

and strengthening church integrity

NCD Churches share a strong commitment to protect the vulnerable, both inside our congregations and throughout the broader community. Alongside this commitment, our churches have a deep desire to foster church integrity, strengthening the witness of Christ's church. In light of these things, we encourage every NCD congregation to do the following things.

- Every congregation needs to understand and implement Minnesota Statute 604.20, which requires you to inquire about past sexual exploitation offenses when hiring for a ministry role that will include counseling.
- Every church needs to develop a security policy to protect the vulnerable, especially children.
- Every congregation needs to ensure that pastors and church leaders follow mandated reporting laws when a person is credibly accused of sexual abuse (Minnesota Statute 260E.06). The state of Minnesota has published Resource Guide for Mandated Reporters of Child Maltreatment Concerns.
- Churches should perform and document both initial and ongoing background checks for all church staff and all ministry volunteers.
- Every church should regularly seek input from its insurer regarding resources, tools, and best practices related to protecting individuals and strengthening church integrity.
- Every church needs to develop and implement a compassionate and principled response and protocol to reports of abuse.
- We strongly encourage you to require an EFCA ministerial credentialing of all eligible staff members. This is the best way we can provide accountability and support for your congregations' pastoral and ministry staff.

We recommend the following resources:

- Becoming a Church that Cares Well for the Abused by Brad Hambrick
- Church Law and Tax, an organization that provides legal guidance for pastors and churches (www.churchlawandtax.com)
- Ministry Safe, a ministry devoted to protecting children and those who serve them (www.ministrysafe.com)
- Church Mutual Insurance & Brotherhood Mutual Insurance

Our district is committed to walking alongside you as you work to protect the vulnerable and strengthen your church's integrity in these important ways. Please reach out to us, we are here to help in any way we can!