

Safe Sanctuaries Packet



1. Read the Safe Sanctuaries Policy to understand our practices at Trinity.
2. Complete three forms:
 - 1) Questionnaire (annually)
 - 2) Quiz (annually)
 - 3) Background Check Authorization Form (every five years)
3. Return forms to the locked box outside the Church Office by _____
4. Background checks will be completed through Trak-1

Background Check Information

- A background check is standard for all persons who work with children/youth in any industry –schools, nurseries, law enforcement, gyms, etc. The church should be a similarly safe place for our youngsters.
- Background Checks will be run through Trak-1, a trusted screening company used by the Baltimore Washington Conference of the Methodist Church. Trinity UMC will cover the minimal cost.
- Who will see my background check? The Safe Sanctuary Coordinator will run the background check and see the results. If the background check shows a problem, it will be discussed with the Pastor and Chair of the SPRC. In this case, they may request a consultation with the volunteer to discuss the issue. The Pastor will make final determination regarding the volunteer’s eligibility to volunteer.
- For Trinity’s purposes, the background check is good for 5 years.
- The background check does NOT include a credit check. (Even though its called a “consumer report”)

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Form 1 of 3 - Personnel Info and Sexual Misconduct Questionnaire

This questionnaire is to be completed and signed by all laypersons and un-appointed clergy who work with children or youth within the local church or a conference agency. If under 18 years of age a parent or guardian must also sign.

Personal Information

Name:	Date:
Address:	Phone (H)
Apt: #	Phone (W)
City, ST, Zip	Phone (C)
	Email:

(Please check the appropriate box. If more space is needed, please use on additional sheet of paper).

1. Have you ever been accused, in a written or signed statement, of sexual misconduct with a child or a youth? Yes No
2. Have you ever been accused, in a written or signed statement, of sexual misconduct with an adult? Yes No
3. Have you ever been dismissed from any position, volunteer or salaried, because of accusations of sexual misconduct on your part? Yes No
4. Have you ever resigned from any position, volunteer or salaried, because of an accusation of sexual misconduct on your part, or to avoid being dismissed because of an accusation of sexual misconduct on your part? Yes No

If your response to any of the foregoing questions (2 through 4) is “yes”, please provide on a separate sheet of paper all details regarding each accusation of sexual misconduct that has been made with respect to you, including a description of the alleged misconduct, the name of the person who made the accusation, the date of the alleged misconduct, and the name of your employer at the time of the alleged misconduct.

5. Have accusations of sexual misconduct on your part ever resulted in civil or criminal court proceedings at any level (e.g., indictment, arrest, trial, etc)? Yes No

If “yes”, please provide the complete details of those proceedings (including dates, circumstances, the jurisdiction where the proceedings occurred, the nature of the accusation, and the results of the proceedings) on a separate sheet of paper.

6. Have accusations of sexual misconduct on your part ever resulted in civil or criminal court proceedings on more than one occasion? Yes No If “yes”, please provide the same details with respect to each such proceeding.
7. Other than the above, is there any fact or circumstance involving your or your background that would call into question your being entrusted with the supervision, guidance, and care of young people?

___ Yes ___ No If "yes", please describe on a separate sheet of paper.

- 8. Have you received, read, and understand the church's Safe Sanctuary Policies? ___ Yes ___ No
- 9. If you answered yes to any of the questions above (except #8), please provide three adult references (names, addresses, phone numbers) of persons who are not related to you by blood, marriage or other family relationship and are not employed or supervised by you, who can, to the best of their ability, provide statements in support of your good character and clean record in regard to sexual misconduct with children, youth, and adults. (Please print legibly)

Name of Reference	Address	Phone Number	Relationship

I verify that the answers I have provided on this questionnaire (see Page 1– Volunteer/Staff Questionnaire) are true and accurate to the best of my ability. I also understand that by signing below I am giving permission to have my references checked and a criminal background check conducted on me. I understand that false answers, as well as the failure to sign this response form, will result in my being denied the position for which I am being considered.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please print your name: _____

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____
(If under 18 years of age)

Date: _____

Please print your name: _____

Date: _____

Form 2 of 3 - Safe Sanctuaries Quiz

Name:	Date:
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What are three possible signs of emotional abuse?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What are three possible signs of physical abuse?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What are three possible signs of neglect?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What are three possible signs of sexual abuse?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What should you do if you suspect a child has been abused?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What is the minimum number of adults who must be present in a room with children at all times? _____

On an overnight retreat, can three teenage boys be housed in a hotel room with one adult male? _____

If an allegation is made, which two people shall be notified?

1. _____
2. _____

If an allegation against the pastor is made, which two people shall be notified?

1. _____
2. _____

No person shall supervise an age group unless he/she is at least _____ years of age or older and is _____ years older than the children being supervised.

Who is considered a "vulnerable adult?" _____

Who may pick up a child from Sunday School? _____

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Form 3 of 3 - Background Check Authorization Form

Disclosure Regarding Background Check (Consumer Report) *This Is NOT a Credit Check*

Trinity United Methodist Church
13700 Schaeffer Road, Germantown, MD 20874
301-540-4300 Email: trinityumc@starpower.net



TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH Will Obtain a Background Check

You acknowledge and understand that in connection with your volunteer application with TRINITY UMC (including any independent contract for services) or when deciding whether to modify or continue your ongoing employment, if hired, we may obtain a “consumer report” and/or an “investigative consumer report” on you from Trak-1, 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 employment purposes. 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 Trak-1’s files on you at the time of your request by providing proper identification.

You are further notified that, prior to being denied a volunteer 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 Trak-1 should be forwarded to:

Trak-1 | Consumer Relations | 7131 Riverside Parkway | Tulsa, Oklahoma 74136

800-600-8999 | CustomerCare@trak-1.com

Background Check (Consumer Report) Authorization Form

The following is information required in order for Trinity UMC, Germantown to obtain a complete consumer report:

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

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

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

Social Security Number: _____ Date of Birth*: _____

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

Other or Former Names: (AKA, Maiden Names, Married Names, Surnames, Etc.) _____

Your signature below indicates the following:

- 1) You authorize, without reservation, Trak-1 or any third party to obtain and/or furnish to TRINITY UMC any records or information referenced in the provided disclosure statement for volunteer related purposes;
- 2) You authorize ongoing procurement of any records or information, reports and records at any time during your relationship with TRINITY UMC to the extent allowed by law;
- 3) You authorize the use of a fax 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 TRINITY UMC and/or Trak-1 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 volunteer application your 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.

Customer Signature: _____ Date: _____

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

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 Trak-1 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. Trak-1 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), Trak-1 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.



Safe Sanctuaries Policy

Reducing the Risk of Abuse in the Church

For the Protection of Children, Youth, Vulnerable Adults, and the Church

Jesus said, “Whoever welcomes [a] child...welcomes me” (Matthew 18:5) Children are our present and our future, our hope, our teachers, our inspiration. They are full participants in the life of the church and in the realm of God. The purpose of this policy is to protect all the children that come to us, to protect both our paid and volunteer staff from potential false allegations of abuse and to limit the liability of local church.

Child abuse happens in churches of all sizes and in all areas. We can help prevent most of the abuse that happens in a church with a set of procedures. We will not eliminate 100 % of abuse, but by having procedures in place within a local congregation, predators will be deterred. The United Methodist Church is the leader across all denominations in Safe Sanctuaries. Other churches are coming to The UMC for policies and procedures as well as training.

These policies are the MINIMUM necessary precautions for protecting children and adults working with children. The local church will monitor updates and recommendations by The United Methodist Church and may modify these procedures as needed.

Statement of Policy

Therefore, as a Christian community of faith and as a part of the Trinity United Methodist Church congregation, we pledge to conduct the ministry of the gospel in ways that assure the safety and spiritual growth. **It is our policy to:**

Recognizing and Responding to Abuse

We recognize that as adults who work with children and youth, we ought to be familiar with signs of abuse, so that we may provide the best care for our children and youth.

Possible Signs of Physical Abuse include:

1. Hostile and aggressive behavior towards others
2. Fearfulness of parents and/or other adults
3. Destructive behavior towards self, others and/or property
4. Unexplainable fractures or bruises inappropriate for child’s developmental stage
5. Burns, facial injuries, patterns of repetitious bruises

Possible Signs of Emotional Abuse

1. Exhibits severe depression and/or withdrawal
2. Exhibits severe lack of self esteem
3. Failure to thrive
4. Threatens or attempts suicide
5. Speech and/or eating disorders
6. Goes to extremes to seek adult approval
7. Extreme passive/aggressive behavior patterns

Possible Signs of Neglect

1. Failure to thrive
2. Patterns of inappropriate dress for climate

3. Begs or steals food; chronic hunger
4. Depression
5. Untreated medical conditions
6. Poor hygiene

Possible signs of sexual abuse

1. Unusually advanced sexual knowledge and/or behavior for a child's age and developmental stages
2. Depression; Cries often for no apparent reason
3. Promiscuous behavior
4. Runs away from home and refuses to return
5. Difficulty walking or sitting

In case abuse is suspected (outside of the church) the adult should contact Social Services with details. If a more specific allegation of child abuse needs to be made, follow the procedures laid out below under *Reporting*.

Supervision

- Paid staff persons or volunteers will be given the Safe Sanctuaries policy document and will complete the questionnaire and quiz demonstrating their comprehension of policies and procedures.
- Two-Adult Rule: The two-adult rule requires that no matter the size of the group, there will always be two unrelated adults present. This may include the presence of an adult "roamer" who moves in and out of rooms.
- The two-adult rule also applies to overnight accommodations. When youth are housed overnight, there must be 2 unrelated adults in a room with youth, otherwise there can be NO adults in the room.
- No person shall supervise an age group in a room alone unless he/she is at least 18 years of age or older and is 5 years older than the children being supervised.
- Each room or space where children are being cared for shall have a window in the door or the door shall be left open including restrooms. Reasonable measures will be taken by a leader if activity occurs outdoors or in a space without windows or doors.
- A check-in/check-out procedure shall be followed for all activities and Sunday School classrooms. A registration form will be filled out for each child and youth. Children and youth will check in for every event, and children will receive a check-in sticker. Parents will receive a matching check-out stub with the same number. Children (0s-5th grade) will not be released to any adult who does not present a check-out stub that matches the check-in sticker for the child. In case the parent/guardian loses the check-out stub, they must be listed on the child's registration form and present a photo ID.
- In the case of small group gatherings in a home, special accommodations may be made to care for children in the home appropriately. It is appropriate for one or more Safe Sanctuaries-trained youth (14+) or adults to provide care for a small number of children, provided 1) the youth/adult is at least 5 years older than the oldest child; 2) the youth/adult is Safe-Sanctuary screened; 3) The door to the room remains open; 4) Periodic checks are made on the room, multiple times an hour.
- Adults transporting children must have another unrelated adult present in car or a minimum 2 children and a signed parent/guardian child transportation permission slip. When only one adult is in the car, it is recommended that vehicles caravan together.
- Transportation permission slip includes name of child, starting and ending destination, day/time leaving and returning, name of parent/guardian/adult dropping off and contact number, name of parent/guardian/adult picking up and contact number, emergency contact name and number.

Screening

- All adults must complete the following THREE documents, and return them to the locked box outside the church office, preferably by February 15 each year. At minimum, they must be returned 3 weeks prior to the first volunteer event:
 1. Personal Information and Sexual Misconduct Questionnaire, which contains three references (not family) attesting to their trustworthiness and character in working with children. (completed annually)
 2. Safe Sanctuaries quiz, demonstrating knowledge of the Safe Sanctuaries Policy. (completed annually)
 3. Background check authorization form (starting January 2016, completed once every five years)
- All References and Personnel Information and Sexual Misconduct Forms must be received by a Safe Sanctuary team member 3 weeks prior to a scheduled volunteer event, and reviewed by a Safe Sanctuary team member and approved before engaging in activities with children/youth.
- Starting in 2016, background checks will be conducted and required for all volunteers.
 - All forms will be stored and locked in church secured filing closet.
 - Safe Sanctuary Chair and the Pastor will review all questionnaires and talk to any applicant that has a “Yes” on any question, except #8, to determine if applicant can work with children.
 - Pastor may be involved in review if needed.
- Safe Sanctuary team will comply with BWC Conference mandated policies which can be found at <http://www.bwcumc.org>

Reporting

- Once an incident of child abuse is alleged the following steps will be performed:
 1. Incident allegation form completed.
 2. Incident allegation form to be given to the Safe Sanctuary chair or the Pastor. Both shall be notified of the allegation.
 3. If Pastor is alleged, Chair of SPRC and Administrative Council Chair are to be notified.
 4. Chair of Safe Sanctuary and Pastor or SPRC and Admin Council Chair will review incident Allegation form to determine what follow up steps should be. Attention shall be given to the Baltimore Washington Conference Policy on Sexual Misconduct, as applicable. Those steps may include one or more of the following:
 - Notification of Law Enforcement
 - Notification of Child Protective Services
 - Notification of Church Conference (District Superintendent)
 - Notification to attorney
 - Discussions with parents and child
 - Investigation of claims
- Based on the outcome of above, appropriate actions will be taken (which may include no action) and all notifications, discussions, and decisions will be documented.
- If an allegation is made, it is imperative that the privacy of all parties is maintained through all investigations and any final dispositions.
- It is imperative that all parties are treated as innocent until proven otherwise.

- If an allegation is made, adult(s) will be removed from interaction with children/youth until claims can be investigated and a final disposition made; for the protection of all parties.
- A response and notification of final disposition is required to all parties involved before concluding an incident. The Pastor or chairperson of SPRC (if Pastor is alleged) are the only authorized persons to make statements to the parties involved, media, or any other entity on any allegation; once they have been reviewed with the Church Conference.

Review

- Safe Sanctuary team will perform a bi-annual audit of records and policy. The audit will consist of the following:
 1. An inventory and cross reference of Personnel Information and Sexual Misconduct Questionnaire forms to ensure all forms are filed for all adults working with children/youth.
 2. Review current policies.
 3. Create a project plan to implement approved changes.
 4. Oversee implementation of approved changes.

Definitions

- Adult – Any paid or volunteer person over the age of 18 that interacts in activities with children/youth as a teacher, leader, helper, assistant, mentor, or other capacity recognized by the church. These activities include but are not limited to Sunday school, youth group, and confirmation.
- Child – Any person currently in the 5th grade or below.
- Youth – Any person who has graduated from the 5th grade or above but is under 18 years of age.
- Activity – Any church sanctioned event to include but not limited to Sunday school, youth group, and confirmation.
- Vulnerable Adult – Any adult working with children or youth.
- Local Church – Trinity United Methodist Church Germantown, MD

Thank You for Helping Us Keep our Children, Youth, and Volunteers Safe!