

# NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

## I. Introduction

Each day, as many as 150 individuals with criminal records apply for positions with nonprofit organizations, many of whom are registered sex offenders. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children reports that, on average, a serial child sex offender will commit 150 acts of molestation against a child prior to being caught. This data was captured as part of survey completed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation among incarcerated child molesters. We understand that organizations serving children, particularly those from distressed circumstances, are most susceptible to being targeted by those who prey on children.

XX has a zero-tolerance policy for incidents of child abuse. We understand that protecting children is our most important responsibility, and that our programs serve no positive purpose if we do not ensure their safety. In EVERY case, the report of molestation and abuse, or suspected molestation or abuse, will be treated with absolute priority, and the XX will do everything in its power to ensure the successful prosecution of the perpetrator to the fullest extent of the law.

This document provides guidelines and establishes procedures for employees, board members, volunteers, consultants, or anyone conducting or involved (*defined as "Individuals"*) in youth programming on behalf of the XX. Note that such "Individuals" do not include outside vendors, contractors, or service providers, unless they are directly involved with XX youth programming.

## II. Compliance

The XX, as part of its Child Protection Policy, is responsible for appointing a Compliance Officer. The Compliance Officer ensures the organization is acting in accordance with any requirements outlined in the policy. He/she is also responsible for designing and implementing any internal controls, policies, and/or procedures to assure compliance with the internal policy and with any outside parties. The Compliance Officer audits each outside entity to make sure they are following the policy guidelines, ensures that any reports/incidents are handled appropriately and in a timely manner, and responds to requests for information from internal and external clients.

Other duties of the Compliance Officer include but are not limited to:

- Conducting orientation and training of internal new hires
- Ensuring that annual background checks are conducted internally and externally
- Notifying President and/or COO of any incident reports

## III. Orientation and Training of Internal New Hires

All internal new hires will be provided with training during their new hire orientation within one month of hire, but always prior to working directly with children.

Orientation/Training will cover:

- Employee's obligations with regard to reporting incidents of child sexual molestation and abuse
- The proper care for a victimized child

- The process for reporting to the proper authorities and notification of Compliance Officer and XX.
- Understanding what signs to look for in a child who may have been abused

#### **IV. Background Checks**

Until a time when national fingerprint-based criminal background check is available, at minimum all XX **“Individuals”** will be subject to national name-based criminal background check on an annual basis. All background checks resulting in a positive finding of sexual abuse or molestation will result in that individual being permanently banned from working or volunteering in the organization.

- a. XX **“Individuals”** are defined as follows:
  - All employees of the XX
  - Any volunteer working directly with children on behalf of the XX
  - All board members of the XX
  - All interns or others who may conduct youth programming on behalf of the XX
  - Any Individual who may be affiliated with a XX sponsored activity in any capacity and who is in regular contact with young people involved in XX programming
- b. Background checks will be conducted by an approved Background Check Provider. Checks will include, at a minimum:
  - National Criminal File
  - National Sex Offender Registry
  - Social Security Number Verification
  - County and municipal hand checks, where deemed necessary

#### **V. Incident Reports**

- a. The Compliance Officer will have a form that **MUST** be filled in the event an incident is reported or occurs. The report will be submitted to senior staff and all appropriate authorities will be contacted. This form should be completed and submitted to the Compliance Officer immediately and no more than 24 hours after incident occurs or is brought to the attention of the Individual.
- b. Individuals must immediately report any and all incidents, suspected incidents, or allegations of molestation or abuse in accordance with the governing state law.<sup>1</sup> Individuals will immediately report any and all incidents, suspected incidents, or allegations of molestation or abuse to the proper local authorities and the Compliance Officer. It is not the responsibility of the individual to decide if an incident is valid, truthful, or worth reporting. This determination will be made by local authorities.

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<sup>1</sup> *State of Maryland, Family Law 5-701: Abuse constitutes physical or mental injury of a child under circumstances that indicate the child’s health or welfare is harmed or at substantial risk of being harmed. All health practitioners, police officers, educators and human service workers are mandated to report any suspected incident if there is reason to believe a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect. This should be reported to the Social Service Administration of the department or the appropriate law enforcement agency.*

- c. All those participating in a XX sponsored program event must sign a copy of this policy along with a waiver that will be provided to them prior to the event. Individuals will not be given permission to participate in any event where children are present without signing the policy and waiver.
  
- d. Individuals must agree to immediately report any incident or allegation of child abuse to local child welfare agencies and/or law enforcement, regardless of the inclusion or absence of this mandate within their governing state laws. Additionally, individuals must agree to immediately report any incident or allegation of child abuse to their appointed Compliance Officer and supervisor.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have received, read, and agree to abide by the XX Child Protection Policy.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_