

VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES
FOR
COTTAM UNITED CHURCH

Policies and Procedures in providing a
Safe and Secure Environment

“Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.”

Matthew 25:40

“I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.”

John 13:34

Reviewed March 2020

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Ministry in the Body of Christ known as Cottam United Church (hereinafter referred to as CUC), is a responsibility of all of us. We have gifts differing “according to the grace given to us” (Romans 12:6) and we share our gifts in service to one another and to further and bear witness to God’s love working in our world. Our paid and accountable ministry staff, administrative staff, custodial staff, members, and adherents are a team and mutual support system to the one goal of building up our members in love and joy and living out Christ’s love and mission for the sake of our world. Those who volunteer their time and gifts are especially precious to us and valued by us.

In order to ensure a safe, respectful, and encouraging environment for our volunteers and for those they serve, we have established these volunteering guidelines.

A volunteer at CUC should have the following expectations;

- To feel love, respected, accepted, and valued in accordance with the dignity due all God’s children;
- To be given a suitable assignment, and to know as much about the church as possible;
- To be heard and to be recognized;
- To be given sound guidance and direction.

A volunteer at CUC has the following responsibilities:

- To be sincere in the offer of service and believe in the value of the job to be done;
- To be loyal to CUC;
- To maintain the dignity and integrity of CUC;
- To carry out duties promptly and reliably;
- To be willing to learn and participate in your volunteer endeavours;
- To be aware that a Vulnerable Sector Screening Certificate will be required.

RECRUITMENT

A volunteer is defined as any individual participating in delivering supported programs and ministries under the auspices of CUC. The recruitment of volunteers will be done by the Volunteer Resource Committee, individual committees, program, or ministry leaders who may be either pastoral staff or lay people leading in the administration of a particular program. Recruiters will strive to ensure that the right match is made between the work to be done and the person who will do it.

CHILDREN'S AND VULNERABLE ADULT'S SAFETY PROCEDURE

The Church relies on its staff and volunteers to provide support to its members of all ages. It is also recognized that any member may be part of a vulnerable population. As a caring church, we must be and be seen to be providing safe ways of interacting. The areas in which staff and volunteers provide assistance and support to these groups are limitless. The purpose of this policy is to set the parameters for staff and volunteers' conduct in order to provide a safe environment for all.

Definitions:

1. Children are defined as persons under the age of 18. This policy applies when children are in the care of church staff and/or volunteers;
2. Vulnerable Adults are defined as adults who are vulnerable to influence by staff or volunteers. Such adults may tend to be seniors and those who are physically or mentally/emotionally challenged, but this policy applies to all such adults.

CHILDREN'S SAFETY

1. **Sick Children** – Parents are asked not to bring children to church activities who are known to be contagious with colds, flu or other childhood diseases. If a child becomes seriously ill while in children's ministries, the parents will be notified immediately.
2. **Snacks** – Parents must advise staff/volunteers of any allergies (e.g. nuts). Children with food allergies are always permitted to bring food for their own consumption when food events occur.
3. **Emergencies** – Volunteers are NOT permitted to administer medication. In exceptional situations, arrangements may be made for leaving medication with a volunteer, so long as clear, written instructions and written permission by the child's parents accompanies the medication. Three first aid kits are kept on hand in the church building and all volunteers are to be made aware of its use. Leaders are to review the location and contents annually in September.
4. **Procedures for Dealing with Cuts or Injuries involving Blood** – Comfort the injured child while administering first aid and asking someone else to administer first aid. The child's parent or guardian must be contacted immediately.
5. **Washroom Procedure** – We recognize that there are situations in which teachers or volunteers must be alone with children during the performance of their assigned duties. Examples are such things as helping children in the restroom, changing diapers, etc. When such situations arise, the adult should whenever possible, inform another nearby adult of the situation.
6. The ratio of adults to youth or children for supervision of overnight and off-site activities will be one to six, with a minimum of two adults present. If groups of youth include both male and female youth, there must be both male and female adult supervisors.

7. In situation of overnight housing, if adults are housed in the same room as youth, at least two preferably unrelated adults must be assigned to the room. When housing is in hotels or college dormitory rooms, it is recommended that youth and adults be housed in separate rooms. Exceptions will be made when the children and young and in need of constant adult supervision.
8. Signed written consent of one custodial parent or guardian of a minor (including transportation consent if appropriate) will be required for all activities off the property of the church or any overnight activity.
9. A valid health form is required for all children and youth attending a church sponsored event taking place away from parental supervision.

CUC is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment in which young people can learn about and experience God's love. For safety reasons, therefore, all staff and volunteers will refrain from alcohol, cannabis, or any other mind-altering substances, unless medically prescribed, while volunteering with children.

VULNERABLE ADULTS' SAFETY

In order to ensure that we provide a supportive environment for vulnerable adult communities, the following procedures will be followed by all ministerial staff and volunteers when interacting with any member of this group.

A list of members of the Pastoral Care Committee shall be kept in the Church Office along with the adults they are designated to visit.

Staff and volunteers must avoid the following in their interactions with vulnerable adults:

1. **Financial**
 - a) Involvement in their financial affairs;
 - b) Receiving personal gifts;
 - c) Providing financial advice.

Volunteers must not accept any cash contributions to the Church. Properly addressed cheques with amount designated for the appropriate area of the Church's ministry, e.g. local, Mission and Service Fund, etc., are acceptable. Ensure the giver clearly states to which area the donation is to be directed.

2. **Physical**
 - a) If staff or volunteers note anything particularly unusual in the visit, e.g. serious unattended illness, suicidal ideation, seriously deteriorating physical status or level of care, then this should be reported to the ministry staff.
3. **Counselling**
 - a) It is not the volunteers' role to provide counselling, but it is their role to provide support and referrals as necessary.