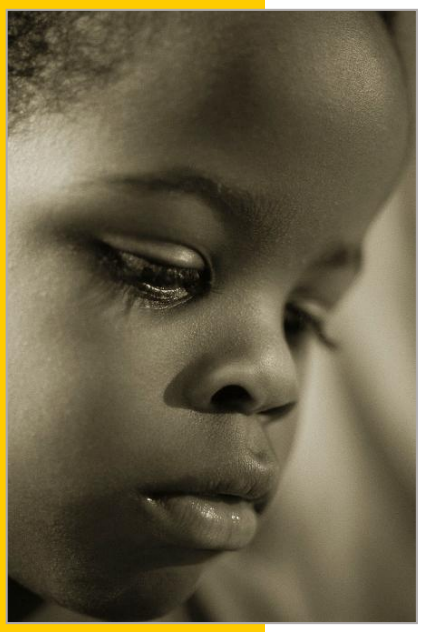

Protecting Today's Child

CEF® USA Ministries Child Protection Policy

Version 8.0

September 19, 2025

USA Ministries
PO Box 348, Warrenton, MO 63383
(636) 456-4321, ext. 2050

Since 1937

CEF
CHILD EVANGELISM FELLOWSHIP®
Reaching children worldwide℠

The purpose of *Child Evangelism Fellowship*® is to evangelize boys and girls with the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and to establish (disciple) them in the Word of God and in a local church for Christian living. We recognize the privilege and the responsibility this brings to all involved in our organization.

There is no more sacred trust given than being entrusted with precious children. *Child Evangelism Fellowship* takes seriously our stewardship of protecting children in our care. We are acutely aware that those who would hurt children will seek affiliation with Christian ministries to gain access to children. Therefore, we must be diligent, ensuring that thorough screening applies to every person working with children in *CEF*.

Also, we must do everything possible to protect our volunteers and staff from false accusations.

Parents entrust their children to us for nurture, safe care, and wise leadership. It is imperative that there are guidelines and procedures in place that will protect children and provide peace of mind and confidence to parents, volunteers, and staff.

POLICY

Child abuse is defined as any verbal abuse, online abuse, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, or infliction of injury. Examples of sexual abuse are: rape, incest, sodomy, lewd or lascivious behavior which includes wrong types of speech, inappropriate use of communication devices or touching.

In order to protect the child from abuse and our workers from false accusations, the following steps must be taken.

1. Always provide adult supervision for children in our care.
2. Two-worker (minimum) rule: Two *CEF* workers, paid or volunteer, must be present at any *CEF* activity where children or minors are present including online or by phone.
    a. Never be alone with a child/child in any setting.
    b. Never be alone with a minor in any setting, unless the minor's parent has signed a waiver. See waiver included in package
3. At *CEF* training or overnight events, all *CEF* workers under 18 must follow the "Rule of 3" during times they are not supervised by at least two adults over the age of 18. The rule of 3 means there should always be 3 or more people in your group.
4. Ensure that all rooms where ministry is taking place are accessible (not locked) with a window in the door or the door left wide open. There should be no private conversations, texts or online chats.
5. Report to supervisory staff all suspicious or inappropriate behavior between any *CEF* worker and a child or minor.
    a. Supervisory staff must complete R-9 (see USA Operations & Policy Manual) and investigate incident immediately.
6. Supervisory staff must make random visits of *CEF* sponsored activities.
7. Overnight activities sponsored by *CEF* involving children or minors must be approved by the local or state director and the local committee or state board.
8. The R-32 must be signed by a legal guardian for children under the age of 13 before any pictures or videos may be taken of individuals. If a legal guardian is not present to sign the R-32, it is not recommended that pictures are taken.
    a. Registration forms that include optional photo release with R-32 verbiage cover the requirements for R-32. Minors age 13 and up may sign an R-32 for themselves but may not sign permission to join a club for themselves.
    b. Pictures taken of large groups in the open-air, spectaculars, and fair ministry: If there is no R-32 on file, faces must be blurred beyond recognition.
    c. Pictures and videos may only be used on official *CEF* owned and operated social media forums and websites.
    d. Pictures and videos may not be shared directly to a personal social media forum. However, you may re-share photos or videos that have been posted from an official CEF social media forum or website.

PRE-SERVICE SCREENING

All volunteers who have contact with minors (in person, online or by phone), all paid staff and all committee/board members who represent and/or participate in *CEF*:

1. Be screened by a face-to-face interview
2. Show a government issued photo ID
3. Read the Child Protection Policy.

4. Listen to or view the *Protecting Today's Child* presentation.
5. Read and sign the Ministry Compliance Agreement.
6. Complete the Confidential Screening Form.
7. Complete the Background/Reference Check Authorization (parent must sign for a minor).

For adults (18 and older), in addition to 1-7, CEF must:

8. Conduct a criminal background check with these minimum requirements
    - National Criminal Database Search
        - If a state or county does not report to the National Criminal Database, then a state or county report is required.
    - National Sex Offender Registry Search
    - Social Security Number Address History Trace

    Notes:
        - These are minimum requirements. State boards determine if additional requirements are necessary for exercising due diligence.
        - If your legal jurisdiction requires more, you must also comply with their requirements.

For minors (ages 14-17), in addition to 1-7, *CEF* must:

9. Check two references, one of which is the pastor.

For all adult staff (paid or volunteer), in addition to 1-8, *CEF* must:

10. Criminal record check for all states where the worker lived in the past five years.
11. Check at least two references, one of which is the pastor.

For adult volunteers serving at camp or overnight events, in addition to 1-8, CEF must:

12. Check at least two references, one of which is the pastor.

Criminal Background Check Screening Rules

Check references in cases where the applicant has a criminal record or other red flag that does not necessarily disqualify him/her from participation in *CEF* ministries.

The following would prevent a person from working with *CEF*:

1. Any crime against children. No exceptions.
2. Any sex crime of any type. No exceptions.
3. All felony convictions. Exceptions require the approval of the vice president, USA Ministries.

Rescreening Requirements

1. Every worker must review the *Protecting Today's Child* presentation annually.
2. Workers who have not been active within one year must have a Criminal Background Check rerun.
3. Every worker must have a Criminal Background Check rerun every five years.
4. A worker transferring to another area must obtain from his former location a signed and completed Screening Procedure Checklist. If the Criminal Background Check was conducted more than five years prior, the transferred worker must be processed as a new worker.
5. All minors (ages 14-17) must be processed as new adult workers when they reach their 18th birthday.

ENSURING COMPLIANCE

1. The committee chairman is responsible for ensuring compliance within his local chapter by annually signing and submitting the CPP Compliance Verification Form (OPM, R-22) to the state board chairman.
2. The state board chairman is responsible for ensuring compliance with the Child Protection Policy within his state. Annually, the state board chairman confirms compliance by signing and submitting the CPP Compliance Verification Form (OPM, R-22a) to USA Ministries.
3. USA Ministries monitors to ensure 100% compliance with this policy.

REPORTING OBLIGATIONS

When any worker has reasonable suspicion that a minor or child is being abused by **anyone representing *CEF***, or is himself accused, or someone whose action would reflect on *CEF* is accused, the following action must be taken:

1. **Call <u>USA Ministries</u> 636-456-4321, ext. 5510 as soon as possible and within 24 hours. Notify your next higher office that this step has been taken.**
2. Any person suspected of child abuse will, upon request, voluntarily relinquish or be removed from duties which involve direct contact with minors or children until the matter is completely resolved.
3. USA Ministries will determine the future ministry of the accused staff member or volunteer.

<u>WARNING</u>: Failure to follow reporting procedures of USA Ministries may result in termination of all *CEF* workers responsible in this reporting process.

All *CEF* staff and volunteers must fully abide by this policy and all state child abuse reporting requirements.

PROCEDURES

Following are steps and resources to ensure compliance with the USA Child Protection Policy.

Screening New CEF Workers

Resources:

- *Protecting Todays Child* presentation
    - Listen at 866-878-4182
    - See video at cefonline.com/childprotection
- Child Protection Policy (see cefonline.com/childprotection)

For the following resources, log in as staff at the Resource Library and search: CPP

- Template for online screening instructions
- Waivers
- *Protecting Todays Child* manual
- Individual documents from PTC manual
    - Ministry Compliance Agreement
    - Code of Conduct
    - Authorization for Background and Reference Check
    - Screening Checklist
    - Interview Form and ID Check
    - Audio and Video downloads of the PTC presentation

Steps in processing a candidate:

1. Follow policy using the Screening Procedures Checklist.
2. Evaluate results of
    a. Reference checks
    b. Criminal Background Check(s)
    c. Face-to-face interview, using the Interview Questions provided
    d. Confidential Screening Form (salvation experience and conviction of crime response—does it match Criminal Record Check?)

3. If the potential worker is eligible
   a. notify him of results
   b. invite him to work with *CEF*
4. If the interested party is ineligible
   a. offer to provide him with a copy of the Criminal Background Check Report
   b. explain the Child Protection Policy
   c. Offer contact information of background check provider for questions regarding results.
5. Consult with your state office to determine where records must be permanently filed. Handle electronic records the same as paper with regard to file retention; state must have access.
6. All child protection records must be filed in a safe, secure place. All records must be treated in a confidential manner and retained permanently.

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse by a CEF Worker

1. A volunteer who suspects abuse must report the suspicion to the state director and comply with legally mandated reporting requirements.
   a. All observed suspicious or inappropriate behavior taking place during ministry activities must be reported immediately to the local *CEF* director.
   b. If abuse of a child or minor is suspected by anyone in *CEF* ministry, it must be reported to the local director immediately.
2. Local director contact state director for direction.
3. State director shall:
   a. Take all allegations seriously.
   b. Call USA Ministries at (**636-456-4321, ext. 5510**) within 24 hours of the time that the incident becomes known. USA will give instructions for next step.
   c. See that the CEF USA Worker - Alleged Child Abuse Report R-9 (in the OPM) is completed and forwarded to usa@cefonline.com.
   d. Keep a record of all telephone calls and correspondence.
   e. Comply with all legal, mandated reporting requirements.
   f. Gather all CPP records, screening forms, etc. of the accused.
   h. In the event of press inquiries, refer inquirers to USA Ministries (636-456-4321, ext. 5510) or use the sample press release provided (p. 7).

Any person suspected of abuse must be removed immediately from duties until USA Ministries concludes an investigation.

Mandatory Reporting Statute

Each state director and state board chairperson should know and keep current with their state's mandatory reporting statute. This statute is to be communicated with each staff and volunteer so every CEF worker is aware of his/her responsibility in regard to reporting possible child abuse. Any knowledge of suspected abuse should only be shared as is absolutely

necessary or as determined by the statute. Having knowledge, even secondhand, may result in the person with the knowledge becoming a mandatory reporter.

Non-Citizens Applying to Serve in USA

Anyone who represents *CEF* must have a Social Security number to be effectively screened. Anyone not having a Social Security number is ineligible to work in *CEF.*

U.S. Citizen Serving Outside Home Ministry Area

Anyone representing *CEF* visiting outside his home ministry area who has been screened according to *CEF* standards does not require rescreening. Previous screening must be verified by receipt of the Screening Procedures Checklist Form.

Keeping Records

The state board is responsible for the security and confidentiality of Child Protection Policy records. All CPP records must be permanently maintained in a locked, confidential file, located in a secure place determined by the state board. Employees/volunteers may have a copy of their records released using a Permission to Transfer Screening Information Form. Handle electronic records the same as paper; state must have access.

Any questions dealing with procedures for handling child abuse or child abuse accusations may be referred to *Child Evangelism Fellowship,* USA Ministries at **636-456-4321, ext. 5510**.

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE STATEMENT

The children of America are our country's most precious resource. The future of this nation rests upon their development and potential. Any form of child abuse endangers that future and shatters the innocence and purity of childhood.

The International Board of Trustees of *Child Evangelism Fellowship®* believes that God has given us a stewardship of caring for the souls of children. We have taken steps as an organization to protect every child involved in our ministry.

We will work with the law enforcement agency in this area to determine the truth concerning this situation. Our prayers are that the investigation will reveal the truth and that justice will be served.

Code of Conduct

This code of conduct outlines what is considered appropriate interaction between a CEF worker and a minor child. This code should be followed by CEF staff and volunteers.

Appropriate & Encouraged Interactions	Inappropriate & Prohibited Interactions	Harmful & Prohibited Interactions
• Praise, encouragement, & acknowledgement • Rewards available to all who achieve • Pats on the back or shoulder • Side hugs • Handshakes & high-fives • Asking a child's permission to help with things like, shoe tying, putting on back packs or outerwear (jackets) & gathering personal effects to take home. • Warmth & kindness • Public social media alerts to groups of kids & parents through an official CEF operated forum.	• Isolated one-on-one interactions • Risqué jokes • Profanity • Favoritism • Gift giving to individual children • Frontal hugging • Photographing or video recording individual children without R-32 permission • Contact outside of program activities • Exchanging of personal email or phone numbers • Private interactions through social media, computer, or handheld devices	• Patting buttocks • Lap sitting • Actions or speech that humiliates, threatens, ridicules, degrades or frightens. • Corporal Punishment of any kind • Touching of personal areas; face, mouth, legs, breasts, stomach, genitals. • Intimate, romantic or sexual conduct • Showing pornography or involving youth in pornography