



Policies for Volunteers/Staff Working with Minors

Last Revised: September 2022

All Volunteers/Staff in the Nursery, Children's Ministry, Youth Ministry or any other ministry within the Ridgecrest Church of the Nazarene (RCNAZ) must fill out an application and are subject to the supervision of the Lead Pastor and evaluation by the Church Board and appropriate board for their area of their service.

All Volunteers/Staff over the age of 18 who work with or in the area of minor children must (See CA Law AB506):

- _____ Complete a Child Abuse and Neglect Mandated Reporter Training
www.mandatedreporter.ca.com
- _____ Complete and clear a LiveScan Background Check
(To be done at the Ridgecrest Police Dept.)
- _____ Maintain the "Rule of Two": Two Mandated Reporters must be with children at all times to the greatest extent possible.
- _____ All leadership must maintain a valid CPR and First Aid Certificate

All Volunteers/Staff under the age of 18, must have an adult leader present at all times while serving with minor children.

All Volunteers/Staff should observe "Exit" signs in case of emergency, as well as the location of the AED device (Located in the Foyer).

In case of Active Shooter Scenario, we will follow the "Run, Hide, Fight" response.

RCNAZ reserves the right to dismiss paid staff/volunteers who are unscriptural in their conduct or fail to follow the policies and procedures for Volunteers/Staff working with minors.

Volunteers/Staff will not curse or use foul language.

All Volunteers/Staff in Children's and Youth must be personally interviewed by the respective minister in their area of desired service (Subject to approval by the Lead Pastor).

Procedures for Volunteers/Staff Working with Minors

1. All activities or outings outside the normal planned Children's or Youth Ministries calendar must be approved by the overseeing pastor or leader to ensure proper supervision.
2. Visitors are not permitted to help in Children's or Youth areas without pastoral approval and without a cleared background check. Only authorized adults are permitted in children's areas.
3. Parents/Guardians are permitted to enter children's areas, but only with their own children. They are permitted to observe their child in his/hers group and must declare their presence to adult leader. Parents/Guardians are never permitted to be alone with any other child except their own. Parents/Guardians are permitted to come to comfort their child or care for their personal needs. Leaders please use proper discretion.
4. Parents/Guardians and children must sign-in and out at check-in areas when entering children's areas or attending children's groups. Only parents/guardians listed on child's emergency list are permitted to pick up children. Parents/Guardians must present their pick-up ticket from the day-of visit when picking up children. Children may only be released to adults 18 and over. Children may not be released to siblings without prior permission from parents/guardians (must present parent's pick-up ticket).
5. Every group of children/youth must have at least 2 Mandated Reporters at all times to the greatest extent possible. An adult should never be alone with a child.
6. A child must never be given a ride home alone without another adult in the car. A Parent/Guardian must be notified beforehand.
7. *Any injury* must be reported to the Parents/Guardians immediately or upon pick up. For severe injuries, an injury report must be submitted to the Office Manager or notify a pastor. Medications are only to be administered with Parent/Guardian approval. Parents/Guardians must be notified when a child displays illness of any kind. A child must go home (or be given separate space away from other children until pick-up) when they display a fever.
8. Windows, blinds, and doors should be kept open in areas where activities are occurring. An adult should never put themselves in a compromising position.
9. Physical contact with a child should be minimal. For children kindergarten and under, a general hug or appropriate touch is permissible, but only in the presence of another adult. For older children, physical contact should be done with extreme care. It is recommended an adult not display physical affection to a child of the opposite gender.
10. When taking a child to the restroom, volunteers/staff should only supervise children of the same gender. If a child is of the opposite gender, volunteer/staff should remain outside the restroom. It is advised that 2 adults go into restrooms with children. Children should have as much privacy as possible when in the restroom. An volunteer/staff may enter the restroom in case of dire emergency or to assist a child.
11. When in doubt, call the parents/guardians for assistance.

12. We do not put sunscreen on children without parent/guardians permission.
13. Medication may be given (including pain relief) with parents permission only. All medication must be kept in a locked cabinet while on premises or in the possession of an adult.
14. If there is reasonable suspicion a child, dependent adult or elderly is being abused or neglected, all Mandated Reporters are required by law to contact local law enforcement immediately over the phone and file a written report within 48 hours (Penal Code Section 11166.5). The adult making the report must also inform at least one of the head pastors at the Ridgecrest Church of the Nazarene they have made a report (i.e. Lead Pastor, Youth Pastor or Children's Pastor). This is so leadership may respond appropriately when confronted with evidence or suspicion of maltreatment of a child or adult. Adult witnesses and volunteers are also encouraged to report. All volunteers/staff or adult witness(es) must inform a head pastor if they suspect abuse or neglect to ensure a report is filed and action is taken.

For written form, please visit: www.oag.ca.gov/childabuse/forms (Form BCIA 8572)

Children's and Youth Group Rules and Expectations

With the goal of providing a safe, efficient and appropriate environment, RCNAZ has put forth a set of standards for those who wish to participate in any student ministry. Behavioral expectations in the church and on the bus are the same. It is expected:

Children's/Youth Expectations:

1. Be Kind
2. Follow Directions the First Time (or Quickly)
3. Respect Each Other and Church Property

Additionally:

- no foul/offensive language (swearing or sexually related speech)
- Students must remain on campus when dropped off until event is over. Their way home must be cleared with the parent/guardian beforehand.
- Intentionally defacing church property will result in automatic dismissal

Warning System:

First Offense - Verbal Warning

Second Offense - Talk with Children's/Youth Pastor or Leader

Third Offense: Talk with Parents

Acceptable Discipline and Consequences:

For students who fail to adhere to these expectations, verbal warnings will be given by a leader. If a problem persists, the leader may contact parent/guardians. If the problem still persists, the student may lose bus-riding/group privileges (at the pastor's discretion).

For elementary children, a thinking corner or quiet (cool down) space may be used as needed and only when coupled with explanation, followed with love and forgiveness.

The Pastor or Leader of the respective ministry should be informed if a behavioral issue is not remedied after second offense in one day or repeated offenses over several days. A Pastor or Leader may inform the parents about issues upon the third offense. It is advised that all leaders speak with the pastoral staff if they are feeling overwhelmed or having any other difficulty (including personal) so the child and worker may be best supported.

We encourage an abundance of positive reinforcement recognizing positive behavior. We believe positive attention will seek more positive attention and negative attention will seek more negative attention. Negative behavior should be briefly addressed as it happens. Speaking with the child one-on-one may also be appropriate if needed. We consider factors which may lead to the seeking of attention, which sometimes maybe a cry for help. Our goal is compassionate, appropriate and understanding care for every individual.

Physical or verbal punishment is never permitted from or to anyone. We have zero tolerance for bullying, verbal harassment or physical violence of any kind. The church will always be a sanctuary, a place of peace and a safe haven for every person.

At the discretion of the pastor and leadership, any person may be restricted or removed from attending a group or activity for the safety of themselves or the other children/adults.

Though a person may be restricted from a group, every person will always be permitted and welcome to attend regular church service on Sundays - regardless of the offense(es). We recognize our unending need for Jesus our Lord and Savior who freely offers His love, compassion, guidance, mercy and forgiveness to every person who seeks Him.

Please sign on the following sheet.

I have read and agree to the preceding Policies and Procedures for Staff/Volunteers Working with Minors by the Church of the Nazarene. I will personally follow and will help children adhere to Children's and Youth Group Rules and Expectations. I will follow all bylaws of the Ridgecrest Church of the Nazarene (See also the "Church of the Nazarene Manual"). I agree to maintain Christian and scriptural conduct.

Please sign below:

Printed Name of Worker: _____

Applicant Signature _____ Date _____