COKESBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
HOUSTON, TEXAS

POLICY OF COKESBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH FOR THE PREVENTION OF ABUSE OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Statement of Purpose:

Members of Cokesbury United Methodist Church come from a variety of experiences, backgrounds and needs. Cokesbury is committed to providing an environment that is as safe as possible for children and youth who participate in any Cokesbury Ministry. Also, Cokesbury is committed to taking the necessary precautions to protect any person working in a Cokesbury Ministry from false accusations or suspicions.

Members of Cokesbury recognize the need to have a formal, written policy and procedures to help (i) prevent the opportunity for the occurrence and/or appearance of abuse of children and youth and (ii) protect Workers from false accusations and/or suspicions. The following policy and procedures are not based on a lack of trust in Workers but instead are intended to protect our preschoolers, children, youth, workers, employees, volunteers and the entire church body.

Definitions: the following terms shall be utilized within this document;

Criminal History — refers to any items reported on a person's criminal records, including arrests, charges, indictments, convictions, probation's and deferred adjudication's.

Director — shall mean the person in charge of a particular Ministry. The Director shall be responsible for coordinating applications and achieving compliance with this policy by Workers within such Director's particular Ministry. For the following areas of Ministry the Director is identified as:

Program / Department	Director**
Children's Ministry	Director of Christian Education
Nursery Ministry	Director of Christian Education
Youth Ministry	Director of Youth
Music Ministry	Director of Music
Church Sponsored Community Ministry	Applicable Director
Weekday Children's Ministry	Preschool Director
Sports and Recreation	Applicable Director
Directors, Other Staff or Work Areas	Senior Clergy

** Senior Clergy shall be an acceptable substitute for a "Director" who is not available.

Incident of Abuse & Neglect as defined by the Texas Family Code - Child Abuse & Neglect (Appendix A)

Ministry(ies) shall mean on campus, or church sponsored off campus, activities or programs, involving Protected Persons, including but not limited to those related to child care, Boy/Girl Scouts, preschool, district and conference youth events, mission trips, Sunday school, and United Methodist Youth Fellowship.

Protected Person(s) shall mean children and/or youth, under the age of 18, participating in any Ministry.

Worker(s) shall mean a person in a "position of trust" with Protected Persons such as any clergy, staff, Sunday school leader or teacher, employee, scout leader, program director, youth counselor, hall or bathroom monitor and any other person in a leadership position, who is at least eighteen (18) years old, and involved in a Ministry. No worker under the age of 18 shall be placed in a position of supervision over protected persons. Adult supervision shall be required for such workers.

1.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

.0l By fostering awareness of appropriate, as well as inappropriate behavior with, or in the presence of, Protected Persons, Cokesbury, as part of the body of Christ, will demonstrate Christian love and respect for one another.

.02 Cokesbury recognizes that certain Workers have exceptional talents for teaching and supporting the growth and development of Protected Persons, and wishes to encourage them to use their spiritual gifts. At the same time however, Cokesbury has set certain criteria for those Workers who choose to serve in Ministries in order to promote and protect the well being of Protected Persons.

.03 It is not the intent of the membership of Cokesury to be judgmental, for we are all accountable to God. The membership of Cokesbury will rely on God's wisdom in developing, implementing and carrying out God's will through this policy. Compassion and truth will be the guiding forces for any investigation, reporting or follow-up action that results from the procedures as outlined in this policy.

.04 Congregational support is critical for adherence to this policy. The limited nature of our resources, and our desire to devote as much time and effort as possible to the work of the Lord, mandates that this policy be fully understood by every member of our congregation and church family. This will enable church staff and leadership to do what is necessary to preserve the church's resources for the work of the Lord.

2.0 BEHAVIOR

.01 The following behaviors are prohibited for Workers:
Threatening or intentionally inflicting emotional or physical injury
Committing any sexual offense or engaging in any sexual contact
Making any kind of sexual advance or making a request for sexual favors
Engaging in verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature, e.g. back rubs, massages, kissing, or similar contact
Physical discipline, such as spanking

.02 Touching to comfort or affirm a Protected Person in an age-appropriate manner is permitted. Side-by-side hugs are suggested instead of full body contact. Appropriate touching need not be completely avoided, but is acceptable only in public. Workers shall be aware of how it looks and how the person being contacted may interpret the contact.

.03 The following are unacceptable and will not be tolerated at any ministry:
Tobacco
Alcohol
Illegal drugs
Firearms or other weapons
Foul or offensive language

.04 The said examples are not "all-inclusive". Any inappropriate behavior that contravenes the Statement of Purpose shall be considered prohibited behavior.

3.0 WORKER ENLISTMENT AND SCREENING PROCESS

Persons shall meet the requirements and approvals for service set out herein in order to be a Worker in a Ministry.

3.1 Application Process

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.01 Workers shall complete the Employment or Volunteer Application (Appendices B or C) and a Form for Authorization for Release of Information (Appendix D) for criminal records check.

.02 Individual survivors of childhood sexual or physical abuse need the love and acceptance of Cokesbury. Individuals who have such a history are encouraged to discuss their desire to work with Protected Persons with one of the clergy prior to applying to work in any Ministry.

3.2 Certification Process

.01 A criminal records check shall be made on applicants by an outside source specializing in such confidential screening. Results of the applicants suitability will be kept confidential. Issues requiring a discussion with the Senior Clergy or designate will be treated with confidentiality. The applicant will be extended the care and ministry of the church in determining appropriate placement for service. Rechecks of each Worker shall be conducted as necessary.

.02 At least two of the references found on the Employment and Volunteer Application shall be checked by the applicable Director. The Employee and Volunteer Reference Check Form (Appendix E) shall be used to document discussions and findings.

.03 The information on the Employment and Volunteer Application will be used to screen any potential driver(s) through the church's insurance company and the State's Department of Motor Vehicles to determine if the potential driver is a safe driver.

3.3 **Approval/Disapproval Process** (Initial certification and during service in a Ministry)

.01 Sunday School teachers shall be members of Cokesbury for three (3) or more months prior to beginning service. Exceptions will be allowed only if the applicant provides a recommendation letter from a pastor and/or relevant staff person at a prior church of applicant, or if written recommendations are received from three (3) current members of Cokesbury, who have been members for more than one (1) year.

.02 Persons convicted of /or having admitted to any of the following types of offenses shall not be allowed to serve in any Ministry:

Child abuse, whether physical, emotional, sexual, or neglectful
Violent offenses, including murder, rape, assault, domestic violence, etc.

.03 Persons having a Criminal History of DUI or DWI conviction within the five (5) years immediately prior to application shall not be allowed to act as a driver.

.04 Workers shall be at least twenty-five (25) years of age to drive. Drivers must have a valid Texas driver's license and proof of insurance covering at least liability and uninsured motorist.

.05 Other offenses, depending on how recent, the frequency, and nature may also preclude an applicant or Worker from serving in a Ministry. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Senior Clergy and the applicable Director. In such cases, the determining factors will be the best interests, safety and well being of the Protected Persons. Any applicant or Worker whose Criminal History is such that his or her approval is subject to decision by the Senior Clergy and the applicable Director, will be given the opportunity to explain the circumstances to the Senior Clergy and the applicable Director.

.06 Lying on an application is cause for removal from service in a Ministry.

.07 Workers who refuses to comply with this policy or repeatedly fails to follow it shall be subject to dismissal.

.08 Workers who do not attend mandatory training are subject to dismissal.

.09 Persons may begin working in a Ministry when;
The application paperwork and certification work is complete and the person is found to meet the acceptance standards, or
The application paperwork is complete and the applicable Director has checked at least two (2) of the references. Persons found to be out of compliance following the completion of the certification and acceptance process shall be immediately removed from serving in any Ministry.

4.0 GENERAL POLICY

4.1 Staffing

.01 A minimum of two (2) Workers shall be present in any room or area where Protected Persons are participating. Exceptions to the above rule include:
Escorting Protected Persons between on-campus buildings or in hallways
Monitoring the arrival or departure of Protected Persons
In cases of emergency care

.02 If the required number of Workers cannot be obtained for the number of rooms or areas, then the group shall be combined with another group or the Ministry canceled.

.03 While on campus, there shall always be a Director or their designee on duty while the Ministries are in session who shall make random checks.

.04 When family members work together (husband/wife/parent/child/siblings/etc.), an additional Worker shall be present. An exception will be allowed only in cases where both family members have actively served in the Church for at least one (1) year then only after the Senior Clergy and applicable Director give approval.

4.2 On Campus Policies

.01 Doors to rooms shall be kept open or, in the case of rooms with Dutch doors, the top half of the door shall be kept open. It is acceptable to close the door to a room if there is a window to the hallway that allows observation of activities in the room. Under no circumstances shall a Worker be alone with a Protected Person behind a closed door with no window. Doors shall never be locked while occupied by Workers and Protected Persons, unless such doors are of the “Dutch Door” variety, and the top portion of said doors are left completely open.

.02 Classes shall remain in the assigned room location. If there is to be a change of location, a sign shall be posted on the door providing notice of any change of location.

.03 Workers shall wear their name tags while working on campus in a Ministry. The name tags will signify by a style or symbol that the Worker is approved under this policy.

4.3 Discipline

.01 The applicable Director shall advise Workers on the best Age-Appropriate Discipline Methods (Appendix F & G).

.02 The behavior of a Protected Person who is a constant disruption shall be discussed with his or her parents or legal guardian and the applicable Director. Parents or legal guardian shall be asked to attend the Ministry to observe or control the problem behavior. A Protected Person who is disruptive or a danger to him/herself or others shall be removed immediately by the Worker and the parents, legal guardian and the applicable Director shall be promptly notified.

4.4 Continuing Education

.01 Directors shall encourage and may require Workers to attend continuing education opportunities.

.02 Directors shall communicate the substance of this policy to Workers, and Workers shall agree to comply with this on the Employee/Volunteer Agreement to Policy Form (Appendix H).

.03 Mandatory training of Workers shall be provided through the Directors on a regular basis for:
Fire and Building Safety (Appendix I)
CPR and first aid certification
statutory requirements for the mandatory reporting of child abuse and the identification of abuse as defined by the Texas Family Code (Appendix A) and
other operational guidelines

4.5 Communication with Parents/Legal Guardians

.0l Workers should attempt to keep open lines of communication with parents or legal guardians.

.02 Parents and legal guardians shall always be permitted to observe activities in a classroom.

.03 Parents and legal guardians shall be advised by the applicable Director where to report suspected abuse or other concerns regarding a situation and be assured that reports shall remain confidential.

.04 Parents and legal guardians shall be advised by the applicable Director that they must pick up their respective Protected Person no later than ten (10) minutes after the Ministry is over unless special arrangements have been made with the Workers concerned.

.05 Information concerning the sleeping accommodations for Protected Persons at any overnight event shall be made available to parents or legal guardians by the applicable Director.

.06 A signed Emergency Medical Release Form shall be obtained for each Protected Person in order to participate in any Ministry.

.07 A signed Parental/Guardian Consent Form shall be obtained for each Protected Person in order to participate in any off-campus Ministry. The consent form may cover events for a stated time period or it may cover specific events.

5.0 ADDITIONAL POLICIES FOR MINISTRIES OF CHILDREN BELOW GRADE SIX

.01 For Ministries, except for the day school, with Protected Persons four (4) years and younger, a positive identity security system shall be used so that the person picking up the Protected Person can be positively matched.

.02 For Protected Persons, five (5) years through third grade and the day school, the parent shall complete a Child Custody Release form that identifies who may pickup the Protected Person and where the parent(s) are likely to be found while the Protected Person is participating in the Ministry. Only a parent or other person specifically designated by the parent and known to the Worker may pick up children.

.03 Fourth and fifth grades may be released from Sunday School by the Workers without being picked up by a parent or other designated person if the parent provides the Workers written permission to do so. For these Protected Persons in Ministries other than Sunday School the procedure outlined in Section 5.02 shall be followed.

.04 Parents shall provide the Director with any special information regarding a possible child custody dispute where Workers shall pay particular attention to who picks up the child.

.05 Diaper changing shall be done in the open and not behind closed doors.

.06 For rooms that have attached bathrooms, a Worker may assist a Protected Person in the bathroom, while keeping the door open.

.07 Workers shall periodically check the bathrooms.

.09 The Worker may release a Protected Person to a designated Worker serving as a hall monitor in order to stay in the classroom.

.10 The applicable Director shall maintain a student information file. This file shall contain a listing of the students enrolled in the Ministry with references or remarks as to any parent instructions or special information regarding a child in such Ministry.

6.0 ADDITIONAL POLICIES FOR MINISTRIES OF YOUTH

.01 The two (2) Worker rule shall be followed, except as noted below:
Planned one-on-one Worker/youth lunches: provided they are held in public places and shall only occur if (1) permission has been given by the parent, (2) the Director has been notified, and (3) separate transportation is to be used.
Youth/Director conferences: provided (1) the conference is for a relatively brief time, (2) the Director informs another Worker at the beginning and end of the meeting, and (3) the on-campus policies are followed.
A Worker may "pick up" or "drop off " a youth at their home provided permission has been given by the parent.

7.0 ADDITIONAL POLICIES CONCERNING DRIVING, TRIPS AND OVERNIGHT STAYS

7.1 Driving Rules

.01 When one vehicle is used for an event, the two-adult rule applies. When multiple vehicles are used for an event, a single Worker may drive if all the vehicles travel together.

.02 Occupants of vehicles shall wear seat belts. Buses not equipped with set belts are exempt.

.03 Protected Persons, twelve (12) years and younger, shall not set in the front seat of vehicles with air bags.

7.2 Overnight and Trip Rules

.01 The two-adult rule shall be followed throughout the trip. The total number of adults on each trip will be adjusted according to the requirement of the planned activities. The ratio of adults to Protected Persons shall be approximately 1:6. Additionally, if the group of Protected Persons contains both males and females, there shall be at least one (1) female Worker and one (1) male Worker on any trip.

8.0 WAIVERS AND REVOCATIONS

.01 Waivers may be made to the policies outlined in Sections 4.0 through 7.0 utilizing the following procedure:
The Director prepares a Waiver / Revocation form highlighting those areas where the policies will not be followed and the duration of the waiver.
The parents of the Protected Persons sign and date the waiver.

.02 Parents may revoke any waiver. The revocation shall be in writing and given to the applicable Director.

9.0 REPORTING AND INVESTIGATIONS

9.1 Notification Requirements

.01 Workers shall immediately notify a Director of any incident of abuse or violation of the above policies. However, in cases where the alleged wrongdoer is the person to whom notification should be given, he or she shall be considered absent for purposes of this reporting procedure, and the notification shall be made to that person's immediate supervisor.

.02 Subject to his or her obligation to report such an incident as set forth hereinafter, any person making and/or receiving such a report shall keep the information strictly confidential.

9.2 Imminent Threat

.01 Where an imminent threat of continued or additional abuse exists, any Worker with knowledge or information about such abuse shall immediately contact another adult and take steps to ensure the safety of the Protected Person. In connection herewith, any needed emergency health care shall be provided, such as (1) first aid, (2) emergency services, and/or (3) transport to a hospital emergency room. The alleged victim shall be immediately removed from contact with the suspected abuser. The Protected Person is paramount before any reporting.

.02 Where the abuse of a Protected Person is alleged to have occurred at home, and the Protected Person's safety at home is in doubt, the Worker reports the alleged abuse to the director who shall call 911 to notify the appropriate law enforcement officials.

9.3 Reporting Procedure

.01 In cases where any Worker has cause to believe that a Protected Person may have been abused or neglected, the Worker is required by state law to make a report to the State of Texas Child Protective Services "CPS". Pertinent portions of the law relating to timing and substantive requirements of such reports to CPS are set forth on Appendix A attached hereto. Since such law may be changed from time to time, the reporting person shall follow the law covering such reporting procedures which is in effect at the time the report is made.

.02 The Director will contact the proper civil authorities following the guidance of the church's insurance company and attorney.

.03 Allegations shall be taken seriously and no pre-judgments shall be made.

.04 Situations shall be handled confidentially with due respect for the privacy of the alleged victim and others involved in the incident.

.05 The person making a report shall provide the facts known with respect to the incident.

.06 The Director, together with the person making the notification shall complete an Accident / Incident Report form (Appendix J).

9.4 Responding to the Report

.01 The Director receiving a report of policy violation shall:
Document the alleged violation
Counsel the alleged wrongdoer
Determine the necessary corrective actions that may include dismissal

.02 The Director receiving a report of an Incident of Abuse shall:
Immediately contact parents or guardian of the alleged victim and inform them of the alleged incident. If one parent or guardian is the alleged wrongdoer, the person receiving the report shall not contact either parent or guardian until after Child Protective Services has conducted their initial investigation.
Immediately contact Cokesbury legal counsel, who shall within seventy-two (72) hours of the report conduct an investigation (with the assistance of the Senior Clergy and the applicable Director if the attorney requests such assistance) and determine whether there is reasonable cause to believe that the abuse may have occurred
Take reasonable steps necessary to ensure that the alleged wrongdoer has no contact with the alleged victim pending the investigation.

9.5 Investigation

.01 Upon notification of an Incident of Abuse a "Supervising Committee," consisting of the Senior Clergy or applicable Director and an attorney shall select an appropriate “Investigative Team”. The charge of the Investigative Team is to determine if there is reasonable cause of abuse.

.02 The Supervising Committee shall take reasonable steps to ensure:
That the investigation is kept strictly confidential and that evidentiary privileges are maintained.
That the investigation is thoroughly documented and that a confidential file is maintained.
That witnesses with information concerning the alleged abuse are contacted and interviewed..
That the interests of the alleged victim and alleged wrongdoer are protected during the investigative phase.

9.6 Finding of No Abuse

.01 If the Supervising Committee finds that there is not reasonable cause to believe the alleged abuse may have occurred, the committee shall provide a report to the Trustees, preserving the identity, confidentiality and privacy of the alleged victim, the alleged wrongdoer, and witnesses.

.02 If there is a finding of no abuse the Worker may resume his or her position of service upon approval of the Senior Clergy and the applicable Director.

9.7 Finding of Abuse

.01 If the Supervising Committee finds that there is reasonable cause to believe abuse may have occurred, the Supervising Committee shall provide a written report to the Trustees and/or Staff Parish Relations (SPR) committee, as appropriate, and shall meet with the governing body to discuss the report.

.02 The written Investigation Report shall include:
Preservation of the identity, confidentiality and privacy of the alleged victim, the alleged wrongdoer, and witnesses
The allegations and the steps taken to investigate the allegations
The facts discovered during the investigation
The conclusion reached as a result of the investigation and the reasons supporting the conclusion
Recommended actions as to the level of participation in Ministries for the alleged wrongdoer

.03 The Senior Clergy shall ensure that the following actions shall be taken:
Send notice of a claim or potential claim to the general liability insurance carrier and, if appropriate, the sexual misconduct liability insurance carrier.
Cause the Media Response Plan to be implemented.
Report the incident to the District Superintendent and the Bishop.

.04 In addition, the Supervising Committee may recommend the need for, and may assist in making necessary arrangements for counseling for the alleged victim, the alleged wrongdoer, their respective families and others who may be aware of the incident.

10.0 MEDIA RESPONSE PLAN

.01 The Supervising Committee shall;
Select a spokesperson to handle dissemination of information to staff, media and congregation. In his or her absence, the Senior Clergy will be the spokesperson
Have ready for release, a clear position statement outlining Cokesburys policy regarding any abuse of Protected Persons and the established safeguards
Select an attorney who will be present with the spokesperson while answering any investigative questions from the police or social service agencies

.02 The Church spokesperson shall;
Use text or a prepared public statement to answer questions from the media and/or inform the congregation
At all times, the identity, privacy and confidentiality of those involved shall be strictly maintained
Keep in mind that information given to or obtained by media may have a bearing on the church's liability, so careful judgment shall be exercised
Should anticipate media questions.

.03 Guidelines for Spokesperson
Be prepared
Define strategy
Be candid and honest
Be clear, concise and in context
Do not answer more than what is asked
Do not volunteer information
Do not ask for quote review
Do respond to calls and questions as quickly as possible
When an answer in unknown, the spokesperson shall simply state, " I don't know, but I'll do my best to find out the information for you." Never say "no comment"

11.0 POLICIES APPLICABLE TO OUTSIDE ORGANIZATIONS

.01 Any outside organization, group(s) or individual(s) this also includes those who use any of the facilities of Cokesbury on a regular basis, as well as those having weddings and funerals at cokesbury shall sign Indemnification and Release form (Appendix K) stating that they are in compliance with this policy.

.02 Any outside organization, group(s) or individual(s) who do not use the facilities of Cokesbury on a regular basis, shall sign Indemnification and Release form (Appendix K) stating that they understand and are in compliance with the policies outlined herein, except Sections 3, 8, 9 and 10.

.03 However, certified leaders of the Boy's or Girl's Scouts of America shall be subject to their own respective organization's rules and regulations concerning safety of those individuals they are charged with caring for.

12.0 AMENDMENT TO POLICY

This policy may be amended as needed by the Ministry Team responsible for the Child/Youth Protection Program and approved by the Church Council (Approved by The Church Council).

APPENDIX A

POLICY OF COKESBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH FOR THE PREVENTION OF ABUSE OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Texas Family Code

Cokesbury United Methodist Church

TITLE 5 - THE PARENT - CHILD RELATIONSHIP AND THE SUIT AFFECTING THE PARENT - CHILD RELATIONSHIP

Subtitle E - Protection of the Child

Chapter 261 - Investigations of Report of Child Abuse or Neglect

Subchapter A - General Provisions

Sec. 261-001, Definitions,

In this chapter:

(1) **"Abuse"** includes the following acts or omissions by a person:

(A) mental or emotional injury to a child that results in an observable and material impairment in the child's growth, development, or psychological functioning;

(B) causing or permitting the child to be in a situation in which the child sustains a mental or emotional injury that results in an observable and material impairment in the child's growth, development, or psychological functioning;

(C) physical injury that results in substantial harm to the child, or the genuine threat of substantial harm from physical injury to the child, including injury that is at variance with the history or explanation given and excluding an accident or reasonable discipline by a parent, guardian, or managing or possessory that does not expose the child to a substantial risk of harm;

(D) failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent an action by another person that results in physical injury that results in substantial harm to the child;

(E) sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare;

(F) failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct harmful to a child;

(G) compelling or encouraging the child to engage in sexual conduct as defined in Section 43.25 (see page 7), Penal code; or

(H) causing, permitting, encouraging, engaging in, or allowing the photographing, filming, or depicting of the child if the person knew or should have known that the resulting photograph, film, or depiction of the child is obscene as defined in Section 43.21 (see page 7), Penal Code, or pornographic.

(2) "Department" means the Department of Protective and Regulatory Services.

(3) "Designated Agency" means the agency designated by the court as responsible for the protection of children.

(4) "Neglect" includes:

(A) the leaving of a child in a situation where the child would be exposed to a substantial risk of physical or mental harm, without arranging for necessary care for the child, and the …..

(B) …… which a license or certification is required, has direct contact with children. The term includes teachers, nurses, doctors, and day-care employees.

(C) The requirement to report under this section applies without exception to an individual whose personal communications may otherwise be privileged, including an attorney, a member of the clergy, a medical practitioner, a social worker, and a mental health professional.

(D) The identity of an individual making a report under this chapter is confidential and may be disclosed only on the order of a court or to a law enforcement officer for the purposes of conducting a criminal investigation of the report.

Sec. 261.102 Matters to be Reported

A report should reflect the reporter's belief that a child has been or may be abused or may be abused or neglected or has died of abuse or neglect.

Sec. 261.103 Reports Made to Appropriate Agency

A report shall be made to:

(1) any local or state law enforcement agency;

(2) the department if the alleged or suspected abuse involves a person responsible for the care, custody, or welfare of the child;

(3) the state agency that operates, licenses, certifies, or registers the facility in which the alleged abuse or neglect occurred; or

(4) the agency designated by the court to be responsible for the protection of children.

Sec. 261.104 Contents of Report

The person making a report shall identify, if known:

(1) the name and address of the child

(2) the name and address of the person responsible for the care, custody, or welfare of the child:

(3) any other pertinent information concerning the alleged or suspected abuse or neglect.

Sec. 261.106 Immunities

(a) a person acting in good faith who reports or assists in the investigation of a report of alleged child abuse of neglect or who testifies or otherwise participates in a judicial proceeding arising from a report, petition, or investigation of alleged child abuse or neglect is immune from civil or criminal liability that might otherwise be incurred or imposed.

Texas Penal Code - Section 43.21, and 43.25

Sec. 43.21 Definitions

(a) in this chapter:

(1)**"Obscene**" means material or a performance that:

(A) the average person, applying contemporary community standards, would find that taken as a whole appeals to the prurient interest in sex;

(B) depicts or describes:

(i) patently offensive representations or descriptions of ultimate sexual intercourse, sodomy, and sexual bestiality: or

(ii) patently offensive representations of descriptions of masturbation, excretory functions, sadism, masochism, lewd exhibition of the genitals, the male or female genitals in a state of sexual stimulation or arousal, covered male genitals in a discernibly turgid state or a device designed and marketed as useful primarily for stimulation of the human genital organs; and

(C) taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, and scientific value.

Sec. 43.25 Sexual Performance by a Child

(2)"**Sexual conduct**" means actual or simulated sexual intercourse, deviate sexual intercourse, sexual bestiality, masturbation, sadomasochistic abuse, or lewd exhibition of the genitals.

Texas Family Code - Chapter 71

Sec. 71.01 Definitions

(3) **"Family**" includes individuals related by consanguinity or affinity, as determined under Sections 573.022 and 573.024, Government Code, individuals who are former spouses of each other, individuals who are the biological parents of the same child, without regard to marriage, and a foster child and foster parent, whether or not those individuals reside together.

APPENDIX B

EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION
COKESBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
10030 Scarsdale Boulevard
Houston, TX 77089

Date: _____

Personal Information

Name (Last Name, First Name, Middle Name) Social Security Number
Present Address City State Zip Code
Permanent Address City State Zip Code
Phone No ( ) Referred by
Are you under the age of 18 YES _____ NO _____Drivers License Number & State

Employment Information

Position Date you can Start If Seeking Employment,
Salary Desired
Are you employed YES __ NO ___If so, may we may inquire of your employer:
YES _____ NO _____

Education History

Name & Location of School Yrs. Attended Did you graduate
Subjects Studied
High School
College
Other

Former Employers

Date(Month&Yr) Name&Address of Employer Position Reason for Leaving

From
To
From
To
From
To
From
To

References Give below the names of 3 persons not related to you, whom you have known at least 1 year

Name	Address	Phone	Business/Title	Yrs. Known

General Information

Special training or skills, organizations, etc.

Have You Ever…

Been convicted of a crime other than minor traffic violations YES _____ NO

_____If yes, please explain

Been convicted of a traffic offense in the last five (5) years YES _____ NO

_____If yes, please explain

APPLICANT'S STATEMENT

The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I authorize any references listed in this application to give you any information (including opinions) that they may have regarding my character and fitness for work. I release all such references from any liability for furnishing such evaluation to you, provided they do so in good faith and without malice. I waive any right that I may have to inspect references provided on my behalf. Should my application be accepted I agree to be bound by the policies of this church and to refrain from unscriptural conduct in the performance of my service on behalf of this church.

I understand and agree that, if hired, my employment is for no definite period and regardless of the date of payment of my wages or salary, I may be terminated at any time without any prior notice. Further, I understand and agree that no oral representations made by anyone on behalf of the employer may change the at will status of my employment and/or service with Cokesbury United Methodist Church.

I further state that I have carefully read the foregoing releases. This is a legally binding agreement that I read and understood.

Applicant's Signature _____ Date _____

Remarks

APPENDIX C

VOLUNTEER APPLICATION
Cokesbury United Methodist Church
10030 Scarsdale Blvd.
Houston, TX 77089

Date: _____

Personal Information

Name (Last Name, First Name, Middle Name)

Present Address City State Zip

Daytime No ( ) Evening Emergency

Occupation_____ Employer _____

Current job responsibilities and schedule _____
_____

Previous work experience_____

_____

Are you under the age of 18 YES _____ NO _____

Drivers License Number & State

Volunteer Information

Position Date you can Start Days/Time Available

Special skills, training, interests, hobbies _____
_____

How many hours per week are you available to volunteer?

_____Days_____Evenings_____Weekends_____

Can you make a one year commitment to this volunteer role? _____

If not what commitment can you make? _____

Are you willing to provide transportation for youth or children? _____

Do you have your own transportation? _____

Do you have liability insurance?(list policy limits and name of carrer)_____

_____

Show proof of insurance_____

Why would you like to volunteer as a worker with children and /or youth?_____

_____

_____

What qualities do you have that would help you work with children and/or youth?

_____

_____

Have you ever been charged, convicted of, or pleaded guilty to a crime, either a misdemeanor or Felony (including but not limited to drug-related charges, child abuse, other crimes of violence, theft or motor violations? _____ NO_____ YES,

If yes, please explain fully:_____

_____

Have you ever admitted to an act of child abuse or neglect?_____NO_____YES

Would you be available for periodic volunteer training sessions?_____

References: Please list three personal references(people who are not related to you by blood or marriage) and provide a complete address and phone information for each. References are Confidential.

1. Name:_____

   Address:_____

   Daytime phone:_____

   Evening phone :_____

Relationship to reference:_____

2. Name:_____

Address:_____

Daytime phone:_____

Evening phone:_____

Relationship to reference:_____

3. Name:_____

Address:_____

Daytime phone:_____

Evening phone:_____

Relationship to reference:_____

APPLICANT'S STATEMENT

The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I authorize any references listed in this application to give you any information (including opinions) that they may have regarding my character and fitness for work. I release all such references from any liability for furnishing such evaluation to you, provided they do so in good faith and without malice. I waive any right that I may have to inspect references provided on my behalf. Should my application be accepted I agree to be bound by the policies of this church and to refrain from unscriptural conduct in the performance of my service on behalf of this church.

I further state that I have carefully read the foregoing releases. This is a legally binding agreement that I read and understood.

Applicant's Signature _____ Date _____

APPENDIX D

AUTHORIZATION FOR RELEASE OF INFORMATION

Cokesbury United Methodist Church
10030 Scarsdale Boulevard
Houston, TX 77089

Date: _____

Name (Last Name, First Name, Middle Name) Social Security Number
Present Address City State Zip

Permanent Address City State Zip
Code
Phone No ( )
Are you under the age of 18? YES __ NO __Drivers License Number & State
Date & Place of Birth
Maiden and/or Any Other Names Used in Last Ten (10) years

Former Residences (Include last Ten (10) years)
Date (Month & Yr)Previous Address (Address, City, County, State, Zip) Reason for Moving
From
To
From
To
From
To
From
To
Please provide a copy of a photo identification.

READ CAREFULLY:

I hereby authorize Cokesbury United Methodist Church to request any information regarding any record of indictment, charges or convictions contained in any file maintained on me, whether said file is a local, county, state, or national file, and including, but not limited to, accusations, charges, indictments and convictions for crimes or traffic convictions, to the fullest extent permitted by state and federal law. In connection herewith, I hereby authorize any agency (including law enforcement agencies) to release such information. I hereby RELEASE AND HOLD HARMLESS Cokesbury United Methodist Church, and all of the herein referenced agencies which provide the contents of said files from all liability that may result from any said request and/or disclosure made in response to such request.

This authorization is given as part of my application for employment or volunteer work at the church. All information relative to the background investigation is confidential and any dissemination will be in accordance with state and federal law.

I certify that I have read and understand the foregoing language that information developed as a result of my authorizing this investigation shall only be shared with the Senior Clergy and the appropriate Director(s) of Cokesbury United Methodist Church. I further certify that the information on this form is true and correct.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

SEND THIS BACKGROUND CHECK TO:
Cokesbury United Methodist Church
10030 Scarsdale Boulevard
Houston, Texas 77089
Attn.: Senior Pastor

APPENDIX E

POLICY OF COKESBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH FOR THE PREVENTION OF ABUSE OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

EMPLOYEE & VOLUNTEER REFERENCE CHECK FORM

Cokesbury United Methodist Church

(One Sheet per Reference)

Name of Applicant: _____

Name of Reference: _____

1. What is your relationship to the applicant?

2. How long have you known the applicant?

3. How well do you know the applicant?

4. How would you describe the applicant?

5. How would you describe the applicant's ability to relate to children and/or youth?

6. How would you describe the applicant's ability to relate to adults?

7. How would you describe the applicant's leadership abilities?

8. How would you feel about having the applicant as a volunteer worker with your child and /or youth?

9. Do you know of any characteristics that would negatively affect the applicant's ability t work with children and/or youth? If so, please describe.

10. Do you have any knowledge that the applicant has ever been convicted of a crime? If so, please describe.

Additional Comments:

Reference inquiry completed by (Print Name):_____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please return to:
Cokesbury United Methodist Church
10030 Scarsdale Blvd.
Houston, Texas 77089
Attn:_____ (281) 484-9243 fax (281)484-5140

APPENDIX F

POLICY OF COKESBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH FOR THE PREVENTION OF ABUSE OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Age-Appropriate Discipline Methods - Children

Cokesbury United Methodist Church

Our goal is to ensure that every child who participates in a Ministry is offered a safe environment where God is the center of all that we do and say.

To do this, we need the children to follow these basic rules:

1. Treat everyone with kindness and respect.
2. Follow directions given by the teacher or leader of a ministry.
3. Stay in the classroom at all times unless escorted by a teacher or leader.
4. Remember, there is no fighting, name calling or rude behavior.
5. Use all equipment properly. Treat property with respect and cleanup after yourself (remember this is God's House)

As parents and teachers we realize that children are filled with energy. However, should a child's behavior become disruptive to the class or any ministry, the following actions shall be taken.

Preschool:

1. The teacher/leader shall redirect the child's focus to an activity.
2. A verbal warning and separation from the source of disruption
   Ex: separate children, put toy away, etc.
3. Time-out in the classroom. Use this time to explain to the child why it is important to exercise proper behavior.
4. As a last resort, the parent/guardian shall be located and asked to sit with the child or remove them from the activity for that day.

Elementary:

1.The teacher/leader shall redirect the child's focus to an activity.
Ex: ask the child to help.
2. A verbal warning and separation from the source of disruption
Ex: separate children, put toy away, etc.
3. Time-out in the classroom. Use this time to explain to the child why it is important to exercise proper behavior.
4. As a last resort, the parent/guardian shall be located and asked to sit with the child or remove them from the activity for that day.

Signature Date

APPENDIX G

POLICY OF COKESBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH FOR THE PREVENTION OF ABUSE OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Age-Appropriate Discipline Methods - Youth
Covenant of Conduct
COKESBURY UNITED METHODIST

Galatians 5:22-23
By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with passion and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, competing against one another, envying one another.

I agree to participate in activities of the UMYF and other youth sponsored activities.

During these events I agree to:

treat all persons, regardless of race, religion, and culture, with respect and consideration
respect the facility we are using
portray a positive role model for others by maintaining an attitude of respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy, tact and maturity

During these events I agree to not:

use profanity
purchase or participate in the use of drugs or alcohol
participate in inappropriate displays of affection or sexual activity
conduct myself recklessly such that I cause injury to myself or others
make terroristic threat that would indicate intent to do bodily harm to self or others
participate in criminal mischief, reckless damage or destruction of property, structures, equipment, or vehicles, and theft
bring or use any weapon(s), fireworks, pets, pornographic materials or any other inappropriate items
abuse others; physically (e.g. strike, spank, shake, slap), verbally (e.g. humiliate, degrade, threaten), sexually (e.g. inappropriate touching, exposure or comments), or mentally (e.g. inconsistent standards, communicating one behavior and rewarding the opposite)
bring any electronic game, equipment, boom boxes, tape players or other items that may distract attention from my participation in UMYF or use when it would prevent others from getting appropriate and necessary rest

Above all, I agree to have fun at UMYF and all youth sponsored activities.

I understand that:

any damage that should occur because of my negligence, I am financially responsible

all penalties are left up to the discretion of the Director of Youth Ministries, or his/her representative, with consultation of other Youth Counselors. Note that penalties may include the possibly of being sent home at the parents expense.

The Cokesbury Youth Covenant of Conduct does not cover all situations. In the event that something arises that is not mentioned, the Director of Youth Ministries, or his/her representative, reserves the right to make all necessary decisions.

I have read the "Covenant of Conduct" and fully agree with the conditions. I understand that I will be excused from participating in UMYF or other youth sponsored activities if I violate any conditions of this covenant.

_____

_____

Signature of Participant Signature of Parent, if Participant is under 18 29

_____

Printed Name of Participant

APPENDIX H

POLICY OF COKESBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH FOR THE PREVENTION OF ABUSE OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Employee/Volunteer Agreement to Policy Form

Cokesbury United Methodist Church

This is to confirm that I have received and read a copy of the Safe Sanctuary Policies of Cokes bury United Methodist Church of Houston, Texas. Included within these policies is a legal definition of child abuse and neglect from the Texas Family Code and written information describing the Texas Laws regarding the reporting of suspected child abuse and/or neglect.

Worker Name: (please print) _____

Worker Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX I

POLICY OF COKESBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH FOR THE PREVENTION OF ABUSE OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Fire & Building Safety Guidelines

Cokesbury United Methodist Church

Prevention Measures

Be alert to any potential causes for accidents, injuries, or fire in your area and during your event. If repairs are needed in an area, (frayed cords, broken chairs/tables, water on the floor, etc.) notify the Applicable Director or leader of ministry event. The buildings, grounds, and equipment must be maintained in order to protect the safety of all.

First - Aid

First - Aid care shall be administered as soon as possible. First - Aid kits and a guide to emergency care shall be available. If necessary, 911 shall be called for local emergency services to respond. Advance emergency release forms from the parent/guardian shall be obtained granting permission for a child's emergency medical care.

If a child/youth arrives ill or becomes ill (fever, vomiting, etc.) during a ministry event, the parent/guardian shall be contacted and asked to pick up their child/youth.

These steps shall be followed when providing first-aid that involves cleaning a open wound, bleeding cut, or examining the mouth:

Wear disposable gloves
Wash hands before and after administering aid
Use care in disposing trash. Place refuse that contains body fluids or blood in a sealed plastic bag and place it in a trash can with a plastic liner.
Clean the area with a disinfectant spray.

Accident / Incident Response

After First - Aid has been administered and the injured person has been cared for, complete a CUMC Accident/Incident Report and notify the Applicable Director. The Director shall follow through with any additional actions to be taken.

Fire Evacuation & Response

Fire evacuation plans shall be posted in each room. Workers shall be trained to understand evacuation procedures and locations of fire alarms, extinguishers and flashlights in the event of electrical failure. In the event of a fire, the first priority is to ensure the safety of all persons in your care. Secondly, pull the fire alarm or dial 911. Only if it is safe to do so, then attempt to contain the fire by shutting door or using a fire extinguisher. Do not use the elevator for evacuation. Evacuation plans shall be reviewed with children/youth periodically.

Severe Weather Response

Severe weather plans shall be posted in each room. Workers shall be trained to understand safety procedures including evacuation plans and location of flashlights in the event of power outages. Do not use the elevator for evacuation. Evacuation plans shall be reviewed with children/youth periodically.

Vandalism & Suspicious Behavior

Any suspicious behavior or activity shall immediately be reported to the Worker in charge of a Ministry. If necessary, 911 shall be called for local police services to respond. All precautions shall be taken to maintain safety and security. This may include moving children/youth to a safe location, locking doors, etc. In cases deemed to pose an imminent danger to persons or property, no one shall attempt to intervene but shall wait for police to assess and act. After assuring that a situation is secure, the Worker shall complete a CUMC Accident/Incident Report and notify the Applicable Director.

Automobile Incident Response

In the event of an automobile accident during a ministry event, the driver shall first ensure the safety of all passengers, administer first-aid and/or call 911 for emergency services as necessary. After assuring that the situation is safe, the driver shall notify the Worker in charge of the ministry event and complete a CUMC Accident / Incident Report. The Worker shall contact the applicable Director and/or Sr. Pastor. The Applicable Director or Sr. Pastor shall notify parents/ guardians promptly.

APPENDIX J

POLICY OF COKESBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH FOR THE PREVENTION OF ABUSE OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

ACCIDENT / INCIDENT REPORT

Cokesbury United Methodist Church

Date: _____ Time: _____

Name of Injured Person: _____

Location of Incident: _____

Program or Event: _____

Description of Injury: _____

Description of how incident occurred: _____

Supervisor of event at time of Incident: _____

Witness (s) to Incident:_____

Procedures Followed : _____

Other pertinent information: _____

Name of person completing Incident Report: _____

Phone Number: _____

Continued Next Page

TO BE COMPLETED BY APPLICABLE DIRECTOR OR SENIOR CLERGY

Reported to Director or Senior Clergy

Date: _____ Time: _____
Summary:
_____

_____

_____

_____

Contact with victim's parent/guardian:_____

Date/time:
_____

Spoke With:
_____

Summary:
_____

_____

_____

_____

Contact local children and family service agency (if necessary)

_____

Date/time:
_____
Spoke with:
: _____

Summary:_____

Contact local law enforcement agency;

_____

Date: Time:

_____

Spoke with:

_____

Summary:

_____

Other Contacts:

_____

Name:

_____

Date/time:

_____

Summary:

_____

APPENDIX K

POLICY OF COKESBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH FOR THE PREVENTION OF ABUSE OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

HOLD HARMLESS AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT

Cokesbury United Methodist Church

WHEREAS, COKESBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH ("Church"), has allowed _____("Organization") to use its campus facilities;

WHEREAS, The Organization desires to use said campus facilities on a one time or repetitive basis

NOW, THEREFORE, KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS that for and in consideration of the Church allowing the Organization to use the Church's campus facilities on a repetitive basis:

The Organization hereby **INDEMNIFIES, RELEASES, DISCHARGES AND HOLDS THE CHURCH HARMLESS** from and against any and all actions, claims and/or damages arising from the Organization's use of the Church's campus facilities;

The Organization hereby represents that it has read The Policy Of Cokesbury United Methodist Church For the Prevention Of Abuse Of Children And Youth, and that it will adhere to all rules, policies and procedures set forth therein;

The Organization hereby agrees this Hold Harmless and Indemnity Agreement shall include all costs, including, but not limited to, attorney's fees and costs of court;

The Organization hereby agrees that in the event that the Organization is notified of, or should have knowledge of, any action, claims and/or damages covered by this Hold Harmless and Indemnity Agreement, it shall promptly notify the Church's Senior Clergy in writing, and the Organization shall immediately assume the cost of defense of such actions, claims and/or damages.

Executed this ____ day of _____,20___.

By:_____ (Signature)

Printed Name _____

Title/Position: _____