



Safe Conduct Policy & Procedure Manual

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Introduction and Statement of Policy

“Instead, as He who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct.”
1 Peter 1:15 NRSV

“He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” Micah 6:8 NRSV

As a community of Christian faith, the United Congregational Church of Tolland (hereafter referred to as UCCT), which includes Tolland Green Learning Center (hereafter referred to as TGLC) are committed to creating and maintaining programs, facilities and a community in which members, friends, staff and volunteers can worship, learn and work together in an atmosphere free from all forms of discrimination, harassment, exploitation, intimidation or abuse. The congregation of UCCT supports the principles found in the Code of Conduct, which include individual responsibility to fulfill the highest standards of personal conduct toward others and to lead and guide the congregation in fulfillment of the standards set by our Christian faith. UCCT strongly opposes and prohibits sexual exploitation, sexual harassment or any form of exploitation or abuse of others regardless of race, age, gender identification, sexual orientation, religion or mental capacity. It is the intention of our congregation to affirmatively nurture good behavior, and to prevent and correct behavior that is contrary to this policy and, as necessary, discipline those persons who violate this policy.

Every member of the Congregation, employee, volunteer or parent, has a role: to lead those who look to them individually for guidance, to monitor their behavior, and to redirect them as they cross boundaries found in the Code of Conduct. Our congregation shall nurture good conduct as demonstrated by personal behaviors that are consistent with our Christian values. As we might conduct an orchestra, we shall guide and lead in ministry.

Ministers and Ministerial Conduct

Ministers who are “authorized clergy” and serving the congregation in any capacity (active, retired, employee, volunteer) shall hold themselves to a high standard of care with respect to their personal conduct and relationships with the congregation, church staff and volunteers, whether pastoral, administrative or personal in nature. This high standard of care is outlined in the United Church of Christ Manual On Ministry as “*The Ordained Minister’s Code*”. Utmost care and good faith are expected.

Consistent with our understanding of the priesthood of all believers, all employees and volunteers are “ministers” to the congregation. Each minister, employee or volunteer, shall:

- be adequately prepared and educated for the ministry in which they serve
- acquire knowledge of the details of this policy and related procedures
- understand the ways in which their use or misuse of authority may impact others
- refrain from using a position of power or authority to exploit an advantage over any other person
- seek to protect and support vulnerable individuals of every kind
- demonstrate and encourage adherence to the Code of Conduct by being attentive to self-care, continuing education, and maintenance of personal boundaries
- comply with State laws
- agree to abide by the Code of Conduct, which follows

Code of Conduct

SECTION 1:

Section 1 of this **Code of Conduct** defines individual responsibilities as ministers, employees or volunteers, to meet the expectations of UCCT with respect to behavior or conduct in the service of the ministries of the church, especially those which serve “at risk” populations (children and vulnerable adults).

General Requirements

Each person subject to this Code shall:

1. Act as a team member in fulfilling ministry objectives
2. Treat children and vulnerable adults with respect, and fairly without regard to race, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion or mental capacity
3. Practice those behaviors we regard as necessary and positive as well as to refrain from those behaviors which have been defined as prohibited
4. Recognize circumstances of sexual harassment and the obligation and means to report to church leadership
5. Demonstrate appropriate physical contact and verbal interaction (further defined below)
6. Understand how, by their action or inaction, they individually pose a risk to the church in the form of legal liability or loss of reputation

General Prohibitions

The following behaviors are prohibited at all times:

1. Abuse of children or vulnerable adults in any way including, but not limited to, physical, verbal, sexual, emotional, financial or by neglect
2. Dating or becoming romantically involved with children
3. Use of or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or medications that impair judgement or reactions in the presence of children
4. Possession of sexually oriented materials, including printed or online pornography, on Church property
5. Having secrets with children or vulnerable adults
6. Staring at or commenting on the bodies of children or vulnerable adults
7. Engagement in inappropriate or unapproved electronic communication with children or vulnerable adults
8. Working one-on-one with children in a private setting
9. Permitting children to engage in the following: hazing, bullying, derogatory name calling, games of Truth or Dare, ridicule, humiliation, sexual activity, or abuse of any kind
10. Manipulating or exploiting a child or vulnerable adult in any way
11. Engaging in any form of sexual harassment or sexual exploitation
12. Having or allowing inappropriate verbal interaction or physical contact

Specific Interaction Standards

Each minister, employee or volunteer of UCCT shall conduct him/herself in a manner that fosters understanding of Safe Conduct in the context of serving children and vulnerable adults. The standards articulated below serve two purposes:

- To protect children and vulnerable adults from abuse or grooming for abuse elsewhere
 - To protect/prevent ministers, employees or volunteers, from engaging in patterns of behavior that may be construed as abusive or predatory
- Physical Interactions** – In providing approval or affection, the following guidelines apply:

The items of conduct shown in the guidelines as appropriate or inappropriate are examples only, not all-inclusive lists.

<i>Appropriate Physical Interactions</i>	<i>Inappropriate Physical Interactions</i>
<p>These may be inappropriate if unwanted by the child, vulnerable adult, employee or volunteer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pats on the shoulder or back • Handshakes or high fives • Arms around shoulders • Holding hands (with young children in escorting situations) <p>While these examples are generally appropriate, any physical interaction may be inappropriate if unwanted by the recipient or the minister, employee or volunteer.</p>	<p>Any form of affection that is unwanted by the child, vulnerable adult, employee or volunteer, which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggestive hugs • Kisses • Wrestling • Tickling • Touching bottom, chest, or genital areas (except for toilet hygiene dependent on an individual's age or special needs) <p>While these are examples of inappropriate interactions, any physical interaction is inappropriate if unwanted by the recipient or the minister, employee or volunteer.</p>

- Verbal Interactions** – The manner of speaking with children establishes respect. The following guidelines apply:

The items of conduct shown in the guidelines as appropriate or inappropriate are examples only, not all-inclusive lists.

<i>Appropriate Verbal Interactions</i>	<i>Inappropriate Verbal Interactions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive reinforcement • Appropriate jokes • Encouragement • Praise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name-calling • Compliments related to physique or body development • Discussing sexual encounters or in any way involving children or vulnerable adults in the personal problems or issues of employees and volunteers • Secrets • Cursing • Off-color or sexual jokes

<p>While these examples are generally appropriate, any verbal interaction may be inappropriate if unwanted by the recipient or the minister, employee or volunteer.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shaming • Belittling • Derogatory remarks • Harsh language that may frighten, threaten or humiliate children • Derogatory remarks about the child, or vulnerable adult, or his/her family <p>While these are examples of inappropriate interactions, any verbal interaction is inappropriate if unwanted by the recipient or the minister, employee or volunteer.</p>
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3. **Outside (Non-UCCT) Contact** – UCCT strongly recommends that ministers, employees or volunteers, do not have outside contact with children from church programs. However, if outside contacts are unavoidable, the following guidelines apply:

The items of conduct shown in the guidelines as appropriate or inappropriate are examples only, not all-inclusive lists.

Appropriate Outside Contact	Inappropriate Outside Contact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking groups of children on an outing • Attending sporting activities with groups of children • Attending functions at a child's home, with parents present <p>While these examples are generally appropriate, any outside interaction may be inappropriate if unwanted by the recipient or the minister, employee or volunteer.</p>	<p>The following are inappropriate unless a parent has given prior approval:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking one child on an outing • Visiting one child in the child's home without a parent present • Entertaining one child in the home of a church employee or volunteer • A lone child spending the night with a church employee or volunteer <p>While these are examples of inappropriate interactions, any outside interaction is inappropriate if unwanted by the recipient or the minister, employee or volunteer.</p>

In addition, when outside contact is unavoidable, the following steps are to be taken:

- A Program Director shall identify for employee and volunteers what types of outside contact are appropriate and inappropriate (above)
- A Program Director shall assure that the employee or volunteer has the parents' permission to engage in outside contact with the child. When time permits, parents shall execute a permission form with a waiver of liability (if permitted by state law).

4. **One-on-One Interactions** – Because most abuse occurs when an adult is alone with a child, private one-on-one meetings with a child are prohibited unless approved in

advance by the appropriate Program Director. When so permitted, the following guidelines shall apply:

The items of conduct shown in the guidelines are examples only, not an all-inclusive list.

<i>One-on-One Interaction Guidelines</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seek to have someone else in attendance.• When meeting one-on-one with a child, always do so in a public place in full view of others.• Avoid physical affection that can be misinterpreted.• If meeting in a room or office, leave the door open or move to an area that can be easily observed by others passing by.• Inform another minister, employee or volunteer that you are alone with a child and ask them to randomly drop in.• Document and immediately report any unusual incidents, including disclosures of abuse or maltreatment, behavior problems and how they were handled, injuries, or any interactions that might be misinterpreted. <p>To the extent any of these guidelines may appear to be in conflict, the spirit of them is that the minister, employee or volunteer, shall seek to be in view of others while meeting privately with a child.</p>

5. Social Media – Electronic Communications

General Social Media Policy – When clergy or staff, acting in their capacity as a representative of the church, lead or coordinate a group activity using social media or electronic communications, each may use only official church sites/channels. These may include web pages, Facebook, e-mail and similar means.

Communication with Children – Due to the attendant risk of electronic communications with children, especially the inability to supervise, the following standards shall apply:

- Any electronic communications with children must abide by the “rule of three” which means including the child’s parents or guardians in the communication. These communications shall be limited to logistical matters, e.g., meeting dates, times and places.
- Employees and volunteers are prohibited from communicating privately with children and will abide by the “rule of three” as outlined above.

The United Congregational Church of Tolland agrees to abide by the “Internet Safety Guidelines” published by the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ. For further details, please reference the “Internet Safety Guidelines” www.ctucc.org.

Usage of UCCT-owned computer equipment and the computer network:

The Communication and Technology Committee shall ensure:

1. Utilization of filtering, firewalls and encryption technology to the extent practicable
2. That prior to receipt of a user name and password, all employees and volunteers will have signed the **Computer Use Form** (Appendix B)

SECTION 2:

Section 2 of this **Code of Conduct** defines the standards for a safe environment for children and vulnerable adults in a variety of circumstances that the UCCT expects ministers, employees or volunteers to create. From time to time it may not be possible to fulfill a standard to the letter. Permission is granted to ministers, employees or volunteers in leadership to waive a standard with justification. If it is found that consistent fulfillment of a standard is not practicable, the matter shall be elevated to the Committee of Concern for action.

Adult to Child Guidelines

It is the expectation that at a minimum two adults will be present at every activity.

The leader planning an activity needs to consider an appropriate child to adult ratio according to the nature and environment of the activity.

Employees or volunteers under the age of 18 are to be included in the ratio as children.

In all cases, an employee or volunteer under the age of 18 working with minor children shall be under the supervision of an adult over the age of 21.

Employees or volunteer leaders under the age of 21 shall not supervise or lead a youth group in which the oldest participating minor child is less than three years younger than the supervisor/leader.

TGLC shall follow State Adult to Child Guidelines.

Bathrooms, Locker Room and Out-of-the-Way Locations

The following practices shall apply to age appropriate supervision of bathrooms and changing areas:

1. Avoid the presence of diverse age groups at the same time.
2. Require children to ask permission before using bathrooms.

Employees and volunteers in leadership should frequently and randomly check bathrooms to assure their security.

Transition and “Free” Time

Especially during day long, off-site or overnight activities, periodically children will not be engaged in a supervised activity. Supervision shall be maintained during transition times through the use of chaperones, hall monitors and escorts to minimize the opportunity for security breach or child-on-child incidents.

Program Directors shall assess at what times and places additional duties are to be assigned to employees and volunteers to assure supervision of transition and free time.

Transportation of Children

Transportation of children, whether on buses, motor coaches or private passenger vehicles, is a serious responsibility. Utmost care shall be taken in view of the risks associated with managing transportation, especially when utilizing church owned vehicles or private vehicles of employees and volunteers.

The following standards shall apply:

1. No employee or volunteer shall transport a single child that is not his/her own, except as may be required in an emergency with the approval of a Program Director. Communications shall be established to verify the whereabouts, expected arrival and change of custody of the child.
2. Any driver operating a vehicle which holds 16 passengers or more, including the driver, shall possess a valid Commercial Driver License (CDL).
3. Any person who drives on behalf of UCCT-sponsored programs shall be previously qualified under our transportation and driver qualification procedure. (Appendix B – Applications & Forms)
4. Volunteer drivers who are taking passengers shall be at least 21 years of age.
5. Adult-child ratios shall be maintained and within the safe loading limits of the vehicles being used.
6. Employees and volunteers shall not make unauthorized or unplanned stops.
7. The organizer shall have a list of all drivers and their cell phones. Each driver shall have the organizer's cell phone and copies of each passenger's permission slip.
8. All passengers are to be seated and to use safety belts as available.
9. Employees and volunteers shall be seated on larger vehicles in a way that permits them to supervise young passengers.
10. When passengers must disembark at any stop, care shall be taken to obtain a headcount on arrival and departure.

Off-site Activities (Day Trips)

Off-site activities require special additional planning, taking into account the nature of the destination and exposure to the public at large. For example, attendance at a public venue, such as an amusement park, will require greater supervision than a visit to a sister church. Due to the increased risk of a child becoming lost or injured during an off-site activity, extra care shall be taken to assure adequate supervision.

The following are minimum requirements:

1. All off-site activities shall be approved in advance by Program Directors.
2. The trip leader shall provide a plan outlining transportation and supervision for the activity.
3. Parent/guardian permission shall be obtained. Permission forms are to cite the destination(s) and activities in which the child might engage.
4. Each employee or volunteer shall be assigned to supervise a specific group of children and shall be given copies of those children's permission slips. Head counts and roll checks will be conducted routinely.

5. Parents/guardians shall be provided a means to make emergency contact with the trip leader.

Overnight Activities

As with off-site activities, over-night activities present an even higher level of risk to children than day trips due to isolation from parents and the 24-hour supervision that is required throughout the activity.

The following standards will apply in addition to standards for off-site activities:

1. All overnight activities, whether on the church site or not, shall have prior approval of one of the pastors.
2. All overnight activities shall include a minimum of four adult chaperones over 21 years of age.
3. All volunteers and employees under 18 years of age shall be supervised at all times.
4. Parent/guardian permission shall be obtained. Permission forms are to cite the destination(s) and activities in which the child might engage.
5. At all times through the night an employee or volunteer shall remain on duty on the premises to supervise the coming and going of any child, to assure safe evacuation during an emergency and to prevent children sneaking out.
6. Trip leaders or other designated adults shall conduct routine walk-throughs of high risk areas
7. In case of a building evacuation, an outdoor rally point will be designated in advance.
8. A roster will be maintained of the room assignments for each child and adult.
9. A bed check will be conducted at a specific time known to all.
10. Adult-child ratios shall be maintained for outings away from the lodging site.
11. A daily schedule of events shall be maintained with supervisory duty assignments included.
12. When staying at a hotel, children in each room shall be of similar age. No adult will share a bed with a child.
13. Adult rooms will be scattered among rooms occupied by children. There shall be at least one adult lodged on any floor on which children are sleeping.
14. Standards for bathroom, out-of-the-way, off limits locations and transition time shall be maintained as the site circumstances and facilities may require.

UCCT Community Awareness

Communication

UCCT is dedicated to a policy of open communication and education for the benefit of all whom we serve. All are entitled to know what to expect of our ministries, the ministers, employees or volunteers who serve them, and to know the related policies and procedures created to protect them.

This Statement of Policy and the Code of Conduct shall be posted on the UCCT website: www.ucctolland.org. The webmaster will keep it up to date at the direction of the Director of Children and Youth Ministries. The full document shall be available in printed form upon request.

Members and interested parties shall be invited to receive the same “abuse prevention” training as provided to ministers, employees or volunteers, to be taken at their option.

All shall be encouraged to report violations of policy, boundaries or suspected abuse to the Program Director of the respective ministry at which the incident has occurred.

Alternatively, reports may be made directly to the **Committee of Concern (Senior Pastor, Chair of Board of Deacons, and Vice Moderator)**. Anonymous reporting is permitted in the same manner and with the same precautions as reporting by ministers or other observers.

Awareness for Children, Parents, Guardians, and Vulnerable Adults

At the time children or vulnerable adults are enrolled in UCCT or TGLC programs, parents or legal guardians shall be informed in writing of this policy and provided with information about where the policy is located should they wish to read it.

An invitation to visit programs in progress at any time at their convenience will also be offered.

Children and vulnerable adults shall be provided information covering the following subjects:

1. Age appropriate information about boundaries (with reference to the Code of Conduct)
2. How to protect themselves from abuse and
3. How to report boundary violations or incidents of abuse

The information shall be provided at the following times:

1. Individually at the time a child or vulnerable adult begins participation in a ministry of the church or
2. As a group at the opening of a program year or event and
3. Annually when a program or event is ongoing

Screening & Selection

Application & Qualification - Volunteers

Prior to beginning their duties as ministers, every volunteer candidate who would work with any “at risk” population (children or vulnerable adults) shall be subject to the following qualifying steps:

Adult Volunteers shall:

1. Complete an employee and volunteer application and disclosure form. A response is required to each and every question; no answers may be omitted. Falsification of any aspect of the application shall be grounds for immediate dismissal. (Appendix B – Applications & Forms)
2. Provide a minimum of three references who are not family members
3. Grant written permission to conduct a background check as specified by this policy. The form is available through Praesidium, the company The Insurance Board partners with for training and background checking
4. Be an active member of the church or otherwise affiliated with the church or TGLC for no less than six months before being permitted to work with “at risk” populations.
Exceptions to this policy may be made with approval from the Senior Pastor or Associate Pastor
5. Be interviewed separately in person by the Program Director or his/her designee. Each interviewer shall employ behavioral interviewing techniques to assess suitability for working with children and specifically discuss the church’s policy of zero tolerance for abuse. (Refer to Appendix C – Sample Interview Questions)
6. Upon selection, sign an acknowledgement of these policies and procedures and fulfill all training obligations within one month after assuming duties

Volunteers under 18 years of age shall:

1. Have parental permission to volunteer
2. Complete a Volunteer and Employee Application and Disclosure form. A response is required to each and every question; no answers may be omitted. Falsification of any aspect of the application shall be grounds for immediate dismissal. (Appendix B – Applications & Forms)
3. Provide a minimum of three references who are not family members
4. Be interviewed separately in person by the Program Director or his/her designee. Each interviewer shall employ behavioral interviewing techniques to assess suitability for working with children and specifically discuss the church’s policy of zero tolerance for abuse. (Refer to Appendix C – Sample Interview Questions)
5. Upon selection, sign an acknowledgement of these policies and procedures and fulfill all training obligations within one month after assuming duties
6. Be under the supervision of an adult over 21 years of age

Application & Qualification – Employees

Prior to beginning their duties, every candidate for employment who would work with any “at risk” population (children or vulnerable adults) shall be subject to the following qualifying steps:

Each candidate for employment shall:

1. Complete an employee and volunteer application and disclosure form. A response is required to each and every question; no answers may be omitted. Falsification of any aspect of the application shall be grounds for immediate dismissal. (Appendix B – Applications & Forms)
2. Provide a minimum of three references. References provided should be a combination of professional and personal (not a family member)
3. Grant written permission to conduct a background check as specified by this policy. The form is available through Praesidium, the company The Insurance Board partners with for training and background checking
4. Be interviewed separately and in person. Each interviewer shall employ behavioral interviewing techniques to assess suitability for working with children and specifically discuss the church's policy of zero tolerance for abuse. (Refer to Appendix C – Sample Interview Questions)
5. Upon selection, sign an acknowledgement of these policies and procedures and fulfill all training obligations within one month after assuming duties

Reference Checking

A representative of the church (preferably a Program Director) shall contact and interview at least one reference for each new volunteer candidate. References provided should not be a family member. Questions asked of the references will be standardized questions (Refer to Appendix B – Professional/Personal Reference Interview Forms) to assess the candidate's suitability, and responses shall be documented.

A representative of the church (preferably a Program Director) shall contact and interview at least three references for each candidate for employment. References provided should be a combination of professional and personal (not a family member). Questions asked of the references will be standardized questions (Refer to Appendix B – Professional/Personal Reference Interview Forms) to assess the candidate's suitability, and responses shall be documented.

Background Checking

The Director of Finance shall conduct a criminal background check on every employment and volunteer candidate who is over 18 years of age and will volunteer with children under 18 years of age or with vulnerable adults. Written permission to conduct a background check shall be obtained from each applicant prior to executing the check.

Criminal background checks shall be repeated for employees and volunteers who perpetually work with children and vulnerable adults every three years. Seasonal employees or volunteers who have been absent from work more than six months shall have a new background check prior to resuming work.

Approval Procedure

If the background check report is "clear," no further action is necessary. If there is a "red flag" in the background check report, the Committee of Concern (Senior Pastor, Chair of the Board of Deacons, Vice Moderator) shall review the report and agree whether the applicant is eligible as an employee or volunteer. An interview with the applicant may be deemed necessary by the Committee.

Where a criminal record exists, consideration shall be given to:

1. Seriousness of the crime
2. Statutes that may legally disqualify the person from working with minors
3. Length of time since the last offense
4. Pattern of criminal activity
5. Activities the applicant has been involved in since the offense(s) occurred

Conviction for the following crimes shall be considered barriers to employment or volunteer work with children:

1. Violent crimes
2. Sexual assault
3. Sexual abuse or neglect of a child
4. Drug offenses or driving offenses, depending upon position requirements

Convictions only (as opposed to arrest data) are grounds for disqualification. The status or relevance of other crimes will be considered individually.

Following the review, each committee member shall sign and date the "Red Flag Background Investigation Results Form" (located in Appendix B) indicating one of two findings that becomes part of the applicant's or employee's permanent personnel file:

1. "We have reviewed the criminal history of Applicant X and determined, based on the information we had available at this time, the applicant would be **acceptable** for the position."
- OR
2. "We have reviewed the criminal history of Applicant X and determined, based on the information we had available at this time, the applicant is **not acceptable** for the position."

Grandfathering Not Permitted

Each employee or volunteer now serving and regardless of length of service must be willing to set an example for all others who follow in their ministry. Therefore, at the time this policy is first adopted, all incumbent employees and all incumbent volunteers who work with children or vulnerable adults shall execute and sign applications and submit to a background check as is required for candidate employees and volunteers.

Record Retention

Volunteer applications shall be retained in the same manner as employee applications with due regard for the safety of private information such as Social Security numbers. The individual record shall include:

1. Employee and Volunteer Application and Disclosure form
2. Permission to perform a background check (and credit check as may be required for employees)
3. Results of the background check
4. Background Investigation Results form (Appendix B – Applications & Forms)
5. Other forms collected during the application process

Training

UCCT wishes to identify and nurture Safe Conduct, to lead and to guide through adequate training. It is difficult to comprehend that those among us, our friends and family, would commit such acts willingly. Nevertheless, persons who have been presented no behavior standards and do not understand boundaries may unwittingly engage in behaviors that may be perceived as predatory. Their personal reputations and that of UCCT are then at risk.

To fulfill our leadership obligation as ministers, each new employee and new volunteer shall complete a specific program of training within 30 days of assuming duties. Fulfillment of training requirements shall be documented by the Director of Children and Youth Ministries and overseen by the respective program Director (Church School; Tolland Green Learning Center, etc.).

Training shall be repeated annually. Records shall be maintained by the Director Children and Youth Ministries and respective program Directors (Appendix D – Leadership & Reporting Roster). Training records shall be audited annually by the Director of Finance.

Abuse prevention curriculum will be appropriate for the position and may include:

1. Organization level
 - Review of expected conduct, boundaries and standards defined in the **Code of Conduct** (pp. 4-10).
 - Explanation of procedures for reporting violations of standards of conduct and suspected child abuse.
 - Explanation of individual statutory reporting obligations
 - Identifying and managing high-risk situations such as bathroom use, transition times, and free times
 - Physical security procedures
2. Abuse prevention education
 - Effects of sexual abuse
 - Types of child molesters
 - Characteristics of abusers
 - How child molesters operate: access, privacy, and control
 - Protecting oneself from false allegations
 - Examples of child-on-child sexual abuse, even among young children
 - Characteristics of children more likely to act out sexually
 - Characteristics of children more likely to be abused
 - High-risk activities and circumstances
 - Specific monitoring and supervision activities to prevent child-on-child sexual activity
 - How to respond to incidents of sexual activity between children

In the conduct of annual training, respective Program Directors shall identify themselves and the Committee of Concern (Senior Pastor, Chair of Board of Deacons, and Vice Moderator) as contacts for reporting violations of the **Code of Conduct**.

Monitoring

Each Program Director who is in a position of leadership shall provide leadership in the fulfillment of our congregation's ***Code of Conduct*** (pp. 4-10) by monitoring performance in their area of responsibility. The objective of monitoring is first, to protect children, then to protect staff from false allegations, and to protect the reputation of UCCT and its ministries.

Each Program Director shall consistently monitor performance using a variety of techniques, which may include, but are not limited to:

1. Scheduled visits
2. Unannounced random visits at unpredictable times
3. Spontaneous interviews with children
4. Planned interviews or surveys of children, employees, and volunteers
5. Meeting regularly with individual employees and volunteers
6. Group supervision meetings
7. Reviewing site documentation (e.g. progress notes, incident logs, etc.)

In the aftermath of an incident of "suspected abuse" or a significant violation of the ***Code of Conduct***, it may be necessary for the church and its Program Directors to defend their actions which support this policy. Therefore, every Program Director of the church shares in the obligation to regularly observe and document their good management.

Monitoring efforts are to be documented and individual employment records annotated as appropriate. Efforts and results shall be reported at regular meetings of the appropriate Committees as outlined in Appendix D.

Responding

UCCT is committed to prompt, professional and measured response to all circumstances, which may range from violations of these policies and procedures to suspicions or allegations of abuse. We are committed to (1) seriously consider the concerns of victims; (2) undertake a fair investigation of policy violations; (3) protect the confidentiality of parties involved in investigation; (4) as required, report to and cooperate fully with public authorities; and (5) if warranted, communicate fully with the congregation within the bounds of individual rights to confidentiality.

Fulfillment of this commitment requires every individual to assume responsibility as part of his/her respective duties, whether “authorized clergy,” employee or volunteer.

Responsibility of Employees and Volunteers

Each employee or volunteer is obligated to fulfill the **Code of Conduct** both by living the standard and helping others to do the same. Each is obligated to guide and gently correct others as they would in a circumstance of high personal risk. When another person, regardless of status, rank or power, repeats a violation of the **Code of Conduct**, the employee/volunteer observer must report the violation.

In ordinary administrative matters we expect employees and volunteers to address concerns with their immediate Program Directors. However, situations affecting the health and welfare of children and vulnerable adults may require a direct and expedited means of communication to ministers, employees or volunteers in leadership who can act upon concerns when an observer or victim is uncertain his/her concerns will be given attention.

When any employee or volunteer observes violations of the **Code of Conduct** or observes any other circumstance they find suspicious or feel is inappropriate, he/she has the right and duty to report it directly to the Director of the particular ministry to which the observation applies (primary contact). Respective Directors are identified in Appendix D – Leadership & Reporting Roster.

If for any reason the observer (1) feels uncomfortable addressing concerns with their immediate Program Director, (2) believes that the primary contact has failed to respond, or (3) has not given credibility to the observer, the latter may contact the church’s **Committee of Concern** (Senior Pastor, Chair of the Board of Deacons, Vice Moderator) (Appendix D – Leadership & Reporting Roster), to report the observation. Any observer or victim shall be permitted to make reports with the assurance that their report will be shared only on a “need to know” basis.

The **Committee of Concern (Senior Pastor, Chair of Board of Deacons, Vice Moderator)** (Appendix D – Leadership & Reporting Roster), while respecting and protecting the confidentiality wishes of the observer or victim, if any, shall ascertain with reasonable certainty the relationship of the observer to the incident and the credibility of the information being provided. The **Committee of Concern (Senior Pastor, Chair of Board of Deacons, Vice Moderator)** shall initiate (1) an investigation of the facts, (2) corrective action in line with the steps called for by “**Progressive Discipline**” (defined in Appendix A), or (3) reporting if required by state statute.

Responsibility of Authorized Clergy & Program Directors (Leaders)

UCCT expects that Leaders will relate to each other in a cordial and professional manner and in matters of Safe Conduct will support, encourage and mentor each other.

Leaders are required to fulfill the standards for **Monitoring** (see above) along with the **Code of Conduct**. Whether upon direct observation or as a result of reports from others, each Leader shall take affirmative steps to correct behavior or enforce policies. Leaders shall foster Safe Conduct by example and by following the steps called for by "**Progressive Discipline**" (defined in Appendix A).

A Leader may turn the disciplinary process over to a higher level of supervision if he/she feels there is a conflict of interest created by family ties or outside-of-church relationships, but may not do so when he/she is a "mandated reporter" as prescribed by Connecticut law.

Responsibility of Mandated Reporters

Regardless of procedures outlined herein, each person who is considered a "mandated reporter" (Mandated Reporters are defined in Appendix A, p. 22) under the statutes of Connecticut shall in good faith report "suspected abuse" following the procedures established by State Statute when any incident of abuse is observed or suspected.

Nothing in this policy shall be considered a restraint of an individual's statutory obligation to report to authorities. Furthermore, no person shall be restrained from reporting an incident on the basis of not being a "mandated reporter."

Other Reportable Abuse

While the State has defined abuse for the purpose of child protection statutes and mandated reporting, other kinds of abuse occur which are outside the bounds of Safe Conduct and to which UCCT requires a response. The following circumstances constitute reportable abuse which require response to include counseling, correction, progressive discipline and termination.

1. Child-on-child sexual activity
2. Dangerous behaviors (hazing, truth or dare, etc.)
3. Bullying, whether child-on-child or adult-on-child
4. Exploitation of a vulnerable adult, physically, mentally or financially

All such activity shall be reported by Employees/Volunteers or Leaders in the same manner as any violation of the **Code of Conduct**. In the event of out-of-program circumstances where there is not an identifiable direct minister, employee or volunteer, Program Director reports shall be made to the Committee of Concern (Senior Pastor, Chair of the Board of Deacons, Vice Moderator).

Other Disciplinary Processes

Other behaviors not necessarily involving children or vulnerable adults, or which may not be considered strictly illegal, are subject to other disciplinary practices as may be set out in governing documents of the congregation or of the denomination. Behaviors subject to other adjudication may include but are not limited to the following:

1. "Sexual harassment," whether among employees or volunteers
2. "Boundary violations" by authorized clergy
3. "Sexual exploitation"

All such activity shall be reported by Employees/Volunteers or Leaders in the same manner as any violation of the **Code of Conduct**. In the event of out-of-program circumstances where

there is not an identifiable direct minister, employee or volunteer, Program Director reports shall be made to the Committee of Concern (Senior Pastor, Chair of the Board of Deacons, Chair of Personnel Committee) or to the Regional Connecticut Conference Minister.

Cooperation with Investigations

UCCT requires the cooperation of all ministers, employees and volunteers in the investigation of violations of the **Code of Conduct**, or other misconduct, including any complainant, witness, or accused offender. These individuals may be interviewed privately and are required to provide oral and/or written statements. Any person who fails to cooperate with such an investigation or to provide complete and truthful information may be subject to disciplinary action.

Notification of Parents

A minor child may be party to an incident either as an initiator or as the victim. Whether a child is initiator or victim may not be clear in all circumstances, such as a child-on-child incident. And violation of policy does not necessarily create a victim. While notification of parents of such circumstances may be warranted, utmost care in communication is required.

Therefore, a Program Director having knowledge of an incident which warrants communication to a parent shall first advise the immediate supervisor, who may consult with the Committee of Concern. While communicating with a parent and being mindful of the importance of timely communication, care shall be given to assessing:

1. The specific facts
2. Whether a disciplinary or termination process is required
3. Whether a child should be dismissed from a program (requiring notification of other parents/guardians)
4. Whether "mandated reporting" is a factor
5. Who shall and in what manner communicate with the parents/guardian
6. Whether the Pastor should be involved in the communication
7. Tentative remedial steps to prevent a further incident

Notification of parents shall not be delayed when immediate medical care is required.

Victim Needs

In the event of cases of reportable abuse, the policy of UCCT is to be responsive to the needs of victims within the constraints or obligations imposed under insurance contracts. In general, we will attend to the immediate needs of victims by providing support and pastoral care.

An incident of alleged abuse that requires medical or psychological care for a victim or family shall be reported to the Insurance Board by the Director of Finance who shall discuss with the Insurance Board Claims Department whether the circumstances warrant initiation of Crisis Management services which may include psychological counseling. Upon approval, counseling services may be offered to a perceived victim(s), which may include family members.

Responding to Media

Media publicity following an incident of abuse or exploitation may be detrimental to the reputations of individuals, the congregation, UCCT and TGLC. Without intending ever to evade the media, contacts with media must be managed and conducted only by a person specifically designated by the Church Council to represent the church. No other person(s) may speak on behalf of the church. Unless designated differently by the Council in a particular circumstance, the exclusive spokesperson for the church shall be the Moderator.

Prior to speaking to media, the Moderator shall contact and consult with the CT Conference of the UCC Legal Counsel, to obtain an understanding of appropriate statements or admissions and issues of privacy that may apply to the situation.

The Moderator shall give immediate consideration to securing Insurance Board media relations and crisis management resources. Considering the speed of news cycles, a prompt determination is required, erring on the side of seeking help.

Administrative Practices

Leadership Reporting

Each Program Director of UCCT is directly responsible to the Committee of Concern to report activities and developments which may have a bearing on the well-being of a member of the congregation or its constituents, or the reputation of the church, its ministries and its congregation. The Program Director of each ministry shall report directly to the Moderator incidents of suspicious or inappropriate interactions.

Individual Ministry Standards

Ministries subject to this Safe Conduct Policy shall include all involving children or vulnerable adults.

Each ministry of the church, based upon its activities, participants and constituent interests, may establish individual ministry standards governing its activities, to include such details as age eligibility, safety practices, training of staff, documentation, etc. Individual ministry standards shall be consistent with and not in conflict with the church's ministry standards defined in the ***Code of Conduct***.

When a ministry is subject to State regulation (for example, day care, pre-school), such regulations shall constitute minimum requirements. Without creating unnecessary duplication, Ministry Standards shall apply in addition to regulatory requirements.

Use of UCCT Facilities by Outside Organizations

Prior to use of church facilities by an outside organization (lessee) to conduct activities involving children or vulnerable adults, and whether or not rent or contributions are provided to the UCCT (lessor), the outside organization shall have policies in place to insure that their practices are congruent with the UCCT Safe Conduct Policy. This will be accomplished by requiring their representative to review the summary of the UCCT Policy represented in the ***Code of Conduct***, and documenting that their practices are congruent with the UCCT's by signing a lease or use agreement which specifies that.

APPENDIX A -- Definitions

Abuse

- is a non-accidental injury to a child which, regardless of motive, is inflicted or allowed to be inflicted by the person responsible for the child's care
- includes the following:
 - any injury which is at variance with the history given
 - maltreatment such as, but not limited to, malnutrition, sexual molestation, deprivation of necessities, emotional maltreatment or cruel punishment.

Types of abuse include physical, sexual abuse and exploitation, emotional abuse or maltreatment, spiritual, and financial.

Authorized Clergy

Includes any person who is admitted to ministry by the United Church of Christ (UCC), who serves the congregation in any capacity whether called as pastor or serving in a retired, *emeritus*, administrative, interim, or volunteer capacity. Clergy who are active, have pastoral responsibilities and are called by the congregation shall have fulfilled the background checking requirements of the United Church of Christ (UCC).

Confidentiality

At all times, the privacy and security rights of individuals will be treated with utmost care. Processes are in place to protect individual rights. Information will be shared only on a "need to know" basis.

Mandated Reporters

Persons required by Connecticut law to report "suspected abuse" to the Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF) are defined in Connecticut General Statutes Sections 17a-101 through 17a-103a.

Minister

Consistent with our understanding of the priesthood of all believers, all "authorized clergy," employees, elected and appointed lay leaders, and authorized volunteers are ministers to the congregation and TGLC.

Neglect

Neglect is the failure, whether intentional or not, of the person responsible for the child's care to provide and maintain adequate food, clothing, medical care, supervision, and/or education. A child may be found neglected who:

- has been abandoned
- is being denied proper care and attention physically, educationally, emotionally, or morally
- is being permitted to live under conditions, circumstances or associations injurious to his well-being
- is being abused

Program Director

Employee or volunteer designated to lead specific program areas (current Program Directors listed in Appendix D)

Permissive Reporters

Persons who are not mandated reporters are permitted to report “suspected abuse” to appropriate agencies.

Progressive Discipline – Employee/Volunteer

A system of escalating discipline as an alternative to summary termination for a policy infraction, even a minor one. Progressive steps in discipline are as follows:

1. Counseling or a verbal warning -- It is preferable that more than one supervisory person be present for this step. Counseling or verbal warnings shall be documented in the employee/volunteer file.
2. Written warning – At such time as verbal warnings are found to be ineffective, and a written notice is required in order to correct behavior, the letter shall be prepared with the advice and approval of the next level of supervision. The notice shall be delivered to the employee/volunteer, while a copy is maintained in the individual's file.
3. Suspension or demotion – This may be appropriate for repeated violations of the **Code of Conduct** by either an employee or volunteer. However, no one shall be suspended or demoted without the involvement of at least two levels of supervision.
4. Termination – Repeated willful violations of the **Code of Conduct** call for termination of employment, whether employee or volunteer. However, no minister, employee or volunteer has authority to terminate an employee or volunteer unilaterally. At least two levels of supervision must make a judgment on termination, including (but not limited to): Program Director, Committee Chair, Pastors, Committee of Concern, CT UCC Regional Minister. No one shall be terminated without legal consultation. A termination letter shall be issued only with the approval of at least three of the above mentioned.

Progressive Discipline – Children

A system of escalating discipline shall apply to children served by our church. When children are observed engaging in inappropriate interactions or sexual contact, the following steps will be followed:

1. The child will immediately be stopped or redirected to another activity.
2. The parent or guardian will be invited to engage in a meeting about the behavior with the expectation that the parent will provide follow-up discussion and discipline with the child.
3. Additional steps may be taken culminating with the expulsion of the child from the church program. Legal counsel shall also be engaged before expulsion.

Progressive Discipline – Vulnerable adult

A system of escalating discipline shall apply to vulnerable adults served by our church. When vulnerable adults are observed engaging in inappropriate interactions or sexual contact, the following steps will be followed:

1. The vulnerable adult will immediately be stopped or redirected to another activity.
2. If the vulnerable adult has a legally appointed guardian, that individual will be invited to engage in a meeting about the behavior with the expectation that the legally appointed guardian will provide follow-up discussion with the vulnerable adult to influence a positive behavior change.

3. Additional steps may be taken culminating with the expulsion of the vulnerable adult from the church program. Legal counsel shall also be engaged before expulsion.

Sexual Exploitation

Sexual activity or contact (not limited to sexual intercourse) in which a minister, employee or volunteer engaged in the work of the church takes advantage of the vulnerability of a participant by causing or allowing the participant to engage in sexual behavior with the minister.

Sexual Harassment

Repeated or coercive sexual advances toward another person contrary to his or her wishes. It includes behavior directed at another person's sexuality or sexual orientation with the intent of intimidating, humiliating, or embarrassing the other person, or subjecting the person to public discrimination. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition or circumstance of instruction, employment, or participation in any church activity;
- Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for evaluation in making personnel or church-related decisions affecting an individual; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance or participation in church activities or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or church environment.

Note: For further information, refer to Personnel Handbook Section 3.6.

Suspected Abuse

When a caregiver in ministry has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that any child under the age of eighteen years or a vulnerable adult: (1) has been abused or neglected, as defined by CT law, (2) has had non-accidental physical injury, or injury which is at variance with the history given of such injury, inflicted upon such child or vulnerable adult, or (3) is placed at imminent risk of serious harm.

While "suspected abuse" is defined here for the benefit of "mandated reporters," the definition, for the purpose of this policy, includes "suspected abuse" of a vulnerable adult.

Vulnerable Adult

An individual who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of disability, age or illness; and is or may be unable to take care of or protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

APPENDIX B – Applications & Forms

1. Employee & Volunteer Application and Disclosure Form pp. 26-28
2. Background Investigation Results - Used when report includes a “red flag” p. 29
3. Professional Reference Interview Form – Optional pp. 30-31
4. Personal Reference Interview Form – Optional pp. 32-33
5. Field Trip Preparation Checklist – Sample pp. 34-35
6. Qualification Form & Agreement for Use of Personally Owned Vehicles p. 36
7. PF Permission Slip p. 37
8. Generic Permission Slip p. 38
9. Computer Use Form p. 39



United Congregational Church of Tolland

Employee & Volunteer Application and Disclosure

NAME: _____
LAST FIRST MIDDLE

ADDRESS: _____
STREET CITY STATE ZIP

DAYTIME PHONE EVENING PHONE EMAIL ADDRESS

References

Please note that references may not be family members, and are limited to only one current UCCT staff member.

NAME (1) _____

RELATIONSHIP _____

ADDRESS: _____
STREET CITY STATE ZIP

TELEPHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

NAME (2) _____

RELATIONSHIP _____

ADDRESS: _____
STREET CITY STATE ZIP

TELEPHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

NAME (3) _____

RELATIONSHIP _____

ADDRESS: _____
STREET CITY STATE ZIP

TELEPHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

Relationship to United Congregational Church of Tolland

- I have been a member of the United Congregational Church of Tolland since _____.
- I have been a friend of the United Congregational Church of Tolland since _____.
- I have not been affiliated with the United Congregational Church of Tolland.

Revised 11/25/2015

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Applicant: _____

1. I have never been convicted of, nor pled guilty or not contest to a crime. (Exclude convictions that have been sealed, expunged or legally eradicated, misdemeanor convictions for which probation was completed and the case was dismissed, or offenses about which inquiry is not permissible in this state)

True

Not True

If not true, please briefly describe the nature of the crime(s), the date and place of conviction and the legal disposition of the case. The church will not deny a position to any applicant solely because the person has been convicted of a crime. The church, however, may consider the nature, date, and circumstances of the offense, as well as whether the offense is relevant to the duties of the position applied for.

2. No civil lawsuit alleging actual or attempted sexual discrimination, harassment, exploitation, or misconduct; physical abuse; child abuse; or financial misconduct has ever resulted in a judgment being entered against me, been settled out of court, or been dismissed because the statute of limitations has expired.

True

Not True

If not true, give a short explanation of the lawsuit. (Please indicate the date, nature, and place of the incident leading to the lawsuit; where the lawsuit was filed; and the precise disposition of the lawsuit.)

3. I have never terminated my employment, professional credentials, or service in a volunteer position or had my employment, professional credentials or authorization to hold a volunteer position terminated for reasons relating to allegations of actual or attempted sexual discrimination, harassment, exploitation, or misconduct; physical abuse; child abuse; or financial misconduct.

True

Not True

If not true, give a short explanation. (Please indicate the date of termination; name address and telephone number of employer or volunteer supervisor; and nature of the incident(s) leading to your termination.)

4. Do you have a valid driver's license?

___ YES ___ NO

5. With respect to my driving record, I have not had my license suspended or revoked within the last five years due to reckless driving, or driving while intoxicated and/or under the influence of a controlled substance.

___ TRUE ___ FALSE

6. Is there any fact or circumstance involving you or your background that would call into question your being entrusted with the responsibilities of the position for which you are applying? ___ YES ___ NO

If yes, provide a brief explanation.

Page 2

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Covenant

Applicant: _____

The covenants between persons seeking employee or volunteer positions in the church require honesty, integrity, and truthfulness for the health of the church. To that end, **I attest that the information set forth in this application is true and complete.** I understand that any misrepresentation or omission may be grounds for rejection of consideration for, or termination of, the position I am seeking to fill. I acknowledge that it is my duty in a timely fashion to amend the responses and information I have provided if I come to know that the response or information was incorrect when given or, though accurate when given, the response or information is no longer accurate.

Beginning such relationships with an open exchange of relevant information builds the foundation for a continuing and healthy covenant between employees and volunteers, and the church they seek to serve. To that end, **I authorize the United Congregational Church of Tolland and/or its agents to make inquiries regarding my character and qualifications, including all statements I have set forth above.** I also authorize all entities, persons, former employers, supervisors, courts, law enforcement, and other public agencies to respond to inquiries concerning me, to supply verification of the statements I have made, and to comment on and state opinions regarding my background, character, and qualifications. To encourage such persons and entities to speak openly and responsibly, I hereby release them from all liability arising from their responses, comments, and statements.

The United Congregational Church of Tolland's employee and volunteer recruitment process involves the sharing of information regarding applicants with those persons in a position to recruit, secure, and supervise both the position I am seeking to fill and programs in which I am seeking to participate. To that end, **I authorize the United Congregational Church of Tolland and its agents to circulate, distribute, and otherwise share information gathered in connection with this application to such persons for these purposes.** I understand that the United Congregational Church of Tolland will share with me information it has gathered about me, if I request it to do so.

If I am offered and accept employment or volunteer service with the church, **I agree to comply with its published policies and rules, including those related to harassment of employees, reporting known or suspected adult or child neglect or abuse and similar requirements.** If requested to do so, I will cooperate with any church investigation of a possible violation of church policies and rules by providing complete and truthful information in an oral and/or written statement.

I agree to comply with the Safe Conduct Policy of the United Congregational Church of Tolland.

PRINT NAME

SIGNATURE

DATE

PRINT NAME & SIGN IF PARENT OR GUARDIAN OF APPLICANTS UNDER 18

DATE

Page 3

(Reduced image for informational purposes. Not to be used.)

RED FLAG Background Investigation Results

A criminal background check was conducted on the candidate using the following sources:

- National multi-state criminal records search
 - National sex offender registry search
 - Social security number trace and alias search
 - County criminal records search for every county where the applicant has lived or worked over the past (xx) years:
 - Motor Vehicle Record
- Other (Identify)

The Committee of Concern (Senior Pastor, Chair of Board of Deacons, Vice Moderator) has reviewed the investigation with the following result:

- We have reviewed the criminal history of Applicant and determined, based on the information we had available at this time, the applicant would be acceptable for the position.

OR

- We have reviewed the criminal history of Applicant and determined, based on the information we had available at this time, the applicant would be acceptable for the position, with the following stipulations
-
-
-

OR

- We have reviewed the criminal history of Applicant and determined, based on the information we had available at this time, the applicant is not acceptable for the position."

This clearance shall remain as a permanent record in the employment file.

MEMBER

Signature

Date

MEMBER

Signature

Date

MEMBER

Signature

Date

Professional Reference Interview Form

Employee/Volunteer Applicant: _____ Date: _____

Name of Reference: _____

Address: _____

Phone Numbers: _____

Hello, my name is _____ with the United Congregational Church of Tolland/Tolland Green Learning Center. (Applicant) has applied for a position with us and said you might be able to tell us about his/her previous work with children. Is this a good time for you to talk with me?

I would like to start by letting you know that the applicant has applied for a position working with children, so it is extremely important for us to make sure that every applicant is suitable for this type of position. I appreciate your help with this.

How long have you known the applicant? _____

How do you know the applicant? _____

How would you rate the applicant's ability to learn new information and skills?

____ Above satisfactory ____ Satisfactory ____ Below satisfactory

Can you give me an example of when the applicant was able to learn something new and use it in his/her work?

We are looking for someone who will adhere to the standard policies of our organization. How would you rate the applicant's ability to follow policies and procedures?

____ Above satisfactory ____ Satisfactory ____ Below satisfactory

How would you rate the applicant's ability to work with and relate to other adults?

____ Above satisfactory ____ Satisfactory ____ Below satisfactory

Have you observed the applicant working with children? ____ Yes ____ No

If yes, how would you rate the applicant's ability to relate to children?

____ Above satisfactory ____ Satisfactory ____ Below satisfactory

Can you give me an example of how the applicant relates to children?

In what types of situations have you observed the applicant working well with children (enjoying the work, being effective)?

In what types of situations have you observed the applicant not working well with children (becoming frustrated, angry, resentful or non-productive)?

How would you rate the applicant's ability to use good judgment in normal conditions?

Above satisfactory Satisfactory Below satisfactory

How would you rate the applicant's ability to maintain appropriate boundaries with children?

Above satisfactory Satisfactory Below satisfactory

How would you rate the applicant's ability to use good judgment in stressful conditions?

Above satisfactory Satisfactory Below satisfactory

Can you give me an example of when the applicant used good judgment?

Are you aware of any reason why we should not allow the applicant to work with the children we serve?

Do you have any additional comments or questions?

Signature of Screening Manager

_____/_____/_____
Date

Personal Reference Interview Form

Employee/Volunteer Applicant: _____ Date: _____

Name of Reference: _____

Address: _____

Phone Numbers: _____

Hello, my name is _____ with the United Congregational Church of Tolland/Tolland Green Learning Center. (Applicant) has applied for a position with us and said you would be a good person for us to talk with about him/her. Do you have a few minutes to talk with me now? I would like to start by letting you know that (Applicant) has applied for a position working with children, so it is extremely important for us to determine that every applicant is suitable for this type of position. I appreciate your help with this.

How long have you known the applicant? _____

What is your relationship to the applicant? _____

How would you rate the applicant's ability to work with and relate to children?

____ Above satisfactory ____ Satisfactory ____ Below satisfactory

Can you give me an example of how the applicant relates to children?

We are looking for someone who can stay calm and control frustration even under very frustrating conditions with children. How would you rate the applicant's ability to be patient and stay calm?

____ Above satisfactory ____ Satisfactory ____ Below satisfactory

Can you give me an example of how the applicant relates to children?

Have you ever known the applicant to use harsh or abusive discipline with a child?

Would you be comfortable placing one of your own loved ones in the care of the applicant?
Why or why not?

What are the applicant's hobbies and recreational activities?

How would you rate the applicant's ability to relate to adults?

Above satisfactory Satisfactory Below satisfactory

Can you give me an example of how the applicant relates to adults?

We need a person who can be supportive and understanding of a child's needs. How would you rate the applicant's ability to be genuinely supportive and understanding to a person in need?

Above satisfactory Satisfactory Below satisfactory

Think of a time when the applicant was able to show genuine concern for another person who needed comfort. Tell me about that time.

How would you rate the applicant's ability to maintain appropriate boundaries with children?

Above satisfactory Satisfactory Below satisfactory

Do you have any additional comments or questions?

Signature of Screening Manager

_____/_____/_____
Date

Field Trip Preparation Checklist

1. Specific location of the off-site activity. (Example: The Children's Museum)

2. Name of the primary contact at the off-site location (Example: Mary Smith, Director of Group Sales at the Children's Museum)

3. Address and telephone number for the location.

4. Parent permission sheet attached to this document for review.

5. Name and cell phone number of the Program Director for the off-site activity.

6. The adult to child ratio for the trip and names of all who will be attending.

7. Required attire for adult and child during the off-site activity.

8. Amount of time required for the off-site activity.

9. Estimated departure time and estimated return time.

10. Method of transportation.

11. Completed seating chart or vehicle assignment chart attached.

12. Overall supervision guidelines for location (adults will be assigned groups of children to monitor throughout the trip, employees will monitor children in "zones," etc.).

13. Location of restrooms/locker rooms at off-site location.

14. Cost of the activity.

Last Minute Checklist:

1. All permission sheets returned and compiled for the off-site activity (children cannot participate without a permission slip). Employees/volunteers must take permission slips to the off-site activity to ensure correct parent contact information.
2. Roll sheets printed and distributed to all employees/volunteers for all children attending the off-site activity.
3. All required employees/volunteers present.
4. All employees/volunteers and children are in approved attire.

VOLUNTEER DRIVER FORM
Qualification Form & Agreement for Use of Personally Owned Vehicles
United Congregational Church of Tolland

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Home phone: _____ Work phone: _____ Cell phone: _____

Years of driving experience _____

Driver license No. & State*: _____ Expiration Date: _____

Insurance Carrier _____ Expiration date: _____

Liability Policy Limit -- Bodily Injury _____ Property Damage _____

1. Are all licensed vehicles you own covered by insurance as required by law? Yes, No

2. Have you ever been denied a driver's license or had one suspended or revoked? Yes, No

3. Have you had any moving traffic violations or accidents in the past three years? Yes, No

If the answer to questions 2 or 3 is YES, explain. Give dates and details of violations and accidents on the back of this form.

I AGREE to the following as a condition of being permitted to act as a Volunteer Driver:

1. The vehicle owner's insurance is the primary liability insurance coverage in the event of an accident.
2. The owner of the vehicle which I am driving is responsible for keeping the vehicle in safe working order.
3. The owner of the vehicle is responsible for all damage to the owned vehicle however caused.
4. The owner of the vehicle shall maintain liability insurance in the amount of at least
 - Bodily Injury -- \$50,000 per person and \$100,000 per accident or \$200,000 combined single limit; and
 - Property Damage -- \$25,000 per accident
5. The church's insurance shall apply in excess of the vehicle owner's liability insurance limits in the event the primary limits are exhausted, and only to the extent the church is legally obligated to pay damages.
6. **I will not receive or initiate phone calls while operating a vehicle for church activities, to include receiving or initiating text messages.**
7. I will indemnify and hold the church harmless from liabilities and damage resulting from my operation of a motor vehicle not owned by the church. The church will indemnify and hold harmless the volunteer driver for liabilities and damages resulting from acts or negligence of the church.

I hereby AFFIRM that the information I have given is stated truthfully and that I shall abide by the Ministry Standards for the transportation of children (Code of Conduct p. 9).

Attach a copy of Driver's License and current Insurance ID Card

Driver Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPROVED: _____ **Date:** _____ **Expiration:** _____

*When this form is distributed, a copy of the Code of Conduct regarding the transportation of children should be copied on the back.

**Junior & Senior P.F. - Pilgrim Fellowship Activity
Tolland Congregational Church - UCC**

Director of Children and Youth Ministries: Amie Giguere (860)402-5893 agiguere@ucctolland.org

Activity Permission Slip - Your child has signed up for the activity below.

Activity:

Location:

Day/Date:

Time(s):

Cost:

Conditions

- Your child must arrange transportation to and from the activity. **Yes, WE WILL CARAVAN FROM CHURCH**
- Adult supervision from P.F. **will be** present.

Feel free to call us if you have any concerns or if you would like to participate in any of our activities.
Please sign below and respond to the questions below. This acknowledges that you are aware of your child's participation in this event according to the conditions above and gives us the necessary information about your child. Thank you for your cooperation!

My child **will participate** in the activity listed above as a member of Pilgrim Fellowship of the UCC of Tolland.

student's name (printed)

student's signature

phone # (optional)

date

Parent/guardian's signature

phone #

date

Emergency Contact Name

Emergency phone #

Parent or Guardian, please answer the questions below. Thank you!

Name _____ Phone number _____ email _____
• I will **Chaperone and/or drive students** to this event, if needed. **Yes** **No**
• I give my **permission for pictures of my child** to be posted on the church website. **Yes** **No**

Health Information

- Please list any **allergies** that the child has _____.
_____.
_____.
- Does participant carry an Epi-pen? **Yes** **No** Participant may self-administer **Yes** **No**
• Does participant carry an inhaler? **Yes** **No** Participant may self-administer **Yes** **No**

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United Congregational Church of Tolland – UCC

Organizers: _____
Name _____ Phone # _____ Name _____ Phone # _____ email _____

Activity Permission Slip - Your child has signed up for the activity below.

Activity:

Location:

Day/Date:

Time(s):

Cost:

Transportation:

- Your child must arrange transportation to and from the activity Yes No
- Volunteer drivers will provide transportation from the church Yes No

Feel free to call us if you have any concerns or if you would like to participate in any of our activities.
Please sign below and respond to the questions. This acknowledges that you are aware of your child's participation in this event as described above and gives us the necessary information about your child.
Thank you for your cooperation!

My child **will participate** in the activity listed above.

child's name (printed) _____ child's signature _____ phone # (optional) _____ date _____

Parent/guardian's name (printed) _____ phone # _____ email _____

Emergency Contact Name _____ Emergency phone # _____

- I will **Chaperone and/or drive children** to this event, if needed. Yes No
- I give my **permission for pictures of my child** to be posted on the church website. Yes No

Health Information

- Please list any **allergies** that the child has _____
- Please list any **chronic or recurring illness**, including seizure disorder, asthma, etc. _____

- Does participant carry an Epi-pen? Yes No Participant may self-administer Yes No
- Does participant carry an inhaler? Yes No Participant may self-administer Yes No
- In the event of a medical emergency, I give my permission for the organizers to make emergency medical decisions if I cannot be reached. Yes No

Parent/guardian's signature _____ date _____

(Reduced image for informational purposes. Not for use.)

Computer Use Form
United Congregational Church of Tolland – UCC

The United Congregational Church of Tolland (UCCT) has provided the computer equipment listed below for your use for church or Tolland Green Learning Center (TGLC) business and activities.

It is your responsibility to keep it safe and secure, to use it for good and trustworthy activity in keeping with the ways of the church – and to remove your information from it when you are no longer using it, leaving it in good working order for the next person who will use it.

Please sign below to accept this responsibility:

Equipment Information:

- Type of Equipment: _____
- Make: _____
- Model: _____
- Serial No: _____

User Information:

- Name: _____
- Title or Position (at UCCT or TGLC):

- Signature: _____ Date: _____

Attested by Church Representative:

- Name: _____ Title: _____
- Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX C – Interview Questions (Sample)

Source 1: *Preventing Child Sexual Abuse Within Youth-serving Organizations: Getting Started on Policies and Procedures*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services, 2007.

The following questions may be used in a written application or personal interview. A single answer should not determine whether an applicant is selected or rejected. Along with other forms of information, answers to these questions can help you build a more complete picture of an applicant.

- **What type of supervisory situation do you prefer?**

If applicants are very independent, they may not fit in an organization whose policies and procedures require close supervision.

- **What age/sex of youth do you want to work with? How would you feel about working with a different age/sex?**

If an applicant seems fixated on one age/sex, be wary. However, it may be that the applicant has experience or is gifted with working with certain age groups. Asking follow-up questions about why an applicant has a strong preference can help you determine if there is cause for concern.

- **Is there anyone who might suggest that you should not work with youth? Why or why not?**

- **Why do you want the job?**

- **What would you do in a particular situation?**

Set up scenarios that involve potential concerns, boundary issues, or youth protection policies and interactions to gauge the applicant's response. Be concerned if applicants disregard the organization's policies and procedures or handle a situation poorly.

- **What makes you a good candidate for working with youth? What would your friends or colleagues say about how you interact with youth?**

- **What other hobbies or activities do you enjoy?**

Determine if applicants have mature, adult relationships—not just relationships with youth

Source 2: *Policies & Procedures Resources*, Praesidium, Inc.

A more exhaustive set of interview questions along with an interpretive guide is available as part of a program self-assessment, which can be accessed at the Insurance Board website:

www.insuranceboard.org. Go to **Safety Solutions/ SafeConduct™ Workbench**. Click on **Self-Assessment**. This resource is especially recommended for programs that deal with large numbers of children and where careful hiring decisions are required.

APPENDIX D – Leadership & Reporting Roster

The persons listed below are considered “primary contacts” for reporting for their respective Ministry or program. Each is also a “mandated reporter” in the State of Connecticut for the purpose of reporting “suspected child abuse” to law enforcement or child welfare authorities.

Any minister, employee or volunteer, or member of the congregation of UCCT may report policy or procedure violations or circumstances of “suspected child abuse” to any of the persons listed below, but preferably to the person in whose ministry or program the incident has occurred.

Position	Name	Telephone	e-Mail address
Senior Pastor	Rev Jeff Gallagher	(860)875-4160x24	jgallagher@ucctolland.org
Associate Pastor	Rev Jill E. Olds	(860)875-4160x12	jolds@ucctolland.org
Acting Director of Children Ministries	Kristen Gallagher	(860)875-4160x16	Kgallagher6@comcast.net
Acting Director of Youth Ministries	Sue Moriarty	(860)875-4160x16	smoriarty@ucctolland.org
Director of TGLC	Teresa Green, Director	(860)875-2795	tlearningcenter@snet.net
Media Spokesperson	Moderator Christine Anderson	(860)558-0686	christineanderson@sbcglobal.net
Committee of Concern (3 members)	1. Senior Pastor (above) 2. Chair of Board of Deacons, Kathy Phillips 3. Vice Moderator, Midge Hurtuk	Kathy (860)742-5230 Midge (860) 872-2181	(Kathy) krdonoghue@sbcglobal.net (Chris) christineanderson@sbcglobal.net (Midge) mhurtuk@aol.com
Troop C State Police in Tolland		(860) 896-3200	
CT Department of Children and Families (DCF)	Careline for reporting abuse or neglect	1-800-842-2288	

Prior to making an anonymous report, a person reporting must take into account how technology may reveal their identification (caller ID, e-mail address, etc.). Nevertheless, the Committee of Concern (Senior Pastor, Chair of the Board of Deacons, Vice Moderator) will take care not to further compromise confidentiality.

It is important to note that two out of three members of the Committee of Concern may be present, as opposed to all three members. This is particularly relevant if one of the three members is involved in the report.

NOTE: The Vice Moderator shall be responsible for updating this Roster on a regular basis, particularly following the Annual Meeting of UCCT. Most Recent Update: February 1, 2018

APPENDIX E -- Registered Sex Offender Policy

As a community of faith, serving by the example of Jesus Christ, we also seek to attend to the needs of all who seek healing, redemption and fellowship among us.

We shall be prepared to accept in our midst those who have violated the most sacred mores of our society at large, in order to provide them refuge, peace, example and support in their recovery and penitence. We commit to doing so with utmost care for the welfare of our congregation, collectively and individually, and the community we serve – as well as with the utmost care for the welfare of the registered sex offender.

We accept that there are risks to be born in our deliberate association with and ministry to sex offenders who are considered a pariah among the community-at-large as evidenced by the many constraints placed upon their interaction with the community. We agree to honor the needs of the congregation and our community to have reasonable assurance that a sex offender in our care will not have an opportunity to re-offend as a result of lapses in our management of the offender.

We shall consider limited participation or membership of a sex offender in our congregation with utmost care. Therefore, if there were an individual who is a registered sex offender who became known to us, the Committee of Concern would need to be assembled, and a clear policy and Limited Access Agreement would be executed between the church and the registered sex offender. This work would be done in consultation with the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ, and with the support of resources such as (but not limited to) the Insurance Board's SafeConduct™ workbench.

APPENDIX F – Resources Used & Safe Conduct Committee

The following resources were used in creating this Manual:

1. Insurance Board's SafeConduct™ workbench.
2. Connecticut Conference Internet Guide
3. State of Connecticut Statues on Abuse Reporting

The following were members of the Safe Conduct Committee that created this Manual:

- Amie Giguere (Chair)
- Gary Lotreck (Youth)
- Cherie Robinson (TGLC/Member at Large)
- Fran Maynard (Caring Ministries)
- Lois Pabst (Personnel)
- Mariah Bumps (CE)
- Cheryl Randino (Communications and Technology)
- Vinny Moriarty (Deacons)