

# **Emmanuel Baptist Church Child Protection Policy**

## **General Purpose Statement**

Emmanuel Baptist Church seeks to provide a safe environment for the children who participate in our programs and activities. By implementing the below practices, our goal is to protect the children of Emmanuel Baptist Church from incidents of misconduct or inappropriate behavior while also protecting our staff and volunteers (workers) from false accusations.

## **Definitions**

For purposes of this policy, the terms “child” or “children” include all persons under the age of eighteen (18) years. The term “worker” includes both paid and volunteer persons who work with children.

## **Selection of Workers**

All persons who desire to work with the children participating in our programs and activities will be screened. This screening includes the following:

### **Six Month Rule**

No applicant will be considered for any position involving contact with minors until he/she has been a member of Emmanuel Baptist Church for a minimum of six (6) months. This time of interaction between our leadership and the applicant allows for better evaluation and suitability of the applicant for working with children. Students enrolled in college courses and have no intention on moving their membership to Emmanuel, may be exempt from this rule, but must be comply with the rest of the worker applicant process.

### **Written Application**

All persons seeking to work with the children must complete and sign a written application in a form to be supplied by us. The application will request basic information from the applicant and will inquire into previous experience with children, previous church affiliation, reference and employment information, as well as disclosure of any previous criminal convictions. The application form will be maintained in confidence on file at the church.

### **Personal Interview**

Upon completion of the application a face-to-face interview will be scheduled with the applicant to discuss his/her suitability for the position.

### **Reference Checks**

Before an applicant is permitted to work with children, at least two applicants' references will be checked. These references should be of an institutional nature as opposed to personal or family references, preferably from organizations where the applicant has

worked with children in the past. Documentation of the reference checks will be maintained in confidence on file at the church.

### **Criminal Background Check and National Sex Offender Registry Check**

A national criminal background check and national sex offender registry check is required for all employees (regardless of position) and for the following categories of volunteers:

Those who will be involved in overnight activities with the children;

Those counseling children;

Those involved in one-on-one mentorship of children; and

Those having occasional one-on-one contact with children (such as, church sponsored athletic team coaches and vehicle drivers).

Before a background check is run, prospective workers will be asked to sign an authorization form allowing the church to run the check. If an individual declines to sign the authorization form, s/he will be unable to work with children.

What constitutes a disqualifying offense that will keep an individual from working with children will be determined by the Pastor and Associate Pastor on a case-by-case basis in light of all the surrounding circumstances. Generally, convictions for an offense involving children and/or for offenses involving violence, dishonesty, illegal substances, indecency and any conduct contrary to our mission will preclude someone from being permitted to work with children. Failure to disclose a criminal conviction on the application form will also be a disqualifying event.

### **Two Adult Rule**

It is our goal that a minimum of two unrelated adult workers will be in attendance at all times when children are being supervised during our programs and activities. Some youth classes may have only one adult teacher in attendance during class session; in these instances, doors to the classroom should remain open and there should be no fewer than three students with the adult teacher. We do not allow minors to be alone with one adult on our premises or in any sponsored activity. Even in counseling situations our goal is to have two adults with one child.

### **Responding to Allegations of Child Abuse**

For purposes of this policy, “child abuse” is any action (or lack of action) that endangers or harms a child’s physical, psychological or emotional health and development. Child abuse occurs in different ways and includes the following:

**Physical abuse** – any physical injury to a child that is not accidental, such as beating, shaking, burns, and biting.

**Emotional abuse** – emotional injury when the child is not nurtured or provided with love and security, such as an environment of constant criticism, belittling and persistent teasing.

**Sexual abuse** – any sexual activity between a child and an adult or a child and another child at least four years older than the victim, including activities such as fondling, exhibitionism, intercourse, incest, and pornography.

**Neglect** – depriving a child of his or her essential needs, such as adequate food, water, shelter, and medical care.

Childcare workers may have the opportunity to become aware of abuse or neglect of the children under our care. In the event that an individual involved in the care of children at this church becomes aware of suspected abuse or neglect of a child under his/her care, this should be reported immediately to the Pastor or Associate Pastor for further actions including reporting to authorities as may be mandated by state law.

In the event that an incident of abuse or neglect is alleged to have occurred at this church during our sponsored programs or activities, the following procedure shall be followed:

The parent or guardian of the child will be notified.

The worker alleged to be the perpetrator of the abuse or misconduct will immediately be placed on leave from working with children pending an investigation and instructed to remain away from the premises during the investigation.

Civil authorities will be notified, and the church will comply with the state's requirements regarding mandatory reporting of abuse as the law then exists. The church will fully cooperate with the investigation of the incident by civil authorities.

Our insurance company will be notified, and we will complete an incident report. Any documents received relating to the incident and/or allegations will immediately be forwarded to the insurance company.

The Pastor shall be our spokesperson to the media concerning incidents of abuse or neglect, unless he or she is alleged to be involved. We will seek the advice of legal counsel before responding to media inquiries or releasing information to the congregation. All other representatives of the church should refrain from speaking to the media.

A pastoral visit will be arranged for those who desire it.

Any person who is not found innocent of the alleged abuse or misconduct will be removed from their position working with children or youth.

## **Training**

Emmanuel Baptist Church will provide training on this child protection policy to all new childcare workers and will strive to provide opportunities for additional training classes or events on an annual basis. All workers are mandated to complete these training events.

## Child/Youth Worker Application Form

*It is the goal of this church to create a safe and secure environment for all children and workers who are involved in church activities. To facilitate this emphasis, it is necessary to gather pertinent information from those who desire employment or offer volunteer services to our children and youth program. This information will be used for the sole purpose of helping the church provide a safe and secure environment for children and workers.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever used name(s) other than the one above? If yes, please list:

\_\_\_\_\_

Current address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Years at address: \_\_\_\_\_

Previous address: \_\_\_\_\_

Current phone number: (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ (Work): \_\_\_\_\_

*Please respond to all questions that apply to the position you are applying/volunteering for:*

Position applying/volunteering for: \_\_\_\_\_

When are you available to work? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a valid driver's license? \_\_\_\_\_ Commercial license? \_\_\_\_\_

License number: \_\_\_\_\_ State issued: \_\_\_\_\_

Current employer: \_\_\_\_\_ Length of employment: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Previous employers (within last five years): \_\_\_\_\_ Dates employed: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Is there any reason you should not work with or around children or youth? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been the subject of a child abuse investigation? \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please provide details: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please list your education background:*

Name	Graduate?	Year	Degree or course study
High School _____	_____	_____	_____
College _____	_____	_____	_____
Other (please specify) _____	_____	_____	_____

*Please provide the following church information:*

What, if any, church affiliation do you have? \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you attended that church? \_\_\_\_\_

List other churches you have been affiliated with: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever worked with youth or children before? \_\_\_\_\_ List where: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please list two references (must be of a business or organizational nature):*

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

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Years known each other: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Years known each other: \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby give permission to make a thorough investigation of my past employment, education, and background, and release from liability all persons, companies, or corporations supplying such information. I also release the church from any liability that might result from making such an investigation. I understand that any false statements or implications made by me on this application or other required documentation shall be considered sufficient cause for denial of employment or discharge.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_