

6.0 SAFETY

6.01 Safe Congregation Policy

Board Approved December 2015

OPENING STATEMENT

We the members and friends of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Bay County recognize the need to promote the safety and wellbeing of our community. We hereby establish this safe congregation policy, which supports and is enhanced by our Right Relations policy and our Communications policy.

Our commitment, as Unitarian Universalists, to the inherent worth and dignity of every person and to justice and compassion, compels us to ensure a safe environment that protects children and adults from harm, and promotes their spiritual growth. We highly value the ideals of community, the search for truth, and the call to make our world a better place to live.

1. Children, Youth, Vulnerable Adults

- a. Two adults present with each group of children, youth or vulnerable adults.
- b. For the purposes of these requirements a “group” is defined as those children, youth or vulnerable adults who have been assigned to a nursery, individual class, or specific program or activity within the context of that class, as well as youth who are taking part in a planned, organized component of their program.
- c. Advisors for youth must have been active in the congregation for at least six months, and must be at least 25 years old.
- d. All staff and volunteers working with children, youth and vulnerable adults will sign a Code of Ethics form. (See Addendum)
- e. All staff and volunteers working with children, youth and vulnerable adults must complete an application form and supply two references. These references should be people who have known the applicants for at least three years, preferably in relation to previous work with children or youth. A government-issued photo identification, such as a driver’s license, must be presented to the Religious Exploration Coordinator (REC) and/or congregational staff person who oversees the RE program.
- f. All staff and volunteers working with children, youth and vulnerable adults will be asked to consent to a criminal background check.

- g. The UUFBC Board of Directors will arrange for **criminal background checks** for all paid staff in their congregation and on volunteers working with children, youth and vulnerable adults. Companies that conduct criminal background checks:
 - i. Oxford Document Management Company
 - ii. Church Mutual Insurance Company
- b. There are certain circumstances when the two adult minimum can be compromised. Examples include:
 - i. When one youth advisor and/or RE teacher is alone in a classroom during a Sunday Church School due to a lack of volunteers, the door to the room should be left open. The REC or responsible RE volunteer should frequent the room during the session for the safety of the youth/children and adult.
 - ii. Children, youth and vulnerable adults may ride with one adult advisor when they live nearby in order to attend a Sunday service or UUFBC sponsored event. In these instances, a parental/guardian form is required stating that the advisor has parent's/guardian's permission for the child, youth or vulnerable adults to drive alone with a non-custodial adult. The adult driver must be subject to the same background check and screening described above.

2. Abuse and Harassment - Abuse and/or harassment of any kind is not tolerated by the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Bay County.

- a. Definition of Harassment: Any harassment regarding sex, race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, age, handicap, sexual orientation or gender will not be tolerated. Harassment includes unsolicited and unwelcome conduct that can feel intrusive, intimidating, hostile, offensive and/or humiliating to the victim. This includes physical, psychological and sexual harassment.
 - i. Physical: Pertaining to unwanted touch, or other physical intrusions on another's personal space
 - ii. Psychological: Pertaining to the infliction of emotional and mental stress, including but not limited to, offensive remarks or gestures, display or circulation of written materials or derogatory pictures directed at any of the above categories, intimidation, intrusion and stalking.
 - iii. Sexual: Pertaining to unwanted sexualized behaviors including but not limited to:
 - iv. Physical conduct- Touching, pinching, exposing, brushing against, impeding or blocking movement, assault, coercing sexual contact.
 - v. Verbal conduct- Sexually suggestive or obscene comments, sexual propositions, threats, jokes about gender-specific traits or sexual orientations.

- vi. Written conduct- Circulation of sexually suggestive or obscene written material
 - b. Definition of Abuse: Abuse is a pattern of behavior used to control and/ or dominate another person. Abuse can be physical, psychological and/ or sexual.
 - i. Physical: Includes actual or threatened harm, such as hitting, shoving, kicking or throwing things. This includes harmful actions/threats toward family members, pets or treasured belongings.
 - ii. Psychological: Includes being mistreated mentally and emotionally, (insulted, ridiculed or threatened verbally.)
 - iii. Sexual: Including, but not limited to, any of the above behaviors with sexual overtones. Also includes:
 - 1. Sexualized behavior or contact between an adult and a minor.
 - 2. Sexualized behavior or contact between minors that violates one of them because of the other's age or role.
 - 3. Sexualized behavior or contact between adults that violates one of them because of the other's role or position of power.
 - c. If abuse is witnessed or experienced by an employee, the employee should take this information to their supervisor immediately. If the abuse/harassment is perpetrated by the supervisor, the employee should contact a member of the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors.
 - d. An employee who is found to be a perpetrator of abuse is subject to penalties documented in the UUFBC Personnel Policies, up to and including termination.
 - e. If a UUFBC member witnesses or experiences abuse, this information should be taken to a member of the UUFBC Executive Committee immediately.
- 3. Limited Access Agreement (Sex Offenders)** - The UUFBC affirms the dignity and worth of all persons. We are committed to being a religious community open to those in need of worshipping with us, especially in times of serious personal troubles. Should the case arise that a known sex offender wishes to participate in the fellowship, the following guidelines apply:
- a. The individual is to avoid all contact with children on congregation property or congregation-sponsored events:
 - i. Do not talk with children.
 - ii. Do not volunteer or agree to lead, chaperone or participate in events for children and youth including such things as religious education classes, stories or talks for worship, youth group events, activities during intergenerational events, driving or otherwise transporting children and/or youth.

- iii. Remain in the presence of an adult who knows your situation at all times when present at UUFBC or in a UUFBC sponsored event.
 - iv. If a child in the congregation approaches you, either at church or in a community place, politely and immediately excuse yourself from the situation.
 - v. Avoid being in the building unsupervised when activities involving children are in session, such as nursery school or youth group.
- b. The individual will be required to sign a Limited Access Agreement to this effect. The agreement will be reviewed every six months and will remain indefinitely.
 - c. Within this framework, the congregation welcomes the individual's participation in adult worship services, coffee hour, committee meetings, adult education, all adult social events and well supervised intergenerational events.

6.02 Facility Safety

1. Safety Rules for Children

- a. No running or playing on the porches, driveway or around parked cars.
- b. No child under 12 shall be outside without direct adult supervision.
- c. No running, rough play or throwing objects indoors.

2. Emergency/Fire Safety

- a. All doors/windows shall be lockable
- b. Building and parking lot shall be well lighted
- c. Fire extinguishers and first aid kits will be maintained by the Environmental Team and always available. The locations of fire extinguishers and first aid kits will be made known to all leaders in the fellowship and training shall be provided if needed. The availability and functionality will be overseen by the Board of Directors.

3. Fire Drills

- a. A fire drill plan will be developed and maintained by the Fellowship Board of Directors and coordinated with the Environmental Team.
- b. A coordinated fire drill will be performed twice per year to ensure congregation members have working knowledge of the plan.

4. Lockdown Plan/Active Shooter Response

- a. An active shooter/lockdown response plan will be developed and coordinated with the acting building manager and with input from local law enforcement.
- b. A coordinated lockdown drill will be performed twice per year to ensure congregation members have knowledge of the plan.

5. Emergency Training

All fellowship leaders, ushers & greeters, will receive more comprehensive training on first aid response, emergency response, fire drills and lockdown drills, so they can better facilitate drills and real-world responses.

6.03 Religious Education Safety Policies

Approved May 2016

1. **Nursery/ Preschool Procedures:** We care for all of the children who are entrusted to us and hope to help them grow and understand that the UU is a safe and fun place for them to come and enjoy. We ask our parents to help our youngest members to feel both welcomed and safe within our walls. As a result, we will make every effort to comfort and engage unhappy children. There are a variety of methods that are available to our volunteers, however if a child is inconsolable (continuous crying) for 10 minutes, we will ask the parent to come assist the child. We will not let children “cry it out”. This will help to develop a trusting relationship between the children and our volunteers.

- a. **Injury**

- i. Anytime a child reports an injury to a volunteer the parent must be notified. We have a first aid kit in the office that can be used for cuts/scrapes/burns/bites. If the incident involves another child, both parents will be notified. We will fill out an incident report and keep it on file at the UU.
- ii. All openly bleeding wounds need to be covered with a bandage.
- iii. Parents will be notified immediately if a child is seriously injured or seems disoriented.

- b. **Sign-In/Out procedures**

- i. Due to safety concerns, we cannot have children under 12 years of age left unattended. Our volunteers have been asked to be in place 10 minutes before service or an event at the UU. If you arrive at the UU early, please do not sign your children in if there is not a volunteer present.
- ii. If you have a child under 12, we ask parents to sign each child into their respective class and to sign them out after class ends. If your child is over 12, he or she can sign his/herself out of the class, but cannot be responsible for younger siblings.
- iii. All parents are asked to sign their children out no later than 5 minutes after the close of the service/event. Our volunteers are busy and would like the opportunity to socialize with the congregation as well. Once you have signed your child out, they are considered to be in your care.

- c. **Illness:** We appreciate that it takes an effort to come and join us at the UU and wish to see everyone each Sunday. Keeping that in mind, we cannot expose other members and children to illness.
 - i. If your child is acting ill, he or she will not be admitted to the RE program for that day.
 - ii. Any child who exhibits signs of illness will have their parent contacted and will be asked to take the child home. These signs include but are not limited to: fever, vomiting, nausea, stomach upset, coughing etc.
 - iii. Sick children should not be left unattended on UU property
 - d. **Playground Safety:** Our play equipment is currently rated for ages 4 and below, please keep your older children off of the toddler equipment. We are working on creating a more friendly play area for older children, please be patient with us while we develop this. In the meantime, we are looking for donations of balls for the older kids to play with. We appreciate that this may be difficult for the older kids, but our priority must be the safety of everyone and we ask you to help us with this even if there are no small children present.
 - e. **Discipline:** Preschoolers are active and precocious. They want to explore the world around them and their classroom is often outside.
 - i. If necessary a preschooler may be asked to sit in timeout with the second volunteer. The second volunteer should discuss the behavior with the child. The timeout is to last no longer than 1 minute per year of age, and no longer than 2 minutes total. We appreciate that this can be a difficult age, parents will be called if a child is biting, hitting or wandering away from class.
 - ii. Nursery: Nursery age children will be separated if they cannot play nicely with each other. We strive to have no more than 4 babies per volunteer to make this possible.
 - iii. If a child is biting or hitting other children in the nursery, his or her parents will be called from service.
 - iv. If at any time a child is disciplined the parents will be notified when they come to sign the child out.
2. **Elementary/Youth:** We all have difficult days and the volunteers strive to understand the needs of children who may be having a bad day. A child who is acting out will be asked by the volunteer to choose between stopping the behavior or to stand against the wall. If that does not work, the child will be put in time out (standing against the wall). The child will not stand against the wall for longer than 1 minute per year of age (ie, a 4 year old will not stand against the wall for longer than 4 minutes). No child will stand on the wall longer than 6 minutes regardless of age. If the behavior does not resolve, the volunteer may have the child stand on the wall a second time. After that point, the

parent will be called from service and asked to remove that child for the remainder of the day. Volunteers are to keep in mind that every age range has a different set of behaviors expected of them, and behave accordingly.

6.04 Addendum to Safety Policy

CODE OF ETHICS

For Adults and Older Youth Working with Children and Youth

Adults and older youth who are in leadership roles are in a position of stewardship and play a key role in fostering spiritual development of individuals and of the community. Those in leadership positions should be well qualified to provide the special nurture, care and support to enable children and youth to develop a positive sense of self and a spirit of independence and responsibility.

The relationship between youth and their leaders must be one of mutual respect. There are no more important areas of growth than those of self-worth and the development of a healthy identity as a sexual being. Adults play a key role in assisting children and youth in these areas of growth.

Children, youth and adults suffer damaging effects when leaders become sexually involved with young persons in their care. Leaders will refrain from engaging in sexual, seductive or erotic behavior with children and youth. Neither shall they sexually harass or engage in behavior with youth that constitutes verbal, emotional or physical abuse.

Leaders shall be informed of the code of ethics and agree to it before assuming their role. In cases of violation of this code, appropriate action will be taken.

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I have read and understand the above statements of position, expectations and actions.

Name (printed): _____

Name (signed): _____

Date: _____

LIMITED ACCESS AGREEMENT—CONFIDENTIAL

Introductory paragraph in cases of allegation:

A serious complaint or allegation, now under review, has been made about you to the Board of Directors. While this complaint is being investigated, in order to protect the children and youth in our programs from potential risk, and in order to protect you from further suspicion, we ask you to abide by this interim agreement. Signing this document in no way constitutes a presumption or confession of guilt. This is a routine safety precaution, activated without prejudice toward particular individuals or circumstances. This document will be made known only to the Minister/President, the Religious Exploration Coordinator and the members of the Right Relations Committee (or other appropriate congregational entity). It will be kept in a locked file in the office.

Introductory paragraph in cases of convicted sex offender:

The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Bay County (UUFBC) affirms the dignity and worth of all persons. We are committed to being a religious community open to those who are in need of worshipping with us, especially in times of serious personal troubles. However, based on your background, we have concerns about your contact with children and youth in our congregation. The following guidelines are designed to reduce the risk to both you and them of an incident or accusation. We welcome you to our congregation and our membership but your participation will be limited to ensure the safety of our children and youth and to assure that you will not be subject to future accusations.

Agreement:

Within these guidelines, the congregation welcomes your participation in adult worship services, coffee hour, committee meetings, adult education, all adult social events, and well supervised intergenerational events. You are to avoid all contact with children on congregation property or congregation-sponsored events. This includes the following:

- Please do not talk with children.
- Please do not volunteer or agree to lead, chaperone or participate in events for children and youth including such things as religious education classes, stories or talks for worship, youth group events, activities during intergenerational events, driving or otherwise transporting children and/or youth.
- Please remain in the presence of an adult who knows your situation at all times when children are present.

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- If a child in the congregation approaches you, either at church or in a community place, politely and immediately excuse yourself from the situation.
- Please avoid being in the building unsupervised when activities involving children are in session, such as nursery school or youth group.

I accept that the following people will be told of my circumstances in order for them to protect the children/young people for whom they care: INSERT NAMES AND/OR POSITIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

I have reviewed this covenant and agree to abide by its provisions. I understand and agree that if I violate this agreement, I will be denied access to future church functions and church property.

I understand that this contract will be reviewed regularly every six months and will remain for an indefinite period.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Witness: _____

Date: _____

Minister/President: _____

Date:

Religious Exploration Coordinator: _____

Date: _____



Emergency Contact and Medical Information for Children and Youth

Child's Name	Date of Birth	Gender
Parent's/Guardian's Name () ()	Parent's/Guardian's Name () ()	
Home Phone Work Phone__	Home Phone Work Phone__	
()	()	
Cell Phone__	Cell Phone__	
Address	Address	
City, ST ZIP Code	City, ST ZIP Code	

Alternative Emergency Contacts

Primary Emergency Contact () ()	Secondary Emergency Contact () ()
Home Phone Work Phone__	Home Phone Work Phone__
()	()
Cell Phone__	Cell Phone__
Address	Address
City, ST ZIP Code	City, ST ZIP Code

Medical Information

Hospital/Clinic Preference

Physician's Name Phone Number

Insurance Company Policy Number

Allergies/Special Health Considerations

I authorize all medical and surgical treatment, X-ray, laboratory, anesthesia, and other medical and/or hospital procedures as may be performed or prescribed by the attending physician and/or paramedics for my child and waive my right to informed consent of treatment.

This waiver applies only in the event that neither parent/guardian can be reached in the case of an emergency.

Parent's/Guardian's

Signature Date

I give permission for my child to go on field trips with the understanding that I will be notified of and consent to my child's participation in each field trip. I release the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Bay County and individuals participating in the field trips from liability in case off accident during the trips and related activities as long as normal safety procedures have been taken.

Parent's/Guardian's Signature

Date

Witness Signature

Date



FIRST AID INCIDENT REPORT FORM

This form is to be used to register all injuries or mishaps that take place during events on church premises. If abuse is suspected do not use this form; instead follow policies and procedures of the Right Relations Policy

Name: Telephone:

Home Address: Town/Zip:

If under the age of 18:

Age: Date of Birth: Parent/Guardian(s):

1. Briefly describe the nature and extent of the injury and/or accident, and include specifics such as date, time and location.

2. Indicate action taken by UUFBC staff and/or leaders, and include their names.

3. Please give any other information you believe might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injury/accident and in preventing future incidents. _____

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If injured party is unable to complete the form, please fill out the following:

Name of Reporter:

Telephone/Email:

Describe the circumstances under which you became aware of the incident:

Return the completed form in paper form to a Board member, or via email to info@uuofbaycounty.com within 5 business days of incident

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Report received by:

Date received:

Date report emailed to Environment Team, if necessary.

Date copy of report provided to parent(s)/guardian(s), if injured person is under 18.

Future Actions/Comments: