



Volunteer Conduct & Confidentiality Policy

Crossroads Church has the following policies regarding drug use and sexual misconduct by volunteers. Please carefully read this Volunteer Conduct Policy and sign the Acknowledgement Form at the end. If the volunteer is under 18, a parent must also sign.

I. Drug-Free Policy

All volunteers at Crossroads Church must report to their assignments and remain in a fit condition to perform their duties. Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol is not acceptable at any time when a person is working at or for the church.

The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance on Crossroads Church premises or while conducting church business is absolutely prohibited. Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action, including immediate dismissal, and may have legal consequences.

If you are taking physician-prescribed medication, you must notify a pastoral staff member or the Ministry Team leader if there is likelihood that such medication could affect your job performance and safety.

II. Sexual Misconduct Policy

Sexual Abuse of Children

There has been increased attention in recent years to problems related to sexual abuse of children and youth, and when those behaviors occur in churches, it is a violation of trust as well as an abuse of power and authority. This is an area of special concern because of the power imbalance between adults and children. Children are by their very nature more vulnerable and less able to protect themselves. Employees, volunteers, members and nonmember participants should all conduct themselves with care around children. State law has reporting requirements for suspected abuse incidents in certain situations, and all required reports will be made. Those working with children should also be alert to sexual abuse by one child against another child.

Child sexual abuse includes any contact or interaction between a child and an adult when the child is being used for sexual stimulation of the adult or a third person. The behavior may or may not involve touching. Sexual behavior between the child and an adult is always considered force whether or not the child consents.

Sexual abuse is defined in Minnesota Statutes 626.556 (2) as:

- (a) "Sexual abuse" means the subjection of a child by a person responsible for the child's care, by a person who has a significant relationship to the child, as defined in section 609.341, or by a person in a position of authority, as defined in section 609.341, subdivision 10, to any act which constitutes a violation of section 609.342 (criminal sexual conduct in the first degree), 609.343 (criminal sexual conduct in the second degree), 609.344 (criminal sexual conduct in the third degree), 609.345 (criminal sexual conduct in the fourth degree), or 609.3451 (criminal sexual conduct in the fifth degree). Sexual abuse also includes any act which involves a minor which constitutes a violation of prostitution offenses under sections 609.321 to 609.324 or 617.246. Sexual abuse includes threatened sexual abuse.
- (b) "Person responsible for the child's care" means (1) an individual functioning within the family unit and having responsibilities for the care of the child such as a parent, guardian, or other person having similar care responsibilities, or (2) an individual functioning outside the family unit and having responsibilities for the care of the child such as a teacher, school administrator, other school employees or agents, or other lawful custodian of a child having either full-time or short-term care responsibilities including, but not limited to, day care, babysitting whether paid or unpaid, counseling, teaching, and coaching.

Sexual Exploitation

Minnesota state law prohibits sexual exploitation of a client by a counseling professional. Consent by the client is not a defense. This includes pastoral counseling. Since Crossroads Church does not currently have a specialized counseling staff, pastors would be the only persons covered by this requirement. State law has reporting requirements for suspected abuse incidents in certain situations, and all required reports will be made.

Procedures for Reporting an Incident

If you are involved in an incident of sexual misconduct, or you suspect a problem involving someone else, contact the Executive Pastor or the Chairperson of the Board of Elders immediately.

If an incident occurs to a child, the parent of the child or another advocate for the child may report it in the same manner. It is important that pastors, employees, officers, volunteers and all other members of Crossroads Church know whom to call if an incident occurs.

The investigation of each incident will be done by the Executive Pastor and the Chairperson of the Board of Elders. If one of those is accused, then another member of the Board of Elders shall be appointed to serve in his/her place. They have the authority to use others as resources, both inside and outside Crossroads Church, to the extent needed, and will conclude their investigation as quickly as possible.

Confidentiality will be maintained as to the identity of the accused and the complainant to the extent this is possible. Written records of each incident and its resolution will be kept for a reasonable period of time.

If the complaint is found to have merit, the Board of Elders will have flexibility in deciding what course of action to take or recommend to other bodies either inside or outside Crossroads Church, depending on the severity of the situation. As stated above, any legally required reporting will be made.

Crossroads Church has an obligation to maintain a pastoral relationship with all affected parties and not to take sides. However, we cannot ignore, dismiss, or cover up allegations of misconduct. While the church is called to offer forgiveness to all persons, we cannot overlook acts of misconduct by any person. Any incidents of alleged sexual misconduct will be given a high priority under this policy.

III. Volunteer/Paid Staff Screening Policy

All paid staff, adult volunteers in Children's and Youth Ministries, as well as those involved in lay counseling of adults, or managing/handling of church finances, will be subject to criminal background checks. Staff/volunteers will be asked to complete a consent form before a criminal check is run.

Statement of Confidentiality

As you participate in a ministry at Crossroads, you may hear personal information from or about people (e.g. during prayer requests). **All personal information is confidential** and therefore may not be shared with anyone other than a ministry team leader or the pastor. Because we want you to know how seriously we take this sacred trust, we ask that you read and agree (sign below) to this Statement of Confidentiality.

1. I understand that all personal information received by me or others involved in our church's ministry are confidential.
2. I will not share with anyone, except a team leader or the pastor, information I receive as a prayer request or as part of my work in this ministry.
3. If I have questions about a prayer concern or an issue of confidentiality, I will contact a ministry team leader or the pastor.
4. **PRAYER TEAM MINISTRY:** I will forward all requests for prayer given directly to me, other than requests for my personal prayers, to a member of the prayer ministry team or the pastor, who will decide how the request should be handled.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

- () *I have read and agree to abide by the provisions of the Statement of Confidentiality*
- () *I acknowledge that I have read the Volunteer Conduct Policy of Crossroads Church and agree to abide by all aspects of these policies while I am volunteering or doing paid work at or for the church.*

Name (print): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

If the applicant is under the age of 18:

By signing this form the parent or legal guardian agrees and attests to the fact they have reviewed this form with the minor. Also, if the minor is serving in either Children or Youth ministry, they also attest to the fact that the minor has never plead guilty or been convicted of a juvenile or adult crime and that no cases are currently pending a court decision.

Parent/Guardian Name (print): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____