

SAFE CHURCH POLICY

(Revised 3/26/14)

The Orinda Community Church is committed to creating and maintaining programs, facilities and a community in which members, friends, staff and volunteers of all ages can worship, learn, work and play together in an atmosphere free from all forms of abuse of power, bullying, discrimination, intimidation, sexual harassment or sexual exploitation. It is the policy of OCC to encourage its ministers to nurture safety within ministerial relationships.

I. Definitions

- a. **Minister:** a person authorized by OCC to carry out its ministry. Ministers include: Authorized Ministers, OCC Employees, Church Council members, and adult Volunteers working closely with youth and children.
 - b. **Authorized Minister:** a person who holds or who is in the process of obtaining ordained ministerial standing in the United Church of Christ or has been commissioned or licensed to perform ministry by the Northern California Nevada Conference of the United Church of Christ.
 - c. **Ministerial Relationship:** the relationship between one who carries out the ministry of OCC and the one being served by that ministry.
 - d. **Sexual Exploitation:** sexual activity or contact in which a minister engaged in a ministerial relationship with another in OCC takes advantage of the vulnerability of the person by causing, allowing or subjecting that person to sexual activity with the minister.
 - e. **Sexual Harassment:** repeated or coercive sexual advances toward another person at OCC, contrary to his or her wishes. It includes behavior directed at another person with the intent of intimidating, humiliating, or embarrassing the other person, or subjecting the person to public discrimination. Specifics of sexual harassment are listed in **Appendix A** of this document.
 - f. **Zero Tolerance:** Abuse of power, bullying, discrimination, intimidation, sexual exploitation or sexual harassment of parishioners or others at OCC by anyone engaged in ministry on behalf of OCC is unethical and will not be tolerated.
 - g. **Background Referencing:**
 1. Profiles Office of the United Church of Christ (www.ucc.org) – performs the background check for OCC Authorized Ministers, as recorded in the Ministers’ UCC Ministerial Profile.
 2. Oxford Document Management Company, Minneapolis, Minnesota (ODMC) (www.oxforddoc.com) is a professional screening firm which provides independent and confidential background investigative services to the UCC and other religious communities.
- 2. Federal Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA):** FCRA regulates the collection, storage and sale of personal information. The UCC Profiles Office and the Oxford Document Management Company are in compliance with FCRA and all other applicable state and federal laws.

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II Implementation of OCC Safe Church Policy

A. Background Referencing

1. Authorized Ministers will maintain their Ministerial Profile in accordance with the guidelines of the UCC Profiles Office, who administer the background referencing for authorized ministers of the UCC through the Oxford Document Management Company.
2. All other OCC ministers (as defined in Section Ia of this document) will apply online directly to the Oxford Document Management Company for authorization of background referencing.

B. Orientation re OCC Safe Church Policy and Procedures will be coordinated by the OCC Staffing and Personnel Committee and an Authorized OCC minister. Orientation will include review and rationale for the OCC Safe Church Policy, background referencing authorization/procedures, and discussion of power in ministerial relationships.

C. Record-Keeping

1. An Authorized OCC minister shall oversee the screening process and keep track of the records.
2. All screening documents shall be stored in a separately-locked file cabinet for an indefinite period of time.

D. Children and Youth, additional requirements

1. Volunteers working with children and youth must be interviewed, known to the OCC staff, and have background checks before being selected.
2. Staff hired for working with children and youth must be interviewed, provide references, and have background checks before being hired.
3. Written Consent Forms (Appendix B) are required from parent(s) or guardian for all OCC-sponsored children and youth activities off the church property and any overnight activities at the church.
4. Supervision
 - a. There must be either 2 unrelated adults (aged 21 or older) **OR** 1 youth over the age of 16 and 1 unrelated adult supervising OCC children's activities.
 - b. Youth 13-15 may assist an unrelated adult in supervising OCC children's activities. However, there still must be 2 unrelated adults (or 1 youth over 16 and 1 unrelated adult) supervising the children.
5. Drivers
 - a. Those driving children and youth to OCC activities must have an OCC Driver Form (Appendix C) on record.
 - b. Drivers must be in compliance with Drivers requirements as listed on the OCC Driver Form.
 - c. There must be at least 2 children in each car, unless it is a parent/guardian and their child.
 - d. Drivers must drive directly to destination of activity; no unscheduled stops are permitted.

E. Complaints of alleged abuse of power, sexual exploitation, and/or harassment at OCC and Concerns regarding background referencing feedback shall be brought to the OCC Senior Pastor and the OCC Moderator. They may refer the matter to the OCC Church Council for confidential review and for determination of any necessary action. The Northern California Nevada Conference of the United Church of Christ may be consulted.

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APPENDIX A

Sexual Harassment

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature constitute **sexual harassment** when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or participation in a church activity or
2. Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for evaluation in making personnel or church-related decisions affecting an individual or
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance or participation in church activities or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or church environment or
4. There are unsolicited and unwelcome contact that has sexual overtones, particularly:
 - a. Written contact, such as sexually suggestive or obscene letters, notes, e-mails, or invitations
 - b. Verbal contact, such as sexually suggestive or obscene comments, threats, slurs, epithets, jokes about gender-specific traits, or sexual propositions
 - c. Physical contact, such as intentional touching, pinching, brushing against another's body, impeding or blocking movement, assault, coercing sexual intercourse
 - d. Visual contact, such as leering or staring at another's body, gesturing, displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, posters, or magazines

Sexual harassment also includes:

1. Continuing to express sexual interest after being informed directly that the interest is unwelcome,
2. Using sexual behavior to control, influence, or affect the career, salary work, learning or worship environment of another,
3. Suggestions, threats, or implications that failure to accept a request for a date or sexual intimacy will affect a person's job prospects, church leadership, or comfortable participation in the life of the church,
4. Implying or withholding support for an appointment, promotion, change of assignment or suggesting that a poor performance report will be given because one has declined a date or sexual intimacy,
5. Hinting that benefits, such as promotions, favorable performance evaluations, favorable assigned duties or shifts, recommendations or reclassifications will be forthcoming in exchange for sexual favors.

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Appendix B**

CONSENT FORM for Children/Youth Activity

Activity: _____ **Location of Activity:** _____

Date: _____ **Time of Departure:** _____ **Time of Return:** _____

OCC Excursion Leader: _____

I, _____ (Parent or Guardian) give permission for
_____ (Child)

to participate in the Orinda Community Church (OCC) Activity listed above.

The children will be with OCC Youth Staff and volunteers at all times during the activity.

The OCC Youth Staff and volunteers will abide by the OCC Safe Church Policy (attached.)

In case of Emergency notify:

Name _____ **Relationship to Child** _____

Home Phone _____ **Cell Phone** _____

Health Information:

Allergies/Medical Information (Please specify and provide instruction):

Medical Release:

I give permission to the church excursion leader to obtain the services of a licensed physician in the event of an emergency requiring medical treatment.

I understand that the church excursion leader will notify me immediately concerning such an emergency.

Signature of Parent or Guardian:

Appendix C

OCC CHILDREN/YOUTH EXCURSION

DRIVER Form

I offer to provide transportation for OCC children/youth field trips.

I certify that:

- **I have read, understand, and agree with the OCC Safe Church Policy and the Driver Requirements listed on this form.**
- **I carry liability insurance on my automobile:**
 - Bodily Injury, \$100,000/300/000**
 - Property Damage, \$50,000**
 - Medical, \$5,000**

Driver Signature: _____ **Date** _____

Driver Name (Print): _____

Driver Address _____

Phone: home _____ **cell** _____

Name of Insurance Company _____

Automobile Insurance Policy Number: _____ **Expiration Date:** _____

California Driver License : _____ **Expiration Date:** _____

Driver Requirements

- **Age 25 years or above, a valid driver's license, 3 years' driving experience**
- **Free of a medical condition which would interfere with car operation**
- **No alcohol, drugs consumed prior to or while driving vehicle**
- **No smoking in vehicle**
- **Vehicle is in good repair, excellent operable condition**
- **Number of passengers not to exceed automobile's allowable limits**
- **All occupants wear seat belts, abiding by California requirements for child safety seats**
- **Cell phones prohibited while driving**
- **At least 2 children in car, unless driver is parent of child**
- **Driver has good driving record, verifiable through Motor Vehicle Bureau**

