

RULES OF CONDUCT FOR THE PREVENTION OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

For employees and volunteers working with children and young people

FACING Sexual Abuse

As Christians we believe that man, made in the image of God, is loved and unconditionally accepted by Him. According to Jesus' words (Matthew 18:1ff. and 19:13ff.) we as the Seventh-day Adventist Church feel a great responsibility for the children and youths entrusted to us.

In the context of my volunteer work / my employment with the Seventh-day Adventist Church I confirm that I have read the manual "Obviating Sexual Abuse" and commit myself (by my signature) to observe the following points:

- My position concerning the children and youths is a special position of trust and authority. I must not abuse this position. As a helper, group leader or staff member I will not misuse my role to initiate sexual contact with the young people entrusted to me.
- I shall respect the individual personalities of children and young people and treat them with trust and dignity.
- I shall encourage a healthy self-assurance and the capacity for self-determination in the children and young people entrusted to my care because "strong" children and youths are able to say "No!" and are less vulnerable.
- I shall structure my relationships with children and youths transparently and with positive, appropriate forms of attention and I shall handle boundaries of closeness and distance responsibly.
- I shall take seriously the individual emotions of children and youths in relation to closeness and distance to other persons and respect their personal boundaries.
- I shall do everything within my power to ensure that, while working with children and young people of Adventist youth groups, no violation of boundaries, no sexual abuse and no sexualized violence will be tolerated.
- I shall protect the boys and girls, children and youths entrusted to me from physical and mental harm, danger, abuse and violence.
- I consciously recognize the trespassing of boundaries by other coworkers and participants in groups, teams, programs and activities and I do not conceal it.
- In case of a conflict I shall seek professional support and help and inform the responsible person(s) at the leadership level. In such cases protection of children and young people must come first.
- I refrain from belittling, sexist, discriminatory and violent verbal and nonverbal behavior and will not tolerate it from others but shall take an active stand against it.
- I also refrain from the viewing of all audiovisual and virtual images or descriptions of sexual violence or pedophilic-type material in my personal use of media. According to the principle described in Matthew 5:28 I am convinced that guilt does not first arise from the actual deed, but that it originates through the effects of indulging in an initial fantasy.
- I am conscious of the fact that any sexual contact with persons entrusted to my care is subject to punishment. Each offense by an employee, according to the Working Policy of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, leads to a compulsory loss of employment. If the offense is committed by a volunteer, the Church Manual¹ of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church dictates that the volunteer be removed from the position.
- By signing these rules of conduct I assure that there were/ are no pending legal proceedings against me in connection with sexual violence, nor has any such proceeding been discontinued due to a fulfillment of conditions. I promise to inform the Conference immediately should any pertinent legal proceedings be initiated against me and to resign from any assigned church duties until the matter is settled.

¹ Alteration is intended in 2010

Last Name

First Name

Date of Birth

Function

Place, Date

Signature