

Presbytery of Milwaukee

The Milwaukee Presbytery gathers its congregations into a covenant partnership marked by faith, hope, love, trust and witness to Jesus Christ.



March 3, 2015

Dear Friends:

In September 2014 the Presbytery of Milwaukee approved an Ethical Boundaries Policy intended to ensure safe environments for children, youth, and vulnerable adults. Physical, emotional, and sexual abuse are major areas of concern in all aspects of life, including in our churches and ministry-related activities. Each of us has a responsibility to ensure that we provide a safe and inviting place for everyone we serve. You can find this policy on our website: pbymilwaukee.org/Forms & Documents/Committee on Ministry/Ethical Boundaries Policy.

Persons governed by this policy, excepting volunteers, are required to complete approved boundary training within the year they first become subject to this policy, and at least once every third year thereafter.

This policy applies to:

- all staff and volunteers who are employed by or engaged in any activity or function carried on by the Presbytery of Milwaukee,
- all teaching elders who are members of the Presbytery of Milwaukee, laboring within bounds or outside of bounds,
- all honorably retired teaching elders who continue in some active ministry,
- all teaching elders intending to do interim or pulpit supply work,
- all teaching elders laboring within our bounds who are members of other presbyteries,
- inquirers and candidates,
- youth leaders engaged in youth ministries under the direction and supervision of the presbytery,
- commissioned ruling elders serving under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery of Milwaukee,
- certified Christian educators,
- members of any PJC or former members of a PJC who may be called to serve.

The Presbytery of Milwaukee has contracted with Safe Gatherings to implement this policy. Safe Gatherings is a program designed to help churches and presbyteries meet their screening and training responsibilities through a comprehensive and consistent on-line process.



There are five components to the Safe Gatherings system:

1. **Application** – Login to safegatherings.com and register to complete the online application. The application fee is \$50, which covers the background check and training.



2. **References** – The approval process requires one professional and one clergy reference to assist in qualifying all applicants.
3. **Background Checks** – By applying for Safe Gatherings approval, applicants authorize the Presbytery of Milwaukee to conduct the background checks included in our process.
4. **Online Training** – A self-paced course addresses responsibilities and best practices for clergy, staff, and volunteers, related to abuse prevention and boundary awareness in ministry settings. The training typically takes about 1.5 hours to complete.
5. **Approval** – Upon satisfactory completion of all components of the Safe Gatherings process, the Presbytery will provide each applicant with approval documentation, valid for three (3) years.

Included in this letter is an easy-to-follow tutorial to log in to Safe Gatherings. A quick glance at this may answer many of your questions. Note that the City of your Organization = Milwaukee, and the Name of your Organization = Teaching Elder. (If you select your city and your church, that's okay.)

In addition, if your church would like to use this Safe Gatherings process for your background checks and training, there is no additional fee other than the \$50 application fee per applicant. To be set up as Church Pay and be billed monthly for applications that come from your congregation, please call the Safe Gatherings office – 888.241.8258, or email them at contact@safegatherings.com.

Please remember that you are required to complete this boundary training by September 2015. Once approved, you will be certified for 3 years.

Don't hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Grace and peace,
Sarah Rand