHICS AND RULES

### Volunteer Copy

While acting in a volunteer in the children and youth programs of Grace Bible Fellowship a volunteer will endeavor to do the following.

1. Volunteers with minors will not abuse any minors, to include the following:
  - a. Any direct sexual activity in the presence of or in association with a minor;
  - b. Any display or demonstration of sexual activity, abuse, insinuation of abuse, or evidence of abusive conduct toward a minor;
  - c. Sexual advances or sexual activity of any kind between any person and a minor;
  - d. Sexual advances or sexual activity of any kind to a minor(s);
  - e. Infliction of physically abusive behavior or bodily injury to a minor;
  - f. Physical neglect of a minor, including failure to provide adequate supervision in relation to the activities of Grace Bible Fellowship Church;
  - g. Mental or emotional injury to a minor;
  - h. The presence or possession of obscene or pornographic materials at any function of Grace Bible Fellowship Church;
  - i. The presence, possession, or being under the influence of any illegal, illicit drugs;
  - j. The consumption of or being under the influence of alcohol while leading or participating in a function for minors of Grace Bible Fellowship Church.
2. Volunteers will have a Criminal Background Check completed and approved every 3 years.
3. Volunteers must treat all people of all races, religions and cultures with respect and consideration.
4. Volunteers will not use or tolerate the use of profanity in the presence of minors.
5. Volunteers must be free of physical or psychological conditions that might adversely affect any minor's health including, but not limited to, contagious diseases.
6. Volunteers will portray a positive role model for minors by maintaining an attitude of respect, loyalty, patience, courtesy and maturity.
7. Volunteers will be expected to act and respond with Christian love and understanding in all situations.
8. Volunteers will do everything in their power to avoid being put in a situation where they are alone with a minor other than their own.



## **DISCIPLINE INVOLVING CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

The goal of the children and youth programs at Grace Bible Fellowship Church is to provide a safe and beneficial environment for the spiritual growth of children. Our desire is to work alongside the parents in the development of their children and to provide open and honest communication with regard to matters of discipline. The following are guidelines to help in this effort.

**APPROPRIATE DISCIPLINE:** When behavioral problems occur, persons working with children should take the following course of action:

1. Communicate with the child at their level and talk to them in a calm quiet manner about what behavior is expected.
2. If misbehavior continues pre-school children may be put in "Time Out" (sitting them in a classroom chair for a few minutes of non-participation).
3. When disciplinary action is conducted the teacher should communicate the incident to the child's parents or guardians after class and also to the Ministry Supervisor.
4. If the child's behavior continues to be disruptive or dangerous the immediate assistance of the Ministry Supervisor should be sought or another adult to bring the child's parent or guardian to the class to remove the child.
5. In the event that the undesired behavior is happening off church property or at a time when the parents or guardians are not in building the parents will be called and a plan of action will be decided with the parent or guardian, ministry volunteer and the Ministry Supervisor.

**INAPPROPRIATE DISCIPLINE:** Any person working with children shall not engage in any of the following actions toward children:

1. Inflict corporal punishment in any manner upon a child's body (hit, spank, slap, beat, shake, pinch or any other measure that produces physical discomfort.)
2. Cruel, harsh, unusual, humiliating or frightening methods of discipline including threatening the use of physical punishment.
3. Placement of a child in an unsupervised place or locked and/or dark room.
4. Public or private humiliation, yelling or abusive or profane language.

Guardians will be notified if their child displays persistent negative behavior and a conference may be set up to establish a personalized strategy for the future. We reserve the right to temporarily deny child care services to any child who has and continues to pose a threat to themselves or others while under our supervision.





# Grace Bible Fellowship Church

## CHILD ABUSE REPORTING PROCEDURE

### Purpose

This procedure shall be followed if abuse or neglect of a child occurs in the ministry of GBFC or evidence of abuse or neglect is suspected while that child is under the care, supervision, guidance or training of Grace Bible Fellowship Church, Wallingford, Pennsylvania (Grace BFC). This procedure shall also be followed if a child under the care of Grace BFC has evidence of or gives witness to possible abuse or neglect in the recent past, whether that abuse occurred within or outside the ministry of Grace.

Any person having cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect will report his or her belief in accordance with this procedure. Every allegation of sexual offense or molestation should be investigated promptly and thoroughly. It is our policy to cooperate fully with law enforcement officials. Confidentiality of the investigation shall be maintained as much as possible. Confidentiality is out of concern for the victim and any accused.

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### Related Child Protection policies

Child Protection Policy  
Discipline Involving Children and Youth Policy  
Volunteer Code of Ethics and Rules

### Related Reporting forms

Reducing the Risk Application Checklist  
GBFC Child Abuse Incident Report Form

### Definitions

Approved by Grace BFC Elders – August 21, 2018

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

**Child, youth, and minor** - will be defined as any individual under the age of eighteen or comparable mental capacity.

**Worker** - will be defined as anyone over the age of 18 who serves as a volunteer and/or paid person given the responsibility of working with or caring for minors.

**Child Abuse** - will be defined as physical or sexual abuse or exploitation of a child. Abuse includes any recent act or failure to act which causes non-accidental serious physical or mental injury to a child. (see Appendix A for extended PA definition of Child Abuse)

**Child Protection Designated Representatives (Designated Rep)**– will be defined as the persons appointed by the Elders to oversee and administer all Child Protection policies and procedures for the church. There must at all time be at least two appointed representatives, at least one of which must be a paid employee of the church.

**PA Mandated Reporter** – Those who the state of PA requires by law to report all suspected child abuse to the state. Who is a mandated reporter will be defined as per the current legal definition in Pennsylvania, which as of July 2018 included the following that are relevant to our church context:

- Clergyman, priest, rabbi, minister, Christian Science practitioner, religious healer or spiritual leader of any regularly established church or other religious organization;
- An individual paid or unpaid; who, on the basis of the individual's role as an integral part of a regularly scheduled program, activity or service, accepts responsibility for a child;
- An individual supervised or managed by a person listed above who has direct contact with children in the course of their employment; and
- An independent contractor who has direct contact with children.

### **Steps to follow if abuse or neglect of a child occurs in the ministry of GBFC**

1. Immediately remove the child from harm and remove suspected abuser from the environment.

2. **Call Childline Abuse Registry (800-932-0313).**

**\*\*IMPORTANT LEGAL NOTICE:** All adult workers within our Children and Youth Ministries are considered by the State of Pennsylvania to be Mandated Reporters with respect to any suspected incidence of Child Abuse of children under their care. According to PA law the Mandated Reporter must call Childline immediate upon suspecting abuse. The mandated reported must make the call themselves, they cannot delegate it. They may not talk to a supervisor before making the immediate oral report, even to discuss the propriety of making a report. If the mandated reporter is unsure whether the situation warrants a report, s/he may immediately call an attorney for advice on the spot

(ie. No callbacks allowed). However, if an attorney is not reached immediately, a report must be made immediately.

3. Immediately find and inform either the **Director of Children's Ministry** or one of Grace BFC's **Child Protection Designated Representatives** about the incident (current Designated Reps are listed at the end of this policy). It is the responsibility of the Designated Rep to collect data concerning the child's name, address and other pertinent information through discussions with the initial reporter and other staff members. The name and address of the person responsible for the care of the child, if available, will be obtained. The Designated Rep will also record who reported the incident, all other workers, children and witnesses in the immediate vicinity of the incident and all workers and children who may have had direct contact with the accused through that program / event. Use the "**Reducing the Risk Application Checklist**" to complete the Designated Rep responsibilities involved with the occurrence. The Designated Rep will be the main contact for the incident.
4. Within 48 hours of the incident the reporter must write and submit a written report. On the same day that the case is first reported verbally to the Designated Rep, the Designated Rep will document the incident on the "**GBFC Child Abuse Incident Report Form**". If a report was made to the ChildLine Registry, then the Designated Rep must submit all legally required paperwork to the State. (currently a CY47 report is required within 48 hours).
5. All employees and volunteer workers are required to cooperate fully and openly with law enforcement. Throughout the investigation the reporter, the victim, and the accused shall be kept informed of overall progress and they shall each be informed of the final findings.
6. If one of the Designated Reps is among those suspected of abuse or is suspected of neglect of duties in following up on a report of abuse, then the Senior Pastor and the Chairman of the Board of Elders shall immediately take over all investigative and other responsibilities of the Designated Rep. with regard to Child Protection.
7. While any suspected incident of child abuse is being investigated, the accused will be barred from serving in any youth or children's ministries until the investigation is complete. If the accusations are proven to be founded the offender will be barred from having any contact with children within the ministry contexts of Grace BFC. If the convicted offender is a paid employee of Grace, their employment will be terminated according to employment laws.
8. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the investigation as much as possible out of concern for the victim and the accused. All documentation gathered throughout the investigation will be marked CONFIDENTIAL and handled according to our Child Protection Policy confidentiality section. Upon completion of the investigation if there are other concerned parties that need to be informed of the final verdict we will seek to balance transparency and confidentiality to assure the injured parties are protected.
9. Efforts will be made to keep the reporters / witnesses of the incident confidential (with the exception of cooperating with legal authorities). No victim involved in an allegation or anyone responsible for

reporting an allegation will be retaliated against in any way.

10. All inquiries into the incident outside of law enforcement officials, including all media inquiries, will be referred to the Designated Rep. or to a spokesperson appointed by the Board of Elders.

### **Steps to follow if there is evidence of child abuse from outside the ministry of GBFC**

1. If any child was potentially abused within the ministry of Grace BFC refer to the procedure in the previous section on "Steps to follow if abuse or neglect of a child occurs in the ministry of GBFC." If any child under the supervision of Grace BFC has clear evidence of current abuse occurring outside the ministry of Grace, or if you are given a disclosure that an identifiable child under your care has been abused outside of Grace BFC, or if someone over the age of 14 discloses to you that they have abused a child in the past 2 years, then you must follow the procedures below.

#### **2. Call Childline Abuse Registry (800-932-0313).**

**\*\*IMPORTANT LEGAL NOTICE:** All adult workers within our Children's Ministry are considered by the State of Pennsylvania to be Mandated Reporters with respect to any suspected incidence of Child Abuse of children under their care. According to PA law the Mandated Reporter must call Childline immediate upon receiving a disclosure of abuse of an identifiable child, even if that abuse has occurred outside of the ministry of Grace. The mandated reported must make the call themselves, they cannot delegate it. They may not talk to a supervisor before making the immediate oral report, even to discuss the propriety of making a report. If the mandated reporter is unsure whether the situation warrants a report, s/he may immediately call an attorney for advice on the spot (ie. No callbacks allowed). However, if an attorney is not reached immediately, a report must be made immediately.

3. Immediately find and inform either the **Director of Children's Ministry** or one of Grace BFC's **Child Protection Designated Representatives** about the incident (current Designated Reps are listed at the end of this policy). It is the responsibility of the Designated Rep to collect data concerning the child's name, address and other pertinent information through discussions with the initial reporter and other staff members. The name and address of the person responsible for the care of the child, if available, will be obtained. The Designated Rep will also record who reported the incident, along with the names of any other workers, children and witnesses that observed or heard the disclosure of abuse.
4. Within 48 hours of the incident the reporter must write and submit a written report. On the same day that the case is first reported verbally to the Designated Rep, the Designated Rep will document the incident on the "**GBFC Child Abuse Incident Report Form**". If a report was made to the ChildLine Registry, then the Designated Rep must submit all legally required paperwork to the State.
5. All employees and volunteer workers are required to cooperate fully and openly with law enforcement.
6. If the suspected perpetrators of the abuse are within the congregation of Grace BFC, then the accused will be barred from serving in any youth or children's ministries until the investigation is complete. If

the accusations are proven to be founded the offender will be barred from having any contact with children within the ministry contexts of Grace BFC. If the convicted offender is a paid employee of Grace their employment will be terminated according to employment laws.

7. Confidentiality will be maintained as much as possible out of concern for the victim and the accused. All documentation gathered will be marked CONFIDENTIAL and handled according to our Child Protection Policy confidentiality section. Upon completion of any investigation if there are other concerned parties that need to be informed of the final verdict we will seek to balance transparency and confidentiality to assure the injured parties are protected.
8. Efforts will be made to keep the reporters / witnesses of the incident confidential (with the exception of cooperating with legal authorities). No victim involved in an allegation or anyone responsible for reporting an allegation will be retaliated against in any way.
9. All inquiries into the matter outside of law enforcement officials, including all media inquiries, will be referred to the Designated Rep. or to a spokesperson appointed by the Board of Elders.

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### **Appendix A – Definition of Child Abuse as included in PA Child Protective Services Law**

(reprinted from <http://www.keepkidssafe.pa.gov/about/faqs/index.htm> , July 12, 2018)

Child abuse, according to the CPSL, means intentionally, knowingly or recklessly doing any of the following:

- Causing bodily injury to a child through any recent act or failure to act.
- Fabricating, feigning or intentionally exaggerating or inducing a medical symptom or disease which results in a potentially harmful medical evaluation or treatment to the child through any recent act.
- Causing or substantially contributing to serious mental injury to a child through any act or failure to act or a series of such acts or failures to act.
- Causing sexual abuse or exploitation of a child through any act or failure to act.
- Creating a reasonable likelihood of bodily injury to a child through any recent act or failure to act.
- Creating a likelihood of sexual abuse or exploitation of a child through any recent act or failure to act.
- Causing serious physical neglect of a child.
- Causing the death of the child through any act or failure to act.
- Engaging a child in a severe form of trafficking in persons or sex trafficking, as those terms are defined under section 103 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (114 Stat. 1466, 22 U.S.C. § 7102 ).

Child abuse also includes certain acts in which the act itself constitutes abuse without any resulting injury or condition. These recent acts include any of the following:

- Kicking, biting, throwing, burning, stabbing or cutting a child in a manner that endangers the child.
- Unreasonably restraining or confining a child, based on consideration of the method, location or the duration of the restraint or confinement.
- Forcefully shaking a child under one year of age.
- Forcefully slapping or otherwise striking a child under one year of age.
- Interfering with the breathing of a child.
- Causing a child to be present during the operation of a methamphetamine laboratory, provided that the violation is being investigated by law enforcement.
- Leaving a child unsupervised with an individual, other than the child's parent, who the parent knows or reasonably should have known was required to register as a Tier II or III sexual offender or has been determined to be a sexually violent predator or sexually violent delinquent.

"Recent" is defined as an abusive act within two years from the date the report is made to ChildLine. Sexual abuse, serious mental injury, serious physical neglect and deaths have no time limit.

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## **Appendix B – Answers to Common Question on Mandated Reporters**

(reprinted from <http://www.keepkidssafe.pa.gov/about/faqs/index.htm> , July 12, 2018)

### **When must a mandated reporter make a report?**

A mandated reporter must make a report of suspected child abuse if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is a victim of child abuse under any of the following circumstances:

- The mandated reporter comes into contact with the child in the course of employment, occupation and practice of a profession or through a regularly scheduled program, activity or service.
- The mandated reporter is directly responsible for the care, supervision, guidance or training of the child, or is affiliated with an agency, institution, organization, school, regularly established church or religious organization or other entity that is directly responsible for the care, supervision, guidance or training of the child.
- A person makes a specific disclosure to the mandated reporter that an identifiable child is the victim of child abuse.
- An individual 14 years of age or older makes a specific disclosure to the mandated reporter that the individual has committed child abuse.

### **Must I report suspected abuse if I learn of the abuse from someone other than the child who was allegedly abused?**

Yes. Nothing requires the mandated reporter have direct contact with the child in order to make a report.

### **How does a mandated reporter make a report if they suspect child abuse?**

Mandated reporters must make an immediate and direct report of suspected child abuse to ChildLine either electronically at [www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis](http://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis) or by calling 1-800-932-0313.

**What if a mandated reporter fails to follow the law?**

The penalties for a mandated reporter who willfully fails to report child abuse range from a misdemeanor of second degree to a felony of the second degree.

**Am I protected from civil and criminal liability if I make a report of suspected child abuse?**

Yes, persons making a report of suspected child abuse are immune from civil and criminal liability as long as the report was made in good faith. The good faith of a mandated reporter is assumed.

**If I make a report is my identity protected?**

The identity of the person making the report is kept confidential with the exception of being released to law enforcement officials or the district attorney's office. Law enforcement and district attorney's office must treat the mandated reporter as a confidential informant.

**Additional Official PA Child Safety Information:** go to [www.keepkidssafe.pa.gov](http://www.keepkidssafe.pa.gov)

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**Current Designated Representatives and Key Contact Information**

*(updated August 2018)*

**Grace BFC Director of Children's Ministries**

Daniel Phillips, [dphillips@gracbfc.org](mailto:dphillips@gracbfc.org), cell phone: (215) 218-8144

**Grace BFC Child Protection Designated Representatives**

Pastor Mark Bickel, [mbickel@gracebfc.org](mailto:mbickel@gracebfc.org), cell phone: (484) 788-9026

Daniel Phillips, [dphillips@gracbfc.org](mailto:dphillips@gracbfc.org), cell phone: (215) 218-8144

**Grace BFC Child Clearance Administrator**

Barbara Brennan, [office@gracebfc.org](mailto:office@gracebfc.org), office phone: (610) 876-8725

**PA ChildLine (Report all suspected child abuse or neglect)**

**1-800-932-0313**





## GOVERNMENT CLEARANCE INSTRUCTIONS

In order to ensure safety for the children attending programs managed by Grace BFC, and in compliance with Pennsylvania state laws, any volunteers who supervise or care for minors must provide the following clearances.

### PA State Police (PSP) Criminal Record

1. Please go to <https://epatch.state.pa.us/Home.jsp> and click on the *yellow* button which states, "New Record Check (Volunteers Only)"
2. Fill out all required sections before clicking next. Use "Grace Bible Fellowship Church" as the Volunteer Organization Name. The church's phone number is (610) 876-8725
3. Check your information before clicking "proceed".
4. Fill out all required sections before clicking "Enter This Request".
5. You will find the same page is given, but blank. Do not fill anything out again. Click "Finished" at the bottom of the page.
6. Click submit on the next page.
7. Click on "Certification Form" which is written in blue about the "Back" button.

### PA Child Abuse History

1. Please go to <https://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home>
2. Click on "Create Individual Account".
3. Follow instructions to create your individual account and click "next".
  - a. Your Keystone ID is a username that *you* create for the PA Child Abuse Portal.
  - b. Check your e-mail to receive your password after filling
4. Once you have created your account, go back to the PA Child Abuse Home Page and click "Individual Log-in"
  - a. Enter your username and password and log in and follow the instructions to finish setting up your new password.
5. Congratulations! You can now log in with your username and new personal password.
6. Check the bubble saying that you have read the terms and conditions before continuing to the next page.
7. You may read over the information on the "Learn More" page before hitting the continue button in the lower right-hand corner of your screen.
8. You will find a box towards the top of the page that says "Create Clearance Application". Click on that first button.
9. You have arrived to the "Getting Started" page. You will notice a section in the middle of the page entitled "Volunteer Applicants" which explains that this is a *free* service. At the bottom of the page, click the begin button on the lower right-hand side.
10. **Application Purpose Page:** Select the first bubble which starts by saying "Volunteer Having Contact with Children".
  - a. Under Volunteer Category, select other.
  - b. Under Agency Name, write Grace Bible Fellowship Church
11. **Applicant Information:** Place the appropriate information into each required field. When finished, click next.
12. **Current Address:** Place the appropriate information into each required field. **Make sure to click the bubble notifying that you would like a paper version of the certificate sent home.** When finished, click next.

13. **Previous Address:** Place the appropriate information, if needed, into each required field. When finished, click next.
14. **Household Members:** Place the appropriate information into each required field. When finished, click next.
15. **Application Summary:** Review all information and make sure that it is correct before clicking next.
16. **eSignature:** Confirm that you have not received a free background check within the last 57 months, if that is true. Next, type in your signature at the bottom of the page before clicking next.
17. **Application Payment:** Click “no” when asked if the organization provided an authorization code. Then click next.
18. **YOU ARE FINISHED!** Congrats! You made it! Check your e-mail for confirmation. When you receive the paper copy of your clearance, you can bring it in to church. *We will make a copy of the paper at church for our records. We must see the original copy before making a second copy.*

#### **FBI History Check (Fingerprints)**

1. Have you lived outside of Pennsylvania in the past 10 years? If yes, proceed to step 2. If no, you do *not* need the FBI History Check (Fingerprints).
2. Go to <https://www.identogo.com/>
3. Search for the closest Identogo site by entering your zip code and state and hitting the “Go” button.
4. Click on the “Digital Fingerprinting” box.
5. Click on “FBI History Check” which is the second option on the bottom of the page.
6. Click on “Schedule or Manage Appointment” at the top of the page.
7. Read the Privacy Act Statement and then click on the “next” button.
8. Fill out all required information and set up the appointment that is most convenient for you.

*I recently had to get fingerprints taken and I found the experience to be exceptionally quick and painless (unlike in the past)! The DCIU in Morton is conveniently located about 5 minutes away from church. If you are having any trouble setting up the appointment please feel free to reach out for help. Also, if money is an issue, we may be able to help cover the cost of the FBI History Check on a case by case basis.*



