



GUIDELINES

FOR

VOLUNTEERS AND OTHER PERSONS

INVOLVED IN

CHILDREN AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES

OF

THE MISSOURI DEPARTMENT

OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

(February, 2014)

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INTRODUCTION

The Missouri Department of the American Legion supports many programs involving children and youth, including, but not limited to such programs as: Sons of the American Legion, American Legion Baseball, Boys' State, Boy Scouts, Cadet Patrol, Oratorical Contests, Junior Shooting Sports and Junior ROTC. These programs would not be possible without the help of many dedicated adult volunteers. By far and large, these volunteers are highly motivated and respected members of the American Legion, or parents, and other civic minded citizens. Nevertheless, it is incumbent on the Department as a sponsoring agency to make sure that such volunteers are properly vetted, do not have an unsatisfactory background and are properly informed as to how to recognize child abuse in all its forms as well as knowing how to follow up when such abuse is discovered. That is the purpose of this guide. The National American Legion has produced a similar guide known as: *Risk Management Policies Of The American Legion For The Enhanced Protection Of Children And Youth*. That guide is primarily concerned with the American Legion Junior and Senior Baseball programs. This guide utilizes many of the policies set forth in that guide and is intended to cover all children and youth programs sponsored by the Missouri Department of the American Legion. Normally, if a volunteer meets the standards set forth in the National's policy guide for American Legion Baseball, that volunteer will also meet the standards set forth in this guide for the other children and youth programs sponsored by the Missouri Department.

DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply to Children and Youth activities sponsored by the Missouri Department of the American Legion which are covered in this guide:

Abuse:

- **Physical Abuse** – injury intentionally inflicted.
- **Economic Abuse/Exploitation** – Deliberate temporary or permanent misuse of another's money or belongings.
- **Emotional Abuse** – mental or emotional injury inflicted resulting in an observable and material impairment in growth, development or psychological functioning.
- **Neglect:** failure to provide basic needs of vulnerable individuals or protect them from harm.
- **Sexual Abuse** – contact or activity of a sexual nature without consent or when consent is not possible.
- **Verbal Abuse** - use of words intended to cause harm or demean the person being spoken to.
- **Adult:** Anyone 18 years of age or over
- **Child/Minor/Youth:** Anyone 17 years of age or under..
- **“Provider”:** The exclusive commercial vendor engaged by The Missouri Department to conduct background check screening of volunteers in Department sponsored Children and Youth Activities:

Priority Research Services, Inc., DBA “Protect Youth Sports”
14499 N. Dale Mabry Hwy, Ste 201 South
Tampa, FL 33618
(877) 319-5587 (8 am to 6 pm EST)
www.protectyouthsports.com

- **“Designated Individual(s)”:** Volunteers in any Children and Youth activities sponsored by the Missouri Department
- **“Organization”:** The Missouri Department of The American Legion
- **“Reporter”:** An individual reporting suspicions or allegations of child abuse.
- **“Team Sponsor”:** The American Legion post or other organization sponsoring a Junior or Senior American Legion Baseball team or any other team activity.

- **“Verifier”**: Those who are assigned responsibility for making verifications as noted below. It is strongly urged and recommended that the respective Legion Post or other organization sponsoring an American Legion activity assume the responsibility for verifying that:
 - 1) Each volunteer has successfully passed the mandated background check screening requirements each year
 - 2) An individual charged with or having a case pending involving disqualifying criteria is prohibited from having contact with the activity until legal adjudication has been made and the screening has been confirmed as successfully completed
 - 3) A substitute or replacement volunteer does not assume any duties within that activity until the background check screening is successfully completed
 - 4) Validity of information that a volunteer may have sustained one of the disqualifying criteria in the interim after a required background check screening
 - 5) Non-screened adults removed from the activity have successfully completed a background check screening prior to their return.
- **Youth**: anyone between 12 and 18 years of age.

BACKGROUND

At the 2012 Fall meetings , the National Executive Committee adopted Resolution No. 16 “Mandatory Background Check Screening For Coaches, Managers and Volunteer Staff of Junior and Senior American Legion Baseball Teams.” This includes all baseball programs sponsored by The American Legion national organization and requires the mandatory background investigation be conducted each season exclusively through a provider selected by the American Legion. For the 2013 baseball season, that provider is “Protect Youth Sports”.

The Missouri Department Executive Committee voted, at the 2013 Spring Conference that a background investigation be performed for all Volunteers for any or all Children and Youth Programs sponsored by or involving the Missouri Department of the American Legion. The DEC had previously voted to provide the same provider, "Protect Youth Sports," for all Children and Youth Program Volunteers and Coaches to register themselves and obtain the appropriate background investigation that will clear them for participation.

The American Legion Department of Missouri, Inc. Protect Youth Sports Verity 4 account with **Coach Pay** has been setup. The cost is \$8.00 and is paid on line when the Volunteer fills out the one page application. It is a very simple application and a pass or fail is the only thing that is reported to the Department Headquarters. The only practical way for the Department to set up this program was to have each volunteer pay the \$8.00 charge for his or her own report at the time of requesting the report; however, each program sponsor whether a Department Committee, Commission or American Legion Post may decide to reimburse such volunteers for the report cost if they wish to do so.

For applicants, volunteers:

Web-link: <https://opportunities.averity.com/ALDeptMissouri>

There is also a web-link at: <https://missourilegion.org> and clicking on the “Protect Youth Sports” banner.

We have set up the following Departments - Positions:

Baseball - Coach and Volunteer

Boys State - Volunteer

Boy Scouts - Volunteer

Cadet Patrol - Counselor and Volunteer

Children and Youth - Volunteer

Jr. Shooting Sports - Shooting Coach and Volunteer

Jr. ROTC - Volunteer

The preceding links may be used by American Legion Program sponsors, Districts, and Posts to request a Background check.

SCREENING

Use of current, dependable, and complete criminal history information is considered a critical screening protocol for any youth-serving organization. Volunteers undergo criminal history screening for many of the same reasons employers conduct background checks - the purpose is to verify identity and determine whether a potential volunteer may have anything in his or her past that might disqualify them as a volunteer from working with youth participants.

Handling of sensitive information during the screening process requires the utmost attention to discretion and confidentiality so as not to damage a volunteer's reputation or career. All volunteers involved in Department sponsored activities are to be screened each year prior to conducting any meetings, events, practices or games that involve youth participants.

In addition to conducting background checks, the Provider provides screening and reporting of background check results in accordance with criteria established by The American Legion National Headquarters, and adopted by the Missouri Department. The Provider is responsible for complying with the Fair Credit Reporting Act, storage of information and records consistent with applicable laws, and maintaining confidentiality of information obtained through the background check process.

Applicability of Background Checks. Although a Designated Individual may have the ability to provide proof of a background check having been previously conducted through a source other than the Provider, background check screening will still be conducted by the Provider in order to provide screening consistency and enhanced confidentiality..

Frequency of Background Checks. Background checks must be conducted on all Designated Individuals each year prior to any meetings, events, practices or games that involve youth participants.

Level of Information to be Checked. All background check screenings conducted on Designated Individuals will include:

- Social security number verification and address history trace
- Alias names national search
- National criminal database search
- National sex offender registry search

Background Check Disqualifying Criteria. Disclosure during a background check screening that contains one or more of any of the following disqualifying criteria will prohibit an individual from serving as a volunteer in any Missouri Department sponsored children and youth activity:

- 1) Conviction of a felony
- 2) Conviction of a crime involving a minor, regardless of the offense
- 3) Conviction of a crime involving force or threat of force against a person
- 4) Conviction of a crime in which sexual behavior is an element; including "victimless" crimes of a sexual nature (including pornography)
- 5) Conviction of a crime involving controlled substances (not paraphernalia or alcohol)
- 6) Conviction of a crime involving cruelty to animals
- 7) Any sex offender registrant
- 8) Refusal to undergo background screening

An applicant will not be disqualified for a harassment or conspiracy conviction unless it is presented in the context of one of the already existing disqualifying criteria listed above.

Local ordinance violations are not considered disqualifying criteria given their low-level of severity

If during the background screening process it is revealed that a Designated Individual is charged with or has a case pending that involves any disqualifying criteria as previously set forth, that individual will be prohibited from having contact with any youths involved in the Department program until legal adjudication has been made and the screening has been confirmed/verified as successfully completed; the Missouri Department assumes the responsibility for oversight of an appropriate disposition in this situation.

If information is acquired at any time that a Designated Individual may have sustained one of the disqualifying criteria in the intervening period after a required background check has been conducted, that individual will be prohibited from having contact with the youths involved in the program until accuracy of the information has been validated so as to ensure the protection of the youth participants; the Missouri Department assumes responsibility for oversight of an appropriate disposition in this situation.

A replacement or substitute for a Designated Individual at any time cannot assume any duties until background check screening as mandated has been confirmed as successfully completed; the Missouri Department assumes responsibility for oversight of an appropriate disposition in this situation.

The American Legion at any level may reserve the right to prohibit an individual from serving as a volunteer if, at any time, it is deemed the individual is unfit to work with minors.

Findings. The Provider grades (adjudicates) and assigns either an “accept” or “reject” designator to a background check application from an individual of The American Legion. An “accept” designator means the background check of a Designated Individual does not contain disqualifying criteria previously set forth and may have contact with youth participants of an American Legion activity. A “reject” designator means the background check of a Designated Individual contains disqualifying criteria and that individual is prohibited from having contact with youth participants of the American Legion activity. The Provider sends the results of that adjudication to the account manager at the Missouri Department; a full copy of the report is not revealed to the Legion during that process. This system of reporting eliminates the need to disclose specific criminal history details to the Legion.

When a background check reveals there is a pending case or an active warrant for crimes involving the disqualifying criteria listed, the Provider will assign a “reject” designator. Doing so supports the Organization’s mandate of prohibiting an applicant from having contact with any youth program participants until such time legal adjudication is made and there is verification that an “accept” designator is then achieved.

Pre-Adverse Action Notice. The Provider has a system in which they are automatically aware that a “reject” designator has been reported for an individual. The Provider will email to that individual a copy of their full report, along with a “Pre-Adverse Action Notice” and a copy of the Summary of Rights as mandated by the Fair Credit Reporting Act.

At this point the Provider allows five (5) business days for the individual to contact them in order to file a dispute or request a recheck, should the individual disagree with the outcome of the report. If contacted, the Provider will follow its normal re-check procedure and will send out an updated report, should one be needed at the completion of the recheck/dispute.

If an individual should ultimately deem that after re-check/dispute that the situation has been resolved, the individual at that time may submit a brand new, fresh application to the Provider in order to provide confirmation of an “accept” designator to their account manager.

If 5 business days pass with no communication from the individual, the Provider will then issue, via email, a final Adverse Action letter and a copy of the Summary of Rights to the individual. There is no report sent with this phase.

Appeals. The Organization will not intercede if a Designated Individual has concern with the outcome of their background check report of findings; it is strongly urged and recommended that the Designated Individual be referred directly to the Provider for discussion

Copies of Reports. Should an individual who receives an “accept” designator desire to receive a full copy of their background check report, that individual should directly contact the Provider to make that request and pay the fee associated with doing so since the routine release of a full report is not an obligatory requirement of the contractual agreement established between the Organization and the Provider.

There are three ways an individual may request a copy of their background check report from the Provider:

1. **Fax:** By faxing a request letter to 800-319-5582
2. **Email:** By emailing a request to support@protectyouthsports.com
3. **Mail:** By mailing a request letter to: Protect Youth Sports Compliance Department, 14499 N. Dale Mabry Hwy, Suite 201, South Tampa, FL 33618

The following information should be included with each request:

- Full name
- Social Security Number (do not provide if sending via email)
- Daytime phone number
- Copy of driver license or photo ID (please enlarge and ensure copy is clear and legible)
- Secondary form of ID
- Report ID (if available)
- Mailing Address. (Please note: The report will be sent certified mail)
- Signature

Removal from Record. As a possible recourse, individuals may independently seek having disqualifying criteria removed from their record through legal or governmental avenues. This may not always be an option, but if an individual can have disqualifying criteria removed from his/her record and then achieve an “accept” designator through background screening with the Provider, they may then be considered qualified to serve as a Designated Individual for American Legion activities.

AWARENESS AND OVERSIGHT

Awareness is a key element to any prevention strategy. Awareness and orientation on safeguards, policies and procedures are instrumental in contributing toward a knowledge and prevention of various forms of abuse. Awareness and orientation can be disseminated in a variety of ways and should be made available to all volunteers prior to conducting any meetings, events, practices or games that involve youth participants, regardless of how experienced that volunteer may be. It is strongly urged and recommended that American Legion Posts assume responsibility for ensuring their volunteers know to whom they should go in the event of questions or problems.

PROTECTON POLICIES AND SAFEGUARDS

Policies and safeguards should be clearly established by Department Commissions and Committees as well as Districts and Posts that sponsor children and youth activities. Such policies and safeguards should reinforce a positive environment, safe interactions and appropriate conduct among program staff, volunteers, and youth participants. Providing volunteers with an awareness of the policies established for acceptable/unacceptable behavior minimizes opportunities for misconduct and helps prevent unfounded allegations. It is also vitally important that policies and procedures for reporting and responding to suspected abuse, misconduct, or policy violations are clearly established as well.

American Legion youth programs are designed to encourage safe interaction between staff, volunteers, and children or youth. Parents and families trust Legion programs to provide a safe and healthy environment for all participants.

Youth Protection Policy. The American Legion does not tolerate abuse in any form, whether it is physical, emotional, sexual, verbal or economic exploitation.

Youth Protection Safeguards. The following safeguards are intended to first and foremost place the welfare and well-being of children and youth in the highest priority, and to assist in employing and monitoring behaviors and interactions with children and youth so as to avoid, recognize or stop those that are harmful. These safeguards do not and cannot address every situation that could be encountered. Just because a certain action is not prohibited in this section does not mean it is acceptable behavior. Staff may be required to act with a certain degree of personal discretion.

Conduct. The following guidelines and expectations have been established for persons serving in volunteer and staff roles for youth programs of The American Legion.

General conduct:

- Demonstrate behavior appropriate for a role model for youth; be courteous, fair, and unbiased in your treatment of all children and youth.
- Put the welfare and well-being of children and youth first.
- Treat all children and youth with dignity and respect.
- Drugs, tobacco, alcohol and sexually explicit materials:
 - Do not possess, distribute, use or allow others to use alcohol or drugs during operation of youth programs.
 - The use of tobacco at youth programs is prohibited in the presence of children or youth.
 - Do not be in the possession of any sexually orientated materials when conducting business as staff of a youth program.
- Use of Language:
 - Do not use harsh, inappropriate, offensive, profane or degrading language in the presence of children or youth.
 - Do not discuss sexual history, preferences or fantasies with or in the presence of children or youth.
- Physical contact:
 - Do not use restraint or any type of restraining device as punishment or behavior management.
 - Do not use physical punishment in any form (e.g. slap, push, hit, kick, etc). Use of the most minimal physical force necessary is only acceptable to save one from serious harm or death when the actions of a child or youth is placing themselves or others at immediate risk.
 - Do not participate in or allow others to engage in hazing or any activities involving harassment, humiliation, teasing, ridicule or abuse.
 - Do not have sexual contact with children or youth.
 - Do not engage in sexual activity in the presence of children or youth.

- Remain alert to the appropriateness (see below), context, and location of any physical contact with children and youth; any physical contact only takes place in public.
 - Do not dress, undress, shower or bathe with or in the presence of children or youth.
 - Do not have sleeping locations with children or youth.
 - *Sleeping room assignments involving youth program participants should be so that no participant of an adult age (18 years of age or older) is rooming with a participant who is a child/minor/youth (17 years of age and below).*
 - Have contingency plans in place for separating those program participants who may become involved in youth-on-youth/child-on-child harassment.
 - Do not be alone with a child or youth when transporting them in a vehicle.
- Appropriate forms of contact:
 - Brief hug (e.g., a “shoulder-to-shoulder” hug of celebration or appreciation).
 - Pats on shoulder or back.
 - Handshakes.
 - “High-fives”.
 - Holding hands during prayer.
 - Inappropriate forms of contact:
 - Lengthy, fully engaged embraces or “bear hug”.
 - Kisses on the mouth.
 - Touching of buttocks, breasts or genital area.
 - Occupying same bed as a child or youth.
 - Any type of massage.
 - Snapping of bras or giving wedgies or similar touching of underwear, whether covered by other clothing or not.
 - Private meals with a child or youth.
 - Giving gifts to, or receiving gifts or money from children or youth.
 - Any form of unwanted affection.

Communication:

- Do not be alone with a child or youth when one-on-one discussion or counseling is necessary; one-on-one interaction with a child or youth will only take place in a publicly visible and open area that allows for private conversation and while still remaining in the presence of another staff member.
- Electronic text or image communications (email, electronic text, social media, videos, digital photos, etc.) with a child or youth under the age of 18 must copy or include the minor’s parents or guardians.

Safety:

- Plan for adequate staff-to-participant ratios that are appropriate to the nature of the youth program, the activities involved, and the age of program participants.
- Keep medical and emergency contact details for youth program participants readily available at all times in the event of an emergency.
- Immediately obtain or provide appropriate medical assistance in the event of an injury.

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF ABUSE

These signs do not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused, but they may help adults recognize the possibility that something is wrong.

Possible signs of physical abuse:

- Frequent suspicious or unexplained injuries out of the norm for those normally associated with childhood activities, e.g., burns, deep bruising, etc.
- Improbable excuses or refusal to explain injuries.
- Wears inappropriate clothing to cover injuries, e.g., long sleeves or pants on a hot day.
- Injuries appearing to have a pattern, such as a handprint or belt.
- Fear of medical treatment or examination.
- Aggression toward others.
- Shrinks back from touch.
- Refusal to change for gym or athletic activities.
- Rebels against authority.

Possible signs of emotional abuse:

- Excessively withdrawn or fearful.
- Continual self-deprecation, e.g., “I’m ugly”, “I’m stupid”, etc.
- Overreaction to mistakes.
- Emotionally abuses others.
- Extreme sensitivity to criticism.
- Extreme fear of new situations.
- Extremes of passivity or aggressiveness.
- Continuous unwillingness to develop relationships

Possible signs of sexual abuse:

- Difficulty walking or sitting.
- Makes strong efforts to avoid a person without explanation or strong reluctance to interact with a person.
- Fear of touch.
- Wearing excessive amounts of clothing.
- Isolation or withdrawal.
- Insecure or clinging.
- Extreme personality changes.
- Sudden loss of appetite or compulsive eating.
- Inability to concentrate.
- Being overly affectionate or acting out sexually.

RESPONDING TO CHILD ABUSE / SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

Anyone having knowledge of, or a reasonable cause to suspect, that abuse of a child or youth has occurred, has a personal, ethical, and often legal, obligation to make a report. The definition of a “mandated reporter” for suspected child abuse can vary from state-to-state, with the applicability of who should report being defined more broadly in some states more than others. But remember, it is the responsibility of all individuals and community members — not just mandated reporters — to respond to the suspected maltreatment of any child or youth. No matter the state laws, learning the appropriate ways to respond to suspected abuse and becoming an informed and involved are important steps toward protecting children. **All volunteers are required to immediately report all cases of abuse or suspected abuse involving a child or youth.** Any individual reporting suspicions or allegations is hereafter referred to as the “Reporter”.

If a child or youth tells you about abuse:

- Remain calm and reassuring.
- Find a quiet place to talk.
- Believe in what you are being told.
- Don’t jump to conclusions.
- Reassure the child or youth they did the right thing by telling you.
- Reassure the child or youth that they will be protected and supported.
- Be discreet.
- Call 911 if medical treatment is necessary.
- *Report the concern immediately to the proper law enforcement authorities.* The law requires only that you have a reasonable suspicion that a child or youth is being abused.
- Do not discuss the concern or share information with anyone other than those having a “need to know”

REPORTING

When anyone, including all volunteers, observes or is made aware of any inappropriate behavior(s) or behavior(s) inconsistent with those detailed in the “Protection Policies and Safeguards” section of this guide, they must immediately report their suspicion(s)/allegation(s) to the Missouri Department.

In ALL cases involving ANY reasonable suspicion that child abuse has occurred, a report must immediately be made to law enforcement authorities and notification to the youth participant’s parent(s) or guardian(s). This reporting responsibility may NOT be abdicated to another individual. The assumption should NOT be made that law enforcement authorities, parent(s)/guardian(s), etc., have already learned of a situation through other venues – report immediately upon becoming aware of suspected child abuse.

The Missouri Department requires that any volunteer or other reporter implement use of the written report form found in Appendix B entitled “REPORTING FORM”, and after having immediately contacted law enforcement authorities and parent(s)/guardian(s) in cases involving child abuse or suspected child abuse, the Reporter should then offer a copy of this completed form to law enforcement authorities, and provide a copy to the Missouri Department.

AWARENESS AND ORIENTATION

All Designated Individuals must comply with the requirements set forth in this manual. The Missouri Department provides copies of both this manual and the National Organization's manual, "*Risk Management Policies of The American Legion for the Enhanced Protection of Children and Youth*" through links on our Department web page; however, the Missouri Department does not have responsibility for ensuring that Designated Individuals receive the information. It is strongly urged and recommended that American Legion Department program sponsors and American Legion Posts implement a system for ensuring availability of this manual and "*Risk Management Policies of The American Legion for the Enhanced Protection of Children and Youth*" to Designated Individuals each year.

It is a requirement that each Department program sponsor shall maintain a record of submission of the statement form contained in Appendix C that acknowledges receipt and understanding of the information contained in this manual, or, if in the American Legion Baseball program, the statement form contained in Appendix C of the "*Risk Management Policies of The American Legion for the Enhanced Protection of Children and Youth*" from Designated Individuals. Such completed forms shall be retained for up to three years by the chairperson of the program sponsor or his/her designee.

RESOLUTION
FOR ACTION BY THE 2013 DEPARTMENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
WITH RECOMMENDATION TO THE DEPARTMENT RESOLUTION
COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: Establishment of Mandatory Screening and Adoption of Policies for Volunteers in All Children and Youth Activities Sponsored by the Missouri Department

WHEREAS, The National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, May 9-10, 2012 adopted a resolution to the effect that Departments of The American Legion are strongly urged and encouraged to establish background screening procedures and policies similar to those of the National Organization for volunteers supporting youth programs within their departments; and

WHEREAS, The Resolution adopted by the National Executive Committee mandated background screening of volunteers and enhanced protection for children and youths involved in the National Baseball Program; and

WHEREAS, The Missouri Department sponsors other children and youth programs as well as baseball; and

WHEREAS, The Missouri Department strongly advocates guarding against child neglect and abuse in the conduct of these programs; and

WHEREAS, Screening, clearly established policies, instruction and oversight are all elements of volunteer management that can help uphold the integrity and safety of youth programs and can mitigate the risk and liability of an organization; now therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the Department Executive Committee of the Missouri Department of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Jefferson City, Missouri, February 15 and 16, 2013, that all adult volunteers involved in any youth programs sponsored by the Missouri Department undergo a mandatory screening through a vendor selected by the Department Commander and such selection be made with the advise and consent of the Department Executive Committee; and be it further

RESOLVED, that such adult volunteers be furnished information regarding the policies and requirements established by the Department for volunteers and that all volunteers acknowledge their understanding and agree to abide by such policies and requirements; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That Posts and intermediate bodies of the Department are strongly urged to set up such screening procedures and policies for all youth activities within their purview.

**THE MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF THE AMERICAN LEGION
REPORTING FORM**

CHILD ABUSE / SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

This section is about the individual you are reporting. Please provide as much information as possible.

1. Name of the individual you are reporting (first and last):
2. Age or approximate age:
3. Circle gender: Male Female
4. Address (City and State required)
5. Program position(s) this individual held at time of the incident:

This section asks questions about the incident(s) you are reporting. Please provide as much information as possible.

6. Type of offense (e.g., what is being suspected or alleged)
7. During which youth program did the incident(s) take place?
8. What is the location of where the incident(s) took place? (include city, state and any other available location information)
9. Describe what happened (include who, what, when, where) (continue on reverse side if necessary) communicated only to those having a “need-to-know”.

This section is for information about the victim(s).

10. Name (first and last)

11. Age or approximate age:

12. Circle gender: Male Female

13. Parent/Guardian name:

14. Parent/Guardian address:

15. Parent/Guardian phone numbers: Cell: Home:

This section is your information. A person reporting alleged misconduct should not fear any retribution and/or consequence when filing a report he/she believes to be true.

16. Name (first and last)

17. Email address:

18. Phone numbers: Cell: Home:

19. Address:

20. Program position you were holding at time of the incident:

21. Relationship to victim (if any):

It is strongly urged and recommended that volunteers or other responsible program sponsors implement use of this written report form entitled "REPORTING FORM", and after having immediately contacted law enforcement authorities and parent(s)/guardian(s) in cases involving child abuse or suspected child abuse, the Reporter then offer a copy of this completed form to law enforcement authorities, and provide a copy to the Missouri Department and/or the program sponsor, if considered necessary. All information regarding alleged child abuse must be maintained under strict confidentiality and communicated only to those having a "need-to-know".

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND UNDERSTANDING
OF THE POLICIES OF
THE MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF THE AMERICAN LEGION
FOR THE
PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

If you have any uncertainty or questions regarding the content of this manual, you are required to consult the Department Adjutant of the Missouri Department prior to signing and acknowledging this agreement.

I have read and understand the Policies of The Missouri Department of the American Legion for volunteers in any “Children and Youth” programs sponsored by the Missouri Department and agree to abide by its terms and conditions. I understand that my failure to follow the terms of these policies could result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of serving as a volunteer or other responsible person involved in any such program or programs

Signature of Volunteer

Printed Name and Date

Youth Activity Name

Sponsoring Commission, Committee or Post Name