

# Church of the Resurrection Abuse Policy and Procedure

## Policy

Church of the Resurrection believes that all people are made in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27) and deserve to be treated with respect (Romans 12:10; 1 Peter 2:17). Each person has great worth before God, and ultimately belongs to Him (Psalm 139:1-17; Matt. 6:25-34; 10:29-31). God expects His people to oppose injustice, not commit or enable it (Isaiah 58:1-14). God hates injustice, and will call those who perpetrate it to account (Deuteronomy 27:19; Psalm 11:7, 15; Malachi 2:16; Galatians 6:7-8).

The Church desires to live in the spirit of 1 John 1:5-7: “This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true; but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.”

Accordingly, the Church will not tolerate any form of abuse from or toward anyone in its community. Church community members, including clergy, staff, lay leaders and volunteers, members, and attendees must conduct themselves according to the highest standards in this respect.

## Definitions

- **Leadership:** any person holding a position of authority derived from the Church, including clergy, Parish Council members, lay leaders, staff, and Church volunteers (acting within their capacity as volunteers).
- **Complainant:** person claiming to have been subjected to abuse or to have knowledge of abuse towards others.
- **Respondent:** person accused of abuse.
- **Abuse:** tactics, typically employed by a person in a position of leadership, power, or other authority, used to gain and maintain coercive control over another person.<sup>1</sup> Abuse can be physical, sexual, psychological, verbal, financial, or spiritual. Abuse typically involves a systematic pattern of behavior, but a single act (such as sexual assault) may also constitute abuse.
  - Physical abuse includes, but is not limited to: physical violence, brandishing weapons, forced substance abuse, denying medical treatment, preventing calls to emergency services, and controlling another person’s sleep or eating. This includes violence toward pets and damaging property.
  - Psychological abuse can involve a variety of tactics, which may be used in concert, such as: monitoring someone’s movements, stalking, threats and

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<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., <https://www.thehotline.org/identify-abuse/power-and-control/>; <https://www.thehotline.org/identify-abuse/understand-relationship-abuse/>.

intimidation, isolating a person from friends or family, controlling a person's habits or dress, and gaslighting (a destabilizing technique – coercing/manipulating someone into doubting their basic, reasonable perceptions or judgments).

- Spiritual abuse is a form of psychological abuse, “characterized by a systematic pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour in a religious context.”<sup>2</sup> The behaviors may include misuse or manipulation of religious texts, overtaking the subject's decision-making, enforcing secrecy, and overuse of accountability or church discipline.
- Sexual abuse includes, but is not limited to any nonconsensual sexual act, image-based sexual abuse, stalking, exploiting prostitution, and harassment of a sexual nature (including unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical contact or verbal communication).<sup>3</sup>

## Reporting Abuse

Complainants may report abuse to the Church's Safeguarding Team at [safeguarding@rezchurch.org](mailto:safeguarding@rezchurch.org). The Safeguarding Team consists of the Rector or Rector's alternate (or Rector's Warden if the Rector is implicated), the People's Warden, and two Rez Members at Large, including at least one person with trauma-informed experience or expertise. Complaints may also be made to any clergy or Parish Council member.<sup>4</sup>

Complaints will be kept confidential within the Safeguarding team absent the complainant's consent to do otherwise. Confidentiality may be limited, however:

- To comply with mandatory reporting requirements to legal authorities or required disclosures to insurers;
- To prevent reasonably certain severe physical harm;
- To seek outside expert advice on best practices (in which case the situation will be anonymized as much as possible); or
- To inform the Parish Council of abuse allegations against a Parish Council member, clergy member, or staff member, of abusive conduct occurring in the context of the Church's programs or ministries, or of the mishandling or other concerns about the safeguarding team itself to the Parish Council.

The safeguarding team must share these confidentiality principles with a person seeking to make a disclosure as soon as possible, ideally before any disclosure is made.<sup>5</sup> Anyone who has questions about confidentiality may direct them to the Parish Council before making a disclosure.

The Church is committed to handling reports of abuse promptly and fairly. Disclosure to the Safeguarding Team is in no way intended to be a substitute for reporting to and engaging with

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<sup>2</sup> Dr. Lisa Oakley and Justin Humphreys, *Escaping the Maze of Spiritual Abuse: Creating healthy Christian cultures* (2019), p-age 31.

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g., <https://www.thehotline.org/resources/consent/>; <https://www.rainn.org/types-sexual-violence>.

<sup>4</sup> Unless a complaint implicates a Safeguarding Team member, any complaint made to a Parish Council or clergy member may be shared with one other Parish Council or clergy member and also will be shared with the Safeguarding Team.

<sup>5</sup> The Church recognizes that this may not be possible, for example, where someone sends a full disclosure by email to the safeguarding team prior to any meeting or other communication about it.

civil authorities where appropriate, such as where any crime has been committed, or with the diocese under its own process, as may be required by the canons.<sup>6</sup>

The flowchart below represents a guide and resource for the Safeguarding Team in responding to complaints of abuse by or against community members.<sup>7</sup> Additionally, any safeguarding team member who has concerns about the way the team is proceeding as a whole on a particular matter, or about an individual team member's conduct, may involve the full Parish Council in the matter at any time.

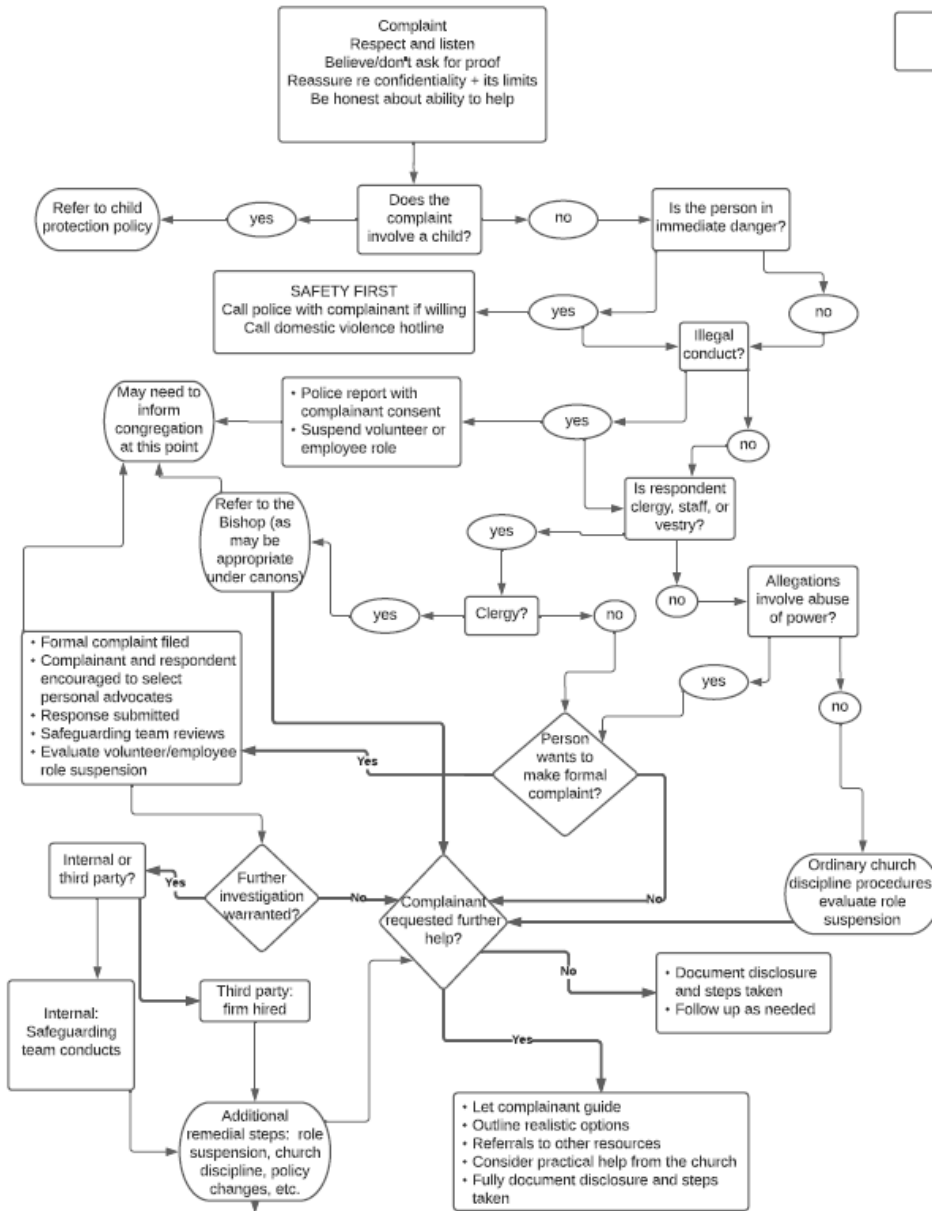
While this Policy is limited specifically to abuse allegations, it is not meant to be a substitute for nor to discourage community members from alerting the Parish Council to other concerns, including other forms of misconduct.

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<sup>6</sup> See <https://adhope.org/about-us/safeguarding-our-churches/>.

<sup>7</sup> See also the advice contained in this one-pager: <https://safeministry.org.au/wp-content/uploads/DV-HowToRespond.pdf>.

Abuse Report  
Flowchart



### Safeguarding Team (as of March 2023)

- Rector. The Rector, at his discretion, may appoint the Rector’s Warden or a clergy member to serve in his stead. The Rector’s Warden must serve in this role if Rector is implicated in a disclosure.
  - Sulmane Maigadi (as Rector’s Designee) or Rector’s Warden Miguel Lau
- People’s Warden
  - Joy Harris
- Member at large (with trauma-informed expertise)
  - Janelle Lau
- Member at large #2
  - Andrea Capuyan

## Resources

### **National Domestic Violence Hotline**

<https://www.thehotline.org/>

Website also has live chat

1-800-799-7233

### **Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network (RAINN)**

<http://www.rainn.org>

RAINN's on-line hotline provides live, secure, anonymous crisis support for victims of sexual assault and their families

1-800-656-HOPE (24/7 hotline)

### **DC Rape Crisis Center**

<http://www.dcrapecrisiscenter.org>

DC Rape Crisis Center offers services that help survivors and their families heal from the aftermath of sexual violence including crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy.

202-333-RAPE (24/7 hotline)

### **DC Shelters**

#### **House of Ruth**

<https://houseofruth.org/>

24-hour hotline, shelter, and counseling for battered women and their children

202-667-7001

#### **My Sister's Place**

<https://mysistersplacedc.org/>

24-hour hotline, shelter, and counseling for battered women and their children

(202) 529-5991

#### **DC Safe**

<https://www.dcsafe.org/>

Provides crisis housing, lethality assessments, and other services.

202-506-2901

### **Local DC Metro Police Resources**

#### **Sexual Assault Unit**

<http://mpdc.dc.gov/page/sex-assault-unit>

The Sexual Assault Unit can arrange for transport to Washington Hospital Center, can assist with an application to the Crime Victim Compensation Program, and can take evidence without pressing charges (victim/survivor has 90 days to press charges).

300 Indiana Avenue, NW, Room 3042 Washington, DC 20001

202-727-3700

**Victim Specialists Unit**

<http://mpdc.dc.gov/page/victim-specialists-unit-vsua>

MPD's Victim Specialists Unit provides support, information, and referrals to victims and survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault.

300 Indiana Ave, NW, Room 3121 Washington, DC 20001

202-724-4339

**Domestic Violence Unit**

<http://mpdc.dc.gov/node/139072>

Can arrange transportation and assist with filing a police report and collecting evidence.

300 Indiana Avenue NW, Room 3156 Washington, DC 20001

202-727-7137

**DC Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program**

<http://www.dcsane.org/>

MedStar Washington Hospital Center

110 Irving St, Washington, DC

Call to get a free Uber to the hospital: 1-800-641-4028

**Legal Assistance****Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia**

[www.legalaiddc.org](http://www.legalaiddc.org).

Includes domestic violence/family law attorneys.

202-628-1161

**Christian Legal Aid of DC**

<https://www.christianlegalaid-dc.org/>

202-710-0592