

*Safe
Sanctuary Policy
of
Altamont
Reformed Church*

*129 Lincoln Avenue
Altamont, NY 12009*

Updated 2/13/20

Safe Sanctuary Policy of Altamont Reformed Church

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Safe Sanctuary Policy of Altamont Reformed Church (A.R.C.)
129 Lincoln Avenue, Altamont, NY 12009

OUR CALLING AND OUR RESPONSIBILITY IS TO ENSURE
SAFE SANCTUARY FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

Introduction

Our Christian faith calls us to offer both intentional hospitality toward and intentional protection of children, youth, and adults with developmental disabilities.

Purpose

1. The purpose of these policies and procedures is to help reduce the risk of child sexual abuse and other forms of abuse or injury from occurring.
2. These policies and procedures are intended to assist Altamont Reformed Church (A.R.C.) in:
 - a. Safeguarding the children, youth, and adults with developmental disabilities who participate in the activities of our church from sexual abuse and other forms of abuse or injury.
 - b. Dealing appropriately with allegations / disclosures of child or youth sexual abuse.
 - c. Protecting church staff and volunteer workers from false allegations of sexual abuse and other forms of abuse or injury.
 - d. Limiting the extent of our church's legal risk and liability due to sexual abuse and other forms of abuse or injury.

Scope / Applicability

This policy does not apply to organizations using the building or grounds for programs, activities, or meetings not associated with Altamont Reformed Church.

Safe Sanctuary Team

1. The Safe Sanctuary Team will be recruited and appointed by Consistory.
2. The Safe Sanctuary Team may comprise the Pastor, paid staff, and / or others. The Team should number three to five (3-5) members.
3. The length of term of service on the Safe Sanctuary Task Force will be determined and specified by Consistory at the time of appointment.
4. The Safe Sanctuary Team will have oversight of A.R.C.'s Safe Sanctuary Policy and its implementation and will carry out the following duties and responsibilities:
 - a. Reviewing and revising A.R.C.'s Safe Sanctuary Policy and forms.
 - b. Screening potential volunteers and staff.
 - c. Monitoring and enforcing adherence to A.R.C.'s Safe Sanctuary Policy related to ministries related to children, youth, and adults with developmental disabilities.
 - d. Maintaining files pertaining to Safe Sanctuary policies and procedures.
 - e. Consulting with Consistory, the Board of Elders, church members, and adherents about the Safe Sanctuary policies and procedures.
 - f. Being aware of and assisting with incidents of observed or disclosed abuse toward children, youth, and / or adults with developmental disabilities.
 - g. Being aware of and following up as needed with injuries or accidents involving children, youth, and adults with developmental disabilities at A.R.C.-sponsored events and activities.
 - h. Designing Safe Sanctuary Training and ensuring the implementation of the training. Training could be led by a qualified ARC volunteer or staff member or by a specialist from outside ARC or by completing the designated online training.

Revisions to Policy

The Altamont Reformed Church Safe Sanctuary Team will thoroughly review this policy at least once every five years to determine if revisions are needed. The Safe Sanctuary Team will determine how any necessary revisions will be made.

Definitions

The following definitions apply to these words, as they are used in this policy statement:

Adult - A person who has attained his or her 18th birthday.

Child - A person whose age is from birth to 10 years, but who has not attained his or her 11th birthday.

Child Protective Services (CPS) – Child Protective Services is part of the Albany County Social Services Department, and is responsible for investigating allegations of child abuse and maltreatment that have been forwarded by the State wide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR). If a report is confirmed, CPS takes steps to assist the family and protect the child or children involved.

Emotional abuse - Abuse in which a person exposes a child or youth to spoken and / or unspoken violence or emotional cruelty.

Neglect - Abuse in which a person endangers a child's or youth's health, safety, or welfare, through negligence.

Physical abuse - Abuse in which a person deliberately and intentionally causes bodily harm to a child or youth.

Psychological Abuse - Psychological abuse, also referred to as emotional abuse or mental abuse, is a form of abuse characterized by a person subjecting or exposing another to behavior that may result in psychological trauma, including anxiety, chronic depression, or post-traumatic stress disorder. Such abuse is often associated with situations of power imbalance, such as abusive relationships, bullying, and abuse in the workplace.

Sexual abuse - Any form of sexual contact or exploitation in which a child or youth is being used for the sexual stimulation of the perpetrator. The abuser may be an adult, a youth, or another child. Note: any sexual activity with a child or youth is considered sexual abuse even if the activity is encouraged by or agreed to by the child or youth. This includes but is not limited to:

1. Romantic involvement of an adult with a child or youth
2. Fondling
3. Oral, genital, and anal penetration
4. Intercourse
5. Rape
6. Incest
7. Prostitution
8. Sexualized behavior that communicates sexual interest and / or content. Examples include, but are not limited to: displaying sexually suggestive visual materials, making sexual comments or innuendo about one's own or another person's body
9. Touching or rubbing oneself in the presence of another person
10. Unwanted kissing
11. Inappropriate verbal comments of a sexual nature
12. Showing of inappropriate images of a sexual nature
13. Obscene phone calls, texts, or electronic communications
14. Exhibitionism

Verbal abuse - Any verbal act that humiliates, degrades or threatens any child or youth.

Adults with developmental disabilities – self explanatory.

Youth - A person who has attained his or her 11th birthday, but who has not attained his or her 18th birthday.

Requirements and Screening for Individuals Who Will Have Contact with Children, Youth, and / or Adults with developmental disabilities

Adult volunteers

1. Be an active attendee and participant of this church for a minimum of six (6) months prior to working with children / youth.
2. Complete a volunteer application form and a criminal background check consent form.
3. Any volunteer who transports children or youth for the benefit of any church program must meet the requirements of and adhere to Altamont Reformed Church's (A.R.C.'s) *Policy Regarding Vehicular Driving* (see the forms section of this document).

Paid employees

1. Complete an employment application and a criminal background check consent form.
2. Any employee who transports children or youth for the benefit of any church program must meet the requirements of and adhere to A.R.C.'s *Policy Regarding Vehicular Driving* (see the forms section of this document).

Contract and sub-contract employees

1. If the contract or sub-contract employees are hired for a job that relates to children and youth work, and if they will interface with children or youth, then they must complete an application and criminal background check form prior to acceptance as a contract / sub-contract employee.
2. If contract or sub-contract employees are hired for a job that does not relate to children and youth and if the contract or sub-contract employees will not in any way interface with children or youth, the policies and procedures herein do not apply.
3. Guest speakers (paid and unpaid) must be supervised by two adults from A.R.C. while they are with children and youth. Guest speakers may not be left alone with individual children or youth or with groups of children or youth.

Child and youth volunteers

1. For nursery and toddler care, youth volunteers must be at least 12 years old with Red Cross Babysitter Training or equivalent. A record of the completed training will be kept on file in the Church Office.
2. All child and youth volunteers must be under the supervision of at least two adults, as specified in this policy under the headings **Supervision, Multiple Person Rules**.

Screening

1. The Safe Sanctuary Team will be responsible for carrying out the screening review process for both volunteer and paid applicants, as well as for contract and sub-contract employees.
2. The screening process will include the following:

- a. Reviewing completed **Volunteer Applications** (see the **Forms** section of this document).
- b. Performing the reference and background checks indicated on the volunteer application.
- c. Interviewing applicants.
- d. Making a determination for accepting or rejecting applicants and communicating acceptance or rejection to applicants.
- e. Confirming that each applicant has received a copy of A.R.C.'s Safe Sanctuary Policy and has agreed on his / her **Volunteer Application** to abide by the policy.
- f. The Safe Sanctuary Team shall maintain a list of approved children and youth workers.
- g. The Safe Sanctuary Team shall maintain a confidential Safe Sanctuary file in the Church Office for storage of applicants' Safe Sanctuary paperwork.

Safe Sanctuary Training

Training for adults working with children and youth

1. Once a person has been screened and approved to work with children / youth / adults with developmental disabilities they must attend training or complete the designated online training.
2. This church shall require training and orientation procedures for all adults who work with children and youth.
 - a. Training shall include but not be limited to the information in this policy.
 - b. No person shall, after this policy becomes effective, have any direct contact with children, youth, and / or adults with developmental disabilities until they have completed this training program.
 - d. All who have been trained will be required to fill out and sign the **Certification of Training and Compliance** before being permitted to work with children / youth. This Certification of Training and Compliance form will be kept in the Safe Sanctuary files in the Church Office.
3. Training will be led by qualified Safe Sanctuary training leaders as determined and appointed or hired by Consistory or by completing the designated on-line training.
4. The training for each adult volunteer will be required every five (5) years. Training will be offered on an as needed basis.

Training for children and youth

1. This church shall require annual training in the following safe sanctuary expectations for children and youth:
 - a. not to leave the building without adult supervision
 - b. not to go out alone
 - c. not to go into the parking lot without supervision
 - d. internet safety
 - e. not to wander the church building alone
 - f. when on field trips / off-site activities, to stay with the group
 - g. supervision rules
 - h. expectations for behavior
2. Training for children and youth will be led by qualified Safe Sanctuary training leaders as determined and appointed or hired by Consistory.

Church Building Precautions and Safeguards

All classrooms or meeting rooms must have a window in the entrance door and the glass must not be covered when used for children and youth activities OR if a room without a window in the door is being used, the door must remain open.

The entrance door to the basement must be locked.

When the building is used for overnight child / youth events, all building entrances will be locked.

When the building is used for child / youth events while other groups are not in the building, all building entrances will be locked during the event.

Supervision of Children and Youth

Multiple Person Rules

1. This church will minimize situations where there is only one adult present with a child or youth whenever possible. This includes travel in motor vehicles.

a. At least two non-related, non-cohabiting adult teachers / leaders / chaperones will be with and supervise each group of children / youth at all youth / child supervised events and activities OR when a second adult is not available, there will be a safety monitor (in addition to one adult teacher / leader / chaperone) who walks through the building and looks into each room at least twice in a one hour period. The safety monitor will not be related to or cohabiting with the supervising teacher / leader / chaperone.

b. No adult will be alone or out of sight of the group with a single child / youth unless that adult is the child's parent, guardian, relative, or other adult designated by a parent or guardian.

c. There will be two non-related and non-cohabiting adults in supervision of individual children / youth ("Two Adult Rule") or there will be one adult in supervision of two or more children / youth ("Buddy System") at organized, supervised events, and activities, and travel in motor vehicles.

d. If the above multiple person rules for supervision cannot be carried out, the church event / activity will be canceled.

2. Any one-to-one mentoring, consulting, or counseling between one child or youth and an adult shall be conducted in sight of another adult or group of children / youth. The counseling may be done at a distance from the group, but always within sight of other children / youth and / or an adult.

3. At the end of child or youth meetings / events, two non-related, non-cohabiting adults should stay until the last child / youth is picked up. If only one adult can stay, contact with the parents / guardians is essential and will limit risk for the adult and child / youth.

a. One child or youth will not be left in the building by himself / herself even if parental permission is given.

b. No child / youth is allowed to walk home in the dark or if conditions are otherwise unsafe.

4. Overnight events:

a. All co-ed overnight events for children / youth shall be chaperoned by at least one male adult and at least one female adult who are not related and non-cohabiting.

b. All overnight events for female children / youth shall be chaperoned by at least two unrelated, non-cohabiting adults.

c. All overnight events for male children / youth shall be chaperoned by at least two unrelated, non-cohabiting adults. Youth / children and adults may not share a bed. Youth or children may not share a bed with other youth or children.

Supervision for Nursery / Childcare

1. At least two non-related, non-cohabiting adults will be in the nursery OR when a second adult is not available, there will be a safety monitor (in addition to the adult in the nursery) who looks into the nursery at least three times in a one-hour period. The safety monitor will not be related to or cohabiting with the supervising adult.

2. In the nursery, when there is need to change a diaper or assist with toilet training, there will be two non-related, non-cohabiting adults present during the changing or bathroom assistance. The safety monitor could serve as the second adult during diaper changing or bathroom assistance. Alternatively, the child's parent / guardian could change a diaper or assist with toilet training.

Other supervision

1. When children and youth are at the church, but not attending an organized, supervised event or activity, parents / guardians / relatives / adults designated by parents or guardians are responsible for supervision.

Parent / Guardian Permission, Medical Authorization, and Release of Child or Youth

1. Permission and Medical Authorization forms for child / youth activities taking place at Altamont Reformed and Lynnwood Reformed Churches are in the forms section of this document, and must be completed by parents / guardians. All signed forms are valid for one year from date of signature.
2. Event specific, signed permission and medical authorization from parent / guardian is required for all children / youth for any of the following situations:
 - a. All overnights on-site or off-site.
 - b. Field trips, community service projects, and other off-site church events or activities when parents / guardians are not present.
3. During church functions, on-site or off-site, when parent / guardian is not present, the following permission to release a child / youth is required:
 - a. Parent or guardian shall provide registration information for each child / youth in Sunday School and Youth Group that includes contact information and names of who the child / youth may be released to.
 - b. If a list is not provided or someone not on the list is to pick up a child or youth, separate permission from parent / guardian shall be provided.
 - c. Separate permission from parent / guardian is required to allow a youth to leave the church building un-escorted.
4. At events with church-sponsored supervision the following is required:
 - a. Youth and child guests will be required to sign in, give parent / guardian name(s), emergency contact information, and let leaders know if there are any health / medical issues or allergies that may be affected by the event.
 - b. For drop-off events for children, parents / guardians will be required to sign in, leave an emergency contact number, let leaders know in writing if there are any health / medical issues or allergies that may be affected by the event, and let leaders know the name and phone number of people who the parents or guardians authorize to pick up their child. A parent, guardian, or authorized adult will be required to sign out children at pick up time.

Appropriate Discipline

1. Children and youth should be made aware that appropriate behavior is expected at all times and at all church events. Gentle reminders are always necessary when dealing with children and youth.
2. When those reminders don't work, then discipline needs to move to the next step. In cases where behavior has to be addressed, designated event adults should handle it. In no case is physical discipline an appropriate measure to deal with problems. A reasonable response might include a period of "time out" for the child or youth. This should be done with necessary supervision keeping safe sanctuary policies and procedures in mind.
3. Keeping parents involved is important. They need to be kept up to date on their child's behavior. For serious offenses, the appropriate response will be to send the child or youth home immediately. Parents and the leaders will help make proper arrangements.

Appropriate Physical and Emotional Boundaries

1. Physical boundaries are important in dealing with children and youth. Persons working with children and youth have to understand and respect those boundaries. Obvious boundaries change as children grow older. A young child sitting in the lap of a caregiver is appropriate, whereas an older child or youth sitting in an adult's lap would not be acceptable. Hugs and kisses from a toddler to an adult are entirely different than the same from a youth.
2. Emotional boundaries are also important. It is important for the adult to maintain appropriate boundaries in relationships with children and youth. Those working with children and youth should not step outside of those lines and allow the younger person to become too attached to them. It is important for the older person to be careful where conversations and other communication might lead and to steer clear of inappropriate talk, subjects, or behavior.

Spiritual Boundaries

As we seek to lead young people in the development of their faith story, it is essential that we guide them and do not manipulate their emotions. This is especially true at longer youth / child events. The attendees may be more tired by longer and more active days than they are accustomed to and thereby more susceptible to emotional manipulation. It is therefore necessary that, as we present the message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the opportunity to follow Jesus in a life-long journey, we present the invitation with "no-strings-attached." We must allow each person involved to make his / her own decisions without stigma, coercion, or pressure in any form. As we do this faithfully, we will see more fruitful commitments in the lives of all our participants.

Leader / Teacher / Chaperone Misconduct

It is a privilege to work with youth. Great responsibility is required. Those who violate this policy shall immediately be removed from contact with children and youth and authorities shall be notified immediately as appropriate to the situation.

Shepherding of Known Sex Offenders

1. Altamont Reformed Church believes that all human beings have worth and should be welcomed into this church. There is a responsibility to keep all people who enter the church and its properties safe from harm.

2. If there is a known sex offender attending the church, it is A.R.C.'s policy to shepherd (supervise) that person in ways that protect our children and our church family and that are kind and considerate of needs. This is also for the protection of the offender so that the risk of false accusations is minimized.
 - a. There will be two or three adults determined and appointed by the Board of Elders to shepherd (supervise) known sex offenders throughout their time in the church building and throughout the church property. At least one of those adults will remain within sight of the offender at all times.

 - b. When an offender has a need to use the restroom, s/he is expected to signal one of the appointed church members (above 2.a.), and s/he will be accompanied to the facilities.

 - c. There will be a discussion between the pastor, the offender, and the appointed church members, so that it is clear that the offender is not to wander alone through the church or its properties unsupervised.

 - d. If the above policies and procedures (2. a. b. c.) are not adhered to by an offender, the offender will be escorted off the church premises and the incident reported to the offender's parole officer and / or the police.

 - e. Sex offenders will not be hired for any paid employment positions at A.R.C.

 - f. Sex offenders will not be permitted to serve in church leadership positions.

Procedures for Responding to Possible Incidents of Abuse

There are several scenarios that could give an adult volunteer or staff member reasonable cause to suspect that a child / youth / adult with developmental disabilities has been abused. A.R.C.'s over-arching goal is to provide supportive care to both the victim and the respondent (alleged perpetrator) and to restore such persons to wholeness.

When an adult observes an adult volunteer or staff member engaging in what he / she believes is abusive behavior toward a child / youth / adult with developmental disabilities in the church building or at a church activity OR

when an adult suspects / sees obvious signs of abusive behavior by an adult volunteer or staff member toward a child / youth / adult with developmental disabilities in the church building or at a church activity OR

when a child / youth / adult with developmental disabilities discloses possible abuse by a church volunteer or staff member in the church building or at a church activity,

the following procedures should be followed:

The reporting adult

1. Intervenes to stop the behavior (if it is safe to do so), reminds the alleged offender of the Safe Sanctuary policy and, if appropriate, informs him / her that a report will be made to the church.
2. Supports and reassures the child, youth, or vulnerable adult that they are not at fault and that they are safe.
3. Immediately completes Section I of the *Child, Youth, or Adult with Development Disabilities Abuse Report* (see page 28) and notifies the parent or legal guardian of the child / youth / vulnerable adult of the incident.
4. Submits form to Pastor, Consistory Vice President, or designated member of the Safe Sanctuary Team **if the suspected abuser is an adult volunteer.**
5. Submits form to Consistory Vice President or designated member of the Safe Sanctuary Team **if the suspected abuser is a church staff member.**
6. Assists by providing additional information, as needed.

When to call law enforcement

If a church volunteer suspects that a child, youth, or vulnerable adult has been physically or sexually assaulted in the church or at a church activity, he / she should immediately call 911.

Stay with the victim to provide support and reassurance. Do not confront or pursue the alleged offender.

When law enforcement officers arrive, provide information as requested.

As soon as possible, contact the Pastor, Consistory Vice President, or other legal representative of the church.

The reporting adult should not share, either in writing or verbally, the information in the report form with any other persons to protect both the alleged victim and the person suspected of abusive behavior.

The recipient of the report

1. Takes immediate action to remove the accused abuser from contact with children, youth, and adults with developmental disabilities during the investigation of the incident.

2. Within 24 hours, discusses the content of the report with the alleged victim, as developmentally appropriate; the alleged abuser (the “respondent”); and any witnesses.
3. Completes Sections II and III of the *Child, Youth, or Vulnerable Adult Abuse Report*.
4. Submits report to Pastor or, if the respondent is a church staff member, to the Consistory VP.
5. Maintains confidentiality of all parties involved during this process.

The Pastor and / or Consistory

1. Determines the appropriate action to be taken to maintain safety for children, youth, and adults with developmental disabilities who participate in church activities.
2. Completes Section IV of the *Child, Youth, or Vulnerable Adult Abuse Report*.
3. Maintains a confidential file in the Church Office of all reports, statements, and actions.

When a child / youth / adult with developmental disabilities discloses possible abuse by his / her parent(s) or guardian(s) or by a person legally responsible for his / her care to a church volunteer or staff member OR

when a church volunteer or staff member suspects abuse by a parent / guardian / person legally responsible for the child’s / youth’s care,

the following procedures should be followed:

The reporting adult

1. Gently questions the child / youth / adult with developmental disabilities to gather as much specific information as possible about the alleged abuse or maltreatment.
2. Calls the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (1-800-342-3720), if a child or youth has obvious injuries or appears to be in danger of imminent harm at home.
3. Calls 1-844-697-3505 to report adult abuse, or contacts the Albany County Department of Social Services.
4. Immediately notifies the Pastor or his / her designee that a report has been made and for a decision about whether to call law enforcement (see box on previous page).
5. Does not contact the parent(s) or guardian(s) about the report.
6. Cooperates fully with any investigation conducted by Child Protective Services and / or law enforcement.

The Safe Sanctuary Team shall retain confirmed reports of proven incidents of abuse in a confidential file in the Church Office for future screening purposes.

Policy with respect
to physical contact within the
Altamont Reformed Church (A.R.C.) Family

The Altamont Reformed Church (A.R.C.) values the various means of expressing Christian support and affection within the life of the church family. Those means often include physical contact, such as hugs mutually given and received by consenting individuals. However, A.R.C. also recognizes the potential for physical contact to be emotionally uncomfortable and spiritually hurtful. Therefore, the A.R.C. family will adhere to the following with respect to physical contact within the community life of the congregation:

- 1. Unsolicited and / or unwanted physical contact (such as embraces or hugs), particularly between male and female persons (regardless of age), is not acceptable.*

- 2. Physical contact (such as embraces or hugs) that can be interpreted as being sexual in nature is not acceptable.*

ALTAMONT REFORMED CHURCH (ARC)
ARC Policy Regarding Vehicular Driving (revised in January, 2017)

The following applies to both staff and volunteers for all church-related activities that require vehicular driving:

1. *Vehicular and driver regulations (e.g. regarding current registration, inspection, and insurance; speed limits; not driving while under the influence; valid driver's license; etc.) will be fully adhered to in every circumstance, bearing in mind the importance of both the safety of driver/passengers as well as respect given to the law.*
2. *No vehicle will be driven by a person younger than the age of 25, with or without passengers.*
3. *No vehicle will be driven by a person with a history of suspension and/or revocation of his/her driver's license, without the explicit, prior permission of Consistory.*
4. *If the weight of a child under the age of 4 exceeds 40 pounds, the child may be restrained in an appropriate child restraint system, allowing the child to use a booster seat. Children ages 4, 5, 6 and 7 must be properly secured in an appropriate child restraint system, one for which the child meets the weight and height recommendations of the child restraint manufacturer. A child safety seat or booster seat may be used.. Children under age 4 and under 40 pounds must be secured and transported in an appropriately installed child safety restraint seat / car seat.*
5. *Every passenger and driver will use his/her own seat belt, regardless of age. No children under the age of 13 and / or under 90 lbs. will sit in a passenger seat that is equipped with an airbag. If anyone sits in the front passenger seat, the seat shall be pushed back as far a possible so that the person will be farther away from the air bag and therefore safer. In all instances the restraining devices must fit properly and be used properly.*
6. *In the case of a non-church-related activity or gathering that might precede or follow a church-related activity, the church, its staff, and its volunteers will not be responsible for that activity or gathering; the individuals, inclusive of the parents of any minors among those individuals, will assume full responsibility.*
7. *In the case of church-related activities that require driving more than 30 miles from the church, there will be at least one extra driver whenever possible in case of emergency (such as one of the drivers becoming too ill to drive safely, a passenger needing medical care away from the group's site, etc.).*
8. *In the case of an off-site, church-related activity, it is the responsibility of that activity's leader(s) to notify, both in writing and verbally, the parents of all youth involved in that activity of the following: "If anyone under the age of 25 drives self and / or others to an off-site, church-related activity, they and / or their parents assume full responsibility and liability." The activity leader is responsible for documenting all parental notifications.*
9. *Adults will adhere to the requirements in ARC's Safe Sanctuary Policy. This includes, but is not limited to, the Multiple Person Rules as stated in ARC's Safe Sanctuary Policy under the headings, "Supervision," "Multiple Person Rules," some of which is reprinted verbatim below (refer to the Policy for other Supervision rules):*

Multiple Person Rules

1. This church will minimize situations where there is only one adult present with a child or youth whenever possible. This includes travel in motor vehicles.

c. There will be two non-related and non-cohabiting adults in supervision of individual children / youth ("Two Adult Rule") or there will be one adult in supervision of two or more children / youth ("Buddy System") at organized, supervised events, and activities, and travel in motor vehicles.

Altamont Reformed Church (ARC)

DRIVER'S CONTRACT

I have read and I understand the *ARC Policy Regarding Vehicular Driving and ARC's Safe Sanctuary Policy*, and I agree to comply fully with them.

Additionally, I certify that my **own** automobile insurance policy covers all the passengers in my automobile, and that my policy's liability limits are appropriately adequate (that is, are at least at, *if not well above*, New York State's current, minimum required liability limits).

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Print name: _____

Note: This “Driver's Contract” will be signed and handed to a person identifiable as in charge of the activity for which the driver is volunteering to drive *prior* to the start of the activity OR this signed “Driver's Contract” will be on file in the Church Office prior to any activity for which the driver is volunteering to drive.

Altamont Reformed Church (ARC)

P.O. Box 671
Altamont, NY 12009

Dear Youth Ministry *Adult Volunteer*,

In August of 1999, the Consistory of Altamont Reformed Church (ARC) formally affirmed a lengthy document entitled “An Unfolding Model for ARC's Ministry to Youth and their Families.” As that document's title suggests, it attempts to detail the direction and process that ARC is attempting to pursue in our efforts at faithful and constructive youth ministry. That document included, in its “Introductory comments,” a provision for “Pastoral care and supervision of adult leaders.”

In January of 2017, ARC's Safe Sanctuary Task Force reviewed the above mentioned provision from the “Unfolding Model for ARC's Ministry to Youth and their Families,” and revised that provision as stated below:

Care and Supervision of Adult Volunteers Who Work With ARC's Youth and Children

*In recognition of the contemporary church's responsibility and need to safeguard all who are vulnerable to abuse (spiritual, emotional, and physical), particularly children, youth, and adults with developmental disabilities, the practice of requiring all who would serve as adult leaders / volunteers in ARC's ministry to children and youth to apply for that privilege to serve (specifically, adults who occasionally and regularly assist group leaders, are themselves small or large group leaders, on behalf of ARC, are drivers for child and youth events, are overnight sleepover or retreat chaperones, are chaperones for off- site community service projects and other child or youth events, etc.) will be in place. ARC's Safe Sanctuary Team will coordinate the application process. The Team will review each **Volunteer Application Form** and a member or members of that Team will share in a conversation with each applicant thereafter. Safe Sanctuary Team affirmation of each applicant's offer to serve will be required prior to the applicant's entry into the position of service.*

In the circumstance that an applicant does not receive affirmation of the Safe Sanctuary Team to serve, s/he may appeal to the Board of Elders for a confidential hearing, which will include the presence of both the applicant and a member or members of the Safe Sanctuary Team.

The Consistory requires that you fill out the **Volunteer Application Form** (as referred to above in bold print) and return it to a member of the Safe Sanctuary Team (whose names are available in the Church Office) for review followed by conversation with you.

If you have any questions about this process, you are invited to address them to the Safe Sanctuary Team or to any member of the current Consistory (whose names are frequently reprinted on the back of the worship bulletin).

Your participation in this application process is much appreciated. The time spent in filling out the application form, as inconvenient as it might seem, is simply part of a congregation-wide investment in ensuring, to the greatest extent possible, the safety and well-being of all the children, youth, and adults with developmental disabilities whom God deems fit to place in our care.

On behalf of the Consistory,

ARC's Safe Sanctuary Team

Altamont Reformed Church (ARC)
Volunteer Application Form

Name of applicant: _____ Today's date: _____

Address: _____

Former address, if you have lived at your current address less than five years:

How many years / months have you attended ARC? _____

List the name(s) and location(s) of other church(es) you have attended in the last five (5) years:

Date of birth: _____ Social Security Number: _____

Driver's License or Non-driver ID: State _____ Number _____

Phone numbers: Day _____ Evening _____ Cell _____

Email: _____

If you have worked with children or youth before, please fill in the following (attach additional page(s), if needed):

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Organization</u>	<u>Responsibilities</u>
1.		
2.		
3.		

Please describe your sense of call to be involved in ARC's child / youth / vulnerable adult ministry (attach additional page(s), if needed):

How would you like to serve (what would you like to volunteer to do) in child / youth / vulnerable adult ministries at ARC (attach additional page(s), if needed)?

References—please list at least two (2) people who are not related to you that ARC may contact:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Have you ever been convicted of a crime (including (DUI / DWI)? YES NO

If yes, please state when, where, and describe the circumstances:

**ALTAMONT REFORMED CHURCH (A.R.C.)
PERMISSION FOR A REFERENCE CHECK AND BACKGROUND SCREENING**

My signature below affirms all of the following:

I give permission to Altamont Reformed Church (A.R.C.) to contact the references I provide.

I give permission for Altamont Reformed Church to do a background check that includes a check of a Sexual Offenders Registry and/or a check of a National Criminal File and Social Security Verification and / or other appropriate government agencies as deemed necessary in order to verify my suitability as a youth worker.

I certify that the information I provided on the Volunteer Application Form is true and complete.

I understand that my application information and information that others may give about me will not be photocopied. It will not be electronically entered into the church's records. It will be used by Altamont Reformed Church only in accordance with A.R.C.'s Safe Sanctuary Policy. It will be kept confidential and secure.

I have read, understood, and I agree to adhere to A.R.C.'s Safe Sanctuary Policy.

Signature of applicant: _____ Date: _____

ALTAMONT REFORMED CHURCH
REFERENCE CHECK FORM
(to be completed by a member of the Safe Sanctuary Team,
kept confidential, and filed in the Church Office)

First and last name of Safe Sanctuary Team member completing reference

check: _____ phone number: _____

email: _____

First and last name of applicant: _____

First and last name of reference: _____ Phone

number: _____ Email address: _____

How was the reference contacted? ___ by phone ___ by email ___ other: _____

* * * * *

1. How long have you known this person, and in what capacity?

2. Have you ever observed this person interact with children? If yes, please describe.

3. How do you describe this person as a role model for children / youth?

4. Can you recommend that this person be in a position of caring for children or youth, or being in proximity to children or youth, without any concern, reservations, or hesitation?

5. Is there any additional information that you think it is important for our church to know about this person?

Altamont Reformed Church (ARC) Safe Sanctuary
CERTIFICATION OF TRAINING AND COMPLIANCE

I certify that I have a copy of Altamont Reformed Church's Safe Sanctuary Policy, that I have read it, that I have been trained about its contents, and that I will comply with its policies and procedures.

Date of Training: _____

Name of the leader of the Training: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Print first and last name: _____

Altamont Reformed Church (ARC) Child and Youth Ministries
Notification of Injury Report

Give completed form to a member of the Safe Sanctuary Team

First and last name, age, and gender of child / youth who was injured:

Address: _____ City, Zip: _____

Name of Parent: _____ Phone: _____

Date of time and accident/injury: _____

Describe in detail how the child / youth was injured, including location, names, and actions of all children and adults involved.

Describe the child's / youth's injuries and what action was taken to treat the injuries.

How and when was the parent notified?

Please list names and phone numbers of witnesses to the accident.

1. _____ 2. _____

Additional comments: _____

Your name, address, and phone number: _____

Altamont Reformed Church (ARC)
Child, Youth, or Adult with Developmental Disabilities Abuse Report

Give form with **the first section completed (Part I)** to the Pastor, Consistory Vice President, or designee.
All information in this report is to be kept confidential.

Please document the following in writing. Support from the Pastor or member(s) of the Safe Sanctuary Team is available, if needed or desired, when filling out this form.

First and last name of the adult making the report: _____

Phone number: _____

I. Incident Summary

1. The date of the observation/suspected or disclosure of abuse: _____

2. The time of the observed/suspected abuse or disclosure of abuse: _____

3. The location of the observed/suspected abuse or disclosure of abuse: _____

4. Alleged victim's first and last name: _____

5. Alleged victim's date of birth _____

6. Summary of the incident or disclosure conversation:

7. Summary of any actions taken by the adult making the report:

a. Contacted Pastor or church officer (name, date, time): _____

b. Contacted Safe Sanctuary Team Member (name, date, time): _____

c. Contacted parents/guardian of child/youth (name, date, time): _____

d. Other: _____

8. First and last name(s) of other witness(es), if any:

II. Summary of Statement by Alleged Victim (as developmentally appropriate)

1. Date and time of conversation with or statement by alleged victim: _____
2. Person who had conversation with alleged victim: _____
3. Summary of any statement made by the alleged victim:

III. Summary of Statement by Respondent

1. The first and last name of alleged abuser (respondent): _____
2. Respondent's role in church activity: _____
3. Date and time of conversation with or statement by respondent: _____
4. Person who had conversation with respondent: _____
5. Summary of any conversation with or any statement made by the respondent.

Written statement may be attached

IV. Summary of Action Taken

- No action required (no abuse occurred)
- Removed from volunteer role
- Suspended or terminated from employment by the church
- Call made to Statewide Central Register of Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR)*
- Call made to law enforcement**
- Other: _____

* Call would be made to SCR because of suspected abuse by a parent or guardian. Person making the call can request that they be informed about the progress and outcome of the investigation by Child Protective Services (CPS).

** Name of law enforcement agency: _____
Date and time of contact: _____
First and last name of officer spoken to: _____
Outcome of investigation, if any: _____

ALTAMONT AND LYNNWOOD REFORMED CHURCHES

COMBINED CHURCH YOUTH GROUP, Grades 4-12

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION FORM

Parental permission and participant information for: **Combined Church Youth Group meetings, events, activities, and transportation** (in accordance with Altamont / Lynnwood Reformed Church Driver's Contract)

Dates: **September through June of the current school year:** _____

Locations: **Altamont Reformed Church, 129 Lincoln Avenue, Altamont, NY 12009, 861-8711 and Lynnwood Reformed Church, 3714 Carman Road, Schenectady, NY 12303, 356-4327**

Today's Date _____ (this form is valid for one year from this date)

Youth Participant

Name _____ Grade _____ Birth date _____

Parent/Guardian _____ Phone _____

Emergency Contact (name) _____ Phone _____

Does participant wear contact lenses/glasses (please specify)? _____

Does the participant have orthodontia? Yes ___ No ___

Participant takes the following **Medications** (dose, frequency, reason. Attach additional pages if needed):

Please detail any **medical conditions** or **allergies** that may require special attention including dietary needs/restrictions, allergies to medication, and other allergies. _____

Physician name: _____ Physician number: _____

Preferred Hospital: _____

Use the space below to provide any additional information about the participant's behavior and physical, emotional, or mental health about which the youth leaders should be aware (attach additional pages as necessary).

Altamont and Lynnwood Reformed Churches Youth Ministries

Permission Slip for Participation in the Combined Church Youth Group

I give my permission for my child's participation in the Altamont Reformed Church (A.R.C.) and Lynnwood Reformed Church (L.R.C.)-sponsored Combined Church Youth Group meetings, events, and activities taking place at A.R.C. and at L.R.C. during the school year. I also give permission for my child's transportation according to Altamont / Lynnwood Reformed Church(es) **Policy Regarding Vehicular Driving**.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

In the event of illness or accident, I understand that adults in charge will make every effort to contact me or the emergency contacts I have provided. In the event that I or the emergency contacts cannot be reached, I authorize any of the A.R.C. or L.R.C. adult volunteers, leaders, drivers, or paid staff to **seek appropriate medical treatment or attention** on behalf of my child as may be required by the circumstances including, but not limited to, **medical doctor and/or hospital visits and arrangements for appropriate transportation for medical care**.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

I understand that only **safe, responsible, and respectful behavior** will be permitted. If there is a concern with my child, leaders may call me for early pick-up of my child.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

The following adults, in addition to myself, have my permission to pick up my child following Combined Youth Group meetings, events, and activities:

- | | <u>Name</u> | <u>Phone number</u> |
|----|-------------|---------------------|
| 1. | _____ | _____ |
| 2. | _____ | _____ |
| 3. | _____ | _____ |
| 4. | _____ | _____ |
| 5. | _____ | _____ |

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Note:

1. Parents/Guardians are required to notify leaders / chaperones in writing if a person other than those listed above on this Permission Slip will be picking up their youth from an event or activity.
2. Parents / Guardians are responsible for revising and updating the youth participant Information Sheet and Permission Slip as needed throughout the school year.

**Altamont and Lynnwood Reformed Churches Youth Ministries
Parental / Guardian Field Trip / Event Permission Form**

I _____ give permission for _____
(Name of Parent/Legal Guardian) (Name of student)

to attend the following trip: _____
(name, address, and phone number of trip destination)

on _____ from _____ until _____.
(date of trip) (start time of trip) (end time of trip)

Trip Itinerary / Schedule:

Transportation and Pick-up:

_____ Students will meet at Lynnwood Reformed Church and travel from there to the field trip destination.

Parent: please specify where you would like your child dropped off at the end of the trip:

___ LRC or ___ ARC where child will be picked up by: _____
(name and phone number)

or ___ Address: _____

_____ Students will meet at Altamont Reformed Church and travel from there to the field trip destination.

Parent: please specify where you would like your child dropped off at the end of the trip:

___ LRC or ___ ARC where child will be picked up by: _____
(name and phone number)

or ___ Address: _____

_____ Parents are responsible for drop off and pick up of students at the trip destination and at the times specified above.

I understand that in the event of illness or accident, the leaders will make every effort to reach me, but in the event emergency treatment is necessary, I give the trip leaders/chaperones/drivers the right to transport and authorize medical treatment on behalf of my child.

My child's physician and preferred hospital information is on file and up to date at ARC/LRC, if not, my child's physician is:

(physician's name, address, phone number)

My preferred hospital is: _____

Two emergency contacts are: _____

(Full names and telephone numbers of the emergency contacts)

___ Attached is a list of any health/medical issues that may be affected by this trip.

I _____ (Parent/Legal Guardian) hereby covenant and agree to release and hold harmless Altamont and Lynnwood Reformed Churches from and against any and all liability, loss damages, claims, or actions (including costs and attorney fees) for bodily injury and/or property damage, to the extent permissible by law, arising out of participation in the above listed field trip.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Altamont Reformed Church Child and Youth Ministries
Sunday School Participant Information Form

Parental permission and participant information for: **Sunday School**

Dates: **September through June of the current school year:** _____

Location: **Altamont Reformed Church, 129 Lincoln Avenue, Altamont, NY 12009, 861-8711**

Today's Date _____ (this form is valid for one year from this date)

Child/Youth Participant

Name _____ Grade _____ Birth date _____

Parent/Guardian _____ Phone _____

Emergency Contact (name) _____ Phone _____

Does participant wear contact lenses/glasses (please specify)? _____

Does the participant have orthodontia? Yes _____ No _____

Participant takes the following **Medications** (dose, frequency, reason. Attach additional pages if needed): _____

Please detail any **medical conditions** or **allergies** that may require special attention including dietary needs/restrictions, allergies to medication, and other allergies. _____

Physician name: _____ Physician phone number: _____

Physician's address: _____

Preferred Hospital: _____

Use the space below to provide any additional information about the participant's behavior and physical, emotional, or mental health about which the youth leaders should be aware (attach additional pages as necessary).

Altamont Reformed Church Child and Youth Ministries
Permission Slip for Participation in Sunday School

I give my permission for my child's participation in the Altamont Reformed Church (A.R.C.) Sunday School.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

In the event of illness or accident, I understand that adults in charge will make every effort to contact me or the emergency contact I have provided. In the event that I or the emergency contact cannot be reached, I authorize any of the A.R.C. adult volunteers, leaders, or paid staff to **seek appropriate medical treatment or attention** on behalf of my child as may be required by the circumstances including, but not limited to, **medical doctor and/or hospital visits and arrangements for appropriate transportation for medical care.**

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

I understand that only **safe, responsible, and respectful behavior** will be permitted. If there is a concern with my child, leaders may call me for early pick-up of my child.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

The following adults, in addition to myself, have my permission to pick up my child following Sunday School Classes:

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Phone number</u>
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Note:

1. Parents / Guardians are required to notify teachers in writing if a person other than those listed above on this **Permission Slip** will be picking up their child/youth from Sunday School.
2. Parents / Guardians are responsible for revising the youth participant **Information Sheet and Permission Slip** as needed throughout the school year.

Altamont Reformed Church Children's Ministries
Nursery Registration Form *Welcome!*

Child's name: _____ Nickname: _____

Birth date: _____ Today's date: _____

Significant Others

Mother: _____ Father: _____

Cell number(s): _____

Siblings' names & ages _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone(s) _____

Emergency contact (other than parent) name, address, phone number: _____

Other safe adults who I can go home with (include phone numbers with each name):

My favorite things

Snacks

Blanket: _____

Are OK: _____

Pacifier: _____

Do not give: _____

Toy: _____

Food Allergies: _____

Game/Song: _____

Other: _____

In diaper bag: _____

Allergies/Medications/Other medical concerns: _____

When I'm sleepy: _____

When I'm crying: _____

Other information: _____

Note: Parents/Guardians are responsible for updating this form as needed.

ARC Communications Policy and Procedures

(Original policy affirmed by Consistory on 4/17/13, the following revised policy affirmed in January, 2017)

The following applies to church staff, members, and adherents when communicating with the public via news outlets and social media:

News Releases

1. Church committees and leaders may write draft announcements about activities that may be of interest to the public. If an individual is named or quoted, the author of the announcement must notify the individual and secure approval for use of his/her name or quote in writing (via e-mail is acceptable).
2. The writer of the announcement is encouraged to have others review the document, especially if there is any uncertainty about the accuracy of the information.
3. The news release is sent to the Altamont Reformed Church (ARC) Media Liaison, who will edit the material, if necessary, and recommend the appropriate media outlet for the release.
4. The draft of the release must be submitted to the pastor* for final approval before it is sent to the media.
5. The pastor* will be the church spokesperson for media interviews.

Photographs and Video

1. If photographs/video are used with news releases, posted on the ARC website, or published in the *ARC Lite*, subjects of the photographs/video must have signed a written Photo and Video Release Form (see reverse side). Photo and Video Release Forms will be kept on file in the church office.
2. The individual planning to use the photo/video (e.g. news release author, ARC Website Manager, *ARC Lite* editor) must either obtain the signed Photo and Video Release Form or confirm that a signed Form is on file.
3. Photos/video will be removed from the website upon the request of the photo subject.
4. Names will not be used with photos/video of children under age 18.
5. It is *not* necessary to obtain Photo and Video Release Forms when photographs are posted on bulletin boards in the church building or shown in a slide show or video as part of an ARC activity.

Website

1. Materials may be submitted to the Website Manager for posting on the site. Generally items that have been submitted to the *ARC Lite* or the church bulletin may also be posted on the website and do not have to be submitted separately.
2. The Website Manager will edit items that are submitted exclusively for the website, format them, and return them to the authors for review and approval.
3. The pastor* must approve all website postings before they go “live.”
4. The pastor* or his/her designee will review the entire site at least quarterly for outdated information, broken links, etc.

Social Media

1. Church leaders, members, and adherents may set up social media outlets (such as Facebook pages) to communicate with group members.
2. If the social media site is identified with ARC, the pastor* must be notified and given a URL address where church staff can periodically review the site.
3. On sites identified with ARC, individuals are advised that they must express themselves in a way that honors the church and the Lord Jesus Christ, whom we serve. If inappropriate language or information is posted, the pastor* will ask that it be removed.

***or the vice president of the Consistory, in the absence of the pastor** Communications Team / ARC Communications Policy and Procedures – March 2013

Safe Sanctuary Task Force, / Revisions - January, 2017

Photo and Video Release Form

Altamont Reformed Church, PO Box 671, Altamont, NY 12009

Permission to Use Photographs and Video

I grant to Altamont Reformed Church the right to take photographs and videos of me in connection with church-sponsored events and activities*. I authorize Altamont Reformed Church to copyright, use and publish the same in print and/or electronically.

I agree that Altamont Reformed Church may use such photographs and video of me with or without my name and for any lawful purpose, including, for example, such purposes as publicity, illustration, advertising, and Web content.

Please note: Minors (under 18 years of age at the time the photo/video is taken) will *never* be identified by name.

I have read, understand, and agree to the above:

Printed Name _____

Address _____

Date _____

Signature _____

(Parent or guardian if subject of photo/video is under age 18)

*If permission is given for one activity:

Event _____

Location _____ Time _____

Updated 2/13/20 by B. Sargent per changes approved by Consistory on 11/14/19.