



Port Royal Baptist Church Child Protection Policy

Effective Date: 4-16-14

General

I. Goal

It shall be the goal of Port Royal Baptist Church to provide a safe environment for the physical and emotional well-being of all children participating in church activities; including participants in any daily or temporary childcare programs. The church's goal is to inform workers and enforce policies to ensure that all children are safe and well protected while attended scheduled services.

II. Definition of "Children"

The term "child" or "children" shall include all persons under the age of eighteen (18) years of age.

III. Selection and Screening Process

It is the goal of Port Royal Baptist Church (afterwards referred to as "the church") to adequately screen the persons desiring to work with children participating in church programs; including participants in any daily or temporary childcare programs. The screening process will consist of criminal background checks and a pre-determined waiting period prior to working with children.

IV. Volunteers

All volunteers who work with children must be members of Port Royal Baptist Church

V. Minimum Age

All primary volunteer workers must be (18) years of age or older. Younger persons may assist adults, but may not take the place of adult workers. The church may utilize responsible teenagers (under the age of 18) only in positions with and under the direct supervision of an approved adult worker.

VI. Probationary Period

Volunteers will be unable to supervise children in any capacity until they have worked alongside a veteran volunteer for a period of three (3) months. This time of interaction allows for a better evaluation and suitability of the volunteer as it relates to working with children. This probationary period may be waived with the authorization of the Personnel Committee in the case of a new staff member.

VII. Criminal Background Checks

A criminal background check and child abuse registry check shall be required of all children's worker positions. No one who has been convicted of a crime involving abuse (sexual or otherwise) or violence will be allowed to work with children. All felonies will be evaluated on an individual basis based on time elapsed since the offense and the nature and severity of the crime. Completing the *Port Royal Baptist Church Child Protection Policy Authorization / Acknowledgment Form* authorizes the church to conduct these checks. Completed background checks will be kept in the safe deposit box owned by the church and social security numbers will be properly disposed once background checks are complete. The determination as to whether a volunteer is "cleared" to work with children will be made by the Deacon Officers (of which there are three) and the Pastor.

The nature and extent of these background checks **will** include:

- a. A search by name and social security number against the county criminal, federal criminal, statewide criminal, county civil law enforcement, and sexual predator databases; both state and federal.
- b. Volunteers to be screened include all persons who will be involved in the care, teaching, and supervision of minors.
- c. Background checks will remain active for a period of three (3) years.

The nature and extent of these background checks **will not** include:

- a. Personal credit history
- b. Driving record

VIII. Acknowledgement of church policies

All volunteers must acknowledge in writing that they understand the church's policies pertaining to the protection of the children and that they agree to abide by them. This requirement will be met by having volunteers sign the *Port Royal Baptist Church Child Protection Policy Authorization / Acknowledgment* form.

Reporting and Responding to Alleged Misconduct Toward Children

IX. Reporting Policy

It is the policy of the church to report to law enforcement any incident of misconduct toward any child in the church. This would include participants in temporary childcare programs. The policy for reporting is as follows:

- Supervisors and staff shall not treat any report as frivolous.
- Employees, workers, and volunteers who observe questionable or inappropriate behavior will report this behavior as soon as possible to the Pastor, supervising staff member, or Chairman of the Deacons as appropriate.
- The church shall suspend the accused person from the performance of duties involving children until the official law enforcement investigation is completed.
- Cooperate fully with law enforcement officials.
- The pastor, or his agent, will inform the victim's family of the steps that are being taken. (Church legal counsel should assist in this determination).
- When misconduct is confirmed, the church will immediately dismiss the volunteer from their position.
- The pastor, in consultation with legal counsel, will determine the amount of information he believes is appropriate to relate to the congregation.

X. Liaison with the Community

The pastor, or his agent, will serve as the church's sole access to the media. The church should emphasize to the public its position on misconduct toward children, its concern for the victim, and the steps being taken to address the safety of all children.