

Participation Covenant Statement

The congregation of Bluffton First United Methodist Church is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, youth, and volunteers who participate in ministries and activities sponsored by the church. The following policy statements reflect our congregation's commitment to preserving this church as a holy place of safety and protection for all who would enter and as a place in which all people can experience the love of God through relationship with others.

No person who has been convicted of child abuse (either sexual abuse, physical abuse, or emotional abuse) should volunteer to work with children or youth in any church sponsored activity.

Survivors of child abuse need the love and support of our congregation. Any survivor who desires to volunteer in some capacity to work with children or youth shall discuss his/her willingness with the Pastor before accepting an assignment.

All volunteers* involved with children or youth of our church must have been a part of the congregation for at least six months before beginning a volunteer assignment.

Volunteers with children and youth shall observe the "Two-Person Rule" where and whenever possible so that no volunteer is ever alone with children or youth. A single minor shall never meet along with a child or youth. If this option is not available, volunteers MUST meet with children or youth in a room with a window on the door and the door MUST be unlocked.

Volunteers with children and youth shall attend regular training and education events provided by the church to keep volunteers informed of church policies and state laws regarding child abuse.

Volunteers shall immediately report to the Pastor or ministry leader any behavior that seems abusive or inappropriate.

All volunteers with children and youth shall submit to a background check. Minors must have parental consent to have a background check.

Please answer each of the following questions:

1. As a volunteer in this congregation/non-church personnel, do you agree to observe and abide by all church policies regarding working with children and youth?

YES _____ NO _____

2. As a volunteer in this congregation/non-church personnel, do you agree to observe the "Two-Person Rule" where and whenever possible, and to meet in rooms with a door window and an unlocked door?

YES _____ NO _____ I am a pre-school employee (see above) _____

3. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to abide by the six-month rule before beginning a volunteer assignment? YES _____ NO _____ I serve in a non-church function _____
4. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to participate in training and education events provided by the church related to your volunteer assignment?
YES _____ NO _____ I serve in a non-church function _____
5. As a volunteer in this congregation/non-church personnel, do you agree to promptly report abusive or inappropriate behavior to the Pastor or ministry leader?
YES _____ NO _____
6. As a volunteer in this congregation and if you are a survivor of child abuse of any kind, do you agree to discuss with the Pastor of this congregation your experience as a survivor of child abuse? (*Answering yes to this question does not automatically disqualify you from volunteering with children or youth.*)
YES _____ NO _____ I serve in a non-church function _____
7. As a volunteer in this congregation/non-church personnel, do you agree to inform the Pastor of this congregation if you have ever been convicted of child abuse?
YES _____ NO _____
8. Do you agree to submit to/supply a current background check if/when requested?
YES _____ NO _____

I have read this Participation Covenant, and I agree to observe and abide by the policies set forth above.

Signature / Date

Print Full Name