

## Providing A Safe Environment For Youth And Children Of The UISBC

### Purpose

The Utah-Idaho Southern Baptist Convention (UISBC) Volunteer Forms will assist the UISBC and churches in selecting the best possible individuals to serve as sponsors and chaperones at UISBC sponsored events.

Many have asked, "Why this is needed?" The desire of the UISBC is to be pro-active in providing a safe environment for youth and children. It has been proven that volunteer screening helps to deter child abusers and predators from being volunteers.

Another reason for these forms is explained by Jon McLanahan from the following article, "Helping Your Church Stay Lawsuit-Free," found at [lifeway.com](http://lifeway.com).

*"I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves." Matthew 10:16*

One well-known and unfortunate characteristic of American culture today is how litigious our society has become. Our country is literally exploding with lawsuits. The impact of this litigation phenomenon can be seen everywhere. Check out the number of disclaimers and disclosures given on the next consumer product or prescription drug you buy, or notice the length and number of waivers you must sign before a child can be enrolled in a sporting event.

All of these disclaimers, disclosures, waivers and releases were born out of a lawsuit somewhere by some disgruntled person who found a lawyer to file a lawsuit on their behalf. Regrettably, many churches in America have also become victims of this litigation plague as well, accused of things from character defamation to negligent counseling.

To overemphasize the risks that are out there and to be paralyzed by fear would be wrong. The risk of litigation should never impede the ministries of the church, but to ignore the very real dangers would be naive and equally wrong.

The UISBC Volunteer Form is one step that will greatly increase the safety and responsibility that we have in providing a safe environment for our youth and children. This form is part of a screening process, which protects the volunteers. It will also serve to protect children and youth from predators and the UISBC and churches from liability. An important purpose of the form and procedure is to assure parents that their youth and children will be in a safe environment and thereby give the parents confidence and trust in bringing their youth and children to UISBC and church activities and events.

## Procedure

Copies of this document are available from the UISBC office and may be reproduced by any of its member churches. Pastors and/or church leaders are responsible for distributing forms to prospective volunteers, making certain that they have read everything, completed, and signed the volunteer forms. In addition, they have a responsibility to provide training and oversight of the volunteers.

1. UISBC Volunteer Form #1 is to be signed and returned to the UISBC state office **no later than one week prior** to each state sponsored event.
2. UISBC Volunteer Form #2 should be kept in a secure file by each individual church. This form should be renewed at least every three years and kept on file indefinitely.

### **Responsible Screening Of Volunteers Qualifications for Volunteers Working with Youth, Children or Pre-School**

1. Sponsors or volunteers who are in leadership roles working with youth, children or pre-school must be 21 years of age or older. Other volunteers working as helpers under their leadership may be younger if approved and supervised by the leaders.
2. Sponsors and volunteers working with youth, children or pre-school must be active members of a Southern Baptist church for at least six months.
3. Sponsors and volunteers working with youth, children or pre-school must submit a (Volunteer Form) belief statement, including lifestyle questions, one week prior to event.
4. Sponsors and volunteers working with youth, children or pre-school must have endorsement from their pastor and/or a church leader one week prior to event. **(No Exceptions)**

### **Providing A Safe Environment Guidelines for Volunteers Working with Youth, Children or Pre-School**

1. No one should be alone with youth, children or pre-school at any time.
2. A minimum of two volunteers will be present at all times. When more than five youth, children or pre-school are involved the following ratios of adults to children must be followed:

Pre-school	1:3
Children	1:5
Youth	1:8
3. No inappropriate touching, kissing, language or behavior is acceptable.
4. Volunteers must arrive at least 15 minutes before event, stay until the conclusion of the event and all youth, children and pre-school are gone.
5. Volunteers must leave all rooms and its contents in better shape than they were found.
6. Volunteers working with children and pre-school must develop a sign-in/sign-out procedure for parents and guardians.
7. Volunteers must follow all incident-reporting procedures.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Providing A Proper Response Incident Reporting Procedures</b></p>
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**Abuse**

1. Immediately separate sponsor/volunteer from any contact with all youth, children or pre-school and provide other appropriate workers to replace the separated sponsor/volunteer.
2. Immediately notify on-site UISBC leadership of any observed, reported, or suspected abuse. On-site UISBC leadership will notify Executive Director who will then notify parents and or additional leadership as deemed necessary.
3. Upon accusation or report of abuse ask person making such accusation or report if you may use their name.
4. Involve law enforcement as prescribed by law (see Utah Reporting Law/Idaho Reporting Law documents). You may not waive your legal duty or responsibility to report any incident involving abuse or suspicion of abuse.
5. Have the accuser, accused and all witnesses write a detailed description of the incident as soon as possible.
6. On-site UISBC leadership must provide a detailed description of the incident reporting process as it occurred, including discussions and behavior or parties involved.

**Accident/Injury**

1. Immediately contact medical personnel and immediately notify on-site UISBC leadership.
2. Immediately notify parents or legal guardians of accident/injury.
3. Notify the UISBC Executive Director if injury is life threatening or results in death.
4. Complete the UISBC Incident Report Form. Submit one copy to the Executive Director, one copy to the Director of Business Services, and keep one copy for your records.

The UISBC takes our policies in providing a safe environment for youth and children seriously and intends to see that the policies are enforced and that pastors, event leaders, workers, and volunteers are trained and monitored for compliance with these policies.

**PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT**

The information gathered through this form is solely for the approval of persons to serve with the UISBC. Information is provided voluntarily by the applicant. Information gathered will be kept on file indefinitely and in strict confidence by the volunteer's church, subject however, to certain exceptions. The UISBC Executive Director may have access to any volunteer form filed with the UISBC if necessary. By signing the completed forms, applicant agrees to the release of this personal information to authorized persons including, but not limited to, investigating law enforcement officers, attorneys representing the UISBC and any involved church or association and its officers, agents, employees, representatives, and volunteers in the event of a claim or litigation. The information may be subject to disclosure by subpoena or court order in the event of litigation.

**UISBC Volunteer Form #1**

*(THIS PAGE ONLY must be received by UISBC one week prior to event)*

**Applicant Statement** (Please initial each statement)

\_\_\_\_\_ I have read the entire document on **“Providing A Safe Environment For Youth And Children Of The UISBC.”**

\_\_\_\_\_ The information contained in the UISBC Volunteer Form is correct to the best of my knowledge.

\_\_\_\_\_ Should my volunteer form be accepted, I agree to be bound by the qualifications, guidelines, and procedures of the UISBC.

\_\_\_\_\_ Should my volunteer form be accepted, I agree to refrain from unscriptural conduct in the performance of my services on behalf of the UISBC.

\_\_\_\_\_ I fully understand that the UISBC Volunteer Form #2 will be kept on file indefinitely and will be kept in strict confidence by the volunteer’s church.

\_\_\_\_\_ I fully understand that the UISBC Executive Director may request access to any volunteer form if needed.

\_\_\_\_\_ I further state that I have carefully read the forgoing release and know the content there of and I sign this release as my own free act. This is a legally binding agreement which I have read and understand.

\_\_\_\_\_ Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_ Sign Name

\_\_\_\_\_ Date

**Pastor And/Or Church Leader Statement** *(must not be same as applicant)*

The above volunteer applicant has returned the UISBC Volunteer Form #2 in proper order. Their character references have been checked. This form is in a confidential file in our church and will be kept indefinitely.

I recommend this volunteer to serve during \_\_\_\_\_  
UISBC Event/Date

\_\_\_\_\_ Pastor’s Name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_ Pastor’s Signature

\_\_\_\_\_ Date

\_\_\_\_\_ And/Or Ministry Leader’s Name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_ Ministry Leader’s Signature Date

\_\_\_\_\_ Church Name

\_\_\_\_\_ Church City, State

**UISBC Volunteer Form #2**

**Personal**

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Present Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a current driver's license? \_\_\_\_\_ License number \_\_\_\_\_

Are you 21 years of age or older? Yes No

Have you ever been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a crime? Yes No If yes, please explain, attach a separate sheet if necessary. \_\_\_\_\_

Were you a victim of abuse or molestation while a minor? Yes No *If you prefer, you may refuse to answer this question, or you may discuss your answer in confidence with your minister rather than answering it on this form. Answering yes, or leaving the question unanswered, will not automatically disqualify an applicant.*

**Spiritual History**

Briefly describe your Christian testimony, include how and when you became a Christian.

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**UISBC Volunteer Form #2 (continued)**

**Character References (Not a relative)**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to reference \_\_\_\_\_ Known for how long? \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to reference \_\_\_\_\_ Known for how long? \_\_\_\_\_

**Statement of Accuracy and Release**

The information contained in this form is current to the best of my knowledge. I understand that this is strictly a volunteer position, and I expect no remuneration for services and time volunteered.

I authorize any persons giving a reference listed in this form to disclose information that they may have regarding my character and fitness for serving as a volunteer in ministry that may involve children or youth. I hereby release any individual, church, or the UISBC from any and all liability for damages which may result to me for compliance with this authorization, and agree that the church may maintain this information. My signature on this form confirms my understanding and agreement that: In the event that allegations of criminal or sexual misconduct arise regarding my conduct while I serve in a volunteer capacity, the church and UISBC will fully cooperate with any investigation. I further state that I have carefully read the foregoing release and understand the contents thereof, and that I sign this release as my own free act. This is a legally binding agreement, which I have read and understand.

Further, I have read **Providing A Safe Environment For Youth And Children Of The UISBC** and signed the **UISBC Volunteer Form #1**.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sign Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*To be filled in by Pastor and/or Church Leader*

Approved by:	Character References Checked: Yes No
Date:	Date:
Church Name:	Church City, State: