



Safe Congregation Plan

For clergy, employees and volunteers

Adopted 10/25/2016

Reviewed and Approved 04/27/2023

UUTC
24 Varsity St.
PO Box 918
Brevard, NC 28712

UNDERLYING PRINCIPLE

The Unitarian Universalists of Transylvania County want their church to be a safe place for all and believe that church leaders, staff and volunteers must be made aware of the responsibility to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the ideals expressed in our Seven Principles.

As Unitarian Universalists of Transylvania County, we are a member congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Association. As members we are committed by our Bylaws, our Seven Principles, and our consciences to affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person.

This document is for internal use within the Unitarian Universalists of Transylvania County. UUTC intends to follow this policy as closely as possible in every instance. Because of our continuing conversation and efforts to be thorough and fair, this document may be modified and changed with the consent of the Board.

No information received in pursuance of this policy shall be disclosed to any person for any purpose except in furtherance of this policy.

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DEFINITIONS – For purposes of this document

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT: misusing power and trust in a sexual way. This includes:

- (1) Sexual Abuse:** Sexual involvement or contact with a person who is a minor or who is legally incompetent. This is a criminal offense and must be reported to law enforcement officials. Sexual abuse also includes sexual involvement or contact between minors when consent is not given or is not possible.
- (2) Sexual Harassment:** Unwelcome or undesired: sexually-oriented humor or language; questions or comments about sexual behavior or preference; physical contact; inappropriate comments about clothing or physical appearance; or repeated requests for social engagements where there is an employment, mentor, or colleague relationship between the persons involved.
- (3) Sexual Exploitation:** A betrayal of trust during the course of a ministerial relationship by the development, or the attempted development, of a sexual or romantic relationship between a cleric or other church worker and a person with whom he or she has a ministerial or fiduciary relationship, whether or not there is apparent consent from the other individual.

ADULT: Any person above the age of eighteen (18) and mentally able to understand the significance and responsibilities of their actions.

BOUNDARIES: Guidelines, rules or limits that persons create to identify for themselves what are reasonable, safe and permissible ways for other people to behave around them, and how they will respond when someone violates those boundaries. Boundaries form out of a mix of beliefs, opinions, attitudes, past experiences, and social learning. Some examples of boundaries include:

- (1) Physical:** The space around an individual and/or the willingness or unwillingness of an individual to be touched, held or close to another.
- (2) Emotional:** The connection of an individual to family, church, society, culture or authority figures and sub-groups.
- (3) Behavioral:** The way in which an individual expresses or outwardly shows and defines her/his connection to family, church, society, culture or authority figures and sub-groups. This can include following or not following cultural and/or sub-cultural norms and expectations.

CHILD: Anyone twelve (12) years of age or younger, or any persons mentally unable to understand the significance and responsibilities of their actions.

CHURCH WORKER: Any member of the clergy; any member of the laity working on behalf of the church in either paid or volunteer positions; and any person who has a key to the physical facilities and could be alone with another person.

CLERGY/CLERIC: Those who have been ordained to serve the church and its people.

CONSENT: Agreement in sentiment, opinion, etc. Consent must be achieved through mutual agreement without coercion or manipulation. The ability to consent is affected by age, influence of drugs or alcohol, mental or physical impairment, or other reasons which may cause a person to be vulnerable to another. When there is a power relationship or a fiduciary responsibility, consent can be especially problematic.

DUAL RELATIONSHIP: Relationship in which people attempt to relate on two levels – personally and professionally – at the same time. Dual relationships occur whenever a church representative enters into a personal relationship with a member of the congregation or group participant.

FIDUCIARY DUTY: A duty of trust, which requires placing the needs or interests of others above the needs or desires of one's self.

FRAIL ELDERLY ADULTS: Older persons who are afflicted with physical or mental disabilities that may interfere with their ability to independently perform activities of daily living.

LAITY: All non-ordained members of the church. This includes all church personnel and all members of the church.

PARAPHILIC BEHAVIORS: Those which occur when individuals are sexually aroused by objects, situations and people outside of societal norms. These include pedophilia, exhibitionism, and voyeurism.

PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS: Individuals who because of either physical or mental impairments are limited in their ability to engage fully in the life of the church, especially in areas such as education, relationships and access to events.

POWER: When a position of authority and responsibility has been established and accepted. Power can be cumulative, arising from a number of sources, such as occupation, experience, physical size and/or attractiveness, gender, age, race, wealth, or charisma. Power can be negative (a top-down mechanism primarily benefiting the one who holds it) or positive (service to benefit others).

PERPETRATOR: Any individual who initiates and conducts nonconsensual and/or unwanted contact or activity of a sexual nature.

SEXUAL COERCION: The use of physical, emotional or supervisory power to gain sexual contact.

VICTIM: Any individual who is the recipient of nonconsensual and/or unwanted contact or activity of a sexual nature.

YOUTH: Anyone between the ages of twelve (12) and eighteen (18) years of age; an individual who is eighteen (18) years old or older but still in high school.

ZERO TOLERANCE: The policy of applying penalties to even minor infringements of a code in order to reinforce its overall importance and enhance deterrence.

OTHER TYPES OF ABUSE that may result in, or be connected to, sexual abuse and sexual misconduct in ministry include, but are not limited to:

- **Physical Abuse:** Non-accidental injury intentionally inflicted upon another person.
- **Emotional Abuse:** Subjecting or exposing another to behavior that results in psychological trauma, including anxiety, chronic depression, or post-traumatic stress. Such abuse is often associated with situations of power imbalance.
- **Neglect:** Failure to provide for another's basic needs or to protect another person from harm.
- **Economic Exploitation:** Deliberate misplacement, exploitation, or wrongful temporary or permanent use of another person's belongings or money.
- **Bullying:** Aggressive behavior that is manifested by the use of force or coercion to affect others, particularly when the behavior is habitual and involves an imbalance or power. It can include verbal harassment, threat, physical assault, or coercion. It may be directed repeatedly towards particular victims based on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexuality, and/or ability.
- **Pornography:** Depiction of erotic behavior in either written, photographic or video materials which is intended to cause sexual excitement or gratification. Pornography should never be shown to children or youth.
- **Abuse of Social Media:** Inflicting abuse upon another by electronic communication, including but not limited to, texting, emails, and social websites such as Facebook and Twitter.

GENERAL POLICY

UUTC is committed to making the church a safe and healthy community for all people, a place where adults, children and youth find love and acceptance, where no one is hurt, and where hurts may be healed.

Our principles include recognizing the inherent worth and dignity of every person, striving for justice, equity and compassion in human relations, and acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations. Because of these mandates, we acknowledge our obligation to articulate clear standards and guidelines for the prevention of sexual harassment and abuse.

All church personnel, profession or lay, employed or volunteer, are required to carefully consider this policy document and agree to adhere to its requirements as a prerequisite to service to the church.

ZERO TOLERANCE

UUTC is committed to zero tolerance of adult sexual misconduct and/or child abuse by any member of the clergy, staff, or volunteers. All leaders in the church need to recognize the dynamics of their relationships and the potential for harm and abuse.

All church leaders are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Exploitation in relationships of trust and the exercise of power leading to sexual misconduct will not be tolerated. Because of the inherent nature of power and authority in the ministerial relationship, consent of the church member, counselee, volunteer, employee/supervisee or colleague is not a defense for the purpose of these policies and procedures.

No individual who has a civil or criminal record of sexual abuse, who has admitted to prior child sexual abuse, who is known to have a paraphiliac diagnosis, or who is known to have been a perpetrator of sexual misconduct at any church-sponsored or church-related activity, on or off the church property, shall be permitted to interact with children and youth under the age of 18.

BACKGROUND CHECKS

All clergy, church employees and persons working with children, youth, and persons with special needs in UUTC programs are required to have a background check completed before the exercise of ministry. All background checks should be renewed every three (3) years.

All clergy and church employees at UUTC must have background checks prior to employment that include:

- Inquiry of all employers during the last five years. If there has been only one employer over the last five years, inquiries will be made to the two most recent employers.
- North Carolina, or state of previous employment, Sexual Offender Registry Check.
- North Carolina, or state of previous employment, Criminal Record Check.
- Credit history, if handling money.

All records of Background Checks are confidential and will be stored in a locked file or in a secure online manner.

Persons working with children, youth, special needs and/or frail elderly adults should have background checks that include:

- North Carolina, or state of previous employment, Sexual Offender Registry clearance.
- North Carolina, or state of previous employment, Criminal Record Check.
- Department of Motor Vehicles check.

Background checks are initiated and assessed by the minister or his/her designee. Records are confidential and will be retained in a locked file or in a secure online manner.

Additional Safeguards for Children, Youth and Persons with Special Needs Screening and Selection

All church workers who have **more than four contacts per year** with children, youth, and persons with special needs shall be screened and selected utilizing at least the following:

- **An application** that includes an authorization for the release of information to conduct background checks.
- **A criminal records check** in any state where the applicant has resided during the past seven (7) years, and other states, if any, as determined by the church.
- **A sexual offender registry check** in any state where the applicant has resided during the past seven (7) years.

- **A motor vehicle records check** if the person may be transporting children, youth and persons with special needs.
- **Reference checks** with persons outside the congregation who know the applicant, and preferably with persons who have observed how the applicant works with children, youth or persons with special needs.
- **An individual interview** with the appropriate supervisor(s).

Procedures

All information gathered about an applicant will be carefully reviewed and evaluated by the minister or CRE to make a determination, in consultation with others as necessary, of whether or not the person is appropriate to work with children and youth.

Church personnel who work with or around children or youth must have a personnel file which is kept where other church records are kept.

Criminal records checks and sexual offender registry checks will be conducted every three (3) years.

Employment Accountability

When there has been a determination that sexual misconduct and/or child abuse has been committed by a person, lay or clergy, continued employment will not be considered.

MONITORING AND SUPERVISING PROGRAMS

The supervision of programs involving children, youth, and persons with special needs involves creating clear structural guidelines and standards for programs and activities, approval of new programs, and accountability for monitoring and supervision.

Monitoring the behavior of adults, youth and children is intended to detect and stop inappropriate behaviors and interactions. Obvious harmful interactions include giving alcohol or drugs to children or youth, sexual contact, or other abuse behavior.

Other behaviors are not necessarily harmful in and of themselves, but are behaviors known to be used by abusers to "groom" vulnerable persons for eventual abuse, or which provide the privacy child molesters need in order to abuse children and youth. Examples include holding children over the age of three on the lap and transporting a child or youth alone.

To the extent possible, no person will be permitted to supervise an immediate family member when working with or around children or youth. (*"Immediate family member" is defined as spouse, partner, child, parent, sister, brother, similar in law relationship, stepchild, stepparent, stepsibling, grandparent or co-habitant.*)

Staffing Ratios

To the extent possible, every program for children, youth, and persons with special needs should follow these established ratios for adults and children.

Children to age 6:	2 adults for every 5 children (2:5)
Children age 6-12:	2 adults for every 8 children (2:8)
Youth age 12-18:	2 adults for every 10 youth (2:10)
Special Needs:	dependent upon the needs of the individual(s), but must meet the ratio established for children to age 6 as a minimum.

General Guidelines

There shall be a minimum of one adult (preferably an employee) and one other person (teen assistant, employee or volunteer) present when UUTC provides childcare or nursery services and in classrooms when children are participating in classroom activities or programs that are part of UUTC's ministry.

- Church personnel should **avoid being alone** with children, youth or persons with special needs where other adults cannot easily observe them.
- Adult church personnel must directly **supervise** church personnel under the age of 18 and be physically present during all activities.
- An up-to-date **list of approved congregation-sponsored programs** for children, youth, and persons with special needs will be maintained in the church office.
- Church personnel are not permitted to develop new activities for children, youth, and persons with special needs without **written approval** from the minister.
- Each program will develop **age-appropriate procedures** to ensure the safety of children, youth, and persons with special needs using restrooms and showers or

baths.

- When supervising or assisting private activities such as dressing, showering or diapering infants or children, church personnel will remain in an area **observable by other adults** or work in pairs.
- At least **two unrelated church personnel** should supervise activities. When both boys and girls are participating, an effort will be made for male and female adults to be present.

General Conduct for the Protection of Children and Youth

To assist church personnel in monitoring and supervising behaviors and interactions with children, youth, and persons with special needs, the following guidelines should be used. *They are not designed or intended to address interactions within families.*

When exceptions to these guidelines must be made, they should be reported to the supervisor of the person making the exception as soon as possible.

- All church personnel who work with children, youth and persons with special needs must agree to comply with the UUTC Guidelines for Appropriate Affection described in this document.
- No person will be allowed to have more than four (4) contacts with children, youth and persons with special needs until that person has been known to the clergy and congregation for at least six months.
- Programs for infants and children under six (6) years old will ensure that children are released only to their parents or legal guardians or those designed by them.
- Church personnel are prohibited from the use, possession, distribution, or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or the misuse of legal drugs while participating in or assisting with programs or activities specifically for children, youth or persons with special needs.
- Parents or guardians must complete written permission forms before church personnel transport children and youth for a church sponsored activity or for any purpose on more than an occasional basis.
- Church Personnel will respond to children, youth and persons with special needs with respect, consideration and equal treatment, regardless of sex, race, religion, sexual orientation, culture or socio-economic status.
- Church personnel will portray a positive role model by maintaining an attitude of respect, patience, and maturity. They will avoid even the appearance of favoritism.
- One-to-one counseling will be done in an open or public or other place where private conversations are possible but occur in full view of others.
- Church personnel are prohibited from dating or becoming romantically involved with a child or youth.
- Church personnel are prohibited from having sexual contact with a child or youth.
- Church personnel are prohibited from possessing any sexually oriented materials (magazines, cards, videos, films, clothing etc.) on church property or in the presence

of children, youth or persons with special needs except as expressly permitted as part of a pre-authorized educational program.

- Church personnel are prohibited from using the Internet to view or download any sexually oriented materials on church property or in the presence of children, youth or persons with special needs.

Internet Guidelines

- Adults who minister to children and youth are strongly encouraged to set very stringent privacy settings on any social networking profile. Individual personal profiles are to be used to interact with real friends, family and peers.
- Adults should not submit “friend” requests to minors or youth. Youth may not be able to decline such requests due to the disparity of power between youth and adults. (Youth may ask to be “friends” and adults should discern the level of contact they want to maintain with youth prior to responding to these requests.)
- If an adult chooses to accept friend requests from minors or youth who are associated with their community of faith, other adult leaders must have full access to all aspects of that adult’s profile and correspondence.
- Adults who want to connect via a social networking website with youth to whom they minister are strongly encouraged to set up a closed group account that youth may join. Youth requesting to “friend” an adult can then be invited to join this group rather than be accepted as a friend on an adult’s personal profile account. The purpose of these two separate accounts/profiles is to create a line of privacy and maintain healthy boundaries with youth and real family, friends and colleagues
- Any material on any site (whether affiliated with the church or not) that raises suspicion that a child has been or will be abused/neglected/exploited should be immediately reported to the clergy.
- Church Personnel are prohibited from discussing their own sexual activities, including dreams and fantasies, or discussing their use of sexually oriented or explicit materials such as pornography, videos, music, text messages, “sexting”, or materials on or from the Internet with children, youth and persons with special needs.

Physical Guidelines

- Church personnel are prohibited from sleeping in the same beds, sleeping bags, tents, hotel rooms or other rooms with children and youth unless the adult is an immediate family member of all the children or youth in the bed, sleeping bag, tent, hotel room or other room. Multiple adults may sleep with all the children or youth participating in one open space such as a church basement or camp lodge.
- Church personnel are prohibited from dressing, undressing, bathing, or showering in the presence of children, youth and persons with special needs.
- Church personnel are prohibited from using physical punishment for behavior management of children, youth and persons with special needs. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force. Physical restraint may only be used to stop a behavior that may cause immediate harm to the individual or to others.
- Church personnel are prohibited from using harsh, sexually explicit or demeaning language, degrading punishment, or mechanical restraint such as rope or tape for behavior management.
- Church personnel may not participate in or allow others to conduct any hazing activities relating to children's or youth ministry or camp activities. Code of Conduct for Church Personnel
- All church personnel understand that the church will not tolerate abuse of children, youth and persons with special needs and agree to comply in spirit and in action with the policies and guidelines outlined in this policy manual.
- All church personnel agree to do their best to prevent abuse and neglect among children, youth and persons with special needs involved in church activities and services.
- All church personnel agree not to physically, sexually or emotionally abuse or neglect children, youth and persons with special needs.
- If church personnel observe any inappropriate behaviors or possible policy violations with children, youth and persons with special needs, they agree to immediately report their observations to a supervisor.
- All church personnel acknowledge their obligation and responsibility to report known or suspected abuse of children and youth to appropriate church leaders and state authorities in accordance with these policies.

Guidelines for Appropriate Affection

UUTC is committed to creating and promoting a positive, nurturing environment for our ministries, and to protecting our children, youth and persons with special needs from abuse and protecting our church personnel from misunderstandings.

UUTC believes it is important to establish what types of affection are appropriate and inappropriate. Stating the boundaries of appropriate affection allows church personnel to comfortably show positive affection in ministry, and identify individuals who are not maintaining safe boundaries with children, youth and persons with special needs.

These guidelines are based, in large part, on avoiding behaviors known to be used by child molesters to groom children, youth and their parents for future abuse. The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by all church personnel working around or with children, youth and persons with special needs.

Love and affection are part of church life and ministry. There are many ways to demonstrate affection while maintaining positive and safe.

POSITIVE AND APPROPRIATE forms of affection for children, youth and persons with special needs include: brief hugs; pats on the shoulder or back; handshakes; "high-fives" and hand slapping; verbal praise; briefly touching hands, faces, shoulders or arms; arm around shoulders; holding hands while walking with small children; sitting beside small children; kneeling or bending down for hugs with small children; holding hands during prayer; pats on the head when culturally appropriate (this is to be avoided with Asian communities).

INAPPROPRIATE forms of affection are often the behaviors that child molesters use to groom children or youth and their parents for later molestation or can be, in and of themselves, sexual abuse. These include: lengthy embraces; kisses on the mouth; holding children over three years old on the lap; touching bottoms, chests or genital areas (other than for appropriate diapering or toileting of infants and toddlers); showing affection in isolated areas such as bedrooms, closets, staff-only areas or other private rooms; children or youth; tickling; piggyback rides; any type of massage (whether given by a child or youth or by an adult); any form of unwanted affection; comments or compliments (spoken, written, or electronic) that relate to physique or body development (such as, "You sure are developing," or "You look really hot in those jeans"); snapping bras or giving wedgies (or similar touch of underwear, whether or not it is covered by other clothing); giving gifts or money to individual children or youth; private meals with individual children or youth.

MINISTERIAL CARE AND SPIRITUAL DIRECTION SAFEGUARDS

Clergy employees of UUTC and lay leaders should:

- Not accept payment or donations, including donations to discretionary funds, in exchange for ministerial counseling or spiritual direction.
- Refer individuals to professional counseling after six (6) sessions of ministerial care ministry have been held.

Anyone charging fees for spiritual direction or ministerial counseling on UUTC premises or under the auspices of UUTC must possess appropriate professional credentials and proof of separate professional liability insurance, including coverage for sexual misconduct, in force at all times.

GUIDELINES FOR PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

It is the responsibility of the clergy and lay leadership of UUTC to maintain a safe place for everyone, including adults as well as children, youth, and those with special needs. To this end the clergy and lay leadership need to adhere to the following.

Leadership Guidelines

- Clergy and lay leaders should treat themselves with dignity and respect by taking good care of themselves.
- Clergy and lay leaders should comply with the policies of this document.
- Clergy and lay leaders should refrain insofar as possible from forming dual relationships (relating to someone in two capacities at once, such as clergy spouse or family member on staff; or being intimate and/or sexual in a personal relationship with a parishioner). When dual relationships occur, all parties in the relationship should be aware of its inherent tension and work towards maintaining healthy boundaries.
- Lay leaders should avoid getting into dual relationships with the minister and be mindful of their own dual relationships within the congregation. They may need to set boundaries and hold confidences.

Clergy Behavioral Guidelines

- Accept only token gifts: "Token" refers to the monetary value of the gift. It is not healthy for a faith community to have a minister receive large/valuable gifts from individual parishioners or the parish. Healthy exceptions to this might include: farewell gifts and significant anniversary of ordination or installation (10 year) gifts.
- Refuse to accept personal loans: A dual relationship as minister/debtor parishioner/creditor creates the same dynamic as with gifts.
- Refuse to be named as a beneficiary: if a parishioner asks whether he/she can leave something to the minister in a will, the minister should suggest that the gift be made to UUTC.

- Maintain confidentiality. Unless a parishioner gives permission for a minister to share personal information, the minister should not disclose such information.

Exception 1 – Follow rules, laws and policies regarding employment (which includes screening, hiring, supervising, maintaining personnel files and terminating employment).

Exception 2 – Comply with legally mandated reporting requirements. However confidential, clergy are to report all suspected abuse or neglect of children, elderly or vulnerable adults to appropriate state agencies.

- Offer ministerial care, not mental health or substance abuse treatment. Restrict involvement and evaluation of mental health/substance abuse issues to a three-session limit. By the conclusion of the third session a referral should be made to a treatment professional or agency. (Clergy can continue to provide ministerial care while the treating professional provides treatment.)
- Comply with financial practices as set forth by UUTC. This includes all accounts including discretionary accounts. Audits should be conducted in accordance with UUA policies.
- Bring resolution to relationships with parishioners when ordained ministry ends. This can be difficult for clergy and laity to understand. A new minister cannot easily establish ministerial relationships if the former minister is still present, physically or in spirit. It is important for a faith community to say good-bye.

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING

UUTC strives to resolve incidents of alleged misconduct justly, to the satisfaction of all parties involved, and for the safety of the church environment.

The Church and all of its ministries are **mandatory reporters** in the State of North Carolina. A list of State and local agencies is provided in Resources on page 26.

- Any suspicion of child sexual abuse must be reported to the local authorities. A listing of state and local agencies is provided below.
- In cases where child sexual abuse is suspected, reporting to the appropriate state agency must be completed *prior to* contacting the Board of Trustees. After contacting the appropriate agency, the Board of Trustees must then immediately be notified.

In cases where sexual misconduct is suspected, the Board of Trustees should be contacted immediately.

Any member of the laity who suspects child sexual abuse or sexual misconduct should bring their concerns to the clergy person responsible for their congregation or ministry.

- It is then the responsibility of that clergy person to begin the reporting process to the proper authorities and to the Board of Trustees.
- It is appropriate for the clergy person to make these reports in the presence of the individual who brought the issue to the attention of the clergy.

If a member of the clergy is the one suspected of child sexual abuse or sexual misconduct, the person with the concerns should contact the Board of Trustees directly for assistance and support.

The Unitarian Universalists of Transylvania County and all members of the clergy will cooperate fully and completely with the authorities during the investigation process.

Call 911 immediately if the child is in danger.

DO make sure the child remains in a safe environment

DO listen to the child

Do NOT try to investigate

Do NOT confront the abuser

DO make a report

- DSS - Transylvania County Dept. of Social Services (DSS) at 828-884-3174
- North Carolina Coalition Against Sexual Assault at <http://www.nccasa.org/>
- National Sexual Violence Resource Center at <http://www.nsvrc.org/>
- North Carolina Sex Offender Registry at <http://sexoffender.ncsbi.gov/>
- Child Abuse Reporting Hotline (national) at 800-932-0313

TRAINING AND PREVENTION

"Safeguard from Abuse" is a program of approximately 3 hours. The purpose of this program is education and prevention regarding inappropriate behavior with children and youth. The program consists of a video presentation, a knowledge exam, and a certificate issued on satisfactory completion of the program.

Who should experience this training? Initially, then every three years thereafter, all clergy, church staff and volunteer leaders ministering with children and youth. It is highly recommended as an annual offering to the entire congregation.

About "Safeguard from Abuse":

Arrangements for this training can be made with the Church Administrator.

All who regularly work with children and youth should experience this training before they start their work with children or youth.

A Certified Record of having experienced this training is kept at UUTC for all clergy and leaders of UUTC children and youth activities

CONFIDENTIAL

UUTC SafeGuard Background Check Authorization

Print Name: _____

(First)

(Middle)

(Last)

Former Name(s) and Dates Used: _____

Current Address Since: _____

(Mo/Yr) (Street)

(City)

(Zip/State)

Previous Address From: _____

(Mo/Yr) (Street)

(City)

(Zip/State)

Previous Address From: _____

(Mo/Yr) (Street)

(City)

(Zip/State)

Social Security Number: _____ DOB: _____

Telephone Number(s): _____

Driver's License Number/State: _____

The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge.

I hereby authorize **Unitarian Universalists of Transylvania County** and its designated agents and representatives to conduct a comprehensive review of my background causing a consumer report and/or an investigative consumer report to be generated for employment and/or volunteer purposes. I understand that the scope of the consumer report/ investigative consumer report may include, but is not limited to the following areas: verification of social security number; credit reports, current and previous residences; employment history, education background, character references; drug testing, civil and criminal history records from any criminal justice agency in any or all federal, state, county jurisdictions; driving records, birth records, and any other public records.

I further authorize any individual, company, firm, corporation, or public agency to divulge any and all information, verbal or written, pertaining to me, to Unitarian Universalists of Transylvania County or its agents. I further authorize the complete release of any records or data pertaining to me which the individual, company, firm, corporation, or public agency may have, to include information or data received from other sources. Unitarian Universalists of Transylvania County and its designated agents and representatives shall maintain all information received from this authorization in a confidential manner in order to protect the applicant's personal information, including, but not limited to, addresses, social security numbers, and dates of birth.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

_____ I wish to receive a copy of any Background Check Report on me that is requested.
_____ For California, Minnesota and Oklahoma Residents: I wish to receive a copy of a consumer report that is requested.

INCIDENT REPORT (Confidential Notice of Concern)

This form may be used to report boundary-violating behavior with children, youth, or adults. Note as "Confidential" and send to:

The Minister, Unitarian Universalists of Transylvania County
P.O. Box 918
Brevard, NC 28712

Individual(s) of concern: _____

Date of Occurrence: _____

Time of Occurrence: _____

Type of Concern: ☐ inappropriate behavior with a child or youth
 ☐ policy violation with children or youth
 ☐ adult sexual exploitation or harassment
 ☐ possible risk of abuse
 ☐ financial misconduct
 ☐ other concern

Use an attached page or pages to respond to the following:

1. Describe the situation, telling what happened, where it happened, when it happened, who was involved, who was present, who was notified. If it was reported to the State, what was their recommendation?
2. Has this situation occurred previously? If so, what action was taken? Describe how the situation was handled, who was involved, who was questioned, whether the police were involved.
3. What is the follow-up plan? Does anyone else need to be notified? Will the situation need monitoring? Would you like someone to call you to discuss this situation?

Submitted by _____

Telephone Number () _____

Address _____

Date _____ Signature _____

CODE OF CONDUCT CONSENT

Have you ever been accused of physically, sexually or emotionally abusing a child, youth or an adult?

(____) yes or (____) no.

If 'yes', please explain on a separate sheet of paper.

CONSENT TO CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Please read and initial each item to signify your agreement to comply with the statement.

- ____ 1. I agree to do my best to prevent abuse and neglect among children and youth involved in church activities and services.
- ____ 2. I agree not to physically, sexually or emotionally abuse or neglect a child or youth.
- ____ 3. I agree to comply with the policies entitled "General Conduct for the Protection of Children and Youth."
- ____ 4. I agree to comply with the "Guidelines for Appropriate Affection."
- ____ 5. In the event that I observe any inappropriate behaviors or possible policy violations with children and youth, I agree to immediately report my observations to my direct supervisor or the minister.
- ____ 6. I acknowledge my obligation and responsibility to protect children and youth and agree to report known or suspected abuse of children or youth to appropriate church leaders and state authorities in accordance with UUTC "Guidelines for Reporting."
- ____ 7. I understand that the church will not tolerate abuse of children and youth and I agree to comply in spirit and in action with this position.

Signature

Date

EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION AND RELEASE

To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this application for employment by the Unitarian Universalists of Transylvania County is complete and accurate. I understand that providing false information is grounds for not hiring me or not choosing me for a volunteer position or for my discharge if I have already been hired or chosen.

I authorize any person or organization, whether or not identified in this application, to provide any information concerning my previous employment, education, credit history, driving record, criminal conviction record, sexual offender registry or other qualifications for my employment or volunteering. I also authorize the Unitarian Universalists of Transylvania County to request and receive such information, and to conduct all appropriate background checks.

Nothing contained in this application or in any pre-employment or pre-volunteering communication is intended to or creates a contract between myself and the Unitarian Universalists of Transylvania County for either employment, volunteering or the providing of any benefit.

My signature below indicates that I read and understand the above provisions.

Signature

Date

**REFERENCE FORM FOR USE BY THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS OF
TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY**

To be used as necessary for persons intending to work with children and youth

To: _____
Name of Organization/Individual Providing Recommendation

Address of Organization/Individual Providing Recommendation

Subject: _____
Name of Worker Candidate

The individual named above has expressed an interest in working with children or youth in our ministry. The candidate has listed you as a reference. In order for our organization to properly evaluate the qualifications of this worker candidate, we are asking you to complete this form with your honest opinions and impressions of the candidate.

Please return the completed form to UUTC in the enclosed envelope. Thank you.

1. How long have you known the worker candidate? _____

2. In what capacity have you come to know this individual? (i.e. coworker, neighbor, friend, etc.)

3. In your opinion, is the above worker candidate fully qualified to work with children and youth?
Yes_____ No_____ (If no, please explain.)

4. What concerns, if any, would you have in allowing this individual to work with children or youth?

5. Are you aware of anything in the candidate's background, personality, or behavior that could in
any way pose a threat to children or youth? Yes_____ No_____ (If yes, please explain.)

Additional comments or explanations:

The above information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Name (please print)

Signature

Date

Please mark as confidential and return to:

Minister, Unitarian Universalists of Transylvania County

PO Box 918

Brevard, NC 28712

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT
OF "UUTC SAFE CONGREGATION PLAN"**

I have received and understand that I personally am accountable to the above named document and all of the contents contained within.

Printed name

Signature

Date

This acknowledgement must be signed and returned by

- (1) all clergy and lay employees of Unitarian Universalists of Transylvania County
- (2) all persons who regularly work with children and/or youth in UUTC programs
- (3) all members of the Board of Trustees.

Please return to:
The Unitarian Universalists of Transylvania County
P.O. Box 918
Brevard, NC 28712

Unitarian Universalists of Transylvania County Standards of Behavior for Children and Youth Events

Our intent at every event, every time we gather as community, and in our daily lives, is to respect the dignity of every human being. To that end I agree to the following:

1. I will use no tobacco products, alcohol, or illegal drugs during the event.
2. I will abide by the set curfew and rules as set by the event. I understand that I am expected to attend the entire event and participate in all scheduled activities.
3. I agree that no extra visitors will be allowed during youth events. (An extra visitor is defined as a person who is unexpected, not registered, and/or does not contribute to the conference.)
4. I agree not to leave the site of the event without the permission of the adult in charge of the event.
5. I understand and accept that visiting in defined sleeping areas by members of the opposite sex is prohibited.
6. I understand and accept that public displays of affection are a distraction from participation in the event and will not be allowed.
7. I understand and accept that offensive language and offensive conversation is prohibited.
8. I understand that youth may not drive other youth participants during youth events. All drivers during youth events must be on the program team and must be 25 years of age or older.
9. UUTC does not provide transportation to and from youth events unless otherwise stated for a specific event. All transportation arrangements are to be made with parental permission. Youth planning to travel away from an event with a youth driver need written permission from their parent(s).

As a participant, I will accept responsibility for my own behavior and property; will respect the feelings, beliefs and property of others; and will participate actively in all activities, while listening to and respecting the staff and adult chaperones and obeying all rules.

A WARNING will be given for breaking the rules about curfew, public displays of affection, participation in the event, or acceptable language.

A youth will be SENT HOME IMMEDIATELY for breaking the rules regarding:

- *Use of alcohol, tobacco products, or illegal drugs*
- *Leaving the event site without permission*
- *Being in the same room or sleeping are as a member of the opposite sex*

The adult in charge of the event will make all decisions concerning sending anyone home. If a youth is to be sent home, it will be the responsibility of his/her parents or an adult designated by a parent to pick up the child as soon as possible.

I hereby agree to abide by all rules of this event. I fully understand the consequences if a rule is broken.

SIGNATURE OF YOUTH PARTICIPANT

Date _____

SIGNATURE OF PARENT/GUARDIAN

Date _____

I hereby agree to abide by all rules of this event. I fully understand the consequences if a rule is broken.

SIGNATURE OF ADULT PARTICIPANT

Date _____

SIGNATURE OF MINISTER OR EVENT LEADER

Date _____

**UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS OF TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY
RELEASE AGREEMENT**

THIS FORM MUST BE FILLED OUT, SIGNED AND DATED BY THE PARENT OR GUARDIAN. YOUTH WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO ATTEND THE EVENT UNLESS WE HAVE RECEIVED ALL FORMS.

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We want to inform you of our safety precautions at our youth events. Your youth will be required by our staff to wear safety equipment for activities requiring such protective gear. Even with safety equipment and competent staff present, we realize that any recreational activity has inherent dangers that no amount of care, caution, instruction, or expertise can totally eliminate.

PERMISSION TO PARTICIPATE: In signing this document, I certify that I give permission to my son or daughter to participate in UUTC youth events.

PUBLICITY: I understand that pictures and videos are taken at these events. Unless otherwise indicated below, I hereby give permission for the use of such pictures and videos of my youth for the promotion of UUTC youth events. Pictures may be posted on the UUTC website and in the UUTC newsletter.

Initial here_____ if permission for use of pictures is NOT granted.

TRANSPORTATION: In addition, I give permission for my son or daughter to be transported in approved vehicles for event activities, as well as be transported to and from medical facilities if necessary.

RELEASE OF LIABILITY: I agree by the execution of this document to release the Unitarian Universalists of Transylvania County, the staff, and all others acting for or on behalf of the Unitarian Universalists of Transylvania County from all liability whatsoever, for personal injury, or damages to property, real or personal, caused by, or arising out of attending the event and activities sponsored by the Unitarian Universalists of Transylvania County.

Event _____

Youth Name _____

Parent/Guardian Name (print) _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Date _____

RESOURCES

Call 911 immediately if the child is in danger.

DO make sure the child remains in a safe environment

DO listen to the child

Do NOT try to investigate

Do NOT confront the abuser

DO make a report

- **DSS** - Transylvania County Dept. of Social Services (DSS)
828-884-3174
- North Carolina Coalition Against Sexual Assault:
<http://www.nccasa.org/>
- National Sexual Violence Resource Center
<http://www.nsvrc.org/>
- North Carolina Sex Offender Registry
<http://sexoffender.ncsbi.gov/>
- Child Abuse Reporting Hotline (national)
800-932-0313