

SAFE CHURCH: at a glance

Why do we have a Safe Church Policy?

- Providing a safe place to all who enter is key to our ministry.
- SOFT Goals - We want to engage our neighbors in ministry, so we have to assure them that Neland is a safe place.
- Prevention - we want to stop abuse before it happens.

Shaping Our Future Together

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS



- Background checks: All leaders 18 and older must have a completed volunteer application on file in the office and be cleared by the Church Administrator to serve.
- Training: All leaders must attend Safe Church training every three years.
- "Rule of Two": two unrelated adults should be present in each room where children are meeting. If that is not possible, a designated rover must drop in on those classrooms throughout the evening.
- Every church function involving minors must have at least two adults present in the building from the time the first student arrives to the time the last student leaves.
- Liability Waivers: All students who attend programs must have a signed liability waiver. Students without a waiver cannot attend any off-site events or trips.
- Transportation guidelines:
 - Anyone listed as an "approved pickup" on a student's liability waiver may transport that student as the only adult in the vehicle.
 - Students who need transportation home, but do not have written permission to be transported by an individual from Neland must be transported home by 2 adults. Ideally, two adults in the same vehicle, but in instances where that is not possible, vehicles may caravan home.
 - No child should be one-on-one in a car with an adult without written permission from a parent/guardian. Leaders may decline to transport students alone if they are not comfortable doing so.
- In an instance where the church learns about a regular attender with a Criminal Sexual Conduct (CSC) conviction or other criminal charges, the Ministry Program Coordinator and Safe Church Coordinator will work with the Admin. Committee to determine any necessary restrictions. This information will be communicated to ministry leaders as needed.
- If a leader observes signs/symptoms of abuse, or receive a direct report of abuse, he/she must file a report with CPS. The Ministry Program Coordinator & Safe Church Coordinator should also be notified.
- All students in Neland programs should be signed in at the start of programming each week.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

SUNDAY NIGHTS



- All the same policies listed for Wednesday evenings apply to TNG meetings.
- Additional transportation information:
 - High school students may be transported by just one adult if there are at least two students in the vehicle.
 - All drivers transporting minors on behalf of Neland Church must be 21 years old (or 18 years old with the consent of the minor's parent/guardian).
- One-on-one and mentoring meetings:
 - One-on-one meetings should be held in public places.
 - Meetings at the home of a minor must have a parent present in the home at all times.
 - Parents/guardians should be notified of any one-on-one meetings. If parents cannot be reached, notify a church staff member of the meeting.
 - If transportation to and from one-on-one meetings is required, signed permission must be obtained from a parent/guardian.

I HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE POLICY:

WHO DO I TALK TO?



If you have questions about the policy, are unsure about how to apply it to your program, or need help implementing policy guidelines, please talk to one of the following people.

- Emily Veenstra-Banning: Ministry Program Coordinator (evenbann@neland.org)
- Lisa Genzink: Safe Church Coordinator (office@neland.org)
- Larry Louters: Administrative Elder (lout@calvin.edu)

A bit of background info:

Abuse and allegations of abuse pose a significant threat to the church and its ability to do ministry. Our Safe Church Policy creates accountability for all volunteers and students. We're required to submit our policy to our insurance company and abide by it at all Neland activities.

Top 5 Reasons Churches End Up in Court

2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Sexual Abuse of a Minor	Property Disputes	Sexual Abuse of a Minor	Sexual Abuse of a Minor			
Personal Injury	Insurance Coverage Disputes	Personal Injury	Property Disputes	Sexual Abuse of a Minor	Property Disputes	Zoning
Insurance Coverage Disputes	Religious Freedom	Property Disputes	Personal Injury	Personal Injury	Personal Injury	Personal Injury
Property Disputes	Property Disputes	Insurance Coverage Disputes	Zoning	Insurance Coverage Disputes	Zoning	Property Disputes
Zoning	Personal Injury	Affordable Care Act	Insurance Coverage Disputes	Zoning	Insurance Coverage Disputes	Clergy Removal

ChurchLaw&Tax
A Ministry of Christianity Today

This infographic also includes cases involving religious organizations.

Neland's Council first adopted the Safe Church Policy in March 2016. Our Ministry Program Coordinator is responsible for administering this policy, with the assistance of the Safe Church Coordinator, and under the direction of the Ministries Committee and Administrative Committee. Council is currently in the process of creating a Safe Church Team to monitor our adherence to the policy and recommend adjustments and changes as needed.