



## Marlton United Methodist Church

Plymouth Dr at Marlborough Ave, Marlton, NJ 08053  
PO Box 1160, 2 Marlborough Ave.,

### **Safe Sanctuaries Policy: Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse in our Church**

#### **Basic Procedures for Safe Ministry with Children and Youth**

All church children and youth programs should adhere to the following basic procedural guidelines.

- The "Two-Adult" Rule: 2 adults should be present at all times. Avoid all one-adult/one-child situations, such as closed-door bathroom breaks.
- The "Five-Years-Older" Rule: Adults should be at least 5 years older than the oldest youth
- Annual Orientation:
  - to train all volunteers and paid staff of appropriate behavior;
  - accepted policies and procedures;
  - and confirm up-to-date background checks for all youth volunteers and staff members.
- First Aid/CPR Trained personnel available at all times.
- Un-shaded and unobstructed windows in all classroom doors. If no windows exist, then the entrance door is to be left open.
- Open-door counseling: One-on-one counseling is to be held within eyesight of another adult or in a public setting.
- Advance notice to parents about program events and activities, including overnight stays.
- Parent and family education about abuse and the components of MUMC's Safe Sanctuaries Policy.
- Appropriate equipment and supervision for the setting and activity. Some settings or activities will require more supervision or expertise than others.
- Rules and guidelines for all church computers and internet activities.
- Transportation and sleeping arrangements for overnight trips must be thoughtfully planned out and be appropriate to the guideline found in the 2008 edition of Safe Sanctuaries.

#### **Forms appended to this document:**

Marlton UMC Parent/Guardian Consent Form	Page 9
Confidential Screening Form for Employees & Volunteers Working with Minors	Page 10
Form for Reference Check	Page 13
Volunteer Child/Youth Worker Enlistment Checklist	Page 14
Participation Covenant Statement	Page 15
Youth Covenant Statement	Page 16
Outside Groups Covenant	Page 17
Accident Report Form	Page 18
Report Form for Suspected Abuse	Page 19

#### **Important Phone Numbers**

- a. DCP&P hotline: 1-877 NJ ABUSE (1-877-652-2873) – They will instruct you of the steps you should follow for the specific situation. For sexual abuse cases, DCP&P will contact a local center and dispatch a trained interviewer to interview the child.
- b. Evesham Police via Burlington County Central Dispatch – non-emergency: 856-983-1111

## **Introduction & Overview**

### **Summary of Issues:**

Because the tragedy of abuse of children, youth, and vulnerable adults is a reality in our world, and because we recognize our responsibility to ensure a safe and protected environment for our children, Marlton United Methodist Church in Marlton, NJ (hereafter referred to as MUMC (Marlton UMC) has developed this policy and associated guidelines to reduce the risk of abuse of children and youth in our church.

Jesus made the importance of children clear when he said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs." Emulating his example, MUMC has grown to be an important place for nurturing children and youth in faith.

This policy attempts to prayerfully and faithfully identify areas of risk and take steps to reduce that risk. This local church policy is in compliance with the Greater NJ Conference Safe Sanctuaries Policy, approved June 2005. This policy and the guidelines herein are to be followed by all persons, ministries and programs dealing with children, youth (under age 18) and vulnerable adults.

### **Mandate for the Church: *From Scripture:* Matthew 18:5-7 NRSV**

*"Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me. If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe to the world because of stumbling blocks! Occasions for stumbling are bound to come, but woe to the one by whom the stumbling block comes!"*

### ***From Tradition:***

- The United Methodist Hymnal Baptismal Covenant
- From The United Methodist Discipline: Refer to The Book of Resolutions 1996, pages 384-386, "Reducing the Risk of Child Sexual Abuse in the Church
- From The Council of Bishops' Episcopal Initiative on Children and Poverty: "A Church for All God's Children," 1996 – 2004.
- From The Greater New Jersey Annual Conference: Safe Sanctuaries: Reducing the Risk of Abuse in Ministry with Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults (2005)

### ***From the Greater New Jersey Conference:***

Compliance with these policies and adoption of a Safe Sanctuaries Policy by the local church shall be reported through a written question to be answered as a part of the Church/Charge Conference Report beginning November 2005.

### **Resources Consulted:**

Safe Sanctuary Policy: Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse in Our Church, developed by Trinity UMC, Merchantville, NJ, rev. 2005-11-02

Resources at the Greater New Jersey Conference website ([www.gnjumc.org](http://www.gnjumc.org)) and offices including specific conversations with Rev. Kathy Stolz – Youth & Young Adult Ministries Coordinators.

Safe Sanctuaries: Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse in the Church, Joy T. Melton (Discipleship Resources 1998)

Safe Sanctuaries for Youth: Reducing the Risk of Abuse in Youth Ministries, Joy T. Melton (Discipleship Resources 2003)

Out of the Basement: A holistic approach to Children's Ministry, Diane C. Olsen (Discipleship Resources 2001)

Children's Ministry Volunteers that Stick, Jim Wideman (Group Publishing 2004)

Job Descriptions & Leadership Training for Local Church Leaders 2005-2008 (Discipleship Resources)

### **Scope of the Problem:**

When we think seriously about the promise we make in the baptismal service, we can only conclude that we are truly called to prevent child abuse in our churches. As Christians we are called to move beyond grieving about the issue to active efforts to eliminate the possibility of child abuse everywhere, and most especially in our churches.

Types of Child Abuse: Physical (battery, shaking, kicking, choking, "non-accidental"), Emotional (spoken or unspoken violence or cruelty), Neglect (endangers child's safety, health, and welfare), Sexual (fondling, intercourse, incest, exploitation and/or exposure to pornography or prostitution), Ritual (regularly and intentionally inflicted, possibly done with an appeal to a higher power).

It Can Happen Anywhere: The child victim is never responsible for causing the abuse, and is never to be blamed. The child victim is never capable of consent to abusive behavior. Child sexual abuse is ALWAYS wrong and is solely the responsibility of the abuser.

Knowing the Facts: Studies have estimated that 1 out of 3 girls are sexually abused before the age of 18. Estimates state that 1 out of 7 boys are sexually abused, but the actual number may be higher because of a reluctance to report occurrences.

The Church at Risk: The risk for churches is especially high because we're seen as "trusting organizations" and we've been "notoriously INACTIVE when it comes to screening volunteers and/or employees who work with kids." Furthermore, churches routinely provide opportunities for close contact with children.

Indicators of Child Abuse: Children showing anxiety about coming to church or being left in a class or program, or reluctance to participate when he/she had previously been enthusiastic may be an indicator of abusive behaviors. Abused children may have fears of specific individuals, experience nightmares, or show hostility.

Abusers: Who Are They?: Less than 20% are strangers – 93% of victims know their abuser. People who abuse children look and act just like everyone else. Those who sexually abuse children are drawn to settings where they can gain easy access to children, such as sports leagues, faith centers, clubs and schools.

How Does Abuse Happen?: Children are vulnerable, the abuser is powerful; without a comprehensive strategy against abuse, we are taking a needless risk that harm may be done to our children or our workers with children. Strategies must be supported by the entire congregation and applied to each worker involved in children's ministries. We need to think carefully about the safety of any one-adult/one-child situations. Look for group situations where possible. Set an example by personally avoiding one-adult/one-child situations with children other than your own.

Consequences of Child Sexual Abuse: Many victims are created in addition to the child, the congregation, the child's family, and often the family of the abuser. Of foremost importance is the child who has been harmed; he or she must be cared for. The congregation's wounds may continue well beyond litigation – that doesn't provide healing among the members. Litigation can go on for two or more years. Financial consequences are somewhere around \$750,000 if innocent/at least \$1-2 million if proven guilty. No congregation can afford, financially, ethically, or morally, to fail to implement strategies for the reduction and prevention of child sexual abuse.

Greater NJ Conference Insurance: All churches are covered because the Conference has a policy, and there is an expectation that every church is implementing some type of policies and procedures. As is true with most situations, the extent of coverage varies, depending on what the local church has done to proactively prevent abuse from happening.

Minimizing Opportunity for Abuse: If you eliminate or reduce one-adult/one-child situations, you'll dramatically lower the risk of sexual abuse for your child. Expect programs to perform careful screening and background checks on all persons working with children. Youth-serving organizations should have policies in place for dealing with suspicious situations and reports of abuse. Furthermore, these organizations should regularly train their staff to prevent, recognize and react responsibly to child sexual abuse.

## **Worker Requirements**

Screening and background checks shall be required of all persons involved in church children's programs and ministries unless a more stringent check is required to satisfy the standards of a licensing agency. All background checks are ordered by the Pastor or Safe Sanctuaries Coordinator through MUMC's MinistrySafe account. Background checks and motor vehicle reports are kept confidential.

This service<sup>1</sup> costs \$15.00 and returns:

- Applicant Verification: Helps to verify that the name and social security number match.
- Nationwide Criminal Database Search: Accesses criminal conviction, sexual offender registry, and department of corrections records across the United States.
- County Courthouse Search: Searches county court records.

### ***Requirements for paid staff:***

All regular paid workers, lay and clergy, of MUMC must:

- Submit personal information for background check.
  - Forms: Authorization for Background Check (through MinistrySafe)
- Complete a volunteer self-assessment screening.
  - Forms: Confidential Screening Form for Employees & Volunteers Working with Minors
- Complete interview and reference check.
  - Forms: Form for Reference Check

### ***Requirements for regular and occasional volunteers in children's programs and ministries:***

All regular volunteer workers of MUMC must:

- Submit personal information for background check.
  - Forms: Authorization for Background Check (through MinistrySafe)
- Complete a volunteer self-assessment screening.
  - Forms: Confidential Screening Form for Employees & Volunteers Working with Minors
- Complete interview and reference check.
  - Forms: Form for Reference Check
- Sign and Date appropriate volunteer Ministry Covenant.
  - Forms: Participation Covenant Statement

*An additional motor vehicle report is required for any volunteer or employee who transport youth, children or vulnerable adults.*

### ***Requirements for church-chartered and non-church children's programs:***

In place of compliance with the details of this Safe Sanctuaries Policy, MUMC will accept the organization's approved Child Advocacy Policy.

If a policy does not exist or it does not meet MUMC's expectations, as determined by the Pastor, Safe Sanctuaries Coordinator, and Staff-Parish Relations Team (SPRT) Chairperson, then the organization will be expected to meet all requirements for "regular and occasional volunteers in children's programs and ministries," (see above).

At the time of this revision, these requirements apply to the following programs: Boy Scout Troop 14, Girl Scout Troop, Brownie Troop, Cub Pack 14.

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<sup>1</sup> Background screening costs and reports are subject to change.

### **Handling of Interview, Screening, and Background Information**

It is a mandate of this policy that all interview, screening and background information be handled according to the following guidelines to ensure privacy and confidentiality for all concerned.

#### ***Interviews and Reference Checks***

The Safe Sanctuaries Coordinator in coordination with the program supervisor shall complete interviews and reference checks for each volunteer ministry position.

These documents shall be kept in the volunteer's personnel file with completed Background Check, application, interview notes, reference check notes, and motor vehicle report if needed.

#### ***Confidential Screening Form for Employees & Volunteers Working with Minors***

This form is mandated for all staff and volunteers working in church children and youth programs. These screening forms are designed to assist MUMC in gaining information on persons who are applicants for working in church programs with children, youth and vulnerable adults. Their use is designed to enhance the protection of those who participate in the programs.

This document shall be kept in the volunteer's personnel file with completed Background Check reports.

#### ***Background Check Information***

Authorization for Background Check forms will be sent to MinistrySafe.

- Staff authorizations shall be collected (\$15.00 per person) by the Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee (SPRT) Chairperson.
- Volunteer authorizations shall be collected (\$15.00 per person) by the Children's Ministry Coordinator or Pastor.

#### ***Reference Check Notes, Application, Interview Notes and Background Check Review***

All reports shall be reviewed by the

- Ministry Supervisor who will be overseeing the volunteer or staff member.
- Chairperson of the Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee (SPRT)
- Safe Sanctuaries Coordinator
- Pastor

These documents shall be stored in the confidential personnel files of the church. This shall be a new locking cabinet stored in the pastor's office and accessible only to the pastor.

Staff personnel files shall be maintained in the confidential personnel files of the church after the termination of any employee.

### **Building Compliance Requirements**

MUMC's Safe Sanctuaries policy applies to all church operated programs for children, youth, or vulnerable adults. These programs must be clearly differentiated from those that are non-church operated.

The following are basic assumptions made as they relate to both church and non-church operated children, youth and vulnerable adult programs.

1. All buildings in which such programs are housed shall have any necessary "certificates of occupancy."
2. All groups conducting such programs shall have the necessary certificates of insurance for both liability and workers compensation. They shall be displayed as required by law.
3. All such programs shall conform to Federal and State wage and tax laws for employees.

### **Basic Procedures for Safe Ministry with Children and Youth**

All church children and youth programs should adhere to the following basic procedural guidelines.

- The "Two-Adult" Rule: 2 adults should be present at all times. Avoid all one-adult/one-child situations, such as closed-door bathroom breaks.
- First Aid/CPR Trained personnel available at all times.
- Annual Orientation: to remind all volunteers and paid staff of appropriate behavior; accepted policies and procedures.

- The "Five-Years-Older" Rule: Adults should be at least 5 years older than the oldest youth.
- Un-shaded and unobstructed windows in all classroom doors. If no windows exist, then the entrance door is to be left open.
- Open-door counseling: One-on-one counseling is to be held within eyesight of another adult or in a public setting.
- Advance notice to parents about program events and activities, including overnight stays.
- Parent and family education about abuse and the components of MUMC's Safe Sanctuaries Policy.
- Appropriate equipment and supervision for the setting and activity. Some settings or activities will require more supervision or expertise than others.
- Rules and guidelines for all church computers and internet activities.
- Transportation and sleeping arrangements for overnight trips must be thoughtfully planned out and be appropriate to the guideline found in the 2008 edition of Safe Sanctuaries.
- All Church computers should be password protected and should always be monitored when in use by children, youth and/vulnerable adults. Church Computers should only be used for ministry related purposes and should contain appropriate blocks from specific internet sites.

## **Congregational Plan for Responding to Allegations of Abuse**

### **What should be reported?**

Every individual in New Jersey, including clergy, is required to report child abuse to the authorities if there is a strong reason to believe that it is occurring. If you believe a child has been abused or neglected, you have a legal responsibility to report it. The Division of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P) of New Jersey is required by law to investigate reports of child abuse and neglect. <https://www.nj.gov/dcf/about/divisions/dcpp/>

DCP&P is New Jersey's child protection/child welfare agency. It is responsible for investigating allegations of child abuse and neglect and if necessary arranges for the child's protection and the family's treatment.

In addition, DCP&P operates a 24-hour hotline to receive reports of suspected child abuse and neglect during evenings, weekends and holidays. This Office of Child Abuse Control (OCAC) is linked with a statewide network of Special Response Units who respond to emergency reports.

### **Plan Summary**

This is a plan for complying with the legal reporting requirements and for making statements to other officials and the media – none but the pastor should be authorized to speak to the media on behalf of the congregation. Beyond the State's requirements, notify conference authorities including District Superintendent and Bishop.

### **Procedure Details**

#### **Reporting:**

All complaints and allegations of child abuse occurring outside the church or church programs and activities should be reported to the DCP&P Abuse Hotline as a citizen of New Jersey.

All complaints and allegations of child abuse occurring inside the church or during a church program or activity should be directed to the Ministry Leader of the program and Senior Pastor.

*Our job is not to try to investigate the suspected abuse, but to document the specifics that cause us to suspect abuse and to carefully report them. NJ Law does not require proof to call the hotline.*

**Forms:** Report Form for Suspected Incidents of Sexual or Physical Abuse; NJ Abuse Factsheet

Follow this procedure in response to a child's complaint or allegations of child abuse occurring inside the church or during a church program or activity.

1. Remove child to safe place. The safety of the victim must be the church's primary concern.
2. Do not confront the alleged abuser with anger and hostility – treat with dignity but immediately remove from further involvement.
3. Notify Authorities and document each contact using MUMC's Report Form for Suspected Abuse.
  - c. Call DCP&P hotline: 1-877 NJ ABUSE (1-877-652-2873) – They will instruct you of the steps you should follow for the specific situation. For sexual abuse cases, DCP&P will contact a local center and dispatch a trained interviewer to interview the child.
  - d. Call police: 911 when a child or vulnerable adult is in immediate danger
    1. 856-983-1111 when a child or vulnerable adult is not in immediate danger  
(Evesham Police via Burlington County Central Dispatch – non-emergency)
  2. Call Capital District Superintendent: 609-661-1768 (Rev. Hector Burgos)
  3. Call Church Insurance: Sovereign Insurance Group (GNJAC insurance carrier),
    1. 1-800-222-4478 or -610-535-6810.
4. Keep a written record of all steps taken in response to the allegation.

### **Schedule of Review for this Policy**

This policy should be scheduled for an annual review to make sure that it meets the needs and activities of the congregation and its children's ministries.

The annual review should be scheduled for completion before the annual church/charge conference meeting. The

Safe Sanctuaries Coordinator should create and chair the review committee. Any changes made to the Safe Sanctuaries Policy must be submitted to the GNJ Safe Sanctuaries Coordinator for review and recertification.

### **Definition of Terms**

**Youth:** Any student or child who attends Marlton UMC's ministry offerings.

**Vulnerable Adults:** Those adults with diminished physical, mental, or emotional capacities.

**Screening Forms:** Screening forms for use with volunteers are designed to assist the local church in gaining information on persons who are applicants for working in church programs with children, youth and vulnerable adults. Their use is designed to enhance the protection of those who participate in the programs. The use of the screening process should be required in both "church" and "non-church" programs.

**Background Checks:** As with the screening forms, background checks are designed to protect those individuals involved in the programs offered by the church to children, youth and vulnerable adults.

**Church Programs/Non-Church Programs** (as related to insurance): Programs relating to children, youth and vulnerable adults are covered under the conference-wide Property and Casualty Insurance Program so long as they are church operated.

To be classified as "church-operated," the church must have control over

- starting and stopping the operation,
- hiring or firing the employees, and
- the management of the day-to-day operations.

The decision to operate a program, as described above, should be a matter of record in the meeting minutes of the Leadership Team or Board of Trustees of the local church. This will lay to rest the question of whether it is a church-operated or a non-church program that is using the church premises.

The non-church program is not covered by the conference insurance and the church should be sure that these non-church programs carry a minimum of \$1,000,000 General Liability Insurance and are covered by Workers' Compensation insurance. Certificates of these insurance coverages should be requested and received by the church annually. The Annual Conference and the local church should be named as additional insureds on these policies. The employees of church-operated childcare centers are covered under the Workers' Compensation Program and as such should be reported on the annual Workers' Compensation salary audit of the local church.



## Marlton UMC Parent/Guardian Consent Form

This Parent Consent Form gives permission for my child to participate in any activities on or off campus and sponsored by Marlton UMC. (All portions of this form shall be completed before the child is registered for the event).

Name of **CHILD**: \_\_\_\_\_ Main Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of **PARENT**: \_\_\_\_\_ Student's Cell Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

My child has the following physical condition that may require special attention:

- Diabetes
- Hyperventilation
- Seizures
- Allergies
- Other

Please specify allergies:

\_\_\_\_\_

Other (please specify):

\_\_\_\_\_

Does your child require any special accommodations or have special accessibility needs?

\_\_\_\_\_

(A Ministry Leader will contact you to discuss these needs.)

### Medical Treatment Release, Liability Release, and Photograph Release

I hereby authorize event staff to obtain and give consent for medical treatment for my child for such injury or illness that may occur during the year and hereby hold the ministry staff and their representatives harmless in the exercise of this authority.

I give permission for my child to be transported in vehicles operated by the adults in whose care the minor has been entrusted while attending and participating in this ministry.

It is my understanding that the above-named participant will be covered by my personal medical insurance. The ministry provides limited/supplemental medical payment coverage for injuries arising out of the event activities which is payable in excess of any other collectible insurance. Payments of any medical injuries not covered by my insurance or the ministry limited/supplemental medical insurance will be paid by me.

I give permission for photographs of my child taken during the year to be used at the discretion of Marlton UMC and the Ministries leadership wherever deemed appropriate.

I do not give permission for photographs of my child taken during the year

Name of parent/guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of parent/guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ **(Attach Copy of both sides of your Insurance Card)**

**Confidential Screening Form for Employees & Volunteers  
Working with Minors  
Marlton United Methodist Church**

This form will be reviewed by the Pastor. Please answer each question candidly and completely.

**This form will be kept in a confidential file to protect your privacy. The results of the background check will be seen only by the Pastor and kept in a locked box to protect your privacy.**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

FULL AND COMPLETE NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Please include maiden name, all married names and nicknames that you commonly are known by such as "Trip, Sonny, etc.". **Please print!***

Date of birth \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Evening phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer's Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Current job responsibilities and schedule:

Previous work experience:

List any churches besides Marlton UMC you have attended regularly in the last 5 years:

<i>Church &amp; address</i>	<i>type of volunteer work</i>	<i>dates</i>
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List all other volunteer work and employment involving children/youth

<i>Organization</i>	<i>type of volunteer work</i>	<i>dates</i>
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Do you have your own transportation? \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Yes

Do you have a valid driver's license? \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Yes

Do you have liability insurance? (list name of carrier)

**Two references** (Do not list relatives)

1. Name:

Address:

Daytime phone:

Evening Phone:

Relationship to reference:

2. Name:

Address:

Daytime phone:

Evening Phone:

Relationship to reference:

Please circle "yes" or "no". **If you answer "yes" to any of the following questions**, please attach an explanation noting the date, nature and place of the incident involved or necessary details regarding medical conditions. A "yes" answer will not necessarily disqualify a person from serving as a volunteer.

1. Have you ever lived outside the state of New Jersey? If so, list other states and/or countries and dates in residence.

Yes / No

2. Have you ever had your employment or volunteer position terminated for any reason? If yes, give reason.

Yes / No

3. Are you willing to provide transportation for children or youth?

Yes / No

If yes, answer the next four questions.

a. Has your driver's license ever been revoked or suspended?

Yes / No

b. In the past three years, have you been convicted of, or pleaded guilty to any offense involving a moving vehicle violation in this state or any other state?  
Yes / No

c. Do you have seizures of any kind? If so, are they controlled by medication?  
Yes / No

d. Do you regularly take any medication that could affect your ability to drive?  
Yes / No

**Please fill out and sign the consent form for a background check. The information will be kept confidential!**

***CERTIFICATION***

The information provided herein and on the Confidential screening form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I authorize any organization listed herein to give you any information that they may have regarding my character and fitness to work with minors. I agree to be bound by the Marlton United Methodist Church "Safe Sanctuaries Policy" and have received a copy.

Signature & date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Form for 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 would you describe the applicant?
4. How would you describe the applicant's ability to relate to children/youth?
5. How would you describe the applicant's ability to relate to adults?
6. How would you describe the applicant's leadership abilities?
7. How would you feel about having the applicant with your child/youth?
8. Do you know of any characteristics that would negatively affect the applicant's ability to work with children/youth? If so, please describe them.
9. Please list any other comments you would like to make.

Reference Inquiry completed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature and date

## Volunteer Child/Youth Worker Enlistment Checklist

Task to complete	Completed by – Initials & date
___ Church status verified (minimum 6 months involvement)	_____
___ Application & screening forms completed	_____
___ Signed background check consent form	_____
___ Background check form sent to agency	_____
___ References checked	_____
___ Screening Interview	_____
___ Review of background check, application, reference notes, and interview notes by Pastor	_____
___ Review of background check, application, reference notes, and interview notes by Ministry Supervisor	_____
___ Review of background check, application, reference notes, and interview notes by SPRC Chair	_____
___ Copy of policies and procedures given to applicant	_____
___ Applicant completes church training event	_____
___ Copy of driver's license on file (if needed)	_____
___ Applicant informed of approval or disqualification	_____

## Participation Covenant Statement

(To be completed by all Approved Volunteers)

The congregation of Marlton United Methodist Church is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, tweens, youth, and adults who participate in ministries and activities sponsored by the church. The following 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.

**Please answer the following questions:**

1. As a member of Marlton UMC do you agree to observe and abide by all church policies regarding working in ministries with children, youth, and vulnerable adults?

Yes No

2. As a member of Marlton UMC, do you agree to observe "The Two Adult Rule"?

Yes No

3. As a member of Marlton UMC, do you agree to participate in training and educational events provided by the church related to your ministry?

Yes No

4. As a member of Marlton UMC, do you agree to promptly report abusive or inappropriate behavior to the event leader?

Yes No

5. I have read the Marlton UMC Safe Sanctuaries Policy. I agree to abide by this policy and to partner with the church in providing a safe environment for our children/youth/vulnerable adults.

Yes No

6. I have read this Safe Sanctuaries Participation Covenant Statement and I agree to observe and abide by the policies set forth above.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Youth Covenant Statement

*Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." Matthew 19:14*

**Covenant: Where I am a volunteer for Children's Ministry, I am a representative of that Christian community and I am responsible for my actions.**

I understand and agree to abide by the following guidelines:

1. I will not bring or use any illegal drugs, alcoholic beverages, or tobacco.
2. My conduct and talk will be respectful of all persons. I will not use any profanity or obscene language.
3. I will obey Marlton UMC staff and adult volunteers at all times.
4. I will dress appropriately.
5. I will use my cell phone for emergency situations only.
6. I agree to serve in the areas that I am asked to serve and with whom I am asked to serve.
7. I understand that friends who have not gone through the training process will not be permitted to volunteer.
8. Above all else, I will focus on serving the children at Marlton UMC and model the Christian faith. I have read and do understand the Youth Volunteer Covenant. To the best of my ability, I agree to abide by it. Failure to abide will result in a 1st time warning and second time dismissal from the Volunteer Youth Team.

**Signature of Youth** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Parent** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_



## Outside Groups Covenant

The Congregation of Marlton United Methodist Church is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, youth and volunteer workers who participate in ministries and activities at the church. The Safe Sanctuaries policy reflects 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.

I have read and understand the Safe Sanctuaries Policy of Marlton UMC. I agree to abide by all parts of this policy and am aware that failure to do so may result in the loss of privileges for my group or organization to use the facilities.

I am personally accepting responsibility to convey, in both oral and written form, a copy of this Safe Sanctuaries Policy to all members of my group or organization.

I, as an authorized agent of the below named group or organization, agree to release, waive, hold harmless, discharge, defend and indemnify Marlton UMC from any and all claims, actions, or losses, for bodily injury, abuse, sexual misconduct/sexual abuse by any person acting as a member of my group or organization, or person present on the premises by invitation of my group or organization.

I understand that my group or organization can hire Safe Sanctuary approved childcare workers from Marlton UMC.

Name of Outside Group or Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Contact Person/Authorized Agent for Group: \_\_\_\_\_  
(please print full name)

Signature of Contact Person for Group: \_\_\_\_\_

Today’s date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Evening phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell phone: \_\_\_\_\_

### Accident Report Form

Use this form to make a report of an accident that occurred to a child or youth while attending a Marlton UMC sponsored activity.

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date/Time of Accident: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Accident: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of child or youth injured: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of child's or youth's parent or guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Date and time parents contacted about accident: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person(s) who witnessed the accident:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe accident: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Condition of child or youth, including the nature and extent of the injury: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

First aid or other care provided after accident: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of person making report: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Printed name of person making report: \_\_\_\_\_

## Report Form for Suspected Abuse

Follow this procedure in response to a child's complaint or allegations of child abuse occurring inside the church or during a church program or activity.

1. Remove child to safe place. The safety of the victim must be the church's primary concern.
2. Do not confront the alleged abuser with anger and hostility – treat with dignity but immediately remove from further involvement.
3. Notify Authorities and document each contact using Marlton UMCs Report Form for Suspected Abuse.
  - a. Call DCP&P hotline: 1-877 NJ ABUSE (1-877-652-2873) – They will instruct you of the steps you should follow for the specific situation. For sexual abuse cases, DCP&P will contact a local center and dispatch a trained interviewer to interview the child.
  - b. Call police: 911 If child or vulnerable adult is in immediate danger
    1. 856-983-1111 If child or vulnerable adult is not in immediate danger (Evesham Police via Burlington County Central Dispatch – non-emergency)
  - c. Call Capital District Superintendent: 609-661-1768 (Rev. Hector Burgos)
  - d. Call Church Insurance and Attorney: Sovereign Insurance Group (GNJAC insurance carrier), 1-800-222-4478 or -610-535-6810.

### NAME OF CHILD OR YOUTH

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

### PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN OF CHILD OR YOUTH

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address (if different):  
\_\_\_\_\_

Telephones: W \_\_\_\_\_; H \_\_\_\_\_; C \_\_\_\_\_

### PERSON MAKING REPORT OF INCIDENT

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to child or youth: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephones: W \_\_\_\_\_; H \_\_\_\_\_; C \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of person reporting incident \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**SPECIFIC ALLEGATION(s)**

When speaking with an alleged victim of abuse, be careful to use open-ended questions. Let the alleged victim tell of the incident using his or her own words. Use this space to provide information to describe or explain the circumstances surrounding the incident you are reporting. You may attach additional sheets if necessary. Include in this report the following information, together with all other information you reasonably believe to be relevant:

Name of the Marlton UMC leader of the activity or event: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of incident: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Any statement made by the alleged victim:

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Describe any injury to the alleged victim:

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Any emergency response required? If so, please describe:

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Names of any witnesses to the alleged abuse:

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Statements made by witnesses:

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Any statement made by the person(s) being reported as having committed the alleged incident:

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Any immediate action taken by person submitting this report as a result of the incident:

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**REPORTING THIS INCIDENT**

Date and time incident reported to Event Leader:

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Date and time incident reported to Senior Pastor:

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Date and time of call to law enforcement agency, name of reporting member, name of officer spoken to and content of that conversation:

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Date and time of call to the DCP&P, name of reporting member, name of worker spoken to, content of that conversation:

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Date and time reported to District Superintendent, name of reporting member, and content of that conversation:

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Date and time reported to Marlton UMC liability insurance carrier and name of reporting member:

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