



***Date Approved: June 5, 2006; revised and approved March 1, 2010 .....***

***Approved By: Bethel Lutheran Church Council .....***

**Title: CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRY VOUNTEER/STAFF WORKER  
POLICY**

**Purpose:** Bethel Lutheran wishes to provide a Grace-filled and safe environment for the young people that attend Bethel. Our goal is to provide caring leadership, opportunities and experiences that will show all children that they are loved unconditionally; that they are capable, worthwhile and unique. In order to provide this safe environment we have developed this policy to provide procedures and guidelines for our children and youth ministry volunteers and staff.

**POLICY GUIDELINES:**

- 1) Children and youth volunteers will be classified into the following two levels:  
**Level I:** a volunteer who assists others but does not work alone with children or youth. An example would be a teacher aide in Sunday school, a kitchen worker in VBS or a nursery aide. This level does not require a background check. **Level II:** a volunteer who is directing or leading children in a room or in an event. This level supervises other volunteers/aides/assistants. This individual has been background checked and does not require direct supervision by Church Staff. All church staff will have background checks.
- 2) All church activities involving children and youth will be supervised or conducted by Level II Volunteers or staff.
- 3) Nursery:
  - a. All infants and toddlers will be signed in by parents each time they are left in the nursery room for any child care activity
  - b. For all church activities and Sunday mornings, parents will be given a pager at the time they leave their child in the nursery.
  - c. Only a parent may pick up his/her child unless prior arrangements have been made.
  - d. There should be at least 2 adults present in the nursery at all times.
- 4) **Prohibited** behaviors of all child/youth workers:
  - a. Physical striking, hitting, spanking of a child/youth by a worker or volunteer
  - b. Touching, fondling, kissing a child/youth in an inappropriate or sexual manner
  - c. Placing yourself in a position where you are alone and unsupervised with one child

- d. Verbally or emotionally abusive language
- 5) All volunteers and staff must report any inappropriate incidents and/or injuries that they are personally aware of.
  - 6) Annually all volunteers will be given information about child abuse and be refreshed about reporting procedures.
  - 7) Adults who have been convicted of either sexual or physical abuse of children/youth will not be employed and shall not volunteer in any church-sponsored activity or program for minors.
  - 8) Volunteers under the age of 18 years may not be alone and unsupervised with children.

## **INCIDENT REPORTING**

- 1) In the event that an incident occurs that involves improper, unsafe and/or prohibited behavior as listed earlier, it shall be reported to the attention of a staff member or clergy overseeing the program in which the incident occurred.
- 2) Once reported, a written incident report will be completed as soon as possible.
- 3) All incidents reported are to be handled in a fair and confidential manner. Prior to action being taken, the alleged individual of wrongdoing must have received communication and be given an opportunity to explain the alleged incident. All incidents must be dealt with in a professional and Christ-like manner (see 2 Timothy 4:2)
- 4) Notification of all appropriate parental, legal, social welfare, insurance or other authorities will be made by the business manager and/or pastor. The worker will be immediately suspended while being investigated.
- 5) All reports of allegations of misconduct will be confidential. Reporting agents will maintain the confidentiality of all parties, to the extent allowed by law, with the exception of required reporting to parental, legal and social welfare authorities and the church's insurance and legal counsel.
- 6) The official spokesperson for Bethel Lutheran shall be the Pastor, or in the absence of the Pastor, a previously designated spokesperson. All inquires or requests for information from the media, attorneys or any other parties shall be referred to the official spokesperson. No person other than the official spokesperson is to release any information regarding any alleged incident of child abuse without the express approval of the official spokesperson.

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**Bethel Lutheran Ministries**  
**Background Check Authorization**

**Area of Ministry/ Service:** \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(First) (Middle) (Last)

Former Name(s) and Dates Used: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Maiden) Year Married

Current Address Since: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Mo/Yr) (Street) (City) (Zip/State)

Previous Address From: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Mo/Yr) (Street) (City) (Zip/State)

Previous Address From: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Mo/Yr) (Street) (City) (Zip/State)

Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Drivers License Number/State: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a member of Bethel Lutheran Church? YES Since: NO  
(Please circle)

The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I hereby authorize **Bethel Lutheran Church** and its designated agents and representatives to conduct a review of my background causing an investigative report to be generated for employment and/or volunteer purposes. I understand that the scope of the investigative report includes verification of social security number; current and previous residences; and criminal history records from any criminal justice agency in any or all federal, state, county jurisdictions.

I hereby release **Bethel Lutheran Church**, the Social Security Administration, and its agents, officials, representative, or assigned agencies, including officers, employees, or related personnel both individually and collectively, from any and all liability for damages of whatever kind, which may, at any time, result to me, my heirs, family, or associates because of compliance with this authorization and request to release.

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

