

VI. SAFE CHURCH POLICIES

Safe Financial Practices-General Principles

Revised and accepted by the Board of Trustees, People's Church

- A. Separation of Duties:** Different people should be assigned to:
1. Authorizing transactions
 2. Recording transactions
 3. Control of Assets. Relatedly,
 - A. Bank deposits ideally should be done by someone other than the recorder (this is currently not feasible).
 - B. Someone other than the check writer should reconcile bank accounts.
 - C. Checks should be signed after examination of supporting documents
 4. Annual Review by the Finance Committee to review procedures.
- B. Documentation:**
1. An accounting manual should specify all procedures (currently in progress).
 2. Clearly specify duties among staff/volunteers involved in financial activities including:
 - a. Checking accuracy of invoices is specifically assigned.
 - b. Using vouchers for expense without standing authority (Regular Bills).
 - c. No Petty cash fund
 - d. Using a regular form for collections (individuals would minimally record totals and their initials).
 - e. Regular review of insurance coverage is specifically assigned
 - f. Regular comparison of financial reports to actual assets on hand performed yearly by Treasurer and Finance Committee
 - g. Mail regular quarterly notices to contributors of their contributions with a note requesting they report any discrepancy.
 - h. When paid, invoices/supporting documentation initialed dated and 3rd part of check stapled to invoice.
- C. Personnel:**
1. Screen new employees. Minimal checks currently in place
 2. Adequate background and training provided to adequately accomplish tasks.
 3. Bonding not currently in place.
- D. Security:**
1. Inform bank that checks made out to the church should never be cashed.
 2. Accounting records and blank checks are secured.
 3. Cash and checks are secured until deposit and deposited in bank as soon as possible. Current security standards are being reviewed
 4. Accounting records are backed up weekly and a second copy is kept off site.
- E. Handling Cash:**
1. Staff, board or committee members should always recruit individuals handling Cash.
 2. If cash exceeds \$100, at least two people should be involved in counting and recording it (in a safe place).
 3. Individuals collecting cash should always indicate amount collected and their initials.
 4. No more than \$500 cash should be kept in the Church. Events at which more than this amount might be collected should have an arrangement for bank deposits during the event if at all possible.

The statements made above are true unless otherwise indicated.

PEOPLE'S CHURCH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROTECTION POLICY

SAFETY POLICY

Purpose

The members of People's Church strive to ensure the existence of a caring religious community free of violence and abuse of all kinds, including intimidation, coercion, sexual harassment, and physical and sexual abuse. The members of People's Church are also aware of the special obligation we have to protect, support, and appropriately nurture the children and youth of our congregation. Therefore, we have developed the following policies and procedures that will help create a safe environment that protects children and adults from harm and promotes their religious and spiritual growth.

Religious Education Volunteer Screening

- 1) Each teacher and assistant will sign the Religious Education Teacher Contract and submit to a background check and have no history of abuse.
- 2) General guidelines:
 - a) Volunteers must have been active church participants for six months.
 - b) Advisors for high school youth must be 25 and for middle school youth must be 21.

Supervision Policy and Guidelines

- 1) There will be 2 adults in each youth classroom.
- 2) If only 1 adult is in a room, the door to the classroom will remain open, and the D.R.E. or designated representative will check in with the group.
- 3) Drivers for high school events will be age 25 or older (21 for middle and elementary school events), and a copy of each driver's license and insurance will be on file at the church office.
- 4) Cars must be currently registered and insured and be in running order according to the state laws.
- 5) Seatbelts are required for each person in the vehicle.

Friendship with Youth

Although we hope that youth and adults will have genuine fondness for one another, any adult who looks to youth for friendship is not sufficiently mature to be in a position of responsibility over them. An adult would be considered to be in a position of authority over youth, deeming this an inappropriate relationship. A "friendship" is reciprocal, where neither person has more responsibility for the health of the relationship than the other. This is antithetical to the adult/youth relationship, where the adult is the one who assumes primary responsibility for maintaining appropriate boundaries and cultivating an atmosphere of health and trust. Therefore, it is the adult volunteer's or compensated worker's responsibility to avoid or discourage inappropriate friendships.

Confidentiality

Adults who work with children and youth under the aegis of People's Church are responsible first to the children and youth, but to the church as well. For the most part, a covenant of confidentiality will mean that you do not repeat information told to you in confidence. However, sometimes an adult will learn that a child or youth is the victim of abuse, has issues with substance abuse or is a danger to self or others. It is People's Church policy that this type of information be communicated to the minister and/or D.R.E. immediately, to discuss an appropriate course of action. If you feel the child or youth is an imminent danger to self or others, the parents will be notified. Adult volunteers must be clear with youth that they are required to report any instances that seriously threaten health or safety.

Off-site and Overnight Activities

- 1) A permission slip signed by parent or guardian is required for all off-site and overnight activities. This will include a contact number where a responsible adult can be reached if an emergency situation arises during the activity.
- 2) Each driver will have a copy of the permission slip and current registration form for each youth passenger in their vehicle, and will fill out a Driver's Form and include all requested information.
- 3) Middle and high school guidelines:
 - a) Events will follow district youth conference rules.
 - b) Youth will be supervised by at least one adult chaperone at all times.

Emergency and First Aid Procedures

- 1) Emergency telephone numbers are posted by all office and kitchen phones.
- 2) First aid kits are kept in the kitchen, the church office, and the RE work and supply room.
- 3) Protective gloves are included in all first aid kits and in every classroom cupboard in a pencil box with bandaids, and their use is required when treating an injury involving bodily fluids.
- 4) The "Accident and First Aid Report" must be completed by the person administering first aid and submitted to the church office for filing.
- 5) A first aid kit will be taken on all off-site activities.
- 6) Annual R.E. teacher training will include health & safety awareness and the church's emergency procedures.

Nursery Policies & Procedures

- 1) Each child will be signed in and out by their parent/guardian.
- 2) Each diaper bag must have an outer identification label.
- 3) Some children have dietary restrictions and special health considerations. Forms are to be completed by the parent/guardian, and all nursery staff must be attentive to these.
- 4) For diaper changes, either a disposable pad must be used on the changing table, and/or the table must be cleaned with a disinfectant wipe. Nursery staff will wash their hands after each diaper change.
- 5) At the end of the nursery time, large surfaces must be sprayed with disinfectant, and used cups and lids must be taken to the kitchen. The bag of soiled diapers must be taken to the dumpster.

A copy of the Nursery Policies & Procedures will be posted in the Nursery.

ABUSE POLICY

The leaders of People's Church place the highest value upon children and youth to insure their physical, social, intellectual, and spiritual development. We are committed to providing a safe environment. We are deeply concerned for any victim of abuse and support them in getting the help that they need.

Code of Conduct

No one working in any capacity under the auspices of People's Church shall engage in sexualized/abusive behavior with children, youth, or adults including but not limited to sexual, verbal, emotional, or physical abuse.

Abuse Reporting Procedures

- 1) A formalized Incident Response Team will be established to deal with any reports of abuse or harassment. Such abuse or harassment could be physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional in nature. The Team will be comprised of three church members based upon appropriate qualifications, such as psychology or social work background.
- 2) All volunteers must immediately report suspected cases of abuse to the minister and/or D.R.E. An incident report must be completed, including the date and time of the incident.
- 3) A member of the Incident Response Team and/or a mandated reporter must file the report with Child Protective Services and notify applicable law enforcement agencies to protect the child or youth, to protect the church, and to bring the necessary help to the abuser. Although this section particularly addresses children, the same support and reporting will be expected with adult victims of abuse. Do not try to handle this without professional outside assistance.
- 4) Church personnel will report the incident immediately to the church's insurance company. Be careful to safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of all involved.

Special Considerations

- 1) Alleged abuse by a minister or church leader
 - a) If there is a report of abuse by a minister or by any member of the Incident Response Team, the alleged abuser will not be a participant in the process of receiving or investigating the allegations.
 - b) Situations involving alleged ministerial abuse shall be reported by the President of the Board of Trustees to the UUA Department of Ministry and to the Unitarian Universalist Ministers' Association.
- 2) Harassment of church employees
 - a) Allegations of harassment of church employees by persons in a position to affect the employee's job security should be handled in accordance with federal and state employment discrimination guidelines.
 - b) Abuse or harassment by persons who do not have a direct influence on the employee's job security will be treated as adult-on-adult abuse and handled as described below.
- 3) Adult-on-Adult Harassment or Abuse
 - a) Complaints of harassment or abuse directed toward members of the church community by strangers on the property should be handled by the police.

Complaints of harassment or abuse directed toward adult church members, including the minister, should be handled in accordance with the board policy on disruptive people.

Warning Signs of Physical Abuse:

- Unexplained bruises, welts or cuts
- A pattern of injuries over time
- Fearful behavior by the child
- Caregivers who are physically abusive or often angry
- Inappropriate child clothing, which may be used by the child or caregiver to hide signs of injury

Warning Signs of Emotional Abuse:

- Excessively fearful or shy behavior
- Persistent anti-social behavior (e.g., very aggressive)
- Children who constantly try to “parent” other kids
- Regression – older children acting much younger
- Harsh, belittling or manipulative caregiver behavior

Warning Signs of Sexual Abuse:

- An STD or pregnancy before age 14
- Stained, bloody or torn underclothes
- Injury to the genital area
- Children who have age-inappropriate knowledge about sex or interest in sexual acts
- Extreme passive or aggressive behavior
- Self-destructive behavior such as substance abuse, self-mutilation or suicide attempts
- Caregivers who limit the child’s contact with others

Verbal signs may include the following statements:

- I don’t like (name).
- (Name) does things to me when we’re alone.
- I don’t like to be alone with (name).
- (Name) has fooled around with me.

Incident Response Team

Tom Cunningham - 269-358-0240

Don Miller - 269-806-7690

Carolyn Heineman 269-9345-7101

Responding to Allegations of Abuse

- 1) Make sure all incident report forms are accurate and accessible to the proper authorities.
- 2) The spokesperson for People's Church will be the President of the Board of Trustees.

Incident Response Procedures

- 1) Ensure the safety of the victim.
- 2) Notify the appropriate family members.
- 3) Document all your efforts at handling the incident.
- 4) Do not prejudge the situation, but take the allegations seriously and reach out to the victim and the victim's family. Showing care and support can help to prevent further hurt. Extend whatever pastoral resources are needed. Remember that the care and safety of the victim are the priority.
- 5) Treat the accused with dignity and support. If the accused is a church worker, that person should be relieved temporarily of his or her duties until the investigation is finished. If the person is a paid employee, arrangements should be made to either maintain or suspend his or her income until the allegations are cleared or substantiated.

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ACCIDENT AND FIRST AID REPORT

Date & time: _____

Name of injured person: _____

Age: _____

Name of person administering first aid: _____

Nature of injury: _____

How injury occurred: _____

First aid provided: _____

Were bodily fluids involved? (Circle) Yes No

If yes, type of fluids: _____ Were protective gloves worn? Yes No

Signature of person administering first aid: _____

ACCIDENT AND FIRST AID REPORT

Date & time: _____

Name of injured person: _____

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Nature of injury: _____

How injury occurred: _____

_____ First aid

provided: _____

Were bodily fluids involved? (Circle) Yes No

If yes, type of fluids: _____ Were protective gloves worn? Yes No

Signature of person administering first aid: _____

REPORT OF SUSPECTED INCIDENT OF ABUSE

1. Name of worker (paid or volunteer) observing or receiving disclosure of abuse: _____
_____ 2.

Victim's name: _____

Victim's age/birthdate: _____

3. Date/place of initial conversation with/report from victim: _____

4. Victim's statement (give your detailed summary here): _____

5. Name of person accused of abuse: _____
Relationship of accused to victim (paid staff, volunteer, family member, other): _____
_____ 6.

Reported to minister/D.R.E.: _____

Date/time: _____

Summary: _____

7. Call to victim's parent/guardian/family member: _____

Date/time: _____

Spoke with: _____

Summary: _____

8. Call to Department of Human Services (855-444-3911) _____

Date/time: _____

Spoke with: _____

Summary: _____

