

# Union Baptist Church

Union, Oregon

## Child Protection Policy and Procedures

Revised May 12, 2015

**Purpose:** It is the commitment of Union Baptist Church that all children and teenagers under our congregation's care (birth until reaching 18 years) be protected and kept safe physically, sexually and emotionally from all forms of abusive treatment by their peers, older children and adults. This document will specify preventative measures, response to allegations and reporting procedures to appropriate authorities.

### **PART 1 – SELECTING AND SCREENING WORKERS**

### **PART 2 – SUPERVISING WORKERS**

### **PART 3 – REPORTING ALLEGED OFFENSES**

### **PART 4 – RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS**

### **PART 1 – SELECTING AND SCREENING WORKERS**

- A. Union Baptist Church has established a formal process for performing background and reference checks on all employees, ministerial staff and volunteers who are involved in any way in the care, training or supervision of minors. This includes vocational and volunteer staff in the following programs: church nursery, Sunday school, junior church, AWANA, VBS, camps and retreats, overnight field trips, youth groups, counseling, mentoring, athletics, mission and community service projects.
- B. This process includes the following required elements: (1) a written application for vocational and volunteer staff, (2) reference checks, (3) a personal interview and (4) training.
- C. The minimum acceptable background check is one attained through Intellicorp Records, Inc. or obtained from Oregon State law enforcement.
- D. All personnel will complete a release of liability form to be kept on file. This file will also include their written application, background check records, records of reference checks in writing or by phone, observations from the personal interview and a training record. The contents of a worker's personnel file will only be available to that individual, their supervisor and the pastors of the church.
- E. New volunteers will undergo a minimum waiting period of six months before interacting with minors in church programs.

- F. If a background check reveals a prior sexual misconduct related offense, that person will be permanently ineligible to serve this church in any role that involves contact with minors.

## **PART 2 – SUPERVISING WORKERS**

- A. No minor will be alone with one adult not their parent on the church's premises or in any church sponsored activity except in a counseling situation.
- B. All workers responsible for the supervision of children and youth will use reasonable care in planning and conducting activities to protect minors from physical, sexual or emotional harm.
- C. Any person in authority (pastors, elders, deacons, superintendents, club or program directors) who sees or is aware of inappropriate or suspicious behavior or relationship between an adult worker and a minor, should speak privately to the adult worker about the apparent dangers and report the incident in writing to a pastor for monitoring.

## **PART 3 – REPORTING ALLEGED OFFENSES**

- A. Any admission, allegation, report or suspicion of child abuse (sexual, physical or verbal) should be reported immediately to a pastor or elder. The allegation(s) will be investigated thoroughly by church leaders and documented in writing, including as many specific details as can be discovered:
  - 1. The name, age, gender, address and phone number of the alleged victim;
  - 2. The name, age, gender, address and phone number of the alleged abuser;
  - 3. The nature of the abuse alleged to have occurred;
  - 4. The frequency of the abuse alleged to have occurred;
  - 5. The date(s) and location(s) of the incident(s);
  - 6. The relationship between the alleged victim and perpetrator;
  - 7. Other evidence that addresses the allegation (eyewitness statements, confessions, medical exam(s), etc.)
- B. The pastors and elders will meet together in emergency session to determine if a report must be made to law enforcement or state child protective services. It may be necessary to seek the services of an attorney to make this determination. The attorney will be present at all law enforcement or child protective services interviews.

#### **PART 4 – RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS**

- A. After the pastors and elders have met to discuss the allegations and a determination has been made to involve civic authorities, the church leaders will respond to the needs of the alleged victim, the accused, the congregation and the public.
- B. Church leaders will express to the victim and his/her family:
  - 1. that they take such allegations most seriously;
  - 2. that they consider any form of child abuse unacceptable and sinful;
  - 3. that the allegations will be investigated immediately and thoroughly;
  - 4. that the accused will be suspended pending a final determination;
  - 5. that the church will not tolerate any retaliation against a victim or family for lodging a complaint, regardless of the final determination.
- C. Church leaders will inform the alleged abuser that he/she is immediately prohibited from any contact with minors as an employee or volunteer with the church, pending a final determination on the charges. Supportive and sympathetic words may be spoken and prayers offered, as long as they neither judge nor excuse the accused.
- D. Church leaders may advise the congregation about an investigation, but the identity of the individuals involved and the details of the charges will be confidential until the matter is fully resolved. Private questions from individuals will be handled in the same matter.
- E. Should the media become aware of the charges, only the pastors or the elders are authorized to speak for the church. If an attorney is engaged for the case, the spokesman will have the attorney brief him and be present at the interview.
- F. The church's insurance company will be advised of any litigious proceedings.
- G. Any employee or volunteer found guilty of the allegations will be permanently terminated from service within the church.
- H. If any employee or volunteer is found innocent of the allegations, the determination will be announced to the congregation and provided to the media (if the matter has received public attention).