

SafeChurch Diocese of East Tennessee

Key Information at a Glance (2019)

For reporting issues within the church:

The Ecclesial Authority is the Bishop.

Bishop Brian Cole
865-966-2110 (office)
bcole@dioet.org

In the absence of the bishop, the ecclesial authority is the [President of the Standing Committee](#).

For reporting clergy misconduct (if the alleged abuse is being done by a clergy person):

The Intake officer is the Rev. Lee Ragsdale
865-740-3657 (cell)
leeragsdale(at)att.net

For reporting outside the church:

Tennessee law states that everyone in Tennessee is a mandated reporter. Tennessee Code Annotated 37-1-403(i) (1) requires all persons to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. “Any person who has knowledge of or is called upon to render aid to any child who is suffering from or has sustained any wound, injury, disability, or physical or mental condition shall report such harm immediately if the harm is of such a nature as to reasonably indicate that it has been caused by brutality abuse, or neglect or that, on basis of available information, reasonably appears to have been caused by brutality, abuse, or neglect.”

Failure to report abuse is a violation of the law and a Class A misdemeanor, carrying a sentence of up to three months imprisonment, a fine or both. Those who report and “act in good faith” are immune from any civil or criminal charges, which may result. The reporter has the right to remain confidential and anonymous.

More information is available at www.state.tn.us/humanserv.

- For life-threatening situations or where there is imminent danger, dial 911 and speak to your local police emergency dispatcher.

- For non-life threatening situation, where there is no imminent danger, or where there may be reason to believe abuse is occurring or ongoing, but you are not currently observing it (e.g, suspicion of abuse, neglect, etc.) , report to the State abuse hotline, 877-237-0004.

Vestry, and leaders of parishes, worshipping communities, campus ministries and Diocesan ministries, have the following annual obligations:

- Review the policies and procedures manual each year with the vestry and other organizational leaders
- Make sure that all have up to date copies of the manual
- Document this in an annual vestry resolution
- Send a copy of this resolution and the Notice of Annual Adoption to the Canon to the Ordinary no later than March 1st of each year
- Retain signature acknowledgement form of receipt of the policies on file at the organization
- Complete and post the Safe Church Notice Form in highly visible places and update it each year