

Safe Conduct Policy

Approved by Church Board February 25, 2020

*“Let the children come to me, do not hinder them; for such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.”
~ Mark 10:13-16.*

I. Statement of Purpose

Broadway Christian Church is committed to creating a safe and healthy environment in which young people can learn about and experience God’s love. We are also an inclusive church, ministering to all. This Safe Conduct Policy has been put in place so that we can fulfill both goals.

II. Definitions

- A. *Offender*: A person who has been convicted of a misdemeanor or felony sex offense under any state’s Criminal Code. Exceptions will be considered by the Committee.
- B. *Sexual misconduct*: Any inappropriate sexual behavior, whether consensual or non-consensual, including but not limited to, inappropriate touching, sexual language, or any form of sexual intercourse directed toward children and/or youth.
- C. *Committee*: Safe Conduct Committee, a subcommittee of the Youth Ministry Team.
- D. *Youth*: Any Broadway Christian Church (BCC) member or visitor in grades 6 -12 or equivalent age.
- E. *Children*: Any Broadway Christian Church member or visitor from age 1 day to 5th grade or equivalent age.
- F. *Volunteer*: Any BCC member or visitor, whether or not under the age of 18, who provides assistance or ministry to children or youth, including but not limited to ministers, Sunday School teachers, VBS volunteers, paid and volunteer nursery workers, youth choir directors and accompanists.
- G. *Staff*: A paid employee of the church.
- H. *Intern*: Any person seeking to fulfill an educational requirement or opportunity while providing a service to BCC, regardless of compensation/stipend.
- I. *Public presence in worship*: Public presence in the worship service includes but is not limited to acting as a worship leader or any other speaking from the lectern (such as Minute for Mission), musical performance, operating the sound system, or serving as an elder, deacon, usher, welcomer, or host.
- J. *Aides*: Any person responsible for providing support to children or youth with disabilities.
- K. *Private Aides*: Personal aides for children or youth provided by the family or the child. These persons are not employed by or volunteers for BCC when serving in this capacity for the family.

- L. *Outside Group*: Any group not affiliated with BCC who is using church facilities. This policy will apply to all outside groups when there are children or youth in the group.
- M. *All God's Children*: An adapted Sunday School and Worship program that serves children with various disability types: sensory deficits, orthopedic disorders, learning disabilities, cognitive deficits, behavioral disabilities, speech/language impairments, autism and other neurodevelopmental disorders. All God's Children also supports students during the all Christian education hour supporting individuals and teachers to give students peer educational experiences.

III. Safe Conduct Committee

- A. The Committee is a subcommittee of the Youth Ministry Team. It shall consist of five members, appointed by the Board Chair. Committee members shall include 1) a member of the ministerial staff, 2) a member of the Youth Ministry Team, 3) a member of the Children's Ministry Team, 4) a member of the All God's Children Ministry Team, and 5) an *at large* member. The Committee members shall serve a term of service of one to three years. The terms shall be staggered so that no more than two terms expire in a given year. Multiple terms may be served up to six consecutive years. Terms of service shall start on July 1 and end on June 30. Prior to July 1, the Chair of the Committee shall be appointed from among the five Committee members by the Chair of the Board.
- B. The bi-annual duties of the Safe Conduct Committee (SCC) shall include the following:
 - i. To ensure that the Boone County Sex Offender Registration is cross-referenced with the members and visitors list every ninety days or whenever the register is refreshed
 - ii. To ensure that written notification is sent to all persons specified in Section V below.
 - iii. To designate a member to act as a liaison to the Board of Probation and Parole with regard to offenders in the congregation, as needed.
 - iv. To ensure that sexual abuse awareness and prevention training occurs on a regularly scheduled basis for staff, volunteers, and other interested members of the congregation. It is recommended that all other staff and church leaders receive training as soon as possible after the start of their responsibilities.
 - v. To maintain confidentiality regarding all information about BCC members learned through the screening process except as disclosure is required by the Policies and Procedures.
- C. The Committee shall meet at least once a year (and) or as needed.

IV. Security / Privacy

- A. Proper precautions are taken at all times to protect personal information. When personal information is submitted to BCC, the Safe Conduct Committee, or any other body or committee sanctioned by BCC, that information is kept private as outlined in this policy.
- B. Any concerns regarding BCC staff or any active committees not abiding by this privacy policy should be directed to a member of the SCC immediately.

V. Registered Sex Offender Policy

- A. When a Registered Offender is an active participant or member of the BCC community: The offender shall be provided a written copy of the Safe Conduct Policies. Participation in church activities of the offender is contingent upon the acceptance in writing of the procedures established by the Board and Safe Conduct Committee.
 - i. Minister(s) will make the initial contact with the offender. The offender is to have no contact with children and/or youth. It is understood that the offender may have inadvertent proximity to children and/or youth during the worship services. This policy will protect the offender, as well as the children and/or youth, by not putting the offender or the children and/or youth in a physically/sexually/emotionally compromising situation.
 - ii. Attendance at worship shall be restricted to the Narthex area and Sanctuary. Other specific restrictions on the use of the building space and facilities will be negotiated on an individual basis
 - iii. The offender is to have no public presence in the worship service or in fellowship activities where children and/or youth may be in attendance. The offender should not carry an aura of authority.
 - iv. Other participation on committees, in BCC groups, or presence on or off of BCC property is to be approved by the SCC in conjunction with the offender's Probation and Parole officer, if any. The request must be made in writing by the offender. The offender shall not act as an official representative of BCC to the community at large and shall not contact BCC children and/or youth for any reason.
- B. Notifying the BCC Community:
 - i. When a visitor is first identified as being on the Sex Offender Registry, pertinent staff will be notified.
 - ii. Once it is determined that the individual offender is a regular attender or joins the congregation, the following people in the congregation will also be notified:
 - a. All members of Broadway Christian Church and regular attenders.
 - b. All others in a leadership role in the congregation or worship service shall be informed in writing. These persons include, but are not limited to, ministers and office staff, elders and deacons, committee chairs, ushers, welcomers, and hosts.
 - c. The written notification shall be renewed whenever there are new hires or there is turnover in volunteers.

VI. Screening / Selection

- A. Applicants for full-time or part-time paid employment or volunteers intending to work directly with the children and/or youth programs at BCC will follow current employment policies, screening practices, and procedures in addition to screening procedures to work with children and/or youth, as outlined below.
- B. Staff and Volunteer Requirements: Staff or volunteers working with youth or children of the church will be required to provide, complete, and undergo the following:
 - a. Each person who is recruited or employed as a worker with children and youth must complete and sign the required screening and application paperwork. Forms and responses will be maintained in a confidential file.
 - b. A background check will be completed upon application and renewed in accordance with BCC employment and volunteer policies.
 - c. Each new person, prior to beginning any role, will be required to sign an acknowledgement that he or she has 1) received a copy of the BCC Safe Conduct Policy, 2) understands it, and 3) will comply with its terms.
- C. Any candidate for volunteer service who has a past conviction of or pending proceeding related to an allegation of child abuse or neglect MAY NOT work with children and youth at BCC. Refusal to complete the Volunteer Application process, or the report of a conviction for any of the following will automatically disqualify an individual from volunteer service with children and youth: physical, sexual, emotional, or any other violence against children or youth and other offenses at the discretion of the committee.
- D. Leaders of other groups of children or youth (e.g., Girl Scout and Boy Scout Leaders) who use BCC's facilities will also be required to read the Safe Conduct Policy and sign a Volunteer Acknowledgement Statement.

VII. Supervision

- A. *Two Deep Rule*: Whenever possible, any volunteer or staff member who is present in a church sponsored activity for children or youth should be accompanied by another adult. BCC employees and volunteers should not, during a BCC program, be alone with a single child where they cannot be observed by others.
 - i. When it is not possible for two adults to be present, the lone adult should make every effort to have multiple children or youth present.
 - ii. The presence of two adult leaders serves to protect children and youth and leaders from opportunity for abuse and/or neglect as well as false allegations.
 - iii. Classrooms, childcare rooms, and any area in which programs for children or youth occur may be visited without prior notice by church staff, parents, or other volunteer church workers. Window coverings will be left open whenever possible.
 - iv. In the event that two adult leaders cannot be present in the room, such that one leader is alone in a room with one or more children or youth, a door or half-door or window from the room must be left open. The

leader should not position themselves in the room such that other adults passing in the hallway cannot see them.

- v. During any sessions with children or youth, the blinds or window treatments of the room used must remain open for the entire session. The session should be conducted at a time when others can be nearby, even if they are not within listening distance.
- B. *Ratios*: The adult/volunteer-to-child/youth ratio is based on best practices, and gender balance is strongly recommended.
 - i. For offsite overnight trips, the preferred ratio is lower whenever possible (i.e., more adults per child).
- C. *“Six Month” Rule for Volunteers*: A volunteer must be a member of BCC, or have regularly attended BCC for six months, before working with youth or children. This requirement does not apply to paid staff, interns, or volunteers involved in activities in which their own children are present. The Safe Conduct Committee or the Minister(s) shall have the authority to waive this six-month rule upon request, where appropriate.

VIII. Internal Reporting

- A. Any volunteer who has reason to suspect that an incident of child abuse has occurred must inform the supervisor for children’s ministry, youth ministry, or the event leader as appropriate. The supervisor will inform a member of the ministry team, who will make the hotline call, contact parents/guardians, the church’s insurance carrier and the church’s attorney. Accurate and detailed documentation shall be kept by all involved in the incident from the initial event through the conclusion. In the event the allegation concerns a minister, then the Board Chair shall be informed, and perform notification as stated above.
- B. All staff members and volunteers are mandated reporters, meaning they are required to report incidents of suspected abuse.
- C. All responses to the media should follow the BCC Media Policy.
- D. Concerns that are brought to the attention of children’s and youth leadership or the ministry team should be documented as they are passed along, even if they do not warrant a hotline report.
- E. Contact information for reporting suspected abuse: The Missouri Division of Family Services Child Abuse and Neglect Hot Line Phone Number is 1-800-392-3738.

IX. Off-Site Trips / Travel

- A. *Ratios*:
 - i. The two-adult rule must be followed throughout the trip with any foreseeable exceptions clearly stated and approved in advance by the parent or guardian.
 - ii. The total number of adults on each trip will be adjusted according to the requirements of the planned activities and comply with the recommended ratio.
 - iii. Under no circumstances may one volunteer alone take or accompany minors on an overnight outing.

- iv. *On or Off-Site Events*: The recommended adult to child/youth ratio for chaperones for any ministry with children or youth shall be based on best practices.
 - i. Gender balance is strongly recommended.
- B. Rooming Arrangements:
 - i. Rooming arrangements should provide for a gender appropriate space for children, youth, and adults.
 - ii. An individual minor may share a room with an individual adult if the two are related (parent/child), or if written permission has been granted prior to the event by a parent or guardian.
- C. Medical:
 - a. Each child, youth, adult volunteer, and staff should, when available, submit a completed Emergency Medical Consent Form.
 - i. Each minor's forms must have a parent or guardian's signature.
 - b. Whenever possible, all activities with children and youth should have a staff or volunteer adult leader with current certification in first aid/CPR training.
 - c. A written report will be completed in the case of any accident, medical emergency, or injury.
- D. Driving Rules/Travel:
 - i. All drivers of children and youth shall be over 21 years of age.
 - ii. Staff members should not be transporting children and/or youth in their personal vehicles to or from church events unless necessary. Parental permission is required and the appropriate coordinator or a minister shall be notified prior to transport.
 - iii. Seat belts will be provided for all passengers.

X. Social Media / Technology / Communication

- A. Any private electronic communication between staff and youths, including the use of social networking websites (e.g., *Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat*, instant messaging, texting, and other similar platforms) is discouraged.
- B. All communication between volunteers/staff and children/youth should be transparent.
- C. All communication between volunteers/staff and children/youth will be in a group format or will include a parent.
- D. Cell Phone Use:
 - i. While assigned to work with youth, staff and volunteers are not permitted to use electronic communications device except for when necessary for work purposes.
 - iii. Use of electronic communication to contact (via voice, text, or pictures/video) organization members and/or program participants for personal and/or inappropriate reasons shall be grounds for discipline up to and including termination of employment.

2019 Committee Members: Eric Lybeck-Brown, Anne Kern, Kay Crouse, Kate Weir, Terri Tatum, Nick Larson