



United Parish of Upton
First Congregational - UCC and Upton United Methodist Church



Safe Church Policies and Procedures

Updated 6HSW 201

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I. Introduction

As a Christian faith community the United Parish of Upton is committed to creating and maintaining programs, facilities and a community in which members, friends, staff and volunteers can worship, learn and work together in an atmosphere free from all forms of discrimination, harassment, exploitation or intimidation. It is the intention of the church to take action in an attempt to prevent and correct behavior that is contrary to this policy and, if necessary, to discipline those persons who violate this policy.

II. Definitions

Minister: a person authorized by the church to carry out its ministry. Ministers include elected or appointed leaders of the church, employees, and volunteers, as well as Authorized Ministers.

Authorized Minister: a person who holds ordained ministerial standing or has been commissioned or licensed by an Association of the United Church of Christ or the United Methodist Church. An Authorized Minister is one type of minister within the meaning of this policy.

Leadership Council: a council comprised of a representative from each committee, the Authorized Minister, and elected officers of the church.

Leadership Council Chair: head of the Leadership Council of the United Parish of Upton.

Safe Church Advocate: an individual appointed by the Leadership Council to coordinate the Safe Church Task Force and all related activities.

Ministerial Relationship: the relationship between one who carries out the ministry of the church and the one being served by that ministry.

Harassment: all people have the right to an environment that is free from verbal and/or physical abuse. Harassment and/or bullying is defined as physical or verbal mistreatment of a person where an imbalance of physical or psychological power is created with the bully being stronger (or perceived to be stronger) than the victim and which causes a disruption to the environment. Aggressive behavior or bullying is any behavior that may subject a person to insults, taunts, or challenges whether verbal or physical in nature (either isolated or repeated behavior), which are likely to intimidate and/or provoke a violent or disorderly response from the person being treated in this matter. This also includes the encouragement or prodding of other people to engage in these types of aggressive behaviors.

Sexual Exploitation: sexual activity or contact (not limited to sexual intercourse) in which a person engaged in a ministerial relationship with another takes advantage of the vulnerability of the person being served.

Sexual Harassment: repeated or coercive sexual advances toward another person contrary to his or her wishes. It includes behavior directed at another person with the intent of intimidating, humiliating, or embarrassing the other person, or subjecting the person to public discrimination. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition or circumstance of instruction, employment, or participation in any church activity.
2. Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for evaluation in making personnel or church-related decisions affecting an individual; or
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance or participation in church activities or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or church environment.

Prohibited sexual harassment includes unsolicited and unwelcome contact that has sexual overtones, particularly:

1. Written contact, such as sexually suggestive or obscene letters, notes, e-mails, or invitations;
2. Verbal contact, such as sexually suggestive or obscene comments, threats, slurs, epithets, jokes about gender-specific traits, sexual propositions;
3. Physical contact, such as intentional touching, pinching, brushing against another's body, impeding or blocking movement, assault, coercing sexual intercourse; and
4. Visual contact, such as leering or staring at another's body, gesturing, displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, posters, or magazines.

Sexual harassment also includes continuing to express sexual interest after being informed directly that the interest is unwelcome and using sexual behavior to control, influence, or affect the career, salary, work, learning, or worship environment of another. It is impermissible to suggest, threaten, or imply that failure to accept a request for a date or sexual intimacy will affect a person's job prospects, church leadership, or comfortable participation in the life of the church. It is forbidden either to imply or actually withhold support for an appointment, promotion, or change of assignment, to suggest that a poor performance report will be given because a person has declined a personal proposition; or to hint that benefits, such as promotions, favorable performance evaluations, favorable assigned duties or shifts, recommendations or reclassifications, will be forthcoming in exchange for sexual favors.

III. Ministerial Conduct

Consistent with our understanding of the priesthood of all believers, all Authorized Ministers, employees, elected and appointed lay leaders, and authorized volunteers are Ministers to the congregation.

It is important that every Minister of the church be adequately prepared and educated for the ministry in which they serve others, and to understand the ways in which their use or misuse of authority may impact others.

It is the policy of the United Parish of Upton to encourage its Ministers to nurture safety within Ministerial Relationships by being attentive to self-care, education, maintaining appropriate boundaries, and the importance of referring those in need to supportive and helpful resources. Harassment, sexual exploitation and/or sexual harassment of parishioners or others by anyone engaged in ministry on behalf of the United Parish of Upton is unethical behavior and will not be tolerated within this congregation.

IV. Requirements for Commencing and Continuing Ministry

1. Before beginning their duties, All Ministers age 14 and older will submit a disclosure form. (See Form A)
2. To assess the suitability of their character and qualifications for the position they seek, all Ministers will be interviewed by either a member of the Safe Church Task Force, staff member, or respective program director (Ex. Vacation Bible School Director).
3. A member of the Safe Church Task Force will conduct a registered sex offender review for each Minister by searching their name on the Department of Justice website at www.nsopr.gov. This registered sex offender review will be repeated on an annual basis for all Ministers.
4. Authorized Minister(s) of the church will attend workshops on this topic as required by their denominations.

A. Additional Requirements for Child and Youth Ministry

The United Parish of Upton is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment in which young people can learn about and experience God's love.

In order to promote this, we have established the following guidelines in addition to the general requirements for ministry to the church.

1. All volunteers who work with minors should be a member of the United Parish of Upton or have the approval of the appropriate program director. (ex. Vacation Bible School)
2. All volunteers who regularly work with children and youth will complete and submit a disclosure document. (See Form B)
3. Before beginning their duties, all prospective employees will undergo a background check, including but not necessarily limited to inquiries of references and a criminal history verification (CORI).
4. All volunteers and employees who regularly work with children and youth will receive annual orientation/training regarding safe church policy and procedures.
5. It is the policy of this church to provide adequate supervision and safeguards for youth activities.
 - a. In situations where participants are not readily visible to each other, there will be no fewer than two unrelated adults present with children.
 - b. Youth who are at least 14 years may assist an unrelated adult in supervising children in the Sunday school; however, such assistance does not alter the requirement that at least two unrelated adults be present.
 - c. Adults must be 21 or older to supervise junior high activities.
 - d. Adults must be 25 or older for senior high youth group activities.

B. Child Bathroom Policy

The following practices shall apply to supervision of bathrooms:

1. Children second grade and under must be escorted to the bathroom by a certified volunteer.
2. No employee/volunteer shall enter a single occupant bathroom or a multiple occupant bathroom stall with an unrelated child unless the entry door is ajar (propped open) in a way that (s)he can be observed by others.
3. Children and youth will be required to ask permission before using bathrooms.
4. Ministers in leadership should frequently and randomly check bathrooms to ensure compliance with the policy.

C. Transportation of Minors

Transportation of minors is a serious responsibility. Especially when utilizing church owned vehicles or private vehicles of ministers, utmost care shall be taken in view of the risks associated with managing transportation.

The following standards shall apply:

1. No minister shall transport a single child that is not his/her own without prior permission of the parent/guardian, except as may be required in an emergency with the approval of a supervisor. Communications shall be established to verify the whereabouts, expected arrival and change of custody of the child.
2. No youth group member, regardless of age, shall transport himself or any other youth to an off-site event unless approved by the Director of Christian Education.
3. Any driver operating a vehicle which holds 16 passengers or more, including the driver, shall possess a valid Commercial Driver License (CDL).
4. Any person who drives on behalf of the United Parish of Upton's sponsored events must submit an Employment/Authorized Children and Youth Volunteer Application and Disclosure Form (Form B), a Qualification Form & Agreement for Use of Personally Owned Vehicles Form (Form C) and a criminal history verification (CORI).
5. A Parent/guardian permission slip shall be filled out and kept on file for all day trips within a 50 mile radius of the United Parish of Upton and will be valid for one school year. Permission slips shall indicate all persons allowed to receive the child on return of the trips.
6. Any day trip over 50 miles from the United Parish of Upton, overnight trips or mission trips are required to have an additional permission slip on file.
7. Ministers are not to make unauthorized or unplanned stops except in an emergency.
8. Each vehicle shall have a copy of all permission slips, grouped by vehicle, for all participants, staff and volunteers for the event.
9. All passengers are to be seated and to use safety belts as available.

10. Ministers are to be seated on larger vehicles (ex. school bus) in a way that permits them to supervise young passengers.
11. When passengers must disembark at a rest facility or destination, care shall be taken to obtain a headcount on arrival and departure.
12. All passengers shall be required to complete a trip on the same vehicle to ensure accountability unless leaders need to switch groupings and/or vehicles.

D. Off-site Activities

Off-site activities require special additional planning, taking into account the nature of the destination and exposure to the public at large. For example, attendance at a public venue, such as an amusement park, will require greater supervision than a visit to a sister church. Due to the increased risk of a child becoming lost or injured during an off-site activity, extra care shall be taken to assure adequate supervision.

The following are minimum requirements:

1. All off-site activities shall be approved in advance by the Leadership Council.
2. The trip leader shall provide a plan to the Christian Education Director outlining transportation and supervision for the activity.
3. Each minister shall be assigned to a specific group of children to supervise. Each minister must then maintain a roll sheet listing all of the children in his or her group. Head counts and roll checks will be conducted routinely.
4. Parents/guardians shall be provided a means to make emergency contact with the trip leader.

E. Over-night Activities:

The following standards will apply in addition to standards for off-site activities:

1. For the event of a building evacuation, an outdoor rally point will be designated in advance.
2. A roster will be maintained of the room assignments for each child and adult.
3. A bed check will be conducted at a specific time known to all.
4. Adult-child ratios are to be maintained for outings away from the lodging site.
5. A daily schedule of events shall be maintained with supervisory duty assignments included.
6. Double-queen lodging is preferred at hotels, four to a room. Children in each room will be of similar age. No adult will share a bed with a child.
7. Adult rooms will be scattered among rooms occupied by children. There shall be at least one adult lodged on any floor on which children are sleeping
8. Standards for bathroom, out-of-the-way, off limits locations and transition time shall be maintained as the site circumstances and facilities may require.

V. Social Media Policy

The creation of all social media (web, Facebook, YouTube, or similar) in the name of the United Parish of Upton must have prior permission of the Leadership Council. Ministers using social media to lead or coordinate United Parish of Upton's group activities must use official church sites. Personal social media sites may not be used to represent the United Parish of Upton.

A. Social Media Communications

In order to extend the life of the congregation, enhance communication and develop participation of people in the life of the church and its ministry, the United Parish of Upton will authorize certain Ministers to manage the church's official website and Facebook page.

Ministers who create public pages on behalf of church programs are responsible to monitor communications and make every effort to ensure that ministers do not have inappropriate communication with children.

Ministers having social media privileges on behalf of the church, shall treat unsolicited communication from children under age 13 as an unauthorized message. No reply may be given except to indicate that accepting an unauthorized message by under-age children is a violation of the United Parish of Upton's Social Media policy.

When using social media to communicate with children, all Ministers must inform parents/guardians of the communication and obtain permission.

B. Social Networking Code of Conduct

Each Minister using the resources of social media shall provide children and their parents with this Social Networking Code of Conduct:

1. Prohibit comments that are, or could be construed by any observer, to be harsh, coercive, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating.
2. Prohibit sexually oriented conversations or discussions about sexual activities.
3. Prohibit private messages between ministers and children under age 13.
4. Prohibit posting inappropriate pictures (for example, sexually suggestive, exploitive or voyeuristic) or inappropriate comments on pictures.
5. Encourage parents to play a role in monitoring their children's interactions on social media.
6. Continuously remind children of acceptable behavior on social networking sites.
7. Deny participation by individuals who repeatedly violate the Code of Conduct.

VI. Procedures for Handling Complaints of Sexual Exploitation or Harassment

Process

- A. A subcommittee of the Safe Church Task Force with no less than two members, one male and one female, will be established each year in preparation for the possibility of hearing complaints under this policy. The subcommittee, hereinafter referred to as “The Response Team,” will be familiar with the terms of this policy, as well as the established procedures of the church for dealing with a complaint.
- B. One or more of the following three procedures may be taken in addressing incidents of alleged sexual exploitation or harassment.
 1. The complainant can attempt to resolve the matter directly with the individual accused of sexual exploitation or harassment.
 2. If a complainant reports an incident to a Minister, the Minister can either make an effort to resolve the matter informally; or if an informal resolution of the complaint does not seem wise, appropriate, possible, or does not succeed, the claimant may request that formal proceedings be taken.
 3. Formal proceedings shall include the following steps:
 - a. The Response Team shall advise the Authorized Minister and Leadership Council Chair of the receipt of all complaints and shall keep them apprised of ongoing steps and actions taken. If either the Authorized Minister or Leadership Council Chair is the subject of the complaint, this notification requirement shall not include that person.
 - b. The Response Team shall gather statements or other information from the individuals involved in the alleged exploitation or harassment and from others who may have pertinent information, and present such information to the Safe Church Task Force or an appropriate subcommittee thereof.
 - c. The Safe Church Task Force or an appropriate subcommittee thereof, shall make determinations and take actions appropriate to resolve the matter. These may include:
 - 1) Finding that sexual exploitation or harassment has occurred, and that the appropriate body of the church is called upon to take action accordingly; such action may include one or more of the following:
 - a. A formal reprimand, with defined expectations for changed behavior;
 - b. Recommending or requiring sexual harassment training, psychological or psychiatric assessment, counseling and/or treatment;

- c. Probationary standing, with the terms of the probation clearly defined;
 - d. Dismissal from employment or authorized volunteer position by, affiliation with, or membership in, the church.
- 2) Finding that sexual exploitation or harassment did not occur.
- 3) The Response Team may seek the advice of legal counsel or others to advise it in performing its functions.
- C. A written summary of the Safe Church Task Force's proceedings in such cases will be maintained on file for five years.
- D. Anyone may initiate the complaint process on behalf of another. Neither consent nor acquiescence will excuse or exonerate inappropriate behavior.
- E. In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes sexual harassment or exploitation, consideration shall be given to the record of the alleged incident(s) as a whole and to the totality of the circumstances, including the context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred.
- F. Any person bringing a sexual harassment or exploitation complaint or assisting in investigating such a complaint will not be adversely affected in terms and conditions of employment or church membership or affiliation, or otherwise discriminated against or discharged.
- G. If the complainant or respondent is not satisfied with the disposition of the matter by the Safe Church Task Force, he or she has the right to appeal to the Leadership Council Chair, or to the Authorized Minister who shall refer the matter to the Leadership Council. The subject of any such appeal to the Leadership Council shall be limited solely to whether the procedures of this policy were followed. The matter will not be reconsidered on the merits and the decision of the Leadership Council will be the final resolution of the matter. If the Leadership Council determines that the procedures of this policy were not followed, it will refer the matter back to the Safe Church Task Force to complete the processing of the complaint in accordance with these procedures.
- H. Apart from any legal requirements, The United Church of Upton will make a report to appropriate authorities, including but not limited to the Massachusetts Department of Children and Family Services, if at any time the church has reasonable cause to believe that a minor may be an abused or neglected child. Any Minister of the church who becomes aware of facts or circumstances that child abuse or neglect has occurred or that there exists a substantial risk that child abuse or neglect may occur in the reasonably foreseeable future, shall immediately report the matter to the Authorized Minister, Leadership Council Chair and Safe Church Advocate so that the church may take appropriate action in a timely manner.
- I. All allegations of behavior which call into question the fitness for ministry of any Authorized Minister will be promptly forwarded to the Church & Ministry Committee of the Massachusetts United Church of Christ and/or the appropriate Bishop of the United Methodist Church.

VII. Registered Sex Offender Policy

As a community of faith, serving by the example of Jesus Christ, we also seek to attend to the needs of all who seek healing, redemption and fellowship among us. We shall be prepared to accept in our midst those who have violated the most sacred mores of our society at large, in order to provide them refuge, peace, example and support in their recovery and penitence. We commit to doing so with utmost care for the welfare of our congregation, collectively and individually, and the community we serve.

We accept that there are risks to be borne in our deliberate association with and ministry to sex offenders who are considered a pariah among the community-at-large as evidenced by the many constraints placed upon their interaction with the community. We agree to honor the needs of the congregation and our community to have reasonable assurance that a sex offender in our care will not have an opportunity to re-offend as a result of lapses in our management of the offender.

We shall consider limited participation or membership of a sex offender in our congregation with utmost care which shall include the following elements:

1. Document understanding of the statutory limitations applying in the State of Massachusetts to the movement and activities of a sex offender, taking into account the programs of the church. (Examples: Sunday school, infant care, pre-school, seasonal camps and associations which serve children and “vulnerable adults”.)
2. Consider and understand the character of the crimes which have resulted in requiring an individual to register as a sex offender, the passage of time without repeated conduct or behavior and the risk and opportunity of re-offending that is presented by the particular programs of our congregation.
3. Document understanding of limitations and prohibitions placed upon the offender by courts and probation authorities. The opinion of a mental health professional regarding the suitability of the person to participate in the life of the church shall be obtained by the Authorized Minister. In all cases where probation is in force, we shall obtain the explicit approval of and conditions of participation specified by the probation officer. A recommendation by law enforcement or mental health professionals to deny participation to an offender shall be honored in all cases.
4. Given that criminal convictions are a matter of public record, there shall be no expectation of secrecy on the part of the offender. As a condition of participation in our faith community, the offender must agree that the leadership of the church may make it known to the members of the church that we have accepted among us a registered sex offender. The conditions and limitations that apply to participation in the life of the church may be made known to all.
5. The conditions of participation by a registered offender shall be defined by a “Limited Access Agreement” (Form D) executed by the offender and church. Such agreement shall be approved by probation authorities as may be necessary according to element 3 above. The agreement shall be reviewed annually to validate ongoing eligibility. Violation of the agreement by the offender shall be considered as grounds for immediate cancellation of the agreement.

The following additional considerations shall apply:

Victims in the congregation – In such case as the victim of a RSO (registered sex offender) is a member of the congregation, employee or is a client of other services provided by the church, the RSO shall not be permitted to attend the church or church activities.

Clergy-penitent privilege – “Clergy-penitent privilege” is a “Rule of Evidence” defining or limiting information which the Authorized Minister may reveal in a court of law only. “Clergy- penitent privilege” does not prevent the Authorized Minister from informing the congregation of matters which may be relevant to their safety; it does not require the Authorized Minister to hold information in secrecy.

The Authorized Minister shall assume responsibility and take extraordinary care to understand the scope and limitations of clergy-penitent privilege in the State of Massachusetts, and the parameters of confidence and privilege as defined by our congregation. The Authorized Minister shall inform the leadership of the church of the general principles of confidence and privilege under which (s)he performs his/her clerical duties.

Escorts (Church Associate) – Conditions of limited access for a RSO will commonly require that the offender have an escort while on the church premises or at church events elsewhere. A person serving as an escort shall not be a spouse, partner or relative of the offender.

Approval & Supervision – With the advice and prior approval of the Leadership Council, a Limited Access Agreement with a Petitioner (known RSO) may be signed only by the Senior Authorized Minister.

The Authorized Minister, in association with the Safe Church Task Force and church associates (escorts), who shall be named in the Limited Access Agreement, shall be responsible for the general supervision of the Petitioner in all of the latter’s activity in relation to the church. Elements of supervision shall include the following:

1. Knowledge of the terms of the Limited Access Agreement, including activity limitations placed upon the Petitioner.
2. Knowledge of the Petitioner’s offense history sufficient to understand the risks of association with the church and its ministries.
3. Willingness to assert activity limitations and to report any violation of restrictions placed upon the Petitioner.
4. Willingness to intervene in any onset of a risky or problem behavior.
5. Willingness to report all cases of non-compliance to the Authorized Minister.

The Authorized Minister and the Safe Church Task Force shall assess, prior to selection, whether a proposed church associate is willing to fulfill the above elements of supervision.

Professional privacy – Members who are employed in certain occupations may have a statutory obligation to maintain privacy around the criminal history of their clients who may also be parishioners. Such members shall decline to accept leadership roles which may put them in a position of decision-making regarding individuals who may be their professional clients.

Juveniles – While the criminal record of a juvenile is ordinarily concealed by the courts, the church may come to know the juvenile’s history by other means. Honest disclosure by a juvenile and parents in the volunteer application and screening process may reveal that a record exists without knowing the specifics. While a limited access agreement will be required for the juvenile, as for others, every precaution will be taken to preserve the privacy and confidentiality which the law affords a juvenile.

VIII. Training

The mission of the United Parish of Upton is first to prevent abuse of children and other “vulnerable adults”. We wish to identify and nurture Safe Conduct to lead and to guide through adequate training.

To fulfill our leadership obligation to our Ministers, each new employee and new volunteer shall complete a specific program of training within 30 days of assuming duties. Fulfillment of training requirements shall be documented by the Safe Church Task Force and respective program Director (Christian Education; Youth Choir; Day Care; Pre-School, etc.).

Training shall be repeated annually. Records shall be maintained by the Safe Church Task Force and respective program Directors.

Abuse prevention curriculum shall include (but not be limited to):

1. Safe Church Policies and Procedures
2. Code of Conduct
3. Abuse prevention education

Training for volunteer/staff members who begin a term mid-year will have individual training by a member of the Safe Church Task Force or respective program Directors.

IX. Responsibility for Oversight

Implementation and oversight of these policies and procedures is the special responsibility of the Safe Church Task Force, Safe Church Advocate, Leadership Council, Authorized Minister and Director of Christian Education.

1. The Safe Church Task Force shall consist of the Director of Christian Education, one representative from the United Parish Nursery School, and at least three ministers of the church, including at least one female and one male appointed by the Leadership Council for a three year term.
2. In conjunction with the Authorized Minister, the Safe Church Task Force will be responsible for creating, and updating the United Parish of Upton’s Safe Church Policies and Procedures document.
3. The Safe Church Task Force will be responsible for:
 - a. Receiving, verifying and maintaining personal/professional references for all ministers of the church on a yearly basis.

- 1) Responses to references will be kept, along with all required forms, in a private area accessible only by members of the Safe Church Task Force.
 - b. Assist in training of all ministers in the policies and procedures of United Parish of Upton.
 - c. In coordination with the Authorized Minister, the Safe Church Policies and Procedures will be made available to all ministers and the congregation at large.
4. The Safe Church Advocate is a member of the United Parish of Upton who is appointed by and accountable to the Leadership Council and has cleared a CORI check. This appointee will be asked to serve a term of not less than 3 years.
5. The Safe Church Advocate will:
- a. Be a certified CORI officer and serve as the CORI Administrator
 - 1) As mandated by law, the CORI Administrator will be the only person to see and verify eligibility from CORI data.
 - a) All CORI data will be kept private and accessible only by the Safe Church Advocate.
 - b) All individuals have the right to request a copy of their CORI results.
 - c) CORI data will be destroyed according to Massachusetts CORI Regulations.
 - 2) The Safe Church Advocate will make recommendations to the Safe Church Task Force, Authorized Minister and/or the Christian Education Director as to the qualifications of all applicants.
 - 3) Where a criminal record exists, consideration shall be given to:
 - a) Seriousness of crime;
 - b) Statutes that may legally disqualify the person from working with minors;
 - c) Length of time since the last offense;
 - d) Pattern of criminal activity; and
 - e) Activities the applicant has been involved in since the offense(s) occurred.
 - 4) Conviction for the following crimes shall be considered barriers to volunteer work with children and other vulnerable adults.
 - a) Violent crimes
 - b) Sexual assault
 - c) Sexual abuse or neglect of a child
 - d) Drug offenses or driving offenses (depending upon position requirements)
 - 5) Arrest data are not grounds for disqualification, only convictions. The status or relevance of other crimes will be considered individually.
 - b. File mandated report forms as needed.



United Parish of Upton
First Congregational - UCC and Upton United Methodist Church



Safe Church Forms

Updated June 2015

The United Parish of Upton
Authorized Volunteer Application and Disclosure Form

FORM A

Name: Last **First** **Middle**

Address: Street **City/State** **Zip code**

Daytime Phone **Evening Phone** **Email**

References: One reference should be related to you and the other references should not be related to you.

Name

Address **City/State** **Zip code**

Telephone **Email**

Name

Address **City/State** **Zip code**

Telephone **Email**

Name

Address **City/State** **Zip code**

Telephone **Email**

I have been a member of this church since _____

I have been a friend of this church since _____

I have never been convicted of, nor pled guilty or no contest to, a crime. (Exclude convictions that have been sealed, expunged or legally eradicated, misdemeanor convictions for which probation was completed and the case was dismissed, or offenses about which inquiry is not permissible in this state) **True** **Not True**
If not true, please briefly describe the nature of the crime(s), the date and place of conviction and the legal disposition of the case. The church will not deny a position to any applicant solely because the person has been convicted of a crime. The church, however, may consider the nature, date and circumstances of the offense, as well as whether the offense is relevant to the duties of the position applied for.

Is there any fact or circumstance involving you or your background that would call into question your being entrusted with the responsibilities of the position for which you are applying? Yes No

If yes, please provide a brief explanation. _____

The covenants between persons seeking authorized volunteer positions in the church require honesty, integrity, and truthfulness for the health of the church. To that end, I attest that the information set forth in this application is true and complete. I understand that any misrepresentation or omission may be grounds for rejection of consideration for, or termination of, the position I am seeking to fill. I acknowledge that it is my duty in a timely fashion to amend the responses and information I have provided if I come to know that the response or information was incorrect when given or, though accurate when given, the response or information is no longer accurate.

Beginning such relationships with an open exchange of relevant information builds the foundation for a continuing and healthy covenant between volunteers and the church they seek to serve. To that end, I authorize The United Parish of Upton to make inquiries regarding my character and qualifications, including all statements I have set forth above. I also authorize all entities, persons, former employers, supervisors, courts, law enforcement, and other public agencies to respond to inquiries concerning me, to supply verification of the statements I have made, and to comment on and state opinions regarding my background, character, and qualifications. To encourage such persons and entities to speak openly and responsibly, I hereby release them from all liability arising from their responses, comments, and statements.

The United Parish of Upton's authorized volunteer recruitment process involves the sharing of information regarding applicants with those persons in a position to recruit, secure, and supervise both the position I am seeking to fill and program I am seeking to participate in. To that end, I authorize The United Parish of Upton and its agents to circulate, distribute, and otherwise share information gathered in connection with this application to such persons for these purposes. I understand that The United Parish of Upton will share with me information it has gathered about me, if I request it to do so.

I acknowledge my receipt and understanding of the United Parish of Upton's Safe Church Policy.

(PRINT NAME & SIGN)

DATE

(PRINT NAME & SIGNATURE OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN FOR APPLICANTS UNDER 18)

DATE

- Sex Offender Registry (www.nsopr.gov) review performed on _____
- Personal interview conducted by staff on _____
- Reference inquiries completed on _____

Employment/Authorized Children and Youth Volunteer Application and Disclosure Form

Name: Last **First** **Middle**

Address: Street **City/State** **Zip code**

Daytime Phone **Evening Phone** **Email**

References: One reference should be related to you and the other references should not be related to you.

Name

Address **City/State** **Zip code**

Telephone **Email**

Name

Address **City/State** **Zip code**

Telephone **Email**

Name

Address **City/State** **Zip code**

Telephone **Email**

I have been a member of this church since _____

I have been a friend of this church since _____

I have never been convicted of, nor pled guilty or no contest to, a crime. (Exclude convictions that have been sealed, expunged or legally eradicated, misdemeanor convictions for which probation was completed and the case was dismissed, or offenses about which inquiry is not permissible in this state)

True Not True

If not true, please briefly describe the nature of the crime(s), the date and place of conviction and the legal disposition of the case. The church will not deny a position to any applicant solely because the person has been convicted of a crime. The church, however, may consider the nature, date and circumstances of the offense, as well as whether the offense is relevant to the duties of the position applied for.

No civil lawsuit alleging actual or attempted sexual discrimination, harassment, exploitation, or misconduct; physical abuse; child abuse; or financial misconduct has ever resulted in a judgment being entered against me, been settled out of court, or been dismissed because the statute of limitations has expired. True Not True

If not true, give a short explanation of the lawsuit. (Please indicate the date, nature, and place of the incident leading to the lawsuit; where the lawsuit was filed; and the precise disposition of the lawsuit.)

I have never terminated my employment, professional credentials, or service in a volunteer position or had my employment, professional credentials, or authorization to hold a volunteer position terminated for reasons relating to allegations of actual or attempted sexual discrimination, harassment, exploitation, or misconduct; physical abuse; child abuse; or financial misconduct. True Not True

If not true, give a short explanation. (Please indicate the date of termination; name, address, and telephone number of employer or volunteer supervisor; and nature of the incident(s) leading to your termination.)

Do you have a valid drivers' license? Yes No

With respect to my driving record, I have not had my license suspended or revoked within the last five years due to reckless driving or driving while intoxicated and/or under the influence of a controlled substance.

True Not True

Is there any fact or circumstance involving you or your background that would call into question your being entrusted with the responsibilities of the position for which you are applying? Yes No

If yes, please provide a brief explanation.

The covenants between persons seeking authorized volunteer positions in the church require honesty, integrity, and truthfulness for the health of the church. To that end, I attest that the information set forth in this application is true and complete. I understand that any misrepresentation or omission may be grounds for rejection of consideration for, or termination of, the position I am seeking to fill. I acknowledge that it is my duty in a timely fashion to amend the responses and information I have provided if I come to know that the response or information was incorrect when given or, though accurate when given, the response or information is no longer accurate.

Beginning such relationships with an open exchange of relevant information builds the foundation for a continuing and healthy covenant between volunteers and the church they seek to serve. To that end, I authorize The United Parish of Upton to make inquiries regarding my character and qualifications, including all statements I have set forth above. I also authorize all entities, persons, former employers, supervisors, courts, law enforcement, and other public agencies to respond to inquiries concerning me, to supply verification of the statements I have made, and to comment on and state opinions regarding my background, character, and qualifications. To encourage such persons and entities to speak openly and responsibly, I hereby release them from all liability arising from their responses, comments, and statements.

The United Parish of Upton's authorized volunteer and employee recruitment process involves the sharing of information regarding applicants with those persons in a position to recruit, secure, and supervise both the position I am seeking to fill and program I am seeking to participate in. To that end, I authorize the United Parish of Upton to circulate, distribute, and otherwise share information gathered in connection with this application to such persons for these purposes. I understand that the United Parish of Upton will share with me information it has gathered, if I request it to do so.

I acknowledge my receipt and understanding of the United Parish of Upton's Safe Church Policy.

(PRINT NAME & SIGN)

DATE

(PRINT NAME & SIGNATURE OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN IF UNDER 18)

DATE

- Sex Offender Registry (www.nsopr.gov) review performed on: _____
- Personal interview conducted on: _____
- Reference inquiries completed on: _____
- CORI completed on: _____
- Safe church awareness training and policy orientation performed on: _____

VOLUNTEER DRIVER

FORM C

Qualification Form & Agreement for Use of Personally Owned Vehicles

United Parish of Upton

Name: _____ Birth Date: _____

Home phone: _____

Work phone: _____

Cell phone: _____

Years of driving experience: _____

Driver license No. & State: _____ Expiration Date: _____

Insurance Carrier: _____ Expiration date: _____

Liability Policy Limit -- Bodily Injury: _____ Property Damage: _____

1. Are all licensed vehicles you own covered by insurance as required by law? Yes No

2. Have you ever been denied a driver's license or had one suspended or revoked? Yes No

3. Have you had any moving traffic violations or accidents in the past three years? Yes No

If the answer to questions 2 or 3 is YES, explain. Give dates and details of violations and accidents on the back of this form.

I AGREE to the following as a condition of being permitted to act as a Volunteer Driver:

1. The vehicle owner's insurance is the primary liability insurance coverage in the event of an accident.
2. The owner of the vehicle which I am driving is responsible for keeping the vehicle in safe working order.
3. The owner of the vehicle is responsible for all damage to the owned vehicle however caused.

4. The owner of the vehicle shall maintain liability insurance in the amount of at least

- Bodily Injury -- \$50,000 per person and \$100,000 per accident or \$200,000 combined single limit; and
- Property Damage -- \$25,000 per accident

5. The church's insurance shall apply in excess of the vehicle owner's liability insurance limits in the event the primary limits are exhausted, and only to the extent the church is legally obligated to pay damages.

6. I will not receive or initiate phone calls unrelated to the trip while operating a vehicle for church activities, to include receiving or initiating text messages.

7. I will indemnify and hold the church harmless from liabilities and damage resulting from my operation of a motor vehicle not owned by the church. The church will indemnify and hold harmless the volunteer driver for liabilities and damages resulting from acts or negligence of the church.

I hereby AFFIRM that the information I have given is stated truthfully and that I shall abide by the terms of the church's Vehicle Use Policy.

Attach a copy of Driver's License and current Insurance ID Card

Driver Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPROVED: _____ **Date:** _____ **Expiration:** _____

- CORI completed on: _____

This Limited Access Agreement is executed between:

United Parish of Upton

Referred to below as “we”, “the congregation” and “Authorized Minister”;

And

(Petitioner Name) _____

Referred to below as “you” and “your”

The United Parish of Upton is an “open and affirming congregation” and as such affirms the dignity and worth of all persons as expressed in our Affirmation Statement. We are committed to being a religious community open to those who are in need of worshiping with us, especially in times of distress and serious personal troubles. However, based on your background, we have concerns about your level of contact with our congregation. The following guidelines are designed to reduce the risk to both you and them of an incident or accusation. We welcome you to our congregation and our membership but your participation will be limited to ensure the safety of our congregation and to assure that you will not be subject to future accusations.

Within these guidelines, the congregation welcomes your escorted participation in: worship services, coffee hour, meetings, adult education, and adult social events. You are to avoid all contact with children and youth on church property or congregation-sponsored events. This includes the following:

1. Do not talk with, photograph or video record children.
2. Do not volunteer or agree to lead, chaperone or participate in events for children and youth including such things as religious education classes, stories or talks for worship, youth group events, activities during intergenerational events, driving or otherwise transporting children and/or youth.
3. You will remain in the presence of an Escort (Church Associate) who knows your situation at all times. You must meet that person before coming onto church property (or before arriving at any church-sponsored event), remain with him/her at all times, and depart with him/her.
4. If a child or youth in the congregation approaches you, either at church or in a community place, politely and immediately excuse yourself from the situation.
5. Avoid being in the church or any church-owned building or church-rented space at any time without an Escort present with you at all times.
6. Do not ask for, seek access to, nor remove from the church any materials, files, directories, etc. listing members and friends of the church.
7. We ask that you limit your time in coffee hour to about ten minutes.

As a part of this agreement it is understood that you will have three (3) members of this congregation, approved by the Authorized Minister and the Safe Church Task Force, who know thoroughly your history and are willing to serve as your Escort (Church Associate). You will be welcome on church property and at church-sponsored events but must be accompanied at all times by one of the Church Associates named on the next page:

Named Church Associate 1: _____

Named Church Associate 2: _____

Named Church Associate 3: _____

To engage your integration into the congregation and to assist you in maximizing your experience with the church it is agreed that you will meet on a bi-monthly basis with the Escorts (Church Associates) and the Authorized Minister together or separately to discuss matters of mutual interest and concern. These meetings will also serve as an ongoing review of the implementation of this agreement.

Implementation of this agreement is based upon a review by the Authorized Minister of the most current supporting documents as follows:

1. A statement from the court as to the nature of the conviction.
2. A risk assessment from a qualified therapist.
3. A report from a certified treatment provider indicating that you are not at too high a risk for recidivism.

Any change in the above must be reported immediately to the Authorized Minister.

REASONS FOR EXCLUDING A PERSON FROM ALL CONGREGATIONAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

1. Refusal to allow the Authorized Minister to contact the treatment provider and parole officer. Refusal to go for a risk assessment with a qualified therapist.
2. Report by a treatment provider that the individual is at too high a risk for recidivism. Refusal to sign and comply with the Limited Access Agreement.

This agreement will remain in effect until/unless:

1. You fail to honor the terms of the agreement, thus nullifying it.
2. You, the Authorized Minister, and the Safe Church Task Force mutually agree to change the terms of this agreement.

ATTEST: I have reviewed the terms of the above Limited Access Agreement and agree to abide by its provisions. Failure to honor its terms will result in my being denied access to church property and all church events.

Signature

Date

Address

Phone

WITNESS FOR THE CHURCH:

Authorized Minister
United Parish of Upton

Date



Massachusetts law requires mandated reporters to immediately make a report to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) when they have reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of 18 years is suffering from abuse and/or neglect by:

**STEP 1: Immediately reporting by oral communication to the local DCF Area Office (see contact information at end of form); and
 STEP 2: Completing and sending this written report to the local DCF Area Office
 within 48 hours of making the oral report.**

For more information about requirements for mandated reporters and filing a report of alleged abuse and/or neglect please see **A Guide for Mandated Reporters** available on the DCF website at www.mass.gov/dcf.

Please complete all sections of this form. If some data is uncertain or unknown, please signify by placing a question mark (“?”) after the entry.

CHILDREN REPORTED

Name	Current Location / Address	Sex	Age or Date of Birth
		<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	

PARENT OR GUARDIAN 1

Name				
First	Last	Middle		
Address				
Street & Number	City / Town	State	Zip Code	
Phone #			Age/Date of Birth	

PARENT OR GUARDIAN 2

Name:				
First	Last	Middle		
Address:				
Street & Number	City / Town	State	Zip Code	
Phone #:			Age/Date of Birth	

REPORTER / REPORT

Report Date:	<input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Report	<input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary Report		
Reporter's Name:				
First	Last	Middle		
(If the reporter represents an institution, school or facility, please indicate)				
Reporter's Address:				
Street & Number	City / Town	State	Zip Code	

Phone #:

Has reporter informed caretaker of report?

Yes No

What is the nature and extent of injury, abuse, maltreatment or neglect? Please list any prior evidence of same and/or other worries regarding danger to the child(ren). (Please cite the source of this information if not observed firsthand.)

If known, please provide the name(s) and contact information of the person(s) responsible for the injury, abuse, maltreatment or neglect and/or any other information that you think might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injury, abuse, maltreatment or neglect:

What are the circumstances under which the reporter became aware of the injury, abuse, maltreatment or neglect? Pedikit# (If applicable) Please include information on dates and timeframes for when the injury, abuse, maltreatment or neglect occurred:

What action has been taken thus far to treat, shelter or otherwise assist the child(ren) to deal with the situation?

If report involved alleged domestic violence, please list any information that will help DCF make safe contact with the family (e.g., work schedule, place of employment, daily routines for the adult victim):

Please provide any information about the family's strengths and capacities that you think will be helpful to DCF in ensuring the child's safety and supporting the family to address the abuse and/or neglect concerns:

Signature of Reporter: _____

To report child abuse and/or neglect:

Weekdays from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm call the local DCF Area Office.
Weekdays **after** 5:00 pm and 24 hours on weekends and holidays call the
Child-At-Risk-Hotline 1-800-792-5200

DCF AREA OFFICES

Western Region

Greenfield 413-775-5000
Holyoke 413-493-2600
Springfield 413-452-3200
Robert Van Wart Center
East Springfield 413-205-0500
Worcester, East & West 508-929-2000
Whitinsville 508-929-1000
Leominster 978-353-3600
Pittsfield 413-236-1800

Northern Region

Lowell 978-275-6800
Framingham 508-424-0100
Haverhill 978-469-8800
Lawrence 978-557-2500
Cambridge/Somerville 617-520-8700
Malden 781-388-7100
Cape Ann, Salem 978-825-3800
Lynn 781-477-1600

Boston Region

Dimock Street, Roxbury 617-989-2800
Hyde Park 617-363-5000
Harbor, Chelsea 617-660-3400
Park Street, Dorchester 617-822-4700

Southern Region

Arlington 781-641-8500
South Weymouth 781-794-4400
Cape Cod & Islands 508-760-0200
Plymouth 508-732-6200
Fall River 508-235-9800
New Bedford 508-910-1000
Brockton 508-894-3700
Taunton/Attleboro 508-821-7000