

Policy & Procedure Manual

Guidelines for Working with Adults in Faith Formation Activities



WELCOME TO ADULT FAITH FORMATION!

Welcome to the Lord of Life Adult Faith Formation Team! Before we say anything else, let me say this: “Thank you!” You have said yes to be part of the faith journey for the everyone who sets foot in our building. I hope you will discover that you are blessed by this process as much as we hope to be a blessing to others. Please know that the staff at Lord of Life is committed to praying for and supporting this journey every step of the way. We are in this together and that can make all the difference!

God loves each of you, and I do too,

Pastor David Bauser
Associate Pastor



ADULT FAITH FORMATION GOALS

Provide an Adult/Family-Friendly Environment

As members of the Adult Faith Formation team, everything we do is done with the purpose of reaching hearts with Jesus' message. From special events to weekly services, our goal is to present the Word in an exciting and age-appropriate manner. We are committed to providing environments and experiences for adults and families.

Provide Relevant Teaching

We believe God's message stays the same, but the way it is expressed and carried out can vary. Our intention is to create a fun and exciting atmosphere where adults and families can learn, grow, and apply God's Word in everyday life.

Provide Varied Experiences

As part of the Adult Faith Formation team, you will strive to make learning and worship exciting, accessible, and relevant by incorporating a variety of experiences - including small groups, Sunday School, Bible studies, camping, fellowship, and service.

Provide a Safe Environment

A top priority of the Adult faith Formation team is to develop and support a caring environment for all. Therefore, every volunteer and staff member is required to undergo a background check and complete a training course prior to serving. All of us are committed to following the policy and procedures outlined here and in the Safe Sanctuary policy manual to ensure a welcoming and safe setting for all activities hosted by Lord of Life.



Adult Faith Formation Volunteer Expectations

Be an active Member of Lord of Life

Leaders must be active participants of LOL for at least 6 months prior to working with the adult faith formation team. If they have not been active with LOL for more than 6 months, an interview on an individual basis must be performed by a staff member to determine reliability of working with and teaching other adults.

Transportation

If the volunteer is driving children/youth (other than those that they are the parent or guardian for) for any event, the driver must:

1. Have a valid driver's license
2. Be at least 21 years old
3. Have proof of car insurance
4. Not be under the influence of any chemical substance that impairs driving – including alcohol, illegal drugs or over-the-counter drugs, etc.
5. No cell phone use in the car by driver
6. Have passed a background check and completed safe sanctuary training

Provide a Safe Environment

One of LOL Adult Faith Formation's top priorities is to develop and support a caring and safe volunteer team. Every volunteer and staff member working with this program is required to undergo a background check and personal interview prior to serving.

Volunteering at Lord of Life

Being a team member or volunteer with adult faith formation is a privilege at Lord of Life. Prospective volunteers will meet with Staff or Pastors to be involved within the program. Dismissal or suspension of a volunteer will be done at the discretion of Staff and Pastors.



Volunteer EXPECTATIONS

Basic Requirements

The Adult Faith Formation team includes a wide variety of people, but we all have a couple of things in common: We are all at least 18 years of age and we all find joy and value in working with adults and families.

Adult Faith Formation team members are church leaders as well as role models; setting a good example through appropriate behavior and language use is critical to our ability to nurture faith and share God's love. At all church sponsored events and within the church environment, Adult Faith Formation team members will:

- Use positive, encouraging language that reflects a caring and loving attitude
- Be professional, friendly, responsive, and accessible
- Be an active participant in Lord of Life's congregational life
- Refrain from using foul, offensive, derisive, or sexualized language
- Refrain from gossiping or engaging in conversations involving adult-only behavior
- Refrain from using tobacco products, alcohol, recreational drugs, and over-the-counter medications that can impair judgment
- Refrain from engaging in romantic or sexualized behavior with another adult (spouse or otherwise)
- Refrain from engaging in any abusive behavior that violates Lord of Life's Safe Sanctuary policy

Communication

Honest and timely communication is a cornerstone of a successful team experience. If you are experiencing any sort of difficulty with a specific person, equipment or materials, other team members, or anything else that impacts your experience as a member of the Adult Faith Formation team, please bring it to the attention of the LOL Staff or Pastors. It is important to not let difficult situations fester and grow worse by not addressing them or by discussing these with people who cannot help resolve them.

Being Absent

Life is busy and messy and sometimes it is difficult to fulfill our volunteering or work commitments. Please make the Director of Adult Faith Formation aware of planned and unplanned absences by calling, texting, or emailing as soon as possible so coverage can be arranged.



Preparation

We recommend that group or event leaders and helpers plan on arriving 15 minutes before the start of any scheduled event or Sunday program. You will feel more relaxed and your time will go more smoothly if you are ready and waiting for your event to begin.

Most Adult Faith Formation events and programs do not require much outside preparation on the part of the volunteers unless you are part of the preparation team. For Sunday school leaders, it is important to familiarize yourself with the week's Bible story and lesson plan.

Background Check/Intolerable Actions

Criminal background checks will be performed on anyone over 18 years of age seeking to serve on the Adult Faith Formation team. Background checks will be performed on team members every two years, or as deemed necessary. Only qualified members of Lord of Life staff will have access to the criminal background check report. Recommendations will be given by this individual(s) to the staff or pastor overseeing the program regarding each person seeking to serve.

Any prospective team member who has prior incidents of abuse, neglect, endangerment, or misconduct will not be allowed to serve in any capacity where he/she would have contact with minors. Whether disclosed voluntarily or by result of the criminal background check, the following will automatically disqualify a person from serving in any activities or program that would give him/her access to minors:

- Criminal homicide
- Aggravated assault
- Sexual abuse
- Sexual assault (rape)
- Aggravated sexual assault
- Injury to a child
- Incest
- Indecency with a child
- Inducing sexual conduct or sexual performance of a child
- Possession or promotion of child pornography
- The sale, distribution, or display of harmful material to a minor
- Employment harmful to children
- Abandonment or endangerment of a child
- Kidnapping or unlawful restraint
- Public lewdness or indecent exposure
- Enticing a child
- Other incidents judged by the discretion of staff and Pastors



If a member of our congregation or outside volunteer is charged with any of the above (but before conviction), that person will be required to step aside in their role as a volunteer with adult faith formation until the court case has been resolved. Reinstatement of a volunteer after the court case resolution will occur at the discretion of staff and pastors.

Lord of Life expects all leaders and volunteers in the adult faith formation program to adhere to the same standards as our volunteers working with youth and children. Some instances on a background check may prevent someone from working with children but they may be able participate in other adult faith formation events. This will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the pastors in consultation with the staff and the member/volunteer.

Failure to report the following incidences are violations of this Policy and will not be tolerated or accepted. Any knowledge of the following acts, either subjective or objective, are to be immediately reported to a Lord of Life staff member after the safety of the minor child or youth has been assured:

- Any direct observations or evidence of sexual activity in the presence of or in association with a minor
- Any display or demonstration of sexual activity, abuse, insinuation of abuse, or evidence of abusive conduct towards a minor
- Sexual advances or sexual activity of any kind between any person and a minor
- Infliction of physically abusive behavior or bodily injury to a minor
- Physical neglect of a minor, including failure to provide adequate supervision in relation to the activities of Lord of Life Church
- Mental or emotional injury to a minor
- The presence or possession of obscene or pornographic material at any function of Lord of Life Church
- The presence, possession, or being under the influence of any illegal or illicit drugs
- The consumption of or being under the influence of illegal or illicit drugs or alcohol while participating in a function for minors at Lord of Life Church

Conduct with Others

Leaders will refrain from any actions or use of language that is harmful towards anyone involved in a LOL adult faith formation event. This could include:

- Physical actions, such as pushing, grabbing, or unwanted physical conduct
- Use of profanity
- Criticizing, gossiping, public ridicule, demeaning facial gestures
- Inappropriate sexual conduct
- Any suggestive or sexual contact with children is strictly prohibited.
- Any romantic relationship between adult and children is strictly prohibited.



Confidentiality

Confidentiality is expected of all volunteers. What is shared in a group setting should stay within that group setting. What is shared in private to a leader, staff member, or volunteer should be between them. A volunteer may ask a staff member for advice on how to deal with a situation, but there are a few exceptions to this rule:

- If a child/youth/adult discusses a desire to self-harm, including cutting, suicidal thoughts and actions, etc.
- If a child/youth/adult discusses a desire to harm others.
- If a child/youth/adult discusses that someone has harmed him/her or he/she is a victim of abuse, physical, sexual, verbal, emotional, etc.
- If a child/youth/adult knows someone else who has expressed these things to them.
- If a child/youth/adult discusses a leader, volunteer, or staff member who is in violation of the above code of conduct.

If a child/youth/adult confides in you any of these points, share them with the LOL pastor or staff in charge of the event as quickly as possible. In many of the above cases we would need to report the information to government agencies and involve the child's parents as quickly as possible. If the abuser in question is the leader, report it immediately to a Pastor at LOL.

If anyone asks a leader to listen to them but not tell anyone else, an appropriate response is "I can't promise that I will not tell appropriate people what you discuss with me if it involves causing harm to yourself or other people. I can promise I will listen and support you with this issue in whatever way I can with God's help. Do you understand? If so, then what do you need to tell me?"

Training

We provide two main training opportunities for volunteers and staff who work with adult faith formation: Safe Sanctuary training, which focuses on maintaining an environment free of abuses of sex, violence, and harassment, and Adult Faith Formation training, which focuses on equipping leaders with the tools and techniques they need to make their efforts effective and enjoyable. Other meetings might be called periodically to discuss matters pertinent to specific situations or events.

Safe Sanctuary training is mandatory for all staff and volunteer who work with children/youth/adults and must be completed every two years. Adult faith formation training is highly encouraged for those who teach Sunday school or regularly participate in faith formation programming.



Safety and Security

Cell Phones

Adult faith formation team members and volunteers may carry a cell phone at any time; however, to reduce distractions the cell phone audio should be put on a very low or mute setting. While participating in faith formation programming, refrain from using your cell phone unless you have an urgent situation or you are using it in relation to an activity in progress, such as accessing information on the Internet.

Photography and Social Media

Lord of Life operates with an “opt-out” photo policy. Unless a family formally notifies a staff member that they wish to opt out, we can use their pictures in our social media and advertising. Volunteers and Staff will work together to ensure that persons who have opted out of our photo policy will not be featured on social media or advertising and will use discretion to respect the rights of these persons.

When utilizing social media follow these guidelines:

- Names of children should not be posted in social media statuses or pictures.
- Social media postings should not disclose sensitive or confidential information unless the person that the information concerns has given written consent to share such information. This may include medical information or other personal matters.
- For the sake of their own privacy and the well-being of the children participants, church leaders and adult volunteers should not add or invite children to any groups, events, pages, etc. that are not solely dedicated to activities directly related to Lord of Life children’s ministries.
- While it is fine to accept child followers on your personal social media pages, do not seek out and “request” child followers, unless running the official child branded social media profiles.
- If you do have child followers on your social media sites, remember that what you display is a reflection of your ministry, Lord of Life’s ministry, and how you engage with the world. Post or comment with discretion and with the knowledge that children will be watching.
- Pictures of unrelated children cannot be posted on your personal social media account without permission of the unrelated child’s parent or legal guardian.
- If communicating with youth/teens: When communicating with a youth in a text or through social media, only communicate between the hours of 9:00am and 9:00pm. Your communication should be short and to the point and should only be through channels that have a clear record, (i.e. no Snapchat).
- If communicating with children, volunteers will communicate only with parents. Volunteers will not need to contact a child directly via phone, text or social media.
- Pictures should not be taken in bathrooms and sleeping areas.



Child Supervision

Lord of Life follows the “two unrelated adult” rule, meaning no adult shall be left alone with a child. Every attempt shall be made to provide at least two adults or teens aged 16 or older for each group of children from the beginning of an event until the last child is picked up. However, if limited resources allow for only one adult or teen to supervise a group of children, the following precautions shall be taken:

- Doors to rooms shall be kept open or left ajar so that the interior of the room is visible from the hall.
- Under no circumstances shall one adult or teen be left alone with one child for any length of time.

This allowance of one adult supervising a group of children at a children’s event will only be allowed when the church is full and active (i.e. Sunday mornings) or in a public space (i.e. meeting at Starbucks), this is not allowed when the church is inactive (i.e. Sunday nights) or in a private space (i.e. your personal home). If the children’s event only has one staff member or volunteer available and is held in a space where the church is inactive or private, the children’s event will be canceled. Under no circumstance should an adult be alone with a child.

In adult and family faith formation events there may be times when families are divided into different groups for activities (i.e. family camp, dads and kids’ campout, and faithful families events). It is the responsibility of the leader of that event to ensure that no adult is ever alone with a child unless they are their parent or legal guardian.

In counseling sessions with minors, parental permission must be obtained prior to a Lord of Life staff member or volunteer meeting privately with a minor. Approved one-on-one counseling will be held in a room with internal windows and/or an open door. Prior permission may be granted by the parents to cover a particular time period (i.e. school year) for their child to receive counseling from a Lord of Life staff member.

Restroom Policy

While leading or volunteering for adult or family faith formation events there may be children who need assistance using the bathroom. Whenever possible, the parent or legal guardian for the child should be responsible for assisting the child. If the parent or legal guardian is not available, assistance should only be given in the full view of a second adult.

Transportation

It is Lord of Life’s policy that only adults who have met the requirements listed under the volunteer requirements section, can drive children to/from a Lord of Life event.

The car is not an exception to the “no adult should be alone with a child” rule. Under the unlikely event that a parent asks a staff member or volunteer to drive a child home after a children’s function, we can



comply since the parent has consented to this activity. In this scenario the staff member or volunteer should text or call one of the Pastors or appropriate staff member to share what is happening. Immediately after drop off, the staff member or volunteer will follow up with the same pastor or appropriate staff member to let them know the child is no longer in their care. This scenario is only allowable under extreme situations and should not be the norm for our programing. If a parent asks for a “drop off” more than once per year, the pastor or appropriate staff will work with the family to come up with a better system.

Appropriate activities

If there is any doubt about the appropriateness of an activity, questions and concerns should be brought before the Pastor or staff in charge.

Spend time preparing and praying over any activity or lesson.

When children/youth are present, movies played in their entirety must have a rating of G or PG, unless parents are told beforehand or at the discretion of the Pastor or staff in charge. Clips from PG-13 or R movies can be shown for Bible Study but should be carefully screened and discussed with the pastor or staff in charge. When children are not present PG-13 or R rated movies may be used but should be carefully considered and cleared with the pastor or staff in advance of the event.

Incident and Emergency Procedures

If a medical emergency arises, send an assistant to notify the pastor or other Lord of Life staff member, remove the person from the group, and make him/her as comfortable as possible. If a life-threatening emergency arises, have someone call 911. As LOL volunteers/staff we are not permitted to administer any medication (including over-the-counter pain relief or topical creams) with out expressed verbal consent by the adult or by the parent or legal guardian.

Below is a list of possible emergencies and actions that may be taken while waiting for help to arrive:

- Profuse Bleeding – Apply pressure to the wound until bleeding stops
- Choking – If the person is not moving air, perform the Heimlich maneuver
- Seizure – Protect the person from injury by removing all objects from around him/her that he/she may bump into or knock over. Do not restrain or put any object in their mouth.
- Broken bones – Support the affected limb/area and keep stable
- Fainting – Lay person flat with legs elevated approximately six inches
- Unconscious – Lay person flat. Check for breathing and pulse. Administer AR/CPR if necessary and you know how, or find someone who does.



In all instances, complete an Incident Report and return it to the pastor or appropriate staff member.

Incident Report

If an incident such as an injury (real or near) or sickness occurs in your group, let the Director of Adult Faith Formation or other Lord of Life staff member or committee leader on duty know. Complete an Incident Report and return it to the Director of Adult Faith Formation.

Severe Weather

If severe weather such as hail, tornado, high winds, hurricane, rising waters, heavy rain, or lightning occurs:

- Move everyone indoors and into the center of the room, away from windows and doors
- Keep everyone calm by maintaining order and a calm, reassuring demeanor.

Fire Evacuation

When a fire or smoke emergency arises, volunteers should begin the appropriate intervention procedures:

- Maintain control and a calm, reassuring demeanor
- Remove everyone from immediate danger
- Call 911, if necessary
- Contain fire by using a fire extinguisher and closing doors, if necessary
- Account for each person in your group (count/ roll call)
- If fire alarm is sounding, follow the evacuation route that is posted in your classroom or move everyone to the nearest building exit
- Use staircase, not the elevator
- Keep everyone in a group at least 100 feet away from the building

Communication Channels

Open and honest communication is a cornerstone of successful ministry. As a member of the Adult Faith Formation team, you are encouraged to communicate your ideas and concerns to any member of the Lord of Life staff. If you have an idea for an event or a way to improve on an existing program, please share it with us. Likewise, if you are experiencing a problem with another team member, a particular person, or an element of one of the programs, you are encouraged to communicate your concern with the Director of Adult Faith Formation.



Email

The Adult Faith Formation team uses email as our primary means of communication. Sunday school leaders will receive weekly emails containing information about upcoming events, lessons, schedules, and program information. Team members are encouraged to use email for communications that are not personal in nature, such as looking for a substitute for a particular Sunday. Because so much information is communicated via email, one's personal email address is generally made available to other members of a particular team or group. Personal email addresses will not be given out to non-team members, Lord of Life staff, or congregation members without explicit permission.

Website

Adult Faith Formation team members and the general public will find general information about Lord of Life sponsored events and programs at <http://www.lordoflifeonline.org/index1e.htm>.

Phone, Text, and Face-to-Face

Urgent or personal information is best communicated face-to-face or via phone. Because urgent information, such as an unplanned absence, is frequently communicated via phone, the personal phone numbers of Sunday school or other specific team members will be made available to other team members. Phone numbers will not be given out to non-team members, Lord of Life staff, or congregation members without explicit permission.



Receipt & Acknowledgement Policy and Procedure Manual

Please read the following statement, sign and date on the lines provided, and return to the pastor or appropriate staff member.

I have read and understand the policies and other information contained in the Adult Faith Formation Policy and Procedure Manual. I agree, as a condition of my employment or volunteering with Lord of Life, to comply with these policies and procedures as well as any new or revised policies or procedures.

Signature

Date

Printed name

