

Oakmont Baptist Church Working with Minors Policy

Purpose

Oakmont Baptist Church (hereinafter “Oakmont”) must always be the safest place possible for Minors to grow in their faith and for those Adults who provide care, teaching, and guidance to them. In order for our church family to achieve that objective and to protect the total church community, this Working with Minors Policy (hereinafter “Policy”) has been established and adopted by Oakmont.

Definitions

The following definitions apply in this Policy, whether or not the individual is a Member of Oakmont, and mean and refer to the following when used throughout this Policy:

1. Minor—Individuals under 18 years of age including all preschoolers, children, and youth.
2. Preschooler—Individuals from birth through Kindergarten.
3. Child—Individuals in the 1st through 6th grades.
4. Youth—Individuals in the 7th through 12th grades.
5. Adult—Individuals 18 years old or older.
6. Associate Member—Individuals who wish to affiliate with this church in a “Watch-Care” relationship, such as a student, or one who has experienced “Infant Baptism” only, in accordance with our Church By-Laws.
7. Member—Individuals who are members of Oakmont Baptist Church, in accordance with our Church By-Laws.
8. Worker—Adults who work with minors, including both paid and volunteer workers.

Worker Eligibility

The eligibility of all individuals to serve as Workers (excluding ministerial staff) shall be determined and assessed through the process and requirements set forth below. There will be an initial determination of eligibility of all Workers. Eligibility of any and all Workers is continuing in nature and is subject to re-assessment as needed.

1. All volunteer Workers must be an Adult Member or Associate Member.
2. All volunteer Workers must have been active at Oakmont for at least six months as determined by the Pastor and/or Minister of Administration.
3. All Workers must complete the application process. The Minister of Administration shall maintain all applications in a secure and confidential manner.
4. Criminal background checks are required for all Worker applicants. The criminal background checks shall be conducted by an outside agency. Oakmont reserves the right to update criminal background checks for any Worker on an ongoing basis.
 - a. Any individual applying to become a Worker who has been previously charged with or convicted of a crime relating to or affecting a Minor has an affirmative duty to report this charge or conviction immediately to an appropriate staff member before working with Minors.
 - b. Any applicant with a prior criminal charge or conviction relating to or affecting a Minor must meet with the Pastor and/or Minister of Administration before becoming eligible to serve as a Worker. The capacity and eligibility of the applicant to serve as a Worker shall be determined by the Pastor and/or Minister of Administration.
 - c. Any approved Worker charged with or convicted of a crime relating to or affecting a Minor after becoming a Worker has an affirmative duty to report this charge or conviction immediately to an appropriate staff member before continuing to work with Minors. Any such Worker must meet with the Pastor and/or Minister of Administration before continuing to work with Minors. The capacity and eligibility of the Worker to continue to serve as a Worker shall be determined by the Pastor and/or Minister of Administration.
5. Applicants who are Adult survivors of child abuse must meet with the Pastor and/or Minister of Administration before serving as a Worker. The capacity and eligibility of the applicant to serve will be determined by the Pastor and/or Minister of Administration.

6. Any Worker deemed eligible through the process set forth herein shall receive a copy of this Policy as well as a copy of the Working with Minors Procedures (hereinafter “Procedures”). The Worker shall sign a form acknowledging the following:
 - a. receipt of the Policy and Procedures;
 - b. has read and understands the Policy and Procedures;
 - c. agrees to follow the Policy and Procedures at all times.
7. Oakmont reserves the right to implement and require any additional process or requirement that is deemed necessary by appropriate church staff to determine or assess whether an individual is eligible to serve or to continue to serve as a Worker for the furtherance of the stated purpose of this Policy.

General Policies

1. The Procedures must be followed at all times.
2. There must be two Workers present with Minors at all times.
3. There may be rare exceptions when less than two Workers will be present with Minors. Under these circumstances the appropriate church staff will obtain written permission from a parent/guardian in advance.
4. There shall be no inappropriate behavior between Workers and Minors. Inappropriate behavior includes, but is not limited, to:
 - Massaging a Minor
 - Youth sitting in the lap of a Worker
 - Kissing
 - Sexual contact of any nature
 - Inappropriate touching
 - Relating stories or jokes of a sexual nature
 - Unusual or inappropriate attention paid to any Minor by a Worker
 - Allowing a Minor to view videos or written material with sexual content or overtones
 - Obscene or harassing communication (including: phone calls, text messages, emails, etc.)
 - Exhibitionism
 - Verbal comments of a sexual nature or innuendos
 - Striking a minor
 - Corporal punishment.

Reporting Procedures

1. Any violation of the Policy and Procedures must be reported immediately to the Minister of Administration/ Pastor.
2. An “incident report form” must be completed and filed in the Minister of Administration’s office for documentation of any reported violations of the Policy and Procedures.
3. Once a violation has been reported, the Pastor and/or the Minister of Administration will immediately investigate the matter and take the appropriate action.
4. A minimum of two ministerial staff will meet with a Worker accused of a violation of the Policy and Procedures. Upon completion of the investigation substantiating a violation of the Policy and Procedures by the ministerial staff, any of the following actions shall occur:
 - a. a warning will be issued to the Worker if warranted.
 - b. if warranted additional training, supervision, or monitoring may be required.
 - c. a first violation of sufficient gravity will result in immediate termination of the Worker’s eligibility.
 - d. a second violation will result in immediate termination of the Worker’s eligibility.
5. If necessary instances will be reported to the appropriate authorities as required by law.
6. Oakmont reserves the right to implement and require any additional process or requirement that is deemed necessary by appropriate church staff to determine or assess whether an individual is eligible to serve or to continue to serve as a Worker for the furtherance of the stated purpose of this Policy.