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Youth Protection Guidelines for CAIORG Volunteers

In keeping with the Supreme Assembly's position on the wellbeing of our members, the following procedures, excerpted from IORG's Youth Protection Policy and Program (Revised 2014) are to be utilized. When possible, electronic means should be utilized for the processing and storage of documents.

Screening and Selection of Adult Leaders

All adults who work with Rainbow youth must be appropriately and adequately screened. This includes advisors, volunteers and persons in leadership positions at all levels, as well as those who occasionally work with youth by assisting with activities or providing a service. Those who regularly work with youth are expected to complete requirements to become a Certified Chaperone within two years. Utilizing the same process for all workers provides transparency and consistency in applying the policy standards, and serves as a deterrent to predators. Requirements for regular volunteers include:

- Must be at least 21 years of age
- Must be known to Mother Advisor or another Rainbow advisor for at least six months
- Must submit completed California Chaperone Application – first year only
- Must submit completed California Chaperone Application Annual – each year
- Must not have been convicted of child abuse or molestation
- Must sign Acknowledgement and Agreement of Code of Conduct (YPP-CA Code of Conduct)
- Must have successful background checks of sex offender, criminal, and other records
- Must have three or more positive personal references, two of which are from outside of Rainbow
- Must complete face to face interview with appropriate level of supervisor (please see below)
- Must submit proof of driver's license and vehicle insurance
- Must complete basic YP Training Curriculum within two years

Youth Helpers

Youth Helpers under 21 years of age must always be under the supervision and in the physical presence of an adult leader designated to supervise youth activities. Anyone convicted of child abuse or molestation is not permitted to be a helper. All helpers must have been active members for at least six months, and demonstrated

specific gifts, talents, and maturity that qualify them as helpers. The Mother Advisor and Advisory Board Chair must provide written approval of an individual's eligibility to be a Youth Helper.

Certified Chaperone Criteria and Process

A Regular Worker may become a Certified Chaperone by having successfully served as a Regular Worker for at least a year, and meeting these additional criteria:

- Must complete Chaperone application
- Must have demonstrated appropriate behaviors and skills when working with Rainbow youth
- Must have recommendation from at least two (2) in Rainbow Leadership
- Must complete face to face interview with Advisory Board or selection committee
- Must have completed all basic YP training components
- Must complete additional training for Chaperone Certification within one year of application

Applications and Profiles

The *California Chaperone Application* and *California Chaperone Application Annual* are to be completed in order to work with Rainbow youth as a volunteer in any capacity. All adult workers must be screened for suitability to work with our members. The intention of collecting such information is the protection of our members as well as the adults who work with them. Moreover, it has been found that those who prey upon young people are discouraged by such processes and go elsewhere. Other youth organizations – including other Masonic youth organizations, churches, and schools – now require similar screening. Adults increasingly recognize it as necessary for the protection of our youth.

References and Background Checks

It is advisable to verify as much information as possible regarding the background of every individual applying to work with our girls. A confidential file for each volunteer should include application, personal references and notes, verification of driver's license and automobile insurance, as well as other pertinent information. Information about Masonic affiliation, previous youth group involvement, driving record, and criminal background checks should also remain in the individual's confidential file. This file may be electronic.

Criminal background record checks must be made for all applicants, and include: criminal checks of county and state of residence for the past seven (7) years; national criminal database search; 50 state sex offender registry; and government watch list. A motor vehicle record must be obtained for any person who will be transporting youth. Conviction of a crime unrelated to the individual's responsibilities with Rainbow does not necessarily disqualify the application. However, anyone convicted of any crime against a person, or misconduct of any kind with a child is automatically disqualified from consideration. Anyone convicted of a driving violation in the past five (5) years that could have endangered a child, or two violations in the past ten (10) years is also excluded from consideration. Additionally, misrepresentation of any information relative to a person's background is grounds for elimination from consideration.

Although much information is available online or through locally available public records, it is recommended that jurisdictions utilize a reputable national background search company for the most thorough screening possible. Each state and county will have its own laws pertaining to background checks and may quickly change or become outdated. Background search companies may provide guidance to ensure compliance with applicable laws. The jurisdiction of California has partnered with LiveScan and Sunset Notary to provide such guidance, as well as thorough and affordable volunteer screenings.

Interviews

It is recommended that each new applicant be interviewed by the appropriate supervising or selection authority (Mother Advisor or Advisory Board for local assemblies; Grand Deputy, or Supreme Inspector/ Deputy depending on the situation and level of volunteer position) in order to clarify or verify information and explore motivation for involvement with the organization. It is important to make sure each adult worker is a well-rounded individual who has a variety of interests, adult interactions, and activities beyond working with youth in our organization. Interviews also provide the opportunity to explore how individuals handle stress, conflict, and authority.

Questions about volunteer screening and selection should be referred to the California Grand Assembly office or Supreme Assembly for guidance.