



Adult Worker/Volunteer Code of Conduct

This Volunteer Code of Conduct establishes standard policies and provides guidance for anyone working with Children/Youth/Minors at BFCC. It is the goal of Beacon Falls Congregational Church (BFCC) to create a safe and secure environment for all of BFCC's Children/Youth/Minors and each Adult Worker/Volunteer who cares for and/or supervises Children/Youth/Minors in any church-sponsored ministry programs and activities.

This Code aims to further the Church's mission by providing guidelines which achieve several objectives:

- Promote authentic witness to Jesus Christ by those who serve in the Church,
- Protect, nurture, and guide Children/Youth/Minors and all others with whom we interact,
- Provide practical guidance to volunteers to enable them to serve effectively and safely,
- Build positive relationships founded upon respect, trust, and integrity.

No adult who has been convicted of child abuse (either sexual abuse, physical abuse, or emotional abuse) should work with Children/Youth/Minors in any church-sponsored activity.

Anyone whose ministry involves interaction with Children/Youth/Minors may be subject to the following before they can begin working with Children/Youth/Minor:

1. **Current Criminal Background Check (Adults Only):** Submitted, reviewed, & approved within the past 5 years (or sooner, if deemed necessary).
2. **BFCC WORKER Application for Children/Youth Ministry Programs & Activities:** One-time application which contains basic personal information as well as reference checks & personal interview questions (optional, at discretion of ministry leads). Required for all Adult Group Leaders, optional for others.
3. **Basic Child Safety & Protection Training:** A video will be sent separately via email to all adults, it is recommended to complete this annually & required for each group/setting to have at least one adult who has taken/passed this exam within the year. An in-person Volunteer Orientation training will also be provided prior to each standalone ministry program/activity for all Adult/Youth volunteers.
4. **Signed Volunteer Code of Conduct:** Required for all volunteers at the start of each standalone ministry program/activity for which they are serving. Adults and Youth have a separate form.

Section I: Ethical Standards for Personal Interactions

- 1.1 Volunteers, in their service to the Church, must conduct themselves in a manner consistent with biblical teaching. The Great Commandment, as taught by Jesus, is found in the Bible in Matthew 22:37-39. It states: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself."
- 1.2 Volunteers will maintain appropriate boundaries and exercise reasonable and appropriate interactions with others.
- 1.3 Volunteers will dress appropriately and consistent with their volunteer roles and activities. Clothing containing images or language that are anti-Christan, crude, sexual in nature, that promote the use of alcohol or drug use, or are in any other way morally objectionable will not be allowed.
- 1.4 Volunteers must exercise discretion and confidentiality, and should consult with an immediate supervisor before disclosing confidential information to others.

I understand and agree to all standards within this subsection. (initial)

Section II: Ethical Standards for Conduct with Minors

- 2.1 Volunteers must use prudent judgement and common sense when working with minors. Volunteers should be aware of their own vulnerability and the vulnerability of others when working with minors. Volunteers should avoid any conduct that a reasonable person could misconstrue as improper.
- 2.2 Volunteers should use positive reinforcement and encouragement, and encourage others to do likewise. Refer to BFCC Child and Youth Protection Policy - Discipline section.
- 2.3 Volunteers should not meet alone with any unrelated minor. A team approach with appropriate supervision should be in place to promote a safe environment for all. One-on-one activities must be held with supervision in a public area or an area visible to others. Volunteers who minister to the home-bound and to minors must serve in the company of another safe environment trained adult.
 - a. Volunteers must not share private space or overnight accommodations (bedroom, hotel room, camper, tent, bed, etc.) with any unrelated minor.
 - b. In situations with minors in which overnight accommodations are in open spaces (gymnasiums, classrooms, gathering spaces, etc.), actions should be taken to provide suitable supervision and create reasonable separation between sexes and between adults and minors.
- 2.4 Volunteers must not travel alone in a vehicle with one other unrelated minor, except in documented emergencies. In documented situations where groups are being transported in vehicles with only one adult driver in a vehicle, a sufficient number of drivers should be available to manage unanticipated situations.
- 2.5 Physical contact with minors must be public, appropriate, and nonsexual.

*Some examples of **permissible** physical contact include:*

- Brief side hugs or an arm around the shoulder
- Brief pat on the shoulder/ upper back
- Brief touching of hand, head, shoulder, or arm
- Hand-shakes, "high fives", or "fist-bumps"
- Holding hands while walking with young children or those who are unsteady
- Holding hands during prayer

*Some examples of **non-permissible** physical contact include:*

- Tickling,
- Massages,
- Prolonged hugs from the front or rear,
- Caressing/touching face or other body parts including breasts or genitals

- 2.6 Volunteers must not possess, use, or be under the influence of alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs while responsible for the care/safety of minors during ministry programs/activities, nor provide these items to a minor. Volunteers should take great care to avoid use of medications that impair functioning or good judgement when volunteering with minors.
- 2.7 Volunteers must not acquire, possess, or distribute any pornographic or sexually explicit, profane, or otherwise inappropriate materials by any means. Volunteers are prohibited from viewing pornographic materials on, or taking pornographic materials to any church/ youth event. Suspected child pornography must be referred to church ministry leads & law enforcement immediately.
- 2.8 Communications by volunteers with unrelated minors must be for volunteer ministry-related reasons only. Volunteers must maintain appropriate boundaries in all communications with unrelated minors, including communication through the use of electronic devices or web-based media. Volunteers should only communicate to minors or vulnerable adults in a group message or public forum. Any private one-to-one communication initiated by a minor or vulnerable adult to a volunteer must be shared with the parent/ guardian, as well as the volunteer’s supervisor (Unless law/regulations governing confidentiality/Mandatory Reporting require otherwise).

I understand and agree to all standards within this subsection. *(initial)*

Section III: Expectations of Behavior

As a volunteer, I WILL:

- Treat everyone with respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration.
- Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism or competition when working with minors.
- Dress appropriately.
- Avoid situations where I am alone with minors and adhere to the recommended Adult to Child group sizes & staffing ratios within my group.
- Be aware of and reduce the risk for peer-to-peer abuse.
- Report suspected abuse/allegations immediately to the pastor or appropriate ministry director/lead & cooperate fully with any investigations that may arise.

As a volunteer, I will NOT:

- Humiliate, ridicule, threaten, degrade, or use any discipline that frightens or embarrasses a participant.
- Use profanity in the presence of children/youth.
- Strike, spank, shake, grab, or slap anyone.
- Pose any health risk to participants via fever or other contagious illness.
- Engage in behavior that could place myself, my peers, or other program participants at risk of being harmed (physically or emotionally).
- Touch a participant in a sexual or other inappropriate manner.

All volunteers, regardless of their personal beliefs and convictions, must acknowledge and support BFCC’s Mission & Vision statements while serving within BFCC’s ministry programs and/or activities.

- BFCCs Mission: “To glorify God through the faithful preaching of His Word, the making of disciples, and reaching the world for Jesus Christ.
- BFCC’s Vision: “To be a family of faith, hope, and love, focused on joyfully giving, and living to the glory of God.” [2 Corinthians 8:1-5; 1 Corinthians 10:31]

I understand and agree to all standards within this subsection. *(initial)*

Section IV: Child Safety & Protection Compliance

Please review this policy and check each box below to acknowledge your understanding and compliance with all of BFCC's Child Safety & Protection guidelines, specifically:

- I have been provided with a copy of the current BFCC Child Youth & Protection Policy and agree to abide by the rules and guidelines outlined within those policies. A current copy of BFCC's Child Safety & Protection policies and procedures can be found on BFCC's website here: <https://beaconfallscongregational.org/site/policies-and-procedures/>.*
- Child Discipline Policy: I understand BFCC has zero tolerance for abuse and neglect of any kind.*
- Definitions: I have read & understand the definitions of Child Abuse.*
- Supervision Policies: I agree to abide by BFCC's Two person rule and staffing ratios, open door policy, & bathroom policies at all times.*
- Peer-to-peer Abuse Prevention: I am aware that peer-to-peer abuse can take many forms and I will do my best to prevent this from occurring by agreeing to actively engage with minors under my care, being aware of blind spots/lines of sight, looking for "red flag" behaviors, and understanding/eliminating opportunities for power imbalances within the group.*
- Child Abuse & Protection Training (Required for Group Leaders): I have been provided Child & Safety training that focused on the steps for reporting suspected abuse and neglect, the role of the mandated reporter, and the recognition and prevention of child maltreatment, abuse, and neglect.*
- Mandated Reporter (Adults Only): I understand that I am a MANDATORY REPORTER, which means that I am required by law to report suspected abuse or neglect to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) or law enforcement officials if I suspect that a Child under my care (or involved in any BFCC Ministry program/activity has been abused, neglected, or is at risk.*

I understand that as a volunteer working with Children/Youth/Minors, any action inconsistent with this Code of Conduct or failure to take action mandated by this Code of Conduct may result in my removal as a volunteer with Children/Youth/Minors in any of BFCC's ministry programs/activities. My signature below indicates that I have read and agree to adhere to all Beacon Falls Congregational Church Policies and the Code of Conduct.

As a volunteer, I agree to guidelines as stated above.

Signature of Volunteer

Volunteer Name (Please Print)

Date