

Commitment to Safety & Preparedness

Safety is a core responsibility of every AVBGC employee and must remain at the forefront of daily program operations, planning, supervision, and decision-making. AVBGC is committed to maintaining safe environments for Members, staff, families, school partners, and visitors through ongoing preparation, training, communication, and accountability.

Safety is not limited to responding appropriately when an incident occurs. Our goal is to create a culture of safety and preparedness in which staff regularly discuss potential risks, understand established procedures, know where safety resources are located, and feel prepared to respond appropriately when concerns or emergencies arise.

School & District Safety Procedures: Because many AVBGC programs operate on school campuses, staff must understand and follow the safety and emergency procedures established by the applicable school district and individual school site.

School and district procedures take priority while operating on school property. AVBGC safety policies and procedures are intended to complement those requirements and provide additional organizational expectations related to supervision, communication, documentation, incident reporting, Member protection, and administrative response.

Procedures may vary between districts and school sites. Leadership is responsible for ensuring staff are trained on the specific procedures applicable to the location where they work, including emergency terminology, evacuation and reunification procedures, campus access, emergency communication, and other site-specific expectations.

Safety Preparation: Safety preparation should occur before Members arrive and continue throughout the school year. Leadership must work proactively to ensure sites are prepared for emergencies and that identified safety concerns are addressed promptly.

Preparation includes, but is not limited to:

- Completing required site safety assessments and following up on identified concerns.
- Coordinating with school and district personnel regarding emergency procedures and scheduled safety drills.
- Ensuring required safety and emergency supplies are available, organized, accessible, and maintained.
- Preparing and maintaining required site safety kits, emergency supplies, and safety binders prior to and throughout each school year.
- Ensuring staff know where emergency supplies, first-aid materials, safety documentation, evacuation information, and other critical resources are located.
- Reviewing emergency contact information, communication procedures, evacuation routes, reunification locations, and other site-specific safety information.

- Identifying and promptly reporting missing, damaged, expired, or insufficient safety supplies.
- Maintaining appropriate staffing, supervision, Member counts, and required staff-to-Member ratios.
- Ensuring safety documentation and reporting systems are accessible to the employees responsible for using them.

Safety materials should not simply be stored at a site. Staff must be familiar with them and understand how and when they are to be used.

Staff Training & Safety Awareness: All employees must receive appropriate safety training based on their position and responsibilities. Before staff independently supervise Members, they must understand applicable AVBGC policies as well as the district and school-site procedures governing their assigned location.

Safety training and discussion should include topics such as:

- Emergency and school-site response procedures
- Fire, earthquake, lockdown, evacuation, and other emergency protocols
- Member supervision and maintaining appropriate staff-to-Member ratios
- Member release and reunification procedures
- Incident and accident reporting
- Mandated reporting responsibilities
- Appropriate staff-to-Member interactions and boundaries
- Prohibition of isolated one-on-one interactions with Members
- Restroom policy, supervision, monitoring, and safety procedures
- Maintaining observable and interruptible interactions
- Medical emergencies and injuries
- Campus access and closed-campus procedures
- Late pick-up and end-of-day safety
- Emergency communication and leadership notification
- Location and use of available safety supplies and resources

Training should not be viewed as a one-time onboarding requirement. Safety expectations must be regularly reinforced through staff meetings, trainings, site visits, coaching, drills, observations, and day-to-day conversations.

Leadership should intentionally create opportunities to discuss safety throughout the year so that staff remain familiar with expectations and safety stays top of mind, even when no immediate concern or emergency exists.

Safety Drills & Continuous Improvement: Required safety drills must be conducted and documented in accordance with AVBGC procedures and, at school sites, should align with the applicable district and school-site emergency procedures whenever possible.

Drills are intended not only to satisfy a requirement, but to help staff and Members develop familiarity and confidence with emergency procedures. Leadership should use drills, safety assessments, actual incidents, near misses, staff observations, and feedback from school partners as opportunities to identify areas for improvement.

When a safety concern is identified, leadership is expected to take reasonable and timely action to correct the concern, elevate it through the appropriate chain of command, and follow through until the matter has been appropriately addressed.

Leadership Responsibility: Program Specialists, Program Directors, Regional Directors, and other organizational leaders each share responsibility for maintaining AVBGC's culture of safety.

Leadership is expected to:

- Model and reinforce safe practices.
- Regularly observe site conditions and staff practices.
- Address unsafe conditions or behaviors promptly.
- Ensure employees understand applicable safety procedures.
- Verify that required safety supplies and resources are available.
- Encourage staff to raise safety questions and concerns without hesitation.
- Reinforce safety expectations through coaching and training.
- Ensure incidents and safety concerns are documented and escalated appropriately.
- Maintain communication with school, district, and AVBGC leadership when safety concerns arise.
- Follow through on identified safety needs until they have been appropriately addressed.

Every employee has a responsibility to speak up when they observe a potential safety concern. Leadership should foster an environment where staff understand that raising a safety concern is encouraged and is an important part of protecting our Members and one another.

Safety Is an Ongoing Commitment: AVBGC's commitment to safety extends beyond policies, forms, drills, or required training. Safety must remain an ongoing organizational priority reflected in how we prepare our sites, train our employees, supervise Members, communicate with school partners, respond to concerns, and continuously evaluate our practices.

Safety is everyone's responsibility, and preparedness is an ongoing process.