

Lord of Love Lutheran Church, 10405 Fort St., Omaha, NE 68134

Introduction: Purpose Statement

The purpose of this manual is to provide everyone at Lord of Love a single resource for basic safety information. Safety considerations should be included in the design of all worship, learning, and serving experiences so participants of all ages thrive.

In the event of an emergency, leaders have seconds to respond. It is important to have trained leaders and an informed congregation who together have practiced drills before an emergency occurs.

All leaders are expected to follow this guide and to share the relevant information with participants. Leaders may also require compliance with additional laws, regulations, and practices, depending on the activity, and it is the leader's responsibility to discover and communicate any additional safety procedures. This is especially important when partnering with outside organizations.

Disregarding the practices and procedures in this manual could result in serious consequences, including criminal and civil legal action.

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Chapter 1: Insurance requirements & community laws

- A. Insurance requirements
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A. Insurance Requirements

As people of faith, we want to do everything we reasonably and legally can to protect the members of our church and the community we serve. To protect the church from financial loss, we have property and liability insurance.

B. Public Assembly

Community events open to the public are subject to local laws governing assembly. Program and event planners should know what these laws are at the planning stage to prevent a problem. Liability insurance for a special event may be needed, or required, particularly if it is done on public property. Some of the most common areas of public concern are:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Location● crowd size● Parking● Permits | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Activity● Alcohol● Pets● Fundraising Restrictions |
|---|--|

Information regarding community events may be found on the city website or by going to city hall. - See: https://library.municode.com/ne/omaha/codes/code_of_ordinances

All church members and visitors are expected to adhere to all safety practices and procedures as instructed.

Any type of accident, injury, or abuse should be reported to the program leader or pastor as soon as possible.

No one is authorized to carry a firearm within the church building.

Chapter 2: Building Safety

- A. Floorplans-includes exits, secure hiding places, posted signs
- B. Natural risks-includes tornado, fire, flood, toxic fumes, earthquake.
- C. Bomb threats-identify exits and gathering place
- D. Active Threat/ Shooter-includes lock down procedure, outside threat, inside threat
- E. Church equipment and technology
- F. Security systems and personnel-includes door & firearm position

G. Outside organizations who use the church building

A. Floorplans - includes exits, secure gathering places, posted signs

All leaders should walk through the church building to become familiar with exits, first aid kits, fire extinguishers, and other safety equipment locations. A detailed site floorplan can be found near the end of this document, and as a separate download, see chapter 10.

The floorplan labels:

- all exits, secure gathering places, and posted signs
- evacuation route and outside meeting spot
- breaker boxes and water shut-off valve locations

For larger group activities, leaders should maintain an attendance list to account for children and adults in case of an emergency.

Emergency Action Plans are to be reviewed at least once a year so everyone is informed and prepared to respond to an emergency. See chapter 9 for more information on conducting safety drills.

B. Natural Risks-include tornado, wind, fire, flood, toxic fumes, earthquake

1. Fire

In the event of any fire, sound the fire alarm and move everyone immediately out and away from the building. People are to gather in the lower west parking lot away from the building. Children should only leave the church grounds with their parents/guardians.

2. Tornado

In the event of a tornado or high winds, loudly communicate “Tornado”, and move to designated safe rooms and spaces. Avoid being near any exterior windows. Sit against the wall prepared to cover your head. Check for severe weather alerts. Remain in the safe room or area until the all-clear is given.

3. Heavy Rain

Extremely heavy rain can result in unsafe travel on various roadways in the area of the church building. In the event of forecast heavy and continued rain, canceling of certain programs and activities will be considered. Notification of cancellation will be made via normal communication channels as soon as possible, generally at least 2 hours before the planned event.

In the event of a flash flood in the area, building users are to stay within the building when at all possible. Consult with local sources and only use designated routes when leaving the building.

Children should only leave the church building with their parents/guardians.

4. Toxic fumes & chemical spills

If the toxic fumes are coming from inside the building, loudly communicate “evacuate”, and move to the west parking area up wind from the toxic fumes and as far away from the building as possible. If necessary move to an area farther west or south of the church building.

Evacuate everyone first and then call 911 to report the issue. Do not re-enter the building until it has been inspected and an “all-clear” is given.

If the toxic fumes are coming from an outside source, keep all building doors and windows closed until an appropriate, specific building and area evacuation plan has been identified.

Children should only leave the church building or grounds with their parents/guardians.

5. Earthquake

Stay calm and move away from overhead fixtures, windows, filing cabinets, and electrical power. If earthquake is severe and lasts more than a few seconds, loudly communicate, “evacuate”, and move people outside to the lower west parking lot away from the building and any power lines.

C. Bomb Threat

If there is a bomb/explosive threat, loudly communicate, “bomb threat - evacuate”, and evacuate the building to the lower west parking area as far away from the building as possible.

Evacuate everyone first and call 911 from the outside location. Do not re-enter the building until law enforcement has given the “all-clear.”

D. Active Threat/Shooter: Lock-down

In a lockdown, all entrances are locked to prevent anyone from entering the building without permission or authorization. Entrances must be monitored from the inside to prevent people from leaving the building. The intent is to isolate people from an active threat. Active threats include armed intruders, someone running from the police, a vicious animal, or a hazardous material spill.

a. External threat

In an external threat, the goal is to prevent the threat from entering the building.

1. Loudly communicate “Lockdown Procedure”.
2. Designated personnel should quickly lock all exterior doors and windows.
3. People outside should retreat to either Walgreens at 108th and Maple or the Kwik Shop at 103rd and Fort.
4. When practical, leaders should take roll call.
5. When potential for real violence exists, children should be moved away from all windows and doors, and windows should be covered.
6. Ensure no one leaves the building without authorization until the all-clear or alternate instructions are issued.

b. Internal threat

1. Loudly communicate "Lock Down Procedure".
2. Designated personnel lock all doors and windows.
3. Seclude children in any available area that can be closed or locked.
4. It is essential not to be seen or heard, create obstacles by locking doors, covering windows, and staying out of sight. Use cell text messages to communicate.
5. Ensure no one leaves seclusion until rescuers come and can identify themselves with credentials, or until further instructions.
6. When dealing with an active shooter there are only seconds to respond.
Adults need to remember:
 1. Run
 2. Hide
 3. Fight

E. Church equipment and technology

Only authorized personnel are to use computers, sound systems, musical instruments or any other church-owned equipment. Please get permission or ask for assistance to use any church-owned equipment for your program or event.

F. Security systems and personnel - includes door & fire alarm position

The door is to remain locked unless open to the public for worship, classes and events. A doorbell is available for individuals to use during regular business hours if the door is locked. Individuals or small groups in the building alone should lock the door. No one is expected to open the door for a stranger when alone in the building, or if there is a perceived threat.

The alarm system will automatically arm about 10:30PM each night. If an event ends after 10:30PM and the system has been disarmed, the last person leaving the building should re-arm the system before leaving.

To disarm the system: When armed, the system will beep when doors are opened or motion detectors are activated. You have 20 seconds to disarm the system. Go to a security keypad, enter your assigned security code. The system will do 3 quick beeps to indicate the system is disarmed.

To re-arm the system: Go to a security keypad, enter your assigned security code, and push the "away" button. The system will begin to beep indicating you have 20 seconds to leave the building.

When the alarm sounds due to failure to disarm the system within the allowed time: Disarm the system (see above). Go to a phone extension and answer the call from the security company. Explain who you are and what has occurred.

If the alarm sounds due to detection of smoke or fire: Loudly communicate “evacuate”, and quickly move people out through the emergency exits. Instruct them to gather in the lower west parking area away from the building. Police and Fire will be called by the Security company. Await their arrival and instructions. Do not re-enter the building until the all-clear has been issued by the appropriate authorities.

The church has external video cameras that record all outside activity. In the event of some sort of disturbance, vandalism, or theft, contact the office and have video footage made available to the appropriate authorities. Not all parking areas are covered by the existing video cameras.

G. Outside organizations who use the church building

The church is responsible for providing a safe place for outside groups. A ‘certificate of insurance’ from an organization may be required as evidence of their own coverage for certain special events. When outside groups use the building:

1. The doors must be locked by the last person leaving.
2. A detailed site map; clearly marked exits; and safety equipment are to be provided to assist outside groups in the event of an emergency.
3. Outside organizations should not use computers, sound systems, musical instruments, kitchen supplies, or any other equipment unless authorized. Please obtain permission or ask for assistance to use any equipment for your program or event.

Chapter 3: First aid supplies & equipment

- A. First Aid Kits
- B. Defibrillator (AED)
- C. Wheelchair
- D. Fire Extinguishers

A. First Aid Kits

Narthex Information Center Area

Fellowship Hall outside of kitchen

In the event of a medical emergency, dial 911; administer CPR if needed; and make sure the front door is unlocked for EMS workers.

B. Defibrillator (AED)

Zoll Defibrillator is located on the right side of ***narthex in the information center.***

Instructions for using the defibrillator are located inside the unit.

The unit is checked monthly.

C. Wheelchair

A wheelchair can be found by the ***coat rack by the Fellowship Hall.*** Please return it

to this location after use.

D. Fire extinguishers

are located throughout the building. ***Refer to the floorplan*** for locations.

These are checked by a certified company (General Fire and Safety Company) annually.

Chapter 4: General practices for employees and volunteers

- A. Overview of screening, background and reference checks
- B. Supervision of infant, children, and youth ministry
- C. Discipline
- D. Injuries or Illness
- E. Reporting injury, abuse, or molestation
- F. Internal Investigations
- G. Dealing with law enforcement and the media
- H. Annual employee/volunteer worker review

A. Overview of screening, background and reference checks

To provide a safe and secure environment at Lord of Love, and to minimize the vulnerability of volunteer and paid employee workers to unwarranted accusation, the following procedures have been adopted for all groups.

Screening application for covered employees and volunteers

Covered Volunteers: Volunteers covered by the screening procedure described below are those who due to their appointment to a volunteer position are expected to have either (a) regular, primary contact with minors or (b) have access or the appearance of private access to minors. Examples of these positions include children's and student ministries, and any overnight chaperones. Exclusions include occasional or substitute volunteers working under the immediate supervision of a covered volunteer or employee.

Covered Employees: All employees are presumed to be in regular, primary contact with minors and are therefore subject to the screening procedures outlined in this document.

Covered volunteer and employee screening procedures:

1. Prior to consideration for a position, an applicant who may be working with children or youth will complete and return an application authorizing a background check and contact of all references provided.
2. If the person's qualifications are appropriate for ministry work, then references and other information provided by the applicant will be checked to confirm the accuracy of the information.

3. Criminal background checks will be performed by Lord of Love through One Source with respect to any applicant seeking a covered employee or volunteer position. The cost of this screening is paid for by Lord of Love. The screening should be redone every 3 years.
4. Any information indicating that an applicant poses a threat to others or has a prior history of physical, sexual, mental or physical abuse, molestation or harassment directed against another person will result in the removal of the individual applicant from consideration for a volunteer or employee position with Lord of Love.
5. A volunteer must have been a member or at least associated with Lord of Love activities for six months before they are allowed to work in the children's ministry.

B. Supervision

1. At least two adults will be present in the building at every ministry event including worship, education, and service. At least two adults will be present at every outside ministry event including worship, service, and mission trips.
Additional adults are needed based on the age of the participants:
 - Infants-minimum of two adults in the room and one additional adult for every additional 2 infants.
 - Children age 2-10-minimum of two adults in the room and one additional adult for every 4 children.
 - Youth age 11-16-minimum of two adults in the room and one additional adult for every 8 youth.
 - Adult programs may include childcare and there should always be two caregivers with the children.
2. The best practice is that no classroom or other enclosed area will have its door closed when an adult is alone with a youth. However, given our church space, if privacy is requested by the youth, they may meet in a room with a window that gives a clear view to others of the meeting space, and the door is never to be locked when such a meeting occurs.
3. Covered employees or volunteers will arrive at least 15 minutes in advance before a scheduled activity and will keep watch over those in their care until all have been picked up by parents, guardians, or persons specifically authorized to pick up the child.
4. All minors who need to use the bathroom will be escorted in a developmentally age appropriate manner.
5. Minors should be assisted as needed in the restroom. If the employee or volunteer is alone with a minor, the bathroom door must be propped open.
6. Covered employees and volunteers must never touch a person's private areas except when unavoidable, as in the case of changing a diaper.

7. Adults/chaperones must be present in the same ratios as for onsite events. Adults/chaperones for youth events off-site must all have passed the screening process.

Permission slips are required for all children and youth to participate in events that occur outside the church building.

C. Discipline

1. Covered employees and volunteers will never spank, hit, grab, shake, or otherwise use physical discipline.
2. Disciplinary problems, other than minor infractions, will be reported to the covered employees or volunteer coordinator/supervisor and to a parent or guardian.
3. Trip chaperones will monitor behavioral requirements regarding curfews, drugs, alcohol, fraternizing, offensive language, bullying, and other unacceptable behavior. Infractions will be reported to the pastor or staff person supervising the trip. Any disciplinary action taken by the pastor or staff person should consider the individual facts of each case and the person(s) involved. Parents/Guardians will be informed of any disciplinary action.

D. Injuries or illness

1. Parents/Guardians will be notified as soon as illness is discovered.
2. Steps will be taken to avoid contact with body fluids of any kind.
3. Any coordinator/supervisor/leader who becomes aware of an injury to a worker or a participant will take steps to ensure proper medical attention is given to the injured person.
4. Persons who receive a minor injury will be given first aid as needed at the time of the injury. A child's parent or guardian will be notified of the injury when they pick up the injured person.
5. Any injury which may require medical treatment beyond simple first aid will be given immediate professional attention. The parent or guardian of the injured person and the coordinator/supervisor/leader will be notified immediately.
6. Emergency 911 will be called immediately if warranted by the severity of the injury or illness.
7. A written incident/notice of injury report will be completed within 24 hours by staff whenever an injury that requires first-aid treatment occurs during a ministry function. The names of any staff or volunteers present should be included in the event a claim is filed. The report will be submitted to the church council and will be maintained for at least two years after the injury or after the injured person attains the age of 18, whichever is longer. Better safe than sorry with incident reports. If any type of injury or illness occurs at a church event, document it!
In situations requiring medical attention from injury should be reported to our

insurance company. See chapter 10 Incident Report Form for what needs to be filled out.

E. Reporting injury, abuse, or molestation

1. A critical aspect of this safety guide is the prompt reporting and investigation of any situation where there is reason to believe that any person, especially a child under the age of 18, may have been neglected or abused physically or sexually. While this guide is particularly concerned with suspected abuse that takes place relating to a Lord of Love event or on church property, any indication of abuse wherever and whenever it occurs should be reported and investigated.
2. It is critical to know state laws regarding reporting abuse, and conduct annual training on how to identify and report abuse.
According to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Nebraska state law 28-711 says that anyone who has reasonable cause to believe a child has been subjected to child abuse or neglect, or observes conditions that reasonably would result in child abuse or neglect, is obligated to report the information to law enforcement or the DHHS hotline. When in doubt, always call the child abuse hotline at 1-800-652-1999. There is not a risk to the caller because names of callers are kept confidential.
For additional information and training requirements, refer to the appendix for Lord of Love's Child and Youth Safety Policy.
3. Any suspected abuse that occurs regarding Lord of Love Lutheran Church staff, should be promptly reported to the church insurance agent and the office of the bishop of the Nebraska Synod. The NE Synod and Lord of Love will cooperate with all governmental authorities, insurance investigations, and with the synod.
4. Unless it would be inappropriate (e.g., the abuse is occurring in the home) the parents/guardians should be promptly notified of the possible abuse and the steps Lord of Love has taken.

F. Internal Investigations

1. All Lord of Love Lutheran Church employees or volunteers who have any knowledge about alleged abuse or neglect, must promptly provide a full written confidential report to the pastor or council executive committee. The report should also go to the bishop's office. Any person who reports an incident to DHHS must also file additional reports as may be required.
2. The alleged offender is to be suspended, (with pay if covered employee), and not permitted to participate in any church activities involving children until an investigation of the matter is concluded.
3. Lord of Love may also conduct its own confidential investigation of the allegation or indication of abuse, engaging legal counsel and other consultants as deemed appropriate.

4. If abuse is confirmed, the offender should not be allowed to participate in any activities involving infants, children, or youth. If the offender is an employee, they may be subject to termination of employment.

G. Dealing with law enforcement and the media

During an investigation of abuse or other criminal activity, employees and volunteers should cooperate with and respond to inquiries from law enforcement, fire and rescue personnel.

1. Congregation leadership will designate a single spokesperson for Lord of Love Lutheran Church regarding any alleged incident or investigation.
2. Such spokesperson will be the only person authorized to communicate with the media or provide information about the alleged incident/investigation to the congregation.
3. Confidentiality to avoid undue hurt on any persons is paramount.

H. Annual Employee/Volunteer Worker Review

1. All covered employees and volunteer workers must review this screening application at least annually.
2. All covered employees will complete a brief renewal application every other year. A renewal application will also be completed every other year by all covered volunteers associated with Lord of Love who will be working in any capacity with infants, children, and youth.

Should the screened renewal application reveal that any covered employee or volunteer has become unsuitable for working with infants, children, or youth, they will be immediately removed from their current position and will not be considered for other positions involving work with, or exposure to, infants, children or youth.

Chapter 5: Additional middle and high school practices

- A. Overview
- B. Behavioral guidelines
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 2. Alcohol, tobacco, firearms, knives, and illicit drugs
 3. Prescription and non-prescription drug abuse
 4. Sexual misconduct
 5. Appropriate attire
 6. Discipline practice
 7. Participation of repeat offenders
- C. Event practices
 1. Forms required
 2. Adult to student ratios

3. Prescription and non-prescription drugs
4. Check in times and procedures
5. Housing
- D. Adult mentor practices
 1. Qualification
 2. Expectations

A. Overview

The intent of this chapter is to define specific practices and guidelines that can be applied to Middle and High School ministries, grades 6-12.

Lord of Love's mission statement: Celebrating and sharing God's Love in a welcoming community of faith, while serving others.

The practices and guidelines set forth in this chapter are intended to help create an environment and opportunities for our church youth to live out our mission statement in their own lives, and conduct themselves in a manner that supports group values and participation.

B. Behavioral Guidelines

1. Respect

Students, mentors, volunteers, and staff will treat each other with respect.

2. Alcohol, tobacco, firearms, knives, and illicit drugs

Alcohol, tobacco, firearms, knives, and illicit drugs will not be allowed on the church premises or at any church affiliated activity. If a student is found to be in possession of and/or has participated in the use of any of the items listed above, the student's parent or guardian will be contacted immediately with the expectation the parent or guardian will remove the student from the event.

This practice does not apply to approved work/project tools used in construction projects etc.

At the discretion of the adult and in accordance with the law, violations may be reported to the authorities.

3. Prescription and non-prescription drug abuse

If a student is found to be abusing prescription or non-prescription drugs, the student's parent or guardian will be contacted immediately with the expectation that the parent or guardian will come and remove the student from the event.

4. Sexual Misconduct

All participants must conduct themselves in a manner that supports group values and group participation, consistent with the mission, vision and values of Lord of Love Lutheran Church.

All participants are expected to refrain from:

- Participation in sexual activity
- Inappropriate displays of affection and/or touching
- Inappropriate, degrading, or sexually charged language

5. Appropriate attire

Participants are expected to dress appropriately for every event, and program leaders will give specific information as needed. In general, work events require closed toed shoes.

Attire displaying inappropriate, profane, or demeaning words, slogans, or pictures will not be tolerated, and the person will be asked to change their outfit.

Attire or accessories displaying gang paraphernalia will not be tolerated, and the person will be asked to change their outfit.

Sexually suggestive attire will not be tolerated, and person will be asked to change their outfit.

6. Discipline practice

If behavioral guidelines are violated and do not require immediate removal, the following steps will be taken:

- First offense-warning and apology expected.
- Second offense-student will be paired with a mentor or chaperone for the remainder of the day and possibly the following day.

(Parent or guardian may be contacted after second offense)

- Third offense the parent or guardian will be contacted immediately with the expectation that the student will be removed from the event.

7. Participation of repeat offenders

At the discretion of staff, participation in future activities may be jeopardized for repeat offenders.

C. Event practices

1. Permission Slips

All students must have a current church permission form on file prior to an off-site event, including permission to take the participant to medical facilities and to authorize treatment.

All students must have any event specific waivers and/or permission forms completed, signed, and turned in prior to attending an event.

All students are required to sign and submit any event specific covenant prior to participation in the event.

2. Adult to student ratios

There must be at least two adults present at any event. It is the intent that there will be at least one adult for every 8 students with a minimum of two adults.

Ideally, there would be male and female chaperones on an overnight youth trip with both male and female youth, but if this is not going to be possible, the parents or guardians of all trip participants will be notified in advance of the event.

3. Prescription and non-prescription drugs

Prescription drugs: Parents must provide documentation for all prescription drugs including dosage and schedule that accompany student.

Non-prescription drugs: Parents must provide documentation for all non-prescription drugs that accompany student.

Students may not share prescription drugs with any other student.

Students may not share non-prescription drugs with any other student without notifying a chaperone.

4. Check-in times

All students will report to the specified check-in location at the specified times, to their designated adult chaperone.

Should a student miss, or arrive excessively late to a check-in time, the discipline practice will be followed.

At least one check in time will be scheduled per every five hours of an event.

5. Housing

Hotel Housing:

Room occupancy should not exceed the amount allowed by the hotel.

Chaperones will not be housed with the students unless two or more chaperones are assigned and staying in the same room with the students.

Males and females will not be housed in the same hotel room unless married.

Curfew may be established by the chaperones and/or the hotel.

Hotel property must be treated with care and any damage reported to a church representative immediately.

Personal belongings are the responsibility of the owner.

Host Home Housing:

All participants must follow the behavioral guidelines and conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the mission and vision of Lord of Love when staying at a host home.

All participants must adhere to the rules of the host home unless they are contradictory to behavioral guidelines. In this case contact a chaperone for clarification. The host home must be treated with care and any damage must be reported to the host immediately and a church representative as soon as possible.

- Curfew is determined by the host home
- Personal belongings are the responsibility of the owner
- At least two students will be assigned to a home
- Separate male and female sleeping areas will be established and enforced.
- Separate male and female changing areas will be established and enforced.

D. Adult volunteer/chaperone/mentor practices

1. Qualification

A volunteer working with middle and high school youth needs to demonstrate an acceptable level of maturity and responsibility as determined by the appropriate Lord of Love Lutheran Church staff person.

Background checks must be done in accordance with the practice as written in chapter 4 or this guide.

Adult chaperones for middle school must be at least 21 years of age.

Adult chaperones for high school must be at least 21 years of age.

2. Expectations

- Volunteers/chaperones/ mentors must become familiar with this safety guide and comply with all Middle and High School practices and guidelines.
- Additional safety information may be needed for specific events and program leaders are responsible for discovering and communicating any additional required safety information.
- All volunteers/chaperones/mentors must sign a statement each year indicating they have reviewed and fully understand the current Middle and High School practices.
- It is the expectation that all adults will interact with the students in a way that reflects the mission, vision, and values of (insert church name here).

- If a student violates the practices and guidelines to the degree the parent or guardian needs to be notified, the volunteer is expected to notify a church staff member, so the incident can be properly documented.
- Every event requires a certain ratio of adults to students and it is expected that these ratios are met.
- Adults must refrain from any kind of exclusive relationship with any student.
- In an emergency only, adults may give an unplanned ride to a student. There must be two adults in the vehicle always when giving a student a ride in this situation.

Chapter 6: Transportation Practices

A. General transportation information

Most accidents occur within a short distance from home or church, safety precautions are necessary, even on short trips.

1. Chartered equipment from established rail, bus, and airline companies are recommended for groups of 20 or more, providing safety records, equipment inspections, and required health & safety certifications.
2. Use of 15-passenger vans manufactured before 2005 are not allowed, unless 'electronic stability control equipped'.
3. Seat belts are required for all occupants
4. All drivers must have a valid driver's license that has not been suspended or revoked for any reason, and no major violation (reckless driving, DUI, DWI, drugs) in last five years, and 2-3 minor violations max in the last five years. Commercial license required for commercial vehicles including a church bus.
5. All drivers must be at least 22 years of age.
6. Trucks may not be used for transporting passengers except in the cab.
7. All vehicles must be covered by automobile liability insurance with limits that meet or exceed requirements of the state in which the vehicle is licensed. It is recommended that coverage limits are at least \$50,000/\$100,000/\$50,000. Any vehicle designed to carry 10 or more passengers is required to have limits of \$100,000/\$500,000/\$100,000.
8. Obey all laws, including the speed limit.
9. Driving time is limited to a maximum of 10 hours in one 24-hour period regardless of the number of drivers available. Driving time must be interrupted by frequent rest, food, and/or recreation stops. Fatigue is a major cause of highway accident fatalities.

10. Drivers must refrain from using hand-held cell phones while driving and text messaging is strictly forbidden.

B. Driver qualifications

1. Personal vehicles

- All drivers must have a valid driver's license and cannot be driving on a ticket.
- All drivers must comply fully with all traffic and safety laws.
- All drivers must be able to provide proof of valid insurance.
- All drivers must be age 22 or older

2. Church van and rental vehicles

- All drivers must have a valid driver's license and cannot be driving on a ticket.
- All drivers must comply fully with all traffic and safety laws.
- All drivers must have a copy of their driver's license on file with the church office.
- All drivers of rental vehicles must be age 22 or older.

3. Chartered Service Providers

Chartered service must provide documentation to ensure the safety record of the provider as well as the driver. This includes but is not limited to:

- Drivers are 25 years of age or older.
- Proof of insurance
- Valid driver's license

C. Passenger Practices

1. Personal vehicles, church vans, & rentals

- All passengers must have a seat belt available and buckled.
- All passengers must listen to the instructions of the driver.

2. Chartered and/or public transportation

- All passengers must follow the rules and guidelines of the transportation provider.
- All passengers must use a seat belt when available.
- There must be safe and adequate space for all luggage and transported items.

D. Students transporting students

If parent/guardians allow students to transport other students, written permission from the parent or guardian of both the driver and passengers is recommended by the congregation.

Chapter 7: Partnering with other organizations

A. Inside the church building

When outside organizations, such as the scouts or AA, are using the building for meetings and events, it is very important they follow the same practices and guidelines for building use and emergency preparedness as church members. It is recommended each outside organization be given a copy of the safety guide.

- All outside organizations assume their own risk when using the church building and grounds. The doors must be locked by the last person leaving. Used rooms should be returned to their original configuration and cleared of any decorations or generated refuse.
- A detailed site map is included in this guide.
- Outside organizations should not use computers, sound equipment, musical instruments, kitchen supplies, or any other equipment unless authorized. Please get permission or ask for assistance to use any equipment for your program or event.

B. Outside the church building

Lord of Love Lutheran Church members serving at or participating in events outside of the church as congregation representatives are responsible for their own actions. Church liability insurance may be applied conditionally.

It is critical our church leaders know what the expectations are when planning any outside activities. Examples of activities outside of the church building include:

- volunteering with 'Habitat for Humanity'
- busing youth to the 'ELCA National Youth Gathering'
- traveling to another city, state, or country for mission work

Some things to consider when planning an outside activity:

- What is the purpose/benefit of this activity?
- Whose insurance covers this event? Is it the church, the outside agency, or both?
- Is there any leadership pre-training required to participate?
- Are there any age restrictions for this activity?
- Are there standardized forms/permission slips from the outside agency?
- Does the church need to provide any special equipment/tools?
- How should participants dress?
- How many adult chaperones/drivers will be required?
- Is this a well-known agency or program?
- Does this outside agency use best safety practices?

Chapter 8: Protecting data & security systems

Electronic data

Includes data storage, email, and text.

The technology team will provide IT leadership for the congregation. This team is responsible for establishing and managing appropriate internet security, technology updates, communication, and documentation regarding technology used within the congregation. Any collection of data, or use of a new technology should be authorized by the technology team. Additionally, the congregation may obtain support services from a third party to further ensure best practices are in place and routine and emergency maintenance is being handled in a timely manner.

1. Data Bases

The congregation will keep information about membership, giving, budget, expenses, and other records as appropriate within the church office. This information will be stored and managed electronically on a computer. Print copies may be generated as appropriate to help facilitate communication and for financial management purposes.

To ensure data integrity and the ability to recover data due to hardware failures, data will be backed up locally as well as remotely via cloud storage. Cloud storage backups will be encrypted to provide additional security.

Printed membership contact information is intended for the use of members only. Each member is tasked with securing their printed copy of the member directory and ensuring it is used only by them. Electronic copies of the directory will be shared with staff and congregation leadership to further enable administrative and organization activities.

Personal financial information access will be restricted to office staff. When financial details are required by congregation leadership, no personal information will be included in the shared information.

We seek to store the minimum amount of information necessary to communicate efficiently, and will inform members if we ever discover a breach in our computer security system.

To keep the information consistent and current, members are asked to provide updated contact information as appropriate (email addresses, home addresses, phone numbers).

A. Printed information

Electronic data should be printed only when necessary, and the loss of any information should be reported to the church office immediately. Chaperones may need printed permission slips and health records in print form and on their person during an event. Those documents should be shredded after the event or turned in to the church office. (insert any different instructions you have for dealing with printed information here.)

It's important to note that printed information is a big cause of data inconsistency. It happens when electronic information is changed but the print copy is not. It is best to have as little as possible printed when it comes to personal data and the safety guide.

B. Photography & videos

Media images and recordings bring our congregation to life and help tell the story of Lord of Love Lutheran Church and our vibrant faith community. They enhance the quality of information we provide to our members and give visitors an idea of what to expect when they attend our church. We would like to share media items recorded at our various ministry activities, events, services, and programs in our church produced materials including, but not limited to:

- Website/social media platforms
- Digital transmissions
- Print media
- Advertising including bulletins, posters, brochures, newsletters and other printer materials.

Accordingly, participation in church activities by adults (age 19 and older) implies permission for publication of any media image or recording, unless a signed "Media Opt-out" form is on file with the church office. This applies to anyone who attends our church, including visitors.

Any child under the age of 19 will not have their image published in any media without parental/guardian permission. Permission may be given by signing a photo release document. See chapter 10 for forms.

While Lord of Love Lutheran Church reserves the right to photograph and record church events, to respect your privacy, we will strive to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Any adult may complete the "Media Opt-out" form if they do not wish for media items in which they or their minor children are prominently featured to be used by the congregation in publications.
- No individual identity information will accompany photos, including names, addresses, email addresses, family member's names, or schools.
- Anyone may request that a media item which prominently features them, or their minor children be removed from use by submitting a request to the church office.
- If you submit images to be used by the congregation, you are giving the church the right to use the photos. These images must not contain any copyrighted material without permission from the copyright holder.

C. Access to the building & security information

(Insert unique church information regarding access to the building including the use of keys, electronic entry, alarms, etc.)

D. Social media, electronic, and phone communication

- All staff and volunteer leaders are required to copy an adult parent or guardian whenever communicating with an individual child or youth by text or email.
- "Being mindful that developing personal relationships with minors is critical to their spiritual formation, volunteers and staff are not prohibited from interacting with minors on social media. However, in such circumstances, the following requirements shall be met:
 - The volunteer or staff person shall never initiate a connection (friending, following, etc.) on social media
 - If a student initiates a connection, the student's parent or guardian as well as the volunteer or staff member's supervisor shall be notified. If deemed inappropriate by either authority, the connection will be denied.
 - All electronic communication shall be documented and retained"
- All staff and volunteer leaders are to notify a parent or guardian regarding any phone communication with an individual child or youth.
- All staff and volunteer leaders are prohibited from engaging in any private chat conversations with children or youth on social media platforms.

Chapter 9: Training & drills (defer to implementation planning phase)

The purpose of training with drills is so trained safety leaders can practice with the congregation, and so the congregation comes to recognize and respond to trained leaders. In an emergency you have seconds to act, and chaos occurs when people who are not the trained leaders attempt to take charge. A safety guide is wonderful, and worthless, if you don't conduct leader training and community drills.

A. New leader/member orientation

- Every new leader should be given an electronic copy of this safety guide and introduced to the congregation's safety leaders.
- Every new leader should be given a tour of the building including the evacuation plan and outdoor meeting site.
- New leaders should consider safety in the design of any program or event.
- New members should be given a tour of the building including the evacuation route. Parents should not try to get their children in the event of an evacuation. They should meet their children at the appointed meeting site outside. No child may leave until released by the leader/teacher.
- New members should be introduced to the congregation's safety leaders and given basic emergency instructions.

B. Church community drills-includes everyone

An annual evacuation and lock down drill will be conducted during the service hour and will include everyone in the building.

C. Annual safety review-includes revisions

A review of the safety manual will be conducted once a year and revisions will be distributed to all staff and volunteer leaders.

Chapter 10: Forms and maps

- A.** Permission Slips
- B. Photo release
- C.** Incident reports
- D.** Floorplan

Lord of Love Lutheran Church

Electronic Permission Slip

I give permission for, _____ (child's name) , to attend
_____ (event name, location, date).

_____ I will pick this child up after the event.

_____ This child has permission to ride home with _____.

During the event I can be reached at _____ (phone number).

In the event you are unable to reach me, please contact:

_____ (emergency contact name)

_____ (contact phone #) .

Allergies/Medications/Relevant medical history (insert below):

I also give my permission to seek medical treatment in the event I cannot be reached for authorization.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Lord of Love Lutheran Church Photo Release/Media Opt-out form

Please be advised that you and your children may be photographed and/or videotaped at various church sponsored services and events.

Images may be posted to the church website, e-newsletter, social media sites, and in our printed bulletins, brochures, and advertising.

Please check one of the boxes below, sign and return this form.

_____ Yes, I give permission for images and video taken at church services and events to be published as church media.

_____ No, I do not give permission for images and video taken at church services and events to be published as church media.

Parent/Guardian

Date

Lord of Love Lutheran Church

Incident Report

Name of person filling out incident report and date:

Date of incident: _____

Location of incident: _____

Name or names of people involved in the incident (included ages if possible):

Description of incident: _____

Did incident include illness or injury? If yes, describe:

Action taken: _____

Witnesses (include contact information if possible):

Follow up action needed: _____

CHILD AND YOUTH SAFETY POLICY Lord of Love Lutheran Church, Omaha, NE

Lord of Love Lutheran Church believes it is in the best interest of the congregation and its children and youth (persons 18 or younger) to protect their physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being as participants in church-sponsored activities. This policy is adopted in order to protect children and youth from abuse and adults from being unfairly accused of any form of child abuse. The policy attempts to balance concerns for personal privacy with the legitimate concerns of protecting our youth.

Churches may be liable for incidents and injuries that result from "negligent supervision"; that is, the failure to exercise reasonable supervision of church workers and church activities. The risk of negligent supervision can be reduced by adhering to certain policies. These policies and procedures also apply to rostered staff, recognizing special situations involving confidentiality in performing their duties.

The following policies and procedures will be in effect at Lord of Love Lutheran Church. Note: All staff and volunteers working with children or youth must be able to provide references. Definitions: Youth - all persons 18 or younger. Adult – person age 19 or older.

1. **Prior-Record Rule** - Adults who have been convicted of either child sexual or physical abuse should not volunteer service in any church-sponsored activity or program for youth.
2. **Six-Months Rule** - All volunteers working with youth must have participated in Lord of Love Lutheran Church activities for six months or more or have suitable references from other churches in which they have participated.
3. **Two-Adult Rule** - It is our goal that a minimum of two adult workers be in attendance at all times during youth programs and activities. Some youth classes may have only one adult teacher in attendance during the class session; in these instances, at least three students should be with the adult teacher and the classroom door(s) should remain open. Exceptions may be needed for confirmation mentoring, counseling young people, providing transportation, and teen-age nursery assistants. Such exceptions require: a. obtaining parental permission; b. using an "open door" policy. (The door to the meeting is left open unless an interior window provides a clear view of the room. Doors are never to be locked while persons are inside the room.)
4. **Parental Permission** - Adults, paid staff or volunteers with legitimate reasons to meet alone with youth should obtain the consent of the youth's parent or guardian before spending time with the youth in an unsupervised situation. This procedure could be used, for example, with the confirmation mentor program, counseling or providing transportation.

Parental permission may not be easily obtained if a youth is having parental relationship issues and desires to visit with an adult in the church about those problems. In these cases, the person providing the counseling should ask for permission from the youth to involve a second adult or youth.

If any youth need last minute transportation, such as a ride home after a church youth group event, the supervising adult will follow the emergency contact procedure.

5. **Emergency Contact Procedure** - When parents enroll their youth for a church activity, they are to provide contact information and the consent that staff or volunteers will need if there is an emergency involving their youth. A "Child/Youth Care Emergency Contact Information and Consent Form" includes a

statement of parental consent to administer first aid and get emergency services for their child. Parents will be asked to update this form at least once every year.

6. **Adequate Personnel** - It is our goal that programs and activities that involve youth should usually include a ratio of one adult to every ten youth. Supervision will be maintained before and after the event.

7. **Teen Assistants** - We encourage confirmed teens to participate as teaching assistants under the direct supervision of an adult leader.

8. **Church Nursery** - At least one adult supervisor and one other person (youth assistant or adult) will staff the church nursery any time children are left in their care. Supervised nursery care will be unavailable when fewer than required staff is present. Children will only be released to their parent or someone the parent has authorized.

9. **Overnight Rule** - Two or more adults must always be involved in any church-sponsored overnight youth activity. All adult chaperones and supervisors will be cleared in advance by the appropriate church leaders/staff.

10. **Reporting Suspicious Behavior** - Nebraska state law requires any person who suspects that a child has been physically or sexually abused or neglected to report it promptly to the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. Adult & Child Abuse & Neglect Hotline: 1-800-652-1999 Do not use e-mail to report cases of abuse. If there is an emergency call local law enforcement immediately. See <http://www.hhs.state.ne.us/cha/chaindex.htm> for additional details. Any inappropriate conduct or relationship between an adult worker and a child or youth must be reported and investigated immediately.

11. **Reporting Other Violations of the Policy** - Other violations of this policy should be reported immediately to the ministry program coordinator, pastor, and/or officer of the congregation. Details of the policy violation should be documented. Additional information gathering will be performed. Appropriate action will be taken regarding the reported behavior or incident in a timely manner.

12. **Training in Child and Youth Safety** - Adults who work with youth will be informed of the policies and procedures of the congregation through printed materials and training sessions. Adults will be made aware of the legal penalties of misconduct, especially sexual relationships with minors, and the extent and limitations of the coverage provided by the church insurance policy. Adult volunteers are expected to participate in provided training programs with renewal of that training on at least a semi-annual basis.

The parents of participants in Lord of Love's Youth programming will be informed of the congregation's child safety policies and procedures and the emphasis on the safety and well-being of their youth.

These policies and procedures, when applicable, should apply to any group using Lord of Love facilities. Groups requesting use of Lord of Love facilities will receive the Child and Youth Safety Policy.

The floor plan of the First Baptist Church of Dallas includes the following rooms and areas:

- Sanctuary:** Located at the top, featuring an altar, altar care area, and a large oval-shaped sanctuary.
- Music Room:** Located to the right of the Sanctuary.
- South Overflow:** Located to the left of the Sanctuary.
- North Overflow:** Located below the Sanctuary.
- Sanctuary:** A smaller room located below the North Overflow.
- Sr High:** Located to the right of the Sanctuary.
- Storm Shelter:** Located to the right of the Sr High.
- Kitchen:** Located to the right of the Storm Shelter.
- North Entrance:** Located on the left side of the plan.
- Ed Storage:** Located in the center of the plan.
- Conf:** Located to the left of the Ed Storage.
- Office:** Located to the left of the Conf.
- Narthex:** Located in the center of the plan.
- Nursery:** Located to the right of the Narthex.
- Sunday School Office:** Located to the right of the Nursery.
- Courtyard:** Located in the center of the plan.
- Main Office:** Located to the right of the Courtyard.
- Pastor:** Located to the right of the Main Office.
- Work Room:** Located to the right of the Pastor.
- Fellowship Hall:** Located to the right of the Work Room.
- Social Hall:** Located below the Fellowship Hall.
- West Entry:** Located at the bottom left.
- Main Entrance:** Located at the bottom center.
- Bathrooms:** Located at the bottom center.
- Men's Room:** Located to the right of the Bathrooms.
- Ladies Room:** Located to the right of the Men's Room.
- PreSch:** Located at the bottom right.
- Office:** Located to the right of the PreSch.
- Quilts:** Located to the right of the Office.
- RR:** Located to the right of the Quilts.
- Exit:** Multiple exits are marked throughout the plan.

About this Template

Christian Education Network of the ELCA Generic Safety Template for Churches 2018

Forward

The purpose of this generic template is to provide general safety information to churches. The content is based on research into best safety practices as discovered by the Christian Education Network of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church of America.) It is our hope that everyone who uses this generic template will customize it to fit their specific church environment. The template was written in Microsoft Word as a “read only” document. It may be “saved as” a new title, and then edited. In the changing world in which we live, recommended safety practices must be reviewed regularly, and we recommend you create a standing safety team to conduct an annual review.

Each church setting is unique. In addition to *regulations and restrictions found in church insurance policies*, congregations are subject to specific *laws* governing the local community. Specific information, regarding regulations and laws, is ***not*** included in the original template. We recommend you avoid using the word “policy” as you edit, unless you are referring to your insurance policy.

The Christian Education Network of the ELCA assumes no liability for any incident that may occur, and everyone uses this template at their own risk.

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“The Christian Education Network of the ELCA Generic Safety Template for Churches” is designed to be used as a digital template. The original is a “read only” document. The user “saves as” and renames it for personal use and editing.

This guide is intended to provide general safety information and practices, and the Christian Education Network of the ELCA assumes no liability for any incident that may occur to an individual or group. Every user downloads and customizes this guide at their own risk.

The content is based on research into “best practices” and was included when repeatedly found to be the recommendation of federal and local law enforcement, and emergency management professionals. For more information about the Christian Education Network of the ELCA go to www.faithfulteaching.org