



Youth Ministry Leader/Volunteer Code of Conduct

As an adult leader/volunteer in the Student Ministry of Memorial Presbyterian Church, I understand and agree to the following:

- I understand that my role as a youth ministry leader/volunteer is very important to the success of this youth ministry, and I pledge to keep the needs of the ministry and the students in focus at all times.
- I will love, encourage and mentor all students without regard to race, ethnicity, socio-economic standing, gender, age, political beliefs or spiritual health.
- I will follow and enforce the letter and the spirit of the **Youth Ministry Code of Conduct**.
- I will conduct myself in a professional and Christian manner at all times.
- I will faithfully represent and practice the commitments of the **Church Covenant**.
- I will exercise discipline according to the youth ministry **Discipline Policy**.
- I will maintain appropriate interaction with youth participants and other adult participants. Positive examples include: one-armed side hugs, handshakes, high fives, verbal praise, arms around shoulders, holding hands during prayer. All leaders must avoid kissing, inappropriate touching, verbal sarcasm, tickling, wrestling or piggyback rides with minors, any form of unwanted affection, and compliments that relate to a student's body.
- I understand that physical, sexual, or romantic relationships between a youth ministry leader/volunteer and a student are unethical and prohibited.
- I will follow a "two deep" strategy* for ministry with students making sure at least two adults are present at all youth ministry activities and situations. If extreme circumstances require me to be alone with students, I will make sure that the youth minister or other adults know the situation. One-on-one counseling will take place in an open environment such as a quiet spot in the youth center. When one-on-one counseling must be done in an office, other adult workers should be notified as to the starting time of the session and the projected conclusion. The door should be left slightly open. If one-on-one counseling is required apart from these settings, the counseling should take place in a public setting such as a busy restaurant and other youth ministry leaders should be notified.
- I will handle matters of confidentiality in a responsible manner, and I understand that if a student reveals something that will place that student or anyone else in harm's way I must report to the youth minister (or the pastor or other church leader if the youth minister is not available) and the appropriate authorities.
- I am aware that I have limitations as a lay counselor and will make appropriate referrals for students who may need professional counseling.
- I will support the rights and roles of parents while ministering to the needs and concerns of the students and the parents.
- I will work collaboratively with the student minister, Student Advisory Team, other youth leaders, and the pastor.
- I understand that as a part of this ministry I am accountable first to God and then to this church and the youth ministry. The line of authority within the ministry goes in the following progression: the youth minister, the Youth Ministry Council, the pastor and/or personnel committee, and finally the Session leadership.
- I will submit to an initial and periodic background checks and affirm that I have never been involved in a violent crime or sex crime.

I agree to abide by this code of conduct.

(Leader/Volunteer Signature)

(Date)