

# **SAFE AND SECURE**

## **Safety and Security for South Main Baptist Church**

### **Pasadena, Texas**

#### **I. Threats to Persons and Property**

##### **A. Severe Weather**

The Ministry Leadership Team will be vigilant regarding any form of imminent weather circumstance that threatens the safety of persons who are at the church building for an activity. The following steps will be taken when they become necessary.

The presence of thunder and lightning during any outdoor event will result in all persons being moved inside the building immediately. Resuming the activity will occur only when 30 minutes have elapsed since the last lightning strike.

In the case of a flash flood event that may occur while an activity is happening, the persons in charge of the event will seek to insure that it is safe to travel and advise participants of that safety. Special caution will be taken if minors are the participants.

If a tornado warning is issued or a tornado is observed, all persons inside the building will be guided to one of the areas that has been designated as "Safe Room" space. These areas are listed on pages 13-14.

##### **B. Specialized Weather: Hurricane**

###### **1. Decision to Cancel Activities and Close the Building**

The decision to close the church office/facility and to cancel all activities will be made by the Pastor in consultation with the Ministry Leadership Team and/or the Deacon officers. The decision to close the building may be made at any time but will be mandatory if the City of Pasadena issues an evacuation order.

The South Main Learning Center staff will follow Learning Center policy regarding closure but will under no circumstance remain open if the decision is made to close the church building and to cancel activities.

Appropriate notifications of the building closing will be given to all non-South Main groups who regularly use the facility (Weight Watchers, Scouting groups, etc.).

###### **2. Securing the Building**

All glass doors and the large windows in the Worship Center and the Narthex area are covered with a hurricane protection film.

Ministry Leadership Team members will secure their work areas as follows:

- Disconnect all computer equipment from power/network connections.
- Place all computer equipment in plastic bags on top of furniture.
- Remove critical church files and personal possessions under the assumption that everything will be destroyed.

The Executive Administrator will remove valuable church documents from the safe and will insure their transport to a safe location.

The Associate Pastor for Music and Worship will secure multimedia, sound, and musical equipment in the Worship Center as appropriate.

The Executive Administrator will disconnect the church's computer servers and insure they are transported to a safe location.

Building Support staff will move all wheeled pianos, televisions, and other moveable electronic equipment to the second-floor interior hallway between the gym and youth area, turn off all lights, and unplug all electrical equipment.

Food Service staff will secure kitchen equipment and turn off all gas appliances.

The last person to leave will lock and alarm the Administrative Suite in the standard procedure.

### **3. Return to the Building and Recovery of Ministry**

All employees will make a "safe" call using e-mail or telephones upon reaching the location where they will be during the storm. The "safe" call should contain updates regarding address, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses at the safe location.

All employees will maintain contact with the Pastor or their immediate supervisor using the following means of communication:

- Monitor church website for updates
- Remote e-mail access using procedures made available to each employee
- Telephone calls using contact list made available to each employee

Storm Team Volunteers who choose to do so may remain behind to help monitor the building for damage and to begin immediate clean-up as needed.

The Pastor or Executive Administrator will notify all employees via website notice, e-mails, telephone calls, or text messages regarding the status of the facility and the time for re-opening the building and returning to work.

Upon returning to work, church employees and volunteers will assist as appropriate with clean-up and restoration of church activities.

### **C. Smoke and Fire**

## **1. Fire Prevention**

The entire church campus is equipped with smoke and fire alarms monitored by Omni Fire & Security. Fire alarms are located in hallways, and each mechanical room has a fire alarm system as well. Fire extinguishers (60) are located throughout the campus, including in the garage and church vans. They are inspected annually and recharged/replaced as needed.

The Martin Building, which includes the Family Life Center, the Kelley Preschool Suite, and the Children's Suite, is equipped with a fire sprinkler system.

## **2. Fire Response**

A fire event will be communicated to all persons known to be occupying the building by sounding the fire alarms as well as through cell phone communication and radios.

The orderly evacuation of the building in the event of a fire has been established. An Evacuation Map detailing this evacuation strategy for each floor has been shared and is posted throughout the building. In case of the evacuation of the building, the meeting place for parents to locate their children is the recreational green space west of the building.

"Fire Drills" to practice the implementation of this evacuation process will be held periodically.

## **D. Chemical Release/Air Quality**

When advised of an event that has the potential to make the air quality hazardous to persons, the church will comply with the request to move everyone on the campus inside the building, close all doors, and turn off the HVAC system.

## **E. Presence of Building Intruder**

The presence of someone in the building who is not participating in an event will be communicated through radio and cell phone messages. Workers within classrooms will lock all doors and move persons to an area away from the door. Anyone who is in a hallway shall go to the nearest classroom and lock the door. If it is necessary, the Pasadena Police Department will be called. The reality of the lockdown status shall remain until information is received that it is safe to leave the room.

## **F. Presence of Active Shooter**

### **1. Early Detection of an Event**

A Security Team will provide counsel concerning the goal of insuring that the church campus is a safe place for members and guests to gather for the purpose of worshipping

God, experiencing small group dynamic, and enjoying fellowship. This team will give direction and make recommendations concerning resources necessary to accomplish this goal and will provide training for other teams that will assist in the comprehensive security responsibility.

For Sunday mornings, when the largest number of people is on the church campus (and for other major events as deemed necessary), the Security Team shall direct the responsibility of monitoring circumstances outside and inside the building and communicating anything of a suspicious nature. These groups will include as follows:

- The Ministry Leadership Team
- The Parking Lot Team
- The Door Greeter Team
- Uniformed Police Officers

## **2. Response to an Event**

The components of the Security Team will coordinate the immediate response to an active shooter incident.

- Maintain comprehensive communication through radios and cell phones.
- Follow the established Lock Down Procedures.
- Provide instructional training for appropriate response of members and guests.
- Notify law enforcement agencies and medical first responders, when necessary
- Utilize the South Main Medical Team

## **G. Threatening Messages and Activity**

If a threatening telephone call is received or any suspicious package is delivered, the response will be to take the threat seriously, to notify the Pasadena Police Department, and to evacuate the building (if considered necessary) until it is determined that it is safe to be in the building again.

## **H. Potential Liability**

The church will do everything that it can do to maintain a safe environment and minimize the possibility of injury due to an accident.

The church will have an insurance policy that provides liability protection for the church and for the Ministry Leadership Team.

The church is committed to a work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Every individual has the right to work in a professional atmosphere that promotes equal employment opportunities and prohibits illegal discriminatory practices, including harassment. The church expects that all relationships among

persons in the workplace will be workplace appropriate and free of bias, prejudice, and all forms of harassment.

Sexual harassment occurs when sexual advances, request for sexual favors, or any other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, either explicitly or implicitly, is a term for condition of an individual's employment or pay or when such conduct creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. It is important for all personnel to understand that jokes, stories, cartoons, nicknames, or comments about appearance may be offensive to others.

Any employee who feels he or she is being subject to sexual harassment or any other form of harassment should immediately contact his/her supervisor or contact the Pastor if the complaint is against the supervisor.

Any complaint regarding sexual harassment or any other form of harassment will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly to determine its truthfulness. The Pastor, in consultation with the supervisor of the one making the complaint, will determine the disciplinary action that should be taken.

## **I. Personal Privacy**

Personnel files of all persons who are employed by South Main Baptist Church are considered to be strictly confidential. Information from them will only be shared in cases of extreme emergency.

Contact information of our members will not be shared or sold to any group or organization outside the membership of this church.

Release of any information, interviews, or public comments concerning any employee or member to any non-church member, group or to any outside organization (e.g., newspapers, radio or television stations, law enforcement officials, businesses) shall be made by the Pastor, the Executive Administrator, or anyone designated by them to be the official spokesperson. Church employees or members asked for information under the conditions described above should state they are not authorized to release the requested information and should make an appropriate referral to the Pastor or Executive Administrator.

The church uses images and names of church members in print and digital publications, and in slide shows or videos shown during worship and other church events. A Media Policy Opt-out Form is available by which any individual or family may request the church not to use their names or images in any church promotional material.

## **J. Social Media**

The Minister of Education is responsible for guiding and managing the overall digital strategy and presence of South Main Baptist Church. Security concern in the area of social media includes as follows:

- Advise church leadership on best practices in using social media
- Create, manage, and improve content for each social media platform
- Oversee all social media channels through 24/7 monitoring of both content from the church channels and response from the social media audience
- Oversee and manage volunteers who assist in social media, including Ministry Assistants to monitor posts and remove any post that is not appropriate

## **II. Medical Safety/Security**

### **A. Medical Team**

The Medical Team is a group of trained professionals in the medical area who volunteer their expertise when it is needed during scheduled activities at the church. Their primary duties are as follows:

- Recommend and maintain medical equipment needed on-site for medical emergencies
- Sign in at the Welcome Desk when they are present and ready to help
- Provide assistance to those in need prior to arrival of emergency responders
- Provide medical support and consultation for church ministry projects and activities as needed

### **B. Medical Equipment**

Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) are located in the Narthex and the Gym. First Aid kits are located in the Administrative Suite, the Gym, and the Kelley Preschool Suite. Wheelchairs are located in a closet at the rear of the Worship Center

## **III. Child Safety Policy**

The safety of children, including protecting them from abuse or neglect, is a priority of South Main Baptist Church. As a result, the following guidelines are established for the employing of all paid persons and the enlisting of all volunteer persons who work with minors (persons under 18 years of age) and the LIFE class (students with special needs) participating in all church programs, including participants in any daily or temporary child care programs of the church. These guidelines cover the ministry in our Preschool, Children, and Student (Youth) Divisions.

In this policy, the meanings of these terms are as follows:

- “Preschool” refers to any minor who has not yet entered first grade.
- “Child” refers to any minor who is in school grades one through six.
- “Student” refers to any minor who is in school grades seven and twelve (and under the age of 18 years).

## **A. The Application Process for Paid and Volunteer Workers with Minors**

Persons who desire to serve in the Preschool, Children’s, and Student ministry areas will be approved by Ministry Leadership Team members through a careful application review process.

### **1. Eligibility to Work with Minors**

All workers must be 18 years of age or older. Younger persons may be assistants, but they may not take the place of adult workers. The church may employ responsible persons 14 to 17 years of age in child care or other positions with and under the supervision of an adult worker.

All applicants desiring to work with minors must be interviewed for suitability for the work they desire to do. Interviews will be conducted by the minister of the program in which the applicant will work, or by another person designated by the minister. These guidelines concerning prevention and response to child abuse and neglect shall be discussed during the interview.

Applicants for volunteer work shall have been a member of the church for at least six months before becoming eligible to work with minors. In some situations (for example, new church ministers or interns who are not church members) this guideline may be waived. If the six-month guideline is waived, ministers may take additional steps to screen the applicant at their own discretion.

Persons who drive church vehicles or a privately-owned vehicle for trips related to a church event or who transport minors on a regular basis must maintain a current valid Texas driver’s license. The church’s insurance carrier requires that all drivers of church vehicles be at least 25 years of age.

### **2. Receiving Required Information**

The church will conduct a criminal background check, a child abuse registry check, and request the driving record for all applicants. Applicants are responsible for completing the online authorization permitting these reports and for providing all necessary information to complete them.

The fact that applicants have a criminal record will not be an automatic disqualification to employment or work as a volunteer. Factors such as age at the time of the criminal offense, seriousness and nature of the violation, time elapsed, and subsequent rehabilitation will be considered.

The church will keep confidential all information that is received in the application process. Such information will be marked as such and stored with limited access afforded only to appropriate ministers and others with a need to know.

While the church is waiting for the response to the background information, applicants may begin working under the supervision of another adult. Failure to receive the information in a timely manner may result in dismissal or withdrawal of the offer to work in the ministry of the church with minors.

Applicants who are survivors of childhood sexual or physical abuse need the love and acceptance of the church family. These persons' experience with abuse and their recovery process may be pertinent to their suitability as ministry workers. Applicants who are survivors of abuse should discuss this in confidence with the minister who conducts the interview. If an applicant is uncomfortable doing so, he/she may have the interview conducted by the Pastor or Associate Pastor. At the request of the applicant, a minister of the same gender may conduct the interview.

Applicants for paid worker positions will provide references so that the church can gather information regarding personal character, work habits, performance, and experience, along with reasons for any disciplinary action or termination from past employment.

All employed (paid) child care workers must maintain current certification in basic first aid and CPR (or their equivalent) as required by applicable licensing requirements or other statutes and regulations. The church will pay the cost of this training and will pay the workers for attending training. New paid workers must get this certification within 120 days of the start of their employment. Non-paid workers are encouraged, but not required, to get this training if they frequently accompany minors on activities such as recreational experiences, camps and retreats, construction type mission trips, or any other activities with an element of risk. Non-paid workers will pay their own costs for this elective training.

## **B. Guidelines for the Benefit and Protection of Minors**

The guidelines in this section are established to insure the safety of our children by providing supervisory oversight of persons working with minors while they are participating in all church programs and ministries in the Preschool, Children's, and Student divisions.

The desire of the church is to provide a safe environment for the physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of minors participating in all church programs. That should be the priority of every person (paid or volunteer) who works with minors. Any worker that observes, in his opinion, something that is unsafe, he shall immediately take appropriate precaution to protect all participants.

## **1. The Ministry Leadership Team and Division Workers**

The Ministry Leadership Team individual for each division shall be primarily responsible for setting and maintaining a reasonable ratio of workers to minors giving due regard to all factors present, including the number and age of the participants, the nature of the activities in which they are involved, and the location at which such activities are taking place. It will be the goal to have no less than two workers present at each event. For any program or event involving preschoolers or children, two workers should always be present. Ministers for the respective divisions are responsible for making sure that all minors are supervised according to these guidelines.

The minister for each division is responsible for making sure that every worker is aware of the church's policy of child safety. The minister shall review the policy annually for all workers, either individually or in a group, and also when any change or addition to the policy is implemented. Every worker will be required in writing to verify that he/she has attended the review or has read again and understands the policy. The ministers will keep these signed acknowledgments.

## **2. Parents and Workers with Minors**

Parental permission is mandatory for every minor that leaves the church campus to participate in a church event. Parental permission is mandatory before a minister or worker spends more than incidental time alone with a minor in a location where actions cannot be readily observed by another worker.

Church activities for minors will take place in areas that are visible from the hallways. In no circumstance should only one adult worker be alone with a minor in any room if the door is closed.

A digital check in/check out system will be utilized in the ministry areas of the preschool and children's divisions. For preschoolers, only the person who checked the minor in will be able to check him/her out. For children, workers will monitor the minors who check themselves in and out. When a minor checks out, a text message is automatically sent to the parent, if requested.

## **C. Reporting and Responding to Alleged Child Abuse and Neglect**

The church will take seriously every allegation regarding child abuse or neglect involving a minor and an employer or worker and will investigate the allegation thoroughly and appropriately.

### **1. Reporting an Incident**

Any worker of the church who has reasonable cause to believe that a minor's physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect by any person shall report that belief through the following process.

The worker(s) shall report such belief to the Ministry Leadership Team member responsible for the division in which the minor is participating and shall complete an Incident Report. This report should contain the name and address of the minor, the name and address of the person responsible for the care, custody, or welfare of the minor, and other pertinent information concerning the alleged or suspected abuse or neglect of the minor.

The worker(s), either individually or jointly with the Minister, shall immediately report the allegation to the following:

- Pasadena Police Department at 713-477-1221;
- Child Protective Services of the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services at 800-252-5400; or such other agency as may be required by law.

The minister shall notify as soon as possible the Pastor or Associate Pastor, who shall notify the parents of the child, unless one of the parents is accused of being the person responsible for the abuse or neglect.

If the accusation is alleged against a church employee or volunteer, the Pastor or Associate Pastor shall notify appropriate legal counsel and the church's insurance carrier that an abuse incident report has been filed with the appropriate authorities.

No minister or worker shall attempt to carry out an investigation of child neglect or abuse. Interviews with any minor, accused person, or witnesses shall be conducted by authorized officials of the agency to whom such abuse or neglect is reported and when appropriate, legal counsel, and other persons representing the church. All employees and volunteers of the church shall cooperate with a child abuse investigation, without the consent of the minor's parents or any leader of the church, if necessary.

All written documents of the report of an alleged child abuse or neglect incident will be given to the Executive Administrator who shall retain them until advised that all criminal or investigations and actions, if any, have been completed.

All reports of alleged or actual child abuse or neglect shall be strictly confidential. No person shall communicate any information concerning the event, including but not limited to the details of the incident or the identities of the minor or the accused individual(s), to any other person except as may be necessary to report the incident in compliance with these guidelines or to cooperate with any official investigation of the incident. Any breach of this confidentiality by an employee of the church shall be cause of immediate dismissal.

The Pastor, in consultation with the Ministry Leadership Team and officials conducting the investigation, may authorize limited additional disclosure, if necessary, to protect other minors from harm in the near future, particularly where the person responsible for the abuse cannot be identified, but in no such case shall the identity of the minor or the accused person be disclosed except as required by law.

## **2. Responding to an Incident**

The Pastor or the Associate Pastor shall be the sole spokesperson for the church concerning the alleged abuse unless another person is authorized to act as the spokesperson by the Pastor in consultation with the Associate Pastor and/or the Chairperson of the Deacon group. All inquiries concerning alleged child abuse and neglect shall be referred to the designated spokesperson for a response. This shall not relieve any person of the obligation to cooperate fully with the formal investigation of the alleged activity.

Any person accused of child abuse or neglect shall be suspended from all church related duties involving minors, including all care, teaching, transportation or sponsorship duties. In the case of paid employees, the minister supervising such individual or, if required, the Finance Team, shall determine the extent to which employment and compensation should be continued during the investigation based upon consultation with and the recommendation of the Pastor and the Minister in whose division the incident occurred. The Finance Team shall not be authorized to investigate the incident but shall be allowed to monitor any such investigation and receive confidential information concerning the incident as may be necessary to enable it to determine issues concerning continuation of employment and compensation.

The Ministry Leadership Team shall encourage any minor who has been a victim of child abuse or neglect and the minor's parents to secure appropriate pastoral care and support and, if necessary, the process of healing therapy. They shall also assist in the implementation of this process if requested to do so. The Ministry Leadership Team will also do this for the person who is accused of abusing or neglecting a minor, when requested to do so.

The Ministry Leadership Team shall be mindful of the potential for a conflict of interest and, if desirable, may encourage and assist those involved in the alleged incident to seek pastoral care from persons not associated with the church until all legal proceedings have been completed or until it is determined that a conflict of interest no longer exists.

All persons shall act towards the minor, the parents, and the accused in the spirit and manner of the principles that reflect the teaching of Jesus.

## **IV. Prevention of Loss/Fraud**

### **A. Security of the Building/Contents**

The building is secured by a strategy of keeping all exterior and interior doors locked except for times before, during, or immediately after scheduled events.

The areas of the building that are secured by an alarm system include the Administrative Suite, storage areas for the Media Equipment, and the Garage. The Haws Burglar Alarm company monitors this system.

## **B. Security of Financial Gifts/Funds**

### **1. Receipt and Management of Offerings**

The church receives stewardship gifts and offerings from members and non members through a variety of ways including through an offering time in Sunday worship, the mail, automatic account deduction, at the web site, and at the ShelbyNext Giving app.

The offerings received on Sunday are secured in a safe until the offering can be counted and prepared for deposit at a bank. At least two persons are involved in the counting of the offering. Multiple people are assigned to that task on a rotating basis. The details of this process as to who counts the offering and when it is done is not published. No person is involved in more than one stage of the process that involves receiving the offering, securing it, counting it, and depositing it.

One of the ministry assistants is responsible for recording all tax-deductible offerings received from every individual and family unit. A statement detailing these gifts are made available two times a year (January and June).

### **2. Receipt and Management of Activity/Participation Fees**

This money includes, but is not limited to, events such as camps, trips, event registrations, vending machine revenue, and Family Life Center income. Arrangements are made for reliable volunteers or a church employee to be responsible for collecting and processing money as it is received.

All money collected will have the Cash Deposit Summary form attached and will be turned in to the Financial Office at the end of each day. Cash and checks are not to be left in any office unattended.

### **3. Financial Accountability**

The Financial Secretary is responsible for establishing accounts in financial institutions as directed by the Finance Team. Funds will be distributed among several financial institutions to secure FDIC protection of church resources.

The Financial Secretary is responsible for depositing offerings and registrations received, for doing payroll functions, for insuring that all accounts payable are covered, and for providing a monthly income/expense statement. Two signatures will be required for all checks.

The church shall provide a surety bond for the Financial Secretary for the church's protection against loss from fraud.

The Finance Team will meet with the Pastor and the Financial Secretary monthly to review the receipt of income and expenditures in the preceding month.

The Church shall have an audit or audited review by a selected CPA annually.

## **V. Physical Campus Safety**

### **A. Protection of Insurance on Building and Contents**

An Insurance Team will review the comprehensive property insurance coverage that is needed and will recommend the insurance company that we will contract with to provide that coverage.

### **B. Inspection and Maintenance of the Various Systems**

The church will work to detect and prevent potential mechanical and system failures through regularly scheduled inspections. These are as follows:

- The HVAC system inspected during the filter change monthly.
- The Cooling Tower cleaned and inspected monthly.
- Fire alarm, extinguishers, sprinklers, smoke alarms – annually
- Fire Marshal Inspections – annual and periodically
- Boiler – annual
- Gas – annual
- Backflow Prevention – annual
- Elevator – annual
- Termite – annual
- Computers – twice monthly
- Liquid Waste – twice annually
- Kitchen, Health Dept – periodically
- AEDs – annually
- Vehicles – annually and periodically

### **C. Designation of Safe Rooms**

If an intruder becomes known to be in the building, any room that can be locked from the inside is a safe area.

If severe weather occurs, the following areas are designated as safe rooms:

- Worship Center
- Administrative Suite—interior rooms

- North Suite—interior rooms
- Family Life Center—Game Room or interior rooms of North Suite
- Preschool Suite—interior rooms
- South Suite—interior rooms
- Thompson Suite—Main Connection or interior rooms
- Student Area—Student Commons area, interior rooms
- Children’s Suite—interior area near the stage
- Great Hall

#### **D. The Evacuation Process**

An Evacuation Directive has been established that provides the interior route and exterior exit for every room in the building if evacuation becomes necessary. This Directive shall be communicated and posted.

The Map detailing this process is attached to this policy.

### **VI. Transportation Safety**

#### **A. Parking Lot Safety**

Speed bumps are located near entrance areas to slow down vehicle traffic for the protection of pedestrians.

The Parking Lot Team will assist in the protection of pedestrians during high traffic times.

#### **B. Maintenance of Vehicles**

Church volunteers seek to maintain the safe condition of the church owned vehicles under the direction of the Associate Pastor.

#### **C. Use of Vehicles**

Written instructions give guidelines for the things that should be done when the Church vehicles are used. These instructions cover items to be done prior to their use and after their use.

- If the van needs fuel, you may request a credit card or turn in receipts for reimbursement.
- Make note of the van height which is posted on the driver’s side windshield. Avoid overhangs when possible.
- Tires are under warranty at Discount Tire.
- Proof of insurance is located in a folder in each van.
- Verify that all passengers are wearing seatbelts.

- At conclusion of a trip, check seats and floor for sleeping passengers and for personal items that were left behind.
- Gather and dispose of trash.
- Refuel the vehicle.
- Use the post-trip inspection checklist when you return to the church.
- Park the vehicle in its assigned spot.
- Set the alarm and then exit through and lock the pedestrian door.
- Return the keys and completed checklists to the Administrative Suite or drop in the mail slot by the exterior door.



