

Safety Policy for Legal Minors:

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Palo Alto (UUCPA) provides a safe environment for legal minors in our programs. To that end, we follow the child protection procedures and emergency procedures listed below.

I/ Child protection procedures:

A. Annual safety training for all volunteers and paid staff working with legal minors

The Sunday school year runs from August 1 to July 31. Each year, as soon as practical in the Sunday school year, all volunteer and paid staff working with legal minors will complete an annual safety training conducted by the Associate Minister of Religious Education or by another person designated by the Board of Trustees. During the training, paid and volunteer staff will do the following:

1. *Code of Ethics:* Paid and volunteer staff will read the “Code of Ethics” (see Attachment A), show that they understand the Code, have an opportunity to ask any questions about the Code, and then sign and date the Code.

2. *Mandated reporters:* Paid and volunteer staff will be given basic information about reporting suspected child abuse, and will be provided with copies of “Mandated reporters — Who are they, and what do they do?” (Attachment B). At the beginning of their employment, paid staff who are mandated reporters will be required to sign the form on the back of “Mandated reporters — Who are they, and what do they do?” and during the annual safety training, they will be given a chance to review that form, and ask any questions they might have.

3. *Review child protection procedures:* Paid and volunteer staff will review the child protection procedures they must follow, as described in the next section, “Ongoing child protection policies.”

B. Ongoing child protection procedures

All paid and volunteer staff will follow these child protection procedures at all times:

1. *Two-deep rule:* Never be alone one-on-one with a legal minor behind closed doors. There should always be at least two adults and one child, or two children and one adult. (The only exception is for parents/guardians with their own children.) This is especially important in rooms without windows (e.g., bathrooms), and in cars for field trips.

2. *Ongoing supervision of all volunteer and paid staff:* The ministers and members of the Children and Youth Religious Education Committee may enter rooms at any time to observe teachers. Parents/guardians are always warmly welcomed to visit and observe in classrooms at any time.

3. *Getting-to-know-you rule:* Before serving as volunteer staff working with legal minors, volunteers must attend weekly services at UUCPA for at least six months, more frequently than once a month.

4. *Annual criminal background checks:* All paid and volunteer staff will agree to annual criminal background checks. Criminal background checks will use the service provided by our insurance carrier, and will be administered by the congregational administrator. (Note that paid staff may be required to undergo additional screening by other UUCPA policies.)

II/ Emergency and health procedures:

A. Annual safety training for all volunteers and paid staff working with legal minors

The Sunday school year runs from August 1 to July 31. Each year, as soon as practical in

the Sunday school year, all volunteer and paid staff working with legal minors will complete an annual safety training conducted by the Associate Minister of Religious Education or by another person designated by the Board of Trustees. During the training, paid and volunteer staff will do the following:

1. *Review emergency and health procedures:* Paid and volunteer staff will review the emergency and health procedures outlined on Attachment C, show that they understand the procedures, and have an opportunity to ask any questions about the procedures.

B. Ongoing emergency and health procedures

1. *Observe procedures:* Paid and volunteer staff will observe the emergency and health procedures set forth on Attachment C as needed.

2. *Annual emergency evacuation drill:* The Associate Minister of Religious Education will conduct an emergency evacuation drill with each Sunday school class at least once each Sunday school year.