

# LEADING WITH CARE & Other PCC POLICIES

*Understanding our Church Policies*

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CANADA**

**The Presbytery of Hamilton**

**Morning Workshop on April 29, 2023**

**with Marilyn Repchuck and Team**

**The Congregational Life and Policies Committee**

**Please view the video at the link below on the importance of policies in the church.**

**The video is not specific to the PCC, but speaks generally to the value of good policy and proper training of all involved in ministry for ensuring the safety of all.**

**The slides following address the specifics of the Leading With Care policy of the Presbyterian Church in Canada.**

**[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9\\_IrzPR0pbs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_IrzPR0pbs)**

Leading with Care is available at this link:

**[https://presbyterian.ca/wp-content/uploads/lwc\\_leading\\_with\\_care\\_policy-1.pdf](https://presbyterian.ca/wp-content/uploads/lwc_leading_with_care_policy-1.pdf)**

## ***LEADING WITH CARE... “Statement”***

Policy and Procedures includes all persons, and in particular all children, youth and vulnerable adults, who participate in the denomination's programs, ministries and/or use the denomination's facilities, will be cared for with Christian compassion and will be safe.

### **Policy and Procedures for Addressing Harassment in the Church**

### **Policy for Dealing with Allegations of Racial Harassment**

### **Policy for Dealing with Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment**

**Who is responsible for implementing and overseeing the Leading with Care process?**

**THE SESSION should name a Committee or an Individual Human Resources Committee representative  
(convenor for the Leading with Care Committee & Staff)**

**Christian Education representative  
(on behalf of teachers and spiritual leadership)**

**Clerk of Session  
(on behalf of the Session and Pastoral Care visitors)**

**Property committee representative  
(for safety in church buildings, the grounds and security)**

**Office Administrator  
(safe record keeping)**

**Ministers & Elders & Church Workers  
(The Ministers and Elders will set an example for the rest of the congregation by actively supporting the implementation of the policy)**

In most congregations the following positions require police record checks.

- **Clergy:** *ALL MINISTERS SUBMIT THEIR POLICE RECORD CHECKS TO THE LEADING WITH CARE COMMITTEE CONVENER FOR THE PRESBYTERY OF HAMILTON EVERY FIVE YEARS.*
- **Volunteers and Paid Staff**
- **Elders & Deacons**
- **Adult Church School teachers**
- **Nursery Coordinators/Leaders** (there must be one screened adult in the nursery at all times.)
- **Pastoral Care Visitors** (at least one person in a team of two)
- **Youth Group Leaders** (at least one screened adult must be present at each youth event, and all adult leaders on overnight retreats must have PRC's)

**The *Leading with Care* Covenant of Care (this form is in the PCC *Leading with Care Policy*)**

***<https://presbyterian.ca/resources/resources-od/safety-policies/>***

*Signed by those who are impacted by the Policy... (and the Clerk of Session)*

**I promise, in all my relationships with children/youth/vulnerable adults, to conduct myself in a way that brings honour to Christ and shows respect for all of God's people; and to follow appropriate action as defined by my training and orientation through the Leading with Care Policy for our denomination.**

## UNDERSTANDING THE RISKS INVOLVED

Church ministries have *different levels of risk* attached to them, depending on several factors:

- **the participants**

*Are there any children involved?*

- **the setting**

*Indoor/ outdoor; which area of the church?*

- **the activity itself is scheduled**

*Involving people who have authority and making decisions*

- **the supervision provided**

*Developing a close relationship with those involved*

- **the nature of the relationship between participant (volunteer) and leader**

*Recruit volunteers based on a job description and skills needed*

**UPDATE information regarding *Leading with Care* and the Property Team at your church:**

- 1. During Sunday Services have a person to patrol the exits in case of emergencies.**
- 2. Patrol monitors should be trained with vital contact information in case of an emergency.**
- 3. A list of emergency phone numbers including staff and the property team should be kept in the vestibule and by a church phone.**
- 4. A hard-wired alarm system should be installed.**
- 5. Video surveillance is now popular for church safety, break-ins, rentals and special events.**
- 6. WiFi – For security you will want to get both public and private WiFi for your church. Public WiFi is not secure, so private is essential for the office, security systems and childcare details.**
- 7. Conduct a risk assessment–Have a plan for safety measures in potential threats and weaknesses.**
- 8. Check your church insurance policy to ensure that you are covered under the PCC's policies.**



## **CHURCH RENTAL INFORMATION AND INSURANCE**

In considering whether or not renters require additional liability insurance, you should consider:

- **Any rental of the church** – whether by a member for private use or an outside party – it is already covered by the church insurance.
- It is recommended that parties renting your church facilities share a copy of their own liability insurance so that they can transfer the liability of the claim(s) to the other insurance. **It is not a requirement but is a recommendation** that any non-member obtain this additional liability insurance.
- **Church Sanctioned Events do not require additional insurance** – even if it is a baby shower, birthday, etc., as long as it is a church sanctioned ministry/event.
- **It is up to each church to decide when and where they are willing to assume the risk/liability if something did happen resulting in an insurance claim that effects a claim history causing higher premiums and higher deductibles.**
- **A Leading with Care Committee/ individual needs to find the balance between protecting the church and serving (accepting responsibility for) the community.**

**The LEADING WITH CARE TEAM (or an individual) has the responsibility of ensuring people are not exposed to RISKS, unnecessary hazards and dangers. As well, the handling of cash and finances as to prevent theft. Two people needed for counting and banking.**

**STAFF and ministry leads are charged with the diligent enforcement of these policies. Violation of these policies is grounds for immediate dismissal, disciplinary action, or re-assignment from children's work at the discretion of the church.**

**The ministry team must keep this priority in mind: ministry team members do not have a right to serve in the ministry. They merely have an opportunity to serve when selected by the church. This means that the ministry team should err on the side of caution as they make subjective decisions involving the well-being of children. Volunteer orientation is very important.**

## **Information for Church School teachers/leaders**

**A minimum of two workers/teachers are present for supervision.**

**COVID Precautions: A child or ministry member who is ill and could therefore expose other children and members of the ministry team to illness**

**A first aid kit must be kept on hand and all ministry team members are to review the location and contents regularly.**

**If preschool or children with special needs, need assistance in the washroom, a ministry team member may enter the washroom cubicle to assist only under the following guidelines: 1) A second ministry team member must be within visual contact. Classroom doors should have windows.**

**Any personal information about other individuals you receive as part of the children's ministry team, must be protected.**

**Be mindful of giving out private/confidential information that should not be seen or published in the public domain.**

**To get in touch with children: No texting on cell phones; phone parents on a landline or cell phone.**

## **More Information for Church School teachers/leaders**

**Disciplining to inflict pain is a form of corporal punishment. Hitting, slapping, spanking, shaking, squeezing, or any other activity which could be considered physically abusive, either individually or as a group, is not permitted. On the other hand, physical affection should be appropriate to the age of the child. Touching should be initiated by the child.**

**It is each person's legal responsibility to report any suspicions of child abuse encountered. Confidentiality for suspected abuse and persons involved must be protected. Response and reporting of such cases must adhere to policies held by the Director of Children's Ministry.**

**When planning local special events, it is preferred that parents drop off and pick up their children at the event location. For out of town events and all camp off-site events, it is preferred that a commercial carrier be employed. Permission from parents must be given for workers to drive children.**

**Any photographs and videos of the children may not be distributed, publicly displayed, or posted on the Internet without proper consent of the ministry staff and the parents of the child(ren).**

# **THE PRESBYTERY OF HAMILTON'S LEADING WITH CARE COMMITTEE**

We will *no longer require* each congregation to send in a yearly *Leading with Care* assessment report and update.

**In 2022 you handed in your up to date LWC Reports:**

**“We reported complete implementation of the Leading with Care Policy in 2019 and have no changes to report this year.”  
Answer was YES or NO.**

**In 2024 (every 2 years) your congregation will require to update The Presbytery of Hamilton and report how you are doing with LWC to our Committee.**

**In the odd years (2023) we will hold a Leading with Care information Session for The Presbytery of Hamilton.**

**It is the responsibility of each congregation to take the necessary steps and to implement and oversee the *Leading with Care* Policy for The Presbyterian Church in Canada in your church and to do it in the best way possible.**

**This video is a discussion with a lawyer about why churches need policies and procedures in place about a number of topics to ensure consistency, and to protect everyone involved, including the church itself and its leadership. Another American example, but useful in terms of understanding the why and how of policy and procedure.**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z6Kz57SN07Y>

The following slides will look at policies and procedures beyond Leading With Care.

# Policy and Procedures for Addressing Harassment in the Church

The policy of The Presbyterian Church in Canada is that harassment of any kind shall not be tolerated and will be addressed.

The video at the link below addresses issues of harassment in the workplace.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rrEFZPHACms>

Policies of the PCC regarding safety in the church may be found at the link below:

<https://presbyterian.ca/resources/resources-od/safety-policies/>

## **Policy for Dealing with Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment**

**It is the policy of The Presbyterian Church in Canada that sexual abuse or sexual harassment of any kind by church leaders, staff or volunteers will not be tolerated. All complaints will be taken seriously, and handled according to the terms of this policy.**



## **Policy for Dealing with Allegations of Racial Harassment**

**Inclusion in the body of Christ transcends every race and culture and is visibly demonstrated by full acceptance and inclusion of all people, regardless of race or culture. All allegations of racial harassment will be taken seriously.**

**The video linked below from the United Church of Canada addresses issues of white privilege in the church and the dismantling of racism as we strive to be more Christ-like in our treatment of one another:**

**[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=elbpDfdZZ\\_4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=elbpDfdZZ_4)**



The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Learn more about the policies of  
the Presbyterian Church in  
Canada and our responsibilities  
at the link below

<https://presbyterian.ca/resources/resources-od/safety-policies/>