

SUMC FACT SHEET ABOUT SAFE SANCTUARIES

PURPOSE

All persons are responsible to make sure Scotia United Methodist Church is a safe environment for children, youth and vulnerable adults. Minimum Standards have been established by the Upper New York Annual Conference to safeguard children, youth, and vulnerable adults from abuse and exploitation.

**Vulnerable adults are defined as someone aged 18 and over; who due to age, illness or a mental or physical condition, is less able to take care of himself/herself, or less able to protect himself/herself against harm.*

EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

All employees and volunteers who choose to regularly work with children or vulnerable adults must agree to: a background check, safe sanctuaries training, and review of and adherence to the SUMC Safe Sanctuaries Policy.

Adults convicted of child abuse or named as the perpetrator in a founded or indicated child abuse report through a designated state or county agency, or who are under investigation for, or who have charges pending for child abuse, shall not be accepted as paid employees or volunteers to have direct access to children, youth, or vulnerable adults in any church-sponsored activity or setting.

KEY POLICY REQUIREMENTS

- Two persons, preferably 18 years or older, must be present during Sunday School or any youth activity. It is acceptable for a teen to accompany an adult with younger aged children as long as there is another adult nearby.
- All children and youth activities must occur in full view with an open door or window in a closed door.
- Children and youth are to be supervised at all times while on church property. A parent or appointed guardian is responsible for the whereabouts of their child(ren) and/or youth at all times.
- If any person observes something they feel is in violation of the policy or suspicious, they are to report their concerns immediately to the Safe Sanctuaries Coordinator (Deb Elliott) or Pastor Chris.