

URBAN VILLAGE
Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy#

GENERAL PURPOSE STATEMENT

Urban Village (an entity of Transylvania Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)) seeks to provide a safe and secure environment for the children, youth, and vulnerable adults who participate in our programs and activities. By implementing the following practices, our goal is to protect the children, youth, and vulnerable adults who participate in the programs of Urban Village from incidents of misconduct or inappropriate behavior while also protecting the staff and volunteers from false accusations.

DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy, the following terms are used:

vulnerable person(s) - includes all persons under the age of 18 and *any person eighteen-years-old or older without the developmental or cognitive capacity to consent.*¹

minor - anyone under the age of 18

worker(s) - includes both paid and unpaid persons working or volunteering as part of the Urban Village staff regardless of their age

adult workers - paid and unpaid persons working or volunteering as part of the Urban Village staff who are over 18

SELECTION OF WORKERS²

All persons who desire to work at Urban Village, whether paid or volunteer, will be screened.

The screening process includes:

Three Month Rule

No person will be considered for any volunteer staff position involving contact with vulnerable persons until they have been involved with Urban Village or a supporting congregation for a minimum of three months. During these three months prospective workers shall be active at Urban Village and may be taking classes, receiving training on equipment, or shadowing other Urban Village workers. Except in extreme situations or emergencies, the prospective worker will not be left in leadership positions nor serve as an adult to fulfill the 2 adult rule.³ This time of interaction between the leadership of Urban Village and the applicant allows for better evaluation and suitability of the applicant for working with vulnerable persons.

Written Application

All persons seeking to work with vulnerable persons must complete and sign a written application in a form to be supplied by Urban Village. The application will request basic information from the applicant and will inquire into previous experience with children, reference and employment information, as well as disclosure of any previous criminal

¹ Vulnerable adult language is copied from the "Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and Its Procedures" approved by the Board of Directors of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation May 20, 2021

² This section was included in the GuideOne sample.

³ PC(USA) policy often includes an "in extreme situations or emergencies" clause.

convictions. The application form will be maintained in confidence in a locked file at Urban Village.

Personal Interview

Upon completion of the previous two steps, a face-to-face formal interview will be scheduled with the applicant to discuss their suitability for the position.

Reference Checks

Before an applicant is permitted to work with vulnerable persons, at least two of the applicant's references will be checked. These references should be of institutional or employment nature as opposed to personal or family references, and preferably from organizations in which the applicant has worked with vulnerable people in the past. Documentation of the reference checks will be maintained in confidence in locked file at Urban Village.

Criminal Background Check

A national criminal background check is required for all workers regardless of position.

Before a background check is complete, the applicant will be asked to sign an authorization form allowing Urban Village and the Presbytery of Transylvania to run the check. If an individual declines to sign the authorization form, they will not be permitted to work with vulnerable persons.

Disqualifying offenses that will prohibit workers from working with vulnerable persons will be the determination of the Urban Village session/board of directors. These determinations will be done so on a case-by-case basis in light of the circumstances.

The background check authorization form and the background check results will be maintained in confidence in a locked file at Urban Village.

TWO ADULT RULE⁴

Two non-related adults (over 18 years of age) must always be present when working with vulnerable persons.

ADULT WORKERS TO MINOR PARTICIPANT RATIO⁵

The ratio of adult workers to minors is:

2:10 for minors 0-8 years of age

2:17 for minors 9-18 years of age

There shall also be one adult of each gender when there is one or more minors of each gender in a group. Only in emergency situations may the ratios and gender diversity be compromised.

⁴ from the "Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and Its Procedures" approved by the Board of Directors of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation May 20, 2021

⁵ These ratios reflect both the PCUSA policy and the Jessamine County 4H policy

WORKERS WHO ARE ALSO MINORS⁶

Urban Village recognizes that there are times when it is desirable or needed for minors to work with other minors. In these situations the following guidelines are in place:

- Must be at least 14 years of age
- Must be screened including written application, reference checks (out of necessity may need to be personal references), and interviewed
- Must be a minimum of four years older than the age group with whom they are working
- Must be under the supervision of an adult worker
- As a worker this individual is neither an adult worker nor a minor participant in relationship to the prescribed ratios above

TRAINING FOR WORKERS

Urban Village will provide regular training on this policy for all workers. This training will cover, but is not limited to:

- Identifying signs of physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect
- Mandatory reporting
- Changes and updates to the policy
- Sexual misconduct prevention
- Setting healthy boundaries

RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

In the event that an incident of abuse, neglect, or misconduct is alleged to have occurred at Urban Village, the worker who is the alleged abuser will be immediately removed from their position at Urban Village pending an investigation.

The director of Urban Village will notify the civil authorities as well as the general presbyter of Transylvania Presbytery. At that point the response to the allegation will follow the process of investigation and remediation that is outlined in the Sexual Misconduct Prevention Policy of Transylvania Presbytery.

⁶ This is recommended in the GuideOne Policy and is reflected in the PCUSA policy, the Jessamine County 4H policy, and the Kentucky McTeggart Irish Dance policy