CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Leander Church of Christ

Leander, TX



ChildSAFE CERTIFIED

Leander CHURCH of CHRIST

Created 03/2009 Revised 12/2021

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Leander Church of Christ Children and Youth Ministries commits to glorify God by bringing young people to faith in Christ Jesus; to equip them for a life of discipleship and service in Christ's church and in the world around them; and to provide a safe and caring environment for all children and youth who participate in any activity of our church.

We intend to protect the children and youth of Leander Church of Christ from abuse and neglect and to protect the volunteers and staff in the church from the risk of accusation of abuse and/or neglect.

Every minister, coordinator, elder, deacon, paid church employee, and volunteer assigned in the areas of Children and Youth Ministries is responsible for abiding by the provisions set forth in the following policies and procedures.

In 2009, the Elders empowered a Child Protection Committee to assist in creating and administering the child protection policy as well as assisting in orientation sessions, the screening process, and investigation of reports. In 2021, the Ministry Staff looked to update the policy to change with the times and to implement a more streamlined policy and process to approve volunteers who work with our children.

This policy applies to all children, defined as all persons ages 0-18 years of age or still in High School; any adult volunteer or paid worker who works or assists with Leander Church of Christ sponsored children's or youth activities; and to all activities involving children or youth which are sponsored and/or supervised by Leander Church of Christ.

Because the policies and procedures have legal ramifications, this is a legal document. However, legal documents can eliminate some subjectivity needed by the Elders when practicing the spiritual leadership to which they have been called. To allow some subjectivity, and to avoid a comprehensive document that describes every conceivable violation, this document strives to define the policies and procedures in a manner that does not eliminate the human and spiritual element. This is accomplished using the following model:

- A policy or procedure is defined in a general way that covers the heart of the policy or the procedure.
- Where applicable, recommendations are made concerning the implementation of the policy or procedure. This recommendations describe the implementation that optimally preserves child safety and legal protection for Leander Church and its volunteers.

While encouraged to follow the recommendations, the Elders and Ministry Staff can elect to modify the implementation on a case-by-case basis to allow for spiritual considerations and people concerns. The Elders and Ministry Staff should make every effort to prayerfully consider the risks of any modification to the recommendations.

The Leander Church of Christ does not tolerate any occurrences of child abuse or neglect and, upon knowledge of such, is required to report violators to legal authorities as per the Texas Family Code.

II. DEFINITIONS

Adult	A person 18 years of age or older
Approved Adult	An individual 18 years of age or older, who serves in a position at Leander Church that regularly requires them to be in contact with Children during Church Planned Events
Approved Volunteer	An individual, whether Adult or Youth, that is approved to be in contact with Children during Church Planned Events
Child / Children	A person under the age of 18 years or still in High School
Church Planned Events	Any classes, devotionals, activities, trips, seminars, or other events that involve Children and are sponsored by Leander Church
Elder / Shepherd	A man holding the position of "Elder" or "Shepherd" at Leander Church
Incident	An occurrence or event that interrupts normal procedure or precipitates a crisis
Leander Church	The Leander Church of Christ located at 300 Crystal Falls Parkway, Leander, TX
Member	A person who officially places and maintains membership at Leander Church
Ministry Staff	A paid member of Leander Church's ministry staff, i.e. all ministers and the secretary
Non-Approved Adult	An adult who has not submitted an application form, gone through proper training, and/or failed the criminal background check
Parent	A legal parent and/or legal guardian of a Child
Youth Volunteer	An individual who has completed the fifth (5th) grade up to age 18 (and still in High School), who serves in a position at Leander Church that regularly requires them be in contact with a younger Child during Church Planned Events

III. VOLUNTEER SELECTION & SCREENING

All individuals will be afforded equal consideration when applying to work with Children in any capacity. However, the Leander Church believes that teaching and working with Children is a privilege and not a right. Protection of Children will supersede all other considerations. Therefore, to establish an equitable and safe, care-giving environment, a screening process will be conducted for all Volunteers who will be involved with Children during Church Planed Events.

A. ADULT VOLUNTEER ELIGIBILITY & SCREENING

An applicant shall be eligible for selection as a Volunteer upon completion of the screening process and after the applicant has been a Member of Leander Church for at least six (6) months immediately prior to becoming a Volunteer. The six (6) months begins when the Leander Church office has documented that the applicant has placed membership. This time of interaction between our leadership and the applicant allows for better evaluation and suitability of the applicant. This rule may be waived with authorization by the ministry staff. However, additional screening steps may be taken.

All individuals wishing to volunteer in Church Planned Activities with Children must complete the following selection process:

1. Contact anyone on the Ministry Staff via in person, email (ChurchMinisters@leanderchurch.org), or call the church office at (512) 259-4673;
2. Receive the Child Protection Policy and the necessary application forms;
3. Complete, sign, and return the Adult Volunteer Application Form, which includes references to the Ministry Staff;
4. Receive link to join MinistrySafe and run criminal background check;
5. Receive link to complete and successfully pass the online MinistrySafe training;
6. The Ministry Staff reserves the right to interview a prospective Volunteer;
7. Obtain final approval from the Ministry Staff;
8. Email the Ministry Staff a portrait photograph for a photo I.D. badge;
9. Receive a photo I.D. badge identifying them as ChildSafe Certified and an Approved Volunteer;
10. Every two (2) years, all Volunteers will be required to renew their training.

All information provided shall remain confidential, and access to confidential information will be afforded only to appropriate church staff on a need-to-know basis. All applicants will receive a copy of the Child Protection Policy and must acknowledge, by signing the application form, that they understand and agree to abide by the church's policies pertaining to the safety and well-being of our Children.

B. YOUTH VOLUNTEER ELIGIBILITY & SCREENING

Youth Volunteer applicants who have completed the 5th grade through the summer after their senior year in High School and are Leander Church Members are eligible to become ChildSAFE certified. Youth Volunteers are not required to pass a criminal background check, but must fill out the Youth Volunteer Application Form and complete a brief training on Child Abuse Prevention and Protection. If a student completes the training once in Middle School, they will not be required to renew their training until the summer before High School. Once a Youth Volunteer completes Middle School, they will be sent a link to the online MinistrySafe training and be required to successfully complete that training to continue as an Approved Volunteer. At that point, the High School student will have the opportunity to submit a new photo and will receive an updated photo I.D. badge. Every two (2) years, High School Volunteers are required to renew their training on Child Abuse Prevention and Protection. When the High School student turns 18, they will have to go through the Adult Volunteer Screening process outlined above if they wish to continue serving as an Adult Volunteer.

All Youth Volunteers may assist Approved Adult Volunteers under the direct supervision of an Approved Adult, but may not take the place of Adult Volunteers.

C. STAFF SCREENING

As a part of the final interview process for any new Ministry Staff hires, the new minister must complete and pass the following (preferably) before starting work at Leander Church:

1. Complete, sign, and return the application form, which includes references to the Ministry Staff;
2. Receive link to join MinistrySafe and run criminal background check;
3. Successfully complete the online MinistrySafe training.

D. BABYSITTER SCREENING

Anytime there is a Church Planned Event that requires babysitting, the babysitters must be ChildSAFE Certified, whether as an Approved Adult or Youth, and the guidelines set in this policy must be followed.

E. APPLICATION FORM GUIDELINES

All applicants who wish to become an Approved Volunteer must completely fill out the appropriate Adult or Youth Volunteer Application Form found on pages 12-14. They must sign it stating they have received and understand the policy, and that by signing it, agrees to work within the policy guidelines.

If any applicant answers "yes" to the screening question #2, then they are automatically disqualified from continuing the process to become ChildSAFE certified and thus become a "Non-Approved Adult." If any applicant answers "yes" to the other questions, it is not an automatic disqualification, but the applicant will need to elaborate and a decision will be made on a case by case basis by the Ministry Staff.

F. CRIMINAL BACKGROUND & CHILD ABUSE / NEGLECT CENTRAL REGISTRY CHECKS

Once the Application Form is returned, each prospective Volunteer will be entered into the MinistrySafe database. They will then receive an email with a link to enter their personal information to submit a background check. MinistrySafe Admins may also enter in the personal information if needed. This check will be conducted at the expense of the Leander Church and will be treated as ***strictly confidential***. Information returned on this check will be available only to the Ministry Staff and Elders (if needed). Any applicant with a conviction, or pled guilty to either Child Abuse or other physical crimes against a person cannot be engaged in any capacity that would bring them into contact with Children. Refusal to consent to the criminal history check disqualifies an applicant from becoming ChildSAFE certified.

The Ministry Staff reserves the right to re-run any criminal background checks at any time that they feel necessary. The Ministry Staff will adhere to the Code of Confidentiality outlined and signed in Appendix E.

G. REFERENCE CHECKS

The Ministry Staff will oversee the completion of the criminal background checks and contact any references provided. At the discretion of the Ministry Staff, a personal interview may be conducted with the applicant. Once satisfactory checks have been completed, the prospective Volunteer will be notified and sent a link to the online MinistrySafe training.

H. MINISTRYSAFE TRAINING

Once the Application Form and background checks have been completed, each prospective Volunteer then receive an email with instructions on how to log into the MinistrySafe site to take the required online training. Upon successful completion of the training, the Ministry Staff will be notified and a certificate and photo I.D. badge will be issued to the Volunteer. Special provisions will be available for those who are not able to access the internet. Refusal to complete the training or failure to receive a "passing" certificate will disqualify an applicant from being ChildSafe Certified and an Approved Volunteer.

I. NON-APPROVED ADULT

Adult Members of the Leander Church who have not submitted an application form, or answered "yes" to screening question #2 on the application form, who have not cleared a criminal background check, and/or did not pass or complete the MinistrySafe training are not permitted to have any assigned contact with Children during Church Planned Activities.

J. REGISTERED SEX OFFENDER CODE OF CONDUCT

Any Member of the Leander Church who is a Registered Sex Offender is not permitted to have any contact with Children and must follow the guidelines set out in the Code of Conduct outlined in Appendix D.
All Approved Adults and Approved Youth are expected to abide by the following policies and guidelines listed below. The heart of this policy is to ensure the overall safety and well-being of the Children in the Leander Church.

IV. VOLUNTEER & STAFF EXPECTATIONS

A. SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN

The intent of the Leander Church is to prevent *one* Approved Volunteer (Adult or Youth) from being in an isolated setting with a Child without another Approved Adult present. Supervision must be maintained after Church Planned Events on and/or off campus until all Children are in the custody of the Parent or Adult that brought them.

While under Adult supervision at any Church Planned Event, Volunteers are not allowed to use profanity, harsh tones, bullying tactics, threats, and/or demeaning language in front of and/or directed towards any Child. Additionally, any kind of physical punishment, including but not limited to: spanking, pushing/pulling by the arm, thumping, and pinching, are not allowed.

1. PHOTO I.D. BADGE

Once a Volunteer is approved to work with Children, the Volunteer will be issued a photo identification (I.D.) badge. The Volunteer is required to wear a photo I.D. badge during all Church Planned Events when working with Children through the 5th grade. For working with Children 6th grade and above, the use of the photo I.D. badge is encouraged, but not required during all Church Planned Events. When required, if a Volunteer does not have his/her badge, a temporary badge will be assigned to that Volunteer for that event only. If the Volunteer has misplaced his/her badge a request must be made to the Ministry Staff for a new badge.

All photo I.D. badges must remain at the church building for safe keeping before and after Church Planned Events. They are to be kept in the appropriate basket in the Teacher's Workroom. Official Leander Church lanyards are available only to Approved Volunteers to use for their photo I.D. badge.

2. TWO-VOLUNTEER RULE

Every attempt will be made to have two Volunteers with Children at all times during Church Planned Events. The Two-Volunteer Rule prohibits one Volunteer from being in an isolated setting with a Child or group of Children without another Volunteer present. Compliance with this rule serves not only to protect the Child but also to protect the Volunteer against the possibility of false accusation. Caveats to the Two-Volunteer rule are:

- Husband and wife Volunteers are encouraged to participate in the same activity but will only count as one (1) Volunteer.
- Parent and Youth Volunteers are encouraged to participate in the same activity but will only count as one (1) Volunteer.
- Youth Volunteers under the age of eighteen (18) must have two (2) Adult Volunteers present during all Church Planned Events.

- Some youth classes (Middle School and High School) may have only one Adult teacher in attendance during the class session. In these instances, doors to the classroom should remain open or have a window in the door, and there should be no fewer than two (2) students with the one Adult teacher.
- One-on-one pastoral counseling situations with a Child are permitted as long as it is done in a public space with a window in the door (like any minister's office) and at least one (1) other Adult knows it is taking place and can see what's happening inside.

To facilitate the Two-Volunteer Rule, the following guidelines must be followed:

- All classrooms must have a window or a door with a window, if doors remain closed. No papers or posters are to be hung on the windows, so that a line of sight will be maintained from the hallway.
- A Volunteer will not visit in seclusion with a Child or take a Child away on a one-on-one basis. In activities where there is a legitimate reason or Parental consent has been given for being alone with a Child (for example pastoral counseling), the visitation must be conducted in a public place where there are other people nearby to observe the activity.
- If a young Child needs to go to the bathroom and requires assistance, it would be best to contact their Parent. If the Parent is unavailable, when at all possible, keep the Two-Volunteer Rule. The goal is to not leave a Child one on one with an Adult or Volunteer. As Approved Volunteers, use discretion and creativity while keeping the Two-Volunteer Rule.
- On any overnight Church Planned Event (youth group trip, etc), where the group stays in a hotel or cabin overnight, at least one (1) Approved Adult may be in each room with at minimum two (2) Children. If possible, pair the Approved Adult with their own Child in a room. Under no circumstances is an Adult allowed to share a bed with any Child that is not related to them.

B. NURSERY

The nursery will be staffed by one (1) full-time, paid attendant every Sunday alongside at least one (1) other Approved Adult Volunteer and any Approved Youth Volunteers. At least two (2) Approved Volunteers will be assigned to work in the nursery during morning worship services. The main door to the nursery must remain opened, with the child-gate closed, or have the top portion of the half-door opened.

C. PARENT RESPONSIBILITY

The Leander Church establishes policies and guidelines to promote the safety of our Children while they are under the supervision of Approved Volunteers and Staff during Church Planned Events. At all other times, Parents or guardians are responsible for supervising their Children while on the Leander Church campus when they are not under the direct supervision of an Approved Volunteer.

- Examples of Church Planned Events, where Children are under the supervision of Approved Volunteers include, but are not limited to: Bible Classes, Nursery, Bible Hour, VBS, Youth Group Trips / Events, Celebrate Recovery, etc.
- Examples of when Parents and/or guardians are responsible for the safety of their Children include, but are not limited to: before and after Bible Class and/or the worship service, during fellowship luncheons, meetings, Connect Groups, on the playground equipment (unless part of a Church Planned Event), or play areas, etc.

D. CHILD CHECK-IN / CHECK-OUT

All Children infant through 5th grade, who attend Bible Class, Bible Hour, and/or the Nursery must be checked in and out of our Breeze database as a way to distinguish who has custody of the Child and when that exchange of custody occurs. We have two check-in stations - one in the hallway and one outside the nursery. A member of the Leander Church's Safety and Security Team will be assigned to operate the check-in station and to remain in place through out the Bible Class or Bible Hour period to provide security during the event, and to, if needed, assist with the Two-Volunteer Rule. To properly check-in and check-out a Child,

- A Parent must be present at check-in.
- If a Child's name is not in Breeze, it must be added and include at minimum the following: Child's name, birthdate (age), grade, and known allergies (if applicable), the Parent's name, and the Parent's mobile phone number.
- Upon check-in, the computer will print two labels with a matching unique 3-digit code. One label stays with the Child and the other is given to the Parent. The Parent must retain this label.
- Upon check-out, the Parent must present their label to the check-in attendant in order to redeem their Child. A Child may only be released to the Adult with the label matching the unique corresponding 3-digit code to the Child's badge.

The nursery check-in station is located outside the nursery door, and it's the responsibility of the Parent to check their Child in. The nursery attendant (or one appointed by him/her) will be available to help Parents check their Children in and out of the nursery at times throughout the morning worship service and other events where childcare is needed. It is up to the main nursery attendant to train/teach other helpers to use the check-in system competently.

During Bible Hour, the check-in attendant should be posted at the station in the hallway at all times before, during, and after Bible Hour until all Children have been released to their Parents. The check-in attendant will help maintain security throughout the duration of Bible Hour. No unauthorized individuals are allowed to enter the Bible Hour zones (Fellowship Hall / Toddler Classroom) if they are not part of the Bible Hour teaching team and have not cleared the process to be Child-safe certified.

E. PHOTOS & VIDEOS OF MINORS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

In order to better protect the privacy of our Children, all photos and/or videos taken of any Child at any Church Planned Event by an agent of the Leander Church must have consent from a Parent before posting the Child's picture and/or video to any online platform including, but not limited to social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, etc) and the church website. The Ministry Staff must have a signed consent form from a Parent or, found in Appendix C, before any image or video is posted online. By signing the consent form, Parents agree that:

- The Leander Church is able to publish photographs and/or videos of their Child as many times as needed or desired.
- Aside from being posted online, the Child's photograph and/or video may also be used for promotional materials such as event fliers and visitor brochures, and may also be reproduced in color or in black and white to be placed in various locations around the church building and/or the brick house.
- While the Leander Church will make every effort to protect the identity of a Child, the Parent recognizes that the Leander Church cannot guarantee that their Child will not be able to be identified from the photograph or video.

F. APPROPRIATE & INAPPROPRIATE FORMS OF AFFECTION

Love and affection are part of church life and ministry. There are many ways to demonstrate affection while maintaining positive and safe boundaries with Children and Youth. Some positive and appropriate forms of affection are listed below:

- Brief hugs.
- Pats on the shoulder or back.
- Handshakes.
- "High-fives" and hand slapping.
- Verbal praise.
- Touching hands, shoulders and arms of Children or youth.
- Arms around shoulders.
- Holding hands while walking with small Children.
- Sitting beside small Children.
- Kneeling or bending down for hugs with small Children.
- Holding hands during prayer.
- Pats on the head when culturally appropriate. (For example, this gesture should typically be avoided in some Asian communities).

The following forms of affection are only some that are considered inappropriate with Children and youth in ministry settings because many of them are the behaviors that Child molesters use to "groom" Children or youth for later molestation or can be, in and of themselves, sexual abuse.

- Inappropriate or lengthy embraces.
- Kisses on the mouth.
- Holding Children over three years old on the lap.
- Touching bottoms, chests or genital areas other than for appropriate diapering or toileting of infants and toddlers.
- Showing affection in isolated areas such as bedrooms, closets, staff only areas or other private rooms.
- Occupying a bed with a non-related Child or Youth
- Prolonged touching of knees or legs of Children or youth.
- Any type of massage given by a Child or Youth to an Adult.
- Any type of massage given by an Adult to a Child or Youth.
- Any form of unwanted affection.
- Comments or compliments (spoken, written, or electronic) that relate to sexual development.
- Snapping bras or giving "wedgies" or similar touch of underwear whether or not it is covered by other clothing.
- Giving gifts or money to individual Children or youth without the knowledge of a Parent.

V. REPORTING & RESPONDING

It is the responsibility of each ministry to ensure that this Child Protection Policy is being followed. It is recommended that classes and events involving Children be monitored periodically by staff and/or other Volunteers without advance notice, to verify that two Volunteers are present at all times, badges are being worn when required and that all aspects of this policy are being enforced.

A. DOCUMENTING SUSPICIOUS INJURIES

In the event a Child attends a Church Planned Activity and the Volunteer notices any kind of bruises, breaks, burns, or any injury on a Child *that is suspicious*, the Volunteer must document the injury using the form in Appendix A and, if possible, take pictures of the injury. This will create a way for the Leander Church leaders to track reoccurring injuries and will also protect the church Members from being accused of causing injury. The completed form, along with any pictures, should be given to the ministry leader, a member on the Ministry Staff, and/or an Elder, and it will be placed in a secure location in the church office.

B. REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

For purposes of this policy, "Child abuse" is any action (or lack of action) that endangers or harms a Child's physical, psychological, or emotional health and development. Child abuse occurs in different ways and includes the following:

- Physical Abuse - any physical injury to a Child that is not accidental, such as beating, shaking, burns, and biting.
- Emotional Abuse - a pattern of behavior in which a person insults, humiliates, criticizes, embarrasses, shames, blames, manipulates, and instills fear in a Child or individual in order to control them.
- Sexual Abuse - any sexual activity between a Child and an Adult or between a Child and another Child at least four years older than the victim, including activities such as fondling, exhibitionism, intercourse, incest, and pornography.
- Neglect - depriving a Child of his or her essential needs, such as adequate food, water, shelter, and medical care.

Volunteers and Members may have the opportunity to become aware of abuse or neglect of the Children under our care. In the event that an individual involved in the care of Children at the Leander Church becomes aware of suspected abuse or neglect of a Child under their care, this should be reported immediately to the

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services
Call - 1-800-252-5400
Online - http://www.txabusehotline.org/

This report should be made within forty-eight (48) hours of first learning of the suspected abuse. *Failure to report suspected abuse of Children is a crime.* Reports may be made confidentially or anonymously. Every state provides immunity from civil liability for persons required to report suspected abuse in good faith without malice. Simply stated, "in good faith" means that the person submitting the report believes what he or she is reporting to be true.

In addition to reporting to the state authorities, Volunteers and Members are required to report any suspected or known abuse of Children that may have been perpetrated by any Member or Volunteer of Leander Church directly to a Ministry Staff member or Elder, so that immediate and proper steps may be taken. The Ministry Staff and Elders will cooperate fully with any investigation by local and state authorities.

C. RESPONDING TO SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

In the event a Child discloses abuse or neglect to an Adult, the following procedure shall be followed:

1. Respond by giving the care and safety of the alleged victim first priority. Listen and believe what the Child is sharing.
2. Make sure the Child is secured in a safe place and do not confront the accused.
3. Fill out the Suspected Abuse or Neglect Report Form in Appendix B.
4. Submit the completed Report to a Ministry Staff member or Elder.
5. The Ministry Staff member, Elder, or the Volunteer / Member to whom the suspected abuse was disclosed shall report the Incident to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, unless it was already reported by the person to whom the suspected abuse was disclosed.
6. Treat each allegation with confidentiality and respect the privacy of all involved parties.
7. Cooperate fully with civil authorities and insurance provider.

In the event that an Incident of abuse or neglect is alleged to have occurred at the Leander Church or during a Church Planned Event, the following procedure shall be followed:

1. The Parent or of the Child will be notified
2. The Volunteer or Member alleged to be the perpetrator of the abuse or misconduct will immediately be placed on leave pending an investigation and instructed to remain away from the premises during the investigation. He or she should be instructed to have no contact with the victim or with witnesses. In the case of paid employees of the Leander Church, he or she will be placed on involuntary paid leave until the allegations are cleared or substantiated.
3. The person making the complaint will be asked to put the complaint in written form and sign it. If the person is of such an age as to make this difficult or unreliable, a Parent or will be asked to assist in the generation of this written document.
4. All allegations of abuse should be reported to the civil authorities, and the Leander Church will comply with the state's requirements regarding mandatory reporting of abuse as the law then exists. The Leander Church will fully cooperate with the investigation of the Incident by civil authorities.
5. The insurance company will be notified, and the organization will complete an Incident report. Any documents received relating to the Incident and/or allegations will immediately be forwarded to the insurance company.
6. The Leander Church will designate a spokesperson to the media concerning Incidents of abuse or neglect. The advice of legal counsel will be sought before responding to media inquiries or releasing information about the situation to the congregation. All other representatives of the Leander Church should refrain from speaking to the media.
7. A pastoral visit will be arranged for those who desire it. This should be for the purpose of providing pastoral support during the time of crisis and not for the purpose of investigating the Incident or influencing the investigation.
8. Any person who is found guilty of the alleged abuse or misconduct will be removed from their position working with Children.

Adult Volunteer Application Form

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

Social Security Number: _____ (Required only if Ministry Staff runs background check on your behalf)

CHURCH INVOLVEMENT

How long have you been a member of the Leander Church of Christ? _____

If you have been a member of the Leander Church of Christ less than three (3) years, please list cities and states in which you have lived and any churches of which you have been a member.

City State Church

_____

_____

_____

In which children's/youth program(s) do you want to become involved?

_____

What skills would you bring to the children's/youth program?

_____

REFERENCES

(Please supply two independent references who are not relatives. Past ministry leaders or former employees preferred)

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Adult Volunteer Application Form

HAVE YOU AT ANY TIME EVER:

1.	Been convicted of, or pleaded guilty or no contest to, any crime?	☐ Yes	☐ No
2.	Participated in, been convicted, or pleaded guilty or no contest to abuse or any sexual misconduct?	☐ Yes	☐ No
3.	Been under investigation of suspected abuse or sexual misconduct?	☐ Yes	☐ No
4.	Became aware of having any traits or tendencies that could pose any threat to children, youth, or others?	☐ Yes	☐ No
5.	Had any reason why you should not work with children, youth, or others?	☐ Yes	☐ No

If the answer to any of these questions is "yes," please explain in detail:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

(Please attach additional pages if more space is needed)

VOLUNTEER VERIFICATION & RELEASE

I, _____ recognize that the Leander Church of Christ is relying on the accuracy of the information I provide on the Volunteer Application Form. Accordingly, I attest and affirm that the information I have provided is absolutely true and correct.

I authorize the Leander Church of Christ to contact any person or entity listed on the Volunteer Application Form, and I further authorize any such person or entity to provide the Leander Church with information, opinions, and impressions relating to my background or qualifications.

I voluntarily release the Leander Church of Christ and any such person or entity listed on the Volunteer Application Form from liability involving the communication of information relating to my background or qualifications.

I have not been convicted of nor admitted committing, nor am I under indictment for any felony, misdemeanor, or deferred adjudication offense involving drugs, child abuse, sexual offenses or moral indecency. If I am convicted of any of these illegal actions in the future, I will notify the Ministry Staff in writing within seven (7) days.

I have received a copy of the Leander Church's Child Protection Policy and agree to follow all of the policies within.

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Youth Volunteer Application Form

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

CHURCH INVOLVEMENT

How long have you been a member of the Leander Church of Christ? _____

In which children's/youth program(s) do you want to become involved?

_____

What skills would you bring to the children's/youth program?

_____

HAVE YOU AT ANY TIME EVER:

1.	Been convicted of, or pleaded guilty or no contest to, any crime?	☐ Yes	☐ No
2.	Participated in, been convicted, or pleaded guilty or no contest to abuse or any sexual misconduct?	☐ Yes	☐ No
3.	Been under investigation of suspected abuse or sexual misconduct?	☐ Yes	☐ No
4.	Became aware of having any traits or tendencies that could pose any threat to children, youth, or others?	☐ Yes	☐ No
5.	Had any reason why you should not work with children, youth, or others?	☐ Yes	☐ No

If the answer to any of these questions is "yes," please explain in detail:

_____

_____

(Please attach additional pages if more space is needed)

PARENTAL AFFIRMATION & CONSENT

I, *(print name)* _____ affirm that I am the parent / legal guardian of the applicant. I recognize that the Leander Church of Christ is relying on the accuracy of the information provided. To the best of my knowledge, I affirm and attest that the information provided is true and correct. I further attest and affirm that I am aware of no traits or tendencies of *(applicant's name)* _____ that could pose any threat to children, youth, or others.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Youth Signature: _____ Date: _____

Reference Response Form

(FOR OFFICE & MINISTRY STAFF USE ONLY)

Reference by: _____ Phone: _____

Reference for: _____

_____ is applying to become a volunteer youth worker with the Children's or Youth Ministry at the Leander Church of Christ and has given your name as a personal reference. This volunteer position is in close contact with children and youth and we want to ensure that these relationships will be healthy ones. Would you feel comfortable sharing some information regarding this individual working with children and youth?

1. Describe your relationship with this person: _____

   _____

2. How long have you known this person? _____

3. How would you rate his/her ability at the following?

	Low		Average		Excellent
1. Resolve Conflict	1	2	3	4	5
2. Following through with commitments	1	2	3	4	5
3. Ability to relate to children and youth	1	2	3	4	5

4. What are this applicant's greatest strengths? _____

   _____

5. Are you aware of anything in the candidate's background, personality, or behavior that could in any way pose a threat to children or youth? If yes, explain. _____

   _____

6. Do you have any concerns regarding this person working with children or youth? _____

   _____

   _____

Reference checked by: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX A

DOCUMENTING SUSPICIOUS INJURIES ON A CHILD

In the event a Child attends a Church Planned Activity and the Volunteer notices any kind of bruises, breaks, burns, or any injury on a Child *that is suspicious*, the following report should be completed.

Date: _____ Time: _____ AM PM

Where is the injury located? _____

What type of injury is it? _____

CHILD INFORMATION

Name: _____ Age: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Name of Parents / Legal Guardian: _____

Relationship to organization: Member Visitor

EXPLAIN YOUR SUSPICION

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Completed by: _____
(Print Name)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX B

SUSPECTED ABUSE OR NEGLECT REPORT FORM

PRIVACY DISCLAIMER: This form should not be shared with other volunteers. You may submit this form to a person on the Ministry Staff, an Elder, law enforcement, or other reporting agency. If you submit it to someone other than law enforcement or other reporting agency, then that person must make the official report to law enforcement. Note that mandatory reporting laws DO apply and you are REQUIRED by law to report this information to local authorities.

YOUR INFORMATION

Name: _____ Title/Position: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Overseeing Minister/Elder: _____

INJURED PERSON

Name: _____ Age: _____

Parents / Guardians (if a minor): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

SUSPECTED PERPETRATOR

Known Unknown

Name: _____ Age: _____

Description: _____

Relationship to suspected victim: _____

Address or location of suspected abuse: _____

_____

REASON FOR REPORT / DETAILS OF INCIDENT

_____

_____

_____

_____

SUSPECTED ABUSE OR NEGLECT REPORT FORM

WITNESSES

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

REPORT SUBMITTED TO

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

Did you notify state / local authorities regarding suspected abuse / sexual misconduct? YES NO

If yes, list agency name: _____

Name of contact: _____

Phone: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____

Signature: _____

Date of report: _____ Time of report: _____

To notify state / local authorities and file a report, you can call the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services at 1 (800) 252-5400 or submit the report online at http://www.txabusehotline.org/

APPENDIX C

LETTER OF CONSENT FOR POSTING PHOTOS/VIDEOS OF MINORS

I, the undersigned, give permission for the Leander Church of Christ, and those affiliated with it, to publish any photographs and/or videos of my child(ren), who is under the age of 18, on the Church Website, YouTube, Social Media accounts and/or other official church platforms online. I acknowledge that these are online websites that may be open to anyone who wishes to view them.

By signing below, I agree that:

1. The Leander Church is able to publish photographs and/or videos of their Child as many times as needed or desired.
2. Aside from being posted online, the Child's photograph and/or video may also be used for promotional materials such as event fliers and visitor brochures, and may also be reproduced in color or in black and white to be placed in various locations around the church building and/or the brick house.
3. While the Leander Church will make every effort to protect the identity of a Child, the parent or legal guardian recognizes that the Leander Church cannot guarantee that their Child will not be able to be identified from the photograph or video.

The following is/are the names of my child(ren) that are allowed to be published:

Child 1: _____ Child 2: _____

Child 3: _____ Child 4: _____

Parent Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

☐ Please check this box if you do **NOT** want your child's photographs and/or videos anywhere online.

APPENDIX D

REGISTERED SEX OFFENDER CODE OF CONDUCT

1. _____ covenants with the Leander Church of Christ to be responsible in the following:
   - I will **NOT** attend special children's worship services or programs.
   - I will **NOT** drive anyone home, or drive a vehicle on behalf of the church.
   - I will **NOT** be a chaperone for any church event which involves children under 18.
   - I will **NOT** enter any restroom not designated for my use.
   - I will **NOT** have contact with anyone under the age of 18 and will move away if approached.
   - I **WILL** use the same entrance in and out of the building each time I attend.
   - When I attend, I **WILL** find a "safety partner" who will accompany me at all times. If I need to use the restroom, the "safety partner" will remain in the hallway while I am in the restroom.

2. The Leander Church of Christ covenants with _____ to be responsible to the following:
   - The church will hold you, _____, accountable to the guidelines listed above. We will continue to pray and encourage you and your family. The church will designate "safety partners" representing the congregation, to ensure that someone will accompany or provide visual supervision for you when you are on the church property or attending church functions. A "safety partner" will be waiting for you at a designated location for each congregational event you will attend. We will do all that we can to handle your situation with sensitivity and confidentiality. We will report any deviation to these policies to church leadership, parole, or probation personnel. This report will be made without prejudice or interpretation.

3. It is a privilege to attend church services and activities. It is imperative that both parties handle this privilege responsibly and regard it with the utmost seriousness. The Eldership reserves the right to add or amend any restrictions on a case-by-case basis.

Church Member Signature _____

Church Leader Signature _____

Probation Officer (if required) _____

Date _____

APPENDIX E

MINISTRY STAFF
CODE OF CONFIDENTIALITY

The Ministry Staff will respect the confidential information provided by the church's members, visitors, adults, and children and will take precautions to make sure private and/or sensitive information is kept in a safe location and/or not shared with any person that does not absolutely need to know. All information revealed through the volunteer screening process and background checks will be seen only by those in the Ministry Staff running the checks. If necessary, a Ministry Staff member may reach out to the appropriate ministry leader if a person did not clear the screening process and/or the background check, but will not share the report or details unless absolutely necessary. One elder may be notified on a case by case basis if a minister deems it necessary for guidance.

The Ministry Staff will adhere to civil law concerning the reporting of any neglect or abuse, or when physical harm could come to any person or third party.

MINISTRY STAFF SIGNATURES

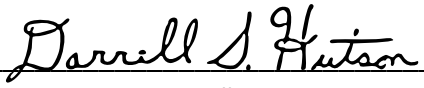
By signing this document, the Ministry Staff agrees to adhere to the Code of Confidentiality as stated above.

Signature:  Date: January 27, 2022

Janet Brewster

Signature:  Date: January 26, 2022

Alan Gower

Signature:  Date: January 27, 2022

Darrell Hutson

Signature:  Date: January 27, 2022

Nathan Keene

Signature:  Date: January 26, 2022

Whit Pennock