



## **Safe Environment Code of Conduct for Adults**

To foster and maintain an atmosphere of trust and safety in its ministry to children and young people (“minors”) and vulnerable adults, the Diocese of Salt Lake City has established a *Safe Environment Code of Conduct for Adults and for Youth Minors*. The Diocese recognizes that not all volunteers come in contact with minors or vulnerable adults in their duties, however the Diocese expects all employees and volunteers to demonstrate good moral character so as to serve as Christian role models.

If your duties include any contact (with or around) minors or vulnerable adults, **even one time**, you must follow the Diocesan Safe Environment Policy and become Safe Environment Trained and Certified **prior** to working or volunteering in the Diocese.

*Safe Environment Compliance Requirements* can be found in the *SE Program Manual* (<https://www.dioslc.org/offices/safe-environment/documents>).

### **STANDARDS OF RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR ALL ADULT VOLUNTEERS, EVEN THOSE WHOSE DUTIES DO NOT INCLUDE CONTACT WITH CHILDREN (YOUTH MINORS) OR VULNERABLE ADULTS.**

- It is expected that all volunteers will act in a manner that is consistent with the Church’s discipline and teachings.
- Have a positive and supportive attitude toward the Catholic Church, her teachings, and her work.
- Refrain from public promotion or approval of any conduct that would reflect discredit or disgrace on, or cause scandal in relationship to, the parish, the organization, or the diocese, or considered to be in contradiction with Catholic doctrine or morals.
- Inform the parish or organization of any publicly known/discoverable convictions, citations, accusations, etc., that may compromise the ability to effectively volunteer, or which could reflect poorly on the parish or organization should they become generally known.
- Volunteers will behave in an honest and open manner, free from deception or corruption.
- Volunteers will witness in all relationships the chastity appropriate to the volunteer’s state of life, whether celibate, married, or single.
- Volunteers will respect the rights, dignity, and worth of every human being.
- Refrain from physically, spiritually, sexually, emotionally intimidating and/or otherwise abusing or harassing persons of any age in any manner, and promptly report any activity that is observed that is inconsistent with this obligation, whether directed at me or others.
- Be aware that issues of age; gender; race; religion; physical, mental, and developmental disabilities and language influence how the message of the Gospel is received and interpreted.

- Always follow Diocesan policies as it relates to technology use and digital communication (see *Technology Use/Digital Communication Policy*) and refrain from posting any information or photographs regarding volunteer service on any personal social media platform without the parish or organization's written permission.
- Exercise responsible stewardship of resources (i.e., financial, parish or organization's physical property, program materials, time of parish or organization staff or other volunteers, etc.).
- Immediately report any observed conduct which causes him/her to have reason for concern for the wellbeing of a minor or vulnerable adult, the adult should confront that other adult in a forthright manner and report his/her concerns to the supervisor, pastor, or administrator. All adults have an obligation to take appropriate steps to protect minors and vulnerable adults, particularly when they are in the care of the Church.

### **STANDARDS OF RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR THE CARE, CONTACT AND CONDUCT WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS**

The following guidelines are intended to assist employees and volunteers (“adults) in making decisions about interactions with minors and vulnerable adults in a parish, school or organization of the Diocese of Salt Lake City (the Diocese). These guidelines do not supersede state law or the Utah Department of Children and Family Services.

1. It is expected all adults in direct contact with minors and vulnerable adults become Safe Environment compliant every three years.
2. It is expected all adults in direct contact with minors and vulnerable adults read the Safe Environment Program Policy Manual. *Available on the Diocesan Safe Environment website and included in the CMG Connect certification curriculum.*
3. An adequate number of adults (21 or over) should be present at activities involving minors to support the safety of such gatherings. The number of adults should be approved by the administrator in charge of the activity.
4. Adults are to report uncontrollable or highly unusual behavior of minors to parents, guardians or persons designated by parents or guardians.
5. Minors should only be released to parents, guardians, or persons designated by parents or guardians.
6. Minors should not be left unsupervised when on church or school-related trips or activities.
7. Minors are not to be given alcoholic beverages, tobacco, drugs or materials prohibited by law. Adults are not allowed to drink alcoholic beverages or use illicit substances when working with minors.
8. Clear boundaries must exist between adults and minors. Vigilance should be maintained regarding inappropriate personal or physical attraction developing between an adult and a minor. Avoid unwarranted emotional attachment and be aware of the attraction that minors may have for adults in positions of authority and trust. If an adult senses that a minor is developing an emotional or physical attraction, the adult should refer the minor to another qualified adult, particularly in counseling situations.

9. Touching should be age appropriate and based on the need of the minor, not on the need of the adult. Any inappropriate or questionable physical contact with a minor is prohibited. If a minor initiates physical contact, an appropriate limited response is proper. Appropriate physical contact includes pats on the shoulder or back, holding hands during prayer, handshakes, side hugs, and high fives. Inappropriate physical contact includes, but is not limited to, prolonged front-to-front hugging, kissing, massages, wrestling, piggyback rides, lap sitting, hitting, pinching.
10. A minor or vulnerable adult should not be in a residence, sleeping facility, locker room, rest room, dressing facility, or other closed room or isolated area where it may appear to be inappropriate to a ministerial relationship. Adults should never shower, bathe, or dress in front of minors and vice versa.
11. Minors should not be exposed to topics, vocabulary, materials, recordings, films, games or use of computer software, or any other form of personal interaction or entertainment that are inappropriate for the age group.
12. Sexually explicit or pornographic material is never appropriate.
13. Online chats or chat room conversations between adult leaders and minors are never appropriate. Social media correspondence with minors should be appropriate and professional.
14. No over-the-counter medication or prescribed medication of any kind is to be administered without written parental/guardian permission.
15. If one-on-one counseling of a minor should be necessary, meeting with the minor should not take place in isolated environments. Meetings should be scheduled at times and in locations that ensure accountability. Both the length and number of sessions should be limited. Parents/guardians should be notified of such meetings. When feasible, these meetings should be conducted in an open room setting without closed doors, unless the door has a window, and the interior is readily observable by others who may be in the room or in the hallway outside the room.
16. Minors should not have access to keys or passcodes to church or school facilities. If a minor does have access to a key/passcode as a result of being a church/school employee or volunteer, the minor is to be properly screened and informed about policies and procedures.
17. Taking photographs of minors while they are unclothed or dressing (e.g., in a locker room or bathing facility) is never allowed.
18. Photographs or recordings of minors are not to be posted or shared online without the express permission of parents/guardians of the minor.
19. All adult leaders and chaperones for any overnight activities must be approved in advance by the administrator of the activity and be Safe Environment compliant.
20. Two adults are required to be present if staying with a group of minors in a hotel room or other sleeping area. One adult should never stay in the same hotel room or sleeping area with a group of minors. If an adult is related to the minor, only that minor and that adult may stay in the same hotel room.
21. Parental/guardian permission, including a signed Consent to Participate form, should be obtained prior to taking minors on trips or activities. The forms must accompany the trip or activity.
22. Adults may occasionally be in a position to provide transportation for minors. The following guidelines should be strictly observed when involved in the transportation of minors:

- ✓ Qualified drivers, as specified in diocesan policy, should be used for any church, school or organization activity.
- ✓ Drivers who are assigned to transport minors must be at least 21 years old.
- ✓ Ordinarily, minors are never to be transported without written permission.
- ✓ Minors are to be transported directly to their destination.
- ✓ Drivers are to avoid unnecessary and/or inappropriate contact with minors while in vehicles.
- ✓ Review the Vehicle Safety Policy and complete the required Driver Information Forms submitting the forms to the administrator of the event or activity or driver coordinator for approval.

All adults have an obligation to take appropriate steps to protect minors and vulnerable adults, particularly when they are in the care of the church. If an adult observes another adult violating this code or engaging in other conduct which causes him/her to have reason for concern for the wellbeing of a minor or vulnerable adult, the adult should confront that other adult in a forthright manner and report his/her concerns to the supervisor, pastor, or administrator.

If an adult has reason to suspect abuse or neglect of a minor has occurred or is occurring, that adult must follow the diocesan policy on reporting incidents of abuse and neglect to civil authorities and report the matter to his/her pastor/administrator and the Office of Safe Environment. Details for reporting abuse can be found here: <https://www.dioslc.org/offices/safe-environment/reporting-abuse>

All volunteers are required to complete a *Volunteer Application* and submit it for review to the parish/school **prior** to volunteering.