

**UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF GERMANTOWN
SAFE CONGREGATION POLICY**

As amended by the Board of Trustees on October 24, 2023. Originally approved by the Board on July 25, 2017, with amendments on September 26, 2017, and June 12, 2018.

Table of Contents

I. Preamble	2
II. Definitions	2
III. Duties.....	4
A. Ministry Executive Team.....	4
B. Safe Congregation Ministry Team.....	4
IV. Prevention.....	4
A. Screening and Selection of Non-Staff Worker.....	4
B. Screening and Selection of Religious Professionals and Staff.....	5
C. Supervision and Safe Environment	6
D. Conduct.....	7
E. Education and Implementation.....	8
V. Response	9
A. When Child Abuse or Neglect is Suspected.....	9
B. Safe Congregation Ministry Team Actions.....	10
VI. Response Procedures.....	11
A. Reporting and Notification – Procedure.....	11
B. Responding to Allegations of Abuse or Misconduct by an Adult – Procedure...11	
C. Responding when the Alleged Abuser is a Youth or Child – Procedure.....14	
D. Responding When a Child Makes a Deliberately False Accusation of Abuse...15	
VII. Appendix of Forms.....	16
Driver Qualification for Transporting Minors Form	17
Background Investigation and Authorization Form	19
Field Trip Permission and Consent for Medical Treatment Form.....	21
Overnight Medical Information Form	23

I. PREAMBLE

We know that religious communities are not immune to the dangers of physical and sexual abuse that can be damaging to a child. This policy is adopted with our sincere desire to provide an open and transparent dialogue within our congregation concerning issues of abuse; to utilize appropriate screening mechanisms that are consistent with best practices; to provide standards for those who interact with children on a regular basis; and to provide appropriate instructions on how to handle and report allegations of child abuse. If allegations of abuse occur, the Unitarian Society of Germantown will do everything in its power to respond in a speedy, professional and caring manner that will respect the dignity of all persons and, above all, protect our children and youth.

II. DEFINITIONS

FOR READY REFERENCE

“Child” or “minor” is any person under 18 years old. “Youth” is a person between 14-17 years, inclusive.

“Parent” includes parents and guardians.

“Workers” are persons who provide direct care or supervision or persons who serve as a formally designated mentor to USG children or youth, whether they are paid or unpaid. This is not limited to Child Spiritual Development classes. Workers shall include Staff who meet this description. *See* Section IV.A. below for age and other requirements to be a Worker.

OTHER DEFINITIONS

“Abuse” is an act that harms or threatens to harm a child or youth. Abuse may be physical, sexual, emotional/ mental, or neglect. Harm caused by withholding life’s necessities – food, clothing, shelter, medical care, education – is “neglect”.

“Board” is the Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Society of Germantown.

“Child” or “minor” is defined above in the Ready Reference section.

“ChildLine” refers to the ChildLine Section of the Bureau of Policy, Programs, and Operations, Office of Children, Youth and Families, Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, operating the hotline 800-932-0313.

“Church” is the Unitarian Society of Germantown, sometimes referred to as USG.

“Church Member” is an official member of the congregation as defined in the church bylaws.

“Church Friend” is a person who makes an identifiable financial contribution to USG but has not become a Church Member.

“Committee on Ministry” is a continuing body that reports to the Board and is charged with assuring the quality of the professional ministry; serving as an advice and support group for the minister and a mean of facilitating communication between the Minister, members of the congregation and staff; assuring procedures that facilitate conflict resolution; implementing the Covenant of Right Relations; and serving on the Safe Congregation Ministry Team.

“DSD” is the Director of Spiritual Development, formerly known as the Director of Religious Education.

“Group” is children or youth who participate in any planned, organized program or activity of the Unitarian Society of Germantown (USG).

“Mandated Reporters” are persons who must make an immediate and direct report of suspected child abuse if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is a victim of child abuse under any of certain enumerated circumstances. 23 Pa.C.S.A. 6311(b)(1); http://keepkidssafe.pa.gov/cs/groups/webcontent/documents/document/c_137646.pdf. See, *infra* Section V. A. 2 of this policy (Response/ When Child Abuse or Neglect is Suspected/Mandated Reporters) for further information.

“MET” is the Ministry Executive Team, which is responsible for day-to-day operations and management of USG.

“Parent” is defined above in the Ready Reference section.

“Policy” is this Safe Congregation Policy.

“Religious Professional” is a trained staff member hired to perform religious functions, such as the Minister, Ministerial Intern, Director of Spiritual Development, or the Music Director.

“Safe Congregation Ministry Team” or the “Team” is comprised of the Minister, the Director of Spiritual Development (“DSD”), and the members of the Committee on Ministry.

“Spiritual Development” was formerly referred to as Religious Education (“RE”). Any references to RE in this policy are made for clarity and shall be deemed to refer to Spiritual Development.

“Staff” are persons employed by USG to provide services for the congregation. Staff does not include independent contractors.

“Supervisor” is an adult charged with maintaining the safety of his or her assigned group through the reasonable exercise of thoughtful action and responsibility. What constitutes appropriate supervision will vary with the ages of those in the group and the context of the activity.

“Team” is the Safe Congregation Ministry Team.

“Workers” is defined above in the Ready Reference section.

“Youth” is defined as part of the definition of Child in the above Ready Reference section.

III. DUTIES

A. MINISTRY EXECUTIVE TEAM (“MET”)

The MET will be responsible for suggesting appropriate revisions to, and implementing, the Safe Congregation Policy, and creating and maintaining Safe Congregation training and reference materials. The MET may delegate duties under this Policy, but will remain accountable for assuring that the requirements of the Policy are followed. The Minister shall have ultimate responsibility.

B. SAFE CONGREGATION MINISTRY TEAM

The Safe Congregation Ministry Team (the “Team”) will consist of the Minister, the Director of Spiritual Development, and the members of the Committee on Ministry. The duties of the Safe Congregation Ministry Team will be as follows:

1. Assist the Board in its oversight responsibilities by helping to ensure proper implementation of, and compliance with, the Policy.
2. Review relevant policies and procedures and make recommendations to the Board.
3. Respond to violations of the Safe Congregation Policy, as set forth in the Policy. If any of the individuals on the Safe Congregation Ministry Team is the subject of a complaint of misconduct, that individual shall not participate in the response as a member of the Team.

IV. PREVENTION

A. SCREENING AND SELECTION OF NON-STAFF WORKERS

Non-Staff Workers at USG must meet the following criteria:

1. Each Non-Staff Worker must be:
 - a. An active participant at the Unitarian Society of Germantown, as a Church Member or Church Friend for at least six months prior to assignment to a group, committee, activity or event OR
 - b. An active participant as a church member or friend in good standing at another Unitarian Universalist (UU) congregation for at least one year duration through

the current or preceding calendar year. Exceptions can be made at the discretion of the Ministry Executive Team with provision of appropriate references, AND.

- c. At least 18 years of age, unless approved by the MET. Youth or children who teach and/or assist in church school and childcare must work with an adult and with the written permission of their parents.
2. Proposed Non-Staff Workers with a documented history of abuse, a violent crime conviction or admitted or adjudicated sexual misconduct are prohibited from providing care or supervision of children or youth. Any background check that indicates a criminal record will be subject to further review considering the nature and age of the offense.
3. All Non-Staff Workers age 18 and over must complete the applicable application forms included in this policy and must consent to have the following screenings: (1) Criminal history from the Pennsylvania State Police, and (2) Child Abuse History Clearance from the Department of Human Services. Additionally, a fingerprint based federal criminal history (FBI) submitted through the Pennsylvania State Police or its authorized agent is required if the volunteer has lived outside the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in the last 10 years. Volunteers who are not required to obtain the FBI Clearance because (a) They are applying for an unpaid position and (b) have been a continuous resident of Pennsylvania for the past 10 years, must swear or affirm in writing that they are not disqualified from service based upon a conviction of an offense under §6344. All prospective volunteers must submit clearances prior to the commencement of service.
4. The above screenings shall be completed at such intervals as USG, in its sole discretion, may deem appropriate, but no less frequently than every 60 months.
5. All Non-Staff Workers are required to read and agree in writing to the terms set forth in this Policy prior to beginning their duties with any group or program involving direct care or supervision of children or youth at USG.

B. SCREENING AND SELECTION OF RELIGIOUS PROFESSIONALS AND STAFF

1. Each proposed Religious Professional and Staff member must complete USG's required job application form, must consent to such reference and background checks as USG, in its sole discretion, deems necessary, and must obtain the following three clearances: (1) Report of criminal history from the Pennsylvania State Police; (2) Child Abuse History Clearance from the Department of Human Services; and (3) Fingerprint based federal criminal history submitted through the Pennsylvania State Police or its authorized agent (FBI). No Religious Professional or Staff member with a history of abuse or sexual misconduct will qualify for employment with USG.
2. The above screenings shall be completed at such intervals as USG, in its sole discretion, may deem appropriate, but no less frequently than every 60 months.
3. Employees who have not received the result of their clearances before beginning employment may be employed for a single period not to exceed 90 days if all of the following conditions are met:

- The applicant has applied for the three required clearances and they provide a copy of the completed forms to their employer.
 - The employer has no knowledge of information pertaining to the applicant which would disqualify him from employment.
 - The applicant swears or affirms in writing that he is not disqualified from employment pursuant to the grounds for denying employment in § 6344 (c) or has not been convicted of an offense of a similar nature to those crimes under the laws or former laws of the United States, or one of its territories or possessions, another state, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or a foreign nation, or under a former law of this commonwealth.
 - The applicant is not permitted to work alone with children and must work in the immediate vicinity of a permanent employee.
4. All Religious Professionals and Staff members are required to read and agree in writing to the terms set forth in this Policy prior to beginning their duties with any group or program involving care or supervision of children or youth at USG.

C. SUPERVISION AND SAFE ENVIRONMENT

All Workers are subject to the supervision of and evaluation by the Minister or delegate.

All Workers are required to comply with the following in furtherance of a safe and secure environment for our children and youth, and in order to avoid the appearance of impropriety:

1. Each group will have at least two assigned Workers, with at least one Worker being an adult. This included infants and toddlers. For infants and toddlers, the desirable ratio is one Worker for each four children, so if there are more than eight children, it is desirable to have additional Worker(s). If a Worker must be briefly absent from the room, special care shall be taken to assure that the setting is open to view, and the absence shall be as brief as possible. In the event that, at the time of a scheduled activity, two Workers turn out not to be available, the Worker who is present will request backup from another Worker who is on call. In the event another Worker cannot be provided, another adult shall be obtained. In the event another adult is not available, the activity shall be cancelled.
2. In order to provide visibility into classrooms, window coverings will be open.
3. Parents or guardians shall be encouraged to visit their child's classroom at any time.
4. When Workers are with children for a scheduled activity, the parent(s) or guardian must be explicitly informed by the DSD or delegate of the child's location and the purpose of the interaction.
5. All outings must be pre-approved by the DSD. Participating children must have a signed permission slip from a parent or guardian.
6. When carpooling as part of a USG trip or activity, all drivers must be adults age 25 or over. Having two adults per vehicle is preferred, but it is recognized that logistically it is sometimes difficult or impossible to have two adults per vehicle. There should be two or

more youth with one adult. Workers who are giving a ride to a child for a purpose other than as part of a USG trip or activity may proceed as authorized by the child's parents or guardians.

7. Children in grade two and younger can be released only to a parent or guardian unless prior arrangements have been made with the DSD or Teacher. This requirement also applies to children in grade three if they are grouped with children in grade two or younger.

D. CONDUCT

1. USG seeks to create an environment in which children and youth can explore the spiritual and religious nature of their lives in relationship with others, including adults. This requires that appropriate boundaries be maintained at all times. No matter the age or behavior of the child, it is always the responsibility of the adult to maintain appropriate boundaries. Workers are expected to nurture the child's physical, emotional and spiritual growth by treating the child with kindness, trust and respect. Interactions must always be engaged with the best interests of the child as the foremost goal. All Workers must understand the power differential in child/ adult relationships. This differential places a great responsibility on the adult in the relationship.
2. Corporal punishment or abusive language may not be used under any circumstances. This includes behavior that constitutes verbal, emotional, or physical abuse and behavior or language that is threatening or demeaning.
3. It is harmful to children and youth for Workers to become romantically or sexually involved with minors. Workers must refrain from engaging in seductive, sexual or erotic behavior with children and youth.
4. Physical expressions of affection such as hugs may be acceptable, but it is best to allow the child to initiate the contact or to at least ask permission of the child. Such contact should never occur in private. The adult must not allow such affection to become too frequent or prolonged.
5. While engaged with USG children and youth, Workers shall not be alone in a private location with one child or youth, and shall avoid seclusion. Private conversations with a USG child will occur in a public place, in full view of others. If a pastoral care conversation is not possible in these circumstances, Religious Professionals may meet with a USG child in a separate room provided that the door of the room remains open for the entire session.
6. Workers shall not intentionally seek out informal contact with USG children and youth without first obtaining the permission of parents. Informal contact refers to contact between a Worker and a child or youth that is not directly part of an official church activity. The Worker should clearly let the parent know the nature of the contact and that it is not part of a church activity. For purposes of this paragraph, informal contact

between a mentor and his/her mentee in connection with a formal church program will require parental permission. Parents are responsible for monitoring such informal contacts.

7. Social media will be handled as follows:
 - a. All USG-sanctioned social media and electronic communications between adults and youth or children shall be viewed as not confidential. When communicating electronically with children below Grade 9 in school, the Minister, DSD, Worker or other adult shall copy the parents.
 - b. A “Closed” but not “Secret” group in Facebook must be used for youth groups, with comparable limitations for other social media. Facebook specifies that “In a Closed group, anyone can see the group’s name and description, see who is in the group and the group’s tags, and find the group in search, but only current members can see what member post and see stories about the group on Facebook. In a Secret group, only current and former members can see the group’s name, description, tags, and find the group in search, and only current members can see who is in the group, what members post, and see stories about the group on Facebook. In a Closed group, anyone can ask to join or be added or invited by a member. In a Secret group, anyone [can join], but they have to be added or invited by a member.” Youth groups in social media must have two Worker administrators, may have two youth administrators, and must include the DSD as a member.
8. The use of tobacco, e-cigarettes, alcohol or drugs by minors is prohibited. Workers should at all times be aware that their own behavior is a powerful statement to children as to what is acceptable and responsible use of these agents. Workers while acting in a supervisory capacity should not use alcohol or drugs. Any tobacco or e-cigarette use must be moderate, discreet, not done in front of the children, and only to the extent permitted by church policy pertaining to tobacco use.

E. EDUCATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

All church members, friends, visitors and Staff will comply with the Safe Congregation Policy and all ancillary procedures and instructions. To facilitate this:

1. The MET or its delegate shall prepare a Safe Congregation Handbook (the “Handbook”), which shall include the requirements set forth in Sections IV.C. (Supervision and Visibility) and IV.D. (Conduct for Adults Working with Children and Youth) above.
2. A copy of the Safe Congregation Policy and Handbook will be provided to anyone identified by the DSD as being within its definition of “Worker”. All new and existing workers will be required to sign a form indicating that they have read the Safe Congregation Policy and agree to be bound by it.
3. The Handbook, along with information on how to access the complete Safe Congregation Policy, will be provide to the parents of all children currently participating in the Child

Spiritual Development program, and thereafter a copy shall be provided to the parents of children enrolling for the first time.

4. References to the Safe Congregation Policy will be a standard part of every application interview and training of new Workers.
5. Teacher and Religious Professional training on the Safe Congregation Policy and on child abuse awareness and prevention will be conducted annually by the DSD or a designee. The MET will be responsible for ensuring that this occurs.
6. The DSD shall store all application forms, signed consents, and background check documentation in a locked file.
7. Anyone with access to volunteer disclosures, background check reports and application forms must agree to hold that information in confidentiality except to share relevant information with Team members.
8. The MET is responsible for informing the congregation about the Safe Congregation Policy and ancillary materials and where they can be accessed.

V. RESPONSE

A. WHEN CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT IS SUSPECTED

1. Confidentiality vs. Secrets. If a child discloses incidents of abuse or neglect, the Worker should listen carefully to the report and ask only limited non-leading questions. The Worker will assure the child that they will respect the information and use it confidentially, but will not give the child the impression that they will keep secrets.
2. Mandated reporters. USG Religious Professionals and Workers are mandated reporters under Pennsylvania laws current as of the date of this Policy.

A mandated reporter must make an immediate and direct report of suspected child abuse if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is a victim of child abuse under any of the following circumstances:

- a. They come into contact with the child in the course of employment, occupation, and practice of a profession or through a regularly scheduled program, activity or service.
- b. They are directly responsible for the care, supervision, guidance, or training of the child, or are affiliated with an agency, institution, organization, school, regularly established church, or religious organization or other entity that is directly responsible for the care, supervision, guidance, or training of the child.
- c. A person makes a specific disclosure to the mandated reporter that an identifiable child is the victim of child abuse.

- d. An individual 14 years of age or older makes a specific disclosure to the mandated reporter that the individual has committed child abuse.

23 Pa.C.S.A. 6311(b)(1);

http://keepkidssafe.pa.gov/cs/groups/webcontent/documents/document/c_137646.pdf

Reports may be made by a telephone call to ChildLine at 1-800-932-0313 or electronically at www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis. It is not necessary that the information that gives rise to the concern come directly from the affected child. The Worker should document all conversations as soon as possible

The Worker also must immediately notify the person in charge at USG, which shall be the DSD, the Minister, another member of the Safe Congregation Ministry Team, or the President of the Board. Persons who submit written reports to ChildLine will provide a signed copy to a member of the Team.

3. Other reporters. Persons who have reasonable cause to suspect child abuse are permitted by law to make a report even if they are not a mandated reporter.
4. Potential abuse or emergency situations. In the event that a child makes a disclosure of potential abuse that may occur when the child is released, or in an emergency situation, an approved adult will stay with the child until further instructions are provided by ChildLine or a member of the Team.

B. SAFE CONGREGATION MINISTRY TEAM ACTIONS

1. The Team will investigate incidents of alleged abuse at church sponsored functions onsite or offsite. The Team will assure that the reporting procedures required by current Pennsylvania law are followed. The reporting procedures in this Policy are current as of the date it was approved.
2. The Team will decide if it is appropriate, and document, to what extent if any, to permit access to the church by an alleged, admitted or convicted abuser. The Team may require that Workers be suspended from their duties pending the results of an investigation. If a Religious Professional is involved, the Board must be consulted prior to any suspension.

VI. RESPONSE PROCEDURES

A. REPORTING AND NOTIFICATION -- PROCEDURE

1. Mandatory reporting procedures as required by statute shall be followed. The Team shall assure that any follow-up or further direction provided by ChildLine is followed after they become involved.
2. A Religious Professional on the Team shall be responsible to notify the parent or guardian of the affected child or youth unless the parent or guardian is the alleged abuser.
3. The Team shall notify the President of the USG Board.
4. In consultation with the President of the USG Board, the Team may notify USG Church Counsel.
5. In consultation with the President of the USG Board, the Team may notify the Media Spokesperson as designated from time to time by the USG Board.
6. The Team should document all reports and notifications.
7. Pastoral care and counseling referrals should be provided as desired.

B. RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE OR MISCONDUCT BY AN ADULT – PROCEDURE

1. *In the case of alleged abuse:* If there is an allegation of abuse of a USG child by a USG member, friend or visitor, before meeting with the alleged abuser, the Minister and member of the Team should:
 - a. Find out the details of the allegation and create a brief written report.
 - b. Find out what actions have been taken. For example, the Team member may want to inquire if the allegation has been reported to the appropriate authorities, if there is a current investigation, and if there are other allegations against this individual.
 - c. Check the local sex offender registry for further information if the allegation involves sexual abuse. See www.pameganslaw.state.pa.us.
 - d. Meet directly with those involved. Once a situation arises, as quickly as possible, the Minister with a Team member should meet privately with:
 - i. The alleged victim's parents or guardians (unless the alleged abuser is the parent or guardian) to discuss what is known and what steps will be taken. The parameters of confidentiality should be discussed.

- ii. The alleged abuser, and possibly his or her partner or family, to discuss the concerns that have been raised and safeguards required by USG. The adult should be told that the purpose of the meeting is to ensure the safety of everyone involved; determine any restrictions on the individual's participation in USG activities; and set the next steps in place. The parameters of confidentiality should be discussed.
 - iii. If applicable, speak with any probation or parole officer.
 - e. Create a plan of action.
 - f. Meet with the alleged abuser and the alleged victim's family, respectively. Notify each of the plan.
 - g. Prepare a report summarizing the allegations, investigation, conclusions, and actions taken. The report will be filed in a secure location.
2. *In the case of an adult who appears to have an attraction to children:* If an adult talks about his/her attraction to children, but to the knowledge of USG has not acted on that attraction, the Team will:
- a. Before meeting with the individual, educate themselves about the treatment options.
 - b. Meet with the individual and obtain additional information, including whether the individual has received, or is currently receiving treatment for the attraction; whether the individual has previously acted on the attraction; whether the individual has a criminal record in connection with conduct relating to the attraction. If the individual currently is, or recently has been, in treatment for the attraction, request permission to contact the treater. Inform the individual that USG will consider whether it is necessary to set any restrictions on the individual's participation at USG.
 - c. Check the local sex offender registry for further information. *See* www.pameganslaw.state.pa.us.
 - d. Develop a written plan after due consideration of the safety of the congregation. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent it is not inconsistent with the safety of the congregation or others.
 - e. Meet with the individual again to inform him of the plan. If there are to be restrictions on the individual's participation at USG, require the individual to sign an agreement to abide by those restrictions.
 - f. Prepare a report summarizing the allegations, investigation, conclusions, and actions taken. The report will be filed in a secure location.

3. *In the case of an allegation of a Religious Professional as an abuser:* If there is an allegation of abuse naming a Religious Professional of the congregation:
- a. If the Religious Professional is a member of the Team, the Religious Professional shall not act as a member of the Team in connection with the investigation.
 - b. The President of the Board shall be notified.
 - c. The Team should contact the person in the UUA Regional office's Congregational Services group and/or the UUA Regional Executive serving the congregation. In the event that the response from these individuals is unsatisfactory, the Team should contact the office of the UUA responsible for investigating allegations of abuse by Religious Professionals.
 - d. The Team shall meet with the person(s) making the allegation, It is good practice for the Team (1) to prepare a written factual statement of the allegations, limited strictly to the facts; and (2) to request the person(s) making the allegations to review the statement, make any needed corrections, and sign it. The parameters of confidentiality should be discussed.
 - e. The Team shall meet or speak with any witnesses or other persons involved.
 - f. The Team shall meet with the Religious Professional. The parameters of confidentiality should be discussed, as well as any other requests the Team has of the Religious Professional at this time.
 - g. Subsequent actions will depend on the facts and input from the Team, the MET, the Board, Church Counsel and the UUA, or any combination thereof. The Team generally will prepare an investigation report summarizing the allegations; actions taken in the investigation; and its conclusions.
 - h. The Team should briefly and factually document all meetings and conversations. Additionally, the Team should prepare a report summarizing the allegations, investigation, conclusions, and actions taken. The report will be filed in a secure location.
 - i. There shall be no retaliation against USG employees for making an allegation of child abuse in good faith against another USG employee, including their manager.

C. RESPONDING WHEN THE ALLEGED ABUSER IS A YOUTH OR CHILD -- PROCEDURE

One of the most difficult situations is when a USG youth or child has been accused of abusing a child. In some cases these children may simply be acting on their feelings impulsively. Pastoral care and support for the families involved is crucial. This will be very difficult for the parents involved, and they will need the support of their church community, especially the Minister and the DSD. Helping them to feel welcome and supported is essential, as is the ongoing offer of ministry.

1. After an incident comes to the attention of any Worker, Religious Professional or other Staff member, the Minister should inform the Team. The Minister or DSD should initiate contact individually with the parents of both children to discuss the allegation and next steps. In some cases, a parent may report a concern that does not actually constitute abuse, e.g. when two five-year-olds are found “playing doctor.” In this case, the Minister or DSD needs to speak with the parent(s) and the child who allegedly committed the abuse, and assure that the child knows what behavior is expected and understands the need to abide by those requirements.
2. The Minister or DSD should encourage the parents of the child who was abused to seek an evaluation for this child. The parameters of confidentiality should be discussed.
3. The parents of the child who initiated the abuse need to be engaged more thoroughly in discussions about next steps. It may be necessary to call ChildLine. The parameters of confidentiality should be discussed.
4. Before the initiator is allowed to continue to attend religious education, this child may be required to receive an assessment by a child psychologist or psychiatrist having experience with childhood sexual or non-sexual behavior problems. The parents may also be required to agree to closely monitor their child whenever he or she is at the church.
5. If the evaluation finds that this was simply a case of inappropriate boundaries or impulsive behavior, and the therapist advises that the child can safely attend church functions with other children, the Minister or DSD and the parents can meet with the child to discuss the importance of never repeating the behavior, the harm it can do to other children, and the consequences should such a situation occur again.
6. If the treatment provider reports that the child has a more severe behavior problem that is likely to be repetitive, the Minister or DSD and the parents need to meet to decide how and if the child can safely be involved with the Religious Education or Youth Group program. In some cases, it may be necessary to deny the young person continued involvement with other children until treatment is completed and to consider alternative ways to provide religious education.

7. In some situations, a family will want to bring a child who has been treated for abuse related offenses back into the congregation after treatment is completed. This is a matter for the Team to consider.

D. RESPONDING WHEN A CHILD MAKES A DELIBERATELY FALSE ACCUSATION OF ABUSE – PROCEDURE

1. Although rare, it may happen that a child deliberately makes a false accusation of abuse. In the event that an investigation as described above should disclose that this is the case, there should be appropriate follow-up appropriate to a child's age, circumstances, the nature of the allegation, etc.
2. Unless the allegation is made against the Minister, the Minister should initiate contact with the child's parent(s) or guardian(s). If the allegation is made against the Minister, two lay members of the Team should initiate contact.
3. The procedures set forth in the section Responding When the Alleged Abuser Is a Youth or Child should be used as a guide in this situation.

[The balance of this page was intentionally left blank.]

VII. APPENDIX OF FORMS

Unitarian Society of Germantown Driver Qualification for Transporting Minors Form

This form will be stored in a locked file cabinet

To protect the safety of our children, it is church policy that any individual driving in any official capacity for the Unitarian Society of Germantown, and transporting minors as passengers (other than his or her family members), shall meet the following qualifications:

1. Possess an adult driver's license valid in Pennsylvania
2. Demonstrate Evidence of Financial Responsibility for the vehicle being operated, as required by Pennsylvania law
3. Be at least twenty- five years of age

It shall be the responsibility of the DSD or Staff member or Worker in charge of a church function or activity to ensure that these qualifications are met by obtaining from each prospective driver a completed Driver Qualification Form. This form shall be completed in full by the prospective driver:

Completed Driver Qualification Forms shall be filed promptly with the church office and will remain valid through the end of the program year during which the form was completed.

For the purposes of this policy, "functions and activities under Unitarian Society of Germantown auspices" will include both scheduled and spontaneous activities, whether programmatic, operational, or social, that are sponsored, led, or directed by ministry teams, task forces, staff members, or designated volunteers of the Unitarian Society of Germantown.

Please fill in the following information:

Name (as shown on driver's license): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Driver's license number: _____ expiration date: _____

Automobile # 1

Insurance company: _____

Insurance policy number: _____ Insurance expiration date: _____

Year, make, and model of automobile: _____

License number of automobile: _____

Automobile #2

Insurance company: _____

Insurance policy number: _____ Insurance expiration date: _____

Year, make, and model of automobile: _____

License number of automobile: _____

By signing this form I agree that the information provided on it is true, and that I am at least 21 years of age.

Signature: _____

Printed name: _____

Date: _____

Unitarian Society of Germantown Background Investigation Authorization Form

This form will be stored in a locked cabinet.

This form is to be completed by any applicant for any position involving interactions with minors. The purpose of this form is to help the Unitarian Society of Germantown provide a safe and secure environment for the children and youth that participate in programs sponsored by the church. Any information you provide here will be kept confidential and used solely for the purpose of determining your qualifications for working with minors.

Date: ____/____/____ Date of Birth: ____/____/____ Gender: _____

Social Security # (required to conduct background check): ____/____/____

Name: First _____ Middle _____ Last _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip code: _____

Home phone: _____ Other phone: _____

Work phone: _____ e-mail: _____

List all your addresses for the past 7 years, starting with the most recent (you must include present address): _____

Have you ever been convicted of a crime (other than minor traffic offenses)? Yes ___ No ___

If yes, please explain charges: (use additional paper if necessary):

What state, what county and what year did these convictions occur?

Other names you have used, including maiden names and the date(s) the name(s) changed:

References: Please list names and addresses of three persons (not relatives) having knowledge of your character, experience, work habits and ability:

Name	Address	E-Mail	Phone

--	--	--	--

Church History and Prior Work with Children and Youth

Are you a member of Unitarian Society of Germantown? Yes No

Length of time associated with USG: _____

If your participation at USG is under 6 months, list any other UU congregations you have attended regularly in the past 3 years:

Name of Congregation	City and State	Dates of Attendance
----------------------	----------------	---------------------

Please list previous church and non-church work involving children and youth:

Driving

If you will be driving minors to church sponsored events, please fill out the Driver Qualification for Transporting Minors form.

Applicant's Statement

I authorize the Unitarian Society of Germantown and their agents to investigate my background as it pertains to employment, appointment or volunteering considerations. I hereby release all persons, companies or corporations furnishing such information from liability and responsibility. I understand that any information obtained about me through this application process will be kept in the strictest confidentiality among appropriate members of the Unitarian Society of Germantown who will be screening applicants for compensated or volunteer positions. Any information obtained through this process which indicates that I may lack, in the Unitarian Society of Germantown's opinion, the maturity or temperament to work with children or youth, will be sufficient grounds for denying this application.

I authorize the Unitarian Society of Germantown or its agents to conduct a criminal history and sexual abuse background check. I understand that results of that test will be kept in confidence.

Signature: _____

Printed name: _____

Date: _____

For office use only:
Application Reviewed by: _____
Date: _____

Unitarian Society of Germantown Field Trip Permission Form and Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment

*Please fill out a separate form for each child.
Chaperones will keep one copy and one copy will be kept in a locked cabinet in the church office.*

Name of child: _____ Gender: (circle) M / F Date of birth: _____

Is this a recurring trip? Y / N Date or dates of trip: _____

Purpose of trip: _____

Destination: _____ CRE class: _____

Parent(s) or Legal Guardian(s):

Name(s): _____ and _____

Address: _____

Home phone: _____ Work: _____ Cell phone: _____

Alternate contact person(s) for emergencies

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Home phone: _____ Work: _____ Cell phone: _____

Medical Information

Insurance Company: _____ Group # _____ ID# _____

Permission/Authorization

I (the undersigned) am the parent or legal guardian of the above named child. He/she has my permission to participate in the outing(s) or field trip(s) specified above.

I authorize any of the adult teachers or advisors assisting in the field trip/outing to take any reasonable action to

advisor to administer first aid treatment to my child and, if necessary in his or her judgment, obtain medical treatment (including surgery) for my child by any medical care provider. I also authorize the adult teacher or advisor obtaining such medical treatment for my child to give, on my behalf, any written consent for such medical treatment that is customarily required by the medical provider, including written consent that releases the medical provider from liability.

The following allergies, medications and other medical issues should be made known to teachers or providers of medical treatment:

I understand that my child is expected to behave in a respectful manner to other members of the group, as well as any persons he/she encounters during the trip. He/she will be expected to obey the adult teacher/advisor's requests with respect to safety and group needs. Failure to do so could disqualify my child from future participation.

Signature of Parent or Guardian: _____ **Date:** _____

Unitarian Society of Germantown Overnight Medical Information Form

*Please fill out a separate form for each child.
Chaperones will keep one copy and one copy will be kept in a locked cabinet in the church office.*

Participant's Name _____

Please list all:

Allergies, Medical Concerns or Conditions

Dietary special needs to accommodate

Medications being taken while on the trip.

Medicine: _____ Dosage: _____

Medicine: _____ Dosage: _____

Medicine: _____ Dosage: _____

Parents/guardians may request chaperone keep possession of medications during the event and administer them as instructed. Please list medications taken independently and any you wish to be held by, administered or confirmed by chaperone:

Is your child permitted to be given Tylenol or ibuprofen if needed? YES NO

Is your child permitted to be treated with topical antihistamine if needed? YES NO

Please provide any comments you wish that may help the participating adults provide a positive experience for your child.

Signature _____

Printed name _____

Date _____