

**Operating Procedures****I Procedure for Conducting CHS Youth Activities Program**

The purpose of this policy is to implement procedures for establishing a protective program that will provide an environment free of abuse and harassment of youth. For purposes of this document, the word “youth” is defined as any person, male or female, who is under 18 years of age; the word is used in either a singular or a plural context. All CHS volunteers interacting with youth during events and at all in-person meetings or interviews with youth must follow these procedures:

**1. Background Checks and Safe Environment Training**

Background Checks and Safe Environment Training are required for all CHS volunteers involved with all youth activities sponsored or coordinated by the CHS. The Director of Pageant Affairs is responsible for retaining a third party to perform Background Checks and locating qualified sources for Safe Environment Training, which may be conducted online. Certificates attesting to the passage of Background Checks and completion of an approved Safe Environment Training program must be provided to the Director of Pageant Affairs, who then must ensure that those certificates remain current and are stored in an easily retrievable file. Safe environment training performed by organizations under the auspices of a Catholic Archdiocese, the Knights of Columbus, or other similar third party, is acceptable. Copies of the above-noted certificates must also be filed at the CHS permanent storage facility at 250 West Fairgrounds Road, La Grange, Texas, 78945.

**2. Contact with Youth**

All in-person contact with youth must be supervised by another CHS volunteer, meaning that a minimum of two CHS volunteers must be present for all in-person meetings or interviews with youth. The Director of Pageant Affairs must coordinate volunteers and ensure that this policy is followed.

**3. Indemnity Requirements from Parents or Guardians**

A CHS indemnity and hold harmless agreement must be signed by parents or guardians of youth before their participation will be allowed in any event sponsored or scheduled by the CHS. The Director of Pageant Affairs must

ensure that all agreements are properly signed and dated before allowing youth participation and subsequently ensure that those agreements remain current, and are stored in an easily retrievable file. A copy of the signed agreement for each youth must also be filed at the CHS permanent records storage room at 250 West Fairgrounds Road, La Grange Texas 78945. The signed and dated agreement will remain valid until the youth reaches the age of 18, or upon changes in family or guardianship status. For any youth joining CHS within the year preceding their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, their youth status terminates upon their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

#### **4. Youth Transportation**

Youth participating in events must be transported to and from events by parents and guardians.

#### **5. Reporting of Incident**

All incidents must immediately be reported by CHS volunteers to the Director of Pageant Affairs or the President of CHS. All abuse incidents must be reported to proper authorities. If a threat is imminent, a 911 call must be made, and the incident then reported to Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (800-252-5400).

This is the federal mandatory reporting law:

\* The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) of 1974 led to all 50 states passing laws that require the reporting of child abuse and neglect. These laws often identify specific professionals as mandated reporters, such as teachers, social workers, child care providers, and health-care professionals. However, anyone can report suspected abuse or neglect. Mandated reporters are not responsible for determining if the allegations are true, but they must report all known or suspected cases.

This is the state (Texas) mandatory reporting law:

\* Texas law requires that any person suspecting that a child has been abused or neglected must immediately make a report. If there is an emergency, call 911 and then call the DFPS Texas Abuse Hotline at 1-800-252-5400.

#### **6. Inquiries**

All abuse incident inquiries from media, parents, etc. should be directed to the President or Director of pageant affairs.

## **II Procedure for Volunteers Use of Personal Vehicle for CHS Business**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all volunteers using their vehicles for CHS business provide valid proof of insurance. "CHS business" may include driving to the bank, printing office, office supply outlet, computer store to conduct normal business, or to procure gifts, flowers, and other supplies for CHS pageants and events.

### **1. Insurance Certificates on File**

All volunteers of the CHS using their vehicle for CHS business must be insured in accordance with the minimum coverages required by the Texas Department of Insurance. As a minimum, all CHS Elected Officers, Executive Committee members, and members of the CHS Board of Trustees are hereby required to provide current proof of insurance to the CHS Treasurer, and which must be updated upon each renewal of their policy. Proof of insurance is required from a parade driver at a local chapter parade if CHS is participating on float. Attending meetings is not considered CHS business that requires proof of insurance as that activity is known as commuting.