



Faith Formation Safety Policies and Agreements

Effective Date: August 25, 2020

Approved by: Board of Trustees on August 25, 2020

This document contains Safety Policies and Agreements that the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Durango (UUFD) Faith Formation (FF) volunteers and staff are required to read and comply with. These policies and agreements help to ensure that our congregational environment is a safe and secure place for the children, youth and adults who are a part of the UUFD FF Program.

A- Definitions

- Child: An individual from birth through Grade 5
- Youth: An individual from rising Grade 6 through graduation from Grade 12.
- Chaperone, Advisor, or Mentor: An individual who is 25 years or older who has been background checked by Trusted Employees.
- Class Helper: A supervised volunteer with a short-term FF role, usually three times per year.
- Driver: Chaperones, advisors, and mentors with current insurance and a valid driver's license on file at UUFD. In addition, youth 18 years old may drive self to off-site youth events. They may also drive younger siblings with the permission of their parents/guardians.
- RE Staff: Paid RE FF staff including the Director of Faith Formation (DFF), the Youth Advisor, the FF Teachers, and the Nursery and Child Care Staff.
- RE Volunteer: Anyone who regularly volunteers in the FF program in any capacity, including as a teacher, class helper, workshop leader, chaperone, advisor, mentor or greeter.

B- FF Staff

1. All FF Staff will be subject to the requirements and standards of UUFD Personnel Policies.
2. UUFD staff will be required to obtain and/or update CPR training every 2 years.

C- FF Volunteers

Volunteers shall comply with these policies.

1. All youth advisors must participate in UUDF activities for 6 months prior to advising and be willing to provide an institutional reference, preferably showing positive experiences with youth. Generally, volunteers have participated in the life of the UUDF community for 6 months prior to volunteering in the FF Program. The Director of Faith Formation (DFF) may make an exception, including if a person has previously volunteered at another Unitarian Universalist community and provides contact information for references from the former DFF or minister of that community or is a well-known person to the ministers or FF staff.
2. Each adult RE teacher, class helper, mentor, chaperone, driver, greeter, and childcare worker must complete the online application emailed by Trusted Employees and be background checked as referenced in section L.
3. No person who has a history of crimes against children or pending legal action involving children as indicated by background checks may volunteer in the FF program.
4. A person who is subject to pending legal action for violent or belligerent behavior—whether or not at UUDF and whether or not involving children—may not volunteer in the FF program. Any current volunteers must disclose new or pending legal actions to the DFF and remove themselves from the program. New volunteers will be required to disclose this information on the volunteer application.
5. Volunteer mentors spending time individually with children or youth outside of the Sunday morning program should do so only with explicit parental permission. Such meetings must take place in public places or on the fellowship property when others are on the premises.
6. The DFF, in consultation with the senior clergy staff, determines volunteer teams and strives to make decisions that promote a safe and nurturing environment for all.
7. All adult and youth leaders shall read, agree to and sign the Code of Ethics form shown in Appendix A.
8. All volunteers shall complete Volunteer Application and Contact form shown in Appendix B.
9. All youth advisors must participate in UUDF activities for 6 months prior to advising and be willing to provide an institutional reference, preferably showing positive experiences with youth.

D- Annual Volunteer Training Workshops

All volunteers are expected to participate in FF training. Training includes safety procedures, standard practices related to the duties of the volunteer position and child development information.

E- Safety Procedures

UUDF staff will be required to obtain and/or update CPR training every 2 years.

Adult FF Staff, including adult childcare staff and adult volunteers are encouraged to have up-to-date first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and AED training.

All staff and volunteers are expected to know:

1. Evacuation procedures for fire, lockdown for intruders, tornado and shelter-in-place. These procedures will be updated regularly by fellowship leadership.
2. Location of fire extinguishers, first aid kits, lockdown switch and automated external defibrillator (AED).
3. Special needs and allergies for children in their care (as provided by parents and shared by FF staff).
4. Due to food allergies, no UUFD classrooms for children under 12 will include snacks.
5. Smoking is not permitted anywhere on the UUFD campus.
6. All children attending UUFD events and classes should be fever, vomit and diarrhea and rash free for at least 24 hours. Children exhibiting symptoms of communicable disease will be returned to their parents.

F- Reporting Abuse

1. No minister, DFF, adult leader, childcare employee, FF volunteer or other person working under the auspices of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Durango (UUFD) shall engage in sexual, seductive or erotic behavior with young people under the age of 18 years; or sexually harass or engage in behavior with young people that constitutes verbal, emotional or physical abuse.
2. Any volunteer or FF staff member who suspects child abuse shall report their suspicions to a minister, the DFF, or the president of the board of directors, who shall report to the DFF or senior clergy staff. In those cases where cause exists, the staff member will make appropriate reports to the authorities as required by law. If the action involves a volunteer in the FF program, the volunteer will be dismissed.
3. All UUFD staff and volunteers must promptly notify the DFF of any suspected volunteer misconduct. The DFF shall inform the minister immediately to determine appropriate action.
4. Children and youth will be encouraged to report any concerns to FF staff or ministers.

G- Supervision of Children and Youth

1. There shall be at least two adults in any area with children or youth at all times. If a youth is a class volunteer or working in the nursery, they are considered the second adult.

Volunteers shall immediately notify the DFF, FF Greeter, or other UUFD staff whenever there are not at least two adults so that FF staff can assist in providing a second adult or provide for merging of groups for that activity.

2. Nursery and preschool/kinder class will have a maximum ratio of 1:4. Parents/guardians will be asked to stay if needed.

3. Children engaging in FF activities or events on UUFD property, including at the playground, shall also be supervised at all times by faith formation staff or volunteers. In an open area (i.e., for nature walks), one adult should lead the group and one should follow at the rear.

4. Parents are responsible for supervision of children and youth on UUFD property outside of organized RE FF classes, events or activities.

5. Volunteers may not use or be under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs when supervising children or youth.

H- Communication

All communication between staff, volunteers, parents, children and youth shall be subject to the UUFD Communications Policy.

I- Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

All children on UUFD premises must be accompanied by a parent or guardian or enrolled in UUFD programs in accordance with the procedures below. Parents are solely responsible for the safety and supervision of children whose presence at UUFD is not in accordance with these procedures.

- A parent or guardian of children up to and including Grade 6 must be on campus while the children participate in RE FF programs or are receiving nursery or child care, except in cases where the DFF has been notified of and approved the absence of the parent or guardian.
 - Parents will be responsible for diaper changes. UUFD staff or volunteers will ask parents as needs arise.
- All minor children or youth who participate in RE FF activities on an ongoing basis must be registered through the RE FF program.
 - Unaccompanied youth of Middle School and High School age may attend UUFD events with their parents' or guardians' knowledge and permission. Children Grade 3- 5 and younger must be dropped off at the start of class and signed out at the end of class by a parent/guardian. They will not be allowed to leave unattended.

J- Permission for Youth Conferences (Cons), Field Trips, and Overnights at UUFD

1. The DFF must approve all off-campus field trips and overnights. Approval will include the consideration of age and developmental stages, transportation, costs and appropriately screened chaperones. If age restrictions preclude the entire group from attending, or the activity appears inappropriate, the field trip will not be approved. Volunteers must bring up potential conflicts when proposing a field trip to allow for full consideration by FF staff.

2. The FF staff prefers to receive information on all field trips and overnights involving children and youth at a minimum of two weeks in advance in order to vet, promote, and obtain permission forms from parents/guardians.

3. There must be a signed field-trip permission form for every child or youth under age 18 who will attend a field trip or stay overnight at UUFD for all trips.

4. One copy of the permission slip will be on file in the RE office. Chaperones will carry a copy of the permission slips that contain emergency and medical information with them on any trip or overnight. A sample permission form is in appendix C.

5. Volunteer/child or youth ratio for:

Field trips:

- Preschoolers: 1 adult for every 3 children
- Gr. K-6: 1 adult for every 5 children
- Gr. 7-12: 1 adult for every 7 youth
- Gr. 9-12: 1 adult advisor for every 5 youth

6. Overnights are supervised by the number of required adults (see above), with adults taking shifts so that one adult is awake at all times.

If a person (an adult leader or youth) has been asked not to participate in our program, we will share that information with other UU-affiliated children and youth-related programs such as Youth Cons.

K- Drivers for Field Trips, Cons and Other Activities

1. Each driver for a field trip or Con must be at least 25 years of age, licensed and covered by car insurance with a copy of the driver's license and the car insurance "wallet card" on file with the FF office to transport children or youth on a UUFD-sponsored field trip, Con or other activity.

2. Young children must use an approved child safety seat in accordance with state law. Older children must use a seat belt when riding in cars. Children may not ride in the cargo area of trucks or other vehicles.

3. Youth may drive themselves and their siblings to events only with the approval of their parents/guardians. Youth are expected to ask their parent's permission prior to driving themselves or siblings to a UUFD event and must follow all Colorado State driving laws.

4. Drivers who are 25 or older must complete an online Advisor/Chaperone/Driver Form to specify how many youth they can transport and expectations around pick-up and drop-off. They must also provide a copy of their state driver's license and proof of auto insurance. They must follow all Colorado State Driving Laws (or the laws of the state in which they are driving), including not texting while driving.

5. It is required to have at least one adult in a car with youth, but two adults are preferably. This is a community of teachers, parents and change-makers and as such it is the responsibility of all congregants to uphold a shared covenant of expectations.

Please help us all ensure that the following covenant is followed to make this a safe place for all, especially our children and youth.

- Respecting the people and property of UUFD.
- Keeping illegal drugs off campus and not abusing drugs, alcohol or legally prescribed drugs.
- Keeping weapons off campus.
- Remembering that the campus is a tobacco-free zone, which includes smoking and smokeless forms of tobacco (chew, vaping, e-cigarettes, etc.).
- Understanding that theft can and will be prosecuted (using county laws). Additionally, theft decays trust within groups and can be damaging to our programs as a whole.
- Staying on campus during a youth activity or while volunteering as a youth helper.
- Remembering that while sexual activity can be healthy and whole, during congregational or youth events, sexual activity and exclusive relationships are inappropriate. This includes unwanted touch and verbal sexual advances and any other form of sexualized behavior.
- Keeping sleeping covers to yourself and six inches of visible floor space between each person.
 - Understanding that at overnight events, at least one adult will be awake at all times while youth are awake and at least three adults will be present in case of emergency during the night.
 - Remembering that “No” means “No.” No in any form such as “Stop” or “Don’t do that” are recognizable signals for others to cease any and all behavior that may cause any and all participants to become uncomfortable or to feel threatened, either physically or emotionally.
 - Recognizing that this is a safe space for all and helping to maintain that safe space through kind and loving language and behavior.

L- Confidential Criminal Background Check

UUFD requires that prior to volunteering in the FF Program, all adults who apply to teach, chaperone, mentor, or work/volunteer in our nursery or childcare settings must be background checked. UUFD uses the company, Trusted Employees, to check the Nationwide Criminal Supersearch, Social Security Trace Plus, and Nationwide Sex Offender Registry.

Applicants receive an email from Trusted Employees (administrator@trustedemployees.com), which includes a link to the online application. Please read the information in the link carefully. It must be completed within seven days.

By electronically signing the application, applicants give UUFD permission to conduct a background check. Applicants receive an email from Trusted Employees confirming that the background check has been completed along with an option to view their report. UUFD receives a report, to which FF staff has access. The report is valid for three years. If you have any concerns, please contact the Director of Faith Formation.

M- Special Pandemic/Online Learning Platform Policies

1. Zoom Sessions

- A waiting room will be established for all Zoom sessions involving children and youth.
 - A staff member or volunteer will be designated for security.
 - All children/parents wishing entry into the Zoom from a waiting room will be looked for in the UUFD Breeze platform.
 - If a guest or unknown child wishes entry, a staff member will ask the following: “May I please have your parents’ full name and contact information?” This information will be updated and maintained in Breeze under the tag, FF Visitor.
- The host will initially have screen share off for all participants. Screen share will be enabled only when the group consists of members that are known to the host and staff.
- If a person on the platform shares or says something inappropriate, that person will be permanently barred from the session using the host controls. Further, that person’s information will be shared with the Director of FF and the minister.
- Understanding that learnings for online platforms are constantly evolving, UUFD staff and volunteers should frequently consult best practices through the UUA [here](#).

N- Multigenerational Spaces

Examples of Multigenerational space: youth and adult webinar, coffee hour, worship, all-congregation game time.

- Parents/guardians are primarily responsible for supervising their children and youth’s participation in multigenerational/all ages spaces. This responsibility should be clearly communicated to parents.
- UUFD events should clearly articulate parent/guardian responsibility in such multigenerational spaces when staff/volunteers are not present and actively attending to interactions.
- In addition, unrelated adults should never message any minor youth or child one-on-one without a parent or religious professional copied on the message. Pictures/video of minors should never be shared with anyone other than parents/guardians outside of covenantal space without appropriate written parental permission.
- UUFD should have covenantal understanding of appropriate behavior in multigenerational settings.

Appendix A:



Code of Ethics

Adults and youth in leadership roles are in a position of stewardship and play a key role in fostering spiritual development of both individuals and the community. It is, therefore, especially important that leaders be well qualified to provide the special nurture, care, and support that will enable youth to develop a positive sense of self and a spirit of independence and responsibility. Leaders shall be informed of the code of ethics and agree to it before assuming their role. In cases of violation of this code, UUA staff may remove or restrict, temporarily or permanently, the leader from the leadership role and/or from UUA event participation.

As either an adult or youth leader I agree to:

- Serve as a role model to other youth and adults in my program including modeling affirmative consent following all site rules, UUA Behavioral Expectations, and UUA policies.
- Respect any information that must be kept in confidence. I understand that as a youth, this information need not be held secret from my parents. And as a leader, I understand I have the freedom to seek the counsel and support of my local religious professional.
- Report to UUA Staff any unsafe behavior, threats or thoughts of harm to self or others, violations of UUA behavioral expectations, poor adult boundaries, and any possible child abuse or other ways youth are in danger including substance abuse and suicidal thoughts.
- Communicate with UUA staff about anything which threatens the well-being of any program or youth community
- Engage in conflict and disagreement directly, creatively, and honestly while holding others with dignity and compassion. Listen to others with openness and a willingness to receive feedback. Seek mediation when needed.
- Remain an active participant and in covenant in a UU Congregation or Covenanting Community
- Engage in the emotional and physical self-care, ongoing training, and spiritual development needed to bring my best self to my community.
- Respect the full range of human difference including race/ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, gender/gender expression, socioeconomic status, physical and mental ability, theology/belief, and primary language among my community and seek to build a community inclusive of all.

As a youth leader I agree to:

- Refrain from engaging in any form of sexual, seductive, or erotic conduct with other youth at events and; outside events, to be conscious of my power as a youth leader when sexually or romantically interested in a peer I met through UU youth events.
- Empower other youth as part of my leadership.
- Be attentive to ways current or potential youth leaders' behavior may be damaging to the trust the community puts in them and seek both youth and adult assistance.
- Where I am older than other youth, recognize the greater influence my age gives me and the greater responsibility I have to maintaining healthy relationships with younger youth. This includes keeping appropriate emotional, sexual, and physical boundaries with youth who are still minors after I bridge.
- Seek the assistance of other adults in leadership or UUA staff when I have discomfort with any adult, especially one in leadership.
- If I am a driver, I will not drive other youth to events.

As an adult leader I agree to:

- Commit to following, modeling, and mentoring other adults in the ethics described in the Code of Ethics for Adults attending UUA Youth Events
- Refrain from all behaviors at youth events, with youth from youth events, and in view of youth online, both verbal and physical, that are in any way erotic, seductive or sexual in nature.
- Consciously engage with youth in ways that seeks to meet their needs rather than mine. Refrain from any behavior that takes advantage of youth and adult attendees.
- Understand that it is primarily my responsibility to maintain appropriate boundaries with youth and youth leaders and to cultivate an atmosphere of health and trust with them.

Agreement

Adults and youth in leadership positions who work with youth under the aegis of the UUA are responsible not only to the youth, but to the UUA as well. Remember: you are acting as a representative of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

I have read this form in its entirety and I understand the ethical responsibilities of both youth and adults in leadership. I commit to following this code of ethics in my own actions and to support my co-leaders, both youth and adults, in living in covenant with each other, the UUA, our congregations, parents and our youth community.

Name

Signature

Date

Appendix B:



Volunteer Application and Contact

- I am applying for a position as a faith formation classroom volunteer.
- I agree to coordinate with the other members of my volunteer team, to be sure that each Sunday is covered and planned for.
- I understand that if I have been convicted of a crime involving a minor, I will notify the DFF of this fact and/or will resign from my church school responsibilities.
- Two people (not from the same household) who can be contacted by the DFF as references are:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

- I agree to a volunteer background check and have attached the required background check information here.
- I have read the Health and Safety guidelines (enclosed) for our program and will follow them.
- If I am unable to volunteer on one of the Sundays I have agreed upon, then (as soon as possible) I will contact my team members first to arrange a substitute. If, after contacting my team, I am unable to arrange for a substitute then I will contact a substitute from the list provided. As a last resort, I will contact the Religious Education Committee member who is a liaison to my class.

SIGNED: I have read and understand the above contract, have provided the necessary information, and agree to the above terms.

Date

Signature

Appendix C:



Permission Form

1. Youth Name:
2. Youth Cell:
3. Event Name & Location & Date:
4. Parent/Guardian Name(s):
5. Parent/Guardian cell phone(s):
6. Parent's Home street address:
7. Parent's E-Mail:
8. Alternative Emergency name(if only one parent listed):
9. Alternative Emergency phone number:
10. Name of Youth's Physician:
11. Physician's phone number:
12. Youth's Health Insurance Provider and Policy Number:
13. Medical issues, needs, and allergies:

14. Accessibility needs:

15. Liability and Medical release:

LIABILITY AND MEDICAL RELEASE

PARENTAL CONSENT: I, _____ (print your name) am the parent/legal guardian of _____. I have fully disclosed all pertinent facts about my child and acknowledge full responsibility for any omission or misstatement regarding such matters

I grant permission for my child to participate in _____. I hereby do release and hold harmless the UUF, other affiliated organizations, and/or any and all adult supervisors for the activity, from and for any and all liability which may arise for damages, loss or injuries, either to person or property, which my child may sustain while engaged in the activity conducted, including, but not limited to, any damages, loss or injuries that may be sustained through transportation to and from the activity.

Liability: I further agree to assume responsibility for any liability which may arise for damages, loss or injuries, as described herein which may be caused or contributed to by my youth to the person or property of others.

Emergency: In the event that an emergency should arise while my child is participating in this event, I hereby grant my permission to any responsible adult to do whatever is deemed necessary to insure the safety and well-being of my child.

Consent: In the event I cannot be reached, I consent to any x-ray examination, anesthetic, medical, or surgical diagnosis or treatment and hospital care under the general or special supervision and upon the advice of or to be rendered by a physician and surgeon licensed under the Medical Practice Act for my child. This authority also extends to any x-ray examination, anesthetic, dental, or surgical diagnosis or treatment and hospital care by a dentist licensed under the Dental Practice Act for my child. I further agree to pay all charges for the dental, medical, or hospital care or treatment.

Health Care Decisions: As parent or legal guardian of my child, I am responsible for the health care decisions of my child and am authorized to consent to the services to be rendered. I represent that my consent to and agreement to pay for the dental, medical, or hospital care or treatment to be rendered to my child is legally sufficient and that no consent from any other person is required by law.

Rules: If my child violates site rules, event expectations, or covenant, I agree to be responsible for their transportation home. I understand I may be required to pick up my child at the conference. If my child participates in any illegal activity, I realize the proper authorities will be contacted. This consent may be photocopied, with photocopies authorized to be as binding as the original.

Sleeping and Supervision: (If relevant) I understand I have access to the sleeping and supervision policies (<https://www.uua.org/central-east/youth/forms/sleeping-policy>) and that at this event all night youth and adult supervision is provided. I understand my youth must have their own bedding and there must be visible floor space between sleepers. After the end of programming, youth will be expected to be in the "awake" hangout room or in a youth sleeping space except for trips to the bathroom, or to attend to personal necessity. Not being in one of these spaces will be considered a violation of covenant.

Medications: Medication must be transported in original prescription bottles. All medications (over the counter and prescription) will be held by an adult who will give the bottles to the youth when they need them. Controlled substances must always be held by an adult in a secure location. Epipens, inhalers and birth control pills can always be held by the youth.

Video and photos may be taken during conference and used in regional or UUA publications including the website. Unless you indicate so below, your youth's likeness may appear in regional publications including the website and Facebook. Your youth will not be identified by name.

____ I give permission for my youth's likeness to appear in regional or UUA publications.

____ I DO NOT give permission for my youth's likeness to appear in regional or UUA publications.

____ I give permission for my youth's likeness to appear in regional or UUA publications with these limitations:

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date
