

**Please note: The following are suggestions that should be adjusted or modified  
by a local church as outlined in *Manual 129.31*.**

**THE \_\_\_\_\_ (name of local church) \_\_\_\_\_ CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE  
POLICY AND PROCEDURE ON SEXUAL MISCONDUCT**

**Approved by the Church Board \_\_\_\_\_  
(date)**

**A. POLICY**

It is the policy of the \_\_\_\_\_ (name of local church) \_\_\_\_\_ Church of the Nazarene (hereinafter referred to as The Church) that all ministers (ordained elders or deacons and licensed ministers, hereinafter referred to as Ministers) church professionals, church officers, church members, nonmember employees and volunteers of governing bodies and entities of The Church are to maintain integrity of ministerial, employment, professional and denominational relationships at all times. Sexual contact or sexualized behavior with another person (other than an individual's spouse) while in volunteer service, ministerial, employment, professional, or denominational relationship, whether or not such contact or behavior is consensual, is never permitted.

This policy is established in response to the direction of The Southwestern Ohio District Church of the Nazarene, of which The Church is a member, and fulfills the requirements specified in, and is in conformance to, The Southwestern Ohio District Church of the Nazarene *Policy and Procedure on Sexual Misconduct*.

**B. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is make explicit The Church's opposition to oppressive or degrading environments in employment and other church relationships, to provide for procedures to be followed in the placement of all who serve in the work of, or function in behalf of, The Church as employees or as volunteers, to provide for procedures to be followed in the supervision of all who serve in the work of, or function in behalf of, The Church as employees or as volunteers, to provide a due process for the determination of facts in cases of allegations of violation of the policy and to provide for the imposition of appropriate remedies in cases of violation. Within the denominational context, it makes explicit the preference of The Church, when circumstances permit, to provide or arrange for pastoral care of persons who may be affected by either a violation or an allegation of violation of the policy.

**C. DEFINITIONS**

Sexual misconduct may include, but is not necessarily limited to:

- 1) sexual contact or sexualized behavior with another person while in volunteer service, ministerial, employment, professional, or denominational relationship, whether or not consensual,
- 2) sexual conduct which is injurious to the physical or emotional health of another or is inappropriate for a representative of the church, such as adultery, pornography, offensive, obscene, or suggestive language, seductive behavior, or inappropriate/unwelcome physical contact;
- 3) sexual harassment, which includes sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature in which submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's volunteer service, employment or church-relationship status or in which submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual affects decisions regarding volunteer service, employment or membership-status decisions of an individual, or in which such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or church-relationship environment; or

4) violation of the criminal laws of the state of Ohio in which the conduct occurred, including rape or sexual contact by force, threat, or intimidation, or any other heinous sexual crimes including any contact or interaction between a child and an adult when the child is being exploited for sexual gratification, whether the behavior does or does not involve touching; such sexual behavior between a child and an adult is always considered forced whether or not consented to by the child.

Sexual misconduct is a breach of Christian ethical principles by the misuse of trust, authority, or power to gain advantage over another for personal pleasure in an abusive, exploitative, or unjust manner. In the case of church professionals (whether they are in pastoral, counseling, or other such relationships), no personal sexual relationship, either public or private, is permitted with anyone with whom the individual has professional relationship. It is always the responsibility of a church officer or church worker to maintain appropriate sexual boundaries and limitations to ensure that sexual misconduct does not occur.

#### **D. APPLICATION**

This policy applies to all persons working with children or youth, who serve in the work of, or function on behalf of, The Church, including members of The Southwestern Ohio District roll of Ministers, all persons on other rolls of The Southwestern Ohio District (commissioned evangelists, song evangelists, etc.), all employees of The Church (whether ordained or not), those who serve The Church on standing boards or committees (whether Ministers or laymen), and volunteers.

#### **E. REFERENCES**

Because The Church has strong policy opposing sexual misconduct, and because of the high moral and ethical character and practice expected of volunteers and employees of The Church, candidates for any position within The Church are to provide sufficient information to The Church so as to assure The Church of the suitability of the person for work with or for children or youth. Accordingly all such candidates will be required to complete a screening form (see Appendix A of this policy) and submit to a criminal records check (see Appendix B). In the event there exists any civil, criminal or denominational complaint and/or judgment regarding sexual misconduct and its disposition, The Church may make any inquiries as may be judged prudent and necessary to assess the suitability of the candidate for service in, or on behalf of, The Church. These inquiries may include, but shall not be limited to, a criminal records check through federal, state or local police departments or other criminal justice agencies. All records and supporting documents of such statements and inquiries will be maintained in a permanent record in the office of The Church, and will be used by The Church for the purposes of determining an applicant's suitability for service in, or on behalf of, The Church or on behalf of any entity operating within and/or under the authority of The Church.

#### **F. SUPERVISION**

No person shall be permitted to work with youth or children until they have been associated with The Church for at least six months. It is further to be understood that, at no time during the time of service in the work of, or in behalf of, The Church, will any individual person, whether volunteer or paid employee, be alone with, or in the sole custody of, an individual minor (unless the minor is their own child) without the consent of that minor's parent or guardian. In addition, provision will be made to monitor the premises (class rooms, halls etc.) when children or youth activities are being held.

Each person placed in a position as volunteer or employee of The Church, for work with, and supervision of, minors will be expected to participate in appropriate training for awareness of the problems of sexual misconduct and an awareness of dealing with the evidence of sexual abuse or other sexual misconduct. Such training shall include instruction about this policy, and information

relating to procedure to be followed under this policy, if at any time, during their service for, or in behalf of, The Church sexual misconduct allegations are made.

Directors of children and youth activities sponsored by The Church, auxiliaries of The Church, or by any entity operating within and/or under the authority of The Church, shall give immediate and appropriate feedback to any person serving in a position of supervision or custody of minors, who displays behavior that gives the appearance of violating the provisions of this policy.

A copy of the latest revision of this policy shall be given to all persons who are placed in a position as volunteer or employee of The Church, for work with, and supervision of, minors.

#### **G. REPORTING PROCEDURE WHEN SEXUAL MISCONDUCT IS DISCOVERED OR SUSPECTED**

There shall be no time limitation for The Church to take appropriate action in cases in which sexual abuse is alleged. No negative response shall be given to, nor negative action taken against, any person who reasonably and responsibly reports conduct in violation of this policy.

Any person who has reasonable belief that a violation of this policy has occurred by a person to whom this policy is applicable is required to make report thereof in a prompt and timely manner to the senior pastor of The Church. (Note: if the alleged violation is attributed to the senior pastor, then the report should be made to the district superintendent, or assistant district superintendent, of the Southwestern Ohio District. In this instance “district superintendent or assistant district superintendent” shall be substituted for all subsequent references in this policy to “senior pastor”). Failure to provide notification of reasonable belief of violation of this policy is itself a violation of this policy. In order that confidentiality be maintained and that the procedures of The Church not be compromised, any person that has reasonable belief that a violation of the policy has occurred is to make report thereof to The Church and/or the civil authorities as may be required by statute, but is not to propagate rumor by further repetition of hearsay, allegations, or suspicions. It is then the responsibility of The Church to exercise ecclesiastical jurisdiction with regard to its policy.

#### **H. SUBSEQUENT REPORTING**

Any person notified of an alleged violation is to record the names of the accused and accuser, together with a brief description of the alleged offense, and shall forward such record to the senior pastor of The Church for the initiation of appropriate procedures described in this document and in accord with the rules of judicial administration of the Church of the Nazarene as set forth in the *Manual* Section VI and the *Judicial Manual of the Church of the Nazarene*. The senior pastor must be provided sufficient information to cause a reasonable person to conclude that an inquiry is needed to either discipline or clear the accused of allegations. The senior pastor need not be personally persuaded of the truth of the allegations nor need to see all of the supporting evidence available before instituting procedures.

When violation of a criminal statute has occurred (as in the case of child abuse) or when otherwise required by civil law, any person who has direct personal knowledge of such violation is to make report to the appropriate governmental agency in addition to making report to the senior pastor.

#### **I. PROCEDURE**

When report of an alleged violation of The Church’s policy on sexual misconduct is received, the senior pastor, at his discretion, shall promptly initiate procedures for dealing with the allegations as outlined in the *Manual* Section VI and the *Judicial Manual of the Church of the Nazarene*.

Additionally, the senior pastor shall take immediate action to insure an appropriate, compassionate and helpful response to the alleged victim(s). At the discretion of the senior pastor, and with the approval of the church board, The Church may elect to seek legal advice concerning statutory reporting requirements and termination of employment if such termination is deemed warranted.

Should the accused acknowledge the substantial truth of the accuser's charges or should there be circumstances which might make such actions prudent, any of the penalties or disciplines, along with the procedure for restoration, when appropriate, which are outlined in the *Manual* Section VI and the *Judicial Manual of the Church of the Nazarene* may be assessed and placed in operation.

The goal of The Church with regard to accusations of violation of its policy and procedure on sexual misconduct is to ensure that an effective, caring, and expeditious response is made to all persons, institutions and entities which may be affected by either a violation of professional ethics or the allegation of a violation. In all cases, all persons shall be treated with respect, and personal integrity shall be presumed.

#### **J. ROLES OF STAFF**

The role of the senior pastor is limited to receiving complaints, serving as consultant/resource to the judicial process, and responding to media inquiries, should such occur, or designating someone to be the spokesperson for, and in behalf of, The Church. (It is to be understood that only the senior pastor, or an attorney acting in behalf of, and representing The Church, shall be so designated.) The role of other employees of The Church is limited to providing appropriate support and counsel to the judicial process, but is not intended to include responsibility for either counsel or management. These roles are to provide a channel for communication and to describe existing process.



**CHURCH HISTORY AND PRIOR WORK WITH MINORS**

Name of church you attend and/or of which you are a member \_\_\_\_\_

List the name and address of other churches you have attended regularly in the past five years.

\_\_\_\_\_

List all previous church work involving youth or children (church name and address, type of work performed, dates).

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

List all previous non-church work involving youth or children (organization's name and address, type of work performed, dates).

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

List any gifts, callings, training, education, or other factors that have prepared you for youth or children work.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Personal references (not former employers or relatives)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

**APPLICANT'S STATEMENT**

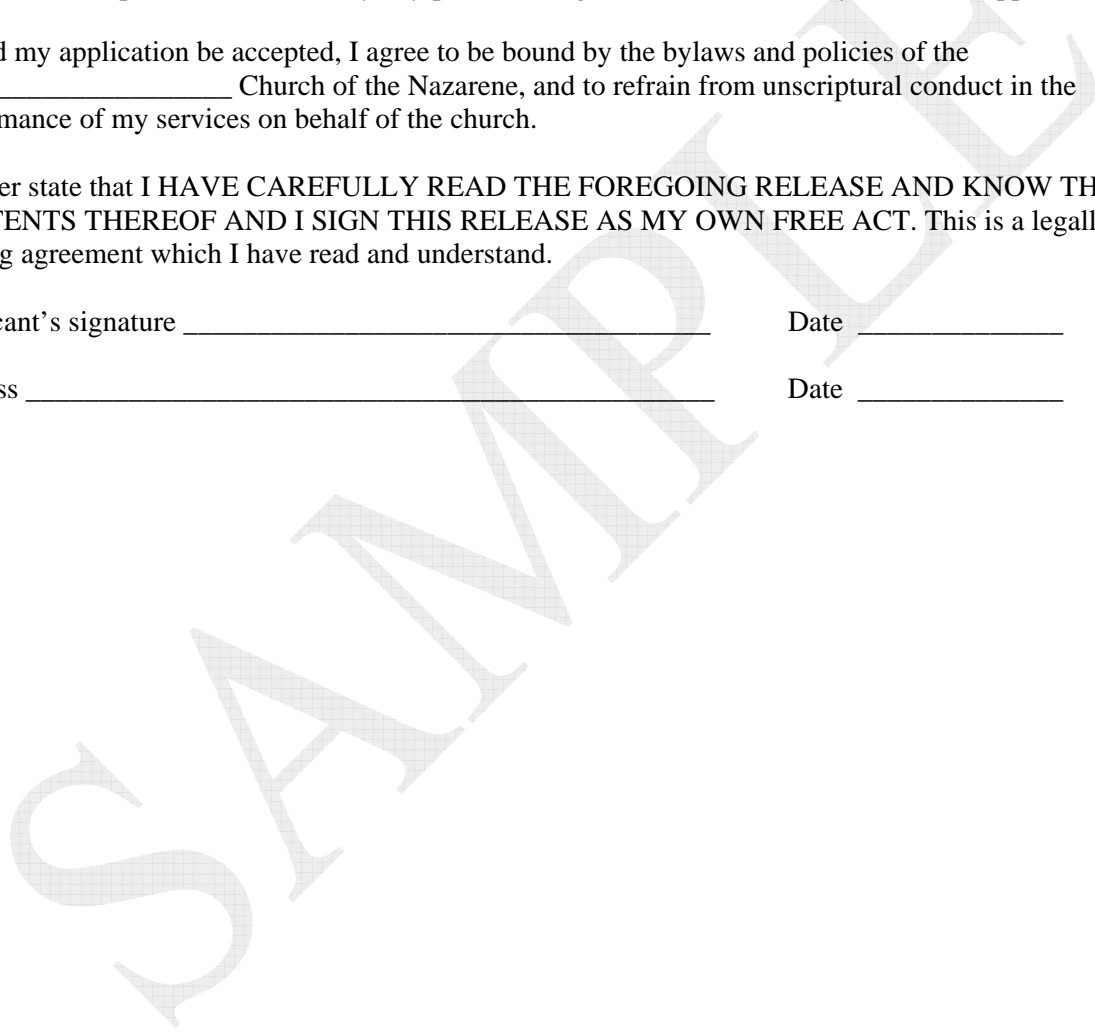
The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I authorize any references or churches listed in this application to give you any information (including opinions) that they may have regarding my character and fitness for children or youth work. In consideration of the receipt and evaluation of this application by \_\_\_\_\_ Church of the Nazarene, I hereby release any district, any individual, church youth organization, charity, employer, reference, or any other person or organization, including record custodians, both collectively and individually, from any and all liability for damages of whatever kind or nature which may at any time result to me, my heirs, or family, on account of compliance or any attempts to comply, with this authorization. I waive any right that I may have to inspect any information provided about me by any person or organization identified by me in this application.

Should my application be accepted, I agree to be bound by the bylaws and policies of the \_\_\_\_\_ Church of the Nazarene, and to refrain from unscriptural conduct in the performance of my services on behalf of the church.

I further state that I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THE FOREGOING RELEASE AND KNOW THE CONTENTS THEREOF AND I SIGN THIS RELEASE AS MY OWN FREE ACT. This is a legally binding agreement which I have read and understand.

Applicant's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Witness \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



**APPENDIX B**

**REQUEST FOR CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECK AND AUTHORIZATION**

I hereby request the \_\_\_\_\_ Police Department to release any information which pertains to any record of convictions contained in its files or in any criminal file maintained on me whether local, state, or national. I hereby release said Police Department from any and all liability resulting from such disclosure.

Police Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

City State Zip

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Print name \_\_\_\_\_

Print maiden name if applicable \_\_\_\_\_

Print all aliases \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: Month \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

Place of birth \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number (if required by the police department) \_\_\_\_\_

Today's date: Month \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

Send record to:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

City State Zip

**APPENDIX C**

**REFERENCE CONTACT FORM - CONFIDENTIAL**

Record of contact with a reference or church identified by an applicant for youth or children work.

Name of applicant \_\_\_\_\_

Reference or church contacted (if a church, identify both the church and person or minister contacted )

\_\_\_\_\_

Date and time of contact \_\_\_\_\_

Person contacting the reference or church \_\_\_\_\_

Method of contact (e.g. telephone, letter, personal) \_\_\_\_\_

Summary of conversation (summarize the reference's or minister's remarks concerning the applicant's fitness and suitability for youth or children work)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Position \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX C  
(CONT.)**

**OPTIONAL QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PERSONAL INTERVIEW OF REFERENCES**

1. How long have you known the applicant?
2. What is your relationship to the applicant?
3. Have you ever worked with the applicant in a volunteer or other capacity? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No  
If yes, please describe.
4. What strengths would the applicant bring to this position?
5. What difficulties might the applicant have fulfilling these duties?
6. Please describe situations where you have observed the applicant interacting with children or youth?
7. Would you be willing to place your son or daughter or any other child or youth for whom you are responsible under the applicant's supervision?
8. Would you consider this applicant a positive role model for children and youth?
9. Is the applicant dependable?
10. Do you know of any reason why this person should not be considered for this position?

Thank you for your assistance.