

# Celtic Junction Arts Center Child Protection Procedures

## General Purpose Statement

The Celtic Junction Arts Center (CJAC) seeks to provide a safe and secure environment for all who participate in our programs and activities, especially children. By implementing the below practices and procedures, our goal is to protect children participating in CJAC programs from incidents of misconduct or inappropriate behavior.

This document provides guidelines and establishes procedures for employees, board members, volunteers, consultants or anyone conducting or involved in youth programming on behalf of Celtic Junction. Note that such Individuals do not include outside vendors, contractors or service providers, unless they are directly involved with CJAC youth programming.

## Definitions

For the purpose of this document, the terms "child" or "children" include all persons under the age of eighteen (18) years. The term "employee" includes both paid and unpaid persons who work with children on behalf of CJAC. The term "volunteer" means anyone not an employee involved in a supervisory capacity on behalf of CJAC in activities involving children.

## Selection of Workers and Volunteers

All internal new hires and volunteers who will be engaged with children are subject to screening which will include a personal interview, reference check, criminal background check and training during their orientation. Training will include reporting incidents of child sexual molestation and abuse.

## Background Checks

All Celtic Junction employees and volunteers as defined above will be subject to a national name-based criminal background check at the time of hire or beginning their association with CJAC. This includes:

- All employees of the CJAC;
- Any volunteer working directly with children on behalf of CJAC;
- All board members of CJAC;

Background checks will be conducted by an approved Background Check Provider. Checks will include, at a minimum:

- Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension Criminal File
- National Sex Offender Registry
- Social Security Number verification

Before hire or association with CJAC all employees and volunteers as defined above will be asked to sign an authorization form allowing CJAC to run the background check. If an individual declines to sign the authorization form, he/she/they will be unable to work with children.

A disqualifying offense that will keep an individual from working with children will be determined by the CJAC Executive Director on a case-by-case basis. Generally, convictions for an offense involving children and/or offenses involving violence, dishonesty, illegal substances, indecency and any conduct contrary to the mission of CJAC will preclude someone from being permitted to work with children. Failure to disclose a criminal conviction to CJAC will also be a disqualifying event.

## Responding to Allegations of Child Abuse

For the purpose of this document, "child abuse" is any action (or lack of action) that endangers or harms a child's physical, psychological or emotional health and development. Child abuse occurs in different ways and includes the following:

- Physical abuse – any physical injury to a child that is not accidental, such as beating, shaking, burns and biting
- Emotional abuse – emotional injury occurs when the child is not nurtured or provided with love and security, such as an environment of constant criticism, belittling and persistent teasing.

- Sexual abuse – any sexual activity between a child and an adult or between a child and another child at least four years older than the victim including activities such as fondling, exhibitionism, intercourse, incest and pornography.
- Neglect – depriving a child of his/her/their essential needs, such as adequate food, water, shelter and medical care.

In the event that an individual involved in the care of children at CJAC becomes aware of suspected abuse or neglect of a child under his/hers/their care, it should be reported to the Executive Director, or any member of the CJAC board of directors for further action, including reporting to the authorities as may be mandated by state law. It is not the responsibility of the individual to decide if an incident is valid, truthful or worth reporting.

In the event that an incident of abuse or neglect is alleged to have occurred at CJAC or during our sponsored programs or activities, the following procedures will normally be followed:

- The parent or guardian of the child will be notified.
- The worker or volunteer alleged to be the perpetrator of the abuse or misconduct will immediately be placed on leave pending an investigation and instructed to remain away from the premises during the investigation. He/she/they will be instructed to have no contact with the victim or witnesses.
- All allegations of abuse will be reported to the civil authorities, and the organization will comply with the state's requirements regarding mandatory reporting of abuse as the law then exists. The organization will fully cooperate with the investigation of the incident by civil authorities when applicable.
- The CJAC insurance company will be notified.
- CJAC, at its discretion, may designate a spokesperson to the media, and seek advice of legal counsel and others to assist in the investigation and process.
- Any person who is not found innocent of the alleged abuse or misconduct will be removed from their position working with children and, if an employee, be

subject to disciplinary measures up to and including termination from employment at CJAC. In the case of volunteers, the individual may be permanently banned from working with children and/or from the premises. All workers and volunteers as described above participating in a CJAC-sponsored program or event must sign and will receive a copy of this document agreeing to these procedures. Individuals will not be given permission to participate in any event where children are present without signing this document.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read, agreed to abide by the Celtic Junction Arts Center Child Protection Policy and the requirements outlined in this document, and received a copy.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Officer of the institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_