

1 Pacific Southwest District  
2 Church of the Brethren

3 **Child Abuse Prevention Policy Statement**

4 *Including Affidavit (pages 5, 6) & Background Check Authorization (page 7), to be returned*

5 Approved by the District Board of Administration on 8/4/2012

6 [www.pswdcob.org/youth/youth-worker-forms](http://www.pswdcob.org/youth/youth-worker-forms)

7 **Mission Statement**

8 God embraces children with love, placing their nurture and care in our hands. We believe that  
9 children should be safe from all forms of abuse and neglect. We, the Pacific Southwest District staff and  
10 volunteers, will be advocates for children and establish clearly defined safeguards, policies, and procedures  
11 for their protection.

12 **Worker Selection**

*(The words "children" and "youth," refer to ages infant through high school graduate.)*

13 Our task is to create a safe haven for the children served by the Pacific Southwest District of the  
14 Church of the Brethren. All of the suggested policies and procedures are directed to this end. No  
15 organization that deals with children is immune from hiring individuals who are abusive to children. The  
16 fact that we deal with children is a sure guarantee that we may attract persons who have sexual or other  
17 inappropriate interests toward the children. The church and church institutions are no exception.

18 The following procedures will be implemented for Church of the Brethren Pacific Southwest  
19 District sponsored activities to protect children from child abuse:

20 Whether paid staff or volunteers are to be in charge of children, these characteristics should be kept  
21 in mind when asking persons to serve in district youth leadership capacities: a genuine interest and concern  
22 for young people, dependability, self-confidence, self-awareness, good health and a high energy level, a  
23 sense of humor and ability to relax, a cooperative team spirit, emotional stability, and the ability to tolerate  
24 conflict.

25 An application, Affidavit Regarding Youth Leader Conduct and Youth Leader/Youth Contact, and  
26 a background check (attached) will be completed by all who wish to serve as leaders. The District Board  
27 will provide these applications to youth leaders who will be responsible for their completion. Copies will  
28 be screened by the District Board and kept in the confidential file at the District Office. Access to  
29 application files is limited to District staff; members of the Nurture Commission of District Board; and  
30 parents/guardians of youth, under the supervision of District Staff.

31 **Supervision**

32 Adequate adult supervision will be in place. The attached Discipline Policy will be implemented.  
33 The District Youth Coordinator will confer with youth activity leaders to discuss policy, problems, and  
34 potential problems.

35 All drivers for PSWD youth activities must be insured and over 21 years of age. Current medical  
36 release forms are required for all overnight activities. Under no circumstances should one adult alone take  
37 youth on an overnight event.

*(The words "children" and "youth," refer to ages infant through high school graduate.)*

1 An open door policy grants parents, pastors, congregational members the right to visit the activity  
2 at any time unannounced, without disrupting program.

3 One on one interactions are sometimes necessary and appropriate, but care shall be taken that they  
4 be conducted in an environment that provides visibility by other leaders. Another adult should have  
5 knowledge of a staff member's whereabouts and with whom they are meeting. No staff member will make  
6 secret "deals" with the children. All staff must understand that gifts are not to be given to individual  
7 children/young people.

## 8 **Reporting Allegations**

9 **Who must Report?** All District youth workers are characterized as "child care custodians." As child care  
10 custodians, under the law, they have a duty to report suspected child abuse.

11 **When to Report?** Once a staff member reasonably suspects that a child is being abused, he or she must  
12 telephone a child protective agency. That person will be required to prepare and send a written report  
13 within 36 hours (California law). The District Youth Coordinator and the District Executive will be  
14 informed as soon as possible.

15 The identity of the person making the report is disclosed only between child protective agencies, country  
16 counsel, the district attorney or, if requested by court order. Those persons legally required to report  
17 suspected child abuse have immunity from criminal or civil liability for reporting as required (PC III72a).

18 **What to Report?** Child abuse includes physical injury, sexual abuse, and neglect of a child. Child abuse  
19 also includes unlawful corporal punishment and injury. Child abuse does not include a fight between  
20 minors or voluntary sexual conduct between minors where both are of a similar age. Such incidents would  
21 be reported in staff meetings.

## 22 **Contents of a Report:**

- 23 1. Name of the person making the report.
- 24 2. Name of the child.
- 25 3. Present location of the child.
- 26 4. Nature and extent of the injury.
- 27 5. Other information requested by the agency, including why you suspect abuse.

## 28 **Gift Giving**

29 Because gift giving can be a form of buying loyalty or silence, staff, paid or volunteer, are not to give  
30 gifts to individual children or youth. If gift giving is done, it should be done on a group basis or for special  
31 occasions only, with prior knowledge of the parent(s) and supervisor or responsible minister. Gifts given  
32 or received should not be elaborate but should be modest and appropriate to the occasion.

## 1 **Discipline Policy**

2 *"Children need limits. The church, believing in the importance of the growth of self-esteem*  
3 *and Jesus' love of children, can help children question and discover the most appropriate and*  
4 *effective ways of disciplining."* — Elaine M. Ward

### 5 **Guidelines for disciplining children in District youth activities:**

- 6 1. Never yell at a child in anger.
- 7 2. If consequences are necessary, they should be immediate, short in duration, age appropriate and  
8 constructive in nature: damage requires repair, greed brings loss of privilege, and destructiveness  
9 necessitates restitution. Uncontrolled aggressiveness may need isolation and adult intervention. District  
10 youth leadership reserves the right to send a youth home at the parent or guardian's expense.
- 11 3. Discipline involves decisions. A youth may have goals for misbehaving, such as: to get attention, to  
12 get revenge, or to get power. Look for reasons causing the behavior.
- 13 4. Give quality time and attention to the youth. One method for behavior modification is to reinforce good  
14 behavior and give no attention to negative behavior.
- 15 5. Treat youth with respect. This will encourage receptivity to your ideas. Sarcasm creates victims.
- 16 6. Set limits. Be sure your standards of behavior are appropriate to the age of the youth with whom  
17 you are working. Maintain control of the group. Make sure the youth realize what inappropriate  
18 behavior includes.
- 19 7. A simple frown can be an effective method of disciplining a child. Use positive reinforcement for the  
20 child who is modeling appropriate behavior.
- 21 8. Never hit a child. The goal of discipline should be to help children learn to live with others in a  
22 caring way.
- 23 9. Speak and model your expectations. We get what we expect, so expect the best! Set limits.
- 24 10. Make sure you have the youth's attention. If necessary, repeat your instruction. Look in the eyes of the  
25 youth and speak slowly and distinctly.
- 26 11. Explain the natural consequences of the act. (Spilled milk is wiped up by the spiller.)
- 27 12. A warning may be helpful. Never issue threats. They do little to maintain discipline.
- 28 13. Make positive statements. Youth tend to hear the last part of your request. "Walk in the hall" is more  
29 appropriate for suggesting the kind of behavior you want than "Don't run in the hall."
- 30 14. A "time out" will give both you and the youth a few moments to get feelings under control. Isolation  
31 from the group can be an effective discipline.
- 32 15. Stay calm. Remember you are dealing with children. You may experience "growing pains" with a  
33 particular youth. Remember that people are not perfect.
- 34 16. Pray about the situation, for strength and guidance.

## **Affidavit Regarding Youth Leader Conduct and Youth Leader / Youth Contact**

### **Guidelines for the Discipline of Children:**

- I understand and accept the following:
- Youth leaders may, under no circumstances, hit a child.
- Youth leaders may not use abusive or derogatory language with youth.
- A youth leader who encounters a particularly difficult child will seek the assistance of supervisory or administrative staff.
- In all dealings with youth, leaders should strive to respond as opposed to react to children.

### **Guidelines for Youth / Leader Contact:**

**I understand and accept that when touching youth, the following guidelines will be followed:**

- on the hand, shoulder or upper back;
- never against a youth's will (unless in the case of clear and present danger to the youth);
- never against a youth's discomfort, whether expressed verbally or non-verbally;
- in the company of other adults;
- never when it would have the effect of over-stimulation;
- never in a place on a youth's body that is normally covered by a bathing suit, unless for a clear medical necessity and then only with supervision by another adult.

### **Youth Leader's Responsibility:**

- I understand and accept that I am a caretaker of children.
- I understand that there is a clear power difference between myself and youth (money, mobility, authority, experience, knowledge, different set of rules).
- I understand that inappropriate sexual contact with or physical abuse of a youth can have severe emotional and psychological effects that can last a lifetime. These reactions can be so severe, they can require intensive professional intervention which can be disruptive to the victim's life as well as time consuming and expensive.
- I understand that giving gifts to individual children or youth will only be done when it is on a group basis and with prior approval of the parents and supervisor.

### **State Laws Pertaining to Child Abuse:**

**I am aware of the following:**

- definition of "mandated reporter"
- purpose of law
- clarification that a report is based on suspicion of abuse, not proven abuse
- summary of procedure (time frame, reporting agency, information requested)
- penalty for not reporting

*Please keep this copy with you for reference purposes*

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**Signature**

*(sign both sides of this page)*

**Date**

*(The words "children" and "youth," refer to ages infant through high school graduate.)*

## Youth & Children's Leadership Application

Name _____ .	Telephone ( ____ ) ____ - ____ - ____ - ____
Email _____ .	Cell ( ____ ) ____ - ____ - ____ - ____
Address _____	
City _____	State _____ Zip+4 ____ - ____ - ____ - ____
Name of church to which you belong: _____	
For how long: _____	If not a member, length of attendance: _____
Other churches you have attended regularly during past 5 years: _____	
_____	
_____	
Previous church and/or non-church work involving youth/children: _____	
_____	
_____	
What are your reasons for wanting to be a youth leader? _____	
_____	
_____	
What skills and experience do you have that would be valuable as a youth leader? _____	
_____	
_____	
Additional pertinent information: _____	
_____	
_____	

I have read the attached statements (1) Child Abuse Prevention Policy, (2) Discipline Policy, and (3) Affidavit Regarding Youth Leader Conduct, and I agree to abide by them.

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**Signature**
*(sign both sides of this page)*
**Date**

*Please return this page to:* Pacific Southwest District Office, P.O. Box 219, La Verne, CA 91750-0219

# THE CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

## **APPLICANT DISCLOSURE**

**The Church of the Brethren** may obtain information about you from a consumer reporting agency for employment purposes. Thus, you may be the subject of a “consumer report” and/or an “investigative consumer report” which may include information about your character, general reputation, personal characteristics, and/or mode of living, which can involve personal interviews with sources such as your neighbors, friends, or associates. These reports may contain information regarding your credit history, criminal history, social security verification, motor vehicle records “driving records”, workers compensation injuries, employment and/or education history, or other background checks. Please be advised that the nature and scope of this notice and authorization is all-encompassing to include National Background Investigations, Inc, PO Box 966, Stevensville, MD 21666, 800-798-0079 or another outside organization. By signing this notice and authorization you are allowing **The Church of the Brethren** to obtain from any outside organization all manners of consumer reports and investigative reports now and throughout the course of your employment to the extent permitted by law. As a result, you should carefully consider whether to exercise your right to request disclosure of the nature and scope of any investigative consumer reports.

# THE CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND AUTHORIZATION

I acknowledge receipt of the DISCLOSURE REGARDING BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION and A SUMMARY OF YOUR RIGHTS UNDER THE FAIR CREDIT REPORTING ACT and certify that I have read and understand both of those documents. I hereby authorize the obtaining of "consumer reports" and/or "investigative consumer reports" by **The Church of the Brethren** at any time after receipt of this authorization and throughout my employment, if applicable. To this end, I hereby authorize, without reservation, any law enforcement agency, administrator, state or federal agency, institution, school or university (public or private), information service bureau, employer, or insurance to furnish any and all background information requested by National Background Investigation, Inc, PO Box 966, Stevensville, MD 21666, 800-798-0079 another outside organization acting on behalf of **NATIONAL BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS, INC** itself. I agree that facsimile (fax), electronic or photographic copy of this Authorization shall be as valid as the original.

**New York applicants or employees only:** You have the right to inspect and receive a copy of any investigative consumer report requested by National Background Investigations, Inc. by contacting the consumer reporting agency identified above directly.

**Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey and Oklahoma applicants or employees only:** Please initial if you would like to receive a copy of a consumer report if one is obtained by National Background Investigations, Inc. \_\_\_\_\_

**California applicants or employees only:** By signing below, you also acknowledge receipt of the NOTICE REGARDING BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION PURSUANT TO CALIFORNIA LAW. Please initial here if you would like to receive a copy of an investigative consumer report or consumer credit report at no charge if one is obtained by National Background Investigations, Inc. whenever you have the right to receive such a copy under California law. \_\_\_\_\_

## SIGNATURE OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND AUTHORIZATION

By my signature below, I certify that the information provided on the attached forms is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Please print name (last, first, middle)

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# THE CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

<b>TO BE COMPLETED BY APPLICANT</b> (all information will be used for background screening purposes only)		
Last Name	First Name	Middle Name
Other Known Names Or Other Names Used		
Other First Name	Other Last Name	
Current Address		
City	State	Zip
From (mm/yy)		To (mm/yy)
Primary Telephone Number		Email
Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy)		
Social Security No.		
Driver's License No.		State
Previous Address of Residence (past seven years)		
1. Address		
City	State	Zip
From (mm/yy)		To (mm/yy)
2. Address		
City	State	Zip
From (mm/yy)		To (mm/yy)
3. Address		
City	State	Zip
From (mm/yy)		To (mm/yy)