

WYOMING UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

216 Wyoming Mill Road
Dover, DE 19904
(302) 697-8400 office@wyomingumc.com

SAFE SANCTUARIES POLICY

PURPOSE

The Safe Sanctuaries Policy of Wyoming United Methodist Church (hereafter Wyoming UMC) are intended to be followed by anyone who will be working directly with youth or vulnerable adults as well as anyone who will be bringing youth groups or vulnerable adults to the church facilities. More specifically, the purpose of these policies is as follows:

- To protect youth and vulnerable adults who are coming to Wyoming UMC for various functions and celebrations from sexual misconduct, harassment, and abuse: physical abuse, violent behavior, substance abuse, or abduction.
- To protect staff and adults in teaching and leadership positions who may be involved in difficult situations with youth and vulnerable adults.
- To implement and monitor cyber-safety for those youth who will be using computer equipment while at Wyoming UMC.
- To create a safe sanctuary at Wyoming UMC from the beginning of any hiring process, either volunteer or paid staff, with thorough background checks and screening.
- To create a system for reporting any incidents of abuse that might occur at Wyoming UMC.
- To require the reporting of any injuries or accidents occurring on Wyoming UMC property.

DEFINITIONS

ADULTS: Persons 18 years of age or older.

YOUTH: Persons under the age of 18, unless still attending high school

CHILDREN: Persons under the age of 12.

VULNERABLE ADULTS: Persons 18 years of age or older, including but not limited to , those with diminished physical, mental or emotional capacities, including students visiting from other countries during the summer as part of the International Students Outreach Program (ISOP).

WYOMING UMC GROUPS: Groups that originate within Wyoming United Methodist Church.

NON-WYOMING UMC GROUPS: Groups that bring their programs to Wyoming UMC from outside organizations.

STAFF: Those who work with youth or vulnerable adults on the salary of Wyoming United Methodist Church. Staff personnel follow requirements set forth in the Employee Handbook created by the Staff Parish Relations Team.

VOLUNTEERS: Those who work with youth or vulnerable adults without pay, including but not limited to such individuals as the Sunday School superintendent, Sunday School teachers and assistants, youth group leaders and drivers who assist in the transportation of youth and vulnerable adults.

PROGRAM POLICIES

1) WYOMING UMC CHURCH GROUPS:

Preschool Programs – child safety in the Preschool setting is governed by the Delaware Department of Licensing and Child Care guidelines and supervised by the Preschool Director.

For every youth program including Sunday School, there shall be at least two (2) adults in attendance, wherever practical. If there are more than twelve (12) youth between the ages of 12 and 18 in the group, there shall be at least one (1) additional adult for every ten (10) additional youth. If there are more than twelve (12) children under the age of 12 in the group, there shall be at least one (1) additional adult for every six (6) additional children.

Children will be dismissed from a program into the care of an adult who is the parent or who has permission on record to take the child. This is to insure the safety of the child and to avoid any unsupervised behavior that might lead to an incident of abuse.

No youth who has been dismissed from a program shall be allowed to remain in the church building without adult supervision.

The youngest adult in a supervisory role shall be at least five (5) years older than the oldest youth in attendance.

All classrooms shall have a window in the door or maintain an open-door policy.

Bathroom procedures for children and youth:

- Children under five should be escorted to the nursery bathroom by an adult.
- A buddy system for children over five should be practiced.

Church facilities in which youth programs are operated shall have any necessary certificates of occupancy displayed in a prominent position.

All Staff members and volunteers working with youth shall have appropriate background checks on record in the church office. Background checks will be updated every three years.

2) NON-WYOMING UMC GROUPS:

- a. All groups contracting to use Wyoming UMC facilities for programs involving youth or vulnerable adults shall be provided with and agree to comply with all the requirements set forth in the Policy Statement and Participation Agreement attached at the time of contracting.
- b. All groups conducting programs for youth in or upon church property are responsible for obtaining the necessary certificates of insurance for both liability and workers compensation and must produce these certificates upon contracting for use of the facilities.

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

- a. It is sexual misconduct when a person within a role of leadership (pastor, educator, counselor, youth leader or other position of leadership) engages in sexual contact or sexualized behavior with a congregant, client, employee, student, staff member, co-worker or volunteer within the leadership relationship. (See the 2008 Book of Resolutions, pp. 128-132 incorporated herein by reference). This includes any and all *unwelcome* behavior of a sexual nature.
- b. Examples of leadership relationships include, but are not limited to:
 - i. Pastor/member of the church
 - ii. Supervisor/church employee
 - iii. Youth Pastor/youth
 - iv. Sunday School teacher/student
 - v. Pastor/international student
 - vi. Pastoral Counselor/counseled
 - vii. Nursery staff/infants and children
 - viii. Preschool staff/student
- c. Examples of sexualized behavior or sexual contact include:
 - i. Displaying sexually suggestive visuals
 - ii. Making sexual comments or innuendos about one's own or another person's body
 - iii. Inappropriate touching of another's body, hair or clothing in a sexual manner
 - iv. Inappropriate touching or rubbing oneself in a sexual manner in the presence of another person
 - v. Kissing, fondling or sexual intercourse
- d. Church policies regarding sexual misconduct, sexual harassment and abuse are further set forth in the Employee Handbook.

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO COMPLAINTS OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT/HARASSMENT AND ABUSE

- a. Persons desiring to report or discuss a concern regarding sexual misconduct, sexual harassment or sexual abuse may contact the chairpersons of the Staff Parish Relations Team, their pastors, another United Methodist Church pastor, a District Superintendent, the Bishop or a person trained to function as an Advocate as part of the Conference CARE Team.
- b. Persons reporting sexual misconduct, harassment or abuse are assured that the process, as outlined beginning at paragraph 361 of the 2008 Book of Discipline, will be a confidential one. In accordance with the Book of Discipline 2008, when a report is made, the Bishop and District Superintendent must take action upon such a request.
- c. The provisions of paragraphs 2701-2719 of the Book of Discipline 2008 shall determine procedures that will be followed in the case of a complaint.
- d. When an allegation of sexual abuse is subject to mandatory reporting requirements by the State (as in the case of a minor or an adult incapable of self-reporting), it shall be reported to the Bishop and appropriate authorities and agencies.
- e. Persons approached by persons identifying themselves as victims of sexual misconduct, sexual harassment and/or abuse by persons within the life of the Church shall report the complaint to a District Superintendent or the Bishop in a timely manner and with a sense of expediency.
- f. Persons wishing to review the procedures outlined in paragraphs 2701-2719 of the Book of Discipline 2008 shall have access to this material in the Adult Library of Wyoming UMC Church, through the office of the District Superintendent or Cokesbury Bookstore.

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SAFE SANCTUARIES FOR YOUTH MINISTRIES AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

POLICY STATEMENT

Wyoming United Methodist Church (hereafter Wyoming UMC) is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all youth and vulnerable adults who participate in ministries and other activities on church property. Youth are defined as persons under the age of 18 and vulnerable adults are those persons over 18 with diminished physical, mental or emotional capacities. It is our goal to preserve this church as a holy place of safety and protection for all who would enter and as a place in which all people may experience in a safe surrounding the joy of fellowship in relationship with others.

In recognition of this commitment, all non-Wyoming UMC groups desiring to use Wyoming UMC facilities are asked to abide by the letter and the spirit of our Safe Sanctuaries policy and to comply with all of the requirements set forth in the Participation Agreement attached as a minimum safeguard.

We welcome your group and pray that your experience here will be fruitful.

Date:

Rev. Rick Wessell

Senior Pastor

PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT

1. It is agreed that every non-Wyoming UMC group using church facilities shall abide by the Wyoming UMC Safe Sanctuaries Policy, a copy of which has been provided as part of your contract packet.
2. The youngest adult in a supervisory role shall be at least five (5) years older than the oldest youth in attendance. For example, if the oldest youth participating is 18 the youngest adult supervisor must be at least 23 years of age.
3. For every youth group using the church property, there shall be at least two (2) persons over the age of 18 (see point #2 above) in attendance at all times. If there are more than twelve (12) youth between the ages of 12 and 18 involved in your activity at one time, there shall be at least one (1) additional person over the age of 18 in attendance for every ten (10) additional youth in the group. If there are more than twelve (12) children in the group under the age of 12, there shall be at least one (1) additional person over the age of 18 for every six (6) additional children in the group.
4. Since non-Wyoming UMC groups may not be covered under Church insurance policies, all groups conducting programs on church property shall present such proofs of insurance as may be requested by Church staff.
5. During any group activity taking place within a room without a window in the door, the door to the room shall remain open.
6. All children under the age of 5 should be escorted to the nursery bathroom by an adult. Use the buddy system for children over five.
7. All injuries to persons or church property and any complaints of sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, physical abuse, violent behavior, substance abuse or abduction occurring on church property shall be reported as soon as possible to the Wyoming UMC office.
8. All adults in a supervisory role shall have appropriate background checks.

AGREED this ____ day of _____, 2____ on behalf of _____

By _____
(Print Full Name)

Signature

WYOMING UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

SAFE SANCTUARY PARTICIPATION COVENANT FOR ALL WORKERS WITH YOUTH

The congregation of Wyoming United Methodist Church is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all youth 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 a 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, physical, or emotional) shall be allowed to work with children or youth in any church-sponsored activity.
2. Adult survivors of child abuse need the love and support of our congregation. Any adult survivor who desires to volunteer in some capacity to work with youth is encouraged to discuss his/her willingness with one of our church's ministers before accepting an assignment.
3. All adult volunteers involved with the youth of our church must be members of the congregation, sponsored by a member of the congregation, regular attendees or associate members.
4. All adult volunteers must submit to a background check and reference check. (Form to be supplied).
5. Adult volunteers with youth shall observe the two-adult rule at all times so that no adult is ever alone with one youth.
6. Adult volunteers with youth shall attend regular training and educational events provided by the church to keep volunteers informed of church policies and state laws regarding child abuse.
7. Adult volunteers shall immediately report to their supervisor any behavior that seems abusive or inappropriate.

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING:

1. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to observe and abide by all church policies regarding working in ministries with youth? _____
2. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to observe the two-adult rule at all times?

3. 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? _____
4. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to promptly report abusive or inappropriate behavior to your supervisor? _____

I have read this Participation Covenant, and I agree to observe and abide by the policies set forth above.

Print Full Name

Date, Signature

WYOMING UNITED METHODIST CHURCH SAFE SANCTUARY VOLUNTEER REFERENCE

Applicant Name: _____

Reference Name: _____

Reference Address: _____

Reference phone: _____

1. What is your relationship to the applicant? _____

2. How long have you known the applicant? _____

3. How well do you know the applicant? _____

4. How would you describe the applicant? _____

5. How would you describe the applicant's ability to relate to youth? _____

6. How would you describe the applicant's ability to relate to adults? _____

7. How would you describe the applicant's leadership abilities? _____

8. Do you know of any characteristics that would negatively affect the applicant's ability to work with youth? If so please describe them. _____

9. Do you have any knowledge that the applicant has ever been convicted of a crime? If so please describe.

10. Please list/share any other comments you would like to make: _____

Reference inquiry completed by _____

Signature

Date

(This form is to be used to verify references submitted by a volunteer. It can either be mailed or handled by phone conversation.)

WYOMING UNITED METHODIST CHURCH SAFE SANCTUARY VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

Name: _____

Address: _____

Daytime phone: _____ Evening phone _____

Occupation: _____

Employer: _____

Current job responsibilities and schedule: _____

Previous work experience: _____

Previous volunteer experience: _____

Special interests, hobbies, and skills: _____

How many hours per week are you available to volunteer _____

Can you volunteer during _____ days _____ evenings _____ weekends?

Do you have your own transportation? _____

Do you have a valid driver's license? _____

Do you have liability insurance? (List policy limits and name of carrier) _____

Why would you like to volunteer as a worker with youth? _____

What qualities do you have that would help you work with youth? _____

Have you ever been convicted of or pled guilty to a crime, either a misdemeanor or a felony (including but not limited to drug-related charges, child abuse, other crimes of violence, theft or motor vehicle violations)? ____ No ____ Yes

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

1. Name: _____

Address: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____ Relationship: _____

2. Name: _____

Address: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____ Relationship: _____

3. Name: _____

Address: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____ Relationship: _____

Print Full Name

Date, Signature of Applicant