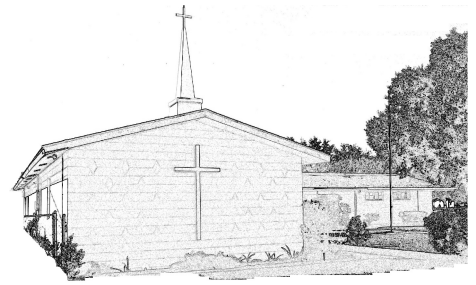


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## **GUIDELINES FOR IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL MINISTRY WORKERS**

### **Policy Statement**

In order to provide as safe and secure environment as possible for our ministry participants and to minimize the ministry's and workers' vulnerability to unwarranted accusation, the following procedures have been adopted by Immanuel Lutheran Church and School.

### **Volunteer Workers Screening Procedure**

1. Prior to consideration for a position, any candidate who may be volunteering with children and youth, will complete and return an initial "Ministry Application."
2. The principal or pastor will carefully review the "Ministry Application" to make certain the worker is appropriate for the position, based on the information provided.
3. Any information indicating a candidate poses a threat to others or has any prior history of physical or sexual abuse will result in the immediate removal of the candidate from consideration for a ministry position with Immanuel Lutheran Church and School.
4. Workers are to be members of Immanuel Lutheran Church or parents/guardians of children enrolled in our school.

### **Employee Screening Procedures**

1. Immanuel Lutheran Church and School will ordinarily call teachers from a list of eligible candidates provided by the Church of the Lutheran Confession. Others called are to be members of the Church of the Lutheran Confession and will fill out a "Ministry Application."
2. A statewide sexual offender background check and/or a national criminal/sexual offender background check will be performed through a law enforcement agency or other screening organization on all employees of this organization.
3. Any information indicating a candidate poses a threat to others or has any prior history of physical or sexual abuse will result in the immediate removal of the candidate from consideration.

### **Work Restrictions**

1. Never touch a person's private area, except when necessary (as in the case of injury).
2. Workers should avoid any appearance of impropriety. This includes such things such as sitting older children on their lap, kissing, or improperly embracing, etc.
3. Workers are to release children in their care only to parents, guardians, or persons specifically authorized to pick up the person.

### **Discipline**

1. Workers are never to spank, hit, shake, or otherwise physically discipline anyone.
2. Disciplinary problems should be reported to a parent or guardian.
3. If disciplinary situations are not satisfactorily resolved, the principal shall report to the Board of Education.

### **Injuries or Illness**

1. Persons who are ill (with a fever or having a communicable disease) will not be permitted to attend school.
2. A suitable substitute (approved by the Board of Education) must be used to take the place of workers who are ill.

3. Reasonable steps should be taken to avoid contact with body fluids of any kind.
4. Persons who have received an injury should be given first aid as needed at the time of the injury. The person's parent or guardian should be notified of the injury when he or she pick up the injured person.
5. Any injury which may require medical attention should be given immediate attention. The parent or guardian of the injured person should be immediately notified. 911 should also be called if warranted by the injury.
6. The teacher should prepare a written incident/notice for any major injury. The incident report should be kept on file.

### **Notice of Abuse, Neglect or Molestation**

1. Workers aware of any actual or suspected cases of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect have a duty to report these cases to the proper authorities.
2. Allegations of abuse or sexual molestation against any employee or volunteer are to be reported to the principal or the pastor or members of the Board of Education.
3. Any allegation of sexual abuse or molestation will be taken seriously and investigated by ministry leaders.
4. These allegations will be reported to the Board of Education and the proper authorities as required by Florida law.
5. Any employee who is the subject of an investigation by the proper authorities will be removed from his or her position, with pay, pending completion of the investigation.
6. Any person who is found guilty of sexual abuse or molestation will be removed from any work with children or youth within the organization.

### **Responding to Law Enforcement**

1. All ministry leaders and employees will cooperate fully with any law enforcement or governmental agency that may be investigating allegations of injury, abuse, or molestation.
2. The organization will promptly notify the ministry's liability insurance carrier of any allegations of sexual misconduct or abuse for advice and guidance as soon as possible.
3. A single organizational leader will be designated as spokesman following notice of any abuse or molestation in connection with activities of the ministry.

### **Revision of Policy/Procedures**

This policy will be regularly reviewed by the Board of Education and can be modified in accordance with the bylaws of the organization. Any such modifications should be conveyed to all persons affected by the modification.

### **A Needs Assessment Checklist**

The following checklist contains items our church is doing to prevent sexual abuse.

- We currently screen all employees who work with youth and children.
- We currently require all volunteers who work with youth and children to fill out a "Ministry Application".
- We do a background check on all paid employees working with children or youth.
- We take all our policies to prevent sexual abuse seriously and see that they are enforced.
- Our workers understand Florida state law regarding child abuse reporting requirement.
- We have clearly defined reporting procedures for a suspected incident of abuse.
- We have a specific response procedure to use if an allegation or sexual abuse is made at our church or school.
- We have sexual abuse liability coverage if a claim should occur.
- Each volunteer and paid employee will be trained using these guidelines and will sign these guidelines that they have read and been trained by them.

## **Reporting Misconduct by Instructional Personnel and Administrators**

All instructional personnel, educational support employees and administrators have an obligation to report misconduct by instructional personnel and school administrators which affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student. Examples of misconduct include obscene language, drug and alcohol use, disparaging comments, prejudice or bigotry, sexual innuendo, cheating or testing violations, physical aggression, and accepting or offering favors. Reports of misconduct of employees should be made to Mike Sheffield, principal, at [immanuelschoolwinterhaven@gmail.com](mailto:immanuelschoolwinterhaven@gmail.com) or 863-967-5145. Reports of misconduct committed by administrators should be made to Ed Morris, president, at [immanuelschoolwinterhaven@gmail.com](mailto:immanuelschoolwinterhaven@gmail.com) or 863-967-5145. Legally sufficient allegations of misconduct by Florida certified educators will be reported to the Office of Professional Practices Services. Policies and procedures for reporting misconduct by instructional personnel or school administrators which affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student are posted in the office and on our Web site at <https://winterhaven.clclutheran.org>.

## **Reporting Child Abuse, Abandonment or Neglect**

All employees and agents have an affirmative duty to report all actual or suspected cases of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect. Call 1-800-96-ABUSE or report online at: <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/abuse/report/>.

The following are the Florida State statutes 39.203 and 768.095 and read as follows:

### **39.203 Immunity from liability in cases of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect.--**

1. (1)(a) Any person, official, or institution participating in good faith in any act authorized or required by this chapter, or reporting in good faith any instance of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect to the department or any law enforcement agency, shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability which might otherwise result by reason of such action.

(b) Except as provided in this chapter, nothing contained in this section shall be deemed to grant immunity, civil or criminal, to any person suspected of having abused, abandoned, or neglected a child, or committed any illegal act upon or against a child.

(2)(a) No resident or employee of a facility serving children may be subjected to reprisal or discharge because of his or her actions in reporting abuse, abandonment, or neglect pursuant to the requirements of this section.

(b) Any person making a report under this section shall have a civil cause of action for appropriate compensatory and punitive damages against any person who causes detrimental changes in the employment status of such reporting party by reason of his or her making such report. Any detrimental change made in the residency or employment status of such person, including, but not limited to, discharge, termination, demotion, transfer, or reduction in pay or benefits or work privileges, or negative evaluations within a prescribed period of time shall establish a rebuttable presumption that such action was retaliatory.

### **768.095 Employer immunity from liability; disclosure of information regarding former or current employees.**

An employer who discloses information about a former or current employee to a prospective employer of the former or current employee upon request of the prospective employer or of the former or current employee is immune from civil liability for such disclosure or its consequences unless it is shown by clear and convincing evidence that the information disclosed by the former or current employer was knowingly false or violated any civil right of the former or current employee protected under chapter 760.

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I have read and been trained by the above Guidelines for Immanuel Lutheran Church and School Ministry Workers and the Florida State statutes 39.203 and 768.095. I hereby understand my duties as a ministry worker to follow these guidelines.

\_\_\_\_\_

(Name)

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(Position)

\_\_\_\_\_

(Date)