

# Legal Issues

## Employees and Volunteers



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.

## Screening and Hiring Employees

### Web Resources:

Protecting Children, Youth, and Adults from Abuse (an ELCA Resource)

[Trusted Employees](#) and [Ministry Safe | Abuse Prevention](#) Systems from Church Mutual Insurance, S.I.

[Called to be a Safe Place: Addressing Sexual Misconduct in Our Church](#) - A Web site containing a variety of resources dealing with sexual misconduct issues offered by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Early in the life of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, this church expressed clearly its intention to take whatever measures it could to help prevent sexual abuse and misconduct within the ELCA. In other words, the church is "Called to be a Safe Place."

[Creating Safe Churches: Addressing Sexual Misconduct](#) A Web site containing a variety of resources dealing with sexual misconduct issues is offered by the Presbyterian Church. The theme of the site is "Safe Churches." The Web site contains sexual misconduct-related definitions, awareness-raising resources, guidelines for creating sexual misconduct policies for congregations, protocols for reporting incidents of sexual misconduct, resources for rebuilding trust that has been shattered in a religious community by incidents of sexual misconduct.

### Books and Pamphlets:

[Safe Sanctuaries: Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse in Church](#)

by Joy Thornburg Melton

This 80-page book from Upper Room provides guidance to help develop policies and procedures for reducing the risk of child abuse in the church. The book defines the scope of child abuse, outlines the different types of abuse, notes the indicators of abuse, discusses the legal requirements for reporting abuse, and provides guidelines for screening and hiring workers and volunteers. The book also outlines basic procedures of safe ministry with children and youth and outlines a congregational plan for responding to allegations of abuse. Sample forms included for screening workers, requiring background checks, doing reference checks and reporting suspected abuse. A suggested training session plan for people who work with children and youth is outlined, and a bibliography of suggested resources is included

Also included:

Safe Sanctuaries for Ministers

Safe Sanctuaries for Children and Youth DVD

**Books:****[Essential Guide to Youth Ministry Safety](#)**

by Richard R. Hammar

**[Essential Guide to Children's Ministry Safety](#)**

by Church Law & Tax Store

**[No Surprises: Harmonizing Risk and Reward in Volunteer Management](#)**

by the [Nonprofit Risk Management Center](#)

**[Staff Screening Tool Kit](#)**

by the [Nonprofit Risk Management Center](#)

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