Safe Sanctuary Policies for
Parkway United Methodist Church

Effective – January 1, 2027
Revised October 22, 2026

I. INTRODUCTION

OUR CALLING AND OUR MANDATE IS TO ENSURE SAFE SANCTUARY FOR ALL GOD'S PEOPLE.

Throughout the gospels, Jesus provides teachings on providing a peaceable kingdom for all of God's people, including our children, youth, and vulnerable adults *(Matthew 5:9, Luke 18:15-17).* The peaceable kingdom begins with sanctuary, and scriptures provide examples of how sanctuary is to be a community of protective nurture and harmony *(Psalms 20:1-2, 27:4-5)*.

As Christians, we are called to create a safe sanctuary in our churches, so that they may be holy, safe, and protective communities for all of God's people, regardless of age or ability.

Therefore, as we practice our faith and fulfill our mission to serve Jesus Christ, Parkway United Methodist Church has developed these Safe Sanctuary Policies as guidelines for protecting from harm the children, youth, and vulnerable adults (herein known as "protected persons") involved in all Parkway events, activities, programs, retreats, trips, and overnight functions (herein known as "events").

II. SCOPE OF CONFERENCE POLICIES

These Safe Sanctuary Policies shall be applicable to all Parkway events involving protected persons. The policies and provisions herein shall apply to all persons, including all clergy and lay persons, paid and unpaid, who have any direct or indirect contact with protected persons who participate in any events sponsored by Parkway UMC.

III. DEFINITIONS

- **Protected Persons** include:
  - **Child** – Anyone under the age of 12;
  - **Youth** – Anyone who is at least 12 years old but not yet 18, or anyone who is 18 years old or older and still in high school;
  - **Adult** – Anyone who is 18 years old or older who is not in high school and not a vulnerable adult;
  - **Vulnerable Adult** – Anyone who is 18 years old or older who has either physical or mental limitations that makes them susceptible to abuse.

- **Personnel/Caregivers** who are subject to these policies include:
  - All clergy, including pastors, assistant pastors, etc.
  - Any adult, employee or volunteer, who works around, supervises, or is engaged in an event for youth, children, or vulnerable adults (e.g. teachers, Sunday School teachers, event leaders, group leaders, assistant leaders, and childcare providers).

- **Event Leader** – the representative who is tasked with organizing and implementing the event. This person is responsible for coordinating with volunteers to ensure that all caregivers receive a background check and training on the Safe Sanctuary Policies and follow the policies. Also, this person is responsible for ensuring that at least one adult who is trained and certified in First Aid and CPR will be present at the event.

- **Adult Leader** – must be 21 years of age or older.

- **Young Adult Leader** – must be 18-20 years of age, not in high school, and supervised by a leader. Young adults will not oversee, nor be left alone with children and students. An exception may occur if adult availability is limited for an activity. Program Staff may allow two young adults to oversee a group of children or students, but this is not preferable. The staff member overseeing the event will choose young adults with great care.

- **Student Aid** – must be 14-18 years of age, and in high school. They may work with children only when supervised by two adults or one adult and one young adult.

- **Student Helper** – must be 11-13 years of age. They may work with children only when supervised by two adults or one adult and one young adult.

- **Childcare Provider** – must be 18 years of age or older and not in high school.

- **Related** – for the purpose of these policies, related means by blood (parent, grandparent, sibling, etc.) or relationship (stepfamily, dating, cohabitating, etc.).

- **Abuse** – Parkway United Methodist Church follows the State of Texas Family Code. The following list of types of abuse is not exhaustive nor is it intended to limit this policy but is provided to educate.

    1. *Verbal Abuse* – any verbal act that humiliates, degrades, or threatens any protected person.
    2. *Physical Abuse* – physical injury intentionally inflicted upon a protected person.
    3. *Neglect* – failure to provide for a protected person's basic needs or to take action to safeguard a protected person.
    4. *Sexual Abuse* – any sexual contact, indecency or activity of a sexual nature with a protected person.
    5. *Emotional/Psychological Abuse* – a mental or emotional injury to a protected person that results in a material impairment in their growth, development, or psychological functioning.
    6. *Financial Exploitation/Abuse* – the illegal or improper use of the resources of a protected person for monetary or personal benefit, profit, or gain, including using another person's social security number or other identifying information without the informed consent of that person or their parent/guardian.

7. *Spiritual/Religious Abuse* – refers to psychological manipulation and harm inflicted on a person by using the teaching of their religion. This is perpetrated by members of the same or similar faith and includes the use of a position of authority within the religion.
8. *Bullying* – behavior intended to intimidate, offend, humiliate, or harm another person physically or psychologically. This can include offensive name calling, abusive language, acts or threats of physical abuse, vandalism, theft, or destruction of property.
9. *Peer Abuse* – abuse perpetrated by a protected person to another protected person.
10. *Digital Communication Misconduct* – contacting protected persons thru electronic media (text, phone, Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, etc.) without including the parent or guardian, or taking pictures of protected persons without permission from the parent or guardian.

IV. SCREENING PROCESS

Prior to any event, the Event Leader is responsible for ensuring that all screening, interviewing, and training of personnel/caregivers occur. The screening process includes gathering and reviewing information to find individuals who can provide safe and caring supervision in a safe environment.

1. All individuals, including staff and volunteers, working with protected persons shall complete an application/consent form. By signing the form, the applicant gives permission to have references (2) checked and background screening completed by the appropriate authority. Background checks should be done through the company with which The Texas Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church has contracted. All individuals shall be background checked annually, unless Parkway UMC has run a Federal Background check (5 years).

2. The Event Leader or their designee will conduct personal interviews with candidates, check all references, and ensure that all documentation is submitted to Parkway Staff for processing, which includes but is not limited to Social Security number verification, a nationwide sex offender screening, and a multi-state criminal history background check.

3. All background check reports and application/consent forms shall be submitted to program staff for review.

4. If any reports raise questions about the fitness of the applicant, Parkway will disapprove the application. Parkway UMC reserves the right to turn away any persons for service.

5. Due to the rise of peer-on-peer abuse, screening for volunteers under the age of 18 and still in high school should include a written application/consent form and references (non-related).

6. No person who has admitted to the sexual abuse or neglect of a protected person or is known to have a criminal or felony conviction or civil record of abuse will be employed or permitted to volunteer or work with or around a protected person in any capacity.

7. No one who has been convicted of driving under the influence (DUI) or driving while intoxicated (DWI) within 5 years shall be allowed to act as a driver.

8. No one with a criminal drug conviction within 5 years will be allowed to work or volunteer with protected persons.

9. Results of screenings shall be kept confidential, except for those who have a need to know. All convictions will be reviewed by the Head Pastor and the board.

10. Screening is valid for 12 months and must be renewed after 12-month expiration.

V. TRAINING

All providers/caregivers must complete Safe Sanctuary training and orientation before an event begins.

Parkway UMC has developed and implemented training and orientation procedures for all persons who work with protected persons at Parkway events. Training shall include but is not limited to appropriate discipline, appropriate physical and emotional boundaries, leader misconduct, and a review of these policies. No person shall have any direct or indirect contact with protected persons until they have completed this training program. A review of these policies is required before each event. This training will be documented in the church's system (Fellowship One).

VI. APPROPRIATE DISCIPLINE & BOUNDARIES

- **Discipline:** Protected persons should be made aware that appropriate behavior is expected at all Parkway events. Gentle reminders are always necessary when dealing with protected persons. When these reminders don't work, then discipline needs to move to the next step.
    - In cases where behavior must be addressed, designated event leaders and counselors from the protected person's home church should be consulted.
    - A reasonable response might include a period of "time away" for the protected person. This should be done with necessary supervision, keeping Safe Sanctuary policies and guidelines in mind.
    - Keeping parents/guardians involved is important. They should be kept up to date on their loved ones' behavior.
    - For serious offenses, the appropriate response will be to send the protected person home immediately. Parents/guardians and the Leader will help make proper arrangements.
    - In no case is physical discipline an appropriate measure to deal with protected persons. There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any protected persons. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:
        - Corporal punishments or threats of corporal punishment
        - Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training
        - Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling
        - Subjecting a protected person with harsh, abusive, or profane language

- Requiring a protected person to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the person's age, including requiring a person to remain in a restrictive device

- **Physical Boundaries** are most important in dealing with protected persons. Those working with protected persons must understand and respect those boundaries. Obviously, these boundaries change as protected persons age.
- **Emotional Boundaries** are also important. Leaders must maintain appropriate boundaries in relationships and not step outside of those lines to allow the protected person to become too attached to them. Caregivers must be careful where conversations might lead and to steer clear of inappropriate talk.
- **Spiritual Boundaries** – As we seek to lead people in the development of their faith story, it is essential that we guide them and do not manipulate their emotions. As we present the message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the opportunity to follow Jesus in a life-long journey, we must present the invitation with "no-strings-attached," and allow each person involved to make their own decisions without stigma, coercion, or pressure in any form.

VII. APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR & EXPECTATIONS

Those who work with protected persons should avoid conduct that may cross boundaries. The following are some examples of behavior that is considered inappropriate:

- Any unwanted form of physical affection;
- Kisses on the mouth;
- Lengthy hugs or embraces;
- Any touching of private parts or sexual contact;
- Displays of affection one-on-one or in isolated areas;
- Touching knees or legs;
- Holding children over three years old on the lap;
- Piggyback rides, wrestling or tickling children or youth;
- Comments or compliments, verbal, written, or electronic, about bodies or physical attributes;
- Private meetings with individual children or youth;
- Giving money or gifts to individual children or youth;
- Discussing their own sexual activities or inquiring about the sexual activities of others, including children or youth;
- Possessing, downloading, or viewing sexually oriented or explicit material or sharing such material with children or youth;
- Using, possessing, providing, or being under the influence of alcohol or drugs while participating in activities for children or youth.

VIII. EVENT SUPERVISION

All Parkway events must be supervised and monitored properly to prevent or stop any inappropriate behavior by any adults, youth, or children. The following rules will apply to all events, including those off-site. To

achieve compliance with the policies it may be necessary to combine groups, recruit and train additional volunteers, or cancel an event.

Supervision for Nursery (0-3yrs old)

- All volunteers/employees must always wear their name badge. These name badges communicate that you are a certified Safe Sanctuary volunteer. Individuals without this name tag on are not allowed to come into contact with children unless granted permission by Program Staff. Program Staff must inform employees/volunteers of the individual without a name badge. Program Staff must be notified if an unauthorized person comes into the space and will remove the individual.
- Only adult volunteers can assist nursery children in the bathroom and must be in eyesight of a second adult while doing so.
- There shall be a minimum of 2 unrelated Childcare Providers per room. Related persons may serve together as long as one other unrelated adult is present at all times. State Childcare Minimum Standards shall be followed, particularly in relation to the number of childcare providers to child ratio:
    - 0-12 months — 2 adults / 8 children max (1:4)
    - 1-3 years — 2 adults / 12 children max (1:6)

Supervision of Children (4yo-6th grade) and Students (7th-12th grade)

- All Parkway events shall observe the "2 Leader Rule", specifically, 2 unrelated Leaders per classroom and 2 Leaders within line of sight and sound in other areas. Related persons may serve together as long as one other unrelated adult is present at all times. Vulnerable adults may not serve as a qualified adult for purposes of this rule; however, a vulnerable adult may be included as a helper upon special approval from the Event Leader and with training.
    - 3-5 years – 2 adults / 20 children max (1:10)
    - School-age – 2 adults / 24 children max (1:12)
- All volunteers/employees working with children must wear their name badge at all times. Individuals without this name tag on are not allowed to come into contact with children unless granted permission by Program Staff. Program Staff must inform employees/volunteers of the individual without the name badge. Program Staff must be notified if an unauthorized person comes into the space and will remove the individual.
- To eliminate secrecy or isolation, each room used for the care of protected persons should have observation windows or doors with windows. Windows should remain uncovered. If windows are not possible, doors should remain open. Half doors are recommended for use with younger children.
- Unused rooms should remain locked.
- Any one-to-one mentoring or consulting shall be conducted in sight and sound of another Leader.
- One Leader may be in contact with multiple youth (6th-12th grade) if they are in the line of sight and sound of other Leaders at all times.
- Children shall not be one-on-one with each other out of the line of sight and sound of a Leader or designated adult.
- Those working with children and youth must be a minimum of five (5) years older than the child/youth they are serving.
- In the case of rooms with Dutch doors, the top half of the door shall be kept open. It is acceptable to close the door to a room if there is a window to the hallway that allows observation of activities in the

room. In no circumstance shall a child or student be alone with a volunteer/employee behind a closed door with no window. Doors shall never be locked while occupied by volunteers/employees and children or students unless it is a Dutch door in which the top portion must be left completely open.

Classes shall remain in the assigned room location. If there is to be a change of location, a sign shall be posted on the door providing notice of any change of location.

Adult "Floaters", or hall monitors, are highly recommended in the case an adult has to step out of the classroom for any reason. These floaters must be safe sanctuary certified as they are in indirect contact with children and students and have a high chance of coming into direct contact.

Check-in and Check-out System for Children

- All children will need to be checked in and out of events by the parent or guardian.
- Check-in and check-out can either be done with a physical sign in or using FellowshipOne check-in.
    - When using the FellowshipOne check-in system it generates a code on the child's name badge and a parent pick up tag matching the child's code. The name badge must always be worn by the child. This system checks each participant into the church's system (Fellowship One).
    - Upon check-out, the parent and/or guardian must display the parent and/or guardian pick up tag to receive their child. Without this tag, a photo identification card must match authorized check-out persons for the child. Authorized check-out persons can be found on the Event Release Form. The only exception is on Sunday mornings if the elementary children return to service where volunteers and/or staff will visually ensure reunification in the sanctuary.
- Volunteers/employee attendance must be recorded into the church's system (Fellowship One).

Check-in and Check-out System for Students

- All Students must check in using the tablet for Wednesday Night programming. This system checks each participant into the church's system (Fellowship One).
- Program staff must take attendance for any Parkway UMC event and check each participant into the church's system (Fellowship One).
- All Students must check out with Program Staff. Program Staff must see the adult or car of the individual picking the student up.
- Volunteers/employee attendance must be recorded into the church's system (Fellowship One).

Supervision from Disability Aid/Caretaker

A person assisting as a disability aid or a caretaker can be one on one with a child or student they are providing aid to ONLY with parent/guardian permission. They must take Safe Sanctuary training and complete a background check.

Supervision of Off-site and Overnight Events

<u>Trips, Retreats, and Overnight Requirements:</u>

All off-site and overnight events and room assignments are approved by Conference/District staff or Parkway staff.

1. There must be at least 2 screened unrelated Leaders present for all trips, retreats, and other events where the protected persons gather overnight at, or away from, the designated campus.
2. At least one of the Leaders must be 25 years old or older.
3. There must be at least 2 qualified adults present for every 10 protected persons attending the event.
4. There will be at least one screened Leader of each gender present at coed overnight events. At single gender overnight events, at least one of the two screened Leaders present shall be of the same gender as the protected persons who are present.
5. The person in charge of protected persons for each overnight trip and/or retreat shall carry parental permission forms, including permission for emergency medical care.
6. There should be separate showers, bathrooms, changing areas, and sleeping arrangements for each gender.
7. No adult should shower, change clothes, or use the toilet in the presence of protected persons.
8. Bed-sharing is not permitted, and bedding of any kind must be separated from one another.
9. Sleeping accommodations must be shared with the parents or legal guardians.

Guidelines for Hotel-type Settings:

1. Separate rooms for adults and protected persons (where applicable) should be assigned with at least 3 participants per room with attention paid to the age and size of the participants.
2. Assignments should be made so that an adult's room is between 2 protected persons' rooms, or at least on the same floor and scattered among the participants' rooms.
3. At least one adult should have a room by stairs and elevators.
4. Leaders should make random monitoring hall trips and room checks at night. This should be done by 2 Leaders of the same gender as those being checked.
5. A hotel should be selected where the rooms open to the interior of the building (i.e., do not open to the outside).

Guidelines for Travel:

1. One adult who is at least 25 years old shall be responsible for all aspects of the trip, including carrying all necessary documentation, including emergency contacts. At least one qualified adult must be trained in First Aid and CPR.
2. During events, the Event Leader is responsible for transportation and those driving.
3. When a protected person is transported in any vehicle, the driver must be either be the protected person's parent/guardian, a screened adult, or a paid staff person who is at least 25 years old.
4. Drivers must provide a valid driver's license for the vehicle being operated, up to date vehicle registration, as well as proof of insurance to drive the vehicle. Copies of each should be maintained by the Event Leader or event sponsor.
5. When one vehicle is used for an event, the 2 adult rule applies. When multiple vehicles are used for an event, a single staff member/volunteer may drive if there are 2 or more students and all vehicles travel together.

6. Drivers must require that passengers wear seat belts; the number of passengers must not exceed the number of seat belts. Each passenger is required to wear a seatbelt at all times, while the vehicle is in motion.
7. Drivers should be advised of a designated route and should not deviate from it except in cases of emergency or road detours.
8. Drivers should not use cell phones unless required for communication with other drivers. Any use should be hands-free and in accordance with state law. Drivers should not text/message while driving.
9. When a trip is planned and the destination is expected to be 100 miles or more from the point of departure, drivers are to be listed on an "approved driver list" maintained by the Event Leader.
10. Parent or guardian permission is required before any child or youth may be transported to or from a church-sponsored off-site event.
11. Prior to departure, parents or guardians shall be provided transportation information including, but not limited to, driver assignments, departure and expected arrival times, event leader and driver contact information, location information, etc.
12. Any significant changes to transportation assignments shall be communicated to parents or guardians as soon as practical.
13. All drivers are expected to complete and comply with the Transportation Compliance Form.
14. All drivers are required to comply with all federal, state, and local traffic laws at all times while transporting passengers.
15. In the event of an accident or emergency
    - Ensure immediate safety of all passengers
    - Contact emergency services (911) when necessary
    - Notify event leader and/or staff member as soon as possible
    - Follow church incident reporting procedures
    - Do not leave children or youth unsupervised

IX. ONLINE SAFETY AND RELEASES

The use of social media for ministries with protected persons must also conform to appropriate safety standards. Parents and guardians must be informed of how social media will be used.
Record keeping for Parkway United Methodist Church Events (Medical Release, Travel Release, and Photo Release) is decided upon, as deemed fit for the event by Program Staff. If a release is necessary, it must be gathered for all children and students participating in the Parkway UMC event. These forms are attached to this policy. All children and student records must be immediately accessible to volunteers/employees for use in an emergency. Parents or legal guardians may revoke any waiver at any given time. The revocation shall be in writing and given to the applicable Program Staff.

1. The volunteer or staff person should never initiate a connection (friending, following, etc.) on social media.
2. If a Leader receives private communication from a protected person that seems questionable, the Leader should immediately end the conversation in the virtual space and offer opportunities to have the conversation in person and in compliance with the earlier guidelines for one-on-one conversations. The Event Leader and/or parent/guardian should be made aware of the incident immediately. Note: If an in-person meeting is not possible, those involved will determine the most reasonable alternative in compliance with the earlier guidelines for one-on-one conversations.

3. Leaders may only post photos of protected persons on social media or websites with prior written permission granted by a parent/guardian. When posted, PHOTOS MUST NOT BE TAGGED with names or location indicators. All photos must be appropriate and in keeping with the spirit of the ministry event.
4. Appropriate language and behavior also apply to group communications. Sexual or derogatory language or bullying are prohibited and can lead to expulsion from the group.
5. All electronic communications shall be documented and retained.
6. Any inappropriate online communications or those that are potentially harmful in nature must be removed but should be saved and reported to the Event Leader as well as parents/guardians. Digital Misconduct at Parkway events shall be reported by the Event Leader to the Lead Pastor.

X. REPORTING SUSPECTED ABUSE OF NEGLECT OF PROTECTED PERSONS

The law is clear: Any person, 18 and older, who has reason to suspect that a protected person has been or is being abused or neglected has a legal obligation to report it to the police, the Texas Department of Family Protective Services (1-800-252-5400), or online at Texas Abuse Hotline. Emailed reports are not accepted. In case of an emergency, call 911.

1. Professional confidentiality does not exempt from legal reporting obligations.
2. Failure to report suspected abuse and neglect is a criminal offense, as is intentionally making a false report.
3. Address any needs the child or youth may have, medical or otherwise. The administrator or event leader will report to the parent(s) and/or legal guardians(s).
4. The person suspected of abuse (respondent) shall, for the safety and well-being of the children and students, be removed with dignity from further contact with the children and students until an appropriate investigation has taken place. The matter shall remain confidential.
5. If the abuse or neglect involves someone who lives in the home with the protected person, it should be reported to Child Protective Services. CPS is responsible for investigating reports of abuse or neglect by household members or caregivers. Law enforcement conducts criminal investigations.
6. Following the report of an incident, the adult event leader, or supervisor in charge shall document the report, and then speak with the alleged victim, being careful to use open-ended questions.
7. All such conversations shall be documented. Careful and confidential documentation is essential. The documentation will include the following:
    - The name of the adult leader observing or receiving the disclosure of abuse, including the date, time and place and any action taken by this person.
    - The alleged victim's name, age, and date of birth.
    - Any statement made by the alleged victim.
    - Name of the respondent, the date, time and place of any conversation or any statement made by the respondent.
    - Any action taken, i.e. suspension of the respondent.
    - Date and time of call to the appropriate agency, name of worker spoken to, content of that conversation and case number assigned.
    - Date and time of call to law enforcement agency, name of officer spoken to and content of that conversation.
    - Date and time of any other contacts made regarding this incident.

8. It shall be the goal to provide supportive care to both the victim and the respondent and to restore such persons to wholeness. Supportive care can include the procedures of the criminal justice system, provisions of the current *Book of Discipline*, appropriate counseling referrals and continued pastoral visitation.
9. Confirmed reports of proven incidents of abuse shall be retained in a confidential file for future screening purposes.
10. All volunteers and staff members that are Safe Sanctuary trained are mandatory reporters for ALL on-site and off-site abuse, of all children, and all students associated with Parkway UMC and not.

Reporting of Incidents

A Parkway United Methodist Church Incident Report must be completed when a child's physical or emotional safety has been violated. This includes administering first aid, giving a child emotional support, or any other instance a parent should know about. If the child or student is being sent home in any different way than when they arrived, an incident report must be completed. The volunteer/employee must ensure that the incident report is completed as soon as possible and is signed by the Program Staff. Program Staff will discern who will communicate to the parents regarding the incident. A copy of the incident report must be given to the parent and the original, with the parent signature, will be filed electronically.

Reporting Protection

No one who reports a violation of these policies will be retaliated against for making a complaint. All reports of inappropriate behavior involving protected persons are taken seriously and will be investigated.

Investigation

All reports of inappropriate behavior involving protected persons are taken seriously and will be investigated. If the investigation substantiates a complaint, immediate corrective action designed to stop the misconduct and prevent its reoccurrence will be taken up to and including dismissal of the offending person.

XI. REPORTING INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

For guidance on behavior that is inappropriate, but which may not rise to the level of abuse or neglect, or policy violations contact Ministry staff or the lead pastor.

Leader Misconduct

It is a privilege to work with children and students. Great responsibility is required. Those who violate this policy shall immediately be removed from contact with children and students and appropriate authorities shall be notified immediately if needed.

XII. MEDIA RESPONSE

The Senior Pastor, District Superintendent and Bishop shall be informed of all investigations or allegations of abuse. If investigations or allegations of abuse should come to the attention of the media, a response shall

come from a designated church spokesperson or a spokesperson in the Conference Communications Office or as designated by the Bishop. Refer all inquiries to that spokesperson. **Do not give out any information, simply state that all inquiries will be answered by our spokesperson.**

XIII. MINISTRY PROGRAMS AND OUTSIDE ORGANIZATIONS

All programs or organizations who come into contact with children or students in a supervisory setting and use the facilities of Parkway United Methodist Church must have a representative sign this policy stating that they are in compliance with it. If the program or organization has an existing policy, the policy is sufficient if approved as such by the Board and Senior Pastor. All leadership of these organizations must either provide a copy of a background check or have one run through PUMC.
Parkway Children's Day School (PCDS), a ministry of Parkway UMC, is exempt from following this policy as they are instructed to follow Texas Childcare Licensing law. If an employee of PCDS wishes to volunteer or be employed in another ministry of PUMC, they must adhere to this policy. The background check system through Texas Department of Family and Protective Services that all PCDS employees must undergo will suffice in replacement of the background check system used by the Texas Annual Conference for volunteering/employment in another ministry area.

This policy must be readdressed and reapproved by the Parkway United Methodist Church Board every 5 years.

Attached to this policy are the following forms mentioned above: Event Release Form, Volunteer Application Form (contains Volunteer Application, Safe Sanctuary Training & Policy Acknowledgment, Reference Checks Form), Incident Report, Transportation Compliance Form.

SUMMARY

APPLICATION PROCESS

1. All adults and young adults shall complete an application and Background Check. By signing the form, the applicant gives permission to have references checked and background screening completed by the appropriate authority.
2. All student aids and helpers shall complete an application with a parent/guardian signature. By signing the form, the applicant gives permission to have references checked and proper screening to occur.
3. The application will be processed with all references checked and background screening completed by the company with which the conference has a contract.
4. All applicants must attend Parkway UMC Safe Sanctuary training in person or online and initial understanding of the policy.

REPORTING OF INCIDENTS

1. If an adult worker/volunteer observes or suspects a violation of the Safe Sanctuary policy, these steps must be taken immediately.
   A. Address any immediate needs the child or student may have.
   B. Report concerns to Program Staff. Program Staff reports concerns to Senior Pastor. If the complaint is about Program Staff reports can be made to the Senior Pastor or the Board.
   C. Cooperate with leadership and authorities throughout the crisis.
2. If an adult suspects that abuse or any suspected violation of the Texas Penal Code is taking or has taken place, he or she shall call 911 when needed and report the abuse to the appropriate local law enforcement agency and/or The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. (800.252.5400)

SUPERVISION POLICY

1. Never be alone with a child or student.
2. Only adult volunteers may assist children in restrooms.
3. Ensure to wear name tags while volunteering/working with children.
4. Ensure incidents are reported when needed and communicated to parents/guardians by the Program Staff.
5. Keep appropriate boundaries from children and students and use age-appropriate discipline.

Consent of Receipt of Parkway UMC Safe Sanctuary Policy

I certify that I have read the Safe Sanctuary Policy of the Parkway United Methodist Church completely, understand it and have no questions regarding the policy.

_____
Printed Name

_____ _____
Signature Date

_____ _____
Parent/Guardian Signature (if under 18 years of age) Date

_____
Organization (if applicable)