

SAFE CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Commitment for Safety of Children and Youth

Mount Oak Fellowship of the United Methodist Church is committed to ensuring that all children and youth involved in church ministries may participate in an environment of safety and security. To that end, the policies and procedures outlined in this section shall be followed to protect the children and youth in our care.

Definitions

Who is a Child?

The Code of Maryland Regulations defines a child as a male or female who is less than 18 years of age. Therefore, the term “children,” which by this definition includes “youth,” will hereafter replace the term “children and youth” in this section of this manual.

Types of Child Abuse

Child abuse may be categorized in five forms:

1. **Physical abuse**, in which a person deliberately and intentionally causes bodily harm to the child.
2. **Emotional abuse**, in which a person exposes a child to spoken and/or unspoken violence or emotional cruelty.
3. **Neglect**, in which a person endangers a child’s health, safety, or welfare through negligence.
4. **Sexual abuse**, in which sexual contact between a child and an adult (or another older and more powerful child) occurs.
5. **Ritual abuse**, in which physical, sexual, or psychological violations of a child are inflicted regularly, intentionally, and in a stylized way by a person or persons responsible for the child’s welfare.

Indicators of Child Abuse

Children suffering abuse often will not tell anyone about it. Consequently, it is important to recognize signs of the several forms of abuse defined above. Examples of such signs include:

1. Burns, facial injuries, pattern of repetitious bruises (possible physical abuse).
2. Exhibits severe lack of self-esteem (possible emotional abuse).
3. Begs or steals food; chronic hunger (possible neglect).
4. Depression – cries often for no apparent reason (possible sexual abuse).
5. Unexplained mistrust and mood swings (possible ritual abuse).

Please reference *Safe Sanctuaries* by Joy Melton* for a more detailed list and description of these signs. This reference is available in the Church Office.

Policies

1. No adult who has been convicted of child abuse (either sexual abuse, physical abuse, or emotional abuse) will be allowed to work with children in any Church-sponsored activity.
2. All adult volunteers involved with children of the Church must be members or constituents of the congregation (constituents are defined as persons who are actively participating in the life of the Church but not officially members) before beginning a volunteer assignment with children.
3. Adult volunteers working with children shall observe the "Two-Adult Rule" at all times so that no adult is ever alone with children during any Church-sponsored program, event, or ministry.
4. Adult volunteers working with children shall attend regular training and educational events provided by the Church to keep volunteers informed of church policies and procedures and of state laws regarding child abuse.
5. Adult volunteers shall immediately report any behavior that seems abusive or inappropriate to the Senior Pastor and/or the Executive Pastor.
6. Each room set aside for children shall have a door with a window in it or a half door.
7. At any counseling sessions with children, the door of the room used shall remain open for the entire session.
8. Parents will be given advance notice and full information regarding the event(s) in which their children will be participating.

Procedures

Requirement for Background Checks

All paid staff and volunteers who work with children as part of their job description or volunteer assignment shall have standard background checks (paid for by the Church) completed within two weeks after beginning their assigned duties. Failure to submit to such a background check shall result in termination of employment, or termination of the volunteer's work with children of the Church.

Procedures for Background Checks

All paid staff and volunteers who work with children will complete the following forms (as applicable) and return them to the Executive Pastor.

- Employment Application (Potential new hires for paid staff only), including three (3) references. Procedures for hiring, evaluation and separation of the paid staff of the Church may be found in another section of this manual.
- Volunteer Application (Volunteers only).
- Authorization and Request for Criminal Records Check form.
- Sexual Misconduct Questionnaire form, including three (3) references.

The applications will be processed and online background checks will be conducted through ChoicePoint Workplace Solutions, Incorporated (hereafter referred to as "ChoicePoint"). The specific check that will be requested is the ChoicePoint Statewide

Criminal Database Search PLUS with National Sex Offender Registry. This check is based on name, Social Security number, birthday, and address.

Any volunteer that may be driving children for a church sponsored program shall also submit on the application their driver's license number and the state where licensed and a driving record will be checked through ChoicePoint as well. The specific search that will be requested is the Motor Vehicle Check. ChoicePoint will obtain the driving record report from the specified state's Department of Motor Vehicles.

A summary of the rights of the person subject to the background checks listed above under the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) are covered in Appendix A of this section. When an applicant completes the Authorization and Request for Criminal Records Check form, they must be provided a copy of this summary of their rights.

The Executive Pastor, Pastor/Director/Coordinator of Children's Ministries, Pastor/Director/Coordinator of Youth Ministries, or a member of the Staff-Parish Relations Committee (hereafter referred to as the "SPRC") will contact the references listed on the Questionnaire. If warranted, the Executive Pastor may request that a subcommittee from members of the SPRC be appointed by the Chairman of the SPRC to assist with processing volunteer applications and reference checks. The results of the reference check will be recorded on the Reference Check form (see the forms section of the Manual), which will be signed by the person completing the reference inquiry.

If any "red flags" appear either through ChoicePoint or the references, all references will be contacted and interviewed with more detailed questions by the Executive Pastor or a member of the SPRC. After all references are interviewed, and appropriate contacts made, a determination must be reached by the leadership of the Church as to the appropriate course of action.

If information indicates that an applicant was convicted of child abuse, child molestation, incest, or some other crime against a child, that applicant should be rejected as a worker with children. If information shows that there was no conviction although charges were filed against an applicant, then the Executive Pastor or member of the SPRC should investigate how the issue was resolved. After obtaining all necessary information, the leadership of the Church must make a decision about whether this applicant presents too great a risk to the Church's children. The Executive Pastor will ensure that documentation is retained in the Church's confidential files that record every step taken during the investigation and the decisions made.

The background check will be conducted every 5 years if the individual serves consecutive years. If the individual does not serve consecutive years, the background check will be conducted after each "break" in service (defined as six months or longer).

Safeguarding Background Check Information

Confidentiality requirements and procedures for safeguarding background check and other sensitive personally identifying information may be found in the section of this manual titled "Legal."

Procedures for Children's Ministry

Registration/Sign-in

There shall be one registration/sign-in station for all children participating in the children's ministry activities of the Church. Children's Ministry activities (e.g., Children's Church) will be conducted for the full length of the worship service in order to allow parents to sign in and still attend the service. The registration/sign-in station will be in operation for the entire length of the worship service. Parents (or guardians) will be directed to bring their children to this station and instructed that this is where the child will be picked up after the service. The Children's Ministry area shall be configured such that there is only one entry and exit way, except in emergency. All Children's Ministry activities shall be conducted in the rooms beyond the registration/sign-in station.

Child Identification & Parent Notification

Each child left in the Nursery/Preschool/Exceptional Kids/ Elementary classes shall have a call number assigned to them at the registration/sign-in station. This number and the child's name shall be printed on a "self-sticking" label or name tag, which shall be attached to the back of the child's outer garment. A computerized log shall be kept of each child checked in. This log shall contain the following information:

- 1) Name of the child
- 2) Call Number assigned to child/parent
- 3) Time and date the child was checked in
- 4) Signature of person checking in the child
- 5) Description of child's clothes (color, etc.)
- 6) Sex of the child
- 7) Allergies
- 8) Feeding requirements, if any
- 9) Other special needs

The parent (or guardian) shall be given a small business card (if necessary) showing the name of the Church, address, phone number, and the name of the Children's Ministry Pastor/Director/Coordinator. They will also be given a wrist band containing the call number assigned to their child. This number is used to notify the parent during worship service of the need for their presence to attend to the needs of their child. It should be stressed that this call system will be on the screens where the words to songs and scriptures are projected, and that a call does not necessarily mean it is an emergency.

A parent should be called for the following reasons:

- a) The child becomes ill.
- b) The child has been crying constantly for more than twenty minutes.
- c) Someone other than the parent has come to the childcare area and attempted to pick up the child on behalf of the parent.
- d) The child is involved in ANY accident regardless of apparent injury.
- e) The child bites another child.
- f) The child consistently refuses to obey reasonable orders of the worker.

- g) It is time for the child to be given their medication.
- h) It is time for the parent to prepare food for their child (according to the instructions left by the parent).
- i) The child has fallen asleep and there are no beds available.

The wrist band and call number also are the means of identification of the parent or other person authorized to receive the child any time during or after the service. CHILDREN'S MINISTRY WORKERS ARE NOT TO RELEASE THE CHILD TO ANYONE WITHOUT THE IDENTIFYING WRIST BAND THAT HAS THE CORRECT CALL NUMBER ASSIGNED AT SIGN-IN.

Nursery Worker Requirements

1. Age Limitations

All nursery workers that count toward fulfilling the "two-adult rule" shall be at least eighteen years of age. Youth workers under the direct supervision of an adult are permitted to help in the nursery; however, they do not count as adult volunteers under this procedure. Except for youth workers under supervision of an adult, at no time shall anyone under the age of eighteen be allowed in the nursery unless they are a child for whom care is being provided, or the teen parent of a child in the nursery. The age range of children in the nursery is 0 – 2 years.

2. Background Check

ALL NURSERY WORKERS (whether paid or volunteer) shall have a background check performed prior to working in any capacity in the nursery. This requirement includes parents of children being cared for in the nursery. For example: if a parent volunteers to work in the nursery, and they also have a child in the same nursery, that parent will still have to agree to have a background check performed.

Child Safety

Special equipment may be used for ministries with children. Workers should be fully trained and aware of how to safely operate such equipment. Use of playground equipment is common at Mt. Oak, so workers should know how to properly use each piece of playground equipment. An adequate number of adults (at least two) should be with children whenever they are on the playground.

There are other outdoor ministries that may require specialized knowledge by workers to ensure safety. For example, ministries such as hiking and camping may need first aid and CPR skills (the Church will arrange and pay for CPR and first aid training for those volunteer workers needing such training). The church's primary responsibility in such ministries is the safety of the children in our care.

Bear in mind, however, that ministries with children will inevitably involve activities that can result in scrapes, bumps and bruises. When such injuries are noted workers should first consider whether they are indicators of child abuse. If there are signs that child abuse may be involved, the worker should consult the Executive Pastor

or Pastor/Director/Coordinator of Children's Ministries or Pastor/Director/Coordinator of Youth Ministries for guidance. Responding to allegations of child abuse is covered later in this section. If the injury is clearly not related to abuse, then the worker must decide if the injury warrants completing an Accident Report form (found in the forms section of the Manual).

In the event of anything more than a minor injury to a child, the worker must complete this form to document the accident and what actions were taken by the Church. If in doubt, consult the Executive Pastor or Pastor/Director/Coordinator of Children's Ministries or Pastor/Director/Coordinator of Youth Ministries.

Procedures for Training and Education

Annual Orientation for Workers

All workers with children, either paid or volunteer, will attend annually an orientation where they will be informed of the:

- Church's policies for the prevention of child abuse.
- Established procedures to be used in all ministries with children.
- Signs and indicators of possible child abuse.
- Required steps to report an alleged or actual incident of child abuse.
- State laws regarding child abuse (see Appendix B of this section).

At the completion of the orientation, the workers should be requested to sign the Participation Covenant Agreement (see the forms section of the manual) signifying that they agree to observe and abide by the policies and procedures of the Church for the prevention of child abuse.

Workers who do not attend should be contacted, provided a handout from the orientation, and asked to sign the Covenant Agreement. The Executive Pastor will ensure that records are kept showing that all workers have been informed of the Church's policies and procedures.

Parent and Family Education

At the beginning of each school year, the Church will conduct a parent and family event, or series of events, where families are invited to hear a presentation about child abuse and about the Church's plans for prevention of abuse in the ministries for children. The event should also include sessions for children so that they learn certain essentials such as how to recognize and report possible abuse and how they can help prevent harm to anyone at the church.

Responding to Allegations of Abuse

When an allegation of child abuse is made against a worker or member, the following steps are to be implemented immediately:

- Notify the Senior Pastor and/or the Executive Pastor. The Senior Pastor and/or the Executive Pastor, with assistance from other leaders of the Church, are responsible for overseeing all subsequent response actions as listed below.

- Notify the parents of the victim and take steps to ensure the child's safety until the parents arrive. The safety of the child is the Church's primary responsibility.
- Treat the accused abuser with dignity, but immediately remove him or her from further involvement with child.
- Notify the proper child protective services agency or law enforcement authorities.
 - a. Prince George's County Child Protective Services phone numbers and address are:
 - i. Telephone: (301) 909-2450 (after hours: 301-699-8605)
 - ii. Fax: (301) 909-2200
 - iii. Address: 805 Brightseat Road, Landover, MD 20785
 - b. Prince George's County Police, District II (Bowie) Station phone number and address are:
 - i. Telephone: (301) 390-2100
 - ii. Fax (301) 218-1091
 - iii. Address: 601 Crain Highway, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772
 - c. An oral report must be made immediately, even if all the pertinent information isn't yet available for a written report.
 - d. Complete the form, "Report of Suspected Incident of Child Abuse" (see the forms section of the Manual), and make a written report to Child Protective Services or the Prince George's County Police within 48 hours of the contact which disclosed the suspected abuse.
- Notify the Baltimore-Washington Conference authorities, the Church's insurance agent, and the Church's attorney.
- Maintain a written record of all steps taken by the Church in response to the allegation.
- Either the Senior Pastor or Executive Pastor, as the Church's ONLY designated spokesperson (there should be only one), should make any necessary statements or responses to the news media.
- Prepare a brief and honest statement that can be made to the congregation. Do not divulge any unnecessary details, place blame, interfere with the victim's privacy, or violate any confidentiality concerns.
- Prepare to cooperate fully with the investigation conducted by law enforcement officials or child protective services.
- Handle all documentation with the utmost confidentiality and safeguard all records kept (see "Safeguarding Background Check Information" above).
- The Executive Pastor will ensure that documentation is retained in the Church's confidential files that record every step taken during this process.

Responding to Known Incidents of Abuse

These steps are the same as those for responding to allegations of child abuse, but with the addition of several important requirements:

- Take steps to provide emergency care for the victim.
- Take steps to protect any evidence.
- Under the direction of the Senior Pastor, the pastoral staff will take steps to provide pastoral care for:
 - The victim and his or her family.
 - The family members of the abuser.

- The abuser. Extra care must be observed here to ensure that the Church does not interfere with the ongoing investigation or due process of law. Pastoral staff should see that professional counseling is provided where the need is indicated.

Ministry After Abuse

When child abuse occurs, it results in many victims besides the one who has been physically harmed. Other victims include:

- Family members of the child who was abused.
- The child's peers.
- The peers of the child's parents.
- Other workers with children in the Church.
- The entire congregation.
- Family members of the accused abuser

The Church will need to address the needs of all the above victims in a ministry of healing.

The first step in the ministry process for victims of child abuse, and one of the most important, is being completely open and honest about what has happened. Sharing the facts by giving an accurate description of what has transpired and what actions have been or will be taken is important. However, the Church must:

- Not jeopardize any ongoing investigation by the Church or local law enforcement or child protective service agencies.
- Not compromise the privacy of the victim and his/her family. Protect the identity of the victim if this has been requested by the victim's family.
- Not identify the accused abuser.
- Not be afraid to answer questions with, "We don't know the answer to that yet."

Communicating the facts may be accomplished in several ways, such as a letter to the congregation or a well planned congregational meeting. Whatever method is selected, the Church should provide accurate and forthright information to dispel rumors and insinuations. It is important to assure the congregation that all necessary actions have been taken to provide for the safety of the victim(s) and that the Church continues to be able to safely provide ministry to children.

The above describes only the first step in what may become a long process of restoring spiritual health to the victim(s) and the congregation. Under the direction of the Senior Pastor, the ministry staff should develop a plan for continuing ministry. Requesting help, such as assistance from the Conference staff or from qualified leadership in the Church or community, should be considered.

Other types of ministry, such as educational and supportive ministries, may be considered. Educational ministries could include programs on:

- The consequences of child abuse.
- How to comfort families suffering from child abuse.
- How children can protect themselves from abuse.
- Resources in the community for victims and survivors of child abuse.

Supportive ministries could include support groups for families and victims directed by qualified people in the congregation or local community. Additionally, consideration should be given to making financial arrangements with a trained and experienced counselor for the victim(s) and/or families involved.

In this healing process, two things should never be allowed:

- Blaming the victim
- Offering forgiveness to the abuser without any sign of repentance from the abuser.

The victim of child abuse is never responsible for what has happened to them and did not do anything to cause it. Blaming the victim denies the truth, insults the victim and their family, and thwarts the healing process. Also, it is not good to offer premature forgiveness to the abuser. Only when the abuser can show sorrow and genuine repentance will the congregation be able to offer the grace of forgiveness.

Periodic Evaluation

The Church staff and the SPRC will evaluate semi-annually the Church's policies and procedures for protecting the children in our care. Those conducting the evaluation will use the Church Self Evaluation form located in the forms section of this manual.

*Credits: Much of the information in this section, Safe Child and Youth, was adapted from the book, *SAFE SANCTUARIES: Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse in the Church* by Joy Thornburg Melton (1998, Discipleship Resources)

APPENDIX A

Rights Under the Federal Fair Credit Reporting Act

The following is a short listing of the rights of the person subject to the Background Report (hereafter referred to as the "Consumer") under the federal Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) and the service agreement between the Church and ChoicePoint. This list is not exhaustive. A complete listing of these rights under the FCRA are prescribed by the Federal Trade Commission under 15 U.S.C. Article 1681g(c)(3). The full text of the FCRA is set forth on the Federal Trade Commission's Website at www.ftc.gov/credit. The full service agreement rights may be found in the Service Agreement document kept by the Executive Pastor in the Church Office.

- In providing Background Reports, ChoicePoint will disclose, upon request of the Consumer, the information reported. Also, at the Consumer's request, ChoicePoint will reinvestigate any information disputed by the Consumer at no charge to the Church and take any necessary corrective action with Consumer and the Church.
- The Church will keep all Background Reports, whether oral or written, strictly confidential and restrict the use of the information in the Background Reports by the Church and its authorized personnel to employment purposes, whether paid or volunteer employment. No information from Background Reports will be given or resold to any other "person" or "user." If the Consumer, or his or her representative, requests Background Report information, that person will be referred to ChoicePoint for disclosure under the FCRA or other applicable laws.
- Should the Church choose to take any adverse action (such as denying paid employment to an applicant, or rejecting an applicant as a volunteer worker with children) based in whole or in part on the Consumer's Background Report, before taking such adverse action, the Church will provide the Consumer with a copy of the Background Report. The Church will also provide a description in writing of the rights of consumers under the FCRA.
- All information will be held in the strictest confidence. When not in use by authorized Church personnel, all application documents, responses to reference checks, sensitive background checks and personally identifiable information will be stored securely in a resettable combination lock file cabinet or safe located in the Church Office. The combination for this lock will be maintained ONLY by the Senior Pastor, Executive Pastor and the Chairperson of the SPRC.

APPENDIX B

Maryland State Requirements for Reporting Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect

CODE OF MARYLAND REGULATIONS, Section 07.02.07 requires reporting child abuse or neglect in the following manner:

1. An individual shall immediately report suspected child abuse or neglect to the local department of social services, or report the suspected incident to a local law enforcement agency.
2. Health practitioners, educators, human service workers, and police officers are required to report, both orally and in writing, any suspected child abuse or neglect, with oral report being made immediately and the written report being made within 48 hours of the contact which disclosed the suspected abuse or neglect.
3. A report shall include:
 - a. The name and home address of the child and the parent or other individual responsible for the care of the child;
 - b. The present location of the child;
 - c. The age of the child;
 - d. The names and ages of other children in the home;
 - e. The nature and extent of injuries or sexual abuse or neglect of the child, including any information known to the individual making the report of previous possible physical or sexual abuse or neglect;
 - f. The information available to the individual reporting:
 - i. Which might aid in establishing the cause of the injury or neglect;
 - ii. About the identity of the individual or individuals responsible for abuse or neglect; and
 - g. If reporting abuse or neglect of a child involving mental injury, a description of the substantial impairment of the child's mental or psychological ability to function that was observed and identified, and why it is believed to be attributable to an act of maltreatment or omission of proper care and attention.
4. Reports of abuse shall be made to the local departments of social services or the appropriate law enforcement agency. Reports of neglect shall be made to local departments of social services.
5. An employee of a local department of social services, who receives a report of suspected child abuse or neglect, shall report the information to the protective services unit within the local department at once so as to initiate prompt handling of the report of suspected child abuse or neglect.

FORMS

- 1. EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION**
- 2. VOLUNTEER APPLICATION**
- 3. AUTHORIZATION & REQUEST FOR CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECK**
- 4. SEXUAL MISCONDUCT QUESTIONNAIRE**
- 5. REFERENCE CHECK**
- 6. ACCIDENT REPORT**
- 7. PARTICIPATION COVENANT AGREEMENT**
- 8. REPORT OF SUSPECTED INCIDENT OF CHILD ABUSE REPORT**
- 9. MOUNT OAK FELLOWSHIP SELF EVALUATION**

EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION

Full Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Home Phone Number: _____ Cell Phone # _____

Position you are applying for: _____

Are you a citizen of the United States? YES NO

If not, do you have work papers? YES NO

Are you over the age of 18? YES NO

Are you a veteran? YES NO
(If yes, what Branch of Service: _____)

Education:

High School _____ Location: _____

Graduate? YES NO

Business/Trade School: _____
Location: _____

Graduate? YES NO Degree: _____

College/University: _____ Location: _____

Graduate? YES NO Degree: _____

Major(s): _____

Graduate/Professional Training: _____ Location: _____

Graduate? YES NO Degree: _____

Additional training (type and where received): _____

Employment Application
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Previous Employment (begin with most recent position):

Firm: _____ Address: _____

City/State/Zip/Phone Number: _____

Supervisor's Name and Title: _____

Nature of the Business: _____

Dates of Employment: From _____ to _____. Ending Salary: _____

Position Held: _____

Reason for leaving: _____

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Firm: _____ Address: _____

City/State/Zip/Phone Number: _____

Supervisor's Name and Title: _____

Nature of the Business: _____

Dates of Employment: From _____ to _____. Ending Salary: _____

Position Held: _____

Reason for leaving: _____

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Previous Volunteer Experience: Please list any relevant volunteer positions you have held and list the duties you performed in each position, the name of your supervisors, the address and phone numbers of the volunteer organizations, and the dates of your volunteer service.

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IF ADDITIONAL SPACE IS NEEDED FOR EMPLOYMENT OR VOLUNTEER
HISTORY, PLEASE USE THE REVERSE SIDE OF THIS FORM.
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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, or other crimes of violence, theft, or motor vehicle violations)? _____ NO _____ YES

If yes, please explain:

REFERENCES:

Please furnish the names, addresses and phone numbers of three people to whom you are ***not*** related by blood or marriage and who are ***not*** employed or supervised by you. Please list people who have known you for at least three years.

1) Reference Name: _____ Address _____

City/State/Zip _____ Phone _____

2) Reference Name: _____ Address _____

City/State/Zip _____ Phone _____

3) Reference Name: _____ Address _____

City/State/Zip _____ Phone _____

Who referred you to us? (person, agency, church): _____

Summarize your special skills or qualifications: _____

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Summarize your weaknesses: _____

Waiver and Consent:

I, _____, hereby certify that the information I have provided on this application for employment is true and correct. I authorize this church to verify the information I have provided on this application by contacting the references and employers I have listed including contacting others whom I have not listed, by conducting a criminal records check, and by investigations and inquiries of my personal, employment, educational, financial or medical history and other related matters as may be necessary for an employment decision. I authorize the references and employers listed in this application to give you whatever information they may have regarding my character and fitness for the job for which I have applied. I waive any rights I may have to confidentiality of the aforesaid information in order to permit its release to this church. I acknowledge that I have been provided a summary of my rights under the federal Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA).

In the event that my application is accepted and I become employed by Mount Oak Fellowship of the United Methodist Church, I agree to abide by and be bound by the policies of this Church and to refrain from inappropriate conduct in the performance of my duties on behalf of this Church.

In the event I am employed, I understand that false or misleading information given in my application or interview(s) may result in discharge.

I have read this waiver and the entire application, and I am fully aware of its contents. I sign this consent freely and under no duress or coercion.

Signature of Applicant _____ Date _____

Signature of Witness _____ Date _____

VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

Name _____

Address _____

Daytime Phone _____ Evening phone _____

Occupation _____

Employer _____

Current job responsibilities and schedule _____

Previous work/volunteer experience with children _____

Can you make a one-year commitment to this volunteer position? _____

Do you have responsibilities that would interfere with your commitment to this position?

Yes _____ No _____

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 children? _____

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

Would you be available for periodic volunteer training sessions? Yes _____ No _____

Signature of applicant

Date

AUTHORIZATION AND REQUEST FOR CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECK

(Please print)

Last Name _____ First Name _____

Middle Name _____ Name Suffix _____

Other names that have been used by applicant, if any:

Last Name _____ First Name _____

Middle Name _____

Social Security number _____ - _____ - _____ Sex: Male _____ Female _____

Date of birth (*month/day/year*) _____

Address: Street # _____ Street Name _____

Apt # _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

County _____ Phone _____

If the applicant may be driving children for a church sponsored program, they shall also submit their driver's license number and the state where licensed and a driving record will be checked.

Driver's license number _____ State of issue _____



(Continued on next page)

AUTHORIZATION AND REQUEST FOR CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECK (Page 2)

DISCLOSURE

As part of the employment process, Mount Oak Fellowship of the United Methodist Church (the "Company"), will obtain a consumer report, which I understand may include information regarding my credit worthiness, credit standing, credit capacity, character, general reputation, personal characteristics, or mode of living.

AUTHORIZATION

During the application process and at any time during the tenure of my employment (as a paid employee or volunteer worker) with the Company, I hereby authorize ChoicePoint Workplace Solutions Inc., on behalf of the Company to procure a consumer report which I understand may include information regarding my credit worthiness, credit standing, credit capacity, character, general reputation, personal characteristics, or mode of living. This report may be compiled with information from credit bureaus, court record repositories, departments of motor vehicles, past or present employers and educational institutions, governmental occupational licensing or registration entities, business or personal references, and any other source required to verify information that I have voluntarily supplied. I understand that I may request a complete and accurate disclosure of the nature and scope of the background verification, to the extent such investigation includes information bearing on my character, general reputation, personal characteristics or mode of living.

I acknowledge that I have been provided a summary of my rights under the federal Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) and the service agreement between the Church and ChoicePoint.Workplace Solutions Inc. I further acknowledge that I have been informed that a complete listing of these rights under the FCRA is set forth on the Federal Trade Commission's Website at www.ftc.gov/credit, and that the full service agreement rights may be found in the Service Agreement document kept by the Executive Pastor in the Church Office.

Applicant/Employee Name

Signature

Date

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT QUESTIONNAIRE

(Please check the appropriate box. If more space is needed, please use an additional sheet of paper.)

1. Have you ever filled out this questionnaire for this church? Yes No
If no, please answer questions 2 through 9 below. If yes, give the date: _____
Have any answers changed since you filled out that copy? Yes No
If no, please sign and return this form. If yes, or you are unsure, please answer questions 2 through 9 below.
2. Have you ever been accused, in a written and signed statement, of sexual misconduct with a child or a youth? Yes No
3. Have you ever been accused, in written and signed statement, of sexual misconduct with an adult? Yes No
4. Have you ever been dismissed from any position, volunteer or paid, because of accusations of sexual misconduct on your part? Yes No
5. Have you ever resigned from any position, volunteer or paid, because of an accusation of sexual misconduct on your part, or to avoid being dismissed because of an accusation of sexual misconduct on your part? Yes No
6. If your response to any of the foregoing questions (2 through 5) is "yes," please provide on a separate sheet of paper all details regarding each accusation of sexual misconduct that has been made with respect to you, including a description of the alleged conduct, the name of the person who made the accusation, the date of the alleged misconduct, and the name of your employer at the time of the alleged misconduct.
- 7a. Have accusations of sexual misconduct on your part ever resulted in civil or criminal court proceedings at any level (e.g., indictment, arrest, trial, etc.)? Yes No

If yes, please provide the complete details of those proceedings (including dates, circumstances, the jurisdiction where the proceedings occurred, the nature of the accusations, and the result of the proceedings) on a separate sheet of paper.
- 7b. Have accusations of sexual misconduct against you resulted in civil or criminal court proceedings on more than one occasion? Yes No
8. Other than the above, is there any fact or circumstance involving you or your background that would call into question your being entrusted with the supervision, guidance, and care of young people? Yes No
9. Please provide three adult references (names, addresses, and phone numbers) on the next page of persons who are **not** related to you by blood, marriage or other family relationship and are **not** employed or supervised by you, who can, to the best of their ability, provide statements in support of your good character and clean record in regard to sexual misconduct with children, youth, and adults.

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT QUESTIONNAIRE (Page 2)

1) Reference Name: _____ Address _____

City/State/Zip _____ Phone _____

2) Reference Name: _____ Address _____

City/State/Zip _____ Phone _____

3) Reference Name: _____ Address _____

City/State/Zip _____ Phone _____

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSE FORM

(To be signed by all laypersons and un-appointed clergy who work with children or youth within the local church. If under 18, a parent or guardian must also sign.)

I verify that the answers I have provided on this Questionnaire are true and accurate to the best of my ability. I understand that false answers, as well as the failure to sign this Response Form, will result in my being denied the position for which I am being considered.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please print your name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ E-mail: _____

If applicant is under 18 years of age:

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____

Date: _____

Please print your name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ E-mail: _____

REFERENCE CHECK

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 child?
6. How would you describe the applicant's ability to relate to adults?
7. How would you describe the applicant's leadership abilities?
8. How would you feel about having the applicant as a volunteer worker with your child?
9. Do you know of any characteristics that would negatively affect the applicant's ability to work with children? If so, please describe.
10. Do you have any knowledge that the applicant has ever been convicted of a crime? If so, please describe.
11. Are there any other comments that you would like to make?

Reference inquiry completed by: _____

Signature

Date

Printed name: _____

ACCIDENT REPORT

(Please print all information)

Date of accident _____ Time of accident _____

Name of child injured _____ Age _____

Address of child _____

Location of accident _____

Parent or guardian _____

Name of person(s) who witnessed the accident:

Name _____ Phone _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Describe the accident: _____

Describe what first aid or other measures were provided: _____

Signature of person completing this form

Date

Printed name

PARTICIPATION COVENANT

Mount Oak Fellowship of the United Methodist Church is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children 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) should volunteer to work with children 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 children is encouraged to discuss his/her willingness with one of the church's pastors before accepting an assignment.
3. All adult volunteers involved with children must be members or constituents of the congregation before beginning a volunteer assignment.
4. Adult volunteers with children shall observe the "Two Adult Rule" at all times so that no adult is ever alone with children.
5. Adult volunteers with children shall attend regular training and educational events provided by the church to keep volunteers informed of church policies and state laws regarding child abuse.
6. Adult volunteers shall immediately report to their supervisor any behavior that seems abusive or inappropriate.

Please answer yes or no to 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? _____
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? _____
5. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to discuss with a pastor of this church your experience, if any, as a survivor of child abuse? _____
(Answering yes to this question does not automatically disqualify you from volunteering with children.)
6. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to inform a pastor of this congregation if you have ever been convicted of child abuse? _____

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

_____ Signature of applicant	_____ Date
_____ Print full name	

REPORT OF SUSPECTED INCIDENT OF CHILD ABUSE

1. Name of worker (paid or volunteer) observing or receiving disclosure of child abuse

2. Victim's name _____

Victim's age/date of birth _____

Victim's home address _____

Victim's present location _____

Home address of parent or other individual responsible for the care of the victim _____

3. Nature and extent of injuries or sexual abuse _____

4. Any information known of previous possible physical or sexual abuse _____

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

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

7. Name of person accused of abuse _____

Relationship of accused to victim (paid staff, volunteer, family member, other) _____

8. Reported to pastor _____

Date/time _____

Summary _____

9. Call to victim's parent/guardian _____

Date/time _____

Spoke with _____

Summary _____

10. Call to Prince George's County Child Protective Services: [(301) 909-2450, after hours: 301-699-8605; fax: (301) 909-2200]

Date/time _____

Spoke with _____

Summary _____

11. Call to Prince George's County Police, Bowie Station: [(301) 390-2100; fax: (301) 218-1091]

Date/time _____

Spoke with _____

Summary _____

12. Other Contacts _____

Name(s) _____

Date/time _____

Summary _____

Signature of Person Making Report

Date

Note: It is imperative that the person filling out this report be familiar with the state law reporting requirements before taking any action or completing this report. These requirements may be found in Appendix B of the section on Safe Children and Youth of the Mount Oak Fellowship Personnel and Procedures Manual.

MOUNT OAK FELLOWSHIP SELF-EVALUATION FORM

The following will help our congregation assess our policy needs for the prevention of child abuse in our church. Read each statement, and mark the appropriate response in the columns to the right. By completing this chart, you will help us identify the areas needing attention.

	Yes	No	Unsure
1. We screen and check references for all paid employees including clergy, who have significant contact with children.			
2. We screen all volunteer workers for any position involving work with children.			
3. We train at least annually all volunteer or paid workers with children to understand the nature of child abuse.			
4. We train at least annually all volunteer or paid workers with children in how to carry out our policies to prevent child abuse.			
5. Our workers are informed of state law requirements regarding child abuse and their responsibility for reporting incidents.			
6. We have a clear reporting procedure for a suspected incident of child abuse that follows the requirements of our state law.			
7. We have insurance coverage available in case a child abuse complaint occurs.			
8. We have a clearly defined building use strategy as a component of our child abuse prevention plan.			
9. We have a clearly defined response plan to be implemented in case an allegation of child abuse is made against someone in our church.			
10. We offer at least annual educational opportunities to parents of children about how to recognize and how to reduce risks of child abuse.			
11. We take our policies to prevent child abuse seriously, and we are committed to their enforcement for the safety and security of all our children.			