

# U.M. ARMY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

**Policy and Procedure Number:** R/D 5 – Safe Sanctuary Policy – Reducing the Risk of Abuse

## **Introduction to Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to address the safety of our youth and leaders at all U.M. ARMY events and mission weeks. U.M. ARMY recognizes the need to have a formal, written policy with procedures in place to (1) help prevent the opportunity for the occurrence and/or the appearance of abuse of youth and, (2) to help protect workers from false accusations and/or suspicions.

## **Scope of Policy**

This policy and its provisions shall apply to all persons including all paid and unpaid leaders, whether lay or clergy, who have any direct or indirect contact with youth, and who participate in any activities or events sponsored by U.M. ARMY.

## **Definition of Youth, Young Adult, and Adult**

- Youth are U.M. ARMY participants registered as youth.
- A Young Adult is someone who is eighteen (18) to twenty (20) years of age who is no longer in high school.
- Adult is someone who is twenty-one (21) years of age or older.
- Young Adults and Adults are, collectively, Leaders.
- Nothing within this policy shall be interpreted as an obligation of U.M. ARMY to accept the registration of an adult as a Youth.
- U.M. ARMY reserves the right to refuse any registration of any individual.

## **Supervision**

Recognizing there is safety in numbers, youth will be instructed to use the “buddy system.” Conceptually meaning, Youth should consciously avoid situations where they are one-on-one with anyone. It is also strongly encouraged there be at least one leader who is trained and certified in First Aid and CPR at each mission week.

## **Supervision for Youth:**

- U.M. ARMY leadership shall observe the “2 Deep Rule” when Youth are present, where possible (2 Adults per room, 2 Adults within line of sight when outdoors). For example, where Youth are present at a client’s home, the 2 Deep Rule shall apply. The client shall not serve as a Leader unless that client has undergone the same screening and approval process required of participating Leaders.
  - In the event there are not enough Adults who are twenty-one (21) years of age or older to meet the “2 Deep Rule” on a Work Team, there may be one (1) Adult and one (1) Young Adult who is at least eighteen (18) to twenty (20) years of age who is no longer in high school.
  - Exception to allow one (1) or no Adults or Young Adults in a confined room on a worksite (e.g., painting a small room), in which case, the door shall remain open and the Leader(s) shall be within the line of sight/ear shout.

- Any conversation between an Adult and Youth shall be conducted within sight of another Adult.
- Adults, Young Adults, and Youth shall not provide supervision for children and other youth who are members of the local community.

### **Overnight Accommodations**

- At least two (2) Leaders shall be present in every room where possible.
- Where it is not possible to have two (2) Adults present in each room, Leaders shall sleep in an alternate area (i.e. separate classrooms, hallways, or common areas) separated from Youth.
- Sleeping accommodations shall be separated by gender. In the event a participant (Youth, Young Adult, or Adult) requests an alternative accommodation, the Director shall call the U.M. ARMY Executive Director for guidance.

### **Transportation**

- All Youth shall be transported by a licensed Adult in a registered and insured automobile, and shall wear seat belts at all times.
- One (1) Adult may provide transportation for two (2) or more Youth. An adult may provide transportation for a family member without other Youth being present.
- One (1) Youth may be transported by one (1) Leader if emergency circumstances warrant.

### **Cell Phones**

In addition to the cell phone policy that is signed by all participants the following guidelines will be adhered to through our Safe Sanctuary policy.

- In the event that an adult/young adult needs to have a conversation with a non-related youth through text, there shall be two adults included in the thread.

### **Definitions of Abuse**

- Verbal Abuse– Any verbal act which humiliates, degrades, or threatens any child or youth.
- Physical Abuse– Any act of omission, or an act endangering a person's physical or mental health. In the case of child or youth physical abuse, this definition includes any intentional physical injury caused by the individual's caretaker. Physical abuse may result from overly punitive punishment which is inappropriate to the individual's age or condition. In addition, physical abuse may result from purposeful acts posing serious danger to physical health of a child or youth.
- Sexual Abuse– Sexual abuse is the sexual exploitation or use of the same for satisfaction of sexual drives. This includes, but is not limited to: (1) incest, (2) rape, (3) prostitution, (4) non-consensual romantic involvement with any participant, (5) any sexual intercourse, or sexual conduct with, or fondling of any participant, (6) sexualized behavior that communicates sexual interest and/or content. Examples include, but are not limited to: displaying sexually suggestive visual materials, making sexual comments or innuendo about one's own or another person's body, touching another person's body, hair or clothing, touching or rubbing oneself in the presence of another person, kissing, and/or sexual intercourse.

## **Screening for Leaders at Camps that Include Minors**

Careful screening is one way to prevent the abuse of children and youth. Screening calls for a careful gathering and review of information in search of those who can provide safe and caring supervision in a safe environment.

- Each participating church is responsible for conducting references, screening applications and submitting a signed pastor verification list to show that all adults/young adults have been trained in accordance with their church's Safe Sanctuary policy. All screening and documentation shall be done in accordance with guidelines consistent with its respective Annual Conferences. Adults that are not members of a participating church or faith-based organization attending to ensure screening has occurred shall:
  - Attend UM ARMY through a church and be included on the pastor verification form, or
  - Submit a signed pastor verification form from their pastor, or
  - Certificate of Safe Sanctuary training equivalent and copy of a completed background check.

At registration all adults shall sign a statement committing to be trained according to their church's safe sanctuary policies. All documents shall be submitted to the U.M. ARMY Regional Director.

- If the applicant is found to have been involved in, or credibly accused of, any activity in which the applicant abused or exploited children or youth, the applicant will not be approved. Any conviction of a crime against children or youth shall disqualify any applicant.
- Persons having a criminal history of any of the following types of offenses shall not be Leaders:
  - Child abuse, whether physical, emotional, sexual, or neglectful;
  - Violent offenses, including murder, rape, assault, domestic violence, etc.;
  - Persons having a Criminal History of DUI or DWI conviction within the five (5) years immediately prior to application shall not be allowed to act as a driver;
  - Persons having a Criminal History of a drug related conviction within the five (5) years immediately prior to application shall not be allowed to participate in the event.

## **Training**

U.M. ARMY shall, through dependence on its participating churches, utilize Safe Sanctuary or equivalently trained Leaders. We recommend a review of this policy be conducted by the Director at the beginning of each Mission Week. U.M. ARMY's Safe Sanctuary Training Video shall be shown at the beginning of each camp to all participants.

## Reporting of Incidents

1. When a Leader suspects abuse, any suspected violation of applicable laws or any violation of a Safe Sanctuary policy, is taking, or has taken place, he or she shall immediately notify the Mission Week Director for consultation and collectively report the abuse to the appropriate local law enforcement agency and/or child protective services. The Director shall contact the Executive Director immediately, and all Leadership will cooperate fully with the investigation conducted by law enforcement officials or child protective services.
2. The Director shall address any needs the child or youth may have, medical or otherwise, and report to the parent(s) and/or legal guardians(s) of the Youth.
3. The person suspected of abuse (referred to as “respondent”) shall, for the safety and well being of the Youth, be removed with dignity from further contact with the Youth until an appropriate investigation has taken place. The matter shall remain confidential. If the Director and or leader is the respondent, then the report should be made to the Executive Director.
4. Following the report of an incident, the Director shall document the report and cooperate fully with any investigation. Careful and confidential documentation is essential. The documentation should include the following:
  - a. The name of the individual observing or receiving the disclosure of abuse, including the date, time, and place, and any action taken by this person.
  - b. The alleged victim’s name, age, and date of birth.
  - c. Any statement made by the alleged victim.
  - d. Name of the respondent, the date, time, and place of any conversation, or any statement made by the respondent.
  - e. Any action taken, i.e. suspension of the respondent.
  - f. Date and time of call to the appropriate agency, name of worker spoken to, content of that conversation, and case number assigned.
  - g. Date and time of call to law enforcement agency, name of officer spoken to, and content of that conversation.
  - h. Date and time of any other contacts made regarding this incident.
5. The Executive Director shall notify the pastor of the participating church for each of the involved Youth (with the permission of the parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s), unless the respondent is the parent or legal guardian), and respondent. Where the respondent is a pastor or church employee, the Executive Director shall notify the Church Conference or District authorities.
6. It shall be the goal to provide supportive care to both the victim and the respondent, and to restore such persons to wholeness.
7. Confirmed reports of proven incidents of abuse shall be retained in a confidential file for future screening purposes.

### **Media Response**

The Executive Director shall be informed of all investigations or allegations of abuse. If investigations or allegations of abuse should come to the attention of the media, all inquiries shall be referred to the Executive Director. No other Leader shall provide any information, and shall simply state any inquiries will be answered by a U.M. ARMY spokesperson.

### **Appropriate Discipline**

Youth should be made aware that appropriate behavior is expected at all times during a mission week. Gentle reminders may be necessary when dealing with Youth. When these reminders don't work, discipline needs to move to the next step. In cases where behavior persists, the Director, Adult(s) working with the Youth during the Mission Week, an Adult from the Youth's church, and the Youth's parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) should be in consultation and develop an appropriate plan. In no case is physical discipline an appropriate measure to deal with problems. For serious offenses, the appropriate response will be to send the Youth home immediately. Parents and the Adult(s) from the Youth's church shall make proper arrangements.

### **Local Policies**

This policy was created with the intent to conform to youth safety policies and guidelines applicable to participating local churches and their Annual Conferences. Recognizing U.M. ARMY is a national organization serving many churches, and that there may be diversity in the details of policies, where a mission week Director is given written notice, reasonably in advance of a mission week, that the policy applicable to the local participating church or host church has a more stringent requirement than what has been set forth herein, the Director shall take reasonable measures to comply with such policy. In the event the Director believes compliance with the policy is not reasonable given the circumstances, the Director shall present the issue to the U.M. ARMY Board of Directors. If the Director is provided notice of the policy without sufficient time to adequately adapt to the policy, the Director shall notify the Executive Director for guidance.