



WEST MARKET STREET
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Safe Sanctuaries

Table of Contents:

- WMSUMC Safe Sanctuaries Policy
- Volunteer Application
- Background Check Form
- Understanding the Language of Safe Sanctuary
- Ministry Do's & Don'ts
- Participant Copy of Volunteer Covenant



Safe Sanctuaries for Children and Youth

In order to provide a safe environment for children and youth, West Market Street United Methodist Church (“the Church”) requires all employees and non-employees (whether paid or volunteers) to adhere to and provide support to the following procedures and practices:

Screening Procedures: All employees and non-employees (whether paid or volunteers) who have regular and direct contact with children and youth through the Church are required to submit to the following screening procedures:

- Completion of a Screening Form (which will be maintained in a confidential file) that includes, but is not limited to:
 - Standard contact information
 - Experience and qualifications for the position
 - Voluntary disclosure of past criminal history and allegations of criminal history
 - Waiver of confidentiality allowing the church to secure the background check for the position being applied for
 - Listing of three (3) non-related references
- Demonstration of an active relationship with the Church for at least six months before being allowed to be in a supervisory role in children’s and youth activities. For new employees, adequate references may be substituted for the six-month period of active relationship with the Church if necessary to function in the position for which the employee is hired.

Training: All employees and non-employees (whether paid or volunteers) must engage in training regarding the Safe Sanctuaries policy before working directly with children or youth. After initial training, an annual review of the Safe Sanctuaries policy is required.

Supervision: All employees and non-employees (whether paid or volunteers) must adhere to the following for supervision of children and youth:

- No matter the size of the group of children or youth, there must be two unrelated adults present with the group. This may include the presence of an adult “roamer” who moves in and out of the rooms.
- No child will be left unsupervised while attending a Church activity.
- All children and youth activities should occur in open view, utilizing only rooms with a window in the door or leaving the door to the room open.
- No person shall supervise an age group unless he/she is at least 18 years of age and is 5 years older than the children/youth being supervised.
- At least one adult present at every Church activity should be certified in basic first aid and CPR.
- Adults are to wear nametags when supervising children and youth.

- For overnight children or youth retreats or mission trips all adult supervisors must be at least 21 years of age. On an overnight retreat where there are both male and female children or youth, there must be both male and female adult supervisors. No child or youth will share a bed with an adult. A minimum of three persons shall be assigned to a room, males and females housed separately, with the exception of married couples. Visitation between males and females in bedrooms is prohibited unless directly supervised in a group setting with the adult supervisors for devotional or group discussion times.
- Adult supervisors of children and youth activities should report any safety issues with facilities or equipment used by children or youth to the Church administrator.

Parent/Guardian Communications:

- Adult supervisors of children and youth activities must give parents/guardians enough information in advance to understand the nature of the activity in which the children and youth will be participating.
- Adult supervisors of children and youth activities must get permission forms with medical information from parents/guardians before children or youth can leave Church property with a Church group.
- Adult supervisors of children and youth activities are to regularly remind parents/guardians of the following:
 - Children should always be signed in and out of activities in which they participate.
 - Children in fifth grade and younger must be accompanied by an adult at all times in the Church, including when leaving an activity or worship service to use the restroom.

Additional Church Commitments:

The Church will conduct an annual inspection of facilities and equipment used in children and youth activities (including, but not limited to the nurseries, classrooms, youth room, and play areas).

The Church shall maintain at all times liability coverage regarding the occurrence of child abuse on the Church premises or in connection with Church sponsored activities. The insurance coverage shall be in an amount that the Trustees deem adequate, and the Trustees shall periodically review the adequacy of such coverage.

West Market Street United Methodist Church

Safe Sanctuaries Virtual Communication Policy

Texting, e-mailing, and other forms of electronic communication have become common today, especially among students. Texting and electronic communication can be a vital part of ministry work, but their improper use can produce serious consequences.

West Market Street United Methodist Church (“WMSUMC”) desires to promote safety and to create a healthy environment for texting and electronic communication between its employees, volunteers and children and youth who participate in ministry activities. As a result, WMSUMC has developed the following guidelines:

1. Employees and volunteers who want to communicate with minors using text messaging, e-mail, social networking websites or other forms of electronic media must first sign a consent form and be trained on the recommended practices, limitations, and legal parameters for texting and other forms of electronic communication within ministry.
2. Ministry workers (employees and volunteers) may not transmit any content that is illicit, unsavory, abusive, pornographic, discriminatory, harassing, or disrespectful when communicating with each other or with minors involved in ministry activities.
3. Except in an emergency, ministry workers may not transmit any personal information pertaining to a minor without the ministry participant and his or her parents or guardians signing consent forms. This applies to group texting, group e-mail, or any other public method of electronic communication. Personal information may include such things as a minor’s name, phone number, e-mail address, or photograph.
4. Many times, the use of cell phones or technology may be built into ministry programs (e.g., looking up a Bible verse on a Bible app, Instagram scavenger hunts, etc.) In all other cases, ministry workers will discourage students from using cell phones during ministry programs except in an emergency, to contact a parent or guardian, or to place calls specifically approved by a leader.
5. Ministry workers will instruct youth occasionally about the Safe Sanctuaries Virtual Communications Policy and the dangers of such conduct as “sexting.”
6. Ministry workers who become aware of possible child abuse through electronic media must immediately notify their supervisor. The ministry will consult with its attorney and report abuse as required by law.
7. All information, images, or videos shared electronically through public ministry communications channels aren’t considered confidential.
8. To participate in ministry electronic communications, minors and their parents/guardians must sign a related consent form.
9. Minors who violate this policy may lose electronic communications privileges or be removed from the ministry program. The ministry’s pastoral leadership will notify parents immediately of any violation.
10. Cellular phones can cause distraction if used while driving. For safety reasons, youth workers driving on ministry business are not to make calls unless they use a hands-free device. If they receive a cell phone call while driving, the youth worker should answer it using a hands-free device or pull off the road to a safe location as soon as possible.
11. Ministry workers driving on ministry business are to avoid cell phone use—even hands-free—when transporting children, while driving in heavy traffic, during hazardous weather conditions, or when it violates local law.
12. Ministry workers are never to send or read text messages or post to or read social media while driving.

**West Market Street UMC Volunteer Application
for Adults Working with Children, Youth, & Vulnerable Adults**

Please answer the following questions fully. Feel free to ask for clarification if you are unclear about any questions and need further information. Note: This is not an employment application. This application form is being used exclusively to help West Market Street UMC continue to provide a safe and secure environment for our children and youth who participate in our church programming and use our church facilities.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

How long have you been attending WMSUMC? Years _____ Months _____

Previous church affiliations including name, city, and state: _____

Have you been previously involved in leading activities with children, youth or vulnerable adults at West Market Street UMC or in another congregation? Yes ___ No ___

If yes, please describe your general duties and age group with which you worked:

Have you been involved with other non-church organizations dealing with children, youth, or vulnerable adults? Yes ___ No ___

If yes, please describe your general duties and age group with which you worked:

Please provide us with a list of any talents or training that may be beneficial to children, youth, or vulnerable adults of our congregation:

Please state briefly why you would like to be involved in our ministries with children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults.

Have you ever been charged, or convicted of, or pled guilty to a crime, either a misdemeanor or felony (including, but not limited to drug-related charges, child abuse, other crimes of violence, theft, or motor vehicle violations)? Yes ____ No _____

If yes, please explain:

References:

Please list three individuals who are not related to you by blood or marriage as references.

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Email: _____ Phone Number: _____

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Email: _____ Phone Number: _____

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Email: _____ Phone Number: _____

Volunteer Covenant:

In accordance with West Market Street United Methodist Church's commitment to being a holy place of safety and protection for all who enter and a place where all people can experience the love of God through relationships with others, I agree to observe and abide by the policies set forth below.

As a volunteer in this congregation:

- I agree to observe and abide by all church policies working in ministries with children, youth, and vulnerable persons.
- I agree to promptly report any behavior that seems abusive or inappropriate to a supervisor or church staff person.

While working with children, youth, and vulnerable adults, I will:

- Treat all children, youth, and adults with respect and consideration.
- Respect the rights of children, youth, and adults to decline being touched in ways that make them feel uncomfortable.
- Maintain an attitude of respect, patience, professionalism, courtesy, tact, and maturity as a positive role model for children, youth, and adults.
- Use positive guidance techniques, such as redirection, positive reinforcement, and encouragement rather than competition, comparison, and criticism.
- Refrain from any behavior that could be considered abusive to children, youth, or adults, including physical abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, and sexual abuse.

Signature of Applicant: _____ Date: _____



DISCLOSURE REGARDING CONSUMER REPORTS

West Market Street United Methodist Church (West Market St. UMC) is committed to providing a safe, secure environment that includes putting the right employees and volunteers into the right positions within our organization and conducting background checks on our employees and volunteers.

West Market St. UMC Will Obtain a Background Check

You acknowledge and understand that in connection with your application with West Market St. UMC (including any independent contract for services) or when deciding whether to modify or continue your ongoing involvement, we may obtain a “consumer report” and/or an “investigative consumer report” on you from PeopleFacts, a consumer reporting agency, or from any third party, in strict compliance with both state and federal law.

Consumer Report Defined

A consumer report is any communication of information by a consumer reporting agency bearing on your credit worthiness, credit standing, credit capacity, character, general reputation, personal characteristics, or mode of living which is used or expected to be used for purposes of serving as a factor in establishing your current and/or continuing eligibility for involvement. A common term for a consumer report is a “background check report.”

Investigative Consumer Report Defined

An investigative consumer report is obtained through personal interviews with individuals who may have knowledge of your character, general reputation, personal characteristics, or mode of living. An investigative consumer report might include, for example, calls to the personal references you provide or conversations with former supervisors or colleagues where you worked.

Reports May Contain

The consumer reports or investigative consumer reports may contain public record information which may be requested or made on you including, but not limited to: consumer credit, criminal records, civil cases in which you have been involved, driving history records, current motor vehicle insurance coverage information, education records, previous employment history, workers compensation claims history, social security traces, military records, professional licensure records, eviction records, drug testing, government records, and others.

You further understand that these reports may include experience information along with reasons for termination of past employment. You also acknowledge and understand that information from various federal, state, local and other agencies which contain information about your past activities will be requested, and that a consumer report containing injury and illness, drug testing, or other medical records and medical information may be obtained only after a tentative offer of employment has been made.

Your Rights as a Consumer

You are hereby notified that you have the right to make a timely request for a copy of the scope and nature of the above investigative background report and/or a complete copy of your consumer report contained in PeopleFacts’ files on you at the time of your request by providing proper identification.

You are further notified that, prior to being denied a position based in whole or in part on information obtained in the consumer report, you will be provided a copy of the report, the name, address and telephone number of the consumer reporting agency and a description in writing of your rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act. Correspondence to PeopleFacts should be forwarded to:

AUTHORIZATION TO OBTAIN CONSUMER REPORT

The following is accurate and complete information required in order for West Market St. UMC to request PeopleFacts to perform a background check on you and in the process obtain a complete consumer report about you:

Full Legal Name : _____
(First Name, Full Middle Name, Last Name)

All Previously Used Former or Other Names: (AKA, Maiden Names, Married Names, Surnames, etc.) _____

Current Street Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Prior Street Address 1: _____ Dates Resided Here: _____ to _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Prior Street Address 2: _____ Dates Resided Here: _____ to _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Prior Street Address 3: _____ Dates Resided Here: _____ to _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Current Email Address*: _____ Gender**: M / F Race**: _____

Social Security Number: _____ Date of Birth**: _____

Driver's License Number: _____ Issuing State: _____ Expiration Date: _____

Your signature below indicates the following:

- 1) You authorize, without reservation, PeopleFacts or any third party to obtain and/or furnish to West Market St. UMC any records or information referenced in the provided disclosure statement for employment or volunteer related purposes;
- 2) You authorize ongoing procurement of any records or information, reports, and records at any time during your relationship with West Market St. UMC to the extent allowed by law;
- 3) You authorize the use of a fax, scan, or photocopy of this authorization as having the same authority as the original;
- 4) You authorize and request, without reservation, any present or former employer, school, police department, financial institution, division of motor vehicles, consumer reporting agency, or other entity, person or agency having knowledge about you to furnish West Market St. UMC and/or PeopleFacts with any and all background information in their possession regarding you for these stated employment purposes;
- 5) You understand and agree that in connection with your employment/volunteer application consumer report information, whether investigative or otherwise, may be shared with and/or reviewed by all applicable parties involved in the hiring process;
- 6) You have read and fully understand the foregoing disclosure and this authorization.
- 7) You certify that all the information you have provided on this form is true, complete, correct and accurate; and
- 8) You certify you have received, reviewed and understand the "Summary of Your Rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act (15 U.S.C. §1681 et seq.)" which is published by the Federal Trade Commission to help you know your rights.

Authorizing Signature: _____ Date: _____

**Your email address will be provided to notify you when any adverse public record information is being reported.*

*** This information will be used for background screening and record matching purposes only.*

NOTICE REGARDING BACKGROUND CHECKS AUTHORIZED BY A MINNESOTA, OKLAHOMA, CALIFORNIA, MAINE APPLICANT/EMPLOYEE

- Check this box if you are a Minnesota, Oklahoma, or California applicant**, and you would like to receive a copy of your consumer report, if one is obtained. For **California** applicants only: a copy of your report will be sent to you by the above-referenced employer within three business days beginning on the date of receipt by the employer. For **Minnesota** applicants only: the consumer reporting agency shall furnish a copy of your consumer report within twenty-four hours of providing it to the above-referenced employer. For **Oklahoma** applicants only: the consumer reporting agency shall furnish a copy of your consumer report.

CALIFORNIA APPLICANTS: Pursuant to § 1786.22 of the California Civil Code, you may view the file maintained on you by PeopleFacts during normal business hours. You may also obtain a copy of this file, either in person or by mail, by submitting proper identification and paying the costs of duplication services. You may also receive a summary of the file by telephone upon production of adequate identification. PeopleFacts is required to have trained personnel available to explain your file to you and any coded information contained therein. You may appear in person alone, or with another person of your choice, provided that this additional person furnishes proper identification.

California Civil Code section 1786.16(2) requires a separate disclosure and authorization to be signed by an applicant or current employee each time a background check is performed for employment purposes. This requirement does not apply in situations where the employer has a suspicion of wrongdoing or misconduct by a current employee.

MAINE APPLICANTS: Pursuant to Maine state law, § 1317(2), PeopleFacts is required to reinvestigate any consumer dispute made by a consumer residing in the state of Maine within 21 calendar days of notification of the dispute by the consumer

NOTICE REGARDING BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS PURSUANT TO CALIFORNIA LAW

West Market Street United Methodist Church (the "Company") intends to obtain information about you for employment purposes from an investigative consumer reporting agency or consumer credit reporting agency. Thus, you can expect to be the subject of "investigative consumer reports" and "consumer credit reports" obtained for employment purposes. Such reports may include information about your character, general reputation, personal characteristics and mode of living.

With respect to any investigative consumer report from an investigative consumer reporting agency ("ICRA"), the Company may investigate the information contained in your employment application and other background information about you, including but not limited to obtaining a criminal record report, verifying references, work history, your social security number, your educational achievements, licensure, and certifications, your driving record, and other information about you, and interviewing people who are knowledgeable about you. The results of this report may be used as a factor in making employment decisions.

The source of any investigative consumer report (as that term is defined under California law) will be PeopleFacts, 7127 Riverside Parkway, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74136. The source of any credit report will be PeopleFacts, 7127 Riverside Parkway, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74136. The Company agrees to provide you with a copy of an investigative consumer report when required to do so under California law.

Under California Civil Code section 1786.22, you are entitled to find out from an ICRA what is in the ICRA's file on you with proper identification, as follows:

- In person, by visual inspection of your file during normal business hours and on reasonable notice. You also may request a copy of the information in person. The ICRA may not charge you more than the actual copying costs for providing you with a copy of your file.
- A summary of all information contained in the ICRA's file on you that is required to be provided by the California Civil Code will be provided to you via telephone, if you have made a written request, with proper identification, for telephone disclosure, and the toll charge, if any, for the telephone call is prepaid by or charged directly to you.
- By requesting a copy be sent to a specified addressee by certified mail. ICRA's complying with requests for certified mailings shall not be liable for disclosures to third parties caused by mishandling of mail after such mailings leave the ICRA's.

"Proper Identification" includes documents such as a valid driver's license, social security account number, military identification card, and credit cards. Only if you cannot identify yourself with such information may the ICRA require additional information concerning your employment and personal or family history in order to verify your identity.

The ICRA will provide trained personnel to explain any information furnished to you and will provide a written explanation of any coded information contained in files maintained on you. This written explanation will be provided whenever a file is provided to you for visual inspection.

You may be accompanied by one other person of your choosing, who must furnish reasonable identification. An ICRA may require you to furnish a written statement granting permission to the ICRA to discuss your file in such person's presence.

Understanding the Language of Safe Sanctuary

Child: 5th grade and younger

Youth: 6th-12th grades

Adult: Any person at least eighteen years of age.

Appropriate: Conduct that is understood as acceptable and permissible.

Vulnerable Person: A person whose ability to protect themselves from violence, abuse, or neglect is significantly impaired through social, physical, or mental disability or illness.

Paid staff person: Someone paid by the church and overseen by the SPRC. All staff are background checked and any staff (adult and minor) working with minors are Safe Sanctuary trained.

Screened Adult: An adult who has been background checked and Safe Sanctuary trained.

Student Leaders: People under the age of eighteen who are assisting with child or student activities. Must be overseen by screened adult.

Floater: A Safe Sanctuary trained adult leader who moves through out the facility to provide additional oversight and supervision during activities.

Abuse: means harm or threatened harm to the health and welfare of a child, youth, or vulnerable adult by any person responsible for the health and welfare of that child, youth, or adult.

Physical Abuse: Deliberately aggressive physical contact that results in bodily injury. This includes, but is not limited to: striking, pushing, biting, kicking, punching, burning, beating, or shaking. Injuries include bruises, fractures, cuts, and burns.

Emotional Abuse: A pattern of behavior in which one person deliberately and repeatedly subjects another to nonphysical acts that are detrimental to the individual's daily life and overall mental well-being.

Sexual Abuse: Sexual contact inflicted upon a person by forcible compulsion. Additionally, sexual abuse refers to engaging in sexual contact with a person who is below a specified age or who is incapable of giving consent because of age or mental or physical incapacity.

Sexual Contact: The intentional touching of the intimate parts or the clothing covering the intimate parts.

Sexual Exploitation: Allowing, permitting, or encouraging a person to engage in prostitution or photographing, filming, or creating electronic or computer-generated images depicting them in actual or suggestive sexual conduct.

Sexual Harassment: Any sexual suggestion, advance, or demand, either verbal or physical, which is perceived by the recipient as demeaning, intimidating, or coercive.

Neglect: Occurs when a person endangers a child's health, safety, or welfare through negligence.

Grooming: The preparation of a child/student/vulnerable adult by a predatory person that moves the individual toward abuse.

APPROPRIATE MINISTRY DISCIPLINE

DO'S

- Be a non-anxious and loving presence when re-directing behavior
- Make your supervisor aware of any behavioral issues

DONT'S

- Do not use physical force to correct behavior
- Do not use derogatory language or intimidation to correct behavior
- Do not issue consequences without staff involvement

APPROPRIATE ELECTRONIC INTERACTIONS

DO'S

- When necessary for ministry purposes, email, text, or app communications only with another ministry approved, unrelated, adult leader
- Taking group photos for ministry event documentation that are sent to staff for ministry promotion and/or parent updates
- Do use hands-free options when driving and/or a co-captain for communications and directions while driving
- Do alert your supervisor of any abusive, predatory, and/or inappropriate electronic interactions between ANY ministry participants

DONT'S

- Do not communicate electronically without another ministry approved, unrelated, adult leader
- Do not electronically communicate anything other than what is necessary for ministry communication purposes
- Do not take photos that are not for ministry purposes
- Do not take photos without the consent of those who are getting their photo taken
- Staff are not permitted to post, share, or promote images without the consent of minors and guardians unless taken during live-streamed and public events.
- Do not post photos of minors on your personal social media site(s)
- Do not use your cell phone while driving

APPROPRIATE PHYSICAL INTERACTIONS

DO'S

- Side hugs
- Pats on the shoulder or upper back
- Handshakes
- High-fives & fist bumps
- Holding hands with young children when guiding from place to place

DONT'S

- Full-frontal hugs
- Kisses
- Showing affection in an isolated area
- Lap sitting, wrestling, piggyback rides, tickling
- Massages
- Any form of unwanted touching
- No touching any area that is not on the "do" list

APPROPRIATE VERBAL INTERACTIONS

DO'S

- Positive reinforcement
- Appropriate jokes
- Encouragement
- Praise

DONT'S

- Name-calling or unwanted nicknames
- Discussing sexual topics or encounters outside the parameters of pre-planned, organized, and approved education
- Secrets
- Sexual/racial/discriminatory jokes
- Cursing, shaming, and/or belittling
- Derogatory remarks
- Intimidating, humiliating, or threatening language

West Market Street UMC Covenant for Adults Working with Children, Youth, & Vulnerable Adults

In accordance with West Market Street United Methodist Church's commitment to being a holy place of safety and protection for all who enter and a place where all people can experience the love of God through relationships with others, I agree to observe and abide by the policies set forth below.

As a volunteer in this congregation:

- I agree to observe and abide by all church policies working in ministries with children, youth, and vulnerable persons.
- I agree to promptly report any behavior that seems abusive or inappropriate to a supervisor or church staff person.

While working with children, youth, and vulnerable adults, I will:

- Treat all children, youth, and adults with respect and consideration.
- Respect the rights of children, youth, and adults to decline being touched in ways that make them feel uncomfortable.
- Maintain an attitude of respect, patience, professionalism, courtesy, tact, and maturity as a positive role model for children, youth, and adults.
- Use positive guidance techniques, such as redirection, positive reinforcement, and encouragement rather than competition, comparison, and criticism.
- Refrain from any behavior that could be considered abusive to children, youth, or adults, including physical abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, and sexual abuse.