



# HTF Child Protection Policy

## Purpose

The Haitian Timoun Foundation is dedicated to serving children and fulfilling our mission of creating a future of hope, sustainability and dignity for the children of Haiti. In order to honor this, it is necessary to ensure that participants of HTF trips abide by and understand the following guidelines intended to protect the future of Haitian children and the ability of HTF to continue to raise them up. This policy exists not because we are suspicious, but because we take our work very seriously and we are committed to our partners.

Many of the children that we work with have experienced or live in difficult or sensitive situations. One of our primary concerns is that these children feel safe and empowered. We also want adults to feel safe and empowered to work without fear of accusations. This policy enables HTF to respond to accusations in an unbiased way, with children's safety as the highest priority. Each child is unique and valuable. Ultimately, child protection addresses not only basic survival for children, but recognizes their rights to develop to their full potential.

## Scope

This policy shall apply to all participants of HTF immersion and other trips.

## Definitions

**Child Abuse:** According to the World Health Organization, 'Child abuse' or 'maltreatment' constitutes 'all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.'

**Child Sexual Abuse** shall be defined as any sexual activity with a child under the age of 18. The abuse may be an adult, an adolescent, or another child, provided the child is four years older than the victim.

**Criminal Background Check:** The procedure used legally by recognized organizations or other qualified agencies to check the background of workers/volunteers for criminal activity.

**Non-accusatory reports** are defined as abuse reports that identify the victim(s) of abuse or neglect whether or not the person(s) responsible for the abuse or neglect is known.

**Accusatory reports** are defined as abuse reports that identify both the victim(s) of the abuse or neglect and the person(s) responsible for the abuse or neglect.

## **Participant Recruitment and Preparation**

### **Background checks**

Criminal background checks (CBC) will be performed on each trip participant after the individual has signed the consent form, and prior to traveling. HTF has the right to conduct any additional criminal background checks on participants, randomly or as deemed necessary. Founder and executive director, Rick Barger, as well as members of HTF's Board, will have access to the criminal background check report. The cost of the background check will be assumed as part of the trip cost for each individual.

Any individual who has prior incidents of sexual misconduct or child abuse will not be allowed to participate in an HTF immersion trip.

### **Education and Training**

Participants of immersion or other HTF sponsored trips must review the child protection policy before traveling and sign it, acknowledging their understanding of the policy and agreement to abide by its terms.

Participants of immersion or other HTF sponsored trips should receive an explanation of the mission and work of HTF. This will include an overview of HTF partners as well as cultural sensitivities, which are included in the travel packet.

## **Disqualifications Policy**

Whether disclosed voluntarily or by result of a security and/or references background check, the following items will automatically disqualify a worker or teenage worker from participating in an HTF immersion trip.

Any conviction for:

- Criminal homicide
- Aggravated assault
- Crimes related to the possession, use of sale of drugs or controlled substances
- Sexual abuse
- Sexual assault (rape)
- Aggravated sexual assault
- Injury to a child
- Incest
- Indecency with a child
- Inducing sexual conduct or sexual performance of a child
- Possession or promotion of child pornography
- The sale, distribution, or display of material harmful to a minor
- Employment harmful to a child
- Abandonment or endangerment of a child
- Kidnapping or unlawful restraint
- Public lewdness or indecent exposure
- Enticing a child

## **Specific Acts and Omissions in the Violations of the Policy**

The following acts and omissions are violations of this policy and will not be tolerated or accepted during any activity or program. Any violation, including those acts and omissions listed below, are to be immediately reported to the trip leader after the safety of the child, children, youth, or minor involved has been assured. Violations include:

- Any falsification of information or intentionally omitted information on any information request form to prevent the discovery of items that would disqualify a trip participant.
- Any direct observations or evidence of sexual activity in the presence of or in association with a minor.
- Any display or demonstration of sexual activity, abuse, insinuation of abuse, or evidence of abusive conduct towards a minor.
- Sexual advances or sexual activity of any kind between any person and a minor.
- Infliction of physically abusive behavior or bodily injury to a minor.
- Physical neglect of a minor, including failure to provide adequate supervision in relation to the activities of the Haitian Timoun Foundation and its partners.
- Mental or emotional injury to a minor.
- The presence or possession of obscene or pornographic materials at any function of the Haitian Timoun Foundation.
- The presence, possession or being under the influence of any illegal or illicit drugs.
- The consumption of or being under the influence of alcohol while leading or participating in a function for minors with the Haitian Timoun Foundation.

## **Behavior Protocols**

**Discipline** - participants of HTF trips should leave discipline of children to their parents or guardians.

Discipline of a child by an HTF trip participant is reasonable only when neglecting to discipline a child would compromise his/her safety. Individuals should use the minimum level of disciplinary action necessary to ensure the safety of the child.

**Adult/Child Ratio** - HTF will follow a policy of one adult and open door or two adults where the door is closed rule for all activities. This means no adult should be left alone with a child in a closed-door room.

Additionally, no adult should be beyond the sight of other trip participants and partners with a child.

**Photographs** - Trip participants should ask before taking pictures of children and allow children to view the pictures. Pictures of children shall not be used in HTF publications without the permission of HTF partners.

**Communication** - Sensitive issues should be communicated to the least number of people necessary in order to preserve confidentiality and trust of the child and HTF partners. However, confidentiality should be considered in balance with safety; if one child reports something they wish to keep confidential, the recipient of this information is obligated to report it to the trip leader or HTF partner if they feel it may affect the safety of other children.

Additionally, before publishing an individual's story or photo in an HTF publication or elsewhere, permission should be obtained when possible.

## **Reporting and Reaction Protocol**

Any person observing unusual or questionable behavior or situations shall personally report the incident or suspicious activity to the trip leader. The trip leader will document the report by asking the person making the report to complete an Incident Report Form or by promptly making record of the verbal report by written memorandum.

Any person having cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect may report the person's belief in accordance with this procedure. Accusatory and non-accusatory reports shall be made initially to the trip leader. The trip leader will then communicate the issue to the executive director and in-country partners.

Always secure the environment or the child's safety first. Upon first suspicion of an instance of child abuse, the following steps should be taken immediately:

1. Do not treat the suspicion as frivolous.
2. If a trip participant suspects a case of child abuse, he or she may report his/her suspicions within 24 hours to the trip leader or concerned partner.
3. The trip leader or other designated person receiving the initial report will be responsible for confirming the facts reported and the condition of the child, on the same day on which the first report was made, or as soon as possible thereafter.
4. Data concerning the child, name, address and other pertinent information will be obtained through discussions with the initial reporter and other trip leaders. The name and address of the person responsible for the care of the child, if available, will be obtained.
5. After the information is secured, the trip leader or HTF partner will contact the appropriate agency.
6. On the same day that the case is reported verbally to the appropriate agencies, the report will be documented on an Incident Report Form.
7. Maintain confidentiality as much as possible. Emphasize confidentiality of the victim and any accused.
8. Cooperate fully with law enforcement officials.
9. The executive director shall be the lead contact person for concerned parties.
10. In instances where the evidence is inconclusive, HTF (the executive director and board) must take action depending on the strength of the evidence available.
11. Keep HTF supporters informed of the investigation with respect to matters which is not confidential, so that they will hear about the investigation from within the organization, rather than the news media.
12. Promptly take steps to plan for a response to the media and attempt to speak to the media only through one contact person. HTF should emphasize its unwavering commitment to creating a future of hope, sustainability and dignity for the children of Haiti.

## **Ramifications of Misconduct**

Anyone accused of abuse toward a child will be suspended from the trip and sent home as soon as possible. If it is not possible to send the individual home before the end of the trip, they will be allowed no contact with children for the remainder of the trip.

In any confirmed cases of abuse, the individual responsible will be barred from future involvement with HTF.

## **Conclusion**

As previously stated and demonstrated, the Haitian Timoun Foundation is 100% committed to walking with Haitian children toward a future of hope, sustainability and dignity. We will not accept any behavior that compromises this mission or the comfort of the children we support.

<b>VOLUNTEER INFORMATION FORM – ADULT</b>				
Screening Form for Those Working with Minors or Mentally Handicapped				
This form is to be completed for any participant of an HTF immersion/vision trip. This is being used to ensure safe, secure and life-giving relationships between trip participants and our HTF partners.				
Name				
Last	First	Middle	Maiden	
ID or DL#		DOB		
(Identity MUST be confirmed with a driver's license or DPS identification card.)				
Present Address				
City		State		Zip
Phone		Email		
Occupation			Work Phone	
If less than one year				
Previous Address				
City		State		Zip
Phone		Email		
Occupation			Work Phone	
Have you ever been arrested for, charged with, under probation for, or convicted of either sexual or physical abuse? _____yes _____no				
If yes, please explain:				
Personal References (3)				
Name		Address		Telephone
An attachment of a photograph of the applicant will be made to this document if approved as a volunteer of the Haitian Timoun Foundation. Photograph shall be updated every 2 years or as needed.				
Signature:			Date:	

<b>VOLUNTEER INFORMATION FORM - TEENAGE</b>			
Screening Form for Teens Working with Minors or Mentally Handicapped			
This form is to be completed for any participant of an HTF immersion/vision trip. This is being used to ensure safe, secure and life-giving relationships between trip participants and our HTF partners.			
Name			
Last	First	Middle	
ID or DL#		DOB	
Present Address			
City		State	Zip
Phone		Email	
School		Grades	
If less than one year Previous Address			
City		State	Zip
Phone		Email	
School		Grades	
I understand that in serving as a volunteer that I am willing to abide by the Guiding Principles and policies set forth by the Haitian Timoun Foundation. I understand that child abuse is a serious matter and will do my part in the prevention of child abuse while serving with the Haitian Timoun Foundation.			
Signature of Teen Participant			Date:
I do not know of any reason why my child should not serve as a Teen Worker with Minors. They do not demonstrate any signs of being a potential risk to the church.			
Signature of Parent/Guardian			Date:

Incident Report Form	
Reason for report:	
Date of incident:	
Class:	
Title:	
Name(s) and Age(s) of Minor(s):	
Quote the child's first words verbatim:	
Briefly describe what happened:	
What action did you take:	
Has the incident been resolved? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no Explain:	
Were there any witnesses? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no Names:	
Signature(s) of witness(es) (if possible)	
Report submitted to:	
Report submitted by:	Date:



**PARTICIPANT'S STATEMENT**

The information contained in this Volunteer Information Form is correct to the best of my knowledge. I authorize any references to give you any information, including opinions, which they may have regarding my character and fitness for work with minors or the mentally handicapped.

In consideration of the receipt and evaluation of this application by the Haitian Timoun Foundation, I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby release any individual, church, youth organization, charity, employer, reference, or any other person or organization, including record custodians, both collectively and individually, from any and all liability for damages of whatever kind or nature which may at any time result to me, my heirs, or family, on account of compliance or any attempts to comply with this authorization. I waive any right that I may have to inspect any information provided about me by any person or organization identified by me or my references in this screening form.

Should my application be accepted, I agree to be bound by the Guiding Principles and policies of the Haitian Timoun Foundation and to refrain from unscriptural conduct in my performance of services on behalf of the Haitian Timoun Foundation. I further state that I have carefully read the foregoing release and know the contents thereof; and sign this release as my own free act. This is a legally binding agreement which I have read and understand.

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 Print Name

Date

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 Applicant's Signature

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 Print Witness Name

Date

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 Witness's Signature

## Haitian Timoun Foundation

## BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION CONSENT

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (applicant's complete name), hereby authorize the Haitian Timoun Foundation and/or its agents to make an independent investigation of my background, references, character, past employment, education, criminal, or police records, including those maintained by both public and private organizations and all public records for the purpose of confirming the information contained on my Application and/or obtaining other information, which may be material to my qualifications for employment now, and if applicable, during my participation as a volunteer or vision trip participant with the Haitian Timoun Foundation.

I release the Haitian Timoun Foundation and/or its agents and any person or entity, which provides information pursuant to this authorization, from any and all liabilities, claims, or lawsuits in regards to the information obtained from any and all of the above referenced sources used. The following is my true and complete legal name, and all information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

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 Full Name (Printed)

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 \_\_\_\_\_ Male or Female (circle)

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 Maiden Name or other names used

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 Present Address

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 How Long?

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 City

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 State

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 Zip

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 Former Address

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 How Long?

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 City

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 State

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 Zip

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 Date of Birth

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 Social Security #

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 Driver's License #

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 State of License

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 Signature

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 Date

HTF Trip Participant Checklist	
Task to Complete	Completed by (initials)
Receive Copy of Travel Packet/Orientation	
Review of Child Protection Policy and Procedure on Reporting	
Volunteer Information Form	
Background Investigation Consent	
References Checked	
Criminal Background Check Performed	
Interview After Checks are Made—If necessary	
Review Background Transcripts with Applicant—if necessary	
Photograph	

**Acknowledgement of Agreement**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read and understood the Haitian Timoun Foundation Child Protection Policy and agree to abide by its conditions. Furthermore, as a participant of this trip, I am comitted to the vision of the Haitian Timoun Foundation that ALL may have life.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_