



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF AMERICA

COMMITMENT

TO SAFETY

Child & Club Safety Handbook



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF MERCER COUNTY

Approved by BGCMC Board of Directors – May 9th, 2024

THE SAFETY AND WELLBEING OF YOUNG PEOPLE IS OUR NUMBER ONE PRIORITY

Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County aims to provide positive opportunities for youth and teens to learn, succeed and discover their full potential. We work every day to create a safe, fun environment so kids can have every opportunity to be successful in life. We have ZERO tolerance for inappropriate behavior of any kind, or policy violation, including child abuse.

CULTURE OF SAFETY

Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County updates safety policies, programs, and training for our staff, volunteers, and board members that are designed to promote child safety and protect young people from threats that are present in our society. We implement layers of safety policies and guidelines to keep our kids safe. We do mandatory and ongoing background checks on all potential and current staff and volunteers, each of whom must follow strict policies and procedures. We also offer routine staff trainings to build a culture of safety. This handbook is reviewed and revised annually or as needed by our Safety Committee and Board of Directors.

Revisions

Revision Date	Policy or Policies Affected	Scope of Change

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1.0 Board-Led Safety Committee

Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County maintains a board-led safety committee that meets regularly, leads our safety agenda, identifies improvement areas, and implements solutions to ensure the safety of all members, staff, and volunteers.

The Safety Committee is comprised of individuals with expertise in the area of safety management including:

- Facilities management
- Building security and surveillance
- Child advocacy and/or abuse prevention
- Mental health or health care experience
- Emergency management and preparedness
- Health and food safety

The Safety Committee requirements/duties are to:

- Be chaired by an active board member
- Meet quarterly
- Implement solutions to ensure the safety of all members, staff, volunteers, and visitors
- Verify the submission of the annual online safety assessment to BGCA
- Review the results of all safety assessments to identify areas for improvement
- Review safety policies and emergency response plans on an annual basis
- Submit the Committee chair's name and contact information annually to BGC

2.0 Emergency Operations Plan

Through the appropriate use of Club and community resources, Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County strive to mitigate the immediate effects of an emergency and its long-term effects on Club operations and mission by being prepared to respond to and recover from an emergency effectively.

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN (EOP) Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)

Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County shall create and maintain an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). At a minimum, the plan encompasses the following elements:

- Mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery for the following types of emergencies:
- Fire
- Weather (tornado, flooding, hurricane, etc.)
- Lockdown (for interior or exterior threat)
- Bomb Threat
- Suspicious Package
- Training/drill schedule and reporting procedures for staff, volunteers and members.
- Developed and shared with local first responders, such as fire departments and law enforcement agencies.

Annual Review

Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County's leadership will maintain a board-led Safety Committee that regularly focuses on safety and will have oversight and responsibility for the emergency operations plan. The board-led Safety Committee will be responsible for reviewing and updating the Emergency Operations Plan annually.

Aid and CPR Training

Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County always maintains a minimum of two CPR and first-aid-trained staff on-site during all operating hours when members are being served.

KEY DEFINITIONS

Emergency: An emergency is any event, natural or man-made, whether expected or unexpected, that places life or significant Club assets in danger or threatens the ability to conduct normal business operations and usually involves abnormal time constraints and resource responses.

Mitigation: Mitigation is the effort to reduce loss of life and property by lessening the impact of disasters or emergencies. For mitigation to be effective, we need to take action before the next emergency occurs to reduce human and financial consequences later.

Preparedness: Preparedness helps everyone act quickly and decisively in the face of a disaster or emergency and can minimize loss of property and prevent death and injury. An effective emergency plan should include steps to ensure that those with disabilities or special needs are provided with a proper evacuation strategy.

3.0 Child Abuse Prevention Policy

The priority of Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County is the physical and emotional safety of its members, staff, and volunteers. Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County maintains a zero-tolerance policy for child abuse. Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County implements policies and procedures for members, employees, volunteers, visitors or any victims of sexual abuse or misconduct to report any suspicion or allegation of abuse.

Mandated Reporting

Every staff member or volunteer of Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County who becomes aware of or has a suspicion of child abuse or neglect must immediately report to Club leadership. In New Jersey, any person having reasonable cause to believe that a child has been subjected to abuse or acts of abuse should immediately report this information to the State Central Registry (SCR). If the child is in immediate danger, call 911 as well as **1-877 NJ ABUSE** (1-877-652-2873). A concerned caller does not need proof to report an allegation of child abuse and can make the report anonymously.

Mandatory Training

Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County conducts and reports through a Boys & Girls Clubs of America's (BGCA)-approved process the following training (**see 5.0 – Screening and Onboarding, Onboarding for a complete list of required training**) for all staff members and volunteers with direct repetitive contact with young people (at the intervals noted for each).

Before providing services to young people, and annually thereafter:

- BGCA-approved child abuse prevention
- BGCA-approved mandated reporting
- BGCA-approved grooming prevention Annually:
- All the policies, including all safety policies and procedures and emergency operation plans for Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County.

Examples of Child Abuse below:

Physical Interactions

Every staff member and volunteer of Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County are required to maintain appropriate physical contact with minors. Appropriate and inappropriate interactions include, but are not limited to the following:

Appropriate	Inappropriate
Side hugs Hand shakes High-fives and hand slapping Holding hands for Preschool (with young children in escorting situations)	Full-frontal hugs or kisses Showing affection in an isolated area Lap sitting Wrestling or piggyback/shoulder rides Tickling Allowing youth to cling to an adult's leg

Verbal Interactions

Every staff member and volunteer of Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County are required to maintain appropriate verbal interaction with minors. Appropriate and inappropriate verbal interactions include, but are not limited to the following:

Appropriate	Inappropriate
Positive reinforcement Child appropriate jokes (no adult content) Encouragement Praise	Name-calling Inappropriate jokes (adult-only content) Discussing sexual encounters or personal issues Secrets Profanity or derogatory remarks Harsh language that may frighten, threaten or humiliate youth

Emotional Abuse Prevention

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County is committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment for all children and adolescents. Emotional abuse can have lasting and damaging effects on young individuals. Therefore, the Club has a zero-tolerance policy towards any form of emotional abuse perpetrated by staff, volunteers, or other members. Emotional abuse can be as devastating to the child as physical abuse. Humiliating, threatening, isolating the child, and other actions are considered emotional abuse.

Appropriate	Inappropriate
Providing positive reinforcement and encouragement. Listening actively and empathetically to children's concerns. Respecting children's boundaries and personal space. Offering guidance and support in a constructive and non-threatening manner. Communicating with children in a respectful and age-appropriate manner. Modeling healthy communication and conflict resolution skills.	Yelling, screaming, or using aggressive language towards children. Ridiculing or making fun of children, their families, or their backgrounds. Threatening or intimidating children to gain compliance. Ignoring or dismissing children's feelings or emotional needs. Using sarcasm or belittling remarks as a form of discipline. Sharing inappropriate or sensitive information with children.

Sexual Abuse Prevention

Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County is committed to providing a safe and respectful environment for our members and will not tolerate any sexual abuse or sexual misconduct toward or by any member.

Sexual abuse and sexual misconduct shall be interpreted to mean any sexual interaction between a child and another person (including another child) in a position of power over the child. Specific acts may include but are not limited to inappropriate physical contact, viewing pornography, exposing oneself to another person, enticing others to expose themselves, inappropriate language, or any other behavior that is a violation of the Boys & Girls Club of Mercer County's Code of Conduct or Employee Handbook.

Adult staff and volunteers shall not:

- Initiate conversations with members about sexual matters. If a member initiates a conversation about sexual matters with a staff or volunteer, the adult shall limit the conversation to the child's immediate concerns and shall provide a written incident report to the supervisor within 24 hours; or
- All staff and volunteers, including minor staff (under age 18), are strictly prohibited from meeting Club participants outside of any Club-sponsored activities. The only exception to this rule is if the Club participant is a child or sibling of a staff member or volunteer. Such interactions also include in-person/virtual meetings and communications via phone, text, and/or social media.
- All persons are prohibited from the access, display, production, possession, or distribution of pornography on Club premises or equipment.

Abuse and Safety Resources

Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County prominently displays BGCA-approved collateral that shares ethics hotline, crisis text line and safety helpline information with members, staff, volunteers and families. We also share all safety policies with parents and guardians upon completing a youth membership application. Safety information is also available for viewing at www.bgcmercer.org

KEY DEFINITIONS

Child Abuse is when an adult or another child, whether through action or failing to act, causes serious emotional or physical harm to a child. Sexual abuse or misconduct may include, but is not limited to:

- Any sexual activity, involvement, or attempt of sexual contact with a person who is a minor (under 18 years old).
- Sexual activity with another who is legally incompetent.
- Physical assault or sexual violence, such as rape, statutory rape, abuse, molestation, or any attempt to commit such acts.
- Unwanted and intentional physical conduct is sexual in nature, such as touching, pinching, patting, brushing, massaging someone's neck or shoulders, and/or pulling against another's body or clothes.
- Inappropriate activities, advances, comments, bullying, gestures, electronic communications, or messages by emails, text or social media.

One-on-One Prohibition: Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County prohibits isolated one-on-one interaction between Club participants and staff or volunteers, including board members. This includes prohibiting

one- on-one contact at any time at the Club, in vehicles, by phone, text, social media, or any other means. See 2.0 for full policy.

Exceptions may only be made when delivering approved medical or counseling services by a licensed, trained therapist or similar professional according to professional guidelines. All staff and volunteers, including minor staff (under age 18), are strictly prohibited from meeting Club participants outside of any Club-sponsored activities. The only exception to this rule is if the Club participant is a child or sibling of a staff member or volunteer.

Grooming is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, or trafficking. Grooming behaviors may include, but are not limited to:

- Targeting specific youth for special attention, activities, or gifts.
- Isolating youth from family members and friends physically or emotionally. This can include one-on-one interactions like sleepovers, camping trips, and daily activities.
- Gradually crossing physical boundaries, full frontal hugs that last too long, lap sitting, or other "accidental" touches.

4.0 Prohibition of Private One-on-One Interaction

Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County is committed to providing a safe environment for members, staff and volunteers. To further ensure their safety, the organization prohibits all one-on-one interactions between Club members and staff and volunteers (including board members). All staff and volunteers must abide by the following:

- Ensure all meetings and communications between members and staff or volunteers are never private (see definition below).
- Ensure in-person meetings take place in areas where other staff and/or members are present.
- Communicate to another staff member whenever an emergency arises that necessitates an exception to this policy.
- Never initiate private or isolated one-on-one contact with a member.
- Never have a private or isolated meeting or communication with a member. This includes in-person meetings and virtual communications such as texting, video chat and social media between only a staff member or volunteer and a single member.
- Never transport one Club member at a time. This includes transportation in Club or leased vehicles.

Exceptions may only be made when delivering medical or counseling services by a licensed, trained therapist or similar professional. All exceptions shall be documented and provided to Club leadership in advance.

If an emergency arises that necessitates an exception to this policy, the emergency exception shall be communicated to Club leadership as soon as practicable, and ideally before engaging in one-on-one interaction.

Staff and volunteers shall immediately inform Club leadership if a staff member, volunteer, or board member, violates this policy. In any such case, the organization will take appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Impact on Mentoring Programs

Mentorship is a key component of Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County's programming and has tremendous positive impacts on members. Prohibition of one-on-one interaction does not have to negatively affect mentor programs and/or relationship building. Mentors can adjust their practices to include:

- Holding mentor and coaching sessions in areas where other staff and/or members are present or can see you – for example, large rooms where meetings are visible but not heard.
- Copying parents, staff, or other members (when appropriate) on written and/or electronic communications
- Scheduling meetings during Club hours and at the Club site.
- Documenting interactions between mentors and youth.

Impact on Partnerships with local mentoring organizations

All local mentors are required to abide by Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County policies, including background check requirements and prohibition of one-on-one interaction. Prior to

interacting with a member, the local mentoring organization shall provide a copy of the completed background check of their employee/volunteer to the Club's Human Resources Department. Records shall be maintained for a period of 5 years after the conclusion of the mentoring partnership.

- External mentors shall be provided a copy of the Club's safety policies and procedures and agree to abide by the policies and procedures.
- A written agreement shall be in place before the start of mentoring to determine how and when the external organization assumes custody and responsibility of the member; these procedures should be clearly communicated to parents or guardians.
- All interactions between mentor and youth shall be documented and confidentially maintained by the Club.

Impact on travelling to off-site events and activities

- When travelling to external events such as Keystone, Youth of the Year or other off-site events, including field trips and any sporting/rec competitions, the one-on-one policy shall continue to be followed.
- Should the Club take responsibility for transporting members to and/or from an event, one staff member should not transport one single child at any time in a vehicle. Accommodations shall be made to ensure at least three people (two staff and one member or one staff and two members) are together when traveling.
- If this arrangement presents staffing or budget challenges, consider the following:
 - Inviting parents or guardians to attend and/or chaperone their child.
 - Including additional youth (e.g., Junior Youth of the Year) and/or staff in travel plans.
 - Coordinating with other Clubhouses or nearby organizations to travel together.
 - Travelling with additional staff or members.
- Parents and guardians must provide written consent in each instance a member travels to any off-site event. NOTE: Parents or guardians are never allowed to provide consent for one-on-one interaction.
- Similar practices should be in place when coordinating field trip

Impact on transportation to and from the Club

When transporting members to and/or from a Club-sponsored event or activity, single members should not be transported alone with one staff person. Consider the following to accommodate single children:

- Modify bus or van routes so single children aren't picked up first or dropped off last.
- Use a bus aide if available
- Pick up and drop off children in groups.
- Modify staff schedules to ensure multiple staff are present.

Exceptions to policy

Exceptions to the one-on-one policy CAN be made under the following circumstances:

- When delivering medical or counseling services by a licensed, trained therapist or similar professional (e.g., counselors, social workers).
- When the emotional or physical safety of a member is at risk and private, one-on-one communication is deemed necessary by Club leadership.
- In emergency situations that could create a safety risk, exceptions can be made (e.g., if a member is not picked up by a parent and leaving them alone at the Club could be a safety

risk).

- Should exceptions need to be made, the Club shall have policies in place to monitor interactions, including but not limited to:
- Disclosing the meeting to Club leadership and regularly checking in with the member and adult during the conversations.
- Placing time limits on conversations.
- Meeting in rooms with clear sight lines (e.g. rooms with windows or glass doors).
- Documenting the interaction.
- In an emergency, disclosing the situation to another staff member before engaging in one-on-one interaction.

KEY DEFINITION

One-on-one interaction is defined as any personal contact or communication (including electronic communication) between any Club participant and an adult, including adult staff, minor staff, volunteers, board members, and others who might encounter members during regular programming and activities.

Private contact/communication is any communication, in-person or virtual, between one youth member and one adult (18 or over) or minor staff in a secluded area, is not in plain sight, and/or is done without the knowledge of others. Private places can include but are not limited to vehicles, rooms without visibility to others, private homes, and hotel rooms; examples of private contact include but are not limited to:

- Meeting behind closed doors (in rooms without windows or visible sightlines) or any spaces that are not visible to others.
- One staff member is transporting one member in a vehicle.
- Electronic communications (text, video, social media, etc.) between one member and one adult.
- Public contact/communication is any communication or meeting, in person or virtual, between at least three individuals, including two staff and one member, one staff and two members, or variations of these combinations. Examples of public contact include but are not limited to:
- Meeting in plain sight of others (e.g., in a quiet corner of an active games room).
- Transporting members via public transportation (bus, taxis, train, air, etc.) or transporting multiple members.
- Electronic communications (text, video, social media, etc.) between multiple members and adults (e.g., group chats).
- Public places can include but are not limited to buses, airports, shopping malls, restaurants, and schools.

5.0 Pre-Existing Outside Relationships with Youth

Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County staff may not be alone with children they meet in Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County programs outside the organization. This includes babysitting, sleepovers, driving or riding in cars, and inviting children to their homes. Any exceptions require a written explanation before the fact and are subject to prior administrative approval.

Staff or volunteers may not have a relationship with a child they meet through Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County programs outside of the activities related to that program. Exceptions may be granted when a staff or volunteer has a relationship that predates meeting at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County or a relationship other than through the Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County. Requests for an exception should be directed to the CEO/COO. NOTE: Youth Sports coaches are exempt from this policy if they have a child in the program who befriends other children in the program and they wish to participate together in activities outside the Boys & Girls Clubs.

Some examples would include, but are not limited to, attending the same place of worship or school, neighbors, friends prior to participating in programs at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County, or relatives. The key is establishing that there is a relationship other than through the Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County.

6.0 Supervision and Facilities Policies

Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County is committed to providing a safe environment. All Club activities and program spaces shall always be under continuous supervision by sight or sound (for restroom supervision) by an appropriate adult staff (18 or over). To ensure proper supervision, staff, and volunteers:

- Must abide by the prohibition of private one-on-one interaction policy.
- Must abide by all the organization's disciplinary policies and procedures.
- Must ensure that at least two adult staff (18 and over) are present when supervising members.
- Must always maintain proper supervision ratios.
- Must be trained on appropriate supervision tactics and behavior patterns.
- Must ensure that all youth staff and volunteers are supervised by an adult (18 and over) staff member.
- Must immediately notify Club leadership and submit written reports detailing supervision issues, accidents, or critical incidents.
- Must never use electronic devices such as cell phones, PDAs, or other communication devices while supervising members unless for Club purposes, as defined in the Acceptable Technology Use Policy.

Ratios

All Club activities shall be under continuous supervision by an appropriate adult (18 and over), and reasonable ratios shall be maintained when supervising youth (never to exceed one staff to 25 youth). Ratios are based on the experience, standards set by Club leadership, and local agencies or authorities' standards. Required ratios are below:

Type	Adults	Youth
School-Age Programs	1	15
Field Trips*	1	15
Preschool**	**	**

***Field Trips are attended and supervised by additional administrative personnel.**

**** Ratios are determined by the New Jersey Department of Children and Families (DCF) regulations and vary depending on age composition of the individual classes, however, in no event shall DCF ratios be exceeded.**

Restroom Usage

Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County is committed to providing a safe, clean environment and enforces the following restroom policy for members, staff, volunteers and other adults.

- There will be either a designated adult restroom or procedures to ensure adults and minors never utilize a restroom at the same time.
- Club will either have single-user restrooms or multi-user restrooms with single stalls that can be secured from the inside.
- When using restrooms at public facilities during field trips, a minimum of two youth will be escorted by one staff member, who will wait outside the main entrance of the restroom.

Restroom Monitoring

Restrooms shall be regularly monitored by designated staff according to a schedule set by Club leadership. Monitoring includes walk-throughs, inspections and/or any (but not necessarily all) of the best practices outlined below:

- Implementing procedures to limit the number of children using restrooms at the same time.
- Prohibiting younger children and teens from sharing a restroom.
- Positioning staff near restroom entries to maintain auditory supervision of space.
- Designing or renovating multi-user restrooms to eliminate outer doors, while maintaining privacy with individual stalls.

Staff observing unacceptable restroom conditions or incidents shall:

- Immediately notify Club leadership of the incident.
- Document, in writing, restroom conduct incidents and report them to Club leadership as soon as possible in compliance with the Club's Incident Reporting Policy.

Entrance and Exit Control

All facility entries and exits shall be controlled and monitored by paid adult staff (18 or over) during all hours of operation, along with a system to monitor and track everyone who is in the facility.

All exit doors shall have an audible alarm to discourage unauthorized use to exit or enter the facility.

Only the, CEO, COO, Facilities Manager, and staff identified by the CEO, COO and Facilities Manager, shall be authorized to possess keys and badges to open a facility. If an employee is supervising a scheduled activity, they shall be responsible for the security of their program space.

Facility Condition

All program spaces shall have clear lines of visibility and be monitored by adult staff when in use. Areas that are not in use shall remain locked and only accessible by adult staff.

All interior and exterior spaces, hallways, stairs and stairways shall be monitored, maintained, well-lit, clean and free of hazards and obstructions. All storage closets and other unused spaces are to be locked during operational hours.

Damages to facilities shall be repaired in a reasonable manner. Damages that pose imminent risk to the health and safety of members, staff or volunteers shall be repaired immediately. If immediate repair to damage that poses imminent risk is not possible, Club leadership shall determine whether temporary or permanent closure of the facility may be required. Any damage to a facility that results in an incident deemed critical to the organization shall be reported to the appropriate authorities as a critical incident.

Food and Drink

Any distribution, preparation or consumption of food and/or drink at any facility shall comply with all applicable food services sanitation and public health codes. If food is prepared and served on site, required city or county health department inspection certificates shall be posted. Any dangerous kitchen utensils including knives, shall be properly and securely sto

7.0 Screening and Onboarding

Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County is committed to selecting and retaining effective staff and volunteers to serve our youth. As part of the selection process and in accordance with state background check regulations, background checks and screening procedures are conducted following this policy.

Background Checks

Boys & Girls Clubs Mercer County conducts criminal background checks of all employees, including minors; board volunteers and others who serve on a standing committee; and all other volunteers, including partners and minors, who have direct repetitive contact with minors. Name-based or fingerprint-based record searches may be used in any combination, but the background check shall at a minimum:

- Verify the person's identity and legal aliases through verification of a social security number.
- Provide a national Sex Offender Registry search.
- Provide a comprehensive criminal search that includes a national search.
- Provide a comprehensive local criminal search that includes either a statewide or county level criminal search, depending on jurisdiction (*a current list of jurisdictions can be found at www.bgca.net/childsafety*).
- Include any additional background check criteria required by organizational policies, funding or licensing agencies or required in the applicable jurisdiction, such as motor vehicle records, child abuse registry or credit checks.

Such checks will be conducted prior to employment and at regular intervals not to exceed twelve months.

All background check findings shall be considered when making employment or volunteer decisions, and Boys & Girls Clubs (local name) will not employ potential staff or engage potential volunteers if such individual:

- Refuses to consent to a criminal background check.
- Makes a false statement in connection with such criminal background check.
- Is registered, or is required to be registered, on a state or national sex offender registry.
- Has been convicted of a felony consisting of:
 - Murder
 - Child abuse
 - Domestic violence
 - Abduction or human trafficking
 - A crime involving rape or sexual assault
 - Arson
 - Weapons
 - Physical assault or battery
 - Drug possession, use or distribution in the last five years
- Has been convicted of any misdemeanor or felony against children, including child pornography.

Interviewing

Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County will conduct in-person and/or virtual behavioral-based interviews with every qualified candidate for employment or program volunteer service. BGCA will provide behavioral-based interview questions for local use.

Reference Checks

Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County conducts reference checks on any candidate for employment or volunteer with direct repetitive contact with young people. Should candidates for employment have previous experience with Boys & Girls Club, information on the candidate's eligibility for rehire/volunteering must be obtained from all previous Boys & Girls Clubs for which the candidate worked prior to extending an offer for employment or volunteer service. Additionally, Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County provides reference materials when asked by other Member Organization (within local, state, and federal law guidelines)

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County is committed to selecting and retaining the best staff and volunteers to serve our youth. As part of the initial selection process, Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County will conduct reference checks in accordance with the following policy.

- Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County will conduct Rat Lest two reference checks on any candidate for employment or volunteer with direct, repetitive interaction with young people.
- Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County inquire with any potential candidate for employment or potential volunteer as to previous Boys & Girls Club experience. Should candidates for employment or volunteer service in a role that has direct, repetitive interaction with young people have previous experience with a Boys & Girls Club, confirmation that the candidate is eligible for rehire/volunteering will be obtained from all previous Boys & Girls Clubs the candidate worked at prior to extending an offer for employment or volunteer service.
- Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County will also provide an accurate assessment of a potential candidate's eligibility for rehire/volunteering when asking by other Boys & Girls Clubs.
- Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County will seek an applicant's written authorization to verify all information contained in the applicants' application for employment or voluntary service.

All reference check findings will be considered when making employment or volunteer decisions. It is the policy of Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County that an employee or volunteer will be automatically ineligible for employment or volunteer service if such individual:

A) Refuses to consent to reference checks; or

B) Is found to have given false information during the application process. If after a candidate is hired or appointed to a voluntary position there is any discovery of false information on the application, the employee or volunteer will be subject to immediate dismissal.

Onboarding – Staff and Volunteers

Upon offer of a position, each new Club employee shall receive and confirm in writing receipt of an up-to-date employee policies and procedures manual or handbook that, at a minimum, articulates current:

- Conditions of employment;
- Benefits;
- Rights and responsibilities of employees;
- Club safety policies; and
- Any other important employment-related information.

Before working with any Club members, all staff and volunteers at a minimum shall be given an orientation that includes an overview of the following:

- The organization's mission, goals, policies and procedures and schedule;
- Job descriptions and performance standards for their position;
- The needs and other relevant characteristics of program participants, including cultural and socioeconomic characteristics;
- Personnel and volunteer policies and procedures, including expectations regarding work hours and schedules, breaks and planning time;
- Operational policies and procedures related to safety, supervision, transportation, facilities, emergency operations, etc.; and
- Completion of the required Child Abuse Prevention Trainings approved by BGCA.
 - Keeping Your Boys & Girls Club Safe
 - Abuse Risk Management
 - Duty to Report: Mandated Report

Based on position requirements, completion of the following BGCA Spillett Leadership University trainings:

Core:

- An Orientation to the Boys & Girls Club Movement

Youth Development:

- Boys & Girls Club Basics
- Ask-Listen-Encourage
- Developmental Characteristics of Youth
- De-escalating Concerning Behavior
- Staff-to-Youth Interactions
- Providing Informal Guidance & Discipline Techniques
- Reframing Conflict

Safety:

- Keeping Your Boys & Girls Club Safe*
- Abuse Risk Management*
- Duty to Report: Mandated Reporter*
- Child & Club Safety 101
- Preventing Bullying in Youth Organizations

Programming:

- Introduction to the Formula for Impact
- Programming in Boys & Girls Clubs
- Academic Success: Intro to Power Hour
- Active Learning
- Cooperative Learning
- Structure & Clear Limits

In addition, the following New Jersey Child Care Development Block Grant Reauthorization (CCDBG) trainings are required for all BGCMC program employees:

- Health, Safety, and Child Growth and Development/Mandated Reporting: Basic Requirements for Licensing
- Pediatric First Aid and Pediatric CPR

8.0 Drug and Alcohol-Free Workplace

Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County is committed to providing a safe environment for members, staff, and volunteers. To further ensure their safety, the organization maintains a drug and alcohol-free workplace. The unlawful or improper use of drugs – including marijuana, controlled substances, or alcohol in the workplace – presents a danger to everyone. The organization also has a duty to comply with the requirements of the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988. As such:

- Employees are prohibited from reporting to work or working while under the influence of alcohol and/or illegal or unauthorized drugs.
- Employees are prohibited from reporting to work or working when the employee is using any legal drugs; exceptions can be made in accordance with state law when the use is pursuant to a doctor's orders, and the doctor has advised the employee that the substance does not adversely affect the employee's ability to perform his or her job duties safely.
- Employees taking any legal drugs that potentially affect job safety or performance are responsible for notifying their supervisor and/or Club leadership so that a determination of job performance or a reasonable accommodation can be made. An employee may not be permitted to perform his or her job duties unless such a determination or reasonable accommodation has been made.
- Employees are prohibited from engaging in the unlawful or unauthorized manufacturing, distribution, dispensing, sale, or possession of illegal drugs and alcohol in the workplace, including on organization paid time, on organization premises, in organization vehicles, or while engaged in organization activities.
- Employees must notify their supervisor and/or Club leadership immediately of any criminal drug alcohol violation.
- Employment with the organization is conditional upon full compliance with the foregoing drug- and alcohol-free workplace policy. Any violation of this policy might result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County further reserves the right to take any and all appropriate and lawful actions necessary to enforce this drug- and alcohol- free workplace policy, including but not limited to the inspection of organization- issued lockers, desks, or other suspected areas of concealment, as well as an employee's personal property when the organization has reasonable suspicion that the employee has violated this policy.

Smoking Policy

Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County will comply with all federal, state, and local regulations regarding non-smoking in the workplace to provide a work environment that promotes productivity and the well-being of its employees.

Smoking in the workplace can adversely affect members, employees, and volunteers. Accordingly, smoking is restricted at all its facilities.

Smoking is defined to include the use of any tobacco-containing products, including cigarettes, cigars, and pipes, as well as the use of electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) and vaporizers.

Smoking is prohibited at all Boys & Girls Clubs properties except for external areas where it is specifically authorized. The smoking policy applies to employees, volunteers, and members while on Club premises or during Club activities (on or off-site).

Reasonable Suspicion

Staff and or volunteers shall immediately notify Club leadership of any action by an employee or volunteer who demonstrates an unusual pattern of behavior suggesting that they are under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Club leadership will determine whether the employee should be examined by a physician or clinic and/or tested for drugs or alcohol in accordance with the Club's drug testing policies. Employees and volunteers believed to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol will be required to leave the premises. Any illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia will be turned over to the appropriate law enforcement agency and may result in criminal prosecution.

Examples of behavior suggesting that employees or volunteers are under the influence of drugs or alcohol include, but are not limited to:

- Odors (smell of alcohol, body odor, or urine);
- Movements (unsteady, fidgety, dizzy);
- Eyes (dilated, constricted or watery eyes, or involuntary eye movements);
- Face (flushed, sweating, confused, or blank look);
- Speech (slurred, slow, distracted mid-thought, inability to verbalize thoughts);
- Emotions (argumentative, agitated, irritable, drowsy);
- Actions (yawning, twitching); or
- Inactions (sleeping, unconscious, no reaction to questions).

Unusual patterns of behavior that may suggest drug or alcohol misuse include, but are not limited to:

- Repeatedly calling in sick;
- Being absent directly before or after holidays and weekends;
- Repeatedly damaging inventory or failing to meet reasonable work schedules.
- Being involved in frequent accidents that can be related to the use of drugs or other substances.

Inspection and Testing

Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County reserves the right to take any and all appropriate and lawful actions necessary to enforce this drug- and alcohol-free workplace policy, including but not limited to the inspection of organization issued lockers, desks or other suspected areas of concealment, as well as an employee's personal property when the organization has reasonable suspicion to believe that the employee has violated this drug- and alcohol-free workplace policy (see "Reasonable Suspicion" above.)

Screening, testing, and security measures may be used as enforcement methods, as permitted by applicable state law. It is a violation of this policy to refuse to submit to testing. Tests that are paid for by the organization are the property of the organization. The examination records will be treated as confidential and held in a separate medical files. However, records of specific examinations will be made available, if required by law or regulation, to the employee, persons designated and authorized by the employee, public agencies, relevant insurance companies, and/or the employee's doctor.

Prescription Medication and Legal Drugs

Employees and volunteers are prohibited from reporting to work or working when using any legal drugs, except when the use is pursuant to a doctor's orders and the doctor has advised the employee or volunteer that the substance does not adversely affect the employee's or volunteers' ability to safely perform his or her duties.

Employees and volunteers taking a legal drug, such as prescription medication or medical marijuana, that potentially affects job safety or performance, are responsible for notifying their supervisor and/or Club leadership so that a determination of job performance or reasonable accommodation can be made. An employee/volunteer may not be permitted to perform his or her job duties unless such a determination or reasonable accommodation is made.

9.0 Minors

Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County will comply with all federal, state, and local regulations regarding employees. BGCMC will not employ any person less than 18 years of age.

10.0 Incident Management Policy

Clear reporting policies and procedures are an important element in responding to incidents that might occur in Clubhouses. Staff and volunteers must, at a minimum, immediately report and document all safety incidents that might affect staff, volunteers, members, and others who visit Clubhouses or Off-sites.

Incident Investigation

Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County takes all incidents seriously and is committed to supporting external investigations of all reported incidents and allegations or internal investigations by the Safety Committee when not an externally reportable incident.

Federal, state, and local criminal and or mandated child abuse reporting laws must be complied with before any consideration of an internal investigation. The internal investigation should never be viewed as a substitute for a required criminal or child protective services investigation.

In the event that an incident involves an allegation against a staff member, volunteer or Club member, the Club shall suspend that individual immediately (employees with pay) and maintain the suspension throughout the course of the investigation.

BGCA Critical Incident Reporting

The Club shall immediately report any allegation of abuse or any potential criminal matter to law enforcement. In addition, the Club shall report the following critical incidents to BGCA within 24 hours.

- Any instance or allegation of child abuse, including physical, emotional or sexual abuse; sexual misconduct or exploitation (Club-related or not) against any child by a current employee or volunteer; or any Club-related instance by a former employee or volunteer.
- Any instance or allegation of child abuse, including physical, emotional or sexual abuse; or sexual misconduct or exploitation by a youth towards another youth at a Club site or during a Club-sponsored activity.
- Any child who might have been abducted or reported missing from a Club site or Club-sponsored activity.
- Any major medical emergency involving a child, staff member or volunteer at a Club site or during a Club-sponsored activity leading to extended hospitalization, permanent injury or death; or a mental health crisis with a child requiring outside care.
- Any instance or allegation of abuse, including physical, emotional or sexual abuse, sexual misconduct, harassment or exploitation (Club-related or not) involving any staff member; or any Club-related instance or allegation of abuse, including physical, emotional or sexual abuse, sexual misconduct harassment or exploitation against a volunteer or visitor.
- Any failure to comply with requirements set forth by childcare licensing agencies or organizations.
- Any known or suspected felony-level criminal act committed at a Club site or during a Club-sponsored activity.
- Any misappropriation of organizational funds in the amount of \$10,000 or greater, or any amount of federal funds.

- Any criminal or civil legal action involving the organization, its employees or volunteers, as well as any changes in the status of an open organization- related legal action.
- Negative media attention that could compromise the reputation of the Member Organization or the Boys & Girls Clubs of America brand.
- Any other incident deemed critical by the Member Organization.

Failure to report safety incidents to Boys & Girls Clubs of America could result in a funding hold or the organization being placed on provisional status.

General Incident Description

Safety incidents can include, but are not limited to:

- Inappropriate activity between adults (18 and over) and youth.
- Inappropriate activity between multiple youth;
- Allegations of abuse;
- Bullying behavior;
- Inappropriate electronic communications between adults (18 or over) and youth;
- Minor and major medical emergencies;
- Accidents, including slips and falls;
- Threats made by or against staff, volunteers, and/or members;
- Physical assaults and injuries, including fights;
- Missing children;
- Criminal activity, including theft and robbery;
- Other incidents as deemed appropriate by Club leadership.
- Safety incidents include those that occur during Club programs, on Club premises, and/or during a Club affiliated program or trip.

Internal Incident Reporting

Any employee or volunteer who becomes aware of an incident, as defined by this policy, shall immediately notify the Chief Operating Officer, providing as much detail regarding the incident as possible. A written report of the incident shall be submitted as soon as practical.

The following information must be included on the incident report:

- Date, time and location
- Incident details
- Witnesses and contact information
- Names of all involved (youth, staff and volunteers)
- All notifications made (first responders, parents, leadership, etc.) and time of notifications

External incident Reporting

Boys & Girls Club of Mercer County follows all applicable mandated reporting statutes and regulations and all applicable federal, state, and local laws for the protection and safety of youth.

Types of incidents reported include, but are not limited to:

- Inappropriate activity between adults (18 or over) and youth;
- Inappropriate activity between multiple youth;
- Allegations of child abuse;
- Any form of child pornography;
- Criminal activity, including assault, theft, and robbery;
- Or children missing from the premises

Reporting Suspicious Behavior to a Supervisor

All staff members have received specific training concerning the requirement to report violations of Organization Policies immediately to their supervisor. If the supervisor does not effectively respond, the staff members have been trained to notify the next level supervisor. Organization staff are expected to observe other staff members' behaviors, including that of supervisors, and to report any suspicions to that supervisor.

PROCEDURES FOR SAFETY REPORTING

For Program Staff - Inform your Site Director

1. If the Site Director is not there, report to the following in this order
 - Director of Operations, Senior Program Director,
 - COO,
 - or the CEO.
2. Site Directors should notify Director of Operations, Senior Program Director (Direct Supervisor), COO, CEO or another member of the Leadership Team

If medical, fire, or police is needed call 911

1. * Notify Leadership right away

Complete a Club Accident/Incident Report

- The accident/incident report form is available at each site
- Once the form has been completed the director calls the parents of all members involved.
- Turn form into your direct supervisor
- Keep a copy of forms confidentially in a secure location

If a Call to 1-877 NJ ABUSE is needed

1. In New Jersey, any person having reasonable cause to believe that a child has been subjected to abuse or acts of abuse should immediately report this information to the State Central Registry (SCR). If the child is in immediate danger, call 911 as well as **1-877 NJ ABUSE (1-877-652-2873)**. A concerned caller does not need proof to report an allegation of child abuse and can make the report anonymously.
 - a. Complete the Clubs Accident / Incident Report
 - b. Keep the original copy of written reports confidentially in a secure location

Violation of this procedure will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

11.0 Technology Acceptable Use Policy

Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County is committed to providing a safe use of technology and online safety for members, staff and volunteers. The acceptable use policy provides the framework for those safety practices and procedures.

CLUB MEMBER USAGE

Before a member will be allowed to use Club technology equipment or their personal device, both the member and his/her parent/guardian will need to read and sign the Technology Acceptable Use policy and return it to the Club. Under the Technology Acceptable Use policy, the following relevant principles shall apply:

Club devices shall include any and all Club-owned existing and/or emerging technologies and devices that can take photographs, play and record audio or video, input text, upload and download content and/or media and transmit or receive messages or images.

Personally owned devices shall include any and all member-owned existing and/or emerging technologies and devices that can take photographs, play and record audio or video, input text, upload and download content and/or media and transmit or receive messages or images. At this time members are not allowed to bring personally owned devices to the Club.

Club purposes shall include program activities, career development, communication with experts and/or Club peer members, homework and Club activities. Members are expected to act responsibly and thoughtfully when using technology resources. Members bear the burden of responsibility to inquire with staff when they are unsure of the permissibility of a particular use of technology prior to engaging in its use.

Authorized use: Club devices and personally owned devices are permitted for use during approved Club times for Club purposes and in approved locations only. The Club expressly prohibits the use of Club devices or personally owned devices in locker rooms, restrooms and other areas where there is an expectation of privacy.

Appropriate use: Members may not use any technology to harass, threaten, demean, humiliate, intimidate, embarrass or annoy their peers or others in their community. Any inappropriate use of a Club or personally owned device, as determined by Club staff, can lead to disciplinary action including but not limited to confiscation of the device, immediate suspension from the Club, termination of membership or other disciplinary actions determined to be appropriate to the Club's existing disciplinary policies including, if applicable, referral to local law enforcement.

Monitoring and inspection: Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy and review any personally owned device that is brought to the Club. Parents/guardians will be notified before such an inspection takes place and may be present, at their choice, during the inspection. Parents/guardians may refuse to allow such inspections. If so, the member may be barred from bringing personally owned devices to the Club in the future.

Loss and damage: Members are responsible for keeping devices with them at all times. Staff are not responsible for the security and condition of the member's personal device.

Furthermore, the Club is not liable for the loss, damage, misuse or theft of any personally owned device brought to the Club.

Any inappropriate or unauthorized use of a Club or personally owned device, as determined by Club staff, can lead to disciplinary action including but not limited to confiscation of the device, immediate suspension from the Club, termination of membership or other disciplinary actions determined to be appropriate to the Club's existing disciplinary policies, including, if applicable, referral to local law enforcement.

Members must be aware of the appropriateness of communications when using Club or personally owned devices. Inappropriate communication is prohibited in any public or private messages, as well as material posted online. Inappropriate communication includes but is not limited to the following:

- Obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening or disrespectful language or images typed, posted or spoken by members;
- Information that could cause damage to an individual or the Club community or create the danger of disruption of the Club environment;
- Personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks;
- Harassment (persistently acting in a manner that distresses or annoys another person) or stalking of others;
- Knowingly or recklessly posting false or defamatory information about a person or organization; or
- Communication that promotes the destruction of property, including the acquisition or creation of weapons or other destructive devices.

If a member is told to stop sending communications, that member must cease the activity immediately.

Cyberbullying: Members may not utilize any technology to harass, threaten, demean, humiliate, intimidate, embarrass, or annoy their peers or others in their community. This behavior is cyberbullying, which is defined as bullying that takes place using emerging technologies and devices. Any cyberbullying that is determined to disrupt the safety and/or well-being of the Club, Club members, Club staff or community is subject to disciplinary action. Examples of cyberbullying include, but are not limited to:

- Harassing, threatening or hurtful text messages, emails or comments on social media.
- Rumors sent by email or posted on social networking sites.
- Embarrassing pictures, videos, websites or fake profiles.

Members may not attempt to gain unauthorized access to the Club's network, or to any other computer system through the Club's network. This includes attempting to log in through another person's account or accessing another person's files

Members may not use the Club's network to engage in any illegal act, including, but not limited to, arranging for the purchase or sale of alcohol, tobacco or other drugs; engaging in criminal activity; or threatening the safety of another person.

Members may not make deliberate attempts to disrupt the computer system or destroy data by spreading computer viruses.

Monitoring and inspection: Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County reserves the right to

monitor, inspect, copy and review files stored on Club-owned devices or networks. In addition, Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County reserves the right to inspect and/or review personally owned devices that are brought to the Club. Parents/guardians will be notified before such an inspection takes place and may be present, at their choice, during the inspection. Parents/guardians may refuse to allow such inspections but the member may be barred from bringing personally owned devices to the Club in the future.

Internet access: Personally owned devices used at the Club must access the internet via the Club's content-filtered wireless network and are not permitted to directly connect to the internet through a phone network or other content service provider. Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County reserves the right to monitor communication and internet traffic, and to manage, open or close access to specific online websites, portals, networks or other services. Members must follow Club procedures to access the Club's internet service.

Loss and damage: Members are responsible for keeping the personal device with them at all times. Staff are not responsible for the security and/or condition of the member's personal device. Furthermore, the Club shall not be liable for the loss, damage, misuse or theft of any personally owned device brought to the Club.

Parental notification and responsibility: While the Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County Technology Acceptable Use Policy restricts the access of inappropriate material, supervision of internet usage might not always be possible. Due to the wide range of material available on the internet, some material might not fit the particular values of members and/or their families. Because of this, it is not considered practical for Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County to monitor and enforce a wide range of social values in student use of the internet. If parents/guardians do not want members to access information beyond the scope of the Technology Acceptable Use Policy, they should instruct members not to access such materials.

Digital citizenship: Club members shall conduct themselves online in a manner that is aligned with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County Code of Conduct. The same rules and guidelines members are expected to follow offline (i.e., in the real world) shall also be followed when online. Should a member behave online in a manner that violates the Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County Code of Conduct, that member shall face the same discipline policy and actions they would if their behavior had happened within the physical Club environment.

Club-owned-and-operated technology: Members are expected to follow the same rules and guidelines when using Club-owned technology. Club technology and systems are the property of the Club, are intended to be used for Club purposes and are to be used during approved times with appropriate supervision. Club members shall never access or use Club technology or systems without prior approval.

STAFF AND VOLUNTEER USAGE

Before a staff member or volunteer can use Club technology equipment or a personal device, they shall read and sign the Technology Acceptable Use policy and return it to the Club. Under the Technology Acceptable Use policy, the following relevant principles shall apply:

Club devices shall include any and all Club-owned existing and/or emerging technologies and devices that can take photographs, play and record audio or video, input text, upload and download content and/or media and transmit or receive messages or images.

Personally owned devices shall include any and all staff-owned/volunteer-owned existing and/or emerging technologies and devices that can take photographs, play and record audio or video, input text, upload and download content and/or media and transmit or receive messages or images.

Club Purposes include but are not limited to the delivery of program activities, accessing sanctioned training or career development opportunities, communication with experts and/or authorized Club staff and for Club purposes or management of other Club activities, such as member check-in or incident reporting. Staff are expected to act responsibly and thoughtfully when using technology resources. Staff bear the burden of responsibility to ask their supervisor when they aren't sure of the permissibility of a particular use of technology prior to engaging in that use.

Authorized use: Personally owned devices are permitted for use during approved Club times for Club purposes and in approved locations only. The Club expressly prohibits the use of personally owned devices in locker rooms, restrooms and other areas where there is an expectation of privacy.

Appropriate use: Staff and volunteers may not use any technology to harass, threaten, demean, humiliate, intimidate, embarrass or annoy their peers or others in their community. Any inappropriate use of a personally owned device, as determined by a supervisor, can lead to disciplinary action including but not limited to confiscation of the device, immediate suspension from the Club, termination of employment or volunteer assignment or other disciplinary actions determined to be appropriate to the Club's existing disciplinary policies including, if applicable, referral to local law enforcement.

Monitoring and inspection: Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy and review a personally owned device that is brought to the Club. Staff and volunteers may refuse to allow such inspections. If so, the staff member may face disciplinary action up to and including termination

Loss and damage: Staff and volunteers are responsible for keeping devices with them at all times. Supervisors and the Club at large are not responsible for the security and condition of the staff member or volunteers personal device. Furthermore, the Club is not liable for the loss, damage, misuse or theft of any personally owned device brought to the Club.

Any inappropriate or unauthorized use of a personally owned device, as determined by a supervisor, can lead to disciplinary action including but not limited to confiscation of the device, immediate suspension from the Club, termination of employment or volunteer assignment or other disciplinary actions determined to be appropriate to the Club's existing disciplinary policies, including, if applicable, referral to local law enforcement.

Inappropriate communication includes but is not limited to:

- Obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening or sexual content or disrespectful language or images typed, posted or spoken by staff or members.

- Information that could cause conflict.
- Personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
- Harassment (persistently acting in a manner that distresses or annoys another person) or stalking others.
- Knowingly or recklessly posting false or defamatory information about a person or organization.
- Communication that promotes the destruction of property, including the acquisition or creation of weapons or other destructive devices.
- If a staff member or volunteer is told to stop sending communications, he/she must cease the activity immediately.
- Staff must be aware of the appropriateness of communications when using Club or personally owned devices. Inappropriate communication is prohibited in any public or private messages, as well as material posted online.
- Staff may not use any technology to harass, threaten, demean, humiliate, intimidate, embarrass or annoy others. This behavior is cyberbullying, which is defined as bullying that takes place using existing or emerging technologies and devices.
- Any cyberbullying that is determined to disrupt the safety and/or wellbeing of the Club, Club staff, Club members or community is subject to disciplinary action.

Examples of cyberbullying include but are not limited to:

- Harassing, threatening or hurtful text messages, emails or comments on social media.
- Rumors sent by email or posted on social networking sites.
- Use of embarrassing pictures, videos, websites or fake profiles.

Communication with Club members: Staff and volunteers may never use personal devices to communicate directly with a single Club member. Proper protocol dictates that all communication between staff or volunteers and Club members must include an additional staff member and at least two Club members.

Internet access: Personally owned devices used at the Club must access the internet via the Club's content-filtered wireless network and are not permitted to directly connect to the internet through a phone network or other content service provider. Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County reserves the right to monitor communication and internet traffic and to manage, open or close access to specific online websites, portals, networks or other services. Staff and

12.0 Transportation Policy

Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County is committed to providing a safe environment and enforces the following transportation policy for members, staff, volunteers and other adults. Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County only provides transportation to and from the Clubhouse and various approved off-site locations. The Club only transports youth in Club vehicles or other vehicles approved by Club leadership.

Bus Drivers

- Must allow for DMV background check and be cleared to transport youth per the barrier crime policy.
- Must have a CDL license with Passenger, School Bus and Air Brake endorsements.
- Must pass yearly Medical Examiner's Certification (Physical).
- Must have access to an updated list of all youth transported to and from the Club and Club related activities.
- Must perform a pre-use safety check of the vehicle.
- Must confirm that no children are left on a vehicle after every trip (based on a seat-by-seat scan of each vehicle); log must be signed daily to ensure compliance.
- Must perform regular checks to ensure that all members are picked up and dropped off at the appropriate times and locations.
- Must submit written reports detailing issues or incidents involving transporting members to and from the Clubhouse or to and from Club-related activities.
- Must only transport members in official Club buses.
- Must ensure that at least three individuals are present when transporting members. If one child remains to be dropped off, two adults (18 or over) must be present in vehicle.
- Must never transport Club members in personal vehicles.
- Must never use cell phones, PDAs or other communication devices while transporting members to and from the Clubhouse or Club-related activities.

Vehicle

- Each agency vehicle should meet all local, state, and federal inspection and licensing requirements.
- Each vehicle shall have a notebook which contains all records related to that vehicle, including:
 - Annual Inspections
 - Insurance
 - Maintenance Performed
 - Pre-Use Safety Check of the Vehicle
 - Transportation Log
- Each vehicle should be inspected as outlined by DMV by staff before every trip for which youth are being transported; any problems with vehicle must be addressed promptly.
- Regular maintenance should be performed on vehicles and documents /records reflecting that maintenance should be maintained in the vehicles notebook.
- Each vehicle must provide a seat belt for every passenger and fully comply with state and federal seat belt regulations.
- Each vehicle must have a complete first-aid kit that satisfies state licensing requirements.
- Each vehicle must have a working and current fire extinguisher that satisfies state licensing requirements.

- Each vehicle must have reflective traffic warning signs (e.g., triangles or flares) that are stored securely during transport.
- The vehicle must be clean and well maintained and exterior physical damage must be repaired promptly.

Shared Use Restrooms

- On a field trip or when using a public restroom, youth shall never enter the restroom alone unless it is a single-stall restroom that is empty.
- Youth shall follow the "rule of three" in using public restrooms, with at least two youth and an adult walking to the restrooms and three youth entering a multi- staff facility together. The adult will remain outside the restroom door to provide auditory surveillance.
- Whenever possible, staff/volunteers will monitor and clear public restrooms before use by members to ensure that the facility is free of adults – and clear of outh not involved in the Club program – before allowing youth to use the facilities. Alternatively, staff members will stand in the restroom doorway and/or hold the door at least partially open when supervising member use of public restrooms. Staff may position themselves inside the restroom near the sinks if positioning at the door is not feasible or is deemed ineffective.
- In a shared-use facility, Boys & Girls Clubs will utilize the best practice of shutting the exterior door to the restroom and using an "Occupied" sign outside of the door to alert others that they must wait until Club members have exited the restroom before they can enter.

Accident or Emergency Protocol

- The driver should immediately notify Club leadership if there is a delay or issue (e.g., breakdown, accident, emergency) with transporting members to and from the Clubhouse or Club-related activities.
- Staff shall immediately inform Club leadership if a staff member, volunteer, or board member violates this policy. In such case, the organization will take appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Through the appropriate use of Club and community resources, Boys & Girls Clubs strive to mitigate the immediate effects of an emergency and its long-term effects on Club operations and mission by being prepared to effectively respond to and recovery from an emergency.

13.0 Video Surveillance Policy

Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County recognizes that maintaining the safety and security of Club members, staff, volunteers, and Club property is best implemented with a multifaceted approach. Modern technology, including video surveillance, can provide tools to maintain safety and security. While video surveillance does not replace appropriate supervision by Club personnel, it can provide an additional layer of protection.

Video surveillance, without or without audio recording capabilities, may be utilized in and around the Club facility, on Club property, and Club vehicles. Video surveillance shall be in accordance with all applicable laws pertaining to such use.

PLACEMENT AND NOTIFICATION

Video surveillance equipment may be installed in and around Club facilities, property, and vehicles. The system provides constant monitoring 24/7 (is activated and records when motion is detected). Video surveillance equipment will not be used or installed in areas where Club Members, staff, and parents/guardians have a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as locker rooms and restrooms. Video surveillance equipment may always be in operation, whether the Club is operational and whether the facilities or buildings are in use at all. The Club will determine the operation schedule of any video surveillance equipment at its discretion.

Video monitors shall not be in an area that enables public viewing. The Club shall notify Club members, parents/guardians, staff, and the public that video surveillance systems are present by signs prominently displayed in appropriate locations throughout the facilities and grounds and provide any other notification or consent as required by applicable law.

ACCESS TO VIDEO IMAGES

The use of video surveillance equipment on Club grounds shall be supervised and controlled by the CEO, COO, and Facilities Manager. The actual recording equipment will be maintained in an area or room or location that is locked and secure to only be accessed by authorized personnel. Live video monitoring may randomly occur as needed. Video data is recorded and stored digitally. Video recording data is considered confidential and secure.

Access to video recorded data is strictly limited to the following authorized full-time Boys & Girls Club personnel: President/Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Facilities Manager, Director of Operations and Senior Program Director. These authorized personnel are trained on video surveillance policy and how video data should be used during any official investigation. Video recording data may be used as evidence that a Club member, parent/guardian, staff member, volunteer, or other person has engaged in behavior that violates state or local law, policies, and/or Club rules. Video footage is subject to production by a valid subpoena or other court order.

Unauthorized Access and/or Disclosure

Confidentiality and privacy concerns limit the general public, including parents and relatives of Club members, from viewing video recording footage and/or data involving Club members, staff, and volunteers. Only the authorized personnel provided above can view and/or export video recording data. No unauthorized recordings are permitted of video recording data through cell phones, portable devices, or any other means. Any Club personnel who becomes aware of unauthorized disclosure of video recording data from the Club and/or a potential privacy breach must immediately inform the CEO or COO.

Club personnel and volunteers are prohibited from unauthorized use of, tampering with or otherwise interfering with video surveillance equipment. Violations will be subject to disciplinary action that may include but are not limited to, written reprimand, suspension, demotion, or termination of employment. Video recording data will remain the property of the Boys & Girls

Clubs of Mercer County and may be reproduced only in accordance with applicable law and board policy.

Retention of Digital Images

Video recording data shall be kept for approximately 10 days except for appropriate still shots or selected portions of the recorded data relating to any incidents under investigation by authorities. The latter shall be retained for one year after the incident or until such time as any legal matters pertaining to the recordings have been resolved.

The stored media shall be kept on a secured computer.

In situations involving banned parents/guardians, former employers or volunteers, or visitors, stored still images may be shared with Club personnel and appropriate officials.

Club Member Privacy

Video recording data will not be used directly or indirectly to identify the activities of individual Club members except as viewed concerning a specific event or suspected criminal activity; suspected violation of Club policy or rules; incidents where there is a reasonable basis to believe a claim may be made against the Club for civil liability; or if otherwise compelled by law.

Authorized Club personnel may use a still shot or selected portions of recorded data to request law enforcement review for assessing the security risk of a specific individual or for investigating a potential crime on Club property.

Disclaimer of Liability

A copy of this policy will be shared with any Club member, parent/guardian, or staff member upon request.

14.0 Visitors

Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County is committed to providing a safe environment for members, staff, and volunteers. To further ensure their safety, the organization requires that all visitors to the club be properly identified.

Definition:

Visitors are defined as those persons who are not:

- A badged Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County employee.
- Emergency personnel responding to a call to include Paramedics, Firemen, Police Officers, etc.

Visitors may include, but are not limited to:

- School Age Member's parents requiring access to the facility
- Boys & Girls Clubs of America employees or an employee of any Boys & Girls Club affiliate
- Early Learning Coalition employees on official business
- Department of Children & Families employees on official business
- Subcontractors to DCF on official business

Sign-In Procedure:

All visitors, including employees from other buildings, parents, vendors, and guests, must sign in at the Membership Desk located in the building lobby.

Visitors are required to present a Photo Driver's License or another form of government-issued photo identification containing their date of birth. If acceptable photo identification is not available, the visit must be approved by a director.

Employees from other buildings must present their employee ID or have their visit approved by a director.

Visitor Identification:

Each visitor will be issued a dated visitor's sticker, which must be worn while on the premises.

Sign-Out Procedure:

Visitors must sign out at the main office upon leaving the building. The main office will initial to indicate the visitor has exited the building.

Unauthorized Visitors:

Any unauthorized visitor failing to obtain a visitor sticker will be asked to leave the premises until a pass can be obtained.

Suppliers, Contractors, and Delivery Personnel:

Truck drivers can use their bill of lading as acceptable identification. However, they are not allowed outside their designated areas without appropriate escort. Delivery personnel (e.g., UPS, Federal Express) can make deliveries to the appropriate areas without a badge or pass, as long as they stay within regular areas of pickup and delivery. Front office employees should notify the recipient employee about the delivery, and if necessary, may accept the order on the employee's behalf.

Volunteers:

All volunteers must sign in and out using the Volunteer Sign-In book at the front desk. Volunteers must always wear a volunteer badge.

BGCMC Employees:

All employees will be issued a Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County identification badge, including their name, photo, and department.

Employees are required to wear their ID badge visibly while on the premises or during off-site Boys & Girls Clubs programs.

In case of lost or stolen badges, employees must obtain a replacement by contacting their supervisor. Failure to wear the ID badge or repeated loss or damage may result in disciplinary action. Upon termination, employees must return their ID badges to their supervisor or the human resources department.

Unauthorized Visitors and Disciplinary Actions:

Staff members identifying unauthorized visitors should ask them to leave. Visitors engaging in misconduct, hate speech, disruptive behavior, or theft will be asked to leave and may face prosecution if necessary. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary actions, which will be determined by Club leadership based on the severity of the offense

CREATING SAFE PLACES WHERE YOUTH THRIVE

COMMITMENT
TO SAFETY



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS ARE COMMITTED TO KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE.

- Comprehensive background checks for staff, board and volunteers
- Ongoing education and training
- Annual safety assessments
- Rigorous safety policies and standards
- Active, engaged board-led safety committees
- Annual safety improvement planning and other accountability systems

CONFIDENTIAL HELP

National Child Abuse Hotline

Call or Text: 800-422-4453

Provides free 24/7 access for adults and youth to professional child abuse crisis counselors who offer crisis intervention and confidential referrals.

Child Safety Helpline

866-607-SAFE (7233)

Praesidium provides employees, volunteers, parents, and youth with confidential or anonymous guidance and support for addressing suspicious or inappropriate behaviors regarding children.

Ethics Point Hotline

866-295-3701 | ethicspoint.com

Provides employees, volunteers and parents anonymous reporting of any unethical or illegal workplace activities.

Crisis Text Line

Text CLUB to 741741

Provides free 24/7 access for adults and youth to confidential support with trained crisis counselors.

Report to Child Protective Services

1-877-NJ ABUSE

Provides 24/7 access for adults and youth local anonymous reporting of child abuse and/or neglect.

