



INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Immanuel Baptist Church (“Immanuel”) seeks to provide a place for all children and youth to grow in their faith and understanding of Jesus. The policies set forth below serve to address the safety and care of all children participating in programs at Immanuel. The policies seek to both prevent abuse and to inform volunteers and staff members (collectively “team members”) regarding the proper course of action to follow in the case of allegations of abuse. As part of this goal, Immanuel seeks to train and equip team members to care for the children participating in its ministries and to create an environment of trust and respect. **These policies are subject to change from time to time as deemed appropriate or necessary. Limited exceptions and variations may be necessary at times to accommodate practical application based on specific situations.** It is essential that all team members read and understand these policies and procedures before serving. If you have a question about these policies and procedures, please contact the kids ministry director.

SECURITY POLICIES

CHECK-IN (ARRIVAL)

Upon arrival each child must check into Immanuel’s computerized attendance system. This system will log the child’s attendance, track any known allergies, and provide access to the emergency contact information of the child’s parents or guardians. The system will print two tags with a unique security code. This 3-digit security code will be used for the verification of the parent/guardian and child at time of checkout.

- Children may not enter the classroom without a name tag.
- The first tag should be affixed to the front or back of the child; the second tag is given to the parent or guardian.
- Team members, please stress to parents/guardians the importance of keeping up with their tag so they can be matched up at check-out. This applies to all parents/guardians, no matter how long they have attended Immanuel or how well the team member knows the parent/guardian.

Offline Check-In Alternative: If for any reason the computer system or printers are down, the following is the alternative method for check-in.

- The team member overseeing registration must switch to Immanuel’s handwritten system by using the following procedure:
 - The team member should retrieve the back-up written log sheets and record the following: (1) the child’s first and last name; (2) a made-up 3-digit security code; (3) the room number, name, or other identifier; and (4) the initials of the team member who took the registration information.
 - The team member should also retrieve an extra roll of stickers used for the printer tags and should indicate the following information on the tags: (1) the child’s first and last name and (2) the same made-up 3-digit security code that was on the registration sheet. This sticker should be affixed on the front or back of the child’s shirt/outfit.
 - On a separate sticker, the team member must write the same 3-digit security code to create a parent/guardian sticker.
- Team members should still stress to parents/guardians the importance of keeping up with this tag so that it can be matched up with the child’s tag at check-out.

CHECK-OUT (DEPARTURE)

It is extremely important Immanuel is consistent in enforcing check-out policies to ensure that every child is returned to the proper parent/guardian. Be sure to use the following procedure:

- Any individual seeking to pick up a child must be over the age of 12 and present the 3-digit security code that matches the child seeking to be picked up. Children under the age of 12 are not authorized to pick up any child but may accompany the parent/guardian to pick up their siblings.
- The team member releasing the child to an individual must look carefully at the child's tag and match the SECURITY CODE with the parent/guardian tag.
- If any parent/guardian does not have their tag, the following alternative procedure may be used to verify the individual:
 - The team member monitoring the door should contact the Kids Desk Team, who must approve the release of the child.
 - The Kids Desk Team must ask for a government-issued photo identification and must log the individual on the missing tag log with (1) their full name, (2) the unique 3-digit security code on the child's tag, (3) the parent/guardian's unique identification number (such as their driver's license number), (4) the class in which the child was located, and (5) the name of the team member who released the child to the adult.
 - If the adult's relationship to the child can be validated by a staff member through the check-in system or church database, then the Kids Desk Team may release the child. In the case that the relationship cannot be verified, then staff must make the decision whether or not to release the child based on the presented circumstances. When in doubt, staff should call the emergency contact information to confirm that the parent/guardian present has permission to pick up the child.
 - Before releasing the child, the Kids Desk Team is required to take a picture of the child with the individual to whom they released the child and should indicate who took the picture on the release sheet.

ACCESS TO AREAS WHERE CHILDREN ARE PRESENT

Hallways:

- The hallways to the Kids ministry will be unlocked for drop-off and pickup 15 minutes prior to any service beginning and 5 minutes before the service is scheduled to conclude.
- At all other times, the door to the Kids ministry hallways will be locked when children are present. (Exception: One door may remain open if a security officer is present).
- All doors must be kept locked if there are no security personnel present.
- Any individual in the hallways other than at drop-off and pick-up times must be a team member with a name tag, a law enforcement officer, church security personnel, or church staff.
- All hallways are monitored by security cameras.
- Immanuel will also have a team member serve as a hall monitor to provide additional surveillance.

Classrooms:

- No person is allowed to enter a Kids classroom other than a Kids team member.
- All team members **MUST** wear a name tag before they are allowed to enter a room to serve.
- All classrooms are monitored by security cameras. Parents and family members of team members are not allowed in the classroom at any time, with the following noted exceptions:
- Parents may be asked by a staff member to participate in their child's class if their child is misbehaving in a harmful way toward others. In those cases, to comply with the established vetting process, the parent will be required to complete a background check before taking part in class.
- A parent from a first-time visiting family will be permitted to visit a classroom to observe that environment, with approval from staff only. The visiting parent must wear the identifying badge/nametag to do so. This is allowed for one week only without performing a background check.

PHOTOGRAPHY/SOCIAL MEDIA

- Team members must not post photos or video that identify students on any online site or printed publication without prior written consent from a parent or guardian.

Team members should seek to avoid any private conversations, whether via text message or social media, with any child. If a child reaches out via these platforms, the conversation should be recorded and never deleted and should be reported. No team member should use a platform for youth interactions that allows anonymity or that automatically deletes posts or communications, such as SnapChat.

Generally, team members may not use their personal phones to take pictures of any child. An exception to this rule is in the event a team member needs to take a photo of a child to send to the child's parent/guardian to assure the parent that their previously anxious or upset child has since calmed down. In this instance, the team member should delete the picture from their phone after sending it to the parent/guardian.

EVACUATION PROCEDURE

In the unlikely event of an emergency which requires an evacuation, team members shall take the following action:

General Emergency Response:

- Prior to beginning to serve at their assigned time, team members in each room should familiarize themselves with the evacuation route for the classroom they are serving in that day. The evacuation route is posted by the exit door of each room.
- Evacuate all children in the room to the location listed on the evacuation plan and take your room roster with you.
- Do not release children to parents/guardians in the middle of an evacuation. Instead, remind parents/guardians that they can walk with you. You can recruit parents/guardians to assist you in the evacuation of the room. Inform them that you cannot release a child until you have arrived at your designated location.
- Once evacuated, please wait for further instructions from Kids staff before releasing any children to a parent/guardian.
- Please always stay with your group. Do not leave to go get your own children, to obtain first aid, or for any other reason. First aid will be brought to you if needed.
- Release children using the check-out policy only after you have been given permission to dismiss by a staff member. All parents/guardians must have their parent tag.

Tornado Procedure:

- Everyone in the building should move quickly to a classroom or hallway where there are no windows.
- Team members should take their room roster with them if they move locations.
- Have the older children line up along the wall kneeling with their hands on their heads.

Lost Child Procedure:

In the event you notice a child is missing, immediately alert the Kids staff or the Kids Team Desk and church security. Please give a description of the child (what was he/she wearing, color of hair, name).

Lockdown Procedure:

Should a lockdown be deemed necessary, no children will be allowed to be picked up or dropped off during this time. Everyone will stay in their classrooms with their door shut and locked where possible. We will remain in this mode until a team member comes to the classroom to inform us the lockdown is over and to resume normal operating procedures. Do not open the door for anyone other than law enforcement or team members, and only when safe to do so.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES

“THE RULE OF 2” (BUT 3 IS BETTER!)

Immanuel’s “Rule of 2” states that there must always be two adults present when supervising one or more children. This rule is non-negotiable and is designed for the safety of children as well as adults. Planning ahead will help avoid the potential of being alone with one or more children. The purpose of “The Rule of 2” is to make sure the actions of any one team member are known to at least one other team member and to encourage team members to support each other in ministry.

Compliance to “The Rule of 2” includes the following:

- There must always be two approved adult team members present when supervising one or more children.
- The adults generally must not be related family members (a married couple would be considered “related”). If two related adults are teaching together, a third team member must generally be present. If a third team member is not available, the two related adults may work together so long as there are cameras present in the classroom.
- The adults should always be in sight of each other.
- If an adult needs to step out of the room at any time (i.e., bathroom, urgent call, to take medicine, etc.) please ask a hall monitor to step into your classroom.

VISIBILITY & SECURITY

It is important that all interaction between children and team members happens in a location where others can observe what is going on for safety and accountability purposes. **At no time** should a child and team member be behind a closed door with no visibility to others.

Most, if not all, areas where children and team members are present on the Immanuel campus are equipped with video surveillance equipment. As a team member you acknowledge that you are being recorded for safety and security purposes. This is done for the protection of both children and team members.

RESTROOM POLICY

When possible, children should use a single restroom if it is available. Once a child alerts a team member that he/she needs to use the restroom, the team member should check the restroom first to make sure that it is free of other adults before allowing the child to enter. As needed, assist young children with their clothing in an open doorway before they go into the bathroom, but give them the opportunity to do as much of this for themselves as possible. The team member should remain outside of the restroom with the door almost closed until the child is finished using the restroom.

If a team member is needed to help a child using the restroom, or a child requires a change of clothes, has special needs or in any way requires extra assistance, the team member shall leave the door to the restroom open and inform the other team member of the facts surrounding the assistance needed. Remember, the two adult rule applies.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

Classroom doors should remain open unless there is a window in the door or windows in the classroom walls. Classroom doors should never be locked while people are inside the room, except to protect children from walking out, or in case of an imminent threat during lockdown. Team members should be always observable.

APPROPRIATE AND INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

Physical Contact

Immanuel is committed to protecting children in its care and recognizes that appropriate touch is part of a positive, nurturing environment in a healthy kids ministry. The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by Immanuel leaders.

Physical contact in any form should be above reproach. The personal behavior of team members must always foster trust. Do not force physical contact, touch, or affection on a reluctant child. A child's preference not to be touched must be respected, except in cases where the child's safety or the safety of others is in question.

Using good judgment, the following are appropriate ways to touch kids:

- An arm around the shoulder.
- Walking hand in hand when needed to ensure safety or efficiency in moving a group to a different location.
- Short congratulatory or greeting side hugs.
- A brief, assuring pat on the upper back or shoulder.
- Handshakes, high-fives, first bumps, and knuckles.
- Redirect a child's attention: Get down to their eye level and point to your chin.

The following are actions a team member should **NEVER** take:

- Never touch a child in anger or disgust
- Never touch a child in any manner that may be construed as sexually suggestive.

VERBAL INTERACTIONS

Verbal interactions between team members and children should be positive and uplifting. Immanuel team members should strive to keep verbal interactions encouraging, constructive, and mindful of their mission of aiding parents in the spiritual growth and development of children. Team members should not show favoritism, give gifts, or look for alone time with children.

To this end, team leaders should not talk to children in a way that is or could be construed by any reasonable observer as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. In addition, team leaders are expected to refrain from swearing in the presence of children or speaking disrespectfully or maliciously of other people. Finally, team members should not make sexually provocative or degrading comments or make inappropriate or risqué jokes.

CAMP EVENTS

IBC staff and volunteers participating in Camp events are required to complete a separate, more comprehensive training session specific to their scheduled event and sign a Statement of Acknowledgment and Agreement to participate.

- NEVER invite a child to go alone ANYWHERE for ANY reason. If you feel a child needs counsel, please contact an Immanuel staff member to develop a plan to help the child.

- All Immanuel volunteers must be at least 18 years of age to serve and will go through the same application process required for serving in other areas of ministry.
- Those under 18 years of age may be approved to volunteer if serving under adult supervision, he/she has completed Caring Well Training, and 3 character references are provided.
- NEVER transport a child alone in a vehicle. If there is an emergency which requires a child to be transported, make sure a staff member is notified for assistance, or dial 911.
- In a camp situation, if you need to enter a room or cabin with only the children present, find another adult first or ask the children to step outside.
- Helping children bathe or shower is absolutely prohibited. Never expose yourself in any way to children. In a camp situation wait until all kids have showered or bathed to take yours.
- Always practice modesty and respect privacy.

OFFSITE GROUP EVENTS

- Off-site Group events are encouraged if approved by the Kids ministry leader, who will advise of best practices while off site.
- Team members must always obtain signed permission from a parent/guardian for students to participate in off-site activities. This should include date/time/location and reason for the event.
- NEVER invite a child to go alone ANYWHERE for ANY reason. If you feel a child needs counsel, please contact an Immanuel staff member to develop a plan to help the child.
- NEVER transport a child alone in a vehicle. If there is an emergency which requires a child to be transported, make sure a staff member is notified for assistance, or dial 911.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

Staff members and ministry volunteers may, from time to time, be in a position to provide transportation for children. The following guidelines should be strictly observed when transporting children:

- Children should be transported directly to their destination. Unauthorized stops to a non-public place must be avoided. Team members must always obtain signed permission from a parent/guardian for students to participate in off-site activities. This should include date/time/location and reason for the event.
- Staff members and volunteers should avoid transportation circumstances that leave only one child in transport.
- Staff members and volunteers should avoid physical contact with children while in vehicles.
- Absent an emergency, drivers may not use cell phones while transporting minors (other than navigation applications for directions). In an emergency, stop the vehicle to use the cell phone, unless a stop cannot safely occur. Texting or other cell phone use is strictly prohibited while driving.
- No drivers under age 25 may drive church-owned or rented vehicles.
- In transportation, the TWO ADULT RULE or RULE OF THREE must be followed.
- Never be alone in a vehicle with a child of the opposite sex.
- Never instruct a child to drive other students to a ministry event.
- Transport only the number of children for whom you have seat belts.
- Seat belts should be worn at all times while in the vehicle.
- No one should be double-buckled.
- Use extra caution when driving children.

DISCIPLINARY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Classroom Discipline: We will use love and kindness when dealing with disciplinary issues. Here are some tips:

- Redirection - In most cases, you can positively redirect a child's attention to another activity or behavior.
- In some cases, it may be necessary to temporarily remove a child from a situation. Team members will sit with and offer emotional comfort and assistance until the child is ready to appropriately come back to play times or learning times. If they are unable to calm down or return to activities, please ask Kids staff for assistance. Remember, the team member should not be alone or isolated with the child.
- Positive Reinforcement - It is important to consistently reinforce positive behavior with smiles, encouraging words, and from time to time, stickers, or other rewards. This should be applied consistently to all children, and no child should receive isolated rewards or gifts.
- In cases of biting or when a child seriously harms another child, please remove the aggressor child from the room and contact staff.
- For more severe and/or persistent disciplinary situations, the staff will meet to discuss steps to take with families whose child persistently endangers others or themselves.
- For team members whose own children are involved in the ministry, during the time you are serving you should only use these same disciplinary policies with your children when you are on campus or at church activities.

Inappropriate forms of discipline:

- Do not spank.
- Do not use sarcasm or ridicule.
- Do not discipline the child in front of others.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS POLICIES

WHEN TO CALL 911

Call 911 if the following emergencies occur:

- A child begins choking.
- A child is knocked unconscious or suffers a serious injury.
- A child starts to have serious trouble breathing, especially if the child seems to be having an allergic reaction and is in distress.
- If there is a fire, serious security issue, or act of violence.

In the event of a potentially life-threatening illness or injury, any adult has authority to immediately call 911. In non-life-threatening instances, immediately report any medical needs or concerns to the Kids team staff and desk team. Those notified will contact the Immanuel Security Team to decide if 911 should be called. In addition, the staff/desk team will contact the parent/guardian to advise them of the situation.

The team member should remain calm and divert the attention of the other children. The injured or sick person should be kept quiet and still to the extent feasible. Do not attempt to move a severely injured person unless he or she is in imminent danger.

Regardless of severity, any medical needs or concerns should be reported immediately to kids staff. After the incident is under control, the team member involved should fill out an Incident Report (discussed below) and submit it to the executive pastor and kids staff.

ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES

If an injury as outlined below occurs, contact kids staff immediately:

- Any injury that leaves a visible mark.
- Any injury where there is bleeding.
- Any occurrence that involves an allergy alert child ingesting an allergen.
- Any occurrence that leaves the child crying for an extended period, even if there is no visible injury.
- Any injury that leaves a child limping or dazed.
- Any injury where a child is complaining of pain more than five minutes after the accident occurred.

For any injury, listed above or otherwise, the staff or team member should contact the parent and/or guardian.

INCIDENT REPORTS

When to fill out an incident report:

For any injury, listed above or otherwise, the team member must complete an Incident Report and fill out completely each and every time a child is injured; damage to property occurred; a security issue arose; a mandated reporter call is made; or any other related issue has taken place: When in doubt – fill it out.

- The Incident Report needs to be filled out by the person who administers first aid and a team member(s) who witnessed the incident.
- Record all details as soon as possible.
- Parents/guardians of any child who has been involved in an incident should be notified.

Completion of Incident Reports:

- All Incident Reports must be turned into the Kids ministry director by the end of the day on the date of the incident. All reports will then be given to the church administrator for recordkeeping.
- If requested, a copy of the report may be provided to the parent/guardian of the child involved. If the report contains the names of other minor children, the copy provided shall be redacted to protect the privacy of the other children involved.

NO MEDICATION POLICY

No prescription or oral medication, with the exception of an EpiPen during a life-threatening reaction, may be administered by team members. In the event of a life-threatening reaction, the EpiPen may be administered by an IBC team member.

The parent/guardian of the child must administer all other medication, both oral and topical.

Team members are prohibited from opening or taking medication while in the classroom. If medication is needed, the team member must leave the classroom to take medication.

CHILDREN AND VOLUNTEER HEALTH POLICY

Children who show any visible signs of illness should not be allowed into the classroom. When addressing this with parents/guardians, assure them that we want their child to come back as soon as they are feeling better. If any illness is discovered after a child is in the classroom, remove the child from the room and ask the kids' staff to locate the parents/guardians.

While in class, should a child begin to exhibit any of the following symptoms or shows other signs of illness, contact Kids staff to evaluate the child. Symptoms due to allergies will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Symptoms:

- Fever
- Has tested positive for COVID-19, flu, RSV, etc.
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Common cold from onset through one week.
- Sore throat.
- Constant cough or croup.
- Colored mucus (runny nose that is not clear).
- Any unexplained rash.
- Any skin infection: boils, ringworm, impetigo, or any open sores that leak fluid/blood.
- Pink eye or other eye infections.
- Cloudy or green runny nose.
- Any communicable disease.
- Lice, including the presence of eggs or nits.

If a parent/guardian tells you that his or her child has exposed the class to a contagious disease (e.g. measles, chicken pox, COVID-19, etc.) please contact the kids ministry director (who will advise the executive pastor) to handle the situation. Do not alarm other parents or children. The circumstances will be fully investigated, and kids staff will be responsible for notifying other parents.

ALLERGIES

Always check the child's nametag for the allergy note. Please be aware of all allergies in your classroom. If snacks are served, children will only be served the snack provided in the room, or provided by their parents..

CHILD ABUSE AND PROTECTION POLICY

What is child abuse/neglect?

According to the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, “child abuse and neglect” means, at a minimum, “any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation.”

Arkansas law prohibits child maltreatment—or abuse and neglect. This includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, sexual exploitation, or abandonment by the caretaker of a child.

- **Neglect** – Arkansas law defines neglect to include but not be limited to (1) failure to prevent abuse; (2) failure to provide food, clothing, shelter, or medical treatment for the child’s well-being; (3) failure to take action to protect the child from abandonment, abuse, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, or neglect; and (4) failure to properly supervise a child, which creates a dangerous situation.
- **Abuse** – Arkansas law defines abuse to include but not be limited to (1) extreme or repeated cruelty to a child; (2) conduct creating a threat of death or impairment; (3) injury to a child’s intellectual, emotional, or psychological development; (4) any nonaccidental physical injury; and (5) any intentional acts, such as throwing, striking, shaking, burning, biting, or cutting a child.
- **Sexual Abuse** – Arkansas law defines sexual abuse to include: (1) sexual intercourse, deviate sexual activity, or sexual contact; (2) attempted sexual intercourse, deviate sexual activity, or sexual contact; (3) forcing or encouraging the watching of pornography; (4) forcing, permitting, or encouraging the watching of live sexual activity; (5) forcing the listening to a phone sex line; (6) an act of voyeurism; or (7) solicitation of sexual intercourse, deviate sexual activity, or sexual contact. Sexual abuse also includes grooming, which means to knowingly disseminate to a child a visual or print medium depicting sexually explicit content with the purpose to entice, induce, or groom the child to engage in the sexual intercourse, sexually explicit conduct, or deviate sexual activity.

Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

It is essential that Immanuel create a culture where child abuse prevention is discussed, addressed, and monitored. All team members who come to learn of any occurrence of neglect or abuse or who have reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been subjected to neglect or abuse should follow the steps below.

- If the child is in immediate danger or if there is an emergency, call security or 911.
- If there is potential for immediate contact between the alleged offender and the victim, take any steps necessary to create distance and call security or 911. After securing the victim’s safety in the moment, the team member with knowledge of the incident of abuse should call the Arkansas Child Abuse Hotline at **1-800-482-5964**. This report must happen immediately. The team member should be specific about concerns and provide the child’s name, the alleged offender’s name, and details about the abuse.
- Once the team member makes the report to the Arkansas Child Abuse Hotline, the team member will receive a report number and should then immediately provide this number along with a completed incident report to the Senior Pastor/Executive Pastor and the Director of Finance & Administration.
 - The team member must also report the incident to the Caring Well Pastor and/or Caring Well Director and the Caring Well Chairperson.
 - If the team member informs a pastor or ministry leader that he/she has not yet called the Arkansas Child Abuse Hotline, the team member should immediately call the hotline with a pastor or ministry leader present for the call.
- After a report of neglect or abuse has been submitted, the pastor/director or ministry leader must immediately send the incident report to the Caring Well Team for further review and any needed actions.

The investigation of any allegations of neglect or abuse is the responsibility of the proper authorities. Team members or any other persons at Immanuel should not conduct their own investigation into any claims of abuse or neglect. Immanuel will cooperate fully with an investigation by local, state, or federal authorities.

Confidentiality

Except to comply with this Policy and applicable law, or to cooperate with any official investigation of the incident, team members with personal knowledge of the suspected neglect or abuse should be mindful of the sensitive nature of the matter and should keep such matters confidential. Team members should not reveal the identity of the victim except when necessary. Any requests for information directed to team members by individuals outside of the official investigation (e.g., requests from the media) should be directed to the ministry leader or executive pastor.

Reporting Other Policy Violations or Inappropriate Behavior

There may be instances where a team member observes violations of this policy or other inappropriate behavior that is concerning but does not qualify as neglect or abuse as defined above. In addition, a team member may observe or be aware of inappropriate behavior by another team member with another adult, such as that team member making sexual related comments or jokes or having inappropriate physical contact with another adult while serving at Immanuel.

If you are subjected to any conduct that you believe violates this policy or witness any such inappropriate conduct that does not qualify as child neglect or abuse, you must promptly speak to, write, or otherwise contact your kids staff or, if the conduct involves staff, then contact the executive pastor within 5 days of the offending conduct.

Your complaint should be as detailed as possible, including the names of all individuals involved and any witnesses. Immanuel will directly and thoroughly investigate the facts and circumstances of all claims of inappropriate behavior or will refer the investigation to the proper professionals and will take prompt corrective action, if appropriate.

Zero Tolerance Policy

Immanuel will neither condone nor tolerate:

- Infliction of bodily injury upon any child or physically or sexually abusive behavior towards a child.
- Physical neglect of children, including failure to provide adequate safety measures, care, and supervision in relation to church activities.
- Emotional mistreatment of children, including verbal
- Abuse and/or verbal attacks.

Removal of Those Accused of Wrongdoing

Immanuel reserves the right to refuse membership, to dismiss, or to exclude from affiliation with an Immanuel member who is or has been convicted of child abuse or neglect of any child or is currently under investigation for such wrongdoing.

SCREENING AND PLACEMENT

Screening

Each potential team member (whether volunteer or employee) must be a member of the church for at least two (2) months before he or she is eligible to apply for a team member position. Once an individual meets these initial criteria, he/she will take the following steps: Infliction of bodily injury upon any child or physically or sexually abusive behavior towards a child.

- Each potential volunteer will fill out an online application.
- Once the online application is received, it will be reviewed and approved by the respective minister or director.
- A formal state and federal background check will be conducted on the potential team member. This background check will be consistent with our current process, which includes a signed consent form. All background check information will be kept confidential to the maximum extent possible. Immanuel will comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws regarding background checks.
- For screening of paid staff members, Immanuel will contact those entities / individuals listed by the applicant as former employers or supervisors to verify that the information presented on the application is accurate.
- The publicly available postings on the potential team member's social media accounts will be checked by the respective staff member. In an era in which most people have a social media presence, it is wise to review an applicant's social media history for red flags or any content that could indicate improper behavior.
- Upon approval of the application and an approved background check, an in-person interview will be scheduled by the respective ministry leader. It will be a face-to-face interview. If a question has arisen with the applicant's background check or application, it will be discussed during the interview. Immanuel will also take this time to educate the applicant about the ministry and to inform the applicant of the child protection policies in place.
- For applicants under the age of 15, Immanuel will require additional references given that a background check will not be able to be conducted. The Executive pastor, director, or assigned volunteer coordinator will contact the character references provided by a potential volunteer applicant to ask the appropriate applicant screening questions.

Training & Placement

- After successful completion of the screening process, and before beginning any training, the team member must review and sign this policy and any others related to his/her area of ministry. This is to demonstrate their understanding of and agreement to Immanuel's policies and procedures.
- All volunteers must complete Ministry Safe and Caring Well training and respective quizzes.
- Upon completion of training, the team member will be placed in their new role.

Recertification of Volunteers

- Ministries will train all team members once a year. The team members must attend recertification training, or if they are unable to attend, they must review the material given at these training courses by video or other provided means.
- Team members must sign a background check authorization every two years, at the time a new background check is performed.

GENERAL SAFETY REMINDERS

- **Never be alone with a child.**
- **Never leave children unattended.**
- **No medication of any kind will be given to children by any team member. The only exception to this rule is an EpiPen during a medical emergency, and application of diaper rash cream or gripe drops.**
- **Follow the "Immanuel Rule of 2" – A minimum of two adults should always be present in any room, except in the event of an emergency; we strive to have 3 adults present if two of the adults in the classroom are related.**
- **Classroom doors should remain open at all times, unless the door is outfitted with a full window. For classrooms that have Dutch or half doors, the top portion will remain open at all times.**
- **Avoid physical contacts with children that could in anyway be misconstrued as inappropriate.**
- **Under the age 15 rule – see screening and placement section for screening guidelines.**



501 N. Shackleford Rd | Little Rock, Arkansas 72211

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