

# **Policies for the Safety of Children and Youth**

## **Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America**

### **Table of Contents**

<b>PART ONE: INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>PART TWO: REGULATIONS</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>SECTION ONE: GENERAL YOUTH WORKER REGULATIONS</b>	<b>4</b>
A. ZERO TOLERANCE	4
B. INTERPRETATION OF THESE POLICIES	4
C. EFFECTIVE DATE	4
D. GENERAL FRAMEWORK FOR YOUTH SAFETY IN THE ARCHDIOCESE	5
E. EXCLUSIVE ELIGIBILITY OF YOUTH WORKERS	5
F. BECOMING A YOUTH WORKER	5
G. REVOKING STATUS OF YOUTH WORKERS	7
H. PROHIBITED BEHAVIORS	8
I. MISCELLANEOUS REQUIREMENTS	9
J. DISMISSAL OR REVOCATION OF STATUS	10
K. REPORTING ABUSE OR NEGLECT	11
L. OTHER SUSPICIOUS OR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR	12
M. RESPONDING TO MEDIA INQUIRIES	12
N. PRESENCE OF REGISTERED SEX OFFENDERS IN COMMUNITIES	13
<b>PART TWO: REGULATIONS</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>SECTION TWO: YOUTH SAFETY ADMINISTRATION AND COMPLIANCE</b>	<b>14</b>
A. PARTICIPATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH	14
B. REQUIRED YOUTH WORKER FORMS	14
C. ADDITIONAL TRAINING AND SCREENING	15
D. TIMELINE OF REGISTRATION, TRAINING, SCREENING, AND CERTIFICATION	15
E. PARTIES RESPONSIBLE FOR REVIEW OF REGISTRANTS	19
F. REVIEW OF BACKGROUND CHECK RESULTS	20
G. PARTICIPATION IN MULTIPLE YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAMS OR EVENTS	21
H. CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION	21
<b>PART THREE: YOUTH SAFETY BEST PRACTICES</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>SECTION ONE: GENERAL POLICIES</b>	<b>22</b>
A. GENERAL YOUTH WORKER POLICIES	22
B. ENCOURAGED BEHAVIORS	22
C. DISCOURAGED BEHAVIORS	23
D. TEEN YOUTH WORKER GUIDELINES	23
<b>PART THREE: YOUTH SAFETY BEST PRACTICES</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>SECTION TWO: YOUTH WORKER INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH</b>	<b>25</b>
A. PHYSICAL CONTACT	25
B. VERBAL INTERACTIONS	26
C. ONE-ON-ONE INTERACTIONS	27
D. NON-MINISTRY CONTACT	28
E. GIFTS	29

<b>PART THREE: YOUTH SAFETY BEST PRACTICES</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>SECTION THREE: ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>A. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>B. BASIC PRINCIPLES</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>PART THREE: YOUTH SAFETY BEST PRACTICES</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>SECTION FOUR: REGISTRATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH, PARENTAL INFORMATION</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>A. INFORMING PARENTS, CHILDREN, AND YOUTH</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>PART THREE: YOUTH SAFETY BEST PRACTICES</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>SECTION FIVE: MONITORING AND SUPERVISING PROGRAMS AND EVENTS</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>A. GUIDELINES BASED ON AGE AND NUMBER OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH PRESENT</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>B. CELL PHONE USE DURING A YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAM OR EVENT</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>C. MONITORING THE PREMISES</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>D. DIRECT AND INDIRECT MONITORING OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>E. MONITORING HIGH RISK ACTIVITIES AND AREAS</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>F. MONITORING YOUTH AND CHILDREN IN TRANSIT</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>G. MONITORING OVERNIGHT ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>H. DIRECTOR AND SUPERVISOR GUIDELINES</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>PART THREE: YOUTH SAFETY BEST PRACTICES</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>SECTION SIX: RESPONDING AND REPORTING</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>A. DIRECTING NOTICES OF CONCERN</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>B. RESPONDING TO SUSPICIOUS OR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS / POLICY VIOLATIONS</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>E. RESPONDING TO PEER-TO-PEER ABUSE AND SEXUALIZED BEHAVIOR</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>PART FOUR: DEFINITIONS</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>PART FIVE: FORMS AND DOCUMENTS</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>EXHIBIT 1: STANDARD REGISTRATION FORM</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>EXHIBIT 2: STANDARD APPLICATION FORM</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>EXHIBIT 3: STANDARD RE-REGISTRATION FORM</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>EXHIBIT 4: STANDARD RE-APPLICATION FORM</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>EXHIBIT 5: CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE SAFETY OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH (FOR YOUTH WORKERS)</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>EXHIBIT 5A: CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE SAFETY OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH (FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND PARENTS)</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>EXHIBIT 6: NOTICE OF CONCERN</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>EXHIBIT 7: PARISH COMPLIANCE LETTER</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>EXHIBIT 8: DISTRICT/METROPOLIS COMPLIANCE LETTER</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>EXHIBIT 9: ARCHDIOCESE COMPLIANCE LETTER</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>EXHIBIT 10: MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>EXHIBIT 11: MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (ALTERNATE TEXT)</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>EXHIBIT 12: POLICIES NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT</b>	<b>89</b>

## Part One: Introduction

---

Under the visionary leadership of His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios, our Archdiocese took a critical step towards protecting the Children and Youth in her care by creating the Youth Protection Manual (“YPM”) for Metropolis/Direct Archdiocesan District Camps and Retreats.

This document establishes new Policies for the Safety of Children and Youth (the “Policies”) to guide youth work of all sorts, and at all levels, across the entire Archdiocese (which includes each Metropolis and Parish, and their respective institutions, ministries, entities, organizations, programs, and events).

These Policies strike a careful balance: creating space for healthy, Christ-centered ministry interactions while establishing clear boundaries and safe environments. Through rigorous training, clear protocols, transparent communication, regular screening, and effective teamwork, we can ensure that all Youth Ministry Programs and Events effectively nurture healthy, Christ-centered connections while doing our absolute best to prevent unsafe or abusive situations.

These Policies are divided into two key sections. **Part Two** lists the key regulations that all Youth Workers and all Youth Ministry Programs and events must follow. **Part Three** contains best practices covering a wide range of circumstances; these best practices should guide a safe course for Youth Ministry Programs and Events and be applied to particular circumstances, as appropriate. In certain circumstances, reasonable and appropriate accommodations may need to be made. In the event of any conflict between these Policies and applicable law, such law shall supersede these Policies. Nothing in these Policies is in derogation of, or an abdication by the Archdiocese of, the Church’s constitutionally protected freedom from governmental interference. Pastoral care and leadership are acts of ministry and, as such, are constitutionally protected acts. Nothing herein is intended to diminish these freedoms in any respect or to create any legal rights or responsibilities upon the Archdiocese or any of its representatives.

**These Policies are intended to supplement and not in any way replace or limit the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America Statement of Policy Regarding Sexual Misconduct by Clergy (the “Clergy Policy”). All complaints involving clergy shall be handled in accordance with the Clergy Policy.**

If you have any questions regarding these Policies, please feel free to contact us at 646.519.6780 or by email [y2am@goarch.org](mailto:y2am@goarch.org).

We pray that these will assist you in providing our Children and Youth with the safe, loving, Christ-centered environment they need to grow in wisdom and holiness.

With love in Christ,

[signature]

Steven Christoforou, *National Director*  
Y<sup>2</sup>AM (Department of Youth and Young Adult Ministries, Office of Camping Ministries)  
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America

## Part Two: Regulations

### Section One: General Youth Worker Regulations

---

#### A. Zero Tolerance

- i. **Abuse.** GOARCH will not tolerate any form of Abuse, regardless of whether the Abuse is committed by a Child, Youth, or Youth Workers. GOARCH is committed to creating safe spaces for Children and Youth at all Youth Ministry Programs and Events.
- ii. **Failure to Comply with Policies.** Any Youth Ministry Program or Event that fails to fully comply with these Policies shall be strictly prohibited from operating until they are in full compliance as certified by the National Department. There will be no exceptions. Any Youth Ministry Program or Event that attempts to operate without being fully compliant opens itself to repercussions at the discretion of its respective Metropolis, the Archdiocese, and/or any relevant state authorities.
- iii. **Confirmed Abuse.** Confirmed Abuse by a Youth Worker will result in immediate dismissal from the Youth Ministry Program or Event.
- iv. **Failure to Report.** Failure to report Abuse of which a Youth Worker has firsthand knowledge will also result in immediate dismissal from the Youth Ministry Program or Event.

#### B. Interpretation of these Policies

- i. **Spectrum of Acceptable Behavior.** These Policies (both the “Regulations” of Part Two and the “Best Practices” of Part Three) define the spectrum of acceptable behavior throughout GOARCH.
- ii. **Scope of Policies.** These Policies are not intended to address interactions within families, *except that* Youth Workers should respond to Abuse and suspected Abuse as needed.
- iii. **Application to Older Youth.** All policies regarding Children and Youth are applicable until the Child or Youth is 18 years old or has graduated from high school, whichever comes later. Even after such time, Youth Workers must continue to exercise appropriate behavior with such persons, as they have been trained to foster relationships based on Christian ethics and morals.

#### C. Effective Date

- i. **Transition Period.** Given the immense challenges of successfully implementing these Policies, the Archdiocese is designating the first full Ecclesiastical Year under these Policies as a transition period. Thus, though all Youth Ministry Programs and Events are expected to fully comply with these Policies, and the Archdiocese is unequivocal in its zero-tolerance policy regarding Abuse, the Archdiocese will work with particular Youth Ministry Programs and Events that are having difficulty implementing and administering the Policies.

- ii. **Effective Date.** These Policies, with all of the penalties for non-compliance, shall be in full effect as of September 1, 2019 (the beginning of the 2019-20 Ecclesiastical Year).

#### **D. General Framework for Youth Safety in the Archdiocese**

- i. **Floor Rather than Ceiling.** These Policies define the minimum standards and procedures that will govern all Youth Ministry Programs and Events across GOARCH. As such, these Policies constitute the “floor” rather than the “ceiling” of youth safety in GOARCH.
- ii. **Additional Policies Encouraged.** We strongly encourage all Directors to carefully review Part Three of these Policies and craft procedures and policies that apply these best practices to their particular Youth Ministry Programs and Events.
- iii. **Camping Ministry Supplement.** Given the important role that the YPM has played in the development of camping ministries across GOARCH, the National Department is working to recodify the YPM as a new “**Camping Ministries Supplement**” to these Policies. This Camping Ministries Supplement will, consistent with and building upon the Policies, offer more detailed policies and procedures for camping ministries in GOARCH.

#### **E. Exclusive Eligibility of Youth Workers**

- i. **Exclusive Eligibility of Youth Workers.** Only Youth Workers are eligible to participate in Youth Ministry Programs and Events, except for participating Children and/or Youth. There will be no exceptions.
- ii. **Participation in Particular Programs or Events.**
  - a. **Participation Not Guaranteed.** Becoming a Youth Workers means that a person is eligible to participate in Youth Ministry Programs or Events, not that such participation is guaranteed.
  - b. **Further Requirements.** In order to participate in particular Youth Ministry Programs or Events, a Youth Worker will:
    - 1. apply to such Youth Ministry Program or Event;
    - 2. satisfy any additional training or screening required by such Youth Ministry Program or Event (which shall supplement rather than replace the training and screening required by these Policies); and
    - 3. be accepted to participate by such Youth Ministry Program or Event.

#### **F. Becoming a Youth Worker**

- i. **Three Steps to Becoming a Youth Worker.** To become a Youth Worker, a person must, as further detailed in this Section: (a) register/re-register (as appropriate), (b) complete the prescribed training either online or in-person, and (c) submit to, and successfully pass, the prescribed background check and screening process.

- ii. **Registration of Youth Workers.** Persons will register to become Youth Workers as follows:
- a. **Registration at Parish.** Because of the important role that parish ministry plays in the life of the Church, all Youth Workers (subject to the following exceptions) are required to register every year with their home Parish.
  - b. **Annual Re-registration.** In order to maintain compliance with the Policies and maintain their status as Youth Workers, all Youth Workers are required to re-register annually with their home Parish in each subsequent year after their initial registration.
  - c. **Clergy and Monastics.**
    1. All clergy and monastics (subject to any restrictions and limitations placed on Youth Ministry Programs and Events at monasteries, as determined by the Holy Eparchial Synod) shall register with their Metropolis Department. This requirement extends to (i) all clergy, whether deacon, presbyter, or bishop, and without regard to seniority or rank, and (ii) monastics of all seniority or rank.
    2. As of the date of these Policies, and by way of clarification, monastics are generally not allowed to participate in Youth Ministry Programs and Events, as per Protocol 73/10 as set forth in a letter by His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios Geron of America dated June 11, 2010. If and when a monastic does receive a blessing to participate in a Youth Ministry Program or Event, such monastic will only be able to participate upon first becoming a Youth Worker according as set forth in these Policies.
  - d. **Persons Not Affiliated with Greek Orthodox Archdiocese.** All persons who are not affiliated with GOARCH (whether because they are foreign nationals or affiliated with another canonical Orthodox jurisdiction in the United States of America) shall register with the National Department.
- iii. **Training of Youth Workers.**
- a. **Required Training.** Youth Workers will complete the official training materials, as designated by the National Department. In 2018, as of the inception of these Policies, the National Department has designated either (1) online Praesidium comprehensive youth protection training modules or (2) the corresponding in-person comprehensive youth protection training as directed by the National Department. Instruction includes internet-based abuse prevention training and in-person training with their local Director/Supervisors prior to the Youth Ministry Program or Event.
  - b. **Frequency of Training.** Youth Workers will complete the above required training no less than once every year.
  - c. **Additional Training Specifically for Camp Directors.** Camp Directors, due to the significant role they play in screening, selecting, and supervising others in high risk Youth Ministry Programs and Events, will complete an additional three (3) hours of annual specialized education and training in screening, selection, and monitoring, as directed by the National Department.

iv. **Background Checks of Youth Workers.**

- a. **Required Background Check.** Every Youth Worker will undergo, and successfully pass, the official background check process, as designated by the National Department. In 2018, as of the inception of these Policies, the National Department has designated the Praesidium Package background check, which is the most thorough background check offered by Praesidium, the official provider of Youth Worker training and screening for the GOARCH. The Praesidium Package background check includes:
  1. Name and Address History Locator (social security number trace)
  2. Multi-State Criminal Database Check (the subject's name as ordered and all aliases located in the SSN Trace searched through this database)
  3. National Sex Offender Database Check (the subject's name as ordered and all aliases located in the SSN Trace searched through this database)
  4. County Level Criminal Search in the current county of residence
- b. **Frequency of Background Checks.** Youth Workers will repeat the required background check no less than once every two (2) years.
- c. **Possibility of Additional Legal Requirements.** Youth Workers should be aware that some states require specific background checks. In such cases, Youth Workers will need to undergo both the background check required by these Policies and the background check required by the state or legal authority in question. Youth should consult their Parish Priest, Parish Director, or Metropolis Director if they have any questions.

**G. Revoking Status of Youth Workers**

- i. **Failure to Maintain Annual and Biannual Requirements.** Youth Workers who fail to re-register once per year, complete their required training once per year, and/or successfully pass their required background check once every two years will immediately have their Youth Worker status revoked.
- ii. **Prohibited Behaviors and Youth Worker Status.**
  - a. In the event that a Youth Worker engages in one or more Prohibited Behaviors, the Metropolis Director may request that the National Director revoke the Youth Worker status of the person in question.
  - b. If such person's Youth Worker status is revoked, the National Director will cause the former Youth Worker's file to be updated accordingly.
  - c. The National Director, in consultation with the aforementioned Metropolis Director, may allow the person to re-apply to be a Youth Worker at some later date.

### iii. Other Red Flags.

- a. In the event that a Youth Worker engages in behavior that, despite not rising to the level of a Prohibited Behavior, nonetheless provides grounds for serious concern, the Metropolis Director will promptly communicate these concerns, and the underlying facts, to the National Director.
- b. The National Director, in consultation with the aforementioned Director, will determine whether the Youth Worker's status as a Youth Worker needs to be revoked and, if so, for how long.
- c. The National Director will cause the Youth Worker's file to be updated accordingly. In addition, the National Director will add the information to the secure file referred to in Part Two, Section Two (H)(ii) and distribute said changes in status promptly to the Youth and Young Adult Ministry Team.

## H. Prohibited Behaviors

- i. **Discrimination and Favoritism.** Youth Workers will respond to Children and Youth with respect, consideration and equal treatment, regardless of sex, race, religion, sexual orientation, culture or socio-economic status. Youth Workers will portray a positive role model for Children and Youth by maintaining an attitude of respect, patience, and maturity. They will avoid even the appearance of favoritism.
- ii. **Narcotics.** Youth Workers are strictly prohibited from using, possessing, distributing, or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or other controlled substances, or misusing legal drugs while participating in or assisting with Youth Ministry Programs or Events.
- iii. **Sexual Contact.** Youth Workers are strictly prohibited from having sexual contact with a Child or Youth.
- iv. **Possessing Sexually Oriented Materials.** Youth Workers are strictly prohibited from possessing or accessing any sexually oriented materials including but not limited to videos, web sites, streaming services, cards, films, clothing, etc., during any Youth Ministry Program or Event, whether or not it takes place on GOARCH property, or in the presence of Children or Youth except as expressly permitted as part of a pre-authorized educational program.
- v. **Viewing Sexually Oriented Materials.** Youth Workers are strictly prohibited from using the Internet to view or download any sexually oriented materials during any Youth Ministry Program or Event or in the presence of Children or Youth.
- vi. **Electronic Communications.** Youth Workers are strictly prohibited from using the Internet, any online social networking site, or any form of Electronic Communication to inappropriately contact Children and Youth, during or after a Youth Ministry Program or Event. See Part Three, Section Three of these Policies for more information on appropriate forms of Electronic Communication. In the event of any ambiguity, Youth Workers are strongly encouraged to ask their Metropolis Director for further guidance.



- vii. **Cell Phone Use.** While working in a Youth Ministry Program or Event with Children and Youth, Youth Workers are not permitted to use electronic communications devices in a way that would cause them to be distracted from their duties in the Youth Ministry Program or Event. Given the dangers posed by such distractions, and to facilitate healthy engagement with the Children and Youth in the Youth Ministry Program or Event in question, personal Internet use, text messaging, and/or emailing pictures while supervising or working with Children and Youth is strictly prohibited regardless of the type of device.
- viii. **Harsh Verbal Interactions.** Youth Workers are strictly prohibited from speaking to Children and/or Youth in a way that is, or could be reasonably be construed by a reasonable observer to be, coercive, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating.
- ix. **Sexually Oriented Verbal Interactions.** Youth Workers are strictly prohibited from discussing their own sexual activities, including dreams and fantasies, or discussing their use of sexually oriented or explicit materials such as pornography, videos, or materials on or from the Internet, with Children or Youth, *provided that* trained and competent Youth Workers may, with the approval of the Director, discuss past struggles in general and non-explicit terms, as part of a ministry discussion or presentation.
- x. **Sharing Beds With Youth Workers.** Youth Workers are strictly prohibited from sleeping in the same bed with Children or Youth, *except that* a Parent may sleep in the same bed with his/her own Child.
- xi. **Non-Youth Workers and Youth Work Support Staff.** Both Non-Youth Workers and Youth Work Support Staff are strictly prohibited from being alone with Children or Youth in the absence of a Youth Worker.
- xii. **Physical Punishment.**
  - a. **Prohibited.** Youth Workers are strictly prohibited from using physical punishment in any way for behavior management of Children and Youth. No form of physical discipline is acceptable. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, demanding pushups, making a Child or Youth stand for long periods of time, using a mechanical restraint such as a rope or tape, or any other physical force. Physical force may only be used to stop a behavior that may cause immediate harm to the individual or to a Child, Youth, or others.
  - b. **Contextual Exceptions.** However, in certain rare circumstances, what may be unacceptable physical punishment in one context may be acceptable conduct in another. For example, while a camp counselor is strictly prohibited from demanding pushups from campers, a basketball coach may legitimately demand pushups from players as a form of conditioning and preparation.

## I. Miscellaneous Requirements

- i. **Counseling/Confession**

- a. One-on-one counseling with Children or Youth must be done in (1) an open or public place, or (2) other place where private conversations are possible but occur in full view of others.
- b. The Sacrament of Confession with a priest must take place in a visible location. Confession with a Child or Youth should, for example, never take place in an office with a closed door, inside the holy altar or vestry of a church or chapel, or in a location that is removed from the main Youth Ministry Program or Event at which a Child or Youth is seeking the Sacrament. If Confession is being conducted at a parish level, the priest should make sure that there is at least one other person in the vicinity of the Confession who can at least see the Sacrament while it is taking place.
- ii. **Documenting Incidents.** In order to adequately respond to and track incidents within the organization, all sexual activity between Children and Youth, and sexualized behaviors of Children or Youth, must be consistently documented.
- iii. **Directors, Supervisors, and Administrators.** All Directors/Supervisors/Administrators must be at least twenty-one (21) years old.
- iv. **Teen Youth Workers.**
  - a. No Teen Youth Worker will have sole responsibility, nor be alone with Children or Youth, but must be directly supervised by at least one Youth Worker (who must be at least 21 years old) at all times.
  - b. We strongly recommend that Directors considering requiring (1) Teen Youth Workers to keep a log documenting their daily activities and any problems they encounter, and (2) their Supervisor to review these logs daily.
- v. **Proactive Social Media Engagement.** Youth Workers will not proactively “friend” or “follow” (or the equivalent) a Youth or Child’s social media account without first being “friended” or “followed” (or the equivalent).
- vi. **Constant Supervision.** All Children and Youth must, while participating in Youth Ministry Programs and Events, be supervised at all times.
- vii. **Separate Rooms for Boys and Girls.** When making sleeping arrangements for a Youth Ministry Program or Event, Youth Workers must separate female and male Children and Youth into different rooms.

**J. Dismissal or Revocation of Status**

- i. **Failure to Maintain Youth Worker Status.** Any Youth Worker who does not re-register annually, re-train annually, and successfully complete a background screening every two years as required by these Policies will lose his status as a Youth Worker and thus be ineligible to participate in any Youth Ministry Programs or Events.

- ii. **Prohibited Behaviors.** Youth Workers who engage in any Prohibited Behavior may be immediately dismissed from participating in the Youth Ministry Program or Event in question, and may have their Youth Worker status revoked, whether for one or more Ecclesiastical Years.
- iii. **Additional Violations.** Any Youth Worker found to be in violation of any portion of these Policies (whether the “Regulations” or “Best Practices”) may be subject to immediate disciplinary action, which may include the Youth Worker’s immediate dismissal from the staff and exclusion from future Youth Ministry Programs and Events at the discretion of their direct Supervisor.

## **K. Reporting Abuse or Neglect**

- i. **Mandated Reporting.**
  - a. **Failure to Report.** *Failure to report suspected Abuse of Children or Youth is a crime.*
  - b. **Duty to Report Abuse or Neglect.** As required by mandated reporting laws, Youth Workers must report any suspected Abuse or Neglect of a Child or Youth—whether on or off the Premises, or whether perpetrated by Youth Workers or others—to state authorities. Reports may be made confidentially or anonymously. A person who mistakenly reports suspected Abuse is immune from civil or criminal liability as long as the report was made in good faith and without malice.
  - c. **Duty to Report Imminent Harm.** As required by mandated reporting laws, Youth Workers must report any imminent danger to the life of a Child or Youth, such as a Youth or Child’s confession of suicidal ideation or stated intent to commit suicide, to state authorities and Parents. Reports may be made confidentially or anonymously. A person who mistakenly reports suspected Abuse is immune from civil or criminal liability as long as the report was made in good faith and without malice.
  - d. **Multiple Jurisdictions.** If a Youth Workers learns of Abuse that took place in a different state than that in which the Child or Youth resides, the Youth Worker should report the Abuse to the local state and notify them that the Abuse will also be reported to the state in which the Abuse took place. The local authorities may give the Youth Worker further guidance as to whether to report to the second state. If the Youth Worker receives no guidance, then he or she should report the Abuse to the state where it took place and notify them that the Abuse has also been reported to the state where the Child or Youth resides.
  - e. **Reporting Help.** Youth Workers who require any assistance in reporting suspected Abuse or Neglect should immediately contact the Childhelp National Abuse Hotline at 1-800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453). A qualified crisis counselor will answer and offer assistance.
  - f. **Reporting to Leadership.** In addition to reporting to state authorities, Youth Workers are required to report any suspected or known abuse of Children or Youth perpetrated by Youth Workers directly to leadership so that immediate and proper steps may be taken to ensure the safety of alleged victims and others who may be at risk. Reports of suspected or known abuse may be made confidentially to the following:

1. Immediate Supervisor
2. Administrators
3. Directors
4. Metropolis Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries
5. Metropolis Chancellor (who will in turn inform the Metropolis Hierarchy)
6. National Department

ii. **Cooperation with State Authorities.**

- a. The District/Metropolis will cooperate with any investigation by state authorities to the fullest extent.
- b. Any Youth Worker shall cooperate to the fullest extent possible in any external investigation by outside authorities or internal investigation conducted by the Archdiocese or persons given authority by the Archdiocese. Failure to cooperate will be grounds for dismissal or termination.

**L. Other Suspicious or Inappropriate Behavior and/or Policy Violations**

i. **Reporting to Leadership.**

- a. Because GOARCH is dedicated to maintaining safe and healthy Youth Ministry Programs and Events, it is imperative that every Youth Worker actively participates in the creating and maintaining safe spaces for Children and Youth. In the event that Youth Workers observe any suspicious or inappropriate behaviors and/or violations of these Policies on the part of other Youth Workers or adults, even when such behavior does not rise to the level of suspected Abuse or Neglect, such Youth Workers must immediately report their observations to their immediate Supervisor.
- b. If this Supervisor is responsible for the suspicious or inappropriate conduct and/or Policy violation in question, Youth Workers must immediately report their observations to the next highest level of supervision, such as a Director or Metropolis Director.

ii. **All Reports Taken Seriously.** *All reports of suspicious or inappropriate behavior with Children and Youth and/or Policy violations will be taken seriously.* These Policies will be carefully followed to ensure that the rights of all those involved are protected.

iii. **Confidentiality.** The Archdiocese, and GOARCH generally, takes all allegations seriously and commits to responding promptly and effectively. Every effort will be taken to safeguard the privacy, rights, and good reputation of all parties involved.

**M. Responding to Media Inquiries**

- i. Youth Workers must immediately notify their Metropolis Director of media inquiries and contacts.

- ii. Inquiries involving the Archdiocese and its Archdiocesan Youth Ministry Programs or Events must be referred to the National Department.
- iii. Requests for media interviews will be coordinated solely by the Archdiocese's Office of Administration. If the media inquiry pertains to a Metropolis Youth Ministry Program or Event and is made at the Metropolis level, the Metropolis shall direct communications through the Metropolis legal committee and communications director (as applicable), in coordination with the Archdiocese's Office of Administration.
- iv. Youth Workers do not have the authority to communicate with the media on behalf of the Archdiocese and/or Metropolis.

**N. Presence of Registered Sex Offenders in Communities**

- i. **Memorandum of Understanding.** In the event that a Parish community includes a registered sex offender, the head Priest and Parish Council President will cause this registered sex offender to sign the Memorandum of Understanding, attached to these Policies as "**Exhibit 11**" (with an Alternate Text attached as "**Exhibit 12**").
- ii. **Participation in Youth Ministry Programs or Events.** No person who is a registered sex offender shall participate in any Youth Ministry Programs or Events.
- iii. **Integration into the Life of the Community.** The clergy and Parish Council of a Parish should work with any registered sex offenders in their Parish, as well as any counselors or parole officers, to monitor such persons when they are on the premises of the parish, check in with them periodically, and otherwise work to integrate them into the life of the Parish while maintaining clear boundaries for the protection of Children, Youth, and other people. Parishes seeking more guidance should reach out to their Metropolis as well as appropriate law enforcement and mental health professionals.

## Part Two: Regulations

### Section Two: Youth Safety Administration and Compliance

---

#### A. Participation of Children and Youth

- i. **Registration of Each Child or Youth.** A Parent or legal guardian must complete a registration for each Child and Youth that participates in a Youth Ministry Program or Event, which includes identifying information, any special medical or behavioral circumstances, any legal indemnifications, date of birth, and emergency contact information.
- ii. **Signing the Code of Conduct**
  - a. **Children and Youth to Sign a Code of Conduct.** All Children and Youth must annually sign, electronically or otherwise, a Code of Conduct that outlines the Youth Ministry Program or Event’s behavioral expectations and policies regarding appropriate and inappropriate interactions, as well as a commitment to honor and abide by these Policies. The Code of Conduct should also include a systematic disciplinary policy, which explains that Children and Youth will be suspended or dismissed for policy violations. A model Code of Conduct, simplified for Children and Youth, is attached to these Policies as “**Exhibit 5A.**”
  - b. **Parents to Sign a Code of Conduct.** Parents must annually sign, electronically or otherwise, the Code of Conduct as well, so that they are aware of polices and progressive disciplinary procedures. A model Code of Conduct is attached to these Policies as “**Exhibit 5A.**”
  - c. **Child or Youth Visitors.** If the Child or Youth is a guest of another Child or Youth, the visitor Child or Youth must sign the Code of Conduct, electronically or otherwise, before being allowed to participate in a Youth Ministry Program or Event.
  - d. **Multiple Youth Ministry Programs or Events.** This section applies to each Youth Ministry Program or Event in which a Child or Youth participates.

#### B. Required Youth Worker Forms

Any and all Youth Workers will be registered or re-registered utilizing at least the following, as well as any other processes or procedures that may be required by applicable state law:

- i. **A Standard Registration (or Standard Re-Registration),** which is attached to these Policies as “**Exhibit 1,**” as well as the following:
  - a. **Background Check Authorization** signed, digitally or otherwise, by the Registrant for the release of information found in the registration and the consent to conduct background checks.

- b. **Acknowledgement of Review of Policies** signed, digitally or otherwise, by each Registrant, indicating that they have reviewed and agree to comply with these Policies.
- c. **Mandated and Ethical Reporting Duties Statement** signed, digitally or otherwise, by each Registrant, verifying that the Registrant has received mandated reporting laws applicable to the state in which they are serving.
- d. **Investigation Cooperation Statement** signed, digitally or otherwise, indicating that the Registrant agrees to cooperate fully with any investigation and that failure to do so maybe grounds for dismissal or termination.

### C. **Additional Training and Screening**

Particular Youth Ministry Programs or Events are free (and strongly encouraged) to mandate additional levels of training and screening, as Directors deem appropriate or as may be required by applicable state law. A model Standard Application Form and model Standard Re-Registration Form are attached to these Policies as “**Exhibit 2**” and “**Exhibit 4,**” respectively. In particular, these Policies strongly suggest that Youth Ministry Programs and Events mandate the following:

- i. **Interview** with the Youth Worker, with more than one person present whenever possible. The individual interview provides the opportunity to address concerns or ask questions raised by the application to the specific Youth Ministry Program or Event in question, and also gives the organization the opportunity to watch the Youth Worker and gather some impression of his/her speaking ability and self-presentation.
- ii. **Reference Checks** of at least three (3) persons who are familiar with the way the Youth Worker works with Children and/or Youth. If the Youth Worker has identified previous work with Children and/or Youth, the references must include a supervisor or co-worker from that position.
- iii. **Driving or Motor Vehicles Record Check** if the Youth Worker may be transporting Children or Youth in a vehicle.
- iv. **Additional Training** specific to the Youth Ministry Program or Event in question.
- v. That all Youth Workers sign a **Code of Conduct** before participating in a Youth Ministry Program or Event. A model Code of Conduct is attached to these Policies at “**Exhibit 5.**”

### D. **Timeline of Registration, Training, Screening, and Certification**

- i. **Registration Periods.** In order to facilitate proper record keeping and administration of a complex system involving thousands of Youth Workers, some level of standardization will be necessary.
  - a. **First Registration Period.** Registrants who seek to be a Youth Worker for the entirety of a particular Ecclesiastical Year will register during the First Registration Period. For purposes of illustration, someone who wishes to be a Youth Worker in the 2017-18 Ecclesiastical Year (which runs from September 1, 2017 to August 31, 2018) can register from June 1, 2017 to August 31, 2017.

- b. **Second Registration Period.** Registrants who seek to begin participating in a Youth Ministry Program or Event after the Ecclesiastical Year has already begun will register during the Second Registration Period. For purposes of illustration, someone who wishes to be a Youth Worker in the 2017-18 Ecclesiastical Year, despite the fact that the Ecclesiastical Year has already begun and such Youth Worker has missed the First Registration Period, can nonetheless register from January 1, 2018 to March 31, 2018. This process, if completed, would allow the Registrant to become a Youth Worker for the remainder of the Ecclesiastical Year.

ii. **Training Periods**

- a. **First Registration Period.** Registrants in the First Registration Period will be able to complete their required training during the First Registration Period and an additional month grace period; thus, Registrants may complete their training between June 1 and September 30. For purposes of illustration, someone who wishes to be a Youth Worker in the 2017-18 Ecclesiastical Year (which runs from September 1, 2017 to August 31, 2018) can complete their training at any time between June 1, 2017 and September 30, 2017.
- b. **Second Registration Period.** Registrants in the Second Registration Period will be able to complete their required training during the First Registration Period and an additional month grace period; thus, Registrants may complete their training between January 1 and March 31. For purposes of illustration, someone who wishes to be a Youth Worker in the 2017-18 Ecclesiastical Year, despite the fact that the Ecclesiastical Year has already begun and such Youth Worker has missed the First Registration Period, can complete their training at any time between January 1, 2018 and March 31, 2018. This process, if completed, would allow the Registrant to become a Youth Worker for the remainder of the Ecclesiastical Year.

iii. **Background Check Screening Periods**

- a. **First Registration Period.** Registrants in the First Registration Period will be screened as soon as their registration is processed. Given the possibility of any delays or potential reviews of any red flags that may appear during the Registrant's screening, it is strongly suggested that Registrants complete their registration as close to the beginning of the First Registration Period as possible.
- b. **Second Registration Period.** Registrants in the Second Registration Period will be screened as soon as their registration is processed. Given the possibility of any delays or potential reviews of any red flags that may appear during the Registrant's screening, it is strongly suggested that Registrants complete their registration as close to the beginning of the Second Registration Period as possible.

iv. **Records of Compliance.** In order to establish a clear record of compliance with both these Policies and applicable law, the following reporting procedures must be observed promptly and consistently:

a. **Tracking Registrants**

- 1. **Tracking Registration Process.** Parishes, Metropolis Departments, and the National Department, as applicable, shall track and document, in a secure database



(see Part Two, Section Two (H)), for every Registrant for whom they are responsible, (1) registration or re-registration, (2) completion of mandated annual training, and (3) completion of mandated background checks (if required that year) to ensure that their full roster of Youth Workers has successfully completed the requirements.

2. **Tracking Parish Registrants**

- i. **First Registration Period.** For Registrants processed during the First Registration Period under Part Two, Section One (F)(ii)(a), Parish Council Presidents and Clergy must jointly certify in a letter to the Metropolis/District, dated no later than October 1 of the Ecclesiastical Year in question, that all Youth Workers in the Parish have successfully registered, completed the required training, and successfully passed the required background checks. A template **Parish Compliance Letter** is attached to these Policies as “**Exhibit 7.**”
- ii. **Second Registration Period.** For Registrants processed during the Second Registration Period under Part Two, Section One (F)(ii)(a), Parish Council Presidents and Clergy must jointly certify in a letter to the Metropolis/District, dated no later than April 1 of the Ecclesiastical Year in question, that all Youth Workers in the Parish have successfully registered, completed the required training, and successfully passed the required background checks.

3. **Tracking District/Metropolis Registrants**

- i. **First Registration Period.** For Registrations processed during the First Registration Period under Part Two, Section One (F)(ii)(b), each Metropolis Director must certify in a letter to the National Department, dated no later than October 1 of the Ecclesiastical Year in question, that all Youth Workers in the District/Metropolis have successfully registered, completed the required training, and successfully passed the required background checks. A template **Parish Compliance Letter** is attached to these Policies as “**Exhibit 7.**”
- ii. **Second Registration Period.** For Registrations processed during the First Registration Period under Part Two, Section One (F)(ii)(b), each District/Metropolis Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries must certify in a letter to the National Department, dated no later than April 1 of the Ecclesiastical Year in question, that all Youth Workers in the District/Metropolis have successfully registered, completed the required training, and successfully passed the required background checks.

4. **Tracking Archdiocese Registrants**

- i. **First Registration Period.** For Registrations processed during the First Registration Period under Part Two, Section One (F)(ii)(c), the National Director must certify in a letter to the Legal Committee of the Archdiocesan Council, dated no later than October 1 of the Ecclesiastical Year in question, that all Youth Workers in the District/Metropolis have successfully registered,

completed the required training, and successfully passed the required background checks. A template **Parish Compliance Letter** is attached to these Policies as “**Exhibit 7.**”

- ii. **Second Registration Period.** For Registrations processed during the First Registration Period under Part Two, Section One (F)(ii)(c), the National Director must certify in a letter to the Legal Committee of the Archdiocesan Council, dated no later than April 1 of the Ecclesiastical Year in question, that all Youth Workers in the District/Metropolis have successfully registered, completed the required training, and successfully passed the required background checks.

b. **Tracking Parish and District/Metropolis Compliance**

1. **First Registration Period.** For Registrations processed during the First Registration Period, each Metropolis Director and their Hierarch must certify in a letter to the National Director, dated no later than October 15 of the Ecclesiastical Year in question, both that (i) all Parishes in the District/Metropolis have successfully registered, completed the required training, and successfully passed the required background checks of all their Youth Workers, and (ii) all Clergy in the District/Metropolis have successfully registered, completed the required training, and successfully passed the required background checks. A template **District/Metropolis Compliance Letter** is attached to these Policies as “**Exhibit 8.**”
2. **Second Registration Period.** For Registrations processed during the Second Registration Period, each Metropolis Director and their Hierarch must certify in a letter to the National, dated no later than April 15 of the Ecclesiastical Year in question, both that (i) all Parishes in the District/Metropolis have successfully registered, completed the required training, and successfully passed the required background checks of all their Youth Workers, and (ii) all Clergy in the District/Metropolis have successfully registered, completed the required training, and successfully passed the required background checks.

c. **Tracking Archdiocese-Wide Compliance**

1. **First Registration Period.** For Registrations processed during the First Registration Period, the National Director and the Hierarch must certify in a letter to the Legal Committee of the Archdiocesan Council, dated no later than October 15 of the Ecclesiastical Year in question, that the District and each Metropolises are, to the best of their knowledge, fully compliant with these Policies. A template **Archdiocese Compliance Letter** is attached to these Policies as “**Exhibit 9.**”
2. **Second Registration Period.** For Registrations processed during the Second Registration Period, the National Director and the Hierarch must certify in a letter to the Legal Committee of the Archdiocesan Council, dated no later than April 15 of the Ecclesiastical Year in question, that the District and each Metropolises are, to the best of their knowledge, fully compliant with these Policies. A template **Archdiocese Compliance Letter** is attached to these Policies as “**Exhibit 10.**”

## **E. Parties Responsible for Review of Registrants**

### **i. Primary Review - Parish**

- a. **Parish Council President.** Each Parish Council President shall, as Parish Administrator of these Policies at the Parish, (1) enter the Registrant's pertinent information in the secure database described in Part Two, Section Two (H) below, and (2) review and evaluate each Registrant within the Parish to determine the Registrant's suitability for becoming a Youth Worker. Such review includes both (x) whether the Registrant has completed the training required under these Policies, and (y) whether the Registrant has successfully passed a background check as required by these Policies. External professionals shall be consulted as necessary.
- b. **Delegation.** The Parish Council President may delegate this responsibility to another person in the Parish, preferably not the Priest, upon a motion duly made, seconded, and carried by the Parish Council in valid session, *provided that* written notice of such delegation is promptly sent to both the Hierarch and Metropolis Director.
- c. **Exceptions.** Parishes of limited means and staffing can, in writing, petition their Hierarch and District/Metropolis Youth and Young Adult Ministries Director for assistance in reviewing their Parish Registrants. With the joint permission of the Hierarch and Metropolis Director, the Metropolis Director will assume temporary responsibility for the Parish under this Section (E)(i). Such assistance will need to be requested and granted annually for each new Ministry Year.
- d. **Training.** The designated Parish Administrator of these Policies should complete, every year, refresher training on Praesidium database administration.
- e. **Non-Disclosure Agreement.** The designated Parish Administrator of these Policies shall sign the "**Policies Non-Disclosure Agreement,**" a copy of which is attached to these Policies at "**Exhibit 12.**"

### **ii. Primary Review – District / Metropolis**

- a. **District / Metropolis Director.** Each Metropolis Director shall, as Administrator of these Policies for Registrants under this Section (E)(ii), (1) enter the Registrant's pertinent information in the secure database described in Part Two, Section Two (H) below, and (2) review and evaluate each Registrant within the Parish to determine the Registrant's suitability for becoming a Youth Worker. Such review includes both (x) whether the Registrant has completed the training required under these Policies, and (y) whether the Registrant has successfully passed a background check as required by these Policies. External professionals shall be consulted as necessary.

- b. **Delegation.** The Metropolis Director may delegate this responsibility to another person in the Metropolis Department, to act as Administrator, *provided that* written notice of such delegation be sent to National Director.
- c. **Non-Disclosure Agreement.** The designated District/Metropolis Administrator of these Policies shall sign the “**Policies Non-Disclosure Agreement,**” a copy of which is attached to these Policies at “**Exhibit 12.**”

iii. **Primary Review – Archdiocese**

- a. **National Director.** The National Director shall, as Administrator of these Policies for Registrants under this Section (E)(iii), (1) enter the Registrant’s pertinent information in the secure database described in Part Two, Section Two (H) below, and (2) review and evaluate each Registrant within the Parish to determine the Registrant’s suitability for becoming a Youth Worker. Such review includes both (x) whether the Registrant has completed the training required under these Policies, and (y) whether the Registrant has successfully passed a background check as required by these Policies. External professionals shall be consulted as necessary.
- b. **Delegation.** The National Director may delegate this responsibility to another person in National Department, to act as Administrator.
- c. **Non-Disclosure Agreement.** The designated Archdiocese Administrator of these Policies shall sign the “**Policies Non-Disclosure Agreement,**” a copy of which is attached to these Policies at “**Exhibit 12.**”

**F. Review of Background Check Results**

- i. **Immediate Disqualification.** Should a Registrant’s screening reveal any Disqualifying Items, that person is no longer eligible to be classified as a Youth Worker and will be immediately ineligible to participate in any Youth Ministry Program or Event. The person will promptly be recorded in a secure and confidential database maintained by the National Department, as described in Part Four, Section 7(G)(ii) below.
- ii. **Further Review.** In the case of any red flags that do not directly concern inappropriate sexual activity with a Youth or Child, the Metropolis Director shall forward the case to the Metropolis Background Check Review Board. Registrants subsequently deemed disqualified from Youth Ministry Programs or Events will then be forwarded to the National Department, who will update their records accordingly.
- iii. **Appeals.** A Registrant may challenge the adverse finding of the Metropolis Background Check Review Board by appealing to the National Background Check Review Board. Registrants subsequently deemed disqualified from Youth Ministry Programs or Events will then be forwarded to the National Department, which will update its records accordingly. Registrants deemed qualified to participate in Youth Ministry Programs or Events will then be classified as Youth Workers, and the National Department shall update their records accordingly.

- iv. **Guidelines.** Guidelines for the National Background Check Review Board and Metropolis Background Check Review Board will be available in the “**Guidelines for Background Check Review Boards.**”

## **G. Participation in Multiple Youth Ministry Programs or Events**

- i. **Further Requirements Allowed.** Youth Workers who wish to participate in more than one Youth Ministry Program or Event may be required to complete a new application, individual interview, and new reference checks for each Youth Ministry Program or Event in which they would like to participate, at the discretion of the Director of each such Youth Ministry Programs or Event. A person’s status as a Youth Worker is a necessary prerequisite for participating in a Youth Ministry Program or Event but does not guarantee such participation.
- ii. **Baseline Youth Worker Status.** However, their baseline registration as a Youth Worker shall hold for any and all Youth Ministry Programs or Events in which they participate during the Ecclesiastical Year in question. Thus, if a Youth Worker successfully completed the required training in a given Ecclesiastical Year and successfully passed a background check in a given or the immediately preceding Ecclesiastical Year, such training and background check shall be valid for any and all Youth Ministry Programs or Events in which the Youth Workers participates for that Ecclesiastical Year.

## **H. Confidentiality of Information**

- i. **Secure Databases.** Data collected under Part Two, Sections 2(D)-2(H) shall be kept confidential, maintained in a secure online database accessible by the applicable Administrator(s) at the parish, camp, Metropolis/Direct Archdiocesan District, and/or Archdiocesan Youth and Young Adult Ministries Office, and released only on a need to know basis. Registrant information shall be entered into and maintained in the Praesidium database (Armatus 2.0 as of the writing of these Policies, or any successor database as selected by the National Department), which is the official central repository for such information, according to the procedures outlined in the “**Guidelines for Praesidium Database Administration**” which are attached to these Policies as “**Exhibit 7.**”
- ii. **Reporting Red Flags.** Notwithstanding, the above, any negative report or adverse findings shall be immediately forwarded to the National Director, who shall maintain the information in a secure file and distribute appropriately and promptly to the Youth and Young Adult Ministry Team as it is updated.

# Part Three: Youth Safety Best Practices

## Section One: General Policies

---

### A. General Youth Worker Policies

- i. **Cultivating a Relationship with Christ in His Church.** A person cannot share what he or she does not already possess. Thus Youth Workers are, first and foremost, encouraged to take their relationship with Christ (as members of His Body, the Church) seriously, and to cultivate it on an ongoing basis.
- ii. **Minimum Age Difference.** We strongly suggest that Youth Workers be at least three (3) years older than the age group they have been assigned to supervise.

### B. Encouraged Behaviors

- i. **General Expectations of Youth Workers.** Youth Workers are expected to be loving, kind, diligent, and hardworking people dedicated to the needs of the Children and Youth in their care. Youth Workers should work hard to make sure that all Children and Youth in their care are safe in the Youth Ministry Programs and Events in which they participate, and that all Children and Youth feel welcome and safe in all Youth Ministry Programs and Events.
- ii. **Core Values of Youth Work.** Youth Workers should be guided by the core values of integrity, transparency, and humility. Youth Workers should strive to be morally upright and keep all their interactions with Children and Youth open to the eyes of parents and Directors, while humbly putting the needs of the Children and Youth they serve before their own.
- iii. **Christ-Centered Duty.** Youth Workers should always keep in mind that their duty as Youth Workers is deeply important, centered on the Person of Christ Himself. Everything a Youth Worker says and does in the presence of Children and Youth should be meant to help introduce them to Christ and reveal the Lord to be present in their lives. Because people cannot share what they do not have, all Youth Workers should take steps to cultivate their own relationship with Christ and live as faithful, observant members of the Orthodox Church.
- iv. **Creating a Safe and Welcoming Space.** Youth Workers should make every effort to ensure that Children and Youth experience Youth Ministry Programs and Events as safe and welcoming. This ranges from fundamental matters, like cultivating an environment free of Abuse, to more easily overlooked matters, like greeting Children and Youth with a smile.
- v. **Role Models.** Youth Workers should remember that they serve the Children and Youth as role models, and are to maintain such an attitude (along with corresponding conduct) at all times.

## C. Discouraged Behaviors

- i. **Exclusive Relationships with Children and Youth.** Youth Workers are discouraged from attempting to form exclusive, non-ministry related personal relationships with a Child or Youth.
- ii. **Immediate Family Supervision.** Youth Workers should avoid supervising (e.g. be responsible for observation, evaluation, promotion, or discipline of) an Immediate Family Member when working in a Youth Ministry Program or Event. If such supervision is unavoidable, the immediate Supervisor should provide a designated, un-related person to whom the supervised Immediate Family Member may report complaints (such as a clergyman or other Youth Worker).
- iii. **Dressing and Undressing.** Youth Workers are strongly discouraged from dressing, undressing, bathing, or showering in the presence of Children or Youth. Even where staffing limitations and the layout of the Premises make this difficult, Youth Workers should work hard to maintain clear boundaries and avoid even the potential for inappropriate situations.

## D. Teen Youth Worker Guidelines

- i. **General Guidelines.** Though they assist Youth Workers, Teen Youth Workers are still Youth participants. Therefore, even though they are often given more responsibility, Teen Youth Workers must be provided with guidelines regarding appropriate behavior, and then supervised accordingly. In addition, Youth Workers must understand and recognize that these Teen Youth Workers are still Youth and not their peers.
- ii. **Screening, Training, and Monitoring.** The following guidelines are strongly recommended for Youth Ministry Programs and Events in which Teen Youth Workers participate:
  - a. **Screening.** Directors should Create a screening process for Teen Youth Workers which includes:
    1. a standard application;
    2. an interview with behaviorally based interview questions; and
    3. references (from teachers, counselors, family friends, etc.)
  - b. **Training.** Directors must train Teen Youth Workers in their role in the Youth Ministry Program or Event in which they will participate, and on program policies about appropriate and inappropriate interactions. This training should include the following information:
    1. The difference between appropriate and inappropriate physical and verbal interactions;
    2. The importance of maintaining behavioral boundaries between (i) Teen Youth Workers and Youth and/or Children, and (ii) Teen Youth Workers and other Youth Workers;

3. That Teen Youth Workers are prohibited from being alone or otherwise unsupervised with Children and/or Youth;
  4. That Teen Youth Workers are prohibited from escorting Children and/or Youth to the bathrooms; and
  5. That Teen Youth Workers are prohibited from assisting Children and/or Youth with changing their clothes.
- c. **Monitoring.** Directors must create a system to monitor the Teen Youth Workers, which includes:
1. designating a specific Supervisor who is in charge of the Teen Youth Workers in the Youth Ministry Program or Event in question;
  2. requiring Teen Youth Workers to wear clothing or lanyards that identify them as leaders-in-training and differentiate them from Youth Workers and from Children and/or Youth;
  3. requiring a Supervisor to conduct daily check-ins with Teen Youth Workers they supervise;
  4. considering requiring (i) Teen Youth Workers to keep a log documenting their daily activities and any problems they encounter, and (ii) their Supervisor to review these logs daily.



# Part Three: Youth Safety Best Practices

## Section Two: Youth Worker Interactions With Children and Youth

---

### A. Physical Contact

#### i. General Guidelines

- a. When creating safe boundaries for Children and Youth, it is important to establish what types of affection are appropriate and inappropriate; otherwise, that decision is left to each Youth Worker and leads to confusion.
- b. Stating which behaviors are appropriate and inappropriate allows Youth Workers to both comfortably show positive affection in ministry, and develop the skills needed to identify individuals who are not maintaining safe boundaries with, and safe spaces for, Children and Youth.
- c. Youth Workers should carefully review the following guidelines and use them to maintain safe boundaries and safe spaces during their interactions with Children and Youth.

#### ii. **Appropriate Physical Contact.** Examples of appropriate physical contact include, for purposes of illustration, the list below. This list is not exhaustive and, in the case of a question, the Youth Worker should speak with the Metropolis Director or National Director.

- a. Side hugs
- b. Shoulder-to-shoulder hugs
- c. Pats on the shoulder or back
- d. Handshakes
- e. High-fives, hand slapping, and fist-bumping
- f. Pats on the head when culturally appropriate
- g. Touching hands, shoulders, and arms
- h. Arms around shoulders
- i. Holding hands (with young Children in escorting situations)
- j. Sitting beside small Children
- k. Kneeling or bending down for hugs with small Children
- l. Holding hands during prayer
- m. Kissing on both cheeks when culturally appropriate

#### iii. **Inappropriate Physical Contact.** Examples of inappropriate physical contact include, for purposes of illustration, the list below. Many of them are the behaviors that child molesters use to groom Children or Youth and their parents for later molestation or can be, in and of themselves, Sexual Abuse. This list is not exhaustive and, in the case of a question, the Youth Worker should speak with the Metropolis Director or National Director.

- a. Inappropriate or lengthy embraces
- b. Kisses on the mouth
- c. Having Children over four years old and any Youth sitting on the lap

- d. Wrestling
- e. Piggyback rides
- f. Tickling
- g. Allowing a Child or Youth to cling to a Youth Worker's leg
- h. Any type of inappropriate massage given by or to a Child or Youth
- i. Any form of affection that is unwanted by the Child or Youth or the Youth Worker
- j. Touching knees or legs
- k. Touching bottom, chest, or genital areas other than for appropriate diapering and toileting of infants and toddlers
- l. Showing affection in isolated areas such as bedrooms, closets, staff only areas
- m. Occupying a bed with a Youth or Child
- n. Snapping bras or giving wedgies or similar touch of underwear whether or not it is covered by other clothing
- o. Having private meals with individual Children or Youth

## **B. Verbal Interactions**

### **i. General Guidelines**

- a. When creating safe boundaries and safe spaces for Children and Youth, it is important to establish what types of verbal interactions are appropriate and inappropriate; otherwise, that decision is left to each Youth Worker and leads to confusion.
- b. Stating which behaviors are appropriate and inappropriate allows Youth Workers to both comfortably communicate praise and positive affection in ministry, and develop the skills needed to identify individuals who are not maintaining safe boundaries with, and safe spaces for, Children and Youth.
- c. Youth Workers should carefully review the following guidelines and use them to maintain safe boundaries and safe spaces during their interactions with Children and Youth.

### **ii. Appropriate Verbal Interactions.** Example of appropriate verbal interactions include, for purposes of illustration, the list below. This list is not exhaustive and, in the case of a question, the Youth Worker should speak with the Metropolis Director or National Director.

- a. Positive reinforcement
- b. Appropriate jokes
- c. Encouragement
- d. Verbal Praise

### **iii. Inappropriate Verbal Interactions.** The following forms of verbal interactions are considered inappropriate with Children and Youth in ministry settings. This list is not exhaustive and in the case of a question, the Youth Worker should speak with the Metropolis Director or National Director.

- a. Name-calling
- b. Discussing sexual encounters in a graphic or gratuitous way, or in a way that is divorced from a legitimate ministry discussion or presentation

- c. Involving Children or Youth in the personal problems or issues of the Youth Worker
- d. Secrets
- e. Cursing
- f. Off-color or sexual jokes
- g. Shaming
- h. Belittling
- i. Threatening physical violence
- j. Compliments or comments relating to physique or body development (e.g. “You are sure developing” or “You look really hot in those jeans”)
- k. Demeaning remarks about Children or Youth, or their family

### C. **One-on-One Interactions**

- i. **Being Alone With Child or Youth is Discouraged.** Most Abuse occurs when an adult is alone with a Child or Youth. Therefore, Youth Workers are strongly advised to avoid being alone with a Child or Youth, or multiple Children or Youth, where other Youth Workers cannot easily observe them.
- ii. **Healthy One-on-One Interactions.** Where one-on-one interactions are necessary or unavoidable, Youth Workers should observe the following additional guidelines to manage the risk of Abuse or false allegations of Abuse. One-on-one situations which do not follow these guidelines introduce additional risks for false allegations. Thus Youth Workers will, when meeting one-on-one with Children or Youth:
  - a. Always do so in a public place where the Youth Worker and Child and/or Youth can be in full view of others.
  - b. Avoid physical affection that can be misinterpreted, and limit affection to pats on the shoulder, high-fives, handshakes, and fist bumps.
  - c. If meeting in a room or office, leave the door open or move to an area that can be easily observed by others passing by.
  - d. Inform other Youth Workers and ask them to randomly drop in.
  - e. Document and immediately report any unusual incidents, including disclosures of Abuse or maltreatment, behavior problems and how they were handled, injuries, or any interactions that might be misinterpreted.
- iii. **Tutoring/Private Coaching**
  - a. Youth Workers should receive Supervisor approval before engaging in any tutoring or private coaching sessions.
  - b. Supervisors should keep and maintain a schedule of private tutoring and coaching sessions, which should include times, Youth Workers involved, Children or Youth involved, and location of sessions. Supervisors must also provide regular updates to Directors.
- iv. **Emergency Situations.** Due to the unpredictable nature of ministry, a Youth Worker may unexpectedly and suddenly find himself or herself alone with a Child or Youth (for example, rushing a Child or Youth into the bathroom to treat a bloody nose). In such situations, we strongly suggest that Youth Workers:

- a. Make their presence and activities known to other Youth Workers and/or Children and Youth.
- b. Keep the time spent alone to an absolute minimum.
- c. Document and immediately report any unusual incidents, including disclosures of Abuse or maltreatment, behavior problems and how they were handled, injuries, or any interactions that might be misinterpreted.

#### **D. Non-Ministry Contact**

- i. **Non-Ministry Contact Discouraged.** Many cases of organizational Abuse occur outside of the realm of regularly scheduled Youth Ministry Programs or Events. This contact outside of regularly scheduled activities may put Youth Workers at increased risk, and may include Electronic Communications. It is strongly recommended that Youth Workers do not engage in Non-Ministry Contact. However, if Non-Ministry Contact is unavoidable or necessary, it must continue to be both appropriate and professional, serve as a reflection both of these Polices and the teaching tradition of the Orthodox Church.
- ii. **Appropriate Non-Ministry Contact.** Examples of appropriate Non-Ministry Contact include, for purposes of illustration, the list below. This list is not exhaustive and, in the case of a question, the Youth Worker should speak with the Metropolis Director or National Director.
  - a. Taking groups of Children or Youth on an outing
  - b. Attending sporting activities with groups of Children or Youth
  - c. Attending functions at a Child's or Youth's home, with Parents present
  - d. Incidental contact with Children or Youth at other parish or community events that are not specifically designed for Children or Youth (such as festivals, dinner-dances, etc.)
- iii. **Inappropriate Non-Ministry Contact.** Examples of inappropriate Non-Ministry Contact include, for purposes of illustration, the list below. This list is not exhaustive and in the case of a question, the Youth Worker should speak with the Metropolis Director or National Director.
  - a. Taking one Child or Youth on an outing without the Parents' written permission
  - b. Visiting a Child or Youth in the Child's or Youth's home, without a Parent present
  - c. Entertaining a Child or Youth in the Youth Worker's home
  - d. A lone Child or Youth spending the night with one or more Youth Workers

## E. Gifts

- i. **Exercise Judgment in Gift-Giving.** Molesters routinely groom Children and Youth by giving gifts, thereby endearing themselves to Children and Youth. Youth Workers should exercise caution and good judgment in offering gifts to Children and Youth. In any event, Youth Workers are strongly discouraged from giving gifts or money to individual Children or Youth.
- ii. **Appropriate Gifts.** Examples of appropriate gifts include, for purposes of illustration, the list below. This list is not exhaustive and, in the case of a question, the Youth Worker should speak with the Metropolis Director or National Director.
  - a. Taking groups of Children or Youth on an outing with Parental consent
  - b. Purchasing meals for an entire group of Children or Youth (such as a pizza party for a Parish GOYA group, or ice cream for a Sunday School class)
- iii. **Inappropriate Gifts.** Examples of inappropriate gifts, for purposes of illustration, the list below. This list is not exhaustive and in the case of a question, the Youth Worker should speak with the Metropolis Director or National Director.
  - a. Taking one Child or Youth on an outing without Parental knowledge
  - b. Purchasing gifts for an individual Child or Youth without Parental knowledge

# Part Three: Youth Safety Best Practices

## Section Three: Electronic Communications

---

### A. General Considerations

- i. **Duty of Youth Workers.** All Youth Workers accept a great responsibility for nurturing the lives of Children and Youth, extending far beyond their interaction with them at a Youth Ministry Program or Event. Children and Youth look to Youth Workers as an example of Christian living, and may model many of their decisions based on what they see (or perceive) them doing, both on or offline. It is especially important for Youth Workers to remind themselves of this in the context of Electronic Communications, to counter the temptation to fall into an overly lax or casual mindset that can lead to blurred or crossed boundaries, misunderstandings, or worse.
- ii. **Exercise Great Care.** A Youth Worker will forever be recognized by Children, Youth, parents, clergy, and fellow Youth Workers as a representative of the Church. Any Electronic Communication, especially without its proper and original context, could be misconstrued, ultimately damaging the participants of a particular Youth Ministry Program or Event and GOARCH generally. For this reason, all Youth Workers should carefully consider the content and nature of any type of Electronic Communication with a Child or Youth.

### B. Basic Principles

As technology continues to evolve, providing people with new ways to interact via Electronic Communications, it is imperative that Youth Workers keep several basic principles in mind:

- i. **Be Mindful of Both the Medium and the Message**

In light of the basic principles outlined below, and for purposes of these Policies, Electronic Communications will be grouped into four distinct categories, each with its own guidelines:

- a. **Informational Electronic Communications**

1. **Permitted as Needed.** Youth Workers may, within the limits of these Policies, engage in Informational Electronic Communications as needed.
2. **Example.** For illustrative purpose, an example of Informational Electronic Communication is a Youth Worker sending Children or Youth a reminder email or text about an upcoming event or meeting, or a Child or Youth messaging a Youth Worker to ask for such information.

- b. **Educational Electronic Communications**

1. **Communication Prerequisites.**

- a. Youth Workers may, within the limits of these Policies, engage in Educational

Electronic Communications as needed, *provided that* they only do so when they are appropriately trained and prepared to offer answers consistent with the teaching tradition of the Orthodox Church.

b. Youth Workers may receive such training by completing, for example, studies at an Orthodox Christian seminary or other certification courses, whether offered by GOARCH or other institutions, that present a comprehensive introduction to the teaching tradition of the Orthodox Church.

2. **Defer to Trained Youth Workers.** When in doubt, Youth Workers should promptly refer Youth or Children with whom they are engaged in Educational Electronic Communications to a Youth Worker who is capable of appropriately and competently engaging in the conversation.

3. **In-Person Communications Preferred.** Youth Workers should attempt to steer Educational Electronic Communications, especially as they become more complex and nuanced, back to a Youth Ministry Program or Event to best ensure that the appropriate lessons are being conveyed.

4. **Example.** For illustrative purposes, an example of Educational Electronic Communications is a Child or Youth's message to a Youth Worker asking whether the Church confesses a belief in heaven and hell.

c. **Pastoral Electronic Communications**

1. **Communication Prerequisites.**

a. Youth Workers may, within the limits of these Policies, engage in Pastoral Electronic Communications as needed, *provided that* they only do so when they are appropriately trained and prepared to offer answers both helpful to the need at hand and consistent with the teaching tradition of the Orthodox Church.

b. Youth Workers may receive such training by completing, for example, studies at an Orthodox Christian seminary or other certification courses, whether offered by GOARCH or other institutions, that present comprehensive pastoral training in the teaching tradition of the Orthodox Church.

2. **Defer to Trained Youth Workers.** When in doubt, Youth Workers should promptly refer Youth or Children with whom they are engaged in Pastoral Electronic Communications to a Youth Worker who is capable of appropriately and competently engaging in the conversation.

3. **Lack of Competency Assumed.** Given the specialized training and experience that is needed to engage in pastoral interactions of all kind, including Pastoral Electronic Communications, Youth Workers should generally assume that they are not capable of engaging in such conversations and refer them to a trained and competent Youth Worker as soon as possible.

4. **In-Person Communications Preferred.** Youth Workers should attempt to steer

Pastoral Electronic Communications, especially as they become more complex and nuanced, back to a Youth Ministry Program or Event to best ensure that the appropriate lessons are being conveyed and that the appropriate Christ-centered care is being offered.

5. **Example.** For illustrative purposes, an example of Pastoral Electronic Communications is a Child or Youth's message to Youth Worker asking for advice about what kinds of sexual behavior are allowed and not allowed by the Church.

d. **Crisis Electronic Communications**

1. **Defer to Trained Professionals.**

- a. Unless properly trained in ways to respond to or treat, all Youth Workers must immediately refer Crisis Electronic Communications to trained and competent mental health workers.
- b. Youth Workers may receive such training by becoming certified in mental health or crisis counseling by a licensed mental health group or organization.
- c. Clergy in particular may, from time to time, as a part of their vocation, encounter Crisis Electronic Communications. Clergy who do not have such a background in mental health or crisis counseling must acknowledge the limits of their training so as not cause further harm to the Youth or Child who contact them with Crisis Electronic Communications.

2. **Promptly Report Abuse.** Subject to applicable law, Youth Workers must promptly report instances of Abuse to their Supervisor and the appropriate authorities.

3. **Suicide and Suicidal Ideation.** If a Youth Worker is contacted by a Child or Youth who threatens to attempt suicide or discloses suicidal ideation, that Youth Worker must immediately call 911 and seek the immediate intervention of trained professionals.

4. **Example.** For illustrative purposes, an example of Crisis Electronic Communications is a Child or Youth's message to a Youth Worker confessing suicidal ideation.

ii. **Maintain Proper and Healthy Boundaries**

Youth Workers should always be mindful that, relative to the Children or Youth in their care, they are in a position of ministry and authority rather than friendship. Given the inherent differences of age and position, a relationship between a Youth Worker and a Child or Youth will inherently be imbalanced, making a friendship of equals impossible. Youth Workers must understand this and understand that any Electronic Communication, exchange of contact information, or any communications resulting from such exchange, should be appropriate and related either directly to a Youth Ministry Program or personal counseling/direction.



a. **Discouraged Behaviors.**

1. Youth Workers should avoid proactively distributing their personal contact information (i.e. personal cell phone number, personal email address, etc.) to particular Children or Youth, as opposed to generally making such contact information available to all the participants of a Youth Ministry Program or Event.
2. Youth Workers are discouraged from proactively initiating any Electronic Communication with Children or Youth, except for Organizational Electronic Communications. When Youth Workers proactively initiate Electronic Communications, they run the risk of blurring boundaries and exploiting the unequal power between Youth Workers and Children/Youth; therefore, Youth Workers should only initiate Electronic Communications with Children or Youth with caution and when pastorally necessary.
3. Given the private and casual nature of Electronic Communications generally, Youth Workers should exercise great care before entering into any Electronic Communications, and should avoid the temptation to take any Electronic Communications lightly, or treat them in a way that risks compromising healthy boundaries.

iii. **Be Transparent**

Secrets, at best, increase the likelihood of scandalous misunderstandings and, at worst, provide the space for inappropriate communications and contact. The Church needs to be a safe space that allows Children and Youth to develop healthy, Christ-centered relationships with transformative mentors in the Faith, whether clergy or laity. However, to ensure that such relationships are in fact safe and Christ-centered, and to avoid the possibility of misunderstanding and misinterpretation, it is critical that Youth Workers cultivate an atmosphere of transparency regarding their Electronic Communications with Children and Youth.

To that end, Youth Workers should endeavor to follow the following guidelines:

- a. **Inform Parents.** Youth Workers should make an effort to get to know the Parents of the Children and Youth in their care, especially ones with whom they engage in Electronic Communications, and inform the Parents that such Electronic Communications occur;
- b. **Send Copies to Parents.** In the case of Informational Electronic Communications, Youth Workers should share with Parents copies of all information that they share with Children or Youth, in a convenient form (for instance, information shared with Children or Youth via text may be shared with Parents via email);
- c. **Keep Copies.** Whenever possible, Youth Workers should keep copies of Electronic Communications with Children or Youth; and
- d. **Notify Supervisor.** Youth Workers should immediately notify their Supervisor (and appropriate authorities, if applicable) if any Electronic Communication from the Youth or Child (1) is sensitive, inappropriate, or not within the acceptable spectrum of interactions between a Youth Worker and a Child or Youth, or (2) is Crisis Electronic Communication.

This may include communication that reveals danger, harm, abuse, flirtatious content or invitations, sexually explicit content, and personal photographs or information.

iv. **Know Your Limits**

All Youth Workers must be conscious, both of the limits of their own knowledge and pastoral skills, and of the limits of the particular form of Electronic Communication they may be using.

- a. **In-Person Communications Preferred.** Because Electronic Communications lack the nuance of in-person communications, where possible, Youth Workers should attempt to steer Electronic Communications to in-person interactions at Youth Ministry Programs or Events.
- b. **Defer to Trained Youth Workers and/or Professionals.** Because of the pastoral sensitivity of certain conversations, and the risk of misleading or otherwise mishandling interactions with Children or Youth, Youth Workers must recognize when a particular interaction needs to be referred to a person with the training and competency needed to properly engage with the Child or Youth in question. Such person may be a more experienced Youth Worker, a clergyman in particular, or a mental health professional, as needed.
- c. **Avoid Extended Communications.** To avoid the blurring of critical boundaries, Youth Workers should avoid long or extended Electronic Communications with Children. Such communications are best kept in the nature of Informational Electronic Communications.
- d. **Exercise Care in Electronic Communications With Opposite Sex.** Because of the heightened risk of misunderstandings and situations that could be misinterpreted, Youth Workers are encouraged to exercise great care when engaging in Electronic Communications with Youth or Children of the opposite sex.
- e. **No Discrimination.** Youth Workers should never engage in Electronic Communications that in any way communicate sexual, racial, or other discriminatory content.
- f. **Avoid Confrontations.** Youth Workers should avoid getting involved in confrontations in any social media forum.
- g. **Report Immediately.** Youth Workers must immediately report any inappropriate Electronic Communications they receive from Children or Youth to the Director.

v. **Be a Christ-Centered Mentor**

Any interactions with Children or Youth through Electronic Communication should be Christ-centered, appropriate, professional, and serve as a reflection of these Policies. All Youth Workers should remember that they are not friends or peers with Children or Youth, but are rather authority figures whose work reflects on Christ and His Church, and will shape the direction of a Child's/Youth's life in Christ.

To that end, Youth Workers will:

- a. ensure that their Electronic Communications and various social media channels contain only appropriate, Christ-centered content;
- b. promptly remove any inappropriate materials with which they have been “tagged” or otherwise associated, and instruct the person responsible to refrain from such posting again in the future;
- c. monitor their own profile/site regularly to make sure that they are reasonably aware, at all times, of the content posted there;
- d. refrain from using Electronic Communications to:
  - 1. depict the abuse of alcohol and drugs, sexual behavior;
  - 2. engage in sexual harassment or Bullying; or
  - 3. use obscenities or profanity.

vi. **Personal Electronic Communications Differ from Institutional Ones**

Youth Workers may find that they can engage in Electronic Communications with Children or Youth either through personal social media accounts or Institutional Social Media Channels. In order to maintain proper boundaries, Youth Workers should follow the following guidelines when administering such Institutional Social Media Channels.

a. **No “Following” or “Friending” of Children or Youth.**

- 1. Youth Workers should not follow, friend, or otherwise allow Institutional Social Media Channels to have access to a Child or Youth’s social media accounts. Institutional Social Media Channels should be used to post news, updates, media, and other items, rather than to access a Child or Youth’s social media accounts.
- 2. Youth Workers should use Institutional Social Media Channels to communicate with people, especially Children and Youth, through public comments rather than private and direct messages.

b. **Follow or Friend Only Other Institutional Media Channels.**

- 1. Institutional Social Media Channels should only follow, friend, or otherwise have access to other Institutional Media Channels. Thus, for example, the social media accounts of a summer camp should only follow the social media accounts of other summer camps, parishes, the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, its home Metropolis or Direct Archdiocesan District, etc.
- 2. Institutional Media Channels may, at the discretion of the Directors of the institutions or programs they represent, follow the social media accounts of their leadership. Thus, for example, the social media accounts of a summer camp may follow the social media accounts of that summer camp’s director and other high-level program staff.

c. **Access By Multiple Youth Workers.** In the interest of transparency, it is best that multiple Youth Workers have access to Institutional Social Media Channels. This ensures

that multiple Youth Workers have access to and can monitor any Electronic Communications entered into with Children or Youth.

- d. **Institutional Social Media Channels Preferred.** Given the private nature of personal social media accounts, we suggest that all Electronic Communications be conducted through Institutional Social Media Channels. This can help such Electronic Communications maintain a sense of transparency and professionalism, supported by proper boundaries, which would be harder to maintain with personal social media accounts.

## Part Three: Youth Safety Best Practices

### Section Four: Registration of Children and Youth, Parental Information

---

#### A. Informing Parents, Children, and Youth

- i. **Signing In and Out of Programs or Events.** We encourage that all Children and Youth sign-in and sign-out of any Youth Ministry Program or Event so that the Youth Ministry Program or Event in question has a record of (a) who is present at all times, (b) when a Child and Youth left a Youth Ministry Program or Event, and (c) with whom that Child or Youth left.
- ii. **Information Sessions.** We encourage Directors to offer informational sessions for Parents to help introduce them to the Youth Ministry Program or Event in question. This meeting, whether in person or online in the form of a webinar, will provide an opportunity to review expectations and requirements, and establish a relationship with the Parents.

## Part Three: Youth Safety Best Practices

### Section Five: Monitoring and Supervising Programs and Events

---

#### A. Guidelines Based on Age and Number of Children and Youth Present

##### i. Youth Worker to Child/Youth Ratios

- a. **Minimum Number of Youth Workers Present.** We strongly suggest that every Youth Ministry Program be supervised by at least two (2) Youth Workers at all times and shall adhere to the Ratios below. To the extent that two Youth Workers are not available to supervise a particular Youth Ministry Program or event, the present Youth Worker should be particularly mindful of properly supervising the Children or Youth in such Youth Worker's care.
- b. **Minimum Ratios.** We strongly suggest that all Youth Ministry Programs and Events observe the following minimum Ratios, according to the age of participating Children and Youth. Please refer to local, state, and licensing requirements for further questions, as these requirements may necessitate that Youth Ministry Programs and Events exceed the minimum Ratios. The specific Ratios of a particular Youth Ministry Program or Event will also differ depending on the specific character of the Youth Ministry Program or Event in question (for example, classroom education vs. field trips).
  1. *Age 3:* 1:7
  2. *Ages 4-5:* 1:8
  3. *Ages 6-11:* 1:10
  4. *Ages 12-18:* 1:12
- c. **Exceeding Ratios Encouraged.** Youth Ministry Programs or Events are strongly encouraged to exceed the Ratios based on the goals of the Youth Ministry Program or Event in question and the design of the Premises on which it is held.
- d. **Increasing Ratios Under Special Circumstances.** Directors should adjust the Ratio for Youth Ministry Programs or Events that serve Children and Youth with special needs. Compliance with at least the established Ratio is recommended at all times.
- e. **Teen Youth Workers.** Because Teen Youth Workers are not permitted to be alone with, or have sole responsibility for, Children or Youth, Teen Youth Workers will only count as Youth Workers for Ratio purposes when they are properly supervised. See Part Four, Section One (H)(ii).

##### ii. Mixed Age Groups

- a. **Recommended Age Gaps.** In most incidents involving Peer-to-Peer Abuse, the Children or Youth are from different age groups. We recommend that the largest age gap between the oldest and youngest Child or Youth in a Youth Ministry Program or Event is no more than 3-4 years.

- b. **Special Circumstances.** In cases where it is inevitable to have mixed age groups, each Youth Ministry Program or Event is responsible for establishing specific guidelines for additional monitoring and supervision. Such guidelines may include increasing the number of Youth Workers, further limiting the authorized area, assigning specific Children or Youth to each Youth Worker, etc. Youth Workers should also be aware that close line of sight supervision is required when monitoring Youth Ministry Programs or Events that mix age groups.

## **B. Cell Phone Use During a Youth Ministry Program or Event**

- i. **Limited Use of Cell Phones During Youth Ministry Program or Event.** Youth Workers should limit their personal cell phone use to breaks and other times when they are off duty, and ensure that friends and family members are aware of this Policy.
- ii. **Acceptable Use of Cell Phones During Youth Ministry Program or Event**
  - a. **Permitted Use.** Youth Workers may, with the permission of Directors, use cell phones to facilitate the Youth Ministry Program or Event in question. Permitted uses of cell phones include, but are not limited to: playing chant or other liturgical music, playing a ministry video for Children or Youth, and displaying the icon of a saint or holiday.
  - b. **Potential Acceptable Uses.** Situations which may require use of personal electronic communication devices include:
    - 1. Field Trips
    - 2. Off-Site Activities or Events
    - 3. Emergencies

## **C. Monitoring the Premises**

- i. **General Guidelines.** Directors should ensure that the Premises are well-monitored by Youth Workers, and that neither Children nor Youth are left unattended during any portion of a Youth Ministry Program or Event. This includes free time in particular, which is not a time for Youth Workers to shirk their duties or create dangerous environments through lax supervision and oversight. To facilitate the creation of a safe environment, Directors must ensure that:
  - a. all Children and Youth are accounted for at all times, whether in specific sessions or activities or during free time in a designated area;
  - b. Youth Workers are assigned specific supervision responsibilities over authorized areas (especially high-risk areas) of the Premises;
  - c. Youth Workers are assigned specific supervision responsibilities over a particular roster of Youth or Children;

- d. Supervisors regularly yet spontaneously (i.e., not on a predictable schedule) monitor authorized areas of the Premises, with particular attention given to high-risk areas of the Premises; and
- e. Supervisors record when they monitor authorized areas of the Premises, whether by using checklists or some other means.

ii. **Private Premises.**

- a. **Check In and Out.** We strongly suggest that any person who enters the Premises during a Youth Ministry Program or Event: (i) check-in and check-out at a designated checkpoint, and (ii) that a Director/Supervisor maintain a record of names and check-in and check-out times.
- b. **Heightened Vigilance.** All Youth Workers should maintain heightened vigilance and attentiveness when Non-Youth Workers and Youth Worker Support Staff are on the Premises.
- c. **Supervising Non-Youth Workers and Youth Worker Support Staff.** Directors should ensure that any Non-Youth Workers and Youth Worker Support Staff who are on the Premises while a Youth Ministry Program or Event is in session are carefully supervised.
- d. **Single Entrance and Exit Preferred.** When possible, Directors should designate no more than a single point of entry and exit in the Premises, and assign Youth Workers to consistently monitor it and check people in and out of the Premises.
- e. **Multiple Entrances and Exits.** If there is more than one entrance or exit to the Premises, Directors should assign Youth Workers to consistently monitor these points of access and check people in and out of the Premises.
- f. **Premises Inspection Checklist.** Directors should assign one or more Youth Workers who must complete a Premises inspection checklist, paying particular attention to these high risk areas:
  - 1. Bathrooms/Locker Rooms
  - 2. Pools
  - 3. Playground/Outdoors
  - 4. Sleeping areas
  - 5. Buses
  - 6. Isolated Areas
  - 7. Stairwells
  - 8. Unused/empty rooms
  - 9. Closets/Utility/Storage Rooms
- g. **Identify High Risk Areas.** Directors should identify any high-risk areas on the Premises in advance and make sure Youth Workers are aware of them and assigned to safely monitor them, as is further outlined in Part Four, Section Five (E) below.



iii. **Public Premises.**

- a. **Compensating for Public Access.** Because it is impossible to limit access to a Public Premises with a checkpoint, Directors should assign Youth Workers to monitor either specific Children and Youth or specific areas of the Premises, as appropriate for the specific Premises in question.
- b. **Designating Areas for Children and Youth.** When possible, Youth Workers should specifically designate which areas of the Premises Children and Youth may enter, and at which times. This will greatly facilitate monitoring Children and Youth during a Youth Ministry Program or Event.
- c. **Heightened Vigilance.** All Youth Workers should maintain heightened vigilance and attentiveness when Youth Ministry Programs or Events take place on Public Premises, both due to the presence of Non-Youth Workers and the relative freedom of Children and Youth to wander without the more heightened supervision that is possible in a Private Premises.

iv. **Off-Site Activities or Events.** Youth Ministry Programs or Events that are generally held on a particular Premises may occasionally transport Children or Youth to a different Premises for Off-Site Activities or Events. In such situations, Youth Workers should observe the following guidelines:

- a. **Receive Director Approval.** Youth Workers should receive Director approval for all Off-Site Activities or Events;
- b. **Receive Parental Approval.** Youth Workers should receive Parental approval before Children or Youth participate in the Off-Site Activity or Event;
- c. **Emergency Contacts.** Youth Workers should maintain copies of emergency contacts for each participating Child or Youth;
- d. **Maintain Ratios.** Youth Workers should adhere to any heightened Ratios set by the Director for the Off-Site Activity or Event;
- e. **Common Dress.** Both Youth Workers and Children/Youth should dress in a way that makes them easily identifiable as part of the Off-Site Activity or Event;
- f. **Follow Bathroom and Locker Room Procedures.** Youth Workers should follow any heightened bathroom and locker room procedures set by the Director for the Off-Site Activity or Event;
- g. **Transportation Procedures.** Youth Workers should adhere to transportation procedures specified by the Director;
- h. **Supervisor Monitoring.** Directors should set specific instructions for a Supervisor to observe the Off-Site Activity or Event at scheduled times and random intervals; and

- i. **Take Premises into Account.** Directors should consider the layout of the specific Premises in question and implement any other necessary recommendations based on the location and type of Off-Site Activity or Event (for example, amusement parks, water parks, arcades, etc.).

## **D. Direct and Indirect Monitoring of Children and Youth**

- i. **General Considerations.** Children and Youth can be supervised directly in structured activities and indirectly when they are in authorized areas of the Premises.
- ii. **Sign-In Sheet and Roster.** Youth Ministry Programs or Events should have a master sign-in / sign-out sheet listing all participating Children and Youth, to track attendance and monitor who is present, while Youth Workers should have a roster of particular Children or Youth for whom they are responsible.
- iii. **General Monitoring Techniques.** While participating in a Youth Ministry Program or Event, Children and Youth can be supervised directly, indirectly, or with a combination of the two techniques.
  - a. **Direct Monitoring.** The following are examples of direct monitoring:
    1. Offer structured, scheduled activities (e.g. classroom lessons, retreat sessions, basketball tournaments, swimming activities, arts and crafts, etc.)
    2. Assign one or more Youth Workers to lead and supervise the activities
  - b. **Indirect Monitoring.** The following are examples of indirect monitoring:
    1. Designate certain buildings and/or areas as authorized areas of the Premises (e.g. gymnasium, game area, classroom for homework, etc.)
    2. Authorized areas must be easily visible and routinely and systematically checked
    3. Inform all Youth Workers which areas of the Premises are authorized and which are not
    4. Let Children and Youth know that they will be supervised at all times
- iv. **Name Tags.** We recommend that all Youth Workers wear nametags or identifying clothing so that Children and Youth can easily recognize them. This especially applies for short-term Youth Ministry Programs or Events, such as retreats, or the first day of a long-term Youth Ministry Program or Event, such as a session of summer camp or semester of Sunday School. Over time, as Youth and Children get to know the Youth Workers in the Youth Ministry Program or Event, the need for identifying name tags diminishes.
- v. **Additional Guidelines.** Directors should train all Youth Workers to:
  - a. direct Children and Youth to the structured activities or authorized areas of the Premises;

- b. redirect Children and Youth who are not in an authorized area of the Premises or who are not participating in a structured activity;
- c. be aware of the risks involved with mixing age groups and how to monitor activities involving mixed age groups;
- d. routinely monitor high risk areas of the Premises (such as bathrooms, locker rooms, and unused rooms);
- e. designate specific Youth Workers to supervise high risk areas of the Premises; and
- f. document the scheduled and periodic sweeps of high-risk areas of the Premises.

## **E. Monitoring High Risk Activities and Areas**

- i. **Bathroom Activities.** Most incidents of Peer-to-Peer Abuse occur in the bathrooms, necessitating extra diligence on the part of Youth Workers. Thus, Youth Workers should observe the following guidelines:
  - a. **Scan Facilities Before Use.** When supervising bathroom use, Youth Workers should first quickly scan the bathroom before allowing Children and Youth to enter.
  - b. **Group Bathroom Breaks.** In the event of group bathroom breaks, Youth Workers should:
    - 1. follow the Rule of Three;
    - 2. if the bathroom only has one stall, have only one Child or Youth enter the bathroom while the others wait outside with the Youth Worker;
    - 3. if there are multiple stalls, only send in as many Children or Youth as there are stalls;
    - 4. avoid instances where Children and Youth of different ages use the bathroom at the same time; and
    - 5. stand outside the bathroom door but remain within earshot.
  - c. **Single Stall Bathrooms.** In the event the Premises have single stall bathrooms, Youth Workers should:
    - 1. require Child or Youth to ask permission to use the bathroom;
    - 2. frequently check bathrooms;
    - 3. not use the bathroom at the same time as Children and Youth; and
    - 4. if assisting Children in the stalls, keep the door to the stall open.

- ii. **Locker Room Activities.** Locker rooms are another area which bring increased risks of Peer-to-Peer Abuse. Thus, Youth Workers should observe the following guidelines:
  - a. **Be Within Earshot.** Directors should assign Youth Workers to stand within earshot of the locker room when in use by Children or Youth.
  - b. **Check Inside.** Directors should assign Youth Workers to intermittently and briefly check inside the locker room so Children and Youth know the locker room is monitored.
  - c. **Consistent Ages.** Youth Workers should discourage the use of locker rooms by Children and Youth of different ages at the same time.
  - d. **Prohibit Horseplay.** Youth Workers should prohibit the use of locker room horseplay such as towel snapping.
  - e. **Design Premises to Facilitate Monitoring.** When possible, Youth Workers should arrange lockers so that Youth Workers will be able to safely monitor the Premises.
  
- iii. **Shower Activities.** Showering time is another time which brings increased risks of Abuse. Thus, Youth Workers should observe the following guidelines:
  - a. **Shower Schedule.** Youth Workers are strongly discouraged from showering at the same time as Children or Youth. To that end, Directors should create shower schedules that will permit supervision of the Children or Youth while Youth Workers shower. If the Premises or the schedule does not allow for that, one shower stall shall be designated exclusively for Youth Workers.
  - b. **Monitoring Shower Facilities.** While Children or Youth shower, at least one Youth Worker should stand in the bathroom doorway and within earshot of Children or Youth. Youth Workers should ensure that only one Child or Youth is in each shower. Directors should, when possible, utilize shower curtains that do not go all the way to the floor, so that Youth Workers can easily see how many Children or Youth are in each shower stall.
  - c. **Appropriate Dress.** Everyone, including Youth Workers, Children, and Youth, should be dressed or covered by a bathrobe when leaving a shower stall and before heading back to their lodging accommodations. At no point should anyone be walking around in only a towel or without a shirt on.
  
- iv. **Swimming Activities.** Swimming, whether at a pool or beach, is another activity which brings increased risks of Abuse as well as physical dangers. Thus, Youth Workers should observe the following guidelines:
  - a. **Monitoring Swim Time.** Youth Workers should ensure that all Children and Youth are carefully monitored whenever they are in or around a swimming pool, beach, lake, or other swim facility. A duly trained lifeguard must always be on duty whenever Children or Youth have swim time.

- b. **Heightened Precautions Around Water.** Youth Workers should maintain good order and discipline in and around water and ensure, for example, that no one is running along the side of a pool or engaging in horseplay in the water.
- v. **Transition Times and Free Times.** Transition times and free-choice times (or free times) pose a high risk for incidents because during these times, Youth Workers may not be assigned a particular group of Children or Youth to supervise. To decrease the risk of incidents, Directors should:
  - a. require Children and Youth to remain in line-of-sight of Youth Workers at all times;
  - b. specify the Ratio;
  - c. specify narrow geographic boundaries in the authorized areas;
  - d. ensure that all Youth Workers are assigned specific authorized areas to supervise;
  - e. include bathroom procedures in their directions to Youth Workers;
  - f. require periodic roll calls for each age group; and
  - g. require Supervisors to conduct periodic check-ins and sweeps of the entire activity area.
- vi. **Playground/Outdoor Activities.** When a Youth Ministry Program or Event includes time at a playground or other outdoor facility, Directors should:
  - a. instruct Youth Workers to keep Children and Youth in their lines of sight at all times;
  - b. define specific and narrow geographic boundaries around the playground/outdoor area;
  - c. specify instructions on how Youth Workers should monitor areas of the Premises that include barriers of supervision (such as storage sheds, playhouses, tunnels, and shrubs);
  - d. assign Youth Workers specific areas to supervise;
  - e. include bathroom procedures in their instructions to Youth Workers;
  - f. instruct Youth Workers to conduct periodic roll calls for each age group; and
  - g. instruct Supervisors to conduct periodic check-ins and assessments of the activity period and of the entire activity area.

## **F. Monitoring Youth and Children in Transit**

- i. **General Transportation.** Transporting Children and Youth may increase the risk of Abuse or false allegations of Abuse because Youth Workers may be alone with a Child or Youth or may make unauthorized stops with Children or Youth. In addition, transportation activities may

provide a time for unsupervised Children and Youth to engage in Peer-to-Peer Abuse. Thus, Youth Workers should observe the following guidelines:

- a. **Receive Permission.** Youth Workers should (1) receive written permission forms from Parents before Youth Workers transport Children and Youth for any purpose and (2) take copies of these permission forms and medical releases with them on the trip, with copies in the Director's office or an equivalent office space;
  - b. **Rosters and Roll Call.** Youth Workers should have a list of the Children and Youth on the trip, and use it to take roll when (1) boarding the vehicle, (2) leaving the vehicle, (3) periodically throughout the trip, and (4) again when boarding the vehicle;
  - c. **Maintain Ratios and Rule of Three.** Youth Workers should make every effort to adhere to the Ratios of the Youth Ministry Program or Event, even while in transit, and adhere to the Rule of Three at a minimum (given the driver's necessary attention on the road rather than on the Children and Youth in the vehicle, the driver does not count as a Youth Worker for Ratio purposes);
  - d. **Spread Out for Maximum Supervision.** Youth Workers should sit in seats that permit maximum supervision and are spread throughout the vehicle;
  - e. **Discourage Mixed Ages Sitting Together.** Because of the risk of Peer-to-Peer Abuse, Youth Workers should discourage mixed age groups from sitting together;
  - f. **Seating for High Risk Youth and Children.** When possible, Youth Workers should seat high risk Children and Youth by themselves or with a Youth Worker;
  - g. **No Unauthorized Stops.** Youth Workers should limit drivers from making unauthorized or unscheduled stops, except for necessary bathroom stops or other necessary emergency stops;
  - h. **Keep Good Records.** Youth Workers should, where applicable (such as in mentoring programs), document (1) the beginning and ending time of the trip, (2) the names of the Children and Youth being transported, and (3) the destination; and
  - i. **Notices of Concern.** Youth Workers should document any unusual occurrences by promptly filling out and submitting a Notice of Concern to their direct Supervisor, which is attached to these Policies as **"Exhibit 6."**
- ii. **Public Transportation.** When a Youth Ministry Program or event uses public transportation to transport Children or Youth, Youth Workers should, in addition to the general guidelines above, observe the following guidelines:
- a. **Keep Children and Youth Together.** Youth Workers should ensure that Children and Youth remain in one area of the vehicle, whenever possible; and
  - b. **Remain With Assigned Children or Youth.** Youth Workers should remain with the group to whom they are assigned while on the vehicle.

## G. Monitoring Overnight Activities

- i. **General Policies.** Overnight Activities present unique risks to Children, Youth, and Youth Workers. They often involve changing clothes, groups of both genders and different ages in a more intimate atmosphere than usual, more unstructured activities, and increased supervision demands for Youth Workers. Thus, Directors should observe the following guidelines:
  - a. **Document and Approve.** Directors should document and approve, in writing, all Overnight Activities.
  - b. **Check-In Regularly.** Directors should regularly and randomly observe Overnight Activities on a scheduled and periodic basis; and assign Supervisors to do the same.
  - c. **Appoint a Supervisor.** Directors should appoint a Supervisor to supervise the Overnight Activity.
  - d. **Meet With Youth Workers Beforehand.** Directors should lead a meeting with all Youth Workers to discuss the unique risks of Overnight Activities, unique elements of the specific Overnight Activity and Premises in question, and to review the specific policies and procedures.
  - e. **Inform Parents.** Directors should provide Parents with written information about the Overnight Activity.
  - f. **Secure Parental Permission.** All Parents must sign a permission slip for their Children and Youth to attend the Overnight Activity.
  - g. **Follow the Ratios.** Directors should schedule Youth Workers according to the Ratios presented in these Policies.
  - h. **Identifying Premises.** Directors should require that any meetings with the group be hosted in open and observable areas, and not in a Youth Worker's, a Child's, or a Youth's room.
  - i. **Define the Premises.** Directors should clearly define the Premises and explain such boundaries to Children and Youth.
  - j. **Assign Pairs for Walk-Throughs.** Directors should require that, when performing room checks or "walk-throughs," Youth Workers always go in pairs.
  - k. **Set Rosters for Youth Workers.** Directors should assign each Youth Worker to supervise a specific group of Children or Youth.
  - l. **Rosters and Head Counts.** Directors should require each Youth Workers to (i) maintain a role sheet that lists all of the Children and Youth in his or her group, and (2) conduct head counts and roll checks routinely throughout the Overnight Activity.
  - m. **Monitor High-Risk Areas.** Directors should assign Youth Workers to high-risk areas in the Premises, such as the bathrooms, entrances and exits, hallways, etc., *provided that*, if it

is not possible to assign specific Youth Workers to these areas, the Director should assign specific Youth Workers to conduct periodic facility “walk-throughs.”

- n. **Night Duty.** Directors should require that all Youth Workers are to be on monitoring/supervision duty in their assigned areas at night until an hour after lights out and all is quiet.
  - o. **Private Homes.** Overnight Activities at private homes are prohibited unless approved by the Director/Supervisor.
- ii. **Individual Room Sleeping.** In the event an Overnight Activity is held on a Premises which allows for individual room sleeping, such as a hotel or camp ground with separate tents, sleeping arrangement during should be arranged as follows:
- a. **Rooms for Youth Workers.** Youth Workers should have their own room. If a Youth Worker must share a room with Children or Youth, Parental consent of each Child or Youth in the room is required, and at least two Children or Youth must be in the room. Youth Workers must Observe the Rule of Three at all times.
  - b. **Sharing Beds With Other Children or Youth.** Given the risk of Peer to Peer Abuse, we strongly suggest that no more than one Child or Youth be assigned to a single bed, *except that* siblings may share a bed.
  - c. **Separate Floors for Boys and Girls.** When possible, Youth Workers should separate female and male Children and Youth onto different floors of a hotel, retreat center, or other multi-floor Premises.
- iii. **Open Space Sleeping.** In the event an Overnight Activity is held on a Premises which allows for open space or open room sleeping, such as gymnasiums or cabin with an open floor, sleeping arrangement during should be arranged as follows:
- a. **Spacing of Youth Workers.** Multiple Youth Workers may sleep in the same space with a group of Children or Youth, and they should be spread throughout the space in a manner that allows for maximum supervision and decreases the opportunity for Children and Youth to sneak out (such as by the door).
  - b. **Space for Boys and Girls.** Youth Workers should separate female and male Children and Youth by as much space as possible.

## H. Director and Supervisor Guidelines

As part of their duty to supervise Youth Ministry Programs and Events, as well as the Children, Youth, and Youth Workers who participate in them, all Directors and Supervisors should observe the following guidelines:

- i. **Visit Regularly.** Directors/Supervisors should regularly visit all Youth Ministry Programs or Events to ensure that all activities are well-managed and that these Policies are observed by all in attendance.



- ii. **Keep a record.** Directors and Supervisors should document their supervision visits. These logs should include:
  - a. the Director's/Supervisor's arrival and departure times at the Premises;
  - b. which Children and Youth and parents were present; and
  - c. a summary of the information collected.
- iii. **Provide Feedback.** Directors and Supervisors should provide Youth Workers with feedback about visits, and any steps the Youth Workers can take to improve their performance and/or the overall quality and safety of the Youth Ministry Program or Event.
- iv. **Vary Your Observation Times.** Directors and Supervisors should not develop a predictable pattern of observation, but should rather visit at different times each day, as well as occasionally leave and come back immediately.
- v. **Arrive Before Youth Workers.** Directors and Supervisors should always arrive before the start of a Youth Ministry Program or Event in order to check the punctuality and routine that Youth Workers follow to prepare for the Children and Youth to arrive, and to be available to handle any last minute issues that may arise.
- vi. **Survey the Physical Environment.** Directors and Supervisors should be aware of any issues the Premises may present to the Youth Ministry Program or Event (such as physical obstacles that may impede monitoring Children and Youth), and be prepared to address them.
- vii. **Watch Activities.** Directors and Supervisors should observe activities to, for example, be aware of their organization, the participation of Youth Workers, and whether a predetermined schedule is being followed.
- viii. **Pay Careful Attention to Activities in High Risk Areas.** Directors and Supervisors should pay particular attention to activities in high-risk areas, like bathrooms and locker rooms, to ensure that the Youth Workers are complying with these Policies.
- ix. **Observe Youth Worker Interactions with Children and Youth.** Directors and Supervisors should observe and ask whether Youth Workers:
  - a. use the proper voice tone with Children and Youth;
  - b. give praise to Children and Youth;
  - c. follow the physical affection guidelines;
  - d. know the Children and Youth by first and last name;
  - e. sound enthusiastic;
  - f. set limits and boundaries with Children and Youth;
  - g. interact with all of the Children and Youth;
  - h. pay undue attention to any particular Child or Youth; and

- i. listen to the Children and Youth when they make reports or express concerns.
- x. **Observe Youth Worker Interactions With Each Other.** Directors and Supervisors should observe and ask whether Youth Workers:
  - a. pay more attention to the Children and Youth than to each other;
  - b. are spread out and monitoring the entire facility;
  - c. know who is supervising which Children and Youth;
  - d. communicate to each other when one must leave the area;
  - e. use polite voice tones with one another; and
  - f. share responsibilities around the program.

**xi. Observe Youth Worker Interactions with Parents.** Directors and Supervisors should observe and ask whether Youth Workers:

- a. greet the Parents;
- b. know the Parents by name;
- c. provide adequate information to the Parents;
- d. ask the Parents if they have any questions; and
- e. make an effort to interact with all the Parents.

iv. **Solicit Feedback from Children and Youth.** Directors and Supervisors should take Children and Youth aside, though within view of others, and ask them questions, such as:

- a. Have you liked your experience here?
- b. What kinds of things do you do when you are here?
- c. How are your interactions with (title of Youth Worker)?
- d. What kinds of experiences have you had here?
- e. How do people treat you here?

v. **Solicit Feedback from Parents.** Directors and Supervisors should take Parents aside and ask them questions, such as:

- a. Are you satisfied with the care your Child or Youth is receiving here?
- b. What can we do to make it better?
- c. Does your Child or Youth ever say anything about his or her (title of Youth Worker)?
- d. Has a Youth Worker ever contacted you or your Child or Youth about anything other than the program?
- e. Do you ever have a chance to observe your Child or Youth at the program?

- f. What does your Child or Youth say about the time he/she spends here?
  - vi. **Gauge the Readiness of Youth Workers.** Directors and Supervisors should ask Youth Workers how they would respond to “what if” situations they describe, such as:
    - a. What if a Child or Youth isn’t picked up by a Parent at the end of the program?
    - b. What if another Youth Worker shakes a Child or Youth for hitting another Child or Youth?
    - c. What if a parent confides in you that he/she thinks one of the Youth Workers is creepy?

## Part Three: Youth Safety Best Practices

### Section Six: Responding and Reporting

---

How an organization responds to suspicious or inappropriate interactions, policy violations, and incidents or allegations of Abuse can dramatically affect the harm to the individuals involved and the damage to the organization. Once a Youth Worker, Child, Youth, or parent has expressed a concern or made an allegation about the treatment of a Child or Youth, swift and determined action must be taken to reduce any subsequent risk to the Child or Youth, to the accused Youth Worker, and to the Church. For this reason, precise, unequivocal requirements for reporting to the authorities and for adhering to a serious-incident response plan have been established.

#### a. Directing Notices of Concern

- i. **Persons Designated to Accept Notices.** Each Youth Ministry Program or Event should provide and prominently post on their website the names, phone numbers, and email addresses of two (2) people who can accept complaints about programming or Youth Workers (e.g. local Metropolis Director and Metropolis/Direct Archdiocesan District Chancellor).
- ii. **Form of Notices of Concern.** For the sake of uniform and consistent record keeping, we strongly recommend that all Youth Workers make complaints and reports in the form of a completed “**Notice of Concern,**” which is attached to these Policies as “**Exhibit 6.**”

#### b. Responding to Suspicious or Inappropriate Behaviors / Policy Violations

- i. **Examples of Suspicious or Inappropriate Behaviors.** The following are examples of suspicious or inappropriate behaviors between Youth Workers and Children or Youth:
  - a. Any violation of these Policies;
  - b. Seeking private time or one-on-one time with Children or Youth;
  - c. Buying gifts for individual Children or Youth;
  - d. Swearing or making suggestive comments to Children or Youth;
  - e. Picking favorites;
  - f. Taking Children or Youth on overnight trips without other adults;
  - g. Selecting or using Youth Workers without the required screening.
- ii. **Responding to Suspicious or Inappropriate Behaviors.**
  - a. **Youth Worker Response.** When witnessing suspicious or inappropriate behavior between Youth Workers and Children or Youth, or violations of these Policies, Youth Workers should follow the following guidelines:
    1. **Interrupt.** Interrupt the behavior and remind the Youth Worker of the correct policy or procedure.

2. **Report.** Report the behavior immediately to the Director by submitting a Notice of Concern. If the Director is involved in the inappropriate behavior, move up to the next highest person in the chain of command and contact the Metropolis/Direct Archdiocesan District Youth Director.
  3. **Report Anonymously.** If you are not comfortable making the report directly, make it anonymously.
  4. **Document the Report.** For future reference, document that the Notice of Concern has been submitted (preferably in an email to the person that received the Notice of Concern) but do not conduct an investigation. Decisions about investigations will be made by Directors.
  5. **Repeat Report As Needed.** If no action is taken in response to the Notice of Concern, keep reporting to the same or different Supervisor/Administrator or to the Metropolis/Direct Archdiocesan District Youth Director until the appropriate action is taken.
- b. **Supervisor Response.** When receiving a report of suspicious or inappropriate behaviors or Policy violations from a Youth Worker, Supervisors should follow the following guidelines:
1. **Meet Needs of Victim.** Determine the immediate needs of the alleged victim. Get the alleged victim into a place of safety and stability immediately, away from any more potential harm or danger.
  2. **Notice of Concern.** Submit a Notice of Concern, signed or unsigned, to the Director or, if the Director is involved in the inappropriate behavior, to the next person up the chain of command: the District/Metropolis Youth and Young Adult Ministries Director.
  3. **Respond.** The Director (or Metropolis Director) will determine the appropriate response based on the report.
  4. **Review.** Review the personnel file / Armatus database profile of the Youth Worker to determine if similar complaints were reported in the past.
  5. **Contact Authorities.** If, at any point while gathering information about a report of suspicious or inappropriate behavior, a concern arises about possible Abuse, contact the state authorities and file a report, according to ones duty as a mandated reporter. Remember that if there is any belief that Abuse is taking place, the safest and best thing to do is to report it to the authorities.
  6. **Notify Parents.** If appropriate, notify Parents and/or guardians.
  7. **Reassure Reporter.** Advise the person who reported the behavior that the report is being taken seriously. If necessary, place the person against whom an accusation has been made on administrative leave until the situation has been appropriately investigated and come to a conclusion.

8. **Document Findings.** Document your findings and response to the report on the Notice of Concern.
- c. **Director Response.** When receiving a report of suspicious or inappropriate behavior or Policy violations from a Youth Worker, Directors should follow the following guidelines:
1. **Respond.** The Director (or Metropolis Director) will determine the appropriate response based on the report.
  2. **Notice of Concern.** Submit a Notice of Concern, signed or unsigned, to the next person up the chain of command: the Metropolis Director.
  3. **Investigate.** If trained to do so, conduct an internal investigation.
  4. **Speak to Accused.** Speak with the Youth Worker who has been reported.
  5. **Review.** Review the personnel file / Armatus database profile of the Youth Worker to determine if similar complaints were reported in the past.
  6. **Contact Authorities.** If, at any point while gathering information about a report of suspicious or inappropriate behavior, a concern arises about possible Abuse, contact the state authorities and file a report, according to ones duty as a mandated reporter. Remember that, generally, if there is any belief that Abuse is taking place, the safest and best thing to do is to report it to the authorities.
  7. **Notify Parents.** If appropriate, notify Parents and/or guardians.
  8. **Reassure Reporter.** Advise the person who reported the behavior that the report is being taken seriously. If necessary, place the person against whom an accusation has been made on administrative leave until the situation has been appropriately investigated and come to a conclusion.
  9. **Document Findings.** Document your findings and response to the report on the Notice of Concern.
- d. **Possible Additional Responses.** Based on the information gathered, the following may be required by Supervisors/Directors:
1. **Increased Monitoring.** Increase monitoring or supervision of the accused Youth Worker specifically, or the Youth Ministry Program or Event generally.
  2. **Disciplinary Action.** If policy violations with Children and Youth are confirmed, the Youth Worker must be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination and prosecution.
  3. **More Information.** If more information is needed, interview and/or survey other Youth Workers or Children and Youth.

e. **Organizational Review.** After receiving a Notice of Concern and investigating the matter, Directors should:

1. review the need for increased supervision;
2. review the need for revised policies or procedures;
3. review the need for additional training;
4. review individuals involved and their future participation in Youth Ministry Programs and Events; and
5. review response to ensure it was appropriate to the situation.

iii. **Responding to Abuse.**

a. **Witnessing Abuse.** Youth Workers who witness Abuse should follow the following guidelines:

1. **Interrupt.** Interrupt the behavior immediately and confront the abuser, preferably with the help and support of another Youth Worker.
2. **Remove.** Remove the Child or Youth from the abuser's presence immediately. It may be necessary to call 911 as well.
3. **Protect.** Protect the alleged victim from intimidation, retribution, or further Abuse.
4. **Contact the Authorities.** Contact the state authorities and file a report, according to one's duty as a mandated reporter. Remember that if there is any belief that Abuse is taking place, the safest and best thing to do is to report it to the authorities.

b. **Disclosures of Abuse.** When a Youth or Child discloses Abuse to a Youth Worker, the Youth Workers should follow the following guidelines:

1. **Take Seriously.** Take what they say seriously – let them know that you believe them.
2. **Offer Thanks.** Thank the Child or Youth for telling you and praise their courage for speaking out.
3. **No Assumptions.** Don't make assumptions about what happened.
4. **Listen.** Listen to the Youth or Child's report, both to gather facts and to provide a loving presence.
5. **Empathize.** Emphasize that what happened was not fault of the Child or Youth, and that they did not deserve to be treated like that.
6. **Encourage.** Encourage the Child or Youth to talk but don't push for details or imply things, or put ideas into their head. Youth Workers may ask questions like "What happened next?"

7. **Choose Words Carefully.** Avoid statements that can make the Child or Youth feel worse like “Why didn’t you tell anyone?” or “Maybe you misunderstood the person.”
  8. **Do Not Promise Secrecy.** Never promise a Child or Youth that you won’t tell anyone. Explain that it is your responsibility to keep them safe, and part of this includes disclosing information to the Director.
  9. **Protect the Victim.** Protect the alleged victim from intimidation, retribution, or further abuse. Children and Youth can be afraid to report Abuse because the perpetrator has threatened them, or they are afraid that they will be the ones who get in trouble. It is important that Children and Youth know that the Youth Ministry Program or Event is a safe place, full of people who want to help and protect them.
  10. **Report to Director/Supervisor.** Youth Workers should immediately report the Abuse to the Director/Supervisor, and follow up to make sure that the Director/Supervisor has properly reported the Abuse.
  11. **Contact the Authorities.** Contact the state authorities and file a report, according to one’s duty as a mandated reporter. Remember that, generally, if there is any belief that Abuse is taking place, the safest and best thing to do is to report it to the authorities.
- c. **Additional Guidelines for Directors and Supervisors.** In addition to the above response procedures, Supervisors, Administrators, and Directors should:
1. first, determine if the Child or Youth is still in danger and if so, take immediate steps to prevent any further harm;
  2. gather as much information about the allegation as possible (for example, who made the report, who was allegedly abused, who was the alleged abuser, what was the nature of the alleged abuse, where and when did the alleged abuse occur, etc.);
  3. accurately record all the information gathered during the investigation, in as much detail as possible, sticking to the facts.
  4. if the alleged Abuse involves a Youth Worker, contact the Director so that immediate and proper steps may be taken to ensure the safety of alleged victims and the accused.
  5. if the alleged Abuse involves a Youth Worker, contact the District/Metropolis in the following ways:
    - i. a telephone call, email, meeting, or fax to the District/Metropolis Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries; and
    - ii. a Notice of Concern, signed or unsigned, to the District/Metropolis Chancellor;
  6. contact the appropriate local authorities as required by mandatory reporting procedures and law, making sure to record a case number and the name and contact information of the person at the reporting agency to whom the report was made; and
  7. place the accused Youth Worker on administrative leave until the investigation is completed.



## **E. Responding to Peer-to-Peer Abuse and Sexualized Behavior**

It does not occur to many people that one Child or Youth may sexually abuse another Child or Youth. Peer-to-Peer Sexual Abuse and sexualized behaviors often remain unreported in organizations because Youth Workers are not comfortable documenting these situations, or may not know how to do so.

### **i. Prohibited Peer-to-Peer Interactions**

Most serious incidents of Peer-to-Peer Abuse are preceded by more subtle incidents such as name-calling, taunting, or roughhousing. Interrupting these interactions early and establishing and communicating standards of conduct can keep the Youth Ministry Program or Event environment safe. The GOARCH recognizes that the following interactions are high risk and should be prohibited:

- a. Sexual Activity
- b. Hazing
- c. Bullying
- d. Derogatory name-calling
- e. Games of Truth or Dare
- f. Singling out one Youth or Child for different treatment
- g. Ridicule or humiliation

### **ii. Staff and Volunteer Response.** Peer-to-peer sexual behaviors can include inappropriate touching, exposing body parts, using sexualized language, making threats of sexual activity, engaging in sexual activity, and similar types of interactions. If Youth Workers witness peer-to-peer sexual behaviors, they should follow these guidelines:

- a. immediately separate the Children and/or Youth in question;
- b. calmly explain that such interactions are not permitted;
- c. notify the Youth Worker's Supervisor; and
- d. complete a Notice of Concern, including the facts of what the Youth Worker observed and how the Youth Worker responded; and

### **iii. Supervisor and Director Response.** In the event that a Supervisor, Administrator, or Director receives a report of a Child's or Youth's sexualized behavior or peer-to-peer sexual activity, the supervisor should:

- a. meet with the Youth Worker who reported the sexual activity to gather information;
- b. confirm that the Children and Youth involved have been separated or placed under increased supervision;

- c. review the steps taken by the Youth Workers on duty;
  - d. review the Youth Worker's Notice of Concern to confirm it is accurately and thoroughly completed;
  - e. meet with Parents of the Children or Youth involved;
  - f. determine what actions should be taken to make sure there is no recurrence, including assessing the suitability of the program for the Children or Youth involved;
  - g. notify the proper authorities; and
  - h. develop a written corrective action or follow-up plan in response to the incident.
- iv. **Organizational Response.** After investigating a report of Peer-to-Peer Sexual Abuse or sexualized behavior, Directors should, in an effort prevent recurrence at the Youth Ministry Program or Event in question:
- a. review the need for additional supervision;
  - b. review the need for revised policies or procedures;
  - c. review the need for additional training; and
  - d. alert others in the organization.

## Part Four: Definitions

---

The following terms are defined for purposes of the Policies and their implementation. Capitalized words not defined herein shall have the definitions given to them in the Uniform Parish Regulations.

1. **“Abuse”** is any of the following: Bullying (in any of its various forms), Emotional Abuse, Neglect, Peer-to-Peer Sexual Abuse, Physical Abuse, or Sexual Abuse Perpetrated by an Adult. Abuse can take on various forms, including:
  - a. **“Emotional Abuse”** is mental or emotional injury to a Child or Youth that results in an observable and material impairment in the Child or Youth’s growth, development, or psychological functioning.
  - b. **“Peer-to-Peer Abuse”** is any instance of Abuse that occurs between a Child or Youth and another Child or Youth.
  - c. **“Peer-to-Peer Sexual Abuse”** is any contact or activity of a sexual nature that occurs between a Child or Youth and another Child or Youth when there is no consent, when consent is not possible, or when one Child or Youth is in a position of authority over the other Child or Youth. This includes any activity that is meant to arouse or gratify the sexual desires of any of the Children or Youth.
  - d. **“Physical Abuse”** is non-accidental injury, which is intentionally inflicted upon a child or youth.
2. An **“Administrator”** is a person responsible for clerical and other administrative matters in a Youth Ministry Program or Event, such as finalizing rosters and ensuring that all Youth Workers have completely and successfully satisfied their training and screening requirements under these policies. An Administrator may also be a Director, Supervisor, and Youth Worker.
3. The **“Archdiocese”** is the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.
4. The **“Background Check Review Board”** is a board of three persons created to review red flags that, while discovered during a potential Youth Worker’s mandated screening, do not rise to a level that would immediately disqualify such person from becoming a Youth Worker. Background Check Review Boards are organized according to [NAME OF DOCUMENT].
5. **“Bullying”** is aggressive and malicious behavior that is intentional, repeated over time, and involves an imbalance of power or strength. **Anyone who sees an act of Bullying, and who then encourages it, is engaging in Bullying.** Bullying can take on various forms, including:
  - a. **“Cyberbullying”** is the intentional and overt act of aggression toward another person by way of any technological tool, such as social media, email, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, website postings (including blogs). Cyberbullying can involve:
    1. Sending mean, vulgar, or threatening messages or images.
    2. Posting sensitive, private information about another person.

3. Pretending to be someone else in order to make that person look bad.
  4. Intentionally and maliciously excluding someone from an online group to which they would otherwise belong (such as purposefully excluding a Youth from the online group of the Parish's Youth group).
  5. Hazing.
- b. **"Hazing"** is an activity expected of someone joining or participating in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers that person regardless of that person's willingness to participate.
  - c. **"Nonverbal or Relational Bullying"** is when one person manipulates a relationship or desired relationship to harm another person. This includes social exclusion, friendship manipulation, or gossip. This type of Bullying also includes intimidating another person by using threatening, vulgar, or embarrassing gestures.
  - d. **"Physical Bullying"** is when one person engages in physical force against another person, such as by hitting, punching, pushing, kicking, pinching, or restraining another.
  - e. **"Sexualized Bullying"** is a form of Bullying which involves behaviors that are sexual in nature. Examples of Sexualized Bullying behaviors include sexting, Bullying that involves exposures of private body parts, and Verbal Bullying involving sexualized language or innuendos.
  - f. **"Verbal Bullying"** is when someone uses their words to hurt another, such as by belittling or calling another hurtful names.
6. A **"Child"** is anyone under the age of 12 years old.
  7. A **"Director"** is a person with ultimate decision-making authority in a particular Youth Ministry Program or Event, such as a camp director, Sunday School director, or parish youth director. A Director may also be an Administrator, Supervisor, and Youth Worker.
  8. **"Disqualifying Items"** include offenses related to any of the following:
    - a. homicide and assault (crimes relating to felonious assault, aggravated assault, aggravated menacing, menacing by stalking, and permitting child abuse);
    - b. kidnapping and unlawful restraint;
    - c. rape, statutory sexual assault, involuntary sexual deviate intercourse, sexual assault, aggravated indecent assault, indecent assault, and indecent exposure;
    - d. incest, concealing the death of a child, endangering welfare of children, dealing in infant children;
    - e. prostitution and related offences, and offenses related to obscene and other sexual materials and performances; or
    - f. sexual abuse of children.
  9. An **"Ecclesiastical Year"** is defined as beginning on September 1st and ending on August 31st of the next immediately following calendar year.

10. An **“Electronic Communication”** is a photo, video, message, post, or any other information shared through social networking or other internet sites, as well as any and all forms of electronic communication, including but not limited to email, instant messages, texts, MMS, video chat, etc. Electronic Communications are classified into four categories:
  - a. **“Crisis Electronic Communications”** are Electronic Communications wherein Youth Workers are (1) either asked to, or offer to, give advice related to instances of self harm, violence, addiction, or Abuse; or (2) contacted by a Youth or Child in imminent danger of either suffering or self-inflicting serious harm.
  - b. **“Educational Electronic Communications”** are Electronic Communications wherein Youth Workers are either asked to answer questions related to the Christian faith or the life of Church, or volunteer information related to the Christian faith or the life of the Church.
  - c. **“Informational Electronic Communications”** are Electronic Communications wherein Youth Workers contact Youth or Children for informational, organizational, and administrative purposes such as scheduling Youth Ministry Programs or Events, communicating news and updates, or otherwise disseminating or gathering information that is necessary to the proper execution of Youth Ministry Programs or Events.
  - d. **“Pastoral Electronic Communications”** are Electronic Communications wherein Youth Workers are asked to, or offer to, either (1) give advice making difficult life choices, navigating difficult personal issues, or otherwise dealing with complex situations and experiences; or (2) listen to and be present for a Child or Youth in the midst of a difficult experience or situation.
11. The **“First Registration Period”** for a particular Ecclesiastical Year will be open from June 1 to August 31 immediately preceding the Ecclesiastical Year in question.
12. **“GOARCH”** is the Archdiocese, and its Metropolises, parishes, camps, monasteries, communities, and other applicable institutions and ministries thereof.
13. An **“Immediate Family Member”** is a spouse, child, parent, sister, brother, similar in-law relationship, godchild, godparent, godsibling, stepchild, stepparent, stepsibling, grandparent, or co-habitant.
14. **“Institutional Social Media Channels”** are the social media accounts, handles, and channels of a Youth Ministry Program or Event, Parish, Metropolis, or other Church office or institution, as opposed to the personal account of a Youth Worker.
15. The **“Legal Committee”** is the Archdiocesan Legal Committee.
16. **“Metropolis”** is one of the several Metropolises of the Archdiocese or the Direct Archdiocesan District, as appropriate.
17. The **“Metropolis Background Check Review Board”** will review the background checks of Registrants whose background checks raise red flags that do not directly concern inappropriate sexual activity with a Youth or Child, and determine whether such person is eligible to be a Youth

Worker. Metropolis Background Check Review Boards are organized according to [NAME OF DOCUMENT].

18. A **“Metropolis Department”** is, depending on the context, either the Department of Youth and Young Adult Ministries of the Direct Archdiocesan District, or the Department of Youth and Young Adult Ministries of a particular Metropolis of the GOA.
19. The **“Metropolis Director”** is, depending on the context, either the Director of the Direct Archdiocesan District Department of Youth and Young Adult Ministries, or the Director of the Department of Youth and Young Adult Ministries of a particular Metropolis of the GOA.
20. The **“National Background Check Review Board”** will hear appeals from the Metropolis Background Check Review Boards. National Background Check Review Boards are organized according to [NAME OF DOCUMENT].
21. The **“National Department”** is the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America’s Department of Youth and Young Adult Ministries, and the Office of Camping Ministries.
22. The **“National Director”** is the Director of the National Department.
23. **“Neglect”** is the failure to provide for a Child or Youth’s basic needs or the failure to protect from known or reasonably foreseeable harm.
24. **“Non-Ministry Contact”** is contact between a Youth or Child and a Youth Worker that is outside the scope of a Youth Ministry Program or Event. Though outside the scope of a Youth Ministry Program or Event, Non-Ministry Contact may be part of legitimate and healthy mentorship and, as such, is not prima facie a violation of these Policies.
25. A **“Non-Youth Worker”** is a person who is both eighteen years old or older and not a Youth Worker. Examples include a worker who visits the Premises to make repairs.
26. **“Off-Site Activities or Events”** occur when a Youth Ministry or Event, which normally takes place on a particular Premises, transports Children or Youth to a different Premises for a short term activity or event. Examples include Youth groups traveling to a water park for a day trip, Sunday School classes travelling to a different Parish for a worship service, and athletic teams traveling to a sports facility to compete in an athletic tournament.
27. **“Overnight Activities”** are Youth Ministry Programs or Events which take place overnight, whether for one or several consecutive nights, either at a Church facility or some other Premises, whether a Public Premises or Private Premises.
28. **“Parent”** is a custodial parent with legally recognized custodial rights.
29. A **“Parish Director”** is a Parish director of youth ministries (or youth and young adult ministries).
30. The **“Policies”** are these Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth, as amended from time to time.

31. **“Praesidium”** is Praesidium, Inc., the official provider of both training materials and background checks for the GOA under these Policies.
32. The **“Premises”** are the physical premises of a Youth Ministry Program or Event, whether or not such physical premises are owned, leased, or otherwise controlled by the GOARCH. Premises can take on one of two basic forms:
  - a. A **“Private Premises”** is a Premises that has well defined borders, with designated entrance and exit points, such that only persons on the Premises include participants in the Youth Ministry Program or Event, or non-participants who are present in designated places on the Premises at determined times. Examples include, but are not limited to, a Parish or summer camp facility.
  - b. A **“Public Premises”** is a Premises that either does not have well defined borders, or lacks designated entrance and exit points, or otherwise makes it impossible to limit who does and does not have access to the Premises. Examples include, but are not limited to, water parks, hotels, and other public accommodations wherein a Youth Ministry Program or Event is hosted. *However*, a Public Premises may be converted to a Private Premises if the Youth Ministry Program or Event in question has the ability to define its borders, designate entrance and exit points, and control who is and is not allowed on the Premises. Examples include an amusement park that has been rented and reserved for the day by a Youth Ministry Program or Event.
33. A **“Prohibited Behavior”** is a behavior listed in Part Two, Section One (H) of these Policies.
34. **“Ratio”** is the ratio of Youth Workers to Children and/or Youth. To be clear, Non-Youth Workers and Youth Worker Support Staff are not taken into account when calculating the Ratio.
35. A **“Registrant”** is a person in the process of registering and completing the required training and screening needed to become a Youth Worker.
36. The **“Rule of Three”** is the basic principle that either (1) at least two Youth Workers must be present if only one Child or Youth is present, or (2) if only a single Youth Worker is available, at least two Children or Youth must be present.
37. The **“Second Registration Period”** for a particular Ecclesiastical Year will also be open from January 1 to March 31 of the Ecclesiastical Year in question.
38. **“Sexual Abuse Perpetrated by an Adult”** is any contact or activity of a sexual nature that occurs between a Child or Youth and an adult. This includes any activity, which is meant to arouse or gratify the sexual desires of the adult, Child or Youth.
39. A **“Supervisor”** is a person who directly oversees one or more Youth Workers in a particular Youth Ministry Program or Event. A Supervisor may also be an Administrator, Director, and Youth Worker.
40. **“Teen Youth Workers”** are Youth Workers who are between 14 and 17 years old.

41. A **“Youth”** is anyone who is at least 12 years old, but either (a) not yet 18 years old, or (b) 18 years old or older but still in high school.
42. The **“Youth and Young Adult Ministry Team”** is composed of the National Director and staff of the National Department, the Metropolis Directors, and the Director of Ionian Village.
43. A **“Youth Ministry Program or Event”** is any ministry, program, or event of GOARCH that is for the main benefit of Children and Youth. This includes all National youth ministries, programs, events, and camping ministry as well as any youth ministry, program, event or camping ministry of the Metropolises of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. In addition, Youth Ministry Program or Events include the ministries, programs, events, and camping ministry for the main benefit of Children and Youth of any parish of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.
44. **“Youth Work Support Staff”** are persons who are not Youth Workers yet who assist in some of the non-ministry maintenance and preparation tasks necessary for the proper functioning of a Youth Ministry Program or Event. Examples include kitchen staff who are regularly on the Premises during a Youth Ministry Program or Event to prepare and serve food, and cleaning staff who are regularly on the Premises during a Youth Ministry Program or Event to maintain the cleanliness of the Premises.
45. A **“Youth Worker”** is any person, whether clergy or laity (including monastics), and whether paid or volunteer, who has successfully satisfied the required registration, training, and screening further detailed in Part Four, Section 1(C) of these Policies and is thus eligible to assist in any Youth Ministry Program or Event of the GOARCH.

This includes, but is not limited to, all chaplains, camp counselors, Sunday School teachers, athletic coaches, dance instructors, chaperones, program or activity coordinators/directors, or other persons who take part in Youth Ministry Programs or Events. It also includes individuals in leadership positions who have significant off-site involvement in the establishment or direction of a Youth Ministry Program or Event (e.g., National Director or Metropolis Director).

To be perfectly clear, the definition of “Youth Worker” includes (i) all clergy of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America: deacons, presbyters, and bishops, regardless of seniority or rank; and (ii) all monastic, regardless of seniority or rank.

The definition of “Youth Worker” does not include Parents or other visitors who interact with the Youth Ministry Program or Event for a short period of time (e.g., picking up or dropping off Children or Youth; attending an introductory session, parent visitor day, or a closing ceremony at which most participants are present; etc.).



## **Part Five: Forms and Documents**

---

Exhibit 1	
Standard Registration Form	Page 67
Exhibit 2	
Standard Application Form (Optional)	Page 68
Exhibit 3	
Standard Re-Registration Form	Page 73
Exhibit 4	
Standard Re-Application Form (Optional)	Page 74
Exhibit 5	
Code of Conduct (For Youth Workers)	Page 78
Exhibit 5A	
Code of Conduct (For Children, Youth, and Parents)	Page 80
Exhibit 6	
Notice of Concern	Page 81
Exhibit 7	
Parish Compliance Letter	Page 82
Exhibit 8	
Metropolis/District Compliance Letter	Page 83
Exhibit 9	
Archdiocese Compliance Letter	Page 84

Exhibit 10

Memorandum of Understanding

Page 85

Exhibit 11

Memorandum of Understanding (Alternate Text)

Page 87

Exhibit 12

Policies Non-Disclosure Agreement

Page 89

# Exhibit 1: Standard Registration Form

---

*This form is available for download at [goarch.org/safety](http://goarch.org/safety). This is the form prospective Youth Workers will use to register and begin the process needed to become Youth Workers in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. Youth Workers will then receive an email from Praesidium to complete their registration process.*

*Please complete all of the questions accurately and fully. Attach additional sheets if needed.*

Today's date: \_\_\_\_\_

## PERSONAL DATA

Legal Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Nickname (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Parish: \_\_\_\_\_ Metropolis: \_\_\_\_\_

Parish Priest: \_\_\_\_\_

Parish Youth Safety Administrator: \_\_\_\_\_

## Acknowledgement, Release and Signature

To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this Standard Registration is complete and accurate.

**I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ABOVE PROVISIONS.**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Exhibit 2: Standard Application Form (Optional)

---

*This form is available for download at [goarch.org/safety](http://goarch.org/safety). Youth Ministry Programs and Events are encouraged to have a rigorous and comprehensive application process for prospective staff, teachers, coaches, etc. The National Department of Youth and Young Adult Ministries offers this as a model form for Youth Ministry Programs and Events, subject to the good faith modifications of Directors.*

*Please complete all of the questions accurately and fully. Attach additional sheets if needed.*

Today's date: \_\_\_\_\_

### PERSONAL DATA

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Best time to contact you: \_\_\_\_\_  
Parish: \_\_\_\_\_ Metropolis: \_\_\_\_\_  
Parish Priest: \_\_\_\_\_

Automobile Insurance Information (if applying for position that requires driving).

What is your insurance carrier? \_\_\_\_\_  
What is your limit of liability? \_\_\_\_\_  
What is your policy's effective date? \_\_\_\_\_

For what position are you applying? \_\_\_\_\_

What interests you about the position for which you are currently applying?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What has prepared you for the position for which you are currently applying?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please explain your current participation in the Orthodox Church.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Are you a steward in good standing of a parish? Which parish?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What other religious or church-related programs have you been involved in at the parish listed above?

---

---

At what other parish(es) have you been a member? Who were the priests then?

---

---

What religious or church-related programs have you been involved in at other parishes?

---

---

What steps are you taking or have you taken to better know your faith?

---

---

Why do you want to be in camping or youth ministry (retreats)?

---

---

What do you believe you can contribute to the Youth Ministry Program or Event?

---

---

Specifically, what God-given talent(s) can you offer to the Youth Ministry Program or Event?

---

---

Have you ever been accused of physically, sexually or emotionally abusing a child or an adult?

Yes  No      If yes, please explain below

---

---

**EMPLOYMENT HISTORY** *(Please complete for prior TEN years of employment)*

**CURRENT EMPLOYER:** \_\_\_\_\_

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Immediate supervisor name: \_\_\_\_\_

Immediate supervisor phone number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Position held: \_\_\_\_\_ Employment Dates: from to: \_\_\_\_\_

**PREVIOUS EMPLOYER:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Immediate supervisor name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Immediate supervisor phone number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Position held: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dates of employment: from to: \_\_\_\_\_  
Reason for leaving position: \_\_\_\_\_

**PREVIOUS EMPLOYER:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Immediate supervisor name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Immediate supervisor phone number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Position held: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dates of employment: from to: \_\_\_\_\_  
Reason for leaving position: \_\_\_\_\_

**PREVIOUS EMPLOYER:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Immediate supervisor name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Immediate supervisor phone number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Position held: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dates of employment: from to: \_\_\_\_\_  
Reason for leaving position: \_\_\_\_\_

**VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE**

Include all experience working with children or youth.

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Duties: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dates: \_\_\_\_\_ from: \_\_\_\_\_ to: \_\_\_\_\_

**VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE**

Include all experience working with children or youth.

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Duties: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dates: \_\_\_\_\_ from: \_\_\_\_\_ to: \_\_\_\_\_

**EDUCATIONAL HISTORY**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Duties: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dates: \_\_\_\_\_ from: \_\_\_\_\_ to: \_\_\_\_\_  
Type of school: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of program or degree: \_\_\_\_\_  
Program completed: \_\_\_\_\_

**EDUCATIONAL HISTORY**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dates: \_\_\_\_\_ from: \_\_\_\_\_ to: \_\_\_\_\_  
Type of school: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of program or degree: \_\_\_\_\_  
Program completed: \_\_\_\_\_

**PROFESSIONAL/CIVIC REFERENCE**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ How long have you known this person? \_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship to you: \_\_\_\_\_

**FAMILY REFERENCE**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ How long have you known this person? \_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship to you: \_\_\_\_\_

**SPIRITUAL REFERENCE (PRIEST)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ How long have you known this person? \_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship to you: \_\_\_\_\_

**[REMAINDER OF PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK]**

## **Acknowledgement, Release and Signature**

To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this Standard Application is complete and accurate. I understand that providing false information is grounds for not hiring me or choosing me for a volunteer position or for my discharge if I have already been hired or chosen. I authorize any person or organization, whether or not identified in this application, to provide any information concerning my previous employment, education, credit history, driving record, criminal conviction record, sexual offender registry or other qualifications for my employment or volunteering. I also authorize [Name of Youth Ministry Program or Event] to request and receive such information.

If hired or chosen, I agree to be bound by [Name of Youth Ministry Program or Event] policies and procedures, including but not limited to the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese Policies for the Safety of Youth and Children. I understand that these may be changed, withdrawn, added to or interpreted at any time at the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America's and [Name of Youth Ministry Program or Event] sole discretion and without prior notice to me. I also understand that my employment or volunteering may be terminated, or any offer or acceptance of employment or volunteering withdrawn, at any time, with or without cause, and with or without prior notice at the option of [Name of Youth Ministry Program or Event] or myself.

Nothing contained in this application or in any pre-employment or pre-volunteering communication is intended to or creates a contract between myself and [Name of Youth Ministry Program or Event] for either employment, volunteering or the providing of any benefit.

**I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ABOVE PROVISIONS.**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Exhibit 3: Standard Re-Registration Form

---

*This form is available for download at [goarch.org/safety](http://goarch.org/safety). This is the form prospective Youth Workers will use to re-register to maintain their status as Youth Workers in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. Youth Workers will then be free to apply to participate in or assist with particular Youth Ministry Programs or Events, according to the application process of such Youth Ministry Program or Event.*

*Please complete all of the questions accurately and fully. Attach additional sheets if needed.*

Today's date: \_\_\_\_\_

### PERSONAL DATA

Legal Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Nickname (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Parish: \_\_\_\_\_ Metropolis: \_\_\_\_\_

Parish Priest: \_\_\_\_\_

Parish Youth Safety Administrator: \_\_\_\_\_

### Acknowledgement, Release and Signature

To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this Standard Registration is complete and accurate.

**I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ABOVE PROVISIONS.**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Exhibit 4: Standard Re-Application Form (Optional)

*This form is available for download at [goarch.org/safety](http://goarch.org/safety). Youth Ministry Programs and Events are encouraged to have a rigorous and comprehensive application process for prospective staff, teachers, coaches, etc. The National Department of Youth and Young Adult Ministries offers this as a model form for Youth Ministry Programs and Events, subject to the good faith modifications of Directors.*

*Please complete all of the questions accurately and fully. Attach additional sheets if needed.*

Today's date: \_\_\_\_\_

### PERSONAL DATA

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

How long at current address? \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Best time to contact you: \_\_\_\_\_

Parish: \_\_\_\_\_ Metropolis: \_\_\_\_\_

Parish Priest: \_\_\_\_\_

Automobile Insurance Information (if applying for position that requires driving).

Who is your insurance carrier? \_\_\_\_\_

What is your limit of liability? \_\_\_\_\_

What is your policy's effective date? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you legally eligible to work in this country?  Yes  No

**Note:** *If you are chosen for a paid position, you will be required to show documents verifying your employment eligibility and identity to complete the INS Form I-9 as required by the Immigration Reform and Control Act.*

Please list your addresses in the previous year. *Attach additional information if needed.*

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

For what position are you applying? \_\_\_\_\_

What interests you about the position for which you are currently applying?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What experience have you gained and what do you believe you can contribute as a returning staff member?

---

---

Specifically, what God-given talent(s) do you feel you can offer to the program?

---

---

What were your strengths and weaknesses as a staff member?

---

---

Please explain your current participation in the Orthodox Church in the past year. In what parish programs/ministries have you been involved?

---

---

What steps have you taken in the past year to better know your faith?

---

---

Please provide any additional information that you feel would be helpful:

---

---

Have you ever been accused of physically, sexually or emotionally abusing a child or an adult?  
 Yes  No      If yes, please explain below

---

---

**EMPLOYMENT HISTORY** *Complete for previous year*

**Current Employer:** \_\_\_\_\_

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Immediate supervisor name: \_\_\_\_\_

Immediate supervisor phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Position held: \_\_\_\_\_ Employment Dates: from to: \_\_\_\_\_

[REMAINDER OF PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK]

**Previous Employer:** \_\_\_\_\_

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Immediate supervisor name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Immediate supervisor phone number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Position held: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dates of employment: from to: \_\_\_\_\_  
Reason for leaving position: \_\_\_\_\_

**VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE** *Include all experience working with youth in the previous year*

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Duties: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dates: \_\_\_\_\_ from: \_\_\_\_\_ to: \_\_\_\_\_

**EDUCATIONAL HISTORY** *Complete for previous year*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dates: \_\_\_\_\_ from: \_\_\_\_\_ to: \_\_\_\_\_  
Type of school: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of program or degree: \_\_\_\_\_  
Program completed: \_\_\_\_\_

**PROFESSIONAL/CIVIC REFERENCE**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ How long have you known this person? \_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship to you: \_\_\_\_\_

**FAMILY REFERENCE**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ How long have you known this person? \_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship to you: \_\_\_\_\_

**SPIRITUAL REFERENCE (PRIEST)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ How long have you known this person? \_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship to you: \_\_\_\_\_

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT, RELEASE AND SIGNATURE

To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this Standard Re-Application is complete and accurate. I understand that providing false information is grounds for not hiring me or choosing me for a volunteer position or for my discharge if I have already been hired or chosen. I authorize any person or organization, whether or not identified in this application, to provide any information concerning my previous employment, education, credit history, driving record, criminal conviction record, sexual offender registry or other qualifications for my employment or volunteering. I also authorize [Name of Youth Ministry Program or Event] to request and receive such information.

If hired or chosen, I agree to be bound by [Name of Youth Ministry Program or Event] policies and procedures, including but not limited to the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese Policies for the Safety of Youth and Children. I understand that these may be changed, withdrawn, added to or interpreted at any time at [Name of Youth Ministry Program or Event] sole discretion and without prior notice to me. I also understand that my employment or volunteering may be terminated, or any offer or acceptance of employment or volunteering withdrawn, at any time, with or without cause, and with or without prior notice at the option of [Name of Youth Ministry Program or Event] or myself.

Nothing contained in this application or in any pre-employment or pre-volunteering communication is intended to or creates a contract between myself and [Name of Youth Ministry Program or Event] for either employment, volunteering or the providing of any benefit.

**I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ABOVE PROVISIONS.**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Exhibit 5: Code of Conduct for the Safety of Children and Youth (For Youth Workers)**

---

*Read and initial each item to signify your agreement to comply with this Code of Conduct.*

\_\_\_ I agree to exhibit the highest ethical best practices and personal integrity.

\_\_\_ I agree to provide a professional work environment that is free from physical, psychological, written, or verbal intimidation or harassment.

\_\_\_ I agree to treat all Children and Youth with respect at all times.

\_\_\_ I agree to treat all Children and Youth fairly regardless of race, sex, age, or religion.

\_\_\_ I agree to do my best to prevent Abuse of Children and Youth involved in the [Name of Youth Ministry Program or Event].

\_\_\_ I agree not to physically, sexually or emotionally abuse or neglect a Child or Youth.

\_\_\_ I have received and reviewed a copy of, and agree to comply with the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese Policies for the Safety of Children and Youth (the “Policy”) developed by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America (“GOARCH”) in cooperation with Praesidium, Inc.

\_\_\_ In the event that I observe any inappropriate behaviors or possible policy violations with Children or Youth, I agree to immediately report my observations to my Supervisor and/or to appropriate state authorities as may be required by law, and as otherwise may be required under the Policy.

\_\_\_ I specifically acknowledge my obligation and responsibility to protect Children and Youth and agree to report known or suspected Abuse of Children or Youth to appropriate church leaders and state authorities in accordance with the Policy and applicable law.

\_\_\_ I understand that GOARCH generally and [Name of Youth Ministry Program or Event] (the “Program”) specifically will not tolerate Abuse of Children and Youth and I agree to fully comply with this position.

\_\_\_ I understand that GOARCH cooperates fully with the authorities to investigate all cases of alleged Abuse and agree to cooperate to the fullest extent possible in any external investigation by outside authorities or internal investigation conducted by the organization or persons given investigative authority by the organization.

\_\_\_ I understand that failure to cooperate fully with any investigation may be grounds for termination.

\_\_\_I understand that I am an at-will employee or volunteer and can be removed from my position at any time and for any reason, or no reason, in the sole discretion of the Program. In addition, and without limiting the above,

- a. The Program may, in its sole discretion, deny the application of any person who answers yes to the following question: “Have you ever been accused of physically, sexually or emotionally abusing a child or an adult?” If I am selected, and the Program later discovers circumstances that would indicate a “yes” answer to the above question, I may be terminated immediately.
- b. The information provided on this form is subject to verification, which may include, but not be limited to, a criminal history check and request for information from any Central Registry of child abusers.
- b. The Program may, in its sole discretion, terminate employment or volunteer service of any person if that person is found, regardless of when discovered, to
  - i. have been the subject of any complaint(s) of abuse of a minor, whether or not criminally charged or the subject of a civil suit;
  - ii. have resigned, been terminated or been asked to resign a position whether paid or unpaid, due to complaint(s) of sexual abuse of a minor; and/or
  - iii. have falsified or omitted information in this disclosure statement

d. This disclosure statement must be updated yearly.

---

Signature Date:

---

Signature of Minor’s Parent or Guardian: Date:

# Exhibit 5A: Code of Conduct for the Safety of Children and Youth (For Children, Youth, and Parents)

---

*Read and initial each item to signify your agreement to comply with this Code of Conduct.*

## **For Children and Youth:**

\_\_\_ I will act with honest, kindness, and only the best possible behavior at all times.

\_\_\_ I will help create a welcoming, safe, and loving atmosphere free from harshness, intimidation, or harassment.

\_\_\_ I will treat all Children and Youth with respect at all times.

\_\_\_ I will treat all Children and Youth fairly regardless of race, sex, age, or religion.

\_\_\_ I will do my best to prevent Abuse of Children and Youth involved in the [Name of Youth Ministry Program or Event].

\_\_\_ I will not physically, sexually or emotionally Abuse or Neglect a Child or Youth.

\_\_\_ I will act according to the Policies for the Safety of Children and Youth (the "Policy") developed by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America ("GOARCH") in cooperation with Praesidium, Inc. I have discussed these Policies with my Parents.

\_\_\_ If I do not act appropriately or violate the Policies, I understand that I may face negative consequences, including possibly being sent home from the [Name of Youth Ministry Program or Event].

\_\_\_ If I see any inappropriate or suspicious behaviors or possible policy violations with Children or Youth, I will immediately tell a Youth Worker.

## **For Parents:**

\_\_\_ I have reviewed the Policies and discussed them with my Child or Youth.

\_\_\_ I understand the behavior expected of my Child or Youth as well as the potential consequences of misbehavior or violations of the Policies, including potentially being sent from the [Youth Ministry Program of Event].

---

Signature

Date:

---

Signature of Minor's Parent or Guardian:

Date:



## Exhibit 6: Notice of Concern

---

Individual(s) of Concern: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of occurrence: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of occurrence: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Concern:

- Inappropriate behavior with a Child or Youth
- Policy violation with a Child or Youth
- Possible risk of abuse
- Other concern

Describe the situation: What happened, where it happened, when it happened, who was involved, who was present, who was notified? Attach additional sheets if needed.

---

If reported to the State, what was their recommendation about investigating? Attach additional sheets if needed.

---

Has this situation ever occurred previously? Attach additional sheets if needed.

---

What action was taken? How the situation was handled, who was involved, who was questioned, were police or other authorities called? Attach additional sheets if needed. \_\_\_\_\_

---

What is the follow-up plan? Does anyone else need to be notified? Will the situation need monitoring? Would you like someone to call you to discuss this situation? Attach additional sheets if needed.

---

Submitted by: (Please print): \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Location and address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Once completed, please keep a copy for your Youth Ministry Program or Event files and forward to your local Metropolis/Direct Archdiocesan District Youth and Young Adult Ministries Department.

# Exhibit 7: Parish Compliance Letter

---

[NAME OF METROPOLIS DIRECTOR]  
Greek Orthodox Metropolis of [NAME]  
[ADDRESS]  
[CITY], [STATE] [ZIP CODE]

[DATE]

Re: [PARISH] Youth Safety Compliance for [MINISTRY YEAR]

[NAME OF METROPOLIS DIRECTOR]:

In according with the Policies for the Safety of Youth and Children (*the Policies*), I am writing to report on the state of youth safety compliance at [PARISH] for [MINISTRY YEAR].

I have attached a complete roster of Youth Workers to this compliance letter. Every individual on the roster has been registered, trained, and screen as required by the Policies for [MINISTRY YEAR]. No individual on the roster has been disqualified from serving as a Youth Worker, as set forth in the Policies.

The only people at [PARISH] who are currently serving in youth ministry programs and events are the individuals listed as Youth Workers in the attached roster. No other individuals are serving in youth ministry programs and events. No other individuals will be permitted to serve in youth ministry programs and events until the next Registration Period. After the close of that Registration Period, we will create and distribute a new Parish Compliance Letter with the new roster of Youth Workers.

I am available to answer any questions should they arise.

In Christ,

[NAME]

Parish Administrator

[NAME]

Parish Priest

## Exhibit 8: District/Metropolis Compliance Letter

---

[NAME OF NATIONAL DIRECTOR]  
Department of Youth and Young Adult Ministries (Y<sup>2</sup>AM)  
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America  
8 East 79th Street  
New York, NY 10075

[DATE]

Re: Metropolis of [NAME] / Direct Archdiocesan District Youth Safety Compliance for  
[MINISTRY YEAR]

[NAME OF NATIONAL DIRECTOR]:

In according with the Policies for the Safety of Youth and Children (*the Policies*), I am writing to report on the state of youth safety compliance in the Metropolis of [NAME] / Direct Archdiocesan District for [MINISTRY YEAR].

The Metropolis / District is comprised of [NUMBER] parishes. We have received Parish Compliance Letters for [NUMBER] parishes. I have attached copies of each Parish Compliance Report for [MINISTRY YEAR].

My office has also spot-checked [NUMBER] of parishes in the Metropolis / District and did not find any discrepancies between the youth safety database and the Parish Compliance Letters.

The parishes which my office spot-checked are: [NAMES OF PARISHES].

I am available to answer any questions should they arise.

In Christ,

[NAME]  
Metropolis Director

## Exhibit 9: Archdiocese Compliance Letter

---

[NAME OF LEGAL COMMITTEE CHAIR]  
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America  
8 East 79th Street  
New York, NY 10075

[DATE]

Re: Archdiocesan Youth Safety Compliance for [MINISTRY YEAR]

[NAME OF LEGAL COMMITTEE CHAIR]:

In according with the Policies for the Safety of Youth and Children (*the Policies*), I am writing to report on the state of youth safety compliance in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America for [MINISTRY YEAR].

The Archdiocese is comprised of the Direct Archdiocesan District and [NUMBER] Metropolises. We have received a District Compliance Letters from the Direct Archdiocesan District and from [NUMBER] Metropolises. I have attached copies of each District/Metropolis Compliance Report for [MINISTRY YEAR].

My office has also spot-checked [NUMBER] of parishes in the District and each Metropolis and did not find any discrepancies between the youth safety database and the Parish Compliance Letters.

The parishes which my office spot-checked are: [NAMES OF PARISHES].

I am available to answer any questions should they arise.

In Christ,

[NAME]  
National Director

# Exhibit 10: Memorandum of Understanding

---

Memorandum of Understanding (the “**Agreement**”)  
between  
Full Name, (“**Surname**”) of [City], [State],  
and  
[Parish Name] of [City], [State], (the “**Parish**”)

Whereas, Surname is a registered sexual offender; and

Whereas, Surname desires to attend worship at the Parish; and

Whereas, both parties to this Agreement understand and agree that Surname must not be in proximity to children or youth attending or participating in Parish activities.

Now therefore, with the intent to be legally bound under the laws of the [State] it is agreed by and between the parties as follows:

1. The foregoing premises are a part of this Agreement.
2. Surname shall be permitted to worship at the Parish under the following limitations:
  - 2.1 He/she shall worship only at the [8:00 AM] Sunday service.
  - 2.2 He/she shall enter and exit the building by the [address] entrance.
  - 2.3 He/she shall have permission to enter only to the nave of the Parish and is not permitted in any other areas of the building whatsoever.
  - 2.4 He/she shall not have access to the use of rest room facilities in the Parish.
  - 2.5 He/she shall be under the observation of the [Very] Reverend Father [Name], or Father [Names]’s designee, at all times while at the Parish.
  - 2.6 He/she shall not sit near any Children or Youth and in the event Children or Youth enter the Parish after he has taken a seat he/she shall remove himself from the vicinity of the Children and/or Youth.
  - 2.7 He/she shall not engage in any behavior which is threatening or suggestive toward any persons.
3. Surname agrees that his/her continued permission to attend worship at the Parish is dependent upon his/her compliance with both the letter and the spirit of these limitations.
4. In the event of the failure of Surname to abide by these limitations, the Parish shall be presumed to have no adequate remedy at law and shall have the right to a temporary and permanent injunction preventing Surname from entering the Parish in the event of a violation.
5. This document contains the entire understanding between the parties as to these matters and has been fully read and understood by Surname.

[REMAINDER OF PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK]

In Witness whereof, the parties have signed this agreement this [XX] day of [Month], 20[XX].

[Parish]

\_\_\_\_\_

Witness

By: \_\_\_\_\_

[Name]

\_\_\_\_\_

Witness

By: \_\_\_\_\_

[Name]

\_\_\_\_\_

Witness

By: \_\_\_\_\_

[Name]

Approved by the Metropolis of [XYZ] / Direct Archdiocesan District

\_\_\_\_\_

By:

[Metropolitan XYZ]

# Exhibit 11: Memorandum of Understanding (Alternate Text)

---

Memorandum of Understanding (the “Agreement”)  
between  
Full Name, of [City], [State],  
and  
[Parish Name] of [City, [State], (the “Parish”)

*This is a list of suggested guidelines only and should be reviewed with the registered sex offender’s support team (Counselor, Clergy, Probation/Parole Officer, other significant persons) before they are signed.*

1. The main obvious issue is that you should never be alone with a child (anyone under 18). You are the adult. You do what it takes to make this happen. You do what it takes to avoid being alone with a child, at all costs.
2. Someone at your church should know about your offense history. Depending upon your risk level, it may be that the professional staff of the church and people who hold paid or volunteer positions of authority and trust such as Ministers, Youth/Children's Minister, Elders, Deacons, should know. It will be tempting to start fresh at a new church where no one knows you, or your history. This is very dangerous. Consult your counselor on this one.
3. Never initiate physical touch with anyone under 18 years old. This includes hugs and handshakes. You should never discuss the physical appearance of anyone under 18 years old. Hugs are common in church settings. If someone under 18 years of age attempts to hug you make it a handshake. It is a good idea for you to also refrain from initiating physical contact, other than handshakes with adults.
4. How you deal with the issue of the restroom at church should be discussed with your counselor and Clergy. For some of you this is not an issue. This depends on your risk level. Some of you should not go into the restroom at all unless you have an adult escort. Some of you however, can use the same relapse prevention strategies that you use in the community to avoid being alone in the bathroom with a child. Plan ahead; be vigilant. Use the restroom before you attend the church. You should not leave the sanctuary during the church service to go to the restroom.
5. You should not be wandering the hallway and in the area of the church building where the Sunday school classes are taught alone, especially during the church service, Remember your argument is that the church service and the worship experience are very important to you. If it is, then why would you be leaving it to go on hall patrol?
6. You will not be in a position of authority and trust over any person under 18 years old. This includes Sunday school, helping with the nursery, or even leading songs for a teenage or children's class. Let me be very clear here: You cannot be even a 'helper' in these activities. These activities put you in a 'zone' or a way of thinking of relating to kids on their level- a place where you do not need to be.
7. Remember the word boundaries. You are the one that needs to exercise them.

[REMAINDER OF PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK]

I have read the above rules and guidelines with my Clergy/minister, counselor, parole or probation officer, and I agree to follow them. [Parish]

_____	_____
Name	Date

I have read these rules and agree to support \_\_\_\_\_ in following them.

_____	_____
Name	Date

_____	_____
Name	Date

_____	_____
Name	Date

_____	_____
Name	Date

_____	_____
Name	Date

Approved by the Metropolis of [XYZ]

\_\_\_\_\_

By:

[Metropolitan XYZ]



## Exhibit 12: Policies Non-Disclosure Agreement

---

[NAME OF ARCHDIOCESAN YOUTH SAFETY COMPLIANCE OFFICER]  
Department of Youth Safety Compliance  
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America  
8 East 79th Street  
New York, NY 10075

[DATE]

Re: Policies Non-Disclosure Agreement for [MINISTRY YEAR]

[NAME OF NATIONAL DIRECTOR]:

In according with the Policies for the Safety of Children and Youth (*the Policies*), I have been appointed to be the Parish Youth Safety Administrator of Youth Safety Compliance for [NAME OF PARISH/METROPOLIS/ARCHDIOCESE] for the [YEAR] Ministry Year.

I understand that my position will give me access to confidential information about both our [PARISH/METROPOLIS/ARCHDIOCESE] Youth Workers and potential Youth Workers. This information includes items like addresses, telephone numbers, and the results of background screens.

By accepting this position as [PARISH/METROPOLIS/ARCHDIOCESE] Parish Youth Safety Administrator, I agree to keep this confidential information strictly private. I will only share this confidential information (1) with the District/Metropolis and/or Archdiocese as required for administrative and compliance purposes; (2) with the express written consent of the person in question; or (3) to comply with a valid legal order.

I agree to work diligently to ensure the comprehensiveness, accuracy, and privacy of the youth safety database I will manage in my role as [PARISH/METROPOLIS/ARCHDIOCESE] Parish Youth Safety Administrator.

I understand that breaching this agreement will, besides undermining the trust and goodwill of my community and the Church, potentially expose me to both civil and criminal penalties under the law.

In Christ,

[NAME]  
Parish Youth Safety Administrator