

Children, Youth, Volunteers and Staff
“Safe Sanctuaries” Policy

Approved by Church Council
October 23, 2005

Fair View United Methodist Church
1430 Mecklenburg Highway
Mooresville, NC 28115

OVERVIEW

Fair View United Methodist Church is committed to maintaining a safe environment for every child and young person involved in its program ministry, and is further committed to insuring that its adult staff and volunteers are protected from unfounded accusations of abuse and neglect.

With this policy, FVUMC affirms the right of children and youth to be protected from abuse and neglect, and equally important, the right of volunteers and staff to be protected from allegations of abuse and neglect.

We believe that a well-balanced, proactive prevention policy is a necessity for any institution entrusted with the care of children and youth. The policy applies to all those who work with children through Fair View sponsored programs both on and off campus.

**Guidelines for Employees and Volunteers
Who Direct or Control Children/Youth/Disabled Activities
At Fair View United Methodist Church**

1. Volunteer Screening Procedures –

- a. For a volunteer position, any candidate who may be working with children, youth or the disabled shall complete and return a Covenant Statement and Volunteer Application. (Form 1 attached)
- b. The Covenant and Application shall be carefully reviewed by the youth minister, children's minister or other ministry leader in the area that the applicant will be working.
- c. If the applicant appears to be appropriate for the ministry work, then at least two of the references may be checked to confirm the information provided on the application. (Form 3 attached)
- d. Should FVUMC have sufficient reason to believe that an applicant poses a threat to children, youth or disabled persons and/or has any prior history of physical or sexual abuse directed against another person, then such applicant shall be immediately removed from consideration for a ministry position in this work area.
- e. A criminal background check may be preferred through a state law enforcement agency with respect to any applicant.

2. Employee Screening Procedures –

- a. All persons applying for an employee position with children, youth, and/or disabled persons will submit Forms 1 and 2, regardless of ministry position being considered.
- b. In addition, a criminal background check shall be performed through an appropriate agency, and such background check shall include at least a state law enforcement check.
- c. Should FVUMC have sufficient reason to believe that an applicant poses a threat to children, youth or disabled persons and/or has any prior history of physical or sexual abuse directed against another person, then such applicant shall be immediately removed from consideration for employment with FVUMC.

3. Waiting Period –

No volunteer worker will be considered for any lead ministry position involving contact with children, youth or the disabled until the candidate has been a member of FVUMC or is personally known to the ministry leader for at least six months and has met the screening criteria above.

4. Supervision –

- a. At least two adults (over 18) shall be present during children/youth/disabled activities, including events that require vehicle travel and program events off campus. Exceptions are permitted only with the approval of the parent and the ministry leader in emergency situations.
- b. During services/events, two adults shall be in each classroom. If two adults are not present in each classroom, then the door to the room will be left open. If the classroom has a Dutch door, then only the top portion may be left open. One adult shall be available to roam in order to monitor activity inside and outside the room(s) where the service/event is held in order to satisfy this requirement.
- c. Volunteer workers are not to send children to find their parents, nor to release any child to await transportation. Workers are to release children in their care only to parents, guardians, or persons specifically authorized to pick up the person.

5. Disciplinary problems –

Shall be reported to the workers' coordinator/supervisor.

Workers are not to spank, hit, grab, shake, or otherwise physically discipline anyone.

6. Injuries or Illness –

- a. A suitable approved substitute, who meets the criteria set forth above, shall be used to take the place of workers who are ill. If it is not possible to find such a substitute, then only substitutes who are personally known to the relevant ministry leader for at least six months or who have been cleared through an immediate background screening shall be used.
- b. Any coordinator/supervisor who becomes aware of an injury to a worker or participant shall take steps to ensure proper medical attention is given to the injured person. If the injury is minor, the parent or guardian should be notified of the injury when picking up the injured person. If the injury requires medical attention, then the parent or guardian of the injured person should be notified along with the worker's coordinator /supervisor as soon as practical. Proper emergency attention should be provided to the injured person, possibly including summoning an ambulance in the interim.

7. Notice of Injury, Abuse or Molestation –

- a. A written incident/notice of non-minor injury report shall be prepared by workers whenever a non-minor injury occurs during a ministry function/event. The incident report shall be forwarded to the worker's coordinator/supervisor and a copy provided to the Trustees Chair of FVUMC. (Form 4 attached)
- b. Workers who become aware of any non-minor injury, any abuse or molestation or any allegation of abuse or molestation connected with any ministry activity shall immediately inform their coordinator/supervisor or ministry leader of such matter. The coordinator/supervisor or ministry leader shall immediately inform FVUMC Pastor.
- c. Any coordinator/supervisor who becomes aware of any non-minor injury, or any abuse or molestation, or allegation of abuse or molestation connected with any ministry activity at FVUMC shall immediately inform the Pastor and shall complete a 'Notice of Injury' form. (Form 4 attached)
- d. Any ministry leader at FVUMC who becomes aware of possible abuse or molestation of a participant shall ensure that the participant's parent or guardian is immediately informed that abuse or molestation may have occurred. The Pastor shall promptly contact the church attorney before any report of abuse or molestation is made to law enforcement authorities. If practical, such opinion by the attorney shall be obtained within 24 hours of the time that the Pastor first becomes aware of the abuse or molestation.
- e. Upon notice of abuse or molestation to the Pastor, then the church's insurance carrier shall be promptly notified, as well as any District or Conference agencies that need to be notified of such allegations according to the Book of Discipline.
- f. Confidentiality of all persons involved shall be safeguarded.

8. Violation of Policy or Procedures –

- a. Workers shall promptly notify their coordinator/supervisor of any activity undertaken on their own behalf or by others which violates this policy or procedure.
- b. Any coordinator/supervisor or ministry leader at FVUMC, who becomes aware of a violation of the policy or procedures, shall take all necessary steps to ensure future compliance with the policy and

procedures by all workers; and shall remove workers from their position if such removal is warranted, or if the workers pose a potential threat to others.

9. Internal Investigation –

- a. Any employee of FVUMC who is the subject of an investigation shall be removed from his or her position, with pay, pending completion of the investigation. If employee has admitted to the abuse or molestation, then he or she shall be terminated in accordance with FVUMC employment practices.
- b. Any volunteer worker who is the subject of an investigation shall be removed from his or her position pending completion of the investigation.
- c. Any person who is not found innocent of alleged abuse or molestation shall be removed from work with children, youth, and the disabled at FVUMC. FVUMC shall consult with its attorney for advice of termination of employment if indicated.

10. Spokesperson For FVUMC –

The Pastor or his or her designee shall be the spokesperson following notice or allegations of any abuse or molestation in connection with activities of the ministry. This person will be the only person authorized to convey information on behalf of FVUMC concerning the situation, so as to avoid compromising any ongoing investigation, and shall convey only such information as is deemed necessary under the circumstances.

11. Annual Employee/Volunteer Worker Review –

- a. This policy and procedures shall be conveyed for review annually to all workers, employees, coordinators, supervisors and pastors to whom it applies.
- b. All employees of FVUMC shall complete a brief renewal application once a year. (Form 2 attached)
- c. A yearly update of information shall also be completed by all volunteer workers associated with FVUMC who will be working in any capacity with children, youth or the disabled at FVUMC.
- d. In the event any employee renewal application and/or volunteer yearly information update suggests or indicates that any employee or volunteer worker has become unsuitable for working with children, youth, or the disabled, he or she shall be immediately removed from his or her current position(s), and shall not be considered for other positions involving working with children, youth or the disabled.

12. Policy/Procedure Revision –

This policy and procedures will be regularly reviewed with FVUMC's attorney and can be modified accordingly by action of the Church Council in accordance with the Book of Discipline. Any such modification shall be promptly conveyed to all persons affected by the modification.

Fair View United Methodist Church
COVENANT STATEMENT AND VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

The congregation of Fair View United Methodist Church is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, youth, disabled persons, and volunteers who participate in ministries and activities sponsored by the church. The following policy statements reflect our congregation's commitment to preserving this church as holy place of safety and protection for all who would enter and as a place in which all people can experience the love of God through relationships with others.

1. No adult who has been convicted of child abuse (either sexual abuse, physical abuse, or emotional abuse) should volunteer to work with children, youth or disabled persons in any church sponsored activity.
2. All adult lead volunteers involved with children, youth or disabled persons of our church must have been members of the congregation or is personally known to the ministry leader for a least six months before beginning a volunteer assignment.
3. Adult volunteers with children, youth or disabled persons shall observe the "Two-Adult Rule" at all times so that no adult is ever alone with children, youth or disabled persons.
4. Adult volunteers with children, youth or disabled persons shall attend regular training and educational events provided by the church to keep volunteers informed of church policies and state laws regarding child abuse.
5. Adult volunteers shall immediately report to their supervisor any behavior that seems abusive or inappropriate.

Name: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

Day Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Area of ministry for which you are applying: _____

Previous work experience: _____

Previous volunteer experience: _____

Please answer each of the following questions:

1. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to observe and abide by all church policies regarding working in ministries with children, youth and disabled persons? Yes No
2. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to observe the "Two-Adult Rule" at all times? Yes No
3. If in a lead volunteer position in this congregation, do you agree to abide by the "Six-Month Rule" before beginning a volunteer assignment? Yes No
4. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to participate in training and education events provided by the church related to your volunteer assignment? Yes No
5. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to promptly report abusive or inappropriate behavior to your supervisor? Yes No
6. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to inform a minister of this congregation if you have ever been convicted of child abuse? Yes No
7. Have you ever been charged resulting in a conviction, pleaded guilty, or pleaded no contest to a crime, either a misdemeanor or a felony (including but not limited to drug-related charges, child abuse, other crimes of violence, improper conduct involving a minor or a disabled person, theft, or motor vehicle violations)?
No Yes (if yes, please explain fully)

Driver License No. _____ State _____ Social Security No. _____

8. As a volunteer in this congregation, are you aware of having any traits or tendencies that could pose any threat to children, youth and/or disabled persons?

No Yes (if yes, please explain fully)

References: Please list three personal references (people who are not related to you by blood or marriage) and provide a complete address and phone information for each. References are confidential.

1. Name:
Address:
Daytime Phone: Evening Phone:
Relationship to reference:

2. Name:
Address:
Daytime Phone: Evening Phone:
Relationship to reference:

3. Name:
Address:
Daytime Phone: Evening Phone:
Relationship to reference:

I have read this **Covenant Statement and Volunteer Application**, and I agree to observe and abide by the policies set forth above.

I recognize that FVUMC to which this application is being submitted is relying on the accuracy of the information contained herein. Accordingly, I attest and affirm that all of the information that I have provided is absolutely true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

I authorize FVUMC to contact any person or entity listed in this application, and I further authorize any such person or entity to provide FVUMC with information, opinions, and impressions relating to my background and/or qualifications.

I further voluntarily release FVUMC and any such person or entity listed herein from liability involving the communication of information relating to my background or qualifications. I further authorize FVUMC or its agent to conduct a criminal background investigation as they deem appropriate.

Signature of Applicant

Date

Print full name

EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION

Name: _____ Daytime Phone: _____

Address: _____

Age range: () Under 18 () 18-25 () Over 25

Drivers License No. _____ State _____ Social Security No. _____

In which position are you making application for employment? _____

Are you currently involved in any children/youth/disabled persons program of FVUMC or any other employment or volunteer work? _____

Have you at any time ever:

- Been arrested resulting in a finding of guilt or a plea of no contest for any reason? Yes No
- Engaged in any child molestation, exploitation or sexual abuse? Yes No
- Been charged resulting in a conviction of or a plea of no contest to any motor vehicle violation within the last 10 years? Yes No
- Participated in, convicted of or pleaded no contest to any improper conduct involving minors or disabled persons? Yes No

Are you aware of:

- Having any traits or tendencies that could pose any threat to children, youth, disabled persons or others? Yes No
- Any reason who you should not work with children, youth, disabled persons or others? Yes No

If the answer to any of these questions is "yes", please explain in detail: _____

(Please attach additional pages if more space is needed)

Applicant Verification and Release

FVUMC is a "Safe Sanctuaries" congregation that is committed to maintaining a safe environment for its congregation, especially children, youth and the disabled. We are further committed to insure that the staff and volunteers are protected from unfounded accusations of abuse and neglect.

I recognize that FVUMC is relying on the information contained herein. Accordingly, I attest and affirm that all of the information that I have provided is absolutely true and correct. I further authorize FVUMC or its agent to conduct a criminal background investigation as they deem appropriate.

I agree to abide by all policies and procedures of the organization, and to protect the health and safety of the children/youth/disabled persons at all times.

Printed name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please attach resume to employment application and send to:
P.O. Box 27, Mt. Mourne, NC 28123
or deliver to the church office:
1430 Mecklenburg Hwy. Mooresville, NC 28115

Form 2

REFERENCE RESPONSE INFORMATION

To: _____
(Name of Reference)

From: _____
(Name and Address of Ministry)

Regarding: _____
(Name of Worker Candidate)

To Whom It May Concern:

You have been listed as a reference by the above individual, who has expressed an interest in working with children, youth or disabled persons in our ministry. In order for our organization to properly evaluate the qualifications of this worker candidate, we would like you to complete this form with your honest opinions and impressions of the candidate.

Once complete, please return this form to our organization in the enclosed envelope. Thank you for your assistance in this regard. **Your response to this inquiry will be kept strictly confidential.**

1. How long have you known the above individual? _____
2. In what capacity have you come to know this individual? (e.g., coworker, neighbor, friend, etc.)

3. In your opinion, is the above worker candidate fully qualified to work with children, youth or disabled persons?
 Yes No (if no, explain on reverse side of this form)
4. What concerns, if any, would you have in allowing this individual to work with children, youth or disabled persons?

5. Are you aware of anything in the candidate's background, personality, or behavior that could in any way pose a threat to children, youth or disabled persons?
 Yes No (if yes, please explain on reverse side of this form)

Additional comments or explanations: _____

The above information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature _____ Date _____

Please return this form at your earliest convenience to: _____

Thank you.

Fair View United Methodist Church
1430 Mecklenburg Highway
Mooresville, NC 28115
Telephone: 704.664.2880 * Fax: 704.669.5144

NOTICE OF INJURY

Person
Injured

Name: _____ Age: _____

Address: _____ Telephone: _____

Name of parents/guardians (if minor): _____

Time and
Place of
Injury

Location of Incident: _____

Date of Injury: _____ Time: _____ AM PM

Full
Description
of Injury

Injury sustained: _____

Where was injured taken? (hospital/doctor): _____

Relationship to FVUMC: Member Visitor Volunteer Employee
Student/Camper Other

If injury occurred on FVUMC's premises, for what purpose was the injured in the premises?

Who was responsible for supervision at the time of injury? _____

If injury occurred elsewhere, what connection did it have with FVUMC's operation or activities?

Does the injured party have personal medical insurance? Yes No

If so, Name of medical insurance company and policy number: _____

Witnesses

Name: _____ Tel: _____

Address: _____

Name: _____ Tel: _____

Address: _____

Signature: _____ Date of Report: _____