

**Indiana-Kentucky Conference
Abuse Prevention, Training & Response
Policy & Procedure**

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Statement of Policy

As a community of Christian faith, the Indiana-Kentucky Conference, United Church of Christ (IKC-UCC) is committed to creating and maintaining programs, facilities, and a community in which friends, staff, and volunteers can worship, learn, and work together in an atmosphere free from all forms of discrimination, harassment, exploitation, or intimidation. The IKC-UCC supports principles of Safe Conduct. These include individual responsibility to fulfill the highest standards of personal conduct toward others, and to lead and guide others in fulfillment of the standards set by our Christian faith. The IKC-UCC strongly opposes and prohibits sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, or any form of exploitation or abuse of others, regardless of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identification, mental capacity, criminal history, or faith background. It is the intention of the IKC-UCC to affirmatively nurture good behavior, and to prevent and correct behavior that is contrary to this policy and, as necessary, discipline those persons who violate this policy.

“Leaders” of IKC-UCC activities are defined as participants who are entrusted with authority to direct, guide, support, encourage, care for, and chaperone other participants; Leaders include authorized ministers, event leaders, lay staff, volunteers, or parents. Every Leader has the role to monitor behavior and redirect individuals if they cross boundaries of Safe Conduct. The IKC-UCC shall nurture good conduct as demonstrated by personal behaviors that are consistent with our Christian values.

Leader Conduct –

It is especially important that every Leader of the IKC-UCC be adequately prepared and educated for the ministry in which they serve others, and to understand the ways in which their use or misuse of authority may impact others. Each Leader is obligated to demonstrate and encourage Safe Conduct by being attentive to self-care, continuing education, maintaining personal boundaries, and supporting those who are vulnerable or in need of support or refuge. Every Leader should seek to protect vulnerable individuals of every kind and to comply with State laws as may be their statutory obligation.

Each Leader shall acquire knowledge of the details of this policy and related procedures in order to:

1. Recognize and prevent sexual exploitation or sexual harassment of participants, employees, or others by anyone engaged in ministry on behalf of the IKC-UCC;
2. Recognize and prevent abuse or exploitation of Vulnerable Adults (see Appendix A for definition), including financial exploitation;
3. Recognize and prevent abuse or mistreatment of minors including abuse of one minor by another;
4. Demonstrate appropriate physical contact or verbal interaction as defined in this policy and prevent or re-direct inappropriate interaction or physical contact by others;
5. Enforce standards for contact among employees, staff, and minors outside of scheduled programs;
6. Use guidelines when communicating with others, including electronic communications and social media;
7. Manage risk of one-on-one contact between adults and minors;
8. Recognize the importance of acting upon observations or allegations of behavior outside policy boundaries;
9. Understand and accept obligations and know how to report suspected abuse as required by this policy – including when to report to conference leadership - or as required by state laws, and cooperate with investigations that may follow;
10. Understand how, by their action or inaction, they individually pose a risk to the conference in the form of legal liability or loss of reputation.

Participant Conduct –

Every participant shall refrain from using a position of power or authority to exploit an advantage over any other person, adult, or minor. Participants who are authorized ministers are subject to the ministerial Codes of Conduct for their position, in addition to this policy.

Public Awareness of the Abuse Prevention, Training & Response Policy & Procedure

The IKC-UCC is dedicated to a policy of open communication and education. All are entitled to know what to expect of IKC-UCC ministries, the Ministers who serve them, and to know the related policies and procedures created to protect the respective ministry constituencies. Constituencies of the Abuse Prevention, Training & Response Policy & Procedure policy include everyone who participates in IKC-UCC ministries.

This entire policy shall be posted on the IKC-UCC websites, and will be kept up to date.

At the time minors or Vulnerable Adults are enrolled in Conference programs, parents or legal guardians shall be provided access to the appropriate documents, including:

1. A copy of the Code of Conduct (Appendix C), and Program Standards (Appendix D);
2. A summary of the content of the orientation to be provided to minors and Vulnerable Adults regarding boundaries and reporting;
3. Information regarding the means to report violations of policy or suspicions of abuse;
4. Information regarding their personal obligation to report suspected abuse as it may exist under applicable state laws.

Minors and Vulnerable Adults shall be provided an orientation covering the following subjects:

1. Age-appropriate information about boundaries (with reference to the Code of Conduct);
2. How to protect themselves from abuse;
3. How to report boundary violations or incidents of abuse.

The orientation shall be provided at the time a minor or Vulnerable Adult begins participation in a ministry of the IKC-UCC. Parents and guardians shall be invited to receive the same abuse prevention training as provided to adult participants.

Screening, Selection, and Training for Leaders of Minors & Vulnerable Adults

Application & Qualification –

Prior to beginning their duties as Leaders in events including minors or Vulnerable Adults, volunteers shall be subject to the following qualifying steps:

1. Complete an application including 10 years of residence history and disclosure of criminal convictions. An affirmative response is required to each and every question; no answers may be omitted. Falsification of any aspect of the application shall be grounds for immediate dismissal. (Appendix B – Applications & Forms)
2. Provide a minimum of three references, which shall include both faith-related and personal.
3. Grant written permission to conduct a background check as specified by this policy.
4. Sign an acknowledgement of these policies and procedures and fulfill all training obligations.

IKC-UCC Interviewing & Background Checks –

The IKC-UCC shall employ behavioral interviewing techniques to assess suitability for working with minors, and specifically discuss the IKC-UCC's commitment to protecting minors and other vulnerable persons from abuse. (Appendix B – Applications & Forms)

The IKC-UCC shall directly contact and interview at least three references for each Leader (a combination of professional, faith-related, and personal), ask standardized questions to assess suitability and document responses. (Appendix B – Applications & Forms)

The IKC-UCC shall conduct a criminal background check on every adult Leader involved in activities that include minors or Vulnerable Adults. The background checks shall be performed in a consistent manner for all IKC-UCC events involving minors or Vulnerable Adults. Written permission to conduct a background check shall be obtained from each applicant prior to executing the check. All background checks shall be repeated for adult Leaders annually.

Approval Procedure –

IKC representatives shall review each background check. Where a criminal record exists, consideration shall be given to:

1. Seriousness of the crime;
2. Statutes that may legally disqualify the person from working with minors;
3. Length of time since the last offense;
4. Pattern of criminal activity;
5. Activities the applicant has been involved in since the offense(s) occurred.

Conviction for the following crimes are barriers to volunteer work with minors:

1. Violent crimes;
2. Sexual assault;
3. Sexual abuse or neglect of a minor.

Arrest data is not grounds for disqualification; only convictions are. The status or relevance of other crimes will be considered individually.

Following the review, the IKC-UCC representatives shall sign and date a document that becomes part of the applicant's permanent personnel file:

“We have reviewed the criminal history of Applicant X and determined, based on the information we had available at this time, the applicant would be **acceptable** for the position.”

OR

“We have reviewed the criminal history of Applicant X and determined, based on the information we had available at this time, the applicant is **not acceptable** for the position.”

Confidentiality of Application Results –

At all times, the privacy and security rights of individuals are to be protected with utmost care. The IKC-UCC shall assure that physical means and processes are in place to protect individual rights.

Record Retention –

Leader applications shall be retained in the same manner as employee applications with due regard for the safety of private information such as Social Security numbers. The records shall be retained permanently. The individual record shall include:

- Leader application;
- Permission to perform a background check;
- Results of the background check;
- Background Investigation Results form (Appendix B – Applications & Forms).

Training –

To fulfill IKC-UCC leadership obligations, each new Leader shall complete a specific program of training. Training shall be repeated annually. Fulfillment of appropriate training requirements shall be documented by an IKC-UCC representative.

Abuse prevention curriculum shall include:

1. Review of expected conduct and boundaries defined in this policy (Appendix C – Code of Conduct);
2. As applicable, review of ministry standards (Appendix D – Program Standards);
3. Explanation of procedures for reporting violations of standards of conduct and suspected abuse of a minor;
4. Explanation of individual statutory reporting obligations;
5. Identifying and managing high-risk situations such as bathroom use, transition times, and free times;
6. Physical security procedures;
7. Abuse prevention education:
 - a. Effects of sexual abuse;
 - b. Types of molesters of minors;
 - c. Characteristics of abusers;
 - d. How molesters of minors operate: access, privacy, and control;
 - e. Protecting oneself from false allegations;
 - f. Examples of minor-on-minor sexual abuse, even among young minors;
 - g. Characteristics of minors more likely to act out sexually;
 - h. Characteristics of minors more likely to be abused;
 - i. High-risk activities and circumstances;
 - j. Specific monitoring and supervision activities to prevent minor-on-minor sexual activity;
 - k. How to respond to incidents of sexual activity between minors.

The IKC-UCC representative shall assure that each employee and Leader has mastered requirements, and provide additional supervision and guidance, as needed to support this policy.

| |
|-------------------|
| Compliance |
|-------------------|

Responsibility of Employees and Volunteers –

Each employee or volunteer is obligated to fulfill the Code of Conduct (Appendix C) and Program Standards (Appendix D) (if applicable) by living the standard and helping others to do the same. Employees are obligated to be in compliance with the IKC-UCC Personnel Manual. Each is obligated to guide and gently correct others as they would in a circumstance of high personal risk. When another person, regardless of status, rank, or power, violates the Code of Conduct or Ministry

Standards, the observer must report the violation to his/her own immediate supervisor/leader, or the next level of authority if necessary.

While being mutually supportive as a team, all must be comfortable in reporting any known violations to leadership. The objective of group accountability is:

1. To protect minors and Vulnerable Adults;
2. To protect staff from false allegations;
3. To protect the reputation of the IKC-UCC and its ministries.

Reporting responsibility includes incidents of:

- a) minor-on-minor sexual activity;
- b) dangerous behaviors (hazing, truth or dare, drinking, etc);
- c) sexual harassment or exploitation;
- d) bullying of any kind;
- e) exploitation or harassment of a Vulnerable Adult;
- f) circumstances which rise to the level of abuse requiring action by a mandatory reporter;
- g) clergy professional boundary violations;
- h) sexual relationships between a participant and a minor, even when permitted by law.

In support of a practice of progressive discipline, violations of the **Code of Conduct** and **Ministry Standards** are to be recorded and stored in files.

An IKC-UCC representative shall monitor compliance at sites involving employees and volunteers using a variety of techniques, including:

1. Scheduled interactions;
2. Unannounced random interactions at unpredictable times;
3. Spontaneous interviews with minors;
4. Planned interviews or surveys of minors, employees, and volunteers;
5. Meeting regularly with individual employees and volunteers;
6. Group supervision meetings;
7. Reviewing site documentation (e.g. progress notes, incident logs, etc.).

Reporting

In ordinary administrative matters, the IKC-UCC expects employees and volunteers to address concerns with their immediate supervisors. However, situations affecting the health and welfare of minors and Vulnerable Adults require a direct and expedited means of communication to persons in leadership who can act upon concerns when an observer or victim is uncertain their concerns will be given attention.

When anyone observes, or is told about violations of the **Code of Conduct**, whether committed by an employee, volunteer, or other person, or observe any other circumstance they find inappropriate or may rise to the level of suspected abuse, they have a right and duty to report it directly to the Leader of the particular ministry to which the observation applies (primary contact).

If for any reason, the observer or reporter believes that the primary contact has failed to respond or has not given credibility to the observer/reporter, the latter may contact the Director of Merom Conference Center, the Associate Conference Minister(s) of the IKC-UCC, or the Conference

Minister of the IKC-UCC. **The observer/reporter or victim shall be permitted to report violations of policy or circumstances of abuse anonymously.**

The receivers of reports, while respecting and protecting the confidentiality wishes of the observer/reporter or victim, shall ascertain with reasonable certainty the relationship of the observer to the incident and the credibility of the information being provided. They shall report the circumstances to the IKC-UCC representative. The IKC-UCC representative shall report circumstances of sexual harassment to conference leadership.

Responsibility of Mandatory Reporters –

Regardless of procedures outlined herein, each person who is considered a mandatory reporter under the state statutes shall in good faith report any reportable abuse as defined by Indiana and/or Kentucky or other states when traveling.

The IKC-UCC prefers that, **without delay**, a mandatory reporter report to authorities and an IKC-UCC representative. In cases of multiple mandatory reporters, the IKC-UCC representative may make the initial report to police or child welfare authorities on behalf of the IKC-UCC.

Nothing in this policy shall be considered a restraint of an individual's statutory obligation to report to authorities. Furthermore, no person shall be restrained from reporting an incident on the basis that (s)he is not a mandatory reporter.

Investigating & Responding

The IKC-UCC is committed to prompt, professional, and measured response to all circumstances, which may range from violations of these policies and procedures to suspicions or allegations of abuse. Furthermore, the IKC-UCC is committed to (1) seriously consider the concerns of victims; (2) undertake a fair investigation of policy violations; (3) protect the confidentiality of parties involved in investigation; (4) report to as required and cooperate fully with public authorities; and (5) transparency with the members of the Conference within the bounds of individual rights to confidentiality.

Conference leadership shall identify the appropriate person(s) to handle the investigation and response. The IKC-UCC representative(s) shall (1) conduct investigation of the facts; (2) make recommendations for appropriate corrective action; and (3) provide any additional reporting, including documentation of the investigation and response.

Resulting actions may include counseling, correction, progressive discipline, or termination. Other behaviors not necessarily involving minors or Vulnerable Adults, or which may not be considered strictly illegal, are subject to disciplinary practices as may be set out in governing documents of the IKC-UCC.

In the aftermath of an incident of suspected abuse or a significant violation of the Code of Conduct or Ministry Standards, it may be necessary for the Conference and its program participants to defend their actions which support this policy. Therefore, IKC-UCC representatives have the obligation to regularly observe and document good management of this policy.

Cooperation with Investigations –

IKC-UCC expects and requires the cooperation of all volunteers, participants, and other employees in the investigation of violations of the Code of Conduct, Ministry Standards, or other misconduct,

including a complainant, witness, and the accused offender. The IKC-UCC may interview these individuals privately, and take oral and/or written statements from them. Any person who fails to cooperate with such an investigation or to provide complete and truthful information may be subject to disciplinary action.

Notification of Parents –

A minor may be party to an incident either as an initiator or as the victim. Whether a minor is initiator or victim may not be clear in all circumstances, such as a minor-on-minor incident. Violation of policy does not necessarily create a victim, but may leave a program vulnerable. While notification of parents of such circumstances may be warranted, utmost care in communication is required.

Therefore, a Leader having knowledge of an incident which warrants communication to a parent shall first advise their immediate supervisor, who shall consult with the Director of Merom Conference Center, the Associate Conference Minister(s) of the IKC-UCC, or the Conference Minister of the IKC-UCC. While communicating with a parent, and **being mindful of the importance of timely communication**, care shall be given to assessing:

1. The specific facts;
2. Whether a disciplinary or termination process is required;
3. Whether a minor should be dismissed from a program (requiring notification of other parents/guardians);
4. Whether mandatory reporting is a factor;
5. Who shall and in what manner communicate with the parents/guardian;
6. Whether the individual's pastor should be involved in the communication;
7. Tentative remedial steps to prevent a further incident.

Notification of parents shall not be delayed when immediate medical care is required.

Victim Needs –

In the event of cases of reportable abuse, the policy of IKC-UCC is to be responsive to the needs of victims within the constraints or obligations imposed under insurance contracts. In general, the IKC-UCC will attend to the immediate needs of victims by providing support and pastoral care.

Responding to Media –

Media publicity following an incident of abuse or exploitation may be detrimental to the reputations of individuals, the IKC-UCC, and the congregations of IKC-UCC. Without intending ever to evade the media, contacts with media must be managed and conducted only by a person specifically designated by the Board of Directors to represent the Conference. No other person(s) may speak on behalf of the Conference. Please refer to the IKC-UCC Media Response Policy for details.

APPENDIX A – Definitions

Authorized Minister –

Any person who has been commissioned, licensed, or ordained to ministry by the United Church of Christ.

Leaders –

Participants of IKC-UCC activities who are entrusted with authority to direct, guide, support, encourage, care for, and chaperone other participants; Leaders include authorized ministers, event leaders, lay staff, volunteers, or parents. Every Leader has the role to monitor behavior and redirect individuals if they cross boundaries of Safe Conduct.

Mandatory Reporter –

Indiana and Kentucky both require everyone to report suspected abuse to police or child welfare agencies. In Kentucky, clergy are not required to disclose privileged information.

Progressive Discipline –

A system of escalating discipline as an alternative to summary termination for a policy infraction, even a minor one. Progressive steps in discipline are as follows:

1. Counseling or a verbal warning – It is necessary to document that such a meeting occurred. It is sometimes appropriate that more than one supervisory person be present for this step.
2. Written warning – A formal letter is prepared and delivered to the employee/volunteer, while a copy is maintained in the employee/volunteer file.
3. Suspension or demotion – This may be appropriate for repeated violations of Program Standards. This step might be skipped for Code of Conduct violations.
4. Termination – Repeated willful violations of the Code of Conduct or Program Standards call for termination of participation.

In extreme circumstances it will be appropriate to skip steps and proceed with immediate termination. However, the same rules apply to a summary termination.

An equivalent to progressive discipline shall apply to participants served by our Conference. When participants are observed engaging in inappropriate interactions or sexual contact, it is expected that they will be immediately stopped or redirected to another activity. When violations are repeated and the participant is unresponsive, the next step is to engage the parent or guardian (when applicable) in a meeting about the behavior with the expectation that the parent will provide follow-up discussion and discipline. If this step fails to achieve positive results, then additional steps must be taken culminating with expulsion of the participant from the Conference program.

Sexual Exploitation –

Sexual activity or contact (not limited to sexual intercourse) in which a participant engaged in a Conference activity takes advantage of the vulnerability of another participant.

Sexual Harassment –

Repeated or coercive sexual advances toward another person contrary to his or her wishes. It includes behavior directed at another person's sexuality or sexual orientation with the intent of intimidating, humiliating, or embarrassing the other person, or subjecting the person to public discrimination. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition or circumstance of instruction, employment, or participation in any Conference activity;

- Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for evaluation in making personnel or Conference-related decisions affecting an individual; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance or participation in Conference activities, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

Prohibited sexual harassment includes unsolicited and unwelcome contact that has sexual overtones, particularly:

- Written contact, such as sexually suggestive or obscene letters, notes, or invitations including through use of social media through e-mail, texting, Tweeting or Facebook comments;
- Verbal contact, such as sexually suggestive or obscene comments, threats, slurs, epithets, jokes about gender-specific traits or sexual orientation, sexual propositions;
- Physical contact, such as intentional touching, pinching, brushing against another's body, impeding or blocking movement, assault, coercing sexual intercourse; and
- Visual contact, such as leering or staring at another's body, gesturing, displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, posters, or magazines.

Sexual harassment also includes continuing to express sexual interest after being informed directly that the interest is unwelcome, and using sexual behavior to control, influence, or affect the career, salary, work, learning, or worship environment of another. It is not permissible to suggest, threaten, or imply that failure to accept a request for a date or sexual intimacy will affect a person's job prospects, Conference leadership, or comfortable participation in the life of the Conference. For example, it is forbidden either to imply or actually withhold support for an appointment, promotion, or change of assignment, to suggest that a poor performance report will be given because a person has declined a personal proposition; or to hint that benefits, such as promotions, favorable performance evaluations, favorable assigned duties or shifts, recommendations or reclassifications, will be forthcoming in exchange for sexual favors.

Suspected Abuse –

Actual abuse consists of physical, sexual, or mental abuse inflicted by a person responsible for a minor's health, welfare, or care, who may be a parent, guardian, or other person having access to a minor. Abuse may include neglect of a person's health as a result of failure to properly feed, clothe or attend to apparent illness or mental well-being. As a caregiver in ministry, one need not directly witness, nor is one likely to directly witness actual abuse. It is sufficient to suspect abuse based upon observations of general health, physical condition, patterns of irregular behavior and environmental factors. Examples of observations might include: bruising on multiple occasions, weight loss, chronic physical illness, and anti-social or excessively withdrawn behavior. Environmental factors may include highly contentious divorce and custody battles, or parental drug use. One must use judgment in assessing multiple factors which lead to suspicion of abuse.

While suspected abuse is defined here for the benefit of Mandatory Reporters, the definition, for the purpose of this policy, includes suspected abuse of a Vulnerable Adult.

Vulnerable Adult –

Any adult person who by reason of profound physical disability or dependence, developmental disability, mental illness, relative social power, or cultural circumstances may be susceptible to physical abuse, sexual exploitation, financial exploitation, or manipulation as a consequence of being unable to physically resist, or render judgments regarding physical, mental, financial, or environmental well-being. Such persons may be unable to act independently and may, to their detriment, manifest high levels of trust or fear of persons of perceived power or authority.

APPENDIX B – Applications & Forms

1. Application and Self-Disclosure
2. Background Investigation Results
3. Professional Reference Interview Form
4. Personal Reference Interview Form
5. Suggested Applicant Interview Questions
6. Field Trip Preparation Checklist
7. Qualification Form & Agreement for Use of Personally Owned Vehicles

**Indiana-Kentucky Conference
Volunteer Application and Disclosure Form**

NAME: _____ Date of Birth: _____
 LAST FIRST MIDDLE

ADDRESS: _____
 STREET CITY STATE ZIP CODE

DAYTIME PHONE EVENING PHONE EMAIL

References: *references must not be related to you or each other.* One must be faith based. Attach additional page(s) as necessary.

NAME (1) _____

RELATIONSHIP _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE ZIP CODE _____

TELEPHONE _____ EMAIL _____

NAME (2) _____

RELATIONSHIP _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE ZIP CODE _____

TELEPHONE _____ EMAIL _____

NAME (3) _____

RELATIONSHIP _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE ZIP CODE _____

TELEPHONE _____ EMAIL _____

Current Church and Location: _____

APPLICANT:

I have never been convicted of, nor pled guilty or no contest to, a crime. (*Exclude convictions that have been sealed, expunged or legally eradicated, misdemeanor convictions for which probation was completed and the case was dismissed, or offenses about which inquiry is not permissible in this state*)

True Not true

If not true, please briefly describe the nature of the crime(s), the date and place of conviction and the legal disposition of the case. The Conference will not deny a position to any applicant solely because the person has been convicted of a crime. The Conference, however, may consider the nature, date and circumstances of the offense, as well as whether the offense is relevant to the duties of the position applied for.

No civil lawsuit alleging actual or attempted sexual discrimination, harassment, exploitation, or misconduct; physical abuse; child abuse; or financial misconduct has ever resulted in a judgment being entered against me, been settled out of court, or been dismissed because the statute of limitations has expired.

True Not True

If not true, give a short explanation of the lawsuit. (Please indicate the date, nature, and place of the incident leading to the lawsuit; where the lawsuit was filed; and the precise disposition of the lawsuit.)

I have never terminated my employment, professional credentials, or service in a volunteer position or had my employment, professional credentials, or authorization to hold a volunteer position terminated for reasons relating to allegations of actual or attempted sexual discrimination, harassment, exploitation, or misconduct; physical abuse; child abuse; or financial misconduct.

True Not True

If not true, give a short explanation. (Please indicate the date of termination; name, address, and telephone number of employer or volunteer supervisor; and nature of the incident(s) leading to your termination.)

Do you have a valid drivers' license?

Yes No Not Applicable

With respect to my driving record, I have not had my license suspended or revoked within the last five years due to reckless driving or driving while intoxicated and/or under the influence of a controlled substance.

True Not True

If not true, provide a brief explanation.

Is there any fact or circumstance involving you or your background that would call into question your being entrusted with the responsibilities of the position for which you are applying?

Yes No

If yes, provide a brief explanation.

APPLICANT:

The covenants between persons seeking volunteer positions in the Conference require honesty, integrity, and truthfulness for the health of the Conference. To that end, I attest that the information set forth in this application is true and complete. I understand that any misrepresentation or omission may be grounds for rejection of consideration for, or termination of, the position I am seeking to fill. I acknowledge that it is my duty in a timely fashion to amend the responses and information I have provided if I come to know that the response or information was incorrect when given or, though accurate when given, the response or information is no longer accurate.

Beginning such relationships with an open exchange of relevant information builds the foundation for a continuing and healthy covenant between volunteers and the Conference they seek to serve. To that end, I authorize the Indiana-Kentucky Conference (IKC-UCC) and/or its agents to make inquiries regarding my character and qualifications, including all statements I have set forth above. I also authorize all entities, persons, former employers, supervisors, courts, law enforcement, and other public agencies to respond to inquiries concerning me, to supply verification of the statements I have made, and to comment on and state opinions regarding my background, character, and qualifications. To encourage such persons and entities to speak openly and responsibly, I hereby release them from all liability arising from their responses, comments, and statements.

The Indiana-Kentucky Conference authorized volunteer recruitment process involves the sharing of information regarding applicants with those persons in a position to recruit, secure, and supervise both the position I am seeking to fill and program I am seeking to participate in. To that end, I authorize the IKC-UCC and its agents to circulate, distribute, and otherwise share information gathered in connection with this application to such persons for these purposes. I understand that the IKC-UCC will share with me information it has gathered about me, if I request it to do so.

If I am offered and accept employment or volunteer service with the Conference, I agree to comply with its published policies and rules, including those related to harassment of employees, reporting known or suspected child neglect or abuse and similar requirements. If requested to do so, I will cooperate with any Conference investigation of a possible violation of Conference policies and rules by providing complete and truthful information in an oral and/or written statement.

I acknowledge my receipt and understanding of the Indiana-Kentucky Conference Abuse Prevention, Training & Response Policy & Procedure.

PRINT NAME & SIGN

DATE

PRINT NAME & SIGNATURE PARENT OR GUARDIAN FOR APPLICANTS UNDER 18

DATE

Please return signed form to:

Indiana-Kentucky Conference, UCC
Attn: Val Ruess
1100 W 42nd Street, Suite 155
Indianapolis, IN 46208-3346
Email: ikc@ikcucc.org
Fax: 317-924-6650

| |
|---------------------|
| For Office Use Only |
| SOR |
| Date Completed |
| IKC/MCC rep |

**Indiana-Kentucky Conference
Background Investigation Results**

EMPLOYEE/VOLUNTEER APPLICANT:

Personal interview conducted by _____ on _____
DATE

Reference inquiries completed by _____ on _____
DATE

A criminal background check was conducted on the candidate using the following sources:
Results attached and date

- National multi-state criminal records search
- National sex offender registry search
- Social security number trace and alias search
- County criminal records search for every county where the applicant has lived or worked over the past (xx) years:
- Motor Vehicle Record
- Other (Identify)

_____ has reviewed the investigation with the following result:

- We have reviewed the criminal history of Applicant and determined, based on the information we had available at this time, the applicant would be **acceptable** for the position.”

OR

- We have reviewed the criminal history of Applicant and determined, based on the information we had available at this time, the applicant is **not acceptable** for the position.”

This clearance shall remain as a permanent record in the employment file.

Signature Date

Please return signed form to:

Indiana-Kentucky Conference, UCC
Attn: Val Ruess
1100 W 42nd Street, Suite 155
Indianapolis, IN 46208-3346
Email: ikc@ikcucc.org
Fax: 317-924-6650

| |
|--|
| For Office Use Only Date Completed IKC/MCC rep |
|--|

**Indiana-Kentucky Conference
Personal Reference Interview Form**

Employee/Volunteer Applicant: _____ Date: _____

Name of Reference: _____

Address: _____

Phone Numbers: _____

Hello, my name is _____ with the Indiana-Kentucky Conference. (Applicant) has applied for a position with us and said you would be a good person for us to talk with about him/her. Do you have a few minutes to talk with me now? I would like to start by letting you know that (Applicant) has applied for a position working with children, so it is extremely important for us to determine that every applicant is suitable for this type of position. I appreciate your help with this.

How long have you known the applicant? _____

What is your relationship to the applicant? _____

How would you rate the applicant's ability to work with and relate to children?

____ Above satisfactory ____ Satisfactory ____ Below satisfactory

Can you give me an example of how the applicant relates to children?

We are looking for someone who can stay calm and control frustration even under very frustrating conditions with children. How would you rate the applicant's ability to be patient and stay calm?

____ Above satisfactory ____ Satisfactory ____ Below satisfactory

Can you give me an example of how the applicant relates to children?

Have you ever known the applicant to use harsh or abusive discipline with a child?

Would you be comfortable placing one of your own loved ones in the care of the applicant?
Why or why not?

What are the applicant's hobbies and recreational activities?

How would you rate the applicant's ability to relate to adults?

____ Above satisfactory ____ Satisfactory ____ Below satisfactory

Can you give me an example of how the applicant relates to adults?

We need a person who can be supportive and understanding of a child's needs. How would you rate the applicant's ability to be genuinely supportive and understanding to a person in need?

____ Above satisfactory ____ Satisfactory ____ Below satisfactory

Think of a time when the applicant was able to show genuine concern for another person who needed comfort. Tell me about that time.

How would you rate the applicant's ability to maintain appropriate boundaries with children?

____ Above satisfactory ____ Satisfactory ____ Below satisfactory

Do you have any additional comments or questions?

Signature of Employee/Volunteer Applicant

____/____/_____
Date

Applicant Interview Questions

The following questions may be used in a written application or personal interview. A single answer should not determine whether an applicant is selected or rejected. Along with other forms of information, answers to these questions can help you build a more complete picture of an applicant.

- ***What type of supervisory situation do you prefer?***

If applicants are very independent, they may not fit in an organization whose policies and procedures require close supervision.

- ***What age/sex of youth do you want to work with? How would you feel about working with a different age/sex?***

If an applicant seems fixated on one age/sex, be wary. However, it may be that the applicant has experience or is gifted with working with certain age groups. Asking follow-up questions about why an applicant has a strong preference can help you determine if there is cause for concern.

- ***Is there anyone who might suggest that you should not work with youth? Why or why not?***

- ***Why do you want the job?***

- ***What would you do in a particular situation?***

Set up scenarios that involve potential concerns, boundary issues, or youth protection policies and interactions to gauge the applicant's response. Be concerned if applicants disregard the organization's policies and procedures or handle a situation poorly.

- ***What makes you a good candidate for working with youth? What would your friends or colleagues say about how you interact with youth?***

- ***What other hobbies or activities do you enjoy?***

Determine if applicants have mature, adult relationships—not just relationships with youth

Field Trip Preparation Checklist

1. Specific location of the off-site activity. (Example: The Children's Museum)

2. Name of the primary contact at the off-site location (Example: Mary Smith, Director of Group Sales at the Children's Museum)

3. Address and telephone number for the location.

4. Parent permission sheet attached to this document for review.

5. Name and cell phone number of the supervisor for the off-site activity.

6. The employee to child ratio for the trip and names of all who will be attending.

7. Required attire for employee and child during the off-site activity.

8. Amount of time required for the off-site activity.

9. Estimated departure time and estimated return time.

10. Method of transportation.

11. Completed seating chart attached.

12. Overall supervision guidelines for location (employees will be assigned groups of children to monitor throughout the trip, employees will monitor children in “zones,” etc.).

13. Location of restrooms/locker rooms at off-site location.

14. Cost of the activity.

Last Minute Checklist:

- 1. All permission sheets returned and compiled for the off-site activity (children cannot participate without a permission slip). Leaders must take permission slips to the off-site activity to ensure correct parent contact information.**
- 2. Roll sheets printed and distributed to all employees for all children attending the off-site activity.**
- 3. All required Leaders present.**
- 4. All Leaders and children are in approved attire.**

VOLUNTEER DRIVER
Qualification Form & Agreement for Use of Personally Owned Vehicles
Indiana-Kentucky Conference, United Church of Christ

Name: _____ Birth Date: _____

Home phone: _____ Work phone: _____ Cell phone: _____

Years of driving experience _____

Driver license No. & State*: _____ Expiration Date: _____

Insurance Carrier _____ Expiration date: _____

Liability Policy Limit -- Bodily Injury _____ Property Damage _____

1. Are all licensed vehicles you own covered by insurance as required by law? Yes, No
2. Have you ever been denied a driver's license or had one suspended or revoked? Yes, No
3. Have you had any moving traffic violations or accidents in the past three years? Yes, No

If the answer to questions 2 or 3 is YES, explain. Give dates and details of violations and accidents on the back of this form.

I AGREE to the following as a condition of being permitted to act as a Volunteer Driver:

1. The vehicle owner's insurance is the primary liability insurance coverage in the event of an accident.
2. The owner of the vehicle which I am driving is responsible for keeping the vehicle in safe working order.
3. The owner of the vehicle is responsible for all damage to the owned vehicle however caused.
4. The owner of the vehicle shall maintain liability insurance in the amount of at least
 - Bodily Injury -- \$50,000 per person and \$100,000 per accident or \$200,000 combined single limit; and
 - Property Damage -- \$25,000 per accident
5. The Conference's insurance shall apply in excess of the vehicle owner's liability insurance limits in the event the primary limits are exhausted, and only to the extent the Conference is legally obligated to pay damages.
6. **I will not receive or initiate phone calls while operating a vehicle for Conference activities, to include receiving or initiating text messages.**
7. I will indemnify and hold the Conference harmless from liabilities and damage resulting from my operation of a motor vehicle not owned by the Conference. The Conference will indemnify and hold harmless the volunteer driver for liabilities and damages resulting from acts or negligence of the Conference.

I hereby AFFIRM that the information I have given is stated truthfully and that I shall abide by the terms of the Conference's Vehicle Use Policy.

Attach a copy of Driver's License and current Insurance ID Card

Driver Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPROVED: _____ **Date:** _____ **Expiration:** _____

APPENDIX C – Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct defines individual responsibilities as Ministers, leaders, employees or volunteers to meet the expectations of the IKC-UCC with respect to behavior or conduct in the service of the ministries of the Conference, especially those which serve minors and Vulnerable Adults.

Definitions –

Leaders: Participants of IKC-UCC activities who are entrusted with authority to direct, guide, support, encourage, care for, and chaperone other participants; Leaders include authorized ministers, event leaders, lay staff, volunteers, or parents. Every Leader has the role to monitor behavior and redirect individuals if they cross boundaries of Safe Conduct.

Mandatory Reporter: Indiana and Kentucky both require everyone to report suspected abuse to police or child welfare agencies. In Kentucky, clergy are not required to disclose privileged information.

Vulnerable Adult: Any adult person who by reason of profound physical disability or dependence, developmental disability, mental illness, relative social power, or cultural circumstances may be susceptible to physical abuse, sexual exploitation, financial exploitation, or manipulation as a consequence of being unable to physically resist, or render judgments regarding physical, mental, financial, or environmental well-being. Such persons may be unable to act independently and may, to their detriment, manifest high levels of trust or fear of persons of perceived power or authority.

General Requirements –

Each person subject to this Code shall

1. Act as a team member in fulfilling ministry objectives;
2. Treat everyone fairly and with respect, regardless of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identification, mental capacity, criminal history, or faith background;
3. Practice those behaviors regarded as necessary and positive to refrain from behaviors which have been defined as prohibited.

General Prohibitions –

The following behaviors are prohibited at all times:

1. Display affection toward a minor/Vulnerable Adult in privacy;
2. Use profanity or tell off-color jokes;
3. Discuss sexual encounters with or around minors/Vulnerable Adults, or in any way involve minors/Vulnerable Adults in their personal problems or issues;
4. Date or become romantically involved with minors/Vulnerable Adults;
5. Use or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs in the presence of minors/Vulnerable Adults;
6. Possess sexually oriented materials, including printed or online pornography, on Conference property or at Conference events;
7. Stare at or comment on anyone's bodies;
8. Engage in inappropriate or unapproved electronic communication with minors/Vulnerable Adults;
9. Work one-on-one with minors/Vulnerable Adults in a private setting;
10. Abuse anyone, including the following:
 - Physical abuse: hit, spank, shake, slap, unnecessarily restrain;

- Verbal abuse: degrade, threaten, curse;
- Sexual abuse: inappropriately touch, expose oneself, or engage in sexually oriented conversations;
- Mental abuse: shame, humiliate, act cruelly;
- Neglect: withhold food, water, shelter;
- Permit anyone to engage in the following: Hazing, bullying, derogatory name-calling, games of Truth or Dare, ridicule, humiliation, or sexual activity;

11. Manipulate or exploit anyone in any way.

Reporting Obligations –

Each Leader or statutory mandatory reporter shall report:

1. Concerns or complaints about other employees and volunteers, other adults, or minors to an IKC-UCC
2. Allegations or incidents of suspected abuse to the designated law enforcement or child welfare authority.

Specific Interaction Standards –

Each Leader or volunteer worker of the IKC-UCC shall conduct him/herself in a manner that fosters understanding of Safe Conduct in the context of serving all people. The standards articulated below serve two purposes:

- To protect minors and Vulnerable Adults from abuse or grooming for abuse elsewhere
- To protect/prevent Leaders from engaging in patterns of behavior that may be construed as abusive or predatory. While a single infraction of guidelines may not constitute abuse, a pattern of repeated violations will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from service.

1. **Approval and Affection** – In providing approval or affection, the following guidelines apply:

| <i>Appropriate Physical Interactions</i> | <i>Inappropriate Physical Interactions with Minors or Vulnerable Adults</i> |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Side hugs • Shoulder-to-shoulder or “temple” hugs • Pats on the shoulder or back • Handshakes • High-fives and hand slapping • Verbal praise • Pats on the head when culturally appropriate • Touching hands, shoulders, and arms • Arms around shoulders • Holding hands (with young children in escorting situations) <p>These may be inappropriate if unwanted.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-frontal hugs • Kisses • Showing affection in isolated area • Lap sitting • Wrestling • Piggyback rides • Tickling • Allowing one to cling to an employee’s or volunteer’s leg • Any type of massage given by or to a minor/Vulnerable Adult • Any form of affection that is unwanted • Compliments relating to physique or body development • Touching bottom, chest, or genital areas |

2. **Verbal Interactions** – The manner of speaking with people establishes respect. The following guidelines apply:

| <i>Appropriate Verbal Interactions</i> | <i>Inappropriate Verbal Interactions</i> |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive reinforcement • Appropriate jokes • Encouragement • Praise | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name-calling • Discussing sexual encounters or in any way involving children in the personal issues of other participants • Secrets with minors/Vulnerable Adults • Cursing • Off-color or sexual jokes • Shaming • Belittling • Derogatory remarks • Harsh language that may frighten, threaten or humiliate • Derogatory remarks about a person or his/her family |

3. **Out-of-Program Contact** –

The IKC-UCC strongly recommends that Leaders, employees or volunteers do not have outside contact with minors/Vulnerable Adults from Conference programs. However, if out-of-program contacts are unavoidable, the following forms of outside contact are appropriate and inappropriate: ***Appropriate Outside Contact*** ***Inappropriate***

| <i>Appropriate Outside Contact</i> | <i>Inappropriate Outside Contact</i> |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking groups of minors/Vulnerable Adults on an outing • Attending sporting activities with groups • Attending functions at the home of a minor/Vulnerable Adult, with parents present • Other contacts, with the permission of parents | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking one minor/Vulnerable Adult on an outing without the parents' written permission • Visiting a minor/Vulnerable Adult at home, without a parent present • Entertaining one minor/Vulnerable Adult at the Leader's home without a parent present • A lone minor/Vulnerable Adult spending the night with a Leader |

4. **One-on-One Interactions** –

Because most abuse occurs when an adult is alone with a minor/Vulnerable Adult, private one-on-one meetings with a child are prohibited. When necessary, the following guidelines apply:

| <i>One-on-One Interaction Requirements</i> |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When meeting one-on-one, always do so in a public place in full view of others. • Avoid physical affection that can be misinterpreted. Limit affection to pats on the shoulder, high fives, and handshakes. • If meeting in a room or office, leave the door open or move to an area that can be easily observed by others passing by. • Inform other adults that you are alone with a minor/Vulnerable Adult and ask them to randomly drop in. (Ask to be supervised.) • Document and immediately report any unusual incidents, including disclosures of abuse or mistreatment, behavior problems and how they were handled, injuries, or any interactions that might be misinterpreted. • To the extent any of these requirements may appear to be in conflict, the spirit of them is to seek being under the supervision of others while meeting privately with a minor/Vulnerable Adult. |

APPENDIX D – Program Standards (Guidelines)

These program standards are intended to provide a safe environment for minors and Vulnerable Adults in a variety of circumstances. From time to time it may not be possible to fulfill the standard to the letter. Permission is granted to Leaders to waive a standard with justification. If it is found that consistent fulfillment of a standard is not practicable, the matter shall be elevated to the IKC-UCC for resolution or amendment of these standards.

Adult-Minor Ratios –

The following ratios shall apply:

- A minimum of 2 adults shall be with minors/Vulnerable Adults
- 1 adult per 8 minors/Vulnerable Adults
- Adults should match gender of minors/Vulnerable Adults
 - Example: 4 boys and 3 girls require 1 man and 1 woman
 - Example: 24 boys and 15 girls require 3 men and 2 women

Leaders or volunteers under the age of 18 are not included in the ratio. In all cases, a Leader or volunteer under the age of 18 working with minors/Vulnerable Adults shall be under the supervision of an adult over the age of 21. Leaders under the age of 21 shall not supervise or lead a group in which the oldest participating person is less than three years younger than the Leader.

Bathrooms, Locker Room and Out-of-the-Way Locations –

The following practices shall apply to supervision of bathrooms and changing areas:

1. Minimize presence of diverse age groups at the same time.
2. No Leader/volunteer shall enter with a single unrelated minor/Vulnerable Adult unless the entry door is ajar (propped open) in a way that (s)he can be observed by others.
3. Minors/Vulnerable Adults shall not enter alone in pairs.
4. Minors/Vulnerable Adults shall not enter unsupervised.
5. Require minors/Vulnerable Adults to ask permission before using bathrooms.
6. Leaders shall frequently and randomly check bathrooms to assure their security.

Transition and “Free” Time –

Especially during day long, off-site, or overnight activities, minors/Vulnerable Adults will periodically not be engaged in a supervised activity. Supervision shall be maintained during transition times through the use of chaperones, hall monitors and escorts to minimize the opportunity for security breach or minor-on-minor incidents. Leaders shall assess at what times and places additional duties are to be assigned to adults to assure supervision of transition and free time.

Transportation of Minors/Vulnerable Adults –

Transportation of minors/Vulnerable Adults, whether on buses, motor coaches, or private passenger vehicles, is a serious responsibility. Especially when utilizing Conference owned vehicles or private vehicles of staff and volunteers, utmost care shall be taken in view of the risks associated with managing transportation.

The following standards shall apply:

1. No staff or volunteer shall transport a single minor/Vulnerable Adult that is not his/her own, except as may be required in an emergency with the approval of a Leader, or with written permission of a parent. Communications shall be established to verify the whereabouts, expected arrival and change of custody of the minor/Vulnerable Adult.

2. Any driver operating a vehicle which holds 16 passengers or more, including the driver, shall possess a valid Commercial Driver License (CDL).
3. Any person who drives on behalf of an IKC-UCC program shall be previously qualified, using the transportation and driver qualification procedure. (Appendix B – Applications & Forms)
4. Adult-minor ratios shall be maintained and within the safe loading limits of the vehicles being used.
5. As practicable, mixed age groups are not to sit together.
6. Staff and volunteers are not to make unauthorized or unplanned stops.
7. On each trip, a vehicle log shall be maintained which documents the departing time, arrival time, destination, mileage, names of passengers and Leaders, as well as any unusual occurrences.
8. All passengers are to be seated and to use safety belts as available.
9. Staff and volunteers are to be seated in a way that permits them to supervise young passengers.
10. When passengers must disembark at a rest facility or destination, care shall be taken to obtain a headcount on arrival and departure. All passengers shall be required to complete a trip on the same vehicle to assure accountability.

Off-site Activities (Day Trips) –

Off-site activities require special additional planning, taking into account the nature of the destination and exposure to the public at large. For example, attendance at a public venue, such as an amusement park, will require greater supervision than a visit to a sister Conference. Due to the increased risk of a minor becoming lost or injured during an off-site activity, extra care shall be taken to assure adequate supervision.

The following are minimum requirements:

1. All off-site activities shall be approved in advance by an IKC-UCC representative.
2. The trip leader shall provide a plan outlining transportation and supervision for the activity.
3. Parent/guardian permission shall be obtained. Permission forms are to note the destination(s) and activities in which the minor/Vulnerable Adult might engage (.e.g., climbing wall, horseback riding, soccer, baseball, etc.)
4. Parent/guardian providing permission shall indicate who will receive the minor/Vulnerable Adult on return if other than the person signing the permission.
5. Adult-minor ratios shall be increased by at least one person, which may include a person age 16 or older who is qualified to drive. One adult may supervise only one person under the age of 18 (staff or volunteer).
6. Each staff or volunteer shall be assigned to a specific group of minors/Vulnerable Adults to supervise. Each staff or volunteer must then maintain a roll sheet listing all in his or her group. Head counts and roll checks will be conducted routinely.
7. Standards for bathroom activities, transition time and transportation shall be maintained.
8. Parents/guardians shall be provided a means to make emergency contact with the trip leader.

Over-night Activities –

Camps generally have the experience and staffing to adopt different standards than these below. The assumption for the purpose of this standard is lodging at a public hotel in an unfamiliar city. As with off-site activities, over-night activities present an even higher level or risk than day trips due to isolation from parents and the 24-hour supervision that is required throughout the activity.

The following standards will apply in addition to standards for off-site activities:

1. All overnight activities, whether on the Conference site or not, shall have prior approval of an IKC-UCC representative.

2. All overnight activities include a minimum of two adult chaperones over 21 years of age.
3. All volunteers under 18 years of age must be supervised at all times.
4. Parent/guardian permission shall be obtained. Permission forms are to site the destination(s) and activities in which the minor/Vulnerable Adult might engage (.e.g., climbing wall, horseback riding, soccer, baseball, etc.)
5. The parent/guardian providing permission shall indicate who will receive the minor/Vulnerable Adult on return if other than the person signing the permission.
6. At all times through the night a Leader must remain on duty at a location to supervise the coming and going of any minor/Vulnerable Adult, to assure safe evacuation during an emergency, and to prevent anyone sneaking out. (Maximum two hour watches through the night are ecommended.)
7. A trip Leader or other designated adult shall conduct routine walk-throughs of high risk areas.
8. For the event of a building evacuation, an outdoor rally point will be designated in advance.
9. A roster will be maintained of the room assignments for each participant and adult.
10. A bed check will be conducted at a specific time known to all.
11. Adult-minor ratios are to be maintained for outings away from the lodging site.
12. A daily schedule of events shall be maintained with supervisory duty assignments included.
13. Double-queen lodging is preferred at hotels, four to a room. Minors in each room will be of similar age. No adult will share a bed with a minor/Vulnerable Adult.
14. Adult rooms will be scattered among rooms occupied by participants. There shall be at least one adult lodged on any floor on which participants are sleeping.
15. Standards for bathroom, out-of-the-way, off limits locations, and transition time shall be maintained as the site circumstances and facilities may require.