

Arise United Methodist Church
Child Protection Guidelines
Secondary Screening Form for Work with Minors

VOLUNTEER (Casual)

(Volunteers working with minors on an infrequent, occasional basis must complete this form.)

The disturbing and traumatic rise of physical and sexual abuse of children has claimed the attention of our nation and society. The following policies reflect our church's commitment to protect all children, youth, and volunteers who participate in church sponsored activities:

1. Adults who have been convicted of either sexual or physical abuse should not volunteer service in any church sponsored activity or program for minors.
2. Adult volunteers should work with a partner (the two-person rule), or the door to the room in which a volunteer is working with minors must be open or have an unobstructed window.
3. Adult volunteers should immediately report any behaviors which seem abusive or inappropriate to their supervisor or the pastor.

Please answer each question below. Your response will be kept strictly confidential.

1. As a church volunteer, do you agree to observe the church policies above regarding working with minors? Yes ____ No ____
2. Have you ever been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a crime against children or other persons? Yes ____ (Please describe on a separate sheet of paper.) No ____
3. Is there any fact or circumstance involving you or your background that would call into question your being entrusted with the supervision, guidance, and care of minors?
Yes ____ (Please describe on a separate sheet of paper.) No ____

I have read the policies above and agree to observe the safeguards listed.
I certify that the information I have provided is true and correct.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Print name: _____

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Reporting Procedures

Michigan law requires a person to immediately report/suspected and reported child abuse to the authorities and, in organizations such as Arise United Methodist Church, to the appropriate individual in charge. A person who fails to do so can be prosecuted for a Class B misdemeanor or, in extreme circumstances, may be subject to civil liability for financial damages. Therefore, all employees and volunteers at Arise United Methodist Church must adhere to the following procedures:

1. In the event of suspected, reported, or discovered child abuse or violation of the Child Protection Policies of our church, the employee or volunteer shall immediately notify the Pastor or, in the absence of the Pastor, the chairperson of the Staff-Parish Relations Committee. In the event of suspected, reported, or discovered child abuse or neglect, the employee or volunteer will also immediately make a report to the local office of Child Protective Services.

Physical signs of molestation may include, but are not limited to: lacerations and bruises; irritation, pain or injury to the genital area; difficulty with urination; discomfort when sitting; torn or bloody underclothing; venereal disease.

Behavioral signs of molestation may include, but are not limited to: nightmares, anxiety when approaching the church building or nursery area (beyond normal separation anxiety), nervous or hostile behavior toward adults, sexual self-consciousness or acting out of sexual behavior, withdrawal from church activities and friends.

Verbal signs of molestation may include, but are not limited to, statements such as:

- “I don’t like _____”
- “_____ does things to me when we’re alone.”
- “I don’t like to be alone with _____”
- “_____ fooled around with me.”

2. Reports will be signed and documented in writing indicating the date and time, phone number, and name of the recipient of the report, and a brief synopsis of the report. If at all possible, all oral reporting will be done in the presence of a recorded witness.
3. All church employees and primary volunteers working with minor children will receive mandatory training at the beginning of each church administrative year regarding the signs of child abuse, including child sexual abuse, and the steps to report any and all suspected child abuse. Any new employees and volunteers not in their positions at the beginning of the year must receive the same training before they begin their work. The Pastor, or a person designated by the Pastor, will conduct the training.
4. Workers shall be assured that state law protects them from liability when they report actual or suspected abuse, so long as the report is made in good faith.

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Response Procedures

All employees and volunteers at Arise United Methodist Church must adhere to the following procedures and guidelines for responding to reported incidents of abuse:

1. **We will not prejudge** any person accused, but we will **take any allegation** of child abuse **seriously** and will reach out in Christian love and support to the victim and the victim's family, extending whatever pastoral care resources are needed. We will not engage in denial, minimization, or blame. We will fully **cooperate with any authorities** investigating an allegation of child abuse.
2. The **official spokesperson** for Arise United Methodist Church shall be the **Pastor** or, if the Pastor cannot be reached, the chairperson of the Staff-Parish Relations Committee. All inquiries or requests for information from the media, attorneys, or any other parties shall be referred to the official spokesperson. **No person other than the official spokesperson** is to release any information regarding any alleged incident of child abuse without the express approval of the official spokesperson.
3. A prepared **position statement** of the church shall be available to the spokesperson for use with the media, should the need arise.
4. The **official spokesperson shall immediately report** any alleged incident of child abuse to the local office of Child Protective Services, our insurance carrier, the Conference Chancellor, the District Superintendent, and the church's attorney.
5. The care and safety of the victim is our first priority. We will not confront the accused without the approval of Child Protective Services or law enforcement authorities.
6. We will **treat the accused with dignity and respect**. The person shall be temporarily relieved of his or her duties until the investigation is finished and the person has been cleared by the authorities.
7. All communication by the official spokesperson to the media, congregation, and public shall **protect the privacy and confidentiality of all involved**.
8. All efforts in responding to the alleged incident of child abuse shall be documented by the Pastor or, in the absence of the Pastor, by the other previously designated spokesperson, and maintained in a secure and confidential file.