



Youth and Young Adult Ministry

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ADULT CHAPERONE & TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

POLICY:

An offsite youth activity is an educational/spiritual opportunity whereby students leave church property under the direction, guidance and/or authority of the priest. Field trips are recognized as useful in contributing to and enhancing students' practical understanding of spiritual and life subjects. The purpose, organization and implementation of an offsite trip must follow regulations established by the Office of Faith Formation.

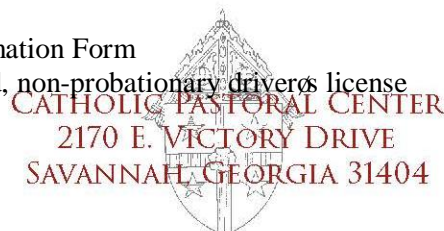
GENERAL GUIDELINES:

All offsite trips must meet the following requirements:

1. The priest shall be provided with all information concerning the offsite trip which may be undertaken only with administrative consent.
2. Youth on trips remain subject to all parish rules and regulations or directives from youth ministry leaders during these activities.
3. Advance written parental or custodial permission must be obtained for each child for each trip. Permission forms must contain all of the elements of the attached sample permission form (Appendix III) for use with the church letterhead. In no instance is verbal consent sufficient, i.e., via a telephone call. However, a FAX transmission of the signed permission form shall be sufficient.
4. Offsite trips will take place under the guidance of faith formation representatives. Reasonable supervision of youth must be provided at all times. Consideration must be given to the type of trip, destination, length of time, and shelter to ensure the responsible supervision and appropriate care for youth at all times.
5. Parent/Guardian consent, liability waiver, and medical consent form must be signed by parent/guardian of each participant under 18 years of age or still in high school. High school graduates 18 years of age or older must sign their own consent forms.
6. The ORIGINAL Parent/Guardian consent, liability waiver, and medical consent form must be kept by the group leader and brought to the event with him/her.
7. All participants over the age of 18 (after graduation) must complete their diocesan Safe Environment Training. In the Diocese of Savannah, it is VIRTUS (www.virtus.org).

TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES:

1. Methods of transportation of youth must be approved by the priest in advance and evidence of adequate insurance coverage of transportation vehicles must be obtained.
2. The use of 15-passenger vans is prohibited by federal law for transporting persons high school age and younger.
3. If using a bus with media systems for transportation, all media/video/DVD material must be reviewed by the leader before using them publicly. R-rated and adult material is strictly prohibited. PG-13 rated materials must be screened by the leader and parents/guardians must be notified in writing.
4. The use of personally owned passenger vehicles is discouraged and should be avoided if at all possible. If a personally owned vehicle must be used, then the following information must be supplied prior to serving as a driver and this information must be certified by the driver in question.
 - A. Driver Information Form
 - B. Copy of valid, non-probationary driver's license





- C. Copy of the driver's insurance declaration page indicating adequate coverage
- D. The driver must be 21 years of age or older; 25 years of age if traveling out of state
- E. The driver must have no physical disability that could in any way impair his/her ability to drive the vehicle safely.
- F. One adult cannot be alone with a single youth in a vehicle.
- G. No other stops may be made while going to or returning from the field trip.
- H. The vehicle must:
 - i. Have a valid and current registration and valid and current license plates.
 - ii. Be insured for the following minimum limits: \$100,000 per person; \$300,000 per occurrence.
 - iii. Must be driven by its owner

CHAPERONE GUIDELINES:

1. A chaperone must be of 21 years of age or older.
2. In no circumstance shall a field trip be only a single chaperone and a single youth.
3. Each employee and volunteer must have the following information on file with the Safe Environment Office:
 - A. VIRTUS training date (completed)
 - B. Signed Code of Conduct (signed annually)
 - C. Background check (current).
4. Chaperones are to be alcohol and drug free. Absolutely no alcohol is allowed at events with minors (under 21 years of age).
5. There must be at least two (2) chaperones at an event.
6. A **1:10** adult/youth ratio is in effect for all day activities. A **1:7** adult/youth ratio is in effect for any overnight activities accounting for male/female chaperones according to the number of male/female youth.

HOUSING GUIDELINES: (For offsite housing activities the OYYAM must be notified)

1. Room accommodations for youth events are gender specific. Males are never allowed in female assigned rooms and females are never allowed in male assigned rooms.
2. Chaperones must be in rooms separate from the youth.
3. Parents and children may share a room. No other combination of relatives is allowed (e.g., aunt/niece; grandpa/grandson, etc.)
4. No unrelated minor may share a room with an adult.
5. High school seniors who are 18 may share a room with their peers; however, this exception ends with graduation.
6. Adult must never be in a room alone with a youth.
7. Bag searches must be conducted with parents present, before arrival at destination.
8. Additional bag searches may be conducted at destination as needed (2 adults are required per bag search).

NOTE: If a private home is used for off-site activities, the homeowner should be aware of the increased liability risk they incur. They should check with the homeowner's insurance agent to see if they are protected for Church group activities. Some policies cover such activities while others require an additional rider.