

**DUBLIN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
SAFE SANCTUARIES POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

The Baltimore-Washington Conference is committed to ensuring that all children and youth involved in local church or annual conference ministries may participate in an environment of safety and security. The Dublin United Methodist Church (DUMC), a congregation of the Baltimore-Washington Conference, is required to develop and implement policy and procedures to protect the children and youth in our care.

**Purpose**

Our purpose for establishing this Safe Sanctuaries Policy and Procedures is to demonstrate our total and unwavering commitment to the physical, emotional and spiritual safety of all the children and youth God has entrusted to our care.

**Policy**

The Safe Sanctuaries Task Force (SSTF) has determined that background checks will be performed on all paid staff, and any volunteer who works with children or youth. In that regard, DUMC will require all paid staff and any volunteer who works with children or youth to complete the following annually:

- Application (Staff and Volunteer) to include three references
- Background Check Permission Form
- Baltimore-Washington Conference Sexual Misconduct Questionnaire

In addition, paid staff or volunteers that may be driving children or youth for a DUMC or a Conference sponsored program shall submit their driver's license number and a Motor Vehicle Report will be obtained.

DUMC will use a reputable company, as determined by the SSTF, to do the following checks:

- National Criminal History Database Search, including a check of Sexual Offenders Registries
- Social Security Verification
- County Criminal Records Search
- Motor Vehicle Record Check

If any concerns appear through the background check, then all references will be contacted and interviewed with more detailed questions by the appropriate staff person. After all references are interviewed, a determination will be made by the Review Board as to the appropriate course of action.

If any violations appear on the Motor Vehicle Report, a determination will be made as to whether that person will be allowed to drive children or youth for a DUMC or Conference program. The decision rests with the Pastor on recommendation of the SSTF.

All forms must be submitted and checks completed before Volunteer/Paid service begins.

\_\_\_\_\_Initials of Volunteer

**PROCEDURES**

- Any counseling of children or youth will be done with the door open unless there is clear visibility into the entire room.
- All classroom and office doors will have a window and shall not be covered for any reason.
- There should be at least two adults in any room where there are children or youth. If two adults are not present, the door shall remain open.
- On Sunday mornings a person designated by DUMC staff will make random Sunday school classroom checks.
- All volunteers who work with children and youth must have been members of DUMC for at least three months or, if not members, regularly and frequently associated with DUMC for at least one year as recorded in the church database system.
- There must be at least a 5-year age difference between the oldest child/youth and the person responsible for the class or program, unless an approved adult is present.
- No individual adult is permitted to transport a minor without the presence of another adult. An adult may transport two or more youth in a private vehicle but never be alone with only one youth.
- A signed permission form must be on file for any child/youth to be transported in a private vehicle.
- All volunteers with children and youth, whether paid, volunteer, part-time, full-time, clergy, or lay, will be required to attend an orientation session in which they are informed of:
  1. The church's policy and procedures for the prevention of child abuse.
  2. Procedures to be used in all ministries with children and youth.
  3. Appropriate steps to report an incident of child abuse.
  4. Details of the state laws regarding child abuse.
- A signed and dated record of compliance to these policies will be kept on file as long as the employee/volunteer remains in employee or volunteer status with DUMC. All signed forms and applications will be kept secured.
- No volunteer under the age of 18 will be responsible for children or youth. Youth under the age of 18 may assist in a ministry alongside an approved adult such as in the church nursery, Sunday school or Vacation Bible School.

The SSTF will meet a minimum of two times a year to review policies and as needed to review concerns that arise from background checks and Motor Vehicle Reports.

This policy was approved by the Administrative Board of Dublin United Methodist Church on July 8, 2008.

(Printed Name of Volunteer) \_\_\_\_\_ has read the Safe Sanctuaries Policy and Procedures of Dublin United Methodist Church and agrees to serve within the boundaries which set forth.

Signature of Volunteer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_