

First Unitarian Universalist Church Columbus, Ohio	
Chapter: II. Congregational Responsibilities	Source: Safety Policy Task Force, including Scott Schricker (Chair), Lane Campbell (director of Religious Education, Fujio Hyashi, and Dan Rothert)
Title: Safety Policy	
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Preamble

We, the members of First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus, as a faith community, recognize the importance of creating an environment where everyone, especially our children and youth, are safe. Safety is one of our highest priorities particularly with regard to those vulnerable to incidents of abuse because of the high level of trust, the welcoming spirit and the strong reliance and need for volunteers, especially in children and youth programs.

We recognize the importance of those very factors of trust, welcome and volunteer commitment, and the necessity to adopt procedures to guard against incidents of abuse. We further realize that institutions operating in the best manner possible with all due concern still cannot guarantee an absolutely risk-free environment.

As a people of faith, we look to our Unitarian Universalist Principles to guide our policy-making. We apply our affirmation of the worth and dignity of all people and our search for justice to these procedures, which support our being together in community.

We recognize that to adequately address the need for safe environments, it will mean making changes, continually monitoring and updating policies and sacrificing some convenience, yet we know our responsibility to respond to the reality of our situation and to our children and youth.

In this spirit, we endorse this policy for church-sponsored activities and events.

Policy Statement

This document sets out First UU policy pertaining to:

1. General Safety and Protection Requirements (Page 2)
2. Screening and Selection of Workers with Children and Youth (Page 3)
3. Supervision Requirements (Page 4)
4. Transporting Children and Youth (Page 6)
5. Reporting of Incidents, Incident Response, and Removal of a Worker (Page 7)
6. Including Sex Offenders in the Church (Page 9)
7. Resources and Forms (Page 10)

This policy applies to all members, friends and congregants and to all First Unitarian Universalist and UUA local, regional, or national sponsored events including those in which children and youth are present (for example, events sponsored by the Religious Exploration Team, the Adult Programs Team, UUA YAC (Youth/Adult Committee) sponsored events and UUA Youth Caucus events.

It is ultimately the responsibility of the entire congregation to create and maintain a safe environment that supports the growth and welfare of adults, children and youth in our church programs. Because of the particular vulnerability of children and youth, much of this policy pertains to situations in which children are in a supervised relationship with congregants other than their parents.

1. General Safety and Protection Requirements

A. General Requirements

1. The Coordinating Team has the responsibility and authority to update and modify the safety policy, establish specific safety procedures and make changes in current policies and procedures.
2. The Coordinating Team has the responsibility and authority to establish a Response Team consisting of the Associate Minister and the Minister or Religious Exploration (who need not participate simultaneously) and four volunteers who are members of First UU. Volunteer members of the Response Team serve a two-year term renewable once.
3. The Response Team has the responsibility and authority to respond to an allegation of abuse, an allegation of disruptive behavior under the Disruptive Behavior policy, or any other incident or behavior that poses a risk to safety of members of the First UU community, their guests, and visitors. The Response Team is accountable to the Associate Minister, who is accountable to the Senior Minister and the Coordinating Team.

B. Building

1. The MRE and the Director of Administration (Administrator) have joint responsibility and authority to maintain safety readiness as specified in this section. They are accountable to the Coordinating Team.
2. The MRE maintains classroom first aid kits.
3. The Administrator ensures that fire extinguishers and AED's are readily available within the church building at all times and are maintained as per manufacture specifications. The cost may be shared between the church and the School for Young Children (SYC).
4. The MRE and the Administrator shall develop and maintain a fire drill plan and, along with the Fire Department, perform at least one church-wide fire drill, with alarm bell, to be held yearly by both the SYC and Sunday School. The Administrator is to ensure that an evacuation plan is posted by each exit within each room and at each exit within the church building.
5. In a Safety Plan [to be developed] that a Safety Team is to implement under the direction of the Administrator, additional procedures (Section 7) will include response to: violent intruder, bomb threat, severe weather, gas leak, fire, and any other situation deemed necessary. These procedures are to be coordinated with SYC procedures.
6. Illegal drugs, firearms, other weapons, and smoking are not permitted at any time at Church events or on Church premises.
7. The Administrator ensures that the church building is in compliance with building and fire codes.
8. The Administrator establishes procedures to notify congregants in case of an emergency, inclement weather or other dangerous situation at the church or a church function, including email, social media, and the church webpage.
9. Training of Staff and Volunteers. The Administrator, or a Safety Team under the Administrator's direction, is to:
 - (a) Arrange training in First Aid/CPR from a certified first aid instructor for key staff and volunteers, including SYC teachers, the MRE and RE assistant.
 - (b) Inform staff and volunteers of the location of first aid kits and fire extinguishers and AED's.
 - (c) Ensure that teachers are trained on procedures required for drills and emergencies.
 - (d) Compile a list of congregants who have first responder or medical experience.

C. The Administrator is to make this Safety Policy and related procedures available on the church website.

2. Screening and Selection of Workers with Children and Youth

With the exception of family assisting in their child's program as required or as requested, all other workers, defined as those persons both volunteer and compensated who provide direct care or supervision of children and/or youth at church events must meet the following criteria:

- A. Be at least 25 years of age and have been active in the church for at least six months. Youth leaders, who must be partnered with an adult, must be at least 14 years of age.
- B. Complete an Application Form (Section 7, A) (included in the resources section), and supply three references. These references must be people who have known the potential worker for at least three years, preferably in relation to previous work with children and youth. Government-issued photo identification, such as a driver's license, is required.
- C. Are required to consent to a criminal background check and such check may be performed.
- D. Must receive a copy of this Safe Congregation Policy Statement and acknowledge receipt of it in writing.
- E. Must sign the Code of Ethics/Volunteer Release for Information Form (Section 7, B).
- F. Must attend at least one training session, which may be incorporated into a broader orientation session for teachers or youth leaders that the MRE must offer at least once annually, to learn:
 1. The positive roles adults can play with children and youth in a religious community
 2. Definitions of child abuse and other inappropriate conduct
 3. Church policies that govern working with children or youth
 4. The rationale behind screening procedures
 5. Reporting procedures in the case of observed or suspected misconduct.

3. Supervision Requirements.

A. MRE and Teacher Responsibilities

1. The MRE, who is accountable to the Associate Minister, has the responsibility and authority to implement the supervision requirements of this section. The MRE is accountable to the Associate Minister.
2. There will be a minimum of two adults scheduled to supervise a group of children or youth.
3. Exceptions for exigent circumstances may be made only by the primary on-site adult leader. This policy protects both the children and the adult in that it minimizes the opportunity for abuse as well as minimizes the risk of false accusations. Any other exception to this requirement is allowed only with written permission from the parent or guardian (for example, to transport children from one location to another).
4. For the purposes of these requirements a “group” is defined as those children and youth who have been assigned to a nursery, or individual class or specific program or activity within the context of that class, program or event, as well as youth who are taking part in a planned, organized component of a program or event. The minimum children/youth-to-adult ratio is as follows:

Infants through age 3	4:1
Age 4 through second Grade	6:1
Age 8 and Older	10:1

Different ratios apply to off-site overnights (see section (4), paragraph (D)).

3. In the event of youth-run/youth-led events, youth in a leadership position must sign the Code of Ethics/Volunteer Release for Information Form (Section 7, B) and submit it to the MRE.
4. Neither corporal punishment nor shaming is permitted.
5. No worker or volunteer is to be alone with a child or youth either on-site or off-site, except as noted in the communication policy in paragraph (C) of this section.
6. The building will not be open to children or youth for any activity until two adults are present. A child’s parent or guardian is responsible for supervising their child or youth until two adult supervisors are present in the classroom(s) or in the church building for a church-sponsored activity.
7. A roaming supervisor (for example, the MRE or RE Assistant) is required to be present in the RE wing during Sunday School to provide supervision for children going to the lavatory.
8. Overnight events must have at least two adult advisors.
9. Youth under the age of 18 who are attending a UUA Central East Region event or local UU-sponsored event must have an on-site sponsor. The registrar of each event is expected to verify to the best of their ability that each youth has an adult sponsor, but the MRE must communicate the sponsor policy to the parents and guardians of First UU youth.
10. In case of a minor injury requiring a band-aid or less, the teacher or adult leader is permitted to treat the injured child and notify the child’s parent or guardian following the class or activity.
11. In case of a more serious injury, the teacher or adult leader is required to notify the child’s parent or guardian immediately and to call emergency services if necessary. The teacher or adult leader must inform the MRE or RE assistant as soon as possible and must make a written incident report.
12. The MRE must establish procedures to support compliance with Parent Responsibilities listed in paragraph (B) of this section.

B. Parent Responsibilities

1. The parent or guardian of a child in Sunday School is responsible for supervising the child before and after classes. The parent or guardian of a preschool-through-third-grader child must pick up the child promptly after the worship service ends and must sign the child in and out of the classroom. The parent or guardian of a fourth or fifth grader may arrange with the teacher to have their child dismissed independently, but the arrangement must be in writing.

2. A parent or guardian must fill out a Pick-up Authorization Form (Section 7, C) the first day they bring a child to RE classes.
3. The parent or guardian of child under age 7 must sign the child in and out with the classroom teacher.
4. Parents visiting for the first time must fill out a Visitor Form (Section 7, D).
5. The parent or guardian of children age 5 and younger must remain on church premises. The parent or guardian of children ages 6-8 must remain within five minutes of the church premises and provide direct contact information (cell phone number, for example) to teachers/supervisors. Parents of older children may drop their children off for services or activities so long as they provide direct contact information and must pick them up following services or activities. If a child's parent or guardian cannot be located, the MRE or delegate will contact appropriate governmental authorities.
6. Medications: A parent or guardian is the only person authorized to administer medication (prescription or over-the-counter) to their children. Under no circumstances are church staff or volunteers authorized to administer medication.
7. Allergies: The parent or guardian must note on the child's registration form any serious or life-threatening allergy, including any food allergy. The MRE is responsible for and has the authority to make this information known to the teachers/supervisors to assure adequate monitoring in the case of snacks, presence of insects, and other risks of exposure to the allergen.

C. Communication Policy: Social Media, Electronic, or Other Means

1. Employees and volunteers who supervise children are not to have private communication with children via social media, electronic, or other means, except as provided in subparagraph (4) of this paragraph.
2. Acceptable social media and electronic communication includes group emails or an open Facebook page pertaining to church groups or activities.
3. Vulgar, harassing, or defamatory content or links are prohibited in any communication.
4. In certain circumstances, private communications (for example, between an OWL teacher or mentor and student) is permitted. While the content of this communication should be private, a parent, guardian, or the MRE should be notified in advance that the private communication will occur and its location. Any one-to-one interactions within or outside the church must take place in a public place, unless a parent or guardian has given permission for the communication to occur in a private setting.

4. Transporting Children and Youth

- A. It is a joint responsibility of the church and parents or guardians to provide safe transportation to and from all church events. The MRE, who is accountable to the Associate Minister, has the responsibility and authority to implement the reporting requirements of this section.
- B. Youth and children being transported are permitted to ride only with adults who meet the requirements of this section.
- C. The driver of a vehicle containing minors other than the driver's own children must be at least 25 years of age and must provide proof of insurance, a valid driver's license, and fill out a Drivers Form (Section 7, E). The driver for a church activity is not permitted to drive a vehicle with only one adult and one child unless that child is the driver's own child.
- D. A vehicle used to transport children or youth must have enough functioning seat belts for everyone and everyone must wear a seat belt. When transporting young children, the driver must follow the state's laws for the use of car seats and booster seats. This seat belt requirement takes priority over the requirement for two adults to be in each vehicle, provided, however, that upon arrival at the off-site destination, a minimum of two adults must accompany a group of children or youth. This exception does not apply if the driver and a child or youth will be the only persons traveling in the vehicle.
- E. For overnight youth events, at least one adult (age 25 or older) must be present for every six Junior High youth and one adult for every eight Senior High youth. For other, non-overnight but off-site, church-sponsored field trips, there must be at least one adult for every five children.
- F. For each youth participant in an overnight, a Blanket Permission Form (Section 7, F) will be kept on file with a copy of the youth's health insurance card. Emergency contact information (including name of physician, health insurance information, and consent to treat in case of an emergency) must accompany all minors who are being transported by adults other than their parents. During travel, a copy of this form will be kept by the driver of the vehicle, or the responsible adult traveling with a group using an alternate form of transportation (for example, bus or train). Each adult driver will leave the names of all children accompanying them and an emergency contact number, such as cell phone or pager, with the MRE.
- G. A driver is not permitted to transport children or youth if the driver is sleep-deprived, has consumed alcohol within 8 hours, or has used any form of drug that may, during the time of transportation, affect the driver's physical or mental performance.

5. Reporting of Incidents, Response, and Removal of a Worker with Children and Youth

A. Responsibility

The MRE, who is accountable to the Associate Minister, has the responsibility and authority to implement the reporting requirements of this section.

B. Definition of Abuse

Staff and volunteers who work with children and youth on a regular basis are to be trained to recognize child abuse, generally defined as the following:

1. **Physical Abuse** – bodily injury to a person. This includes, but is not limited to hitting, biting, scalding, burning, strangulation, or suffocation.
2. **Physical Neglect** – the failure to adequately provide the essentials of life, such as food, shelter, clothing, and medical care.
3. **Sexual Abuse** – the exploitation of a child or youth for the gratification of an adult. It includes, but is not limited to inappropriate touching, intercourse, incest, rape, and sodomy as well as exhibitionism, voyeurism, and the use of children in pornography.
4. **Emotional maltreatment** – the failure to provide the love, care, support, and guidance necessary for healthy psychological development. This includes, but is not limited to, verbal abuse, such as excessive teasing, belittling, and rejection.

B. Response Team

The Response Team described in section (1), paragraph (A) of this policy is to be established and in place at all times, with the names and phone numbers of team members available to all members and friends of the church.

1. The Response Team, individually and collectively, offers confidential support, advice, and counsel, with concern for the safety of all parties involved. The team may serve as a resource for children or adult survivors of sexual abuse, victims of violence, or perpetrators who are in treatment, should they look to their religious community for support until a professional counselor can be identified.
2. The Response Team aids in filing a report to the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services if a member of the congregation observes or has reasonable cause to suspect behavior they believe constitutes abuse of a child, or if someone discloses abuse.
3. The Response Team recommends changes in this policy or its procedures.
4. If there is an allegation of a violation of this Safety Policy or the Disruptive Behavior Policy, or an allegation of the endangerment of a member of the First UU community, visitor, or guest, the Response Team has the responsibility and authority to evaluate the allegation and to determine whether a limitation of access is appropriate.

C. Reporting Procedures.

1. A First UU paid staff member or a volunteer, whether adult or youth, who acquires knowledge or a reasonable suspicion that one or more adult, child, or youth at a church event has been sexually molested or exploited, injured, or the victim of significant objectionable conduct must:
 - a. Immediately report the incident to a Minister, the MRE, or Response Team member.
 - b. The Response Team will follow the incident report procedure.
 - c. An incident report must be made within 24 hours following the incident or notice thereof.
2. If a person who is not a First UU staff member or volunteer acquires knowledge or a reasonable suspicion that a child, youth, or adult has been sexually molested, exploited, injured, or been a victim of significant objectionable conduct, that person is encouraged to follow the procedure outlined in subparagraph (1), beginning with the first step, by reporting the incident to a Minister, the MRE, or a Response Team member.

D. Confidentiality

Although First UU encourages reporting of all concerns or suspicions of child abuse, harassment, or other inappropriate conduct, all staff and volunteers subject to reporting requirements must carry out the

reporting responsibility in a manner that allows for maximum confidentiality so that no one need fear retaliation or recrimination.

E. Youth Who May Be Abusers

1. One of the most difficult possible situations is when a teenager or child in the congregation has been accused of inappropriately sexually touching a child in the congregation. If an older child forces sex on a younger child or exposes his or her genitals to a younger child, both of these children will need professional help. If an older child demonstrates inappropriate sexual interest in younger children that doesn't extend to these behaviors, the situation should be further investigated
2. If such an incident comes to the attention of the minister, the MRE, or member of the Response Team, the MRE (or other Response Team member, if appropriate) is required to initiate contact individually with the parent or guardian of the children involved to discuss the allegation and next steps. Depending on state law and the nature of the incident, it may be necessary to call Child Protective Services.
3. Before the alleged perpetrator is allowed to continue to attend religious education, this child should receive an extensive assessment by a child psychologist or psychiatrist with experience with children with sexual behavior problems. It is NOT the responsibility of a minister, MRE, or the Response Team to decide if abuse has occurred, but rather to assure that such assessment does take place. The MRE, in consultation with the Response Team, may decide to remove the child from religious education during this time, a decision that should take into account that the child should not be allowed unsupervised time with other children until the assessment is complete.

F. False Accusations

Protecting adults who teach in the RE program or otherwise interact with children at church from false or mistaken allegations is also an important goal of this policy. A key way to prevent false or mistaken allegations is to abide by the prevention guidelines outlined in the Supervision portion of this policy (section 3). The MRE and the Response Team must be sensitive to the disruption and damage a false accusation may cause to both the adults and the children involved. This is true even when the accusation is one due to a misunderstanding or misinterpretation of what seems a child's straightforward report of an event.

G. Other Inappropriate Behavior

Some incidents or allegations in RE or other programs for children, youth, or adults may involve behavior that is not clearly child abuse, sexual misconduct, or other behavior obviously in violation of this Safety Policy or the Disruptive Policy, but may be in some other way deemed inappropriate by a parent, by the MRE, or by a member of the First UU community. In such cases, the Associate Minister or the MRE has the responsibility and authority to call the Response Team together to review the situation and decide what action to take.

H. Reporting to Police in Response to Criminal Behavior

When an allegation of misbehavior constitutes a crime, a report must be made to the police.

I. Role of the Senior Minister

The Senior Minister of the First Unitarian Church of Columbus will be informed about any allegation of sexual abuse in which the Response Team is involved. Depending on the level of concern, identities of the victim, accused, and reporter may be withheld. If a staff member is accused of misconduct, the Senior Minister, as head of staff, will make the final determination of any additional consequences appropriate to the violation of this policy, including, but not limited to, termination of employment. If the Senior Minister is alleged to have engaged in misconduct, the Response Team is required to make a recommendation to the Board of Trustees, which has the responsibility and authority to make a determination of the consequences.

J. Removal of a Person who Works with Children or Youth

1. If there the MRE has reasonable suspicion that a person is no longer a suitable person for working with children or youth, the MRE must take immediate steps to remove that person from involvement or contact with children or youth. Anyone who has concerns about a staff member or volunteer who works with children or youth must immediately contact the MRE or another Minister. The MRE and other Ministers have the discretion to consult as appropriate, including with Response Team, to determine whether action is necessary.

2. In acting to remove, the MRE and Ministers must afford the accused person an opportunity to know the accusations, the evidence supporting the accusations, and their right to reply to or rebut such charges, but this process need not occur in advance of temporary but immediate removal. If the accused person disputes the allegations, the Response Team has the authority to make a determination and recommend action to the Senior Minister (in the case of paid staff) or the MRE (in the case of a volunteer). Our Unitarian Universalist principles, which call on us to apply fairness and compassion in our relationships with each other, must guide the actions and decisions of the Response Team and the Ministers.
3. The Ministers and the Response Team are required to handle any removal process with due caution and discretion.
4. The Coordinating Team and the Board of Trustees are expected to extend their support and backing to the Response Team and the Ministers who determine to remove a person from the RE program for children and youth or more widely from congregational participation. In considering whether a person is a risk to the First UU community, the following circumstances support the Response Team's decision to exclude a person from all congregational activity:
 - (a) Refusal of permission for a minister to contact their treatment provider and/or parole officer.
 - (b) Refusal to go for a risk assessment with a qualified therapist.
 - (c) Report by a treatment provider that the individual is at high risk of recidivism.
 - (d) Refusal to sign a Limited Access Agreement (for an example, see Resources in section 7).
 - (e) Refusal to comply with the requirements of the Limited Access Agreement.
5. Once an individual decides that they can comply with these conditions, the process would begin again to reassess the individual and see if they could be welcomed into the life of the congregation anew.

K. Procedures.

The Response Team will recommend procedures that outline specific responses to allegations of abuse.

6. Policy for Including Sex Offenders in the Church.

- A. This policy balances the need for the First UU community to be inclusive and the need to maintain a safe environment for all adults and children. This policy recognizes that striking this balance can be delicate and divisive. Many members may be victims of abuse; unknown sex offenders are likely present in the church; and sex offenders, identified or not, have spiritual needs and the need for community.
- B. The MRE, in consultation with the other Ministers and the Response Team, has the responsibility and authority to establish procedures for limited access agreements to separate sex offenders from vulnerable populations within the church, especially children. Sex offenders:
 - (a) Must be supervised by a reliable 'buddy' at all times
 - (b) Must have limited contact with children
 - (c) Must not enter the RE classroom wings of the building
- C. The Ministers and the Response Team will evaluate each individual and situation on a case-by-case basis as sex offenders become known to them. In some cases, complete exclusion may be appropriate; in others, limited access to worship services and Church activities may be appropriate as outlined above.

6. Resources

This section contains documents and procedures that support the Safety Policy.

A. Limited Access Agreement Form	Page 11
B. Volunteer Application Form	Page 12
C. Code of Ethics	Page 14
D. Volunteer Release for Information Form	Page 15
E. Pick-up Authorization Form	Page 16
F. Visitor Form	Page 17
G. Drivers Form	Page 18
H. Blanket Permissions	Page 19
I. Incident Report Forms	Page 21
J. Safety Procedures	Page 22
1. Evacuation Procedure	
2. In the Case of a Dangerous Person or Situation Inside Building	
3. Bomb Threat	
4. Severe Weather	
5. Gas Leak	
6. Fire	
7. Tornado	
8. Filing an Incident Report	
9. Allegations of Abuse	
10. Assessment for Volunteer Removal	

A. LIMITED ACCESS AGREEMENT FORM (adapted from UUA website)

Introductory paragraph in cases of allegation:

A serious complaint or allegation, now under review, has been made about you to the Response Team. While this complaint is being investigated, in order to protect the children and youth in our programs from potential risk, and in order to protect you from further suspicion, we ask you to abide by this temporary agreement. Signing this document in no way constitutes a presumption or confession of guilt. This is a routine safety precaution, activated without prejudice toward particular individuals or circumstances. This agreement will be made known only to the Ministers, the MRE and the members of the Response Team (or other appropriate congregational entity). It will be kept in a locked file in the office.

Introductory paragraph in cases of convicted sex offender:

The First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus affirms the dignity and worth of all persons. We are committed to being a religious community open to those who are in need of worshipping with us, especially in times of serious personal troubles. Based on your background, however, we have concerns about your contact with children and youth in our congregation. The following guidelines are designed to reduce the risk to both you and them of an incident or accusation. We welcome you to our congregation and our membership but your participation will be limited to ensure the safety of our [children, youth, vulnerable adults] [choose all that apply] and to ensure that you will not be subject to future accusations.

Agreement:

Within the following limitations, the congregation welcomes your participation in adult worship services, coffee hour, committee meetings, adult education, all adult social events, and well supervised intergenerational events. You are to avoid all contact with children on congregation property or congregation-sponsored events. This includes the following:

- Do not talk with children.
- Do not volunteer or agree to lead, chaperone or participate in events for children and youth including such things as religious education classes, stories or talks for worship, youth group events, activities during intergenerational events, driving or otherwise transporting children and/or youth.
- When children are present, remain in the presence of an adult who knows your situation at all times.
- If a child in the congregation approaches you, either at church or in a community place, politely and immediately excuse yourself from the situation.
- When activities involving children are in session, such as nursery school or youth group, avoid being in the building unsupervised.

I accept that the following people will be told of my circumstances in order for them to protect the children/young people for whom they care: INSERT NAMES AND/OR POSITIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

I have reviewed this agreement and agree to abide by its provisions. I understand and agree that if I violate this agreement, I will be denied access to future church functions and church property.

I understand that this agreement will be reviewed regularly every six months and will remain for an indefinite period.

Signature:

Date:

Witness:

Date:

Minister(s):

Date:

Minister of Religious Exploration:

Date:

B. APPLICATION FORM

for Volunteers/Leaders of Children's and Youth Programs

With the exception of family assisting in their child's program as required or as requested, all other workers, defined as those persons both volunteer and compensated who provide direct care or supervision of children and/or youth at The First Unitarian Universalist Church's events must meet the following criteria:

1. Be at least 25 years of age and have been active in the church for at least six months. Youth who are partnered with an adult must be at least 14 years of age.
2. Complete an application form and supply three references. These references should be people who have known the potential workers for at least three years, preferably in relation to previous work with children and youth. Government-issued photo identification, such as a driver's license, *will* be required.
3. Must consent to a criminal background check, which must be performed.
4. Must receive a copy of this Safe Congregation Policy Statement and acknowledge receipt of it in writing.
5. Must sign the Code of Ethics form. A copy of this form is included in the Resource section of this document.
6. Must attend at least one training session to understand:
 - (a) The positive roles adults can play with children and youth in a religious community
 - (b) Definitions of child abuse and other inappropriate conduct
 - (c) Church policies that govern working with children or youth
 - (d) The rationale behind screening procedures
 - (e) Reporting procedures for observed or suspected misconduct. This training session may be incorporated into a broader orientation session for teachers or youth leaders, and will be offered at least once annually by the MRE.

Date _____

Name _____
 First Middle Last

Current Address _____
 Number Street City Zip Code

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Please list any other congregations you have attended regularly during the past three years:

Name of Congregation	City, State	Dates of Attendance
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Please list previous church and non-church work involving children and/or youth (Please include the name of the church or organization and your role or duties):

Please share information on your talents, callings, training, education, gifts or other resources that you can share with the children and youth at First UU:

Please describe the reasons you are interested in this position:

In keeping with the First UU's safety policy concerns:

Have you ever been charged or convicted of a criminal offense related to actual or attempted sexual misconduct or molestation of a minor, or of child abuse? Yes No

If yes, please explain:

Has any civil judgment ever been made against you for reasons related to sexual misconduct or child abuse?

Yes No

If yes, please explain:

Have you ever resigned from employment or been disciplined or terminated by an employer because you were accused of sexual misconduct or child abuse? Yes No

If yes, please explain:

Other than the above, is there any fact or circumstance involving you or your background that would call into question your being entrusted with the supervision, guidance and care of children and youth?

Yes No

If yes, please explain:

Signature

Date

C. CODE OF ETHICS

For Persons Working with Children and Youth in UUA Sponsored Programming

Adults and older youth who are in leadership roles are in a position of stewardship and play a key role in fostering spiritual development of both individuals and the community. It is, therefore, especially important that those in leadership positions be well qualified to provide the special nurture, care, and support that will enable youth to develop a positive sense of self and a spirit of independence and responsibility. The relationship between young people and their leaders must be one of mutual respect if the positive potential is to be realized. There are no more important areas of growth than those of self-worth and the development of a healthy identity as a sexual being. Adults play a key role in assisting youth in these areas of growth. Wisdom dictates that youth and adults suffer damaging effects when engaging in sexual, seductive, or erotic behavior with youth. Neither shall they sexually harass or engage in behavior with youth which constitutes verbal, emotional, or physical abuse. Leaders shall be informed of the code of ethics and agree to it before assuming their role. In cases of violation of this code, appropriate action will be taken.

ORC 109.575 states any volunteer who is in a position to have unsupervised access to a child on a regular basis "... might be required to provide a set of impressions of the person's fingerprints and a criminal records check might be conducted with respect to the person."

Code of Ethics of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus

No person working under the auspices of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus, whether as a volunteer or as paid staff, is permitted to engage in sexual, seductive, or erotic behavior with youth under age 18. Neither is any person permitted to sexually harass youth, or engage in behavior with youth that constitutes verbal, emotional, or physical abuse. Such a volunteer or paid staff will also abide by the communication policy in the safety policy.

If anyone working under the auspices of First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus has reason to suspect that a youth or child under 18 has been the victim of sexual abuse, physical abuse, or neglect, these suspicions must be reported immediately. Those who suspect abuse or neglect shall immediately report their suspicions to a First UU minister. It is the responsibility of that minister to investigate these suspicions; in those cases where sufficient causes exist, the minister shall make appropriate reports to authorities as required by ORC 2151.421.

I understand that if I have been charged with a crime involving a minor, I will notify a First UU minister of this fact, or will resign from my church school responsibilities.

My signature indicates that I have read the above code of ethics and the safety policy, and agree to the expectations and actions specified therein.

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

D. VOLUNTEER RELEASE FOR INFORMATION

I authorize the congregation to contact references and other congregations to obtain information about my background regarding my character and fitness for work with children and youth. I authorize references to provide such information about me. I hereby release and hold harmless from liability any person or organization that provides information. I also agree to hold harmless this congregation, its trustees, employees and volunteers. Further, I understand that a member of the staff may check the sex offender registry and/or contact the local police for more information about my background.

This information will be available only to those responsible for screening staff or volunteers or participating in a response team, or as required by law.

I attest that the above information is true and correct.

Signature _____ Date _____

Please supply the names, addresses and phone numbers of three references. See p. 1 of application form for descriptors.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Please complete all information should a check take place.

PLEASE FILL IN EACH BLANK SPACE:	
NAME:	PHONE:
FORMER NAME:	SOCIAL SECURITY #:
CURRENT ADDRESS:	PREVIOUS ADDRESS:
CITY:	CITY:
STATE: ZIP:	STATE: ZIP:
COUNTY:	COUNTY:
LENGTH OF RESIDENCE: Years: _____	LENGTH OF RESIDENCE: Years: _____
Months: _____	Months: _____
DRIVERS LICENSE #:	STATE:
DATE OF BIRTH:	HAVE YOU EVER BEEN CONVICTED OF A CRIME?
MAY WE CONTACT YOUR PRESENT EMPLOYER? _____ YES _____ NO	_____ YES _____ NO IF YES, APPROX. DATE: _____
	CITY: _____
	STATE: _____

E. PARENTAL PICK UP AUTHORIZATION FORM (AGE 7 OR YOUNGER)

First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus (Revised 7/2014)

The safety policy of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus requires that the parent, guardian, or adult who dropped the child off at the classroom must be the one to pick up that child from the classroom after Sunday School at approximately 10:30 a.m. for the first service and 12:15 p.m. for the second service.

Name of Parent(s) and/or Guardians: _____

Name of Child(ren): _____

If you wish to authorize other people to pick up your child (age 7 or younger), First UU Sunday School requires that you sign the following authorization form:

My child in _____ grade may be dismissed by the teachers from Sunday School class at the end of their class time to the following people:

Name/ Relation:

Name/ Relation:

Name/ Relation:

My child knows these persons and we have agreed that they will meet me at/in:

My signature below gives blanket permission for the entire 2014-15 Sunday school term for my child to be dismissed from class to these people.

Signed: _____

Date:

F. CHILD VISITOR FORM

VISITOR FORM • Religious Education Programs
 First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus

Welcome to First UU!

Today's Date _____

9:15 Service 11:00 Service Summer Service
(Circle one)

Children				
CHILD #1	First Name	Last Name	Preferred Name	Grade _____ Age _____
Special Info?				
CHILD #2	First Name	Last Name	Preferred Name	Grade _____ Age _____
Special Info?				
Adult(s) Contact Information				
PRIMARY CONTACT	First Name		Last Name	
	Phone			
	Email			
SECONDARY CONTACT	First Name		Last Name	
	Phone			
	Email			

G. DRIVER INFORMATION FORM
First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus

I hereby offer my time and my vehicle to provide transportation for youth trips during the 2013-2014 church year. I release The First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus, its board, employees and volunteers from any and all liability of any kind which may arise during or relating to the activity or trip, except liability for damages and injuries caused by the sole negligence of The First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus. I understand that this authorization may be withdrawn at any time in writing.

 Signature of Driver

 Date

Please complete the following sections of this form and provide a copy of your driver's license and auto insurance card. Inform the church of any changes in the information and authorization as they occur and prior to each activity or trip. **PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY.**

Driver Information	
Driver Name _____	Birthdate _____
Address _____ _____	Email _____
	Home Phone _____
	Cell Phone _____
	Work Phone _____
Car Insurance Carrier _____	Policy No. _____
Health Insurance Carrier _____	Policy No. _____
Make/Model/Yr of Car _____	License Plate _____
	# Miles _____
	# Seatbelts _____
Driver's License No. _____	# Points _____
	ANY DUI's? _____
Emergency Contact _____	Home Phone _____
Relationship _____	Work Phone _____
	Cell Phone _____

Emergency Medical Information	
Food Allergies _____	Medicine Allergies _____
Insect Allergies _____	Other Allergies _____
Is EPI-PEN required? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	
Current Medications:	
Name _____	Dosage _____
Name _____	Frequency _____
Name _____	Dosage _____
Name _____	Frequency _____

Health Condition/Concerns:

This form serves as a permission slip for ALL activities from 8/01/13 through 8/31/14.

H. Blanket Field Trip/Activity Permission and Emergency Medical Authorization Form
First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus

I hereby grant my permission for my child to participate in activities and trips during the 2013-2014 church year. I release The First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus, its board, employees and volunteers from any and all liability of any kind which may arise during or relating to the activity or trip.

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian

Date

Please complete the Emergency Contact Information, Medical Information and Authorization **sections of this form.** Attach a copy (both sides) of your health insurance card. **Inform the church of any changes in the information and authorization as they occur and prior to each activity or trip.** PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY.

Emergency Contact Information

Youth Name _____ **Birthdate** _____

Address _____ **Telephone** _____

_____ **Email** _____

Primary Insurance Carrier _____ **Policy No.** _____

Secondary Insurance Carrier _____ **Policy No.** _____

Parent's Name _____ **Home Phone** _____

Work Phone _____

Cell Phone _____

Parent's Name _____ **Home Phone** _____

Work Phone _____

Cell Phone _____

Other Responsible Party _____ **Home Phone** _____

Relationship _____ **Work Phone** _____

Cell Phone _____

Emergency Medical Information

Food Allergies _____ **Medicine Allergies** _____

Insect Allergies _____ **Other Allergies** _____

Is EPI-PEN required? ___ Yes ___ No

Current Medications:

Name _____ Dosage _____ Frequency _____

Name _____ Dosage _____ Frequency _____

Name _____ Dosage _____ Frequency _____

Health Conditions/Concerns _____

Youth Name _____

Page 2 of 2

Consent to Emergency Treatment

I give my consent for the emergency medical treatment of my child. I give my consent for all information in this form to be provided to those providing treatment. In the event of illness or injury requiring emergency treatment, I wish for church authorities and volunteers to make reasonable attempts to contact all emergency numbers listed above. In the even that no parent or guardian listed can be reached, I hereby give my consent for the administration of any treatment deemed necessary by:

Preferred Physician _____ Phone _____

Preferred Dentist _____ Phone _____

Preferred Specialist _____ Phone _____

In the event the designated preferred practitioners are not available, by another licensed physician or dentist and the transfer of the child to:

Preferred Hospital _____ Address _____

Or any hospital reasonably accessible.

This authorization does not cover major surgery unless the medical opinions of two licensed physicians or dentists, concurring in the necessity for such surgery, are obtained prior to the performance of such surgery.

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian

Date

Refusal to Consent to Emergency Treatment

I do not give my consent for the emergency medical treatment of my child. In the event of illness or injury requiring emergency treatment, I wish church authorities and volunteers to TAKE NO ACTION OR TO _____

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian

Date

J. SAFETY PROCEDURES

1. Evacuation Procedure

Worship Center

- Ushers stand by Gallery (West) entrance and by the Chancel (North-facing) doors to guide people out of exits and into parking lot.
- If a person present is in a wheelchair, ushers should guide that person to exit out of the Gallery (West) entrance. Should the Gallery (West) entrance be blocked, direct the person in the wheelchair to the Chancel (North-facing) doors (behind the Chancel). Access to the Chancel exit must be kept clear at all times.
- The Minister with lead responsibility for the worship service and the primary Worship Associate are to turn off lights, check to make sure the Worship Center is empty, and exit last.

RE Wing

- Teachers are to collect attendance books and exit rooms through classroom exterior doors, if available.
- In the event a classroom exterior door is blocked by a hazard, or if there is no classroom exterior door, please travel to hallway exit and leave building through the Panera parking lot (East) doors.
- Gather children and youth on the lawn area next to the big rock.
- Take attendance and make sure all children are present.
- MRE and RE Assistant will walk through Religious Exploration Wing and ensure all youth and children are out. Then they will sweep through classes gathered outside to see check to see if any children or youth are unaccounted for. If children or youth are missing, the MRE will immediately contact the authorities.

Office Wing

- Administrator and Office Staff or Volunteer will secure Office Wing and use the Office Wing (Southwest) door to evacuate to the Parking Lot.

Fellowship Hall/Kitchen

- People in the Kitchen and Fellowship Hall exit through the Gallery (West) entrance.
- The Administrator will sweep the area and ensure people have left before exiting through the Gallery (West) entrance.
- In the event the the Gallery (West) entrance is blocked, evacuate through the Panera parking lot (East) doors; through the office wing (Southwest) door; or through the side (South) door that opens to the wooded play space.

In the Event of Needing an Off-Site Location

- The primary location to evacuate to is Panera Bread at 4519 N. High Street.
- The secondary location is Our Lady of Peace Catholic Parish at 20 E. Dominion Blvd.

2. In the Case of a Dangerous Person or Situation Inside Building

People present in the building who become aware of a dangerous person or situation within the building should either exit or remain in the building as specified in the subsections of this section. If exiting, go to the off-site location designated in section 1.

Worship Center

- The Gallery (West) entrance will immediately be locked by Office Staff or by Ushers on Sunday morning (so that new arrivals do not unknowingly enter the building).

- The Worship Center entrance will be locked by Ushers.
- People will be directed to exit through Worship Center external doors to the Parking Lot.
- Ushers will assist anyone in a wheelchair to exit through the Gallery (West) entrance, if possible. If not possible, the exit behind chancel is wheelchair accessible (and clear access to this exit must be maintained at all times).

RE Wing

- Teachers lock classroom doors, if it feels safe to do so.
- MRE and RE Assistant will lock the Panera parking lot (East) doors.
- MRE calls 911.
- If able, MRE and RE Assistant will come to each class and tell teachers the circumstances, directing teachers where to bring children.
- If MRE and RE Assistant are unable to enter the RE Wing, RE Staff will call teachers on their cell phones.
- Teachers gather: first aid kits, attendance binders, and cell phones if it feels safe to do so.
- Teachers move children to safest location possible depending on situation making sure to lock doors when possible.
 - Rooms 1 and 2: Classroom Bathroom, Room 5, Basement, Outside- away from danger
 - Rooms 3 and 4: Classroom Bathroom, Room 5, Basement, Outside- away from danger
 - Room 5: place climber in front of outside or inside doors, family bathroom, basement, outside- away from danger
 - [Room 6 does not exist]
 - Room 7: Basement, General Bathrooms, Bathrooms off Room 9, Outside (away from danger)
 - Room 8: Basement, General Bathrooms, Bathrooms off Room 9, Outside (away from danger)
 - Room 9: Kitchenette, Classroom Bathrooms, Basement, Outside (away from danger)
 - Room 10: Family Bathrooms, Kitchenette, Basement, Outside (away from danger)
- Parents will be contacted immediately by cell phone, if it feels safe to do so.
- At conclusion of the emergency, MRE and RE Assistant will announce, "Lockdown lifted."
- The MRE or RE Assistant will email families following any such incident, explaining what happened and highlighting resources for family support.

Office Wing

- Office Staff will lock Gallery (West) entrance doors, if it feels safe to do so.
- Office Staff will lock front and rear Office Wing doors and exit out of side entrance to Parking Lot.
- In the event of a dangerous person outside of the church, Office Staff will convene in the Staff Conference Room or the Senior Minister's office and lock the door(s).

Fellowship Hall/Kitchen

- These areas must be evacuated because they do not have doors that lock.
- The Administrator will direct people to evacuate to the Basement or the General Bathrooms, should the situation require people stay indoors for safety.
- To evacuate to the outdoors, use either the office wing (Southwest) exit, or side exit (South) to the wooded play space
- The Administrator will secure the area if it feels safe to do so.

3. Bomb Threat

- The Church will be closed immediately following a bomb threat incident. The person who receives the threat or a member of the First UU Staff will call the authorities.
- If people are in the building at the time of a bomb threat, the evacuation procedure will be implemented. Exit the building and go to the off-site location designated in section 1.
- Staff will ensure that notice goes out via electronic media (website, email, social media, and similar methods) that the building has been closed.
- Staff will notify by phone anyone scheduled to lead an event on the day of a bomb threat that the church will be closed for the day.

4. Severe Weather

- In the event of severe weather where the church building will be closed, Staff will ensure that notice goes out via electronic media (website, email, social media, and similar methods).
- Unless the premises are unsafe as a result of severe weather, cancellation of specific events and meetings at First UU is up to the discretion of the convenor. It is the responsibility of the convenor to inform people who are anticipated to attend an event or meeting that the event has been cancelled. If the Administrator concludes that severe weather or a power outage has made the Church premises unsafe, the Administrator has the responsibility and authority to close the building to all activities.
- First UU will close in the event of a Level 2 (or more severe) weather emergency.

5. Gas Leak

- The Church will be closed immediately following the detection of a gas leak.
- The Administrator will contact the gas company and file the appropriate report.
- If people are in the building at the time of a gas leak, the evacuation procedure will be implemented. Exit the building and go to the off-site location designated in section 1.
- Staff will ensure that notice goes out via electronic media (website, email, social media, and similar methods) that the building has been closed.
- Staff will notify by phone anyone scheduled to lead an event that the church will be closed for the day.

6. Fire

- In the event of a fire, a Staff member must immediately call 9-1-1. If no Staff member is present, anyone may (and should) call 9-1-1.
- If people are in the building at the time of a fire, the evacuation procedure will be implemented. Exit the building and go to the off-site location designated in section 1.

7. Tornado

Worship Center

- If the tornado danger becomes apparent during Sunday morning worship or other large-group activity in the Worship Center, the Minister or layperson who is the primary worship or other event leader will announce the need to take shelter due to a tornado watch.
- Ushers will direct people in the Worship Center to leave through the Worship Center's main doors into the Gallery.
- Ushers and Staff will direct people towards the Staff Offices hallway, Room A/B, the basement, or the restrooms.
- Once the tornado has passed, Staff will say, "The tornado threat has passed."

RE Wing

- MRE and RE Assistant will inform teachers of a needed evacuation and will provide location of evacuation.
- Teachers will move children and youth into hallways that end with the Panera parking lot (East) doors Line the children up against the inside walls. Close the doors to those hallways.
- Additional evacuation locations: family restrooms, general restrooms, and basement.
- Once the tornado has passed, MRE or RE Assistant will say, “The tornado threat has passed.”

Office Wing

- Staff will evacuate offices, secure doors, and line up along the wall in Office Wing Hallway.

Fellowship Hall/Kitchen Area

- The Administrator will direct people in the Fellowship Hall and Kitchen area towards appropriate safety area.
- People in the kitchen or Fellowship Hall will go to the restrooms or the basement.
- The Administrator will secure the doorways of the Fellowship Hall as well as the Kitchen, ensure that everyone has left those areas, and will be last to move to a safe location.
- Once the tornado has passed, the Administrator will say, “The tornado threat has passed.”

8. Filing an Incident Report

- Incident Report Forms are located in the Volunteer Workroom on top of the desk in a file folder labeled “Incident Report Forms.”
- Incident Report Forms are to be filled out when an accident or injury has occurred on First UU Church grounds.
- Please describe the incident in terms of details- names of persons involved, location, what happened to prompt injury, and where person was injured on their body. Please also indicate contact information of witnesses.
- Incident Report Forms are to be copied and submitted to the Church Administrator and the Director of Religious Education.

9. Allegations of Abuse

If a member, visitor, or friend of First UU is accused of abuse said to have occurred on First UU premises, that person will be asked to refrain from attending First UU while an investigation is conducted. Below are some guidelines for procedures First UU Staff are to follow:

- Immediately report an incident of abuse to the MRE or ministers.
- A Response Team will be assembled, including the MRE, ministers, and three other members of the congregation with particular backgrounds and expertise to address the identified situation.
- Should the incident involve leadership of the church (staff, clergy, Board member) strict confidentiality must be maintained and the accused and those with a conflict of interest must not take part in any procedures.
- Any incidents reported involving the ministers must also include procedures outlined in the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association Guidelines.
- The person in charge of an event to whom a report of molestation, injury, or objectionable conduct is made shall submit a copy of an Incident Report to the Ministers and MRE.
- If indicated, the person to whom the report is made will then assist the person who reported the incident in reporting to any local authorities of the jurisdiction in which the incident occurred.
- Reporting procedures must be implemented within 24 hours following the incident or notice thereof.
- The Response Team will be in conversation about who to inform about the incident and whether or not the congregation needs to be informed.

- All precautions will be taken to ensure emotional, physical, and mental safety of all parties involved.
- The intent of the Response Team is not to conduct an investigation, but rather to make sure incidents are responded to with appropriate reporting procedures and support.
- Should allegations of abuse be confirmed, it is the job of the Response Team to respond with creating a Limited Access Agreement (see Resource Section).
- Should the subject of a Limited Access Agreement fail to honor it, members of the Response Team will ask the that person to terminate attendance and membership at First UU.

10. Assessment for Volunteer Removal

- (a) In the event a report of abuse or misconduct is brought forward for a person in a volunteer role at First UU, these are procedures to follow. As holding a volunteer position gives a member access to vulnerable populations, it is best practice to ask the volunteer to step out of their volunteer role while the situation is being investigated.
- (b) Both the volunteer and the party making the accusation will be asked to record an account of the situation including a description of the incident(s), witnesses, and any pertinent historical information about relationships between parties, previous disagreements, etc.
- (c) Documentation of the event will be passed along to the Minister of Religious Education and other Ministers and a report will be filed with the proper authorities, if necessary.
- (d) The MRE or one of the other Ministers will follow up with witnesses listed and ask for additional documentation as needed.
- (e) The Response Team will be assembled as needed and will determine whether the incident requires volunteer removal and/or an additional Limited Access Agreement as well as who needs to be informed in the congregation.
- (f) The following constitute grounds for volunteer removal:
 - Any acts of abuse or misconduct towards a child, youth, member, or visitor while on First UU premises.
 - Failure to follow applicable First UU Code of Ethics or Safety Policy requirements for volunteer positions.
 - A history of sexual abuse or misconduct as revealed by a background check initiated for a volunteer position.
 - Disruptive behavior that prevents other volunteers from engaging in their work or that prevents people in the program served from fully participating.