

**1. Title:** Incident Reporting

**2. Purpose:** To clarify individual responsibility on the part of anyone observing questionable circumstances to report said observation in order to provide maximum child protection.

**3. Policy:**

3.1 In order to maintain an environment free of destructive acts toward children and youth, the paid staff, teachers, leaders and volunteers must be aware of their individual responsibility to report any questionable circumstances, observation, act, omission, or situation thought to be in violation of this policy.

3.2 All questions or concerns of any suspected abusive behavior or harassment shall be directed to the Senior Pastor, the Director of Christian Education and/or the Associate Pastor.

3.2.1 Notwithstanding the provisions of Part 3.2 above, however, in any case where improper conduct may have been engaged in by a pastor, or the Director of Christian Education, the person who is aware of the issue may, and is encouraged and expected to, bypass the normal order of reporting the incident and report it instead to the Chairperson of the Discipleship Committee, the Chairperson of the Administration Committee, or the Clerk of the Session for appropriate action.

3.3 The person reporting actions in defiance of the Church's Child Protection Policy will be asked to complete a Suspected Abuse Report Form. (On file in the Forms Notebook in the FPCC Office and on the FPCC Web Page. Incident Report form – F-100601)

3.4 As required by Texas law, all valid reports of abuse must be reported within 48 hours to the appropriate child protection or law enforcement authorities.

3.5 The Church's legal representative shall also be notified.

**4. Definitions:**

*Children and Youth* - Individuals between the ages of birth to 18 years

**5. Applicability:**

5.1 The Senior Pastor, the Director of Christian Education and/or the Associate Pastor, or appointed spokesperson will be solely responsible for all communications on behalf of the Church.

5.2 The Senior Pastor, the Director of Christian Education and/or the Associate Pastor, or appointed spokesperson will report the incident to Children's Protective Services if applicable.

**6. Procedures:** The following are the steps to take in the event of a violation of this Policy. These steps should be thoroughly covered in volunteer training.

6.1 Personally secure the safety of children and youth.

6.2 Report the incident immediately to the Senior Pastor or the Director of Christian Education and/or the Associate Pastor, or to an appropriate alternate as explained in 10.06 (3.2.1)

6.3 Do not leave children or youth unsupervised while reporting the incident.

6.4 Do not personally confront the alleged or accused violator of the Policy.

6.5 Assisted by a Pastor, or by an appropriate alternate as explained in 10.06 (3.2.1), report the incident to parents or guardians of the children or youth.

6.6 Complete and submit F-100601 to the Senior Pastor within 24 hours. A fillable and printable F-100601 can be found on the FPCC Web Page.

6.7 The Senior Pastor shall report the incident to the appropriate government authorities within 48 hours from the time of the incident's occurrence.

**7. Review Schedule:**

The Discipleship Committee Chairman shall review this OPS every three years on the anniversary of the effective date and make any needed revisions for Session's approval.

**8. Approval:**

The Session approved this OPS on the above effective date.

