

Camp Garwood Child Protection policy

I. Goal

It is the goal of the Baptist Missionary Association of Missouri, Camp Garwood, to provide a safe environment for the physical and emotional well being of all children participating in camp activities.

Our goal is to inform workers and to enforce policies to ensure that all children are safe and well protected while attending all scheduled activities.

Future revisions to this policy may be made with the authorization of both the Camp Director and the Encampment Committee.

II. Definition of “children”

The term “child” or “children” shall include all persons under the age of eighteen (18) years.

III. Pre-employment procedures for paid workers and volunteer sponsors.

It is the goal of the Baptist Missionary Association of Missouri, Camp Garwood, (hereafter referred to as BMA of Mo, Camp Garwood or Camp) to adequately screen the applications of all adults desiring to work with children or participate in camp events.

IV. Classification of workers

In order to screen workers appropriately for their responsibilities, the Risk Management person will categorize workers into two categories: primary and secondary. These terms refer to the relative levels of responsibility and risk, not to the ages of the children being served.

Primary workers:

Includes all paid staff, plus volunteers in roles with greater responsibility or risk. (Camp Director, Camp Committee, Evangelist, Worship Leaders, Teachers, Cooks, Church Designated Sponsors, etc.) These workers must be eighteen (18) years of age. Receive a Background check. And complete the full child protection course online.

Secondary workers:

Persons who occasionally interact with children and/or do so in less risky circumstances. i.e.: Any adult staying overnight at camp activities. Also, All volunteer workers under the age of eighteen (18) will be considered secondary workers. Secondary workers are also required to receive a background check. But are only required to take the condensed online training course.

V. Primary workers must be members of a BMA church.

All volunteers who work with children must first be members of a BMA of Mo church. Under certain circumstances, the Director or the Encampment Committee may authorize an exception to this rule for a specific planned event.

VI. Minimum age

All primary volunteer workers must be 18 years of age or older. Younger persons may assist adults, but may not take the place of adult workers. The camp may employ responsible teens (under the age of 18) only in positions with and under the direct supervision of an approved adult worker.

VII. Six-month rule:

Churches can only send as primary sponsors. Members who have been active in their church a minimum of six months.

VIII. Volunteer applications

Volunteer applicants must complete and sign an Application For Volunteer Workers.

Applications will be submitted via the web link provided by Protect My Ministry. (link available at <http://bmamissouri.org/> and at the bottom of this form) Once the application is received the risk officer will request a background check and sign the volunteer up for the appropriate online training course. If the camp learns of false, misleading or amended information on an application that could cause potential danger to children or liability to the church, that person will be terminated.

IX Criminal background check

A criminal background check and child abuse registry check shall be required for all worker positions, both primary and secondary workers. No one who has been convicted of a crime involving misconduct with children will be allowed to work with children. Completing the Application for Volunteer Workers authorizes the church to conduct these checks. Background checks will be kept confidential.

X Identification bands

All campers, both adults and children, are required to wear name tags which will be provided by the camp and will also show the church each camper is registered with.

XI Acknowledgement of church policies

All applicants must acknowledge that they have read and understand the camp policies pertaining to the protection of children and that they agree to abide by them. This requirement will be met by answering yes on the volunteer application.

XII Safety of children

It is the responsibility of all persons having contact with children participating in camp programs to promote the emotional and physical safety of the participants giving regard to all factors and circumstances known to them. If in their opinion, an unsafe condition exists; such persons shall immediately take appropriate precautions under the circumstances to protect all children. Nothing contained in any other camp policy, procedure or instruction shall be construed to relieve persons having contact with children from this responsibility.

XIII Two-adult rule

It shall be the goal of Camp Garwood, that a minimum of two workers will be in attendance at all times when children are being supervised during a camp activity regardless of the number of participants, location or activity. At least one of these must be a primary worker. These two adults cannot be related to one another. At no time should an adult ever be in a room or an enclosed area alone with a child.

XIV Observation of children

Activities for children should be scheduled in areas visible from adjoining areas. At no time will an adult meet alone with a child in any room where the door is closed or in an area where they cannot be seen.

XV Children's pickup

It is the responsibility of the churches primary sponsor to insure each child, leaves camp only with appropriate supervision.

XVI Release of claims

Prior to any camp activity a participation agreement form will need to be signed by the child's parent or legal guardian. Without the form signed and in the possession of the sending churches primary sponsor the child will not be allowed to participate in the camp activity.

Reporting and Responding to Alleged Child Abuse or Neglect

XVII Reporting policy

It is the policy of Camp Garwood to report any incident of child abuse or neglect toward any child.

- Do not treat any suspicion as frivolous.
- Notify your supervisor immediately.
- Commence the investigation right away.
- The staff member in charge should suspend the accused person from the performance of duties involving children until the official investigation has been completed.
- Cooperate fully with law enforcement officials.
- The camp director or his agent will inform the victim and victim's family of the steps that are being taken, and continue to keep them advised of the status of the investigation. If child abuse is confirmed, ask the victim and the victim's family what action they would like to take in the matter and fully cooperate to address their requests within the bounds of a legal and prudent response. (Camp legal counsel should assist in this determination.)
- In an instance where child abuse is confirmed, the camp will immediately dismiss the worker from their position. Termination will be considered appropriate in the circumstances.
- In instances where evidence is inconclusive, the church should take action with the advise of legal counsel in consultation with law enforcement officials depending on the strength of the evidence available and after consideration of the victim and the victim's family's requests.
- The camp director in consultation with legal counsel, will determine the amount of information he believes is appropriate to relate to the concerned parties. (Committee members, pastors, primary workers). Usually commenting in detail on an ongoing investigation is not wise.

XVIII Reporting obligation

Anyone who has reasonable cause to believe that a child is being physically abused, sexually abused, neglected or is dependent is required to report this information. If you suspect abuse, you should call your local Department of Family Services office or the Child Abuse Hot line (800) 752-6200. Camp or Church leadership should also be informed immediately of any suspected child abuse.

XIX. Reports required

Any worker of the camp who has cause to believe that a child's physical or emotional health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect shall report that belief according to the following procedure:

- a. The worker shall report such belief to the camp director, camp committeeman, or the sending church pastor
- b. The director or staff member will immediately report to one of the following: the local Department for Family Services Services, the local authorities, or the Child Abuse Hotline (800-752-6200) or any local law enforcement agency.
- c. The director or his agent will notify the parents of the child (unless the parent is the person responsible for the abuse or neglect).
- d. The pastor, or his agent, in consultation with the chairperson of the encampment Committee will notify the appropriate legal counsel.
- e. The director, or his agent, will notify the church's insurance agent that an abuse report has been filed with the appropriate local or state agency.

XX Incident report

The person making a report should identify:

- a. The name and address of the child.
- b. The name and address of the person responsible for the care, custody, or welfare of the child.
- c. Any other pertinent information concerning the alleged or suspected abuse or neglect.

XXI. Confidentiality

All reports of child abuse or neglect shall be held in absolute confidence. No person shall communicate any information concerning the alleged event to any person except as necessary to cooperate with any official investigation. Any breach of this confidentiality by an employee of the church shall be cause for immediate dismissal. The camp director, in consultation with the official conducting the investigation may authorize limited additional disclosure if necessary to protect other children from harm in the near future, particularly where the person responsible for the abuse cannot be identified, but in no case shall the identity of the victim or the accused person be disclosed except as required by law.

XXII Investigation of alleged abuse or neglect

No person shall attempt to conduct a detailed investigation either through examination or interrogation of the child, the accused person or a witness. It is acceptable to obtain a reasonable amount of information to have cause to believe a child has been abused or neglected. Interviews shall be conducted only by authorized officials of the agency to whom the suspected crime has been reported or, when appropriate, by legal counsel or persons representing the church in an official capacity. All employees and volunteers of the camp shall cooperate with the official investigation as requested.

XXIII. Suspension of church related duties

A person accused of child abuse or neglect will be suspended from all camp related duties involving children. The Camp Committee is not authorized to conduct an investigation of the incident but is allowed to monitor any such investigation and receive confidential information concerning the incident as may be necessary to determine issues concerning continuation of employment of the accused. The person accused should be suspended until the investigation is completed. This removal from duty should occur in such a way that an innocent person is not immediately deemed guilty. If the allegation is determined to be unsubstantiated, the employee can be returned to their prior position.

XXIV. Preservation of records

Copies of all documents relating to an event of abuse or neglect, including a list of all persons known to be present or in the vicinity shall be transferred to the camp director or his agent. They will review them to determine if the documents are complete in accordance with church policy. If any documents are missing, they shall make a written notation and transfer the documents to the BMA of Mo business administrator who shall retain them until advised that all criminal and civil investigations and actions have been completed.

XXV. Ministerial care

The ministerial staff of the sending church shall encourage and assist the child and the parents in securing appropriate counseling, care and support. In the event the abuse or neglect involves a member or employee of the sending church, camp staff shall encourage and assist the individual in securing appropriate pastoral care and support, including third party counseling, being mindful of the potential for a conflict of interest. All persons shall act towards the child, the parents and the accused in accordance with the principles of Christianity at all times.

XXVI Liaison with the community

The Camp Director, or sending church pastor will serve as the camp's sole access to the media. All campers should emphasize to the public its position on child abuse, its concern for the victim and the extensive steps being taken to address the safety of all children.

Worker application link:

<https://www.ministryopportunities.org/BaptistMO>