

U.M. ARMY Safe Sanctuary Policy

Introduction to Policy

The purpose of this policy is to address the safety of our youth and leaders at all U.M. ARMY events and mission weeks. U.M. ARMY recognizes the need to have a formal, written policy with procedures in place (1) to help prevent the opportunity for the occurrence and/or the appearance of abuse of youth and (2) to help protect workers from false accusations and/or suspicions.

Scope of Policy

This policy and its provisions shall apply to all persons including all paid and unpaid leaders, whether lay or clergy, who have any direct or indirect contact with youth and who participate in any activities or events sponsored by U.M. ARMY.

Definition of Youth, Young Adult and Adult

- Youth are U.M. ARMY participants registered as youth.
- Young Adult is someone 18-20 years of age with a high school diploma or equivalent.
- Adult is someone who is twenty-one (21) years of age or older.
- Young Adults and Adults are, collectively, Leaders.
- Nothing within this policy shall be interpreted as an obligation of U.M. ARMY to accept the registration of an adult as a Youth. U.M. ARMY reserves the right to refuse any registration of any individual.

Supervision

Recognizing that there is safety in numbers, youth will be instructed to use the “buddy system.” Conceptually meaning, Youth should consciously avoid situations where they are separated one on one with anyone. It is also strongly encouraged that there be present at least one leader who is trained and certified in First Aid and CPR at each mission week.

Supervision for Youth:

- U.M. ARMY leadership shall observe the “2 Deep Rule” when Youth are present, where possible (2 Adults per room, 2 Adults within line of sight when outdoors). For example, where Youth are present at a client’s home, the 2 Deep Rule shall apply. The client shall not serve as a Leader unless that client has undergone the same screening and approval process required of participating Leaders.
 - Exception to allow 1 Adult/1 Young Adult may be made with the approval of the Director on a case by case basis.
 - Exception to allow second Leader to float between work sites that are closely situated, e.g., within the same neighborhood
 - Exception to allow 1 or no Leaders in a confined room on a worksite (e.g., painting a small bath), in which case, the door shall remain open and the Leader(s) shall be within the line of sight/ear shout.
 - Any one-to-one mentoring or consulting with a Youth shall be conducted in sight of another Leader.
- Adults, Young Adults, and Youth shall not provide supervision for children and other youth who are members of the local community

Overnight Accommodations

- At least (2) Leaders shall be present in every room where possible.
- Where it is impossible to have two (2) Leaders present in each room, Leaders shall sleep in separate rooms from Youth.
- Sleeping accommodations shall be separated by gender. In the event a participant (Youth, Young Adult or Adult) requests an alternative accommodation, the Director shall call the U.M. ARMY Executive Director for guidance.

Transportation

- All Youth shall be transported by a licensed Adult in a registered and insured automobile and shall wear seatbelts at all times.
- One (1) Adult may provide transportation for two (2) or more Youth. An Adult may provide transportation for their son or daughter without other Youth being present. One Youth may be transported by one Leader if emergency circumstances warrant.

Definitions of Abuse

- Verbal Abuse– Any verbal act that humiliates, degrades or threatens any child or youth.
- Physical Abuse– Any act of omission or an act that endangers a person's physical or mental health. In the case of child or youth physical abuse, this definition includes any intentional physical injury caused by the individual's caretaker. Physical abuse may result from punishment that is overly punitive or inappropriate to the individual's age or condition. In addition, physical abuse may result from purposeful acts that pose serious danger to physical health of a child or youth.
- Sexual Abuse– Child or youth sexual abuse is the sexual exploitation or use of same for satisfaction of sexual drives. This includes, but is not limited to: 1) incest, 2) rape, 3) prostitution, 4) romantic involvement with any participant, 5) any sexual intercourse, or sexual conduct with, or fondling of a Youth, 6) sexualized behavior that communicates sexual interest and/or content. Examples include but are not limited to: displaying sexually suggestive visual materials, making sexual comments or innuendo about one's own or another person's body, touching another person's body, hair or clothing, touching or rubbing oneself in the presence of another person, kissing, and sexual intercourse.

Screening for Leaders

Careful screening is one way to prevent the abuse of children and youth. Screening calls for a careful gathering and review of information in search of those who can provide safe and caring supervision in a safe environment.

- Each participating church is responsible for conducting references and screening applications for its Leaders. All screening and documentation shall be done in accordance with guidelines consistent with its respective Annual Conferences.
- If the applicant is found to have been involved in, or credibly accused of, any activity in which the applicant abused or exploited children or youth, the applicant will not be approved. Any conviction of a crime against children or youth shall disqualify any applicant.
- Persons having a criminal history of any of the following types of offenses shall not be Leaders:
 - o Child abuse, whether physical, emotional, sexual, or neglectful;
 - o Violent offenses, including murder, rape, assault, domestic violence, etc.;
 - o Persons having a Criminal History of DUI or DWI conviction within the five (5) years immediately prior to application shall not be allowed to act as a driver;

- o Persons having a Criminal History of a drug related conviction within the five (5) years immediately prior to application shall not be allowed to participate in the event.

Training

U.M. ARMY shall, through dependence on its participating churches, utilize Safe Sanctuary or equivalent trained Leaders. We recommend that at the beginning of each mission week a review of this policy be conducted by the Director.

Reporting of Incidents

1. When a Leader suspects that abuse or any suspected violation of the applicable laws is taking or has taken place, he or she shall immediately notify the mission week Director for consultation and collectively report the abuse to the appropriate local law enforcement agency and/or child protective services. The Director shall contact the Executive Director immediately, and Leadership cooperate fully with the investigation conducted by law enforcement officials or child protective services.
2. The Director shall address any needs the child or youth may have, medical or otherwise and report to the parent(s) and/or legal guardians(s) of the Youth.
3. The person suspected of abuse (respondent) shall, for the safety and well being of the Youth, be removed with dignity from further contact with the Youth until an appropriate investigation has taken place. The matter shall remain confidential. If the Director and or leader is the respondent, then the report should be made to the Executive Director.
4. Following the report of an incident, the Director shall document the report and cooperate fully with any investigation. Careful and confidential documentation is essential. The documentation should include the following:
 - a. The name of the individual observing or receiving the disclosure of abuse, including the date, time and place and any action taken by this person.
 - b. The alleged victim's name, age, and date of birth.
 - c. Any statement made by the alleged victim.
 - d. Name of the respondent, the date, time and place of any conversation or any statement made by the respondent.
 - e. Any action taken, i.e. suspension of the respondent.
 - f. Date and time of call to the appropriate agency, name of worker spoken to, content of that conversation and case number assigned.
 - g. Date and time of call to law enforcement agency, name of officer spoken to and content of that conversation.
 - h. Date and time of any other contacts made regarding this incident.
5. The Executive Director shall notify the pastor of the participating church for each of the involved Youth (with the permission of the parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s), unless the respondent is the parent or legal guardian) and respondent. Where the respondent is a pastor or church employee, the Executive Director shall notify the Conference/District authorities.
6. It shall be the goal to provide supportive care to both the victim and the respondent and to restore such persons to wholeness.

7. Confirmed reports of proven incidents of abuse shall be retained in a confidential file for future screening purposes.

Media Response

The Executive Director shall be informed of all investigations or allegations of abuse. If investigations or allegations of abuse should come to the attention of the media, all inquiries shall be referred to the Executive Director. No other Leader shall provide any information, and shall simply state that all inquiries will be answered by a U.M. ARMY spokesperson.

Appropriate Discipline

Youth should be made aware that appropriate behavior is expected at all times during a mission week. Gentle reminders may be necessary when dealing with Youth. When these reminders don't work, then discipline needs to move to the next step. In cases where behavior persists, the Director, Adult(s) working with the Youth during the mission week, Adult from the Youth's church and the Youth's parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) should consult and develop an appropriate plan. In no case is physical discipline an appropriate measure to deal with problems. For serious offenses, the appropriate response will be to send the Youth home immediately. Parents and the Adult from the Youth's church shall make proper arrangements.

Local Policies

This policy was created with the intent to conform to youth safety policies and guidelines applicable to participating local churches and their Annual Conferences. Recognizing U.M. ARMY is a national organization serving many churches, and that there may be diversity in the details of policies, where a mission week Director is given written notice, reasonably in advance of a mission week, that the policy applicable to a local participating church or a host church has a more stringent requirement than what has been set forth herein, the Director shall take reasonable measures to comply with such policy. In the event the Director believes compliance with the policy is not reasonable given the circumstances, the Director shall present the issue to the U.M. ARMY Board of Directors. If the Director is provided notice of the policy without sufficient time to adequately adapt to the policy, the Director shall notify the Executive Director for guidance.