

Policy for Preventing Abuse of Children and Youth

The Association of the Churches of God in Oregon and Southwest Washington (hereinafter referred to as the Association) take seriously our responsibility to provide a safe and secure environment for all children and youth (ages birth to 18 years of age), as well as all adults who participate in the services and activities offered by our Association. The following policies reflect our expectations for all workers, paid or volunteer.

The purpose of this policy is to set-up guidelines and procedures to endeavor to insure that our children and youth are protected from any sexual misconduct or abuse.

1. All paid employees will be required to provide two background references that can be verified by the leadership of the Association.
2. A background search will be completed on each paid employee and volunteer who will be involved with children and/or youth. The Association will cover the cost for this background search.
3. All volunteers who serve with children and/or youth must be attending one of the Association's recognized churches for a period of not less than six (6) months prior to having any leadership/responsibility with children and/or youth or provide an acceptable letter of reference from the church they have most recently attended for the prior six (6) months.
4. All volunteers and employees will be given a copy of the ***"Oregon Child Abuse Reporting Law"***. Each recipient will be expected to read, understand and be familiar with the law. They will sign a statement indicating complete compliance on the **Application and Consent Form for Background Search**.
5. No physical restraint of any kind should be used at any time unless a child or youth presents an immediate physical threat to other children/youth, himself or others. Should intervention need to take place, a warning should be given and if possible a parent(s)/guardian(s) notified. If physical restraint should need to be administered, it should be achieved with only the minimum physical restraint required and a parent(s)/guardian(s) should be contacted immediately.
6. As much as is possible, volunteers and employees should have at least one other adult present when working with or supervising children and youth. The exception to this rule would be for a one-on-one counseling situation between an authorized Association staff person and a child or youth. Said authorized Association staff person should not work with a child or youth behind closed doors, but with the door open or in the open and another adult immediately nearby with line of sight supervision.

7. Any allegations of child abuse committed by a volunteer or employee of the Association must be reported immediately to the District Pastor of the Association. The District Pastor and the volunteer and/or employee reporting the suspected abuse will report those allegations to an appropriate state and/or law enforcement agency and all information regarding the allegations will be turned over to the appropriate authority as soon as possible. Upon receiving results from an investigation, the District Pastor will make the appropriate decision with respect to an employee or volunteer.
8. Any employee or volunteer accused of abuse of any kind will be immediately placed on administrative leave and precluded from having any contact with the child/youth or family until an investigation is completed by law enforcement and/or an appropriate state agency. Any confirmed allegation of abuse of any kind by an employee of the Association or a volunteer will result in termination of employment or volunteer status.
9. No adult who has been convicted of child abuse (sexual, physical or emotional) will be allowed to work with children and/or youth in any Association sponsored activity. The Association may also, at its discretion, restrict someone from working with children and/or youth.
10. All paid employees and volunteers must give the Association permission in writing to obtain such background checks as the Association deems appropriate. All records will be held confidential and used only by those who have a bonafide need to know.
11. Each volunteer, director/leader and employee of the Association will be asked to sign a statement stating they have read, understand and will comply with both this policy and the Oregon Child Abuse Reporting Law.

9/13/16