



**COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH**  
ORDINARY PEOPLE. EXTRAORDINARY GRACE.

# Policies & Procedures for Ministry Workers with Minors and The Disabled

(revised February 2022)

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# INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in serving in the Children's Ministry at Community Bible Church. We are thrilled that you are joining our team as we minister to the children and parents of our church family. We thank the Lord that He has placed it on your heart to join us.

We recognize that you and those workers who serve with you are a foundational part of a Christ-centered ministry to children. No matter what your role is within our ministry, you are an integral part of this team as we work together to effectively minister to the children that God entrusts to our care.

We want you to have a great sense of calling, joy and satisfaction in your ministry. That is why we seek to provide the necessary materials, facilities and training to help make you most effective.

We are committed to providing a safe and secure environment for those participating in our ministry activities. We also seek to minimize any vulnerability to unwarranted accusations of improper behavior that our volunteers and employees may experience as they fulfill their ministerial duties. To fulfill these commitments as fully as possible, our leadership team has adopted the following policies and procedures to be followed, without exception.

By following these policies and procedures, you are helping to protect all children entrusted to our care, the church, and yourself. Thank you for taking your service to the children at Community Bible Church seriously.

# MISSION STATEMENT

To preach the gospel of God's grace to our children, protect them from the dangers of moralization, refuse to allow the biblical message to be merely ethics and declare to them the work of Christ on their behalf found in the Old and New Testaments.

## **Covenant of Service**

As you serve in Children's Ministry, we ask you to:

- Serve with gentleness, compassion, truth and prayer; considering those you serve as more important than yourself.
- Endeavor to protect and preserve the primacy of the Gospel, ensuring that nothing is added to or subtracted from its essence as it is offered for our hope, encouragement and growth in Christ.
- Commit your heart to a spirit of unity among the congregation of God's people and its leaders.
- Dedicate yourself to the teachings and distinctives of this church. Celebrating its particular emphasis on the Glory of God, the Gospel of God's Grace, the authority of God's word, the nature and purpose of the Church, the fellowship of the saints, the transformation of the Christian life, the mission to the World and the future hope of the Glory of God.
- Protect all those entrusted to your care by adhering to the policies and procedures of Community Bible Church.

# POLICIES & PROCEDURES

The following policies and procedures are for the protection of our minors (all those under 18 years of age), employees, volunteers and our entire church family at Community Bible Church.

This policy shall apply to all current and future workers, compensated and/or volunteer, who will have the responsibility of supervising the activities of minors and disabled persons.

## Worker Screening Procedures

1. Prior to consideration for a position, any candidate, compensated or volunteer, who may be working with minors or the disabled will complete and return a *Worker with Minors* application. A separate application is required for teenage applicants.
2. The ministry application will be carefully reviewed by a ministry leader or designee to make certain that the worker will be appropriate for the ministry position, based on the information provided.
3. If the person appears to be appropriate for the ministry work, then at least two of the references will be checked to confirm the information provided on the ministry application.
4. A criminal background check will be performed with respect to any candidate seeking to work with minors or the disabled.
5. Any information indicating that a candidate poses a threat to others will result in the immediate removal of the individual candidate from consideration for a ministry position involving contact with minors or the disabled.
6. All personal information will be held in confidence.
7. No volunteer worker candidate will be considered for any ministry position involving contact with minors or the disabled until the candidate has been regularly involved in the church for at least six months.

## Supervision

8. At every church activity involving minors or disabled persons, the church will provide adequate adult supervision for the needs of the environment. For groups of children Kindergarten age and older, one supervising adult may be authorized to serve with prior approval. For groups of children Pre-K age and younger, two approved adults must be present in each classroom or other enclosed areas.
9. During services/events, at least one approved adult worker will be appointed to supervise activity on the premises.

10. Children under age 10 are allowed to serve along side their parent or guardian. Children age 10-12 are allowed to serve along side their parent or an authorized supervising adult volunteer. There should be a minimum age gap of three years between the classroom and child volunteer. Prior to serving, the parent/guardian should provide an age appropriate overview of the Policies and Procedures to their child as well as talk through the general routine within the classrooms. Child volunteers will be trained within the classroom by a volunteer trainer. Child volunteers should not be a hindrance to the nursery workers. They can play with the children, read stories, and help with snack time. Children under 13 should not pick up any child in the nursery, nor should they assist children in the bathroom or change diapers. In addition, parents will be required to include their children on their application and/or renewal application in the appropriate area.
11. Approved teenagers are allowed to serve in Children's Ministry in any classroom as assistants to the adult volunteers. Adult volunteers may instruct the teen volunteers to serve in a capacity that is helpful to the classroom. They can play with the children, help teach the lesson, help with craft time, read stories, and assist with snack time. Teenage volunteers will not assist children in the bathroom nor change diapers.
12. Any change to the status of a child or teen to appropriately serve in Children's Ministry may result in their right to serve being revoked.
13. Workers should arrive at least 15 minutes before a scheduled activity and should keep watch over those in their care until all have been picked up by an authorized person.
14. Children under age 10 must be released only to parent-approved supervision after any church class or function. An identification system shall be used to ensure safety of children under age 10 during drop off and pick up.
15. An attendance list should be kept for all of the ministry's functions involving minors and the disabled. The date of the function, along with the names of all participants and coordinators/supervisors should be recorded.
16. For children ages 5-10, they may use the bathroom as necessary. A volunteer should keep track of the child departing the classroom to ensure they use the bathroom and return promptly. If the children use the bathroom in a group, at least one adult female should take girls to the restroom, and one adult male should take boys to the restroom. The adult should check to make sure the facility is safe, and then wait outside the restroom until the children come out.
17. Children five years of age or younger (boys and girls) should be assisted as needed in the restroom by an adult female.
18. Men shall not change diapers or assist children, five years of age or younger, in the restroom.
19. Never touch a person's private areas except when changing a diaper or assisting a child in the restroom.
20. Workers should avoid the appearance of impropriety; this may include older children sitting on their lap, kissing, embracing, use of language, etc.
21. The church will require a reasonable ratio of adult workers to be maintained in each situation involving the supervision of children and in an age-appropriate manner.
22. Church staff and volunteer directors will supervise volunteers and make random visits into classes and other programs.

23. In one-on-one counseling sessions with minors, parental permission must be obtained prior to the meeting. If two approved adults are present, then parental permission is not required. Prior permission may be granted by parents to cover a particular time period (i.e., a school year) for their child to receive counseling from a particular minister.
24. All activities, including scheduled or impromptu counseling situations, will occur in an appropriate room or setting, where visibility of the session is maintained – either in a room with windows, or in some other setting providing appropriate visibility. If there is no window in the door of the room, then the door shall remain open.

## **Discipline**

25. Workers are never to spank, hit, grab, shake, or otherwise physically discipline anyone.
26. The following behaviors are considered disruptive:
- Requires constant attention from the staff
  - Inflicts physical or emotional harm on other children, adults or self
  - Disrespects people and materials provided
  - Consistently disobeys the rules of the classroom
  - Verbally/Physically threatens other students and/or staff
  - Uses verbal or physical activity that diverts attention away from the class
27. Discipline procedures for disruptive behavior:
- Disciplinary problems should be reported to the workers' coordinator/supervisor and to a parent or guardian.
  - If a minor has difficulty managing his/her behavior on a recurring basis, the coordinator/supervisor and parent should discuss ways to encourage better classroom behavior with the minor. This information should be shared with those workers in regular contact with the minor.
  - If the child's behavior continues to be inappropriate, consistently disruptive, and/or dangerous, it may be necessary for the child to attend services with their parent for a time to be determined by the Ministry Director.

## **Health and Wellness**

28. Persons who are experiencing any of the following symptoms within 24 hours of the ministry activity will not be permitted to participate in the activity:
- Fever of 100 or higher within the last 24 hours
  - Vomiting or diarrhea within the last 24 hours
  - Conjunctivitis (pink eye or other eye infection causing discharge in or around the eyes)
  - Questionable rash
  - Nasal drainage that is green or yellow
  - Excessive coughing
  - Sore throat

- Open sores
- Lice
- Any known virus (Active Chicken Pox, Measles, Mumps, Impetigo, etc)
- In addition, if a child is at home with a fever, we recommend their siblings stay home as well unless they have already recovered from the illness.

29. A substitute who has been approved as a volunteer worker through the above screening process must be used to take the place of workers who are ill.
30. Participants should be returned to their parent or guardian as soon as illness is discovered. If this is not possible, then the person who is ill should be isolated in a manner that will allow supervision to continue until the person can be returned to their parent or guardian.
31. Reasonable steps should be taken to avoid contact with body fluids of any kind.
32. Children who are not fully potty trained should wear a pull up while under the care of Children's Ministry volunteers.
33. Any coordinator/supervisor who becomes aware of an injury to a worker or participant will take steps to ensure proper medical attention is given to the injured person.
34. Persons who have received an injury which is obviously minor, should be given first aid as needed at the time of injury. The person's parent or guardian should be notified of the minor injury when they pick up the injured person.
35. Any injury which may require medical treatment beyond simple first aid should be given immediate attention. The parent or guardian of the injured person should be immediately notified, along with the worker's coordinator/supervisor. An ambulance should also be called immediately if warranted by the injury.
36. A written "Injury/Incident" report should be prepared by workers whenever an injury occurs during a ministry function. The incident report will be forwarded to their Ministry Director promptly upon completion.
37. Workers who become aware of any injury, abuse, or molestation connected with any ministry activity will immediately inform their coordinator/supervisor or Ministry Director. This information is to remain confidential.
38. Any coordinator/supervisor who becomes aware of any injury, abuse, or molestation connected with any ministry activity will immediately inform their Ministry Director and will complete an "Injury/Incident" report.
39. Any Ministry Director who becomes aware of possible abuse or molestation of a participant will immediately inform the Associate Pastor that possible abuse or molestation has occurred.
40. The Associate Pastor will ensure that the participant's parent or guardian is immediately informed that possible abuse or molestation has occurred. The Associate Pastor will also see that an attorney is promptly contacted to provide a written opinion as to whether the church should report the abuse or molestation to law enforcement authorities. The written opinion should be obtained within 24 hours of when the ministry leader first becomes aware of the abuse or molestation, and the attorney's advice should be followed. If the attorney recommends that an incident be reported, the advice should be acted upon immediately.
41. Upon notice of abuse or molestation, the ministry's insurance carrier (general or professional liability insurance) must be promptly notified.



## **What Constitutes Sexual Abuse of a Child?**

- 42. Child sexual abuse is any sexual activity with a minor in any setting by any person, including any use of a minor for sexual gratification of any kind with or without physical contact. The abuser may be an adult or another minor.
- 43. Child sexual abuse may be violent or non-violent. All child sexual abuse is an exploitation of a child's vulnerability and powerlessness in which the abuser is fully responsible for the action.
- 44. Child sexual abuse includes behaviors that involve touching and non-touching aspects.
- 45. Child sexual abuse is criminal.

## **Violations of Policy or Procedures**

- 46. Workers must promptly notify their coordinator/supervisor of any activity which violates this policy or procedures and must avoid discussion with anyone else.
- 47. Any coordinator/supervisor or ministry leader who becomes aware of a violation of the policy or procedures will take all necessary steps to ensure future compliance with the policy and procedures by all workers; and will remove workers from their positions if such removal is warranted, or if the worker poses a potential threat to others.

## **Specific Acts and Omissions in Violation of the Policy Include...**

- 48. Any direct observations or evidence of sexual activity in the presence of or in association with a minor.
- 49. Any display or demonstration of sexual activity, abuse, insinuation of abuse, or evidence of abusive conduct towards a minor.
- 50. Sexual advances or sexual activity of any kind between any person and a minor.
- 51. Physically abusive behavior or infliction of bodily injury to a minor.
- 52. Physical neglect of a minor, including failure to provide adequate supervision in relation to the activities of Community Bible Church.
- 53. Mental or emotional injury to a minor.
- 54. The presence or possession of obscene or pornographic materials at any function of Community Bible Church.
- 55. The presence, possession, or influence of any illegal or illicit drugs.
- 56. The consumption of or being under the influence of illegal or illicit drugs or alcohol while leading or participating in a function for minors at Community Bible Church.

## **Internal Investigation**

- 57. Any allegation of abuse will be taken seriously and will be investigated by ministry leaders.
- 58. Any employee of the ministry who is the subject of an investigation will be removed from their position, with pay, pending completion of the investigation (unless the employee has admitted to

the abuse or molestation, in which case they will be terminated in accordance with church employment practices).

- 59. Any volunteer worker who is the subject of the investigation will be removed from their position pending completion of the investigation.
- 60. Any person who is not found innocent of alleged abuse will be removed from work with children, youth, or the disabled within the church. The church will consult with legal counsel for advice if termination of employment is indicated.

### **Dealing with Law Enforcement/Media**

- 61. Legal counsel will be contacted for advice and guidance as soon as possible after the church receives notice of possible abuse or molestation in connection with church activities. Decisions concerning the ministry's response to the allegations will be made in accordance with such advice.
- 62. All ministry leaders, employees, and volunteers will cooperate fully with any law enforcement or governmental agency that may be investigating allegations of injury, abuse, or molestation in connection with activities of the church.
- 63. A single church leader will be designated as spokesperson following notice of any abuse or molestation in connection with activities of the ministry. This spokesperson will be the only person to convey information concerning the situation and (to avoid compromising any ongoing investigation) will convey only such information as is necessary under the circumstances.

### **Biannual Employee/Worker Review**

- 64. These policies and procedures will be conveyed for review biannually to all workers, employees, coordinators, supervisors, and leaders to whom it applies.
- 65. All ministry employees and volunteer workers may be required to complete a brief renewal application once every two years.
- 66. Should the renewal application reveal that any employee or volunteer worker has become unsuitable for working with minors or the disabled, they will be immediately removed from their current position, and will not be considered for other positions involving work with minors or the disabled.
- 67. Should circumstances arise, Community Bible Church reserves the right to revoke any child, teen or adult's privilege to serve in Children's Ministry.
- 68. Volunteers may be asked to complete periodic training involving the teaching and care of children.