

306. NURSERY & CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

- a. See "Background Check Policy" below. Additional pre-requisites for volunteering in ministries to minors are as follows:
 - i. All new church attendees wishing to volunteer to work with minors at Mt. Carmel Friends Church must:
 - (1) Complete a waiting period of six (6) months from first attendance at worship services at Mt. Carmel Friends, before being allowed to volunteer.
 - (2) Submit a completed application (Form 2100) to volunteer, and receive approval from the Elder of Christian Education.
- b. Every Sunday School class, Children's Church class, Youth Meeting, or any other ministry to minors (on-campus or off-campus) will be supervised by at least two responsible adults. (This fulfills a commitment to our liability insurer).
 - i. An acceptable alternative, when sufficient volunteers cannot be found for the above, is to leave the classroom door open—for Sunday School and Children's Church classes (Sunday morning) only (not including Nursery).
- c. Church Nursery Policies
 - i. The church Nursery will be supervised by at least two responsible adults, or one adult and one other responsible person aged 12 years or more.
 - (1) Any minor helping to supervise the nursery is not to be left alone without an adult. Therefore, if the need should arise for a "runner," to communicate with parents, etc., this will be the minor, and not the adult.
 - (2) Any minor helping to supervise the nursery will not be responsible for diaper changes/toileting.
 - (3) Minors helping to supervise the nursery need not comply with the Background Check Policy until they turn 18 years old.
- d. Youth Activities Policies:
 - i. One particular person is designated by the church membership as either an officer (Youth Sponsor) or an employee (Pastor/Youth Pastor) to make decisions and take responsibility for the welfare of the teens/teen program.
 - (1) Discretion about activities, participants, chaperones, transportation, sleeping arrangements, and other things involving the youth group rests with that person, with the

supervision of the Senior Pastor, and with consideration given to the requests of the teens' parents.

- ii. Overnight outings for teens (mission trips, retreats, etc.) will be supervised by *at least* one responsible adult of *each* sex, but preferably by two adults of each sex.
 - (1) Males and females shall be separated for sleeping arrangements—either in different rooms, different tents, or different buildings.
 - (2) The only exception would be if a parent, attending as a chaperone, were to share a room with his/her own child(ren), of whom they have legal guardianship, as long as such arrangements do not leave either the male teens or the female teens (of the rest of the group) without a same-sex chaperone.
- iii. All teens wishing to participate in off-campus or overnight activities sponsored by the church must have a Health/Insurance/Release Form on file with the church, with his/her parent providing permission for transportation, permission for medical treatment in an emergency, and providing pertinent information for the care of the child in his/her parents' absence.
 - (1) A form for this use is attached to these by-laws. (*Form 2000.*)
- iv. No child will be allowed to participate in youth activities until they finish the 6th grade.
- e. The church will not sponsor overnight programs for any children who have not yet completed the 6th grade, unless each child is accompanied by their legal guardian.
- f. A signed activity-specific permission slip will be obtained from each child's parents (or guardians) for any activity outside of normal weekly services and activities, (this includes youth activities, VBS, Youth Explosion), if the child's parents will not be present for the entire activity. The director of the activity is responsible for obtaining these.
- g. The church staff has a legal obligation to report suspected child abuse of any kind, by anybody, to the State of Ohio within 24 hours. This includes sexual abuse.
 - i. Church volunteers are to report suspicions to the church staff in writing (who will pass it on) or may contact the State themselves.
 - ii. This "Incident Report" should contain:

- (1) The names and addresses of the child and the names of his/her parents/guardians/custodians.
 - (2) The child's age, the nature and extent of the child's injuries or physical neglect or behavior indicating abuse—including any evidence of previous injuries or physical neglect
 - (3) Any other information which might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injury or physical or emotional abuse or neglect.
- iii. Suspicion of abuse occurring on Church property will be immediately reported to law enforcement (Sherriff's office).
- h. Sex Offender Response Policy:
- i. When the Administrative Council or church staff becomes aware of a registered sex offender attending church services or functions, the following action will be taken:
 - (1) An investigation will be made into the offender's status and the church's responsibilities.
 - (2) If the offender is in violation of any restrictions placed on them by the courts, law enforcement will be notified.

400. Background Check Policy: Mt. Carmel Friends Church, Cable, OH

401. **PURPOSE:** The main purpose of this policy is to protect the children who participate in programs at Mt. Carmel Friends Church. In addition, this policy and its application fulfill an obligation to the carrier of our liability insurance and the state to do due diligence in protecting children and others at our programs and facilities. This policy represents a desire for all to be welcome to participate in our programs without fear. This includes accountability in our offices related to finances.

402. All volunteers in the ministries to or involving minors (those under 18 years of age) at Mt. Carmel Friends Church properties or programs must first pass a background check. In addition, all staff persons of the church and all of those involved in the finances (accounts payable and receivable) of the church must also pass a background check prior to volunteering for/employment with the church.

- a. This includes (but may not be limited to):
 - i. Sunday School teachers for children or teens and aides
 - ii. Children's Church teachers and aides
 - iii. Youth Ministry volunteers
 - iv. Anyone transporting a child that is not their own in a vehicle for a Church function/program

- v. Pastors, Christian Workers, and office staff of the church
 - vi. The Financial Secretary and his/her aides
 - vii. The Treasurer
 - viii. Any others who have access to church monies and accounts
- b. This policy will take effect on September 1, 2016.
- c. Mt. Carmel Friends Church will provide the fee for the background checks to Protect My Ministry, Inc.
- d. The church has enlisted the services of the following to provide a “National Combo Search”: Protect My Ministry, Inc. of 14499 N. Dale Mabry Hwy., Suite 201 South, Tampa, Florida 33618 (800-319-5581)
- i. This search checks for records on
 1. SSN Verification and Address History
 2. National Criminal Database
 3. National Sex Offender Search
 4. Re-verification of criminal records
 5. Alias Names
- e. The (paper or digital) packet given to applicants to volunteer or work will include:
- i. A copy of this policy
 - ii. “Disclosure and Authorization—Background Investigation”
 - iii. “State Consumer Reporting Requirements—Background Investigation”
 - iv. “A Summary of your Rights Under the Fair Credit Reporting Act”
 - v. “Requesting a Copy of Your Background Report”
- f. Applicants must input necessary personal information, and provide authorization to investigate their background, on the internet through the Ministry Mobilizer program.
- i. The Elder of Education or the Senior Pastor, and the Church’s office equipment, will aid applicants with this process if they desire.
- g. The members of the Administrative Council have sole access to the Ministry Mobilizer account and the background reports generated through it.
- i. It is the responsibility of the Elder of Christian Education to maintain the account and the protection of personally identifiable information of all those involved.
403. An applicant to volunteer (or for employment) at Mt. Carmel Friends Church may be denied the opportunity to volunteer (or be employed) based on the findings of the Background Investigation through Protect My Ministry, Inc.
- a. This decision lies solely at the discretion of the Administrative Council of Mt. Carmel Friends Church.

- i. The Administrative Council may appoint one particular member of the Council to make these decisions on his/her own—at the Council’s discretion.
 - b. The applicant will be notified as soon as possible as to this decision.
 - i. At that point, the applicant will be given an opportunity to repudiate the findings of the background check in front of the Administrative Council, if they so desire.
 - c. The applicant may not assume volunteer or paid duties until approval is given by the Senior Pastor and/or the Administrative Council.
 - d. If the applicant is denied the opportunity to volunteer, a copy of the background report and “Adverse Action Notice” will be supplied to the applicant.
 - e. The actual background check results (accuracy) can be appealed with Protect My Ministry, Inc.
 - f. As to the decision to deny a volunteer position at Mt. Carmel Friends Church, the only appeal that can be made is: in writing to the Congregational Business Meeting of the membership of Mt. Carmel Friends Church, which is held quarterly (write to the Presiding Clerk).
 - i. If this appeal is made, information on the background check may need to be shared with the membership in order for an informed decision to be made at the Business Meeting.
404. Church volunteers/employees must submit to a new background check if requested by the Senior Pastor or Administrative Council—at least annually.
405. Any individual who refuses to comply with this policy and/or submit themselves to a background check as outlined in this policy will be denied the opportunity to volunteer in Mt. Carmel Friends Church programs related to children, teens, or church finances. Any applicant for employment or contracted employment who refuses to comply with this policy will be denied employment with Mt. Carmel Friends Church.
406. The “Disclosure and Authorization” forms for those persons no longer volunteering for Mt. Carmel Friends Church will be destroyed in a timely manner.
407. Reports generated by Protect My Ministry/Ministry Mobilizer (which are on-line) will not be printed, or transferred to church or private computers, except to provide a copy to the applicant as required above.
408. This policy (*see also #308*), supersedes and replaces any previous policy on background checks or child abuse implicit or explicit.