

Safe Church Policies for Groups Using SVPC Facilities

Groups or individuals using Sunnyvale Presbyterian Church's (SVPC) facilities for activities involving minors (under age 18) must have procedures in place to protect children from abuse and other harms. These procedures include screening and training leaders, adequate supervision of minors by screened and trained leaders, monitoring activities, and reporting of and responding to warning signs of or actual abuse or harm. Any activity involving minors must be approved by SVPC's Safe Church Oversight Team. In general, event planners must go through SVPC's Safe Church screening, clearance, and training process before the program begins. Exceptions are as follows.

- Events that include guardians with their children such as concerts, memorial services, Baccalaureate ceremonies, and educational or recreational programs where children are with their guardians do not need to be approved by the Safe Church Oversight Team. In these cases, guardians or their designates are responsible for the safety of their children.
- Some organizations have existing policies and procedures for protecting children. If the Safe Church Oversight Team determines that these policies and procedures are sufficient for protecting children, the organization does not need to go through SVPC's Safe Church program. The group will be asked to provide those policies for review and retention.
- For one-time events, individuals/organizations do not need to go through the Safe Church clearance process, however, they must assure that the event meets Safe Church standards for supervision (adult to child ratio) and there must be at least one individual present who is mandated by the state to report child abuse or neglect. Event planners can inquire to see if a SVPC mandated reporter is available if needed (a small administrative fee may be assessed for this option). The name and contact information of the designated reporter will be provided to the SVPC Church Administrator prior to the day of the event.

Safe Church Clearance for Recurring Events

Event planners should have a minimum of three adults complete the Safe Church clearance process to make sure they have at least two cleared adults present if one adult cannot come (see Supervision section below). Steps for clearance:

1. **Fill out the Safe Church Application.** (At least three references need to come back endorsing the applicant.) [Volunteer Application](#)
2. **Get fingerprinted through the Department of Justice (DOJ)** (for those over 18 years.) (*Fingerprinting that has been done in another state or for another organization cannot be used.*) Print and complete the "applicant information" part of the appropriate Department of Justice Form found [here](#).
and bring it to a Live Scan location (UPS stores typically provide this service) where you will get fingerprinted. This costs around \$25--send a picture of the receipt to safechurch@sunnyvalepres.com for reimbursement. Proof of fingerprinting will be sent to the church office and confirmed for applicants by the Safe Church Coordinator.

Attend SVPC General Safe Church Training. See SVPC website for dates, <https://sunnyvalepres.com/safe-church/>. Proof of training will be documented by the Safe Church Oversight Team.

3. **Complete the online California Child Abuse Mandated Reporter Course.** California state requires training of staff and volunteers on the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Law. Go to mandatedreporter.ca.com to complete training.
 - Event leaders should take the “general” training.
 - Other volunteers are required to take the “Volunteer” training.
 - If you have recently completed a California state-approved course on mandated reporting for another organization, you do not need to do the training again—send a copy of the training certificate to safechurch@sunnyvalepres.com.
 - After completion of the course, proof of completion needs to be sent to safechurch@sunnyvalepres.com.

Supervision—Two Adult Rule

Safe Church requires a minimum of two Safe Church-cleared adults present at all times when minors are involved. The two adults cannot be related to each other. For example, a couple (whether married or not) or two siblings do not satisfy the two-adult rule if there are no other cleared adults present. For programs using multiple spaces/rooms, there must be two cleared adults in each room. In addition, there must be a minimum of 1 adult for every 9 minors. If there are not two Safe Church cleared adults available, the event must be canceled.

Children should be supervised at all times, including when a child needs to leave the program space to go to the bathroom. If the bathroom is located in the same building as the program, older children (age 10 and older) can go unescorted, as long as an adult knows they’re leaving the room and watches for them to return. Younger children (under 10) should be escorted to the bathroom by either two non-related adults or one adult and several children. *One adult should never be alone with one child.* The event leaders should establish procedures for bathroom visits, taking into account the age of the children and the program location, and clearly communicate them to all leaders and participants.

Monitoring

The Safe Church Oversight Team will conduct monitoring visits to make sure procedures for protecting children are being followed. If procedures such as the two-adult rule are not being followed, SVPC may terminate the individual/organization’s use of the facilities.

Reporting

Event leaders are required to report actual or suspected abuse to Child Protective Services or the police. Any individual can also contact safechurch@sunnyvalepres.com for assistance in reporting incidents or warning signs of child abuse.

Further Information on SVPC’s Safe Church policies can be found at:

<https://sunnyvalepres.com/safe-church/>