

**SAFETY POLICY**  
**for**  
**THE REFORMED YOUTH MOVEMENT, INC.**  
“Reformed Youth Ministries” “RYM” (the “Corporation”)

**ARTICLE I: DEFINITIONS**

“Abuse”	Any action that intentionally or recklessly harms or injures, or that can be reasonably expected to result in harm or injury to another person and can include physical, psychological, or mental injury
“Board”	Board of Directors for RYM
“Child/Children”	Anyone under the age of 18, who is, thus, under the care and supervision of an adult
“Contractor”	Any individual(s) that RYM engages to perform services for pay (but not as an employee) at an RYM-sanctioned event when there are children present, including but not limited to videographers, photographers, band members, lifeguards
“Church”	Any Church(es) or Adult Leader(s) that is participating in an RYM-sanctioned ministry offering and is responsible for persons under the age of 18
“Employee”	Includes anyone employed by RYM for pay, whether full-time, part-time, or seasonal
“Grooming”	Grooming is the process used by an abuser to select a child, win the child’s trust (and the trust of the child’s parent or “gatekeeper”), manipulate the child into sexual activity and keep the child from disclosing the abuse
“Handbook”	RYM Safety Handbook and Procedures Manual
“Intern”	Seasonal employees hired by RYM for the Summer Internship Program
“RYM”	The Reformed Youth Movement, Inc., d/b/a Reformed Youth Ministries
“Safety Agreement”	RYM Church Safety Agreement
“Staff”	All full-time, salaried employees of RYM, including those in the Church Internship Program
“Volunteer”	Individuals working with RYM to provide unpaid help to RYM at any RYM-sanctioned event, including but not limited to members of the Board

**ARTICLE II: PURPOSE**

RYM takes its responsibility to care for children seriously. This policy is intended to create and facilitate a safe and nurturing environment in which children can grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ without fear of abuse.

This policy provides for general oversight of safety guidelines and protocols for RYM and will inform any and all other documents which RYM employs in the efforts of creating a safe environment for children while providing physical and legal protection to children, the organization, and the mission of RYM. This policy has been adopted by the Board and will be strictly enforced.

### **ARTICLE III: OVERVIEW OF THE SAFETY SYSTEM**

Out of our love for children, RYM requires all Employees, Contractors, and Volunteers working directly with or in the presence of children to read the Handbook and abide by any requirements therein. All Churches are required to read and sign the Safety Agreement before bringing students to an RYM-sanctioned event.

### **ARTICLE IV: CHILD SAFETY POLICY**

#### ABUSE

RYM **will not tolerate abuse** in ministry programs and activities. It is the responsibility of every Employee, Contractor, and Volunteer at RYM to act in the best interest of children in every program and at all times.

In the event that any Employee, Contractor, or Volunteer observes any inappropriate behaviors or suspects abuse, it is his or her personal responsibility to report it as required by this policy by following the procedures as set forth in the Handbook.

#### REPORTING SUSPICIOUS OR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS

RYM is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for children and their families. Adults must report any violation of this Policy, including inappropriate behavior or suspected abuse of a child or the failure to report inappropriate behavior. RYM will investigate any such report and may further report the behavior, abuse, or suspected abuse to parents and or authorities in accordance with the procedure set forth in the Handbook and as required by any applicable state laws where the alleged behavior occurred.

#### ENFORCEMENT OF POLICIES

RYM Employees, Contractors, and Volunteers who supervise or engage with other employees, contractors, and volunteers are charged with the diligent enforcement of all RYM policies (including the procedures contained in the Handbook and Safety Agreement). Violations of these policies are grounds for immediate dismissal, disciplinary action, or reassignment. Determining the facts concerning any alleged policy violations relating to safety will be the responsibility of the SCR Committee. The SCR Committee may also recommend appropriate remedial action to management and, where appropriate, to the full Board.

### **ARTICLE V: REPORTING ABUSE OR SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE**

#### REPORTING VIOLATION OF POLICY

To maintain a safe environment for children, RYM Employees, Contractors, and Volunteers must be aware of their individual responsibility to report any questionable circumstance, observation, act, omission, or situation that appears to be abuse of a child or is a violation of these policies. Reporting requirements consistent with this policy are maintained in the Handbook and should be referenced and followed upon any such occurrence.

#### CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLATION

Any person accused of committing a prohibited act or any act considered by RYM to be abusive or otherwise harmful to a child will be immediately suspended from participation in youth related ministries.

This suspension will continue during any investigation by RYM, law enforcement or child protective agencies.

Any person found to have committed a prohibited act is prohibited from future participation as an Employee, Contractor, Volunteer, or Adult Leader working with any Church in all activities and programming that involves children at an RYM-sanctioned event. If the person is an Employee or Contractor, such conduct may also result in termination of employment from RYM.

#### RESPONSE TO REPORT OF ABUSE

Any reports of abuse should be immediately reported to the Executive Director, who will timely inform the SCR Committee and RYM's Legal Counsel. If the reporter requests confidentiality, then the person who receives the report should keep the identity of the reporter confidential to the extent possible to encourage disclosure and to protect from potential retaliation.

### **ARTICLE VI: SAFETY, COMPLIANCE, AND RISK (SCR) COMMITTEE**

Recognizing the importance of providing and maintaining a safe environment for children, RYM will appoint and maintain a Safety, Compliance, and Risk Committee.

#### MISSION STATEMENT

An important purpose of the Safety, Compliance, and Risk Committee, among other purposes, is to assist the Board in providing oversight to ensure that RYM carries out appropriate ministry activities while safeguarding program participants against emotional, physical, or sexual abuse.

#### COMPOSITION

The SCR Committee will be comprised of a minimum of two at-large board members (one of whom will be elected to and serve as the Committee Chair), the RYM Executive Director, and a Member of RYM's full-time staff team. This Committee will always include at least one male and one female in its membership.

#### MEETINGS

The Chair of SCR Committee will hold quarterly meetings before each stated Board Meeting to discuss risk management practices, compliance, training completion, and potential updates to the Policy, Handbook, and Safety Agreement. The SCR Committee will also meet on an as needed basis upon the request of a member or following the report of any incident or allegation of abuse or suspected abuse or a violation of this Policy.

#### RESPONSIBILITIES

The SCR Committee will be charged with the following duties with respect to this Policy:

1. Advising the Board concerning the RYM Safety Policy and its implementation through safety and risk management issues, including but not limited to the regular review of the Handbook and Safety Agreement.
2. Ensuring that management is periodically assessing youth ministry programs for ongoing compliance with safety policies and best practices.
3. Making recommendations to management and to the RYM Board of Directors regarding safety issues, with a particular focus on ensuring an environment that enhances safety for children.
4. Receiving reports of alleged policy violations relating to the safety of children, including or not limited to allegations of abuse, suspected abuse, or failure to timely report abuse or suspected abuse.
5. Determining the facts concerning any alleged policy violations relating to safety. The SCR Committee may also recommend appropriate remedial action to management and, where appropriate, to the full Board.

6. Reporting to the Board on these responsibilities.

#### **ARTICLE VII: SAFETY MONITORING PLAN**

Monitoring of Employees and Volunteers will include regular (announced and unannounced) visits during RYM programming by the Executive Director to provide the opportunity to observe Employee, Contractor, and Volunteer interactions with students. The details of this monitoring plan are included in the Handbook.

#### **ARTICLE VIII: GENERAL POLICIES**

RYM will maintain, in its Handbook, a list of best-practices as it concerns issues of safety and abuse prevention at its sanctioned events. All RYM Employees, Contractors, and Volunteers are expected to be knowledgeable about and adhere to all practices and policies therein.

Adopted by the Board of Trustees at its \_\_\_\_\_, 2024 meeting.

_____ Signature Les Newsom Chair, Reformed Youth Movement, Inc.	_____ Date
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## **SAFETY POLICY: ACKNOWLEDGMENT & ACCEPTANCE DISCLOSURE STATEMENT**

I, as a Member of the Board, have received and read a copy of the RYM Safety Policy and understand the importance of the matters set forth within it. I agree to follow and abide by these guidelines during my service at RYM.

Further, I understand that the policy may be modified at any time by a two-thirds majority of the Board.

Finally, I understand that it is my duty to be diligent about any such communications which are referred to me by the SCR Committee, including any proposed changes to this Policy.

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT**

I hereby acknowledge that I have received a copy of the RYM Safety Policy, have read and understood it, and agree to comply with its terms.

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Board Member Signature

Date

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Board Chair Signature

Date