

**General Purpose Statement:**

Leadership Akron (LA) believes in putting the best leaders in front of the high school juniors selected to participate in Junior Leadership Akron (JLA) each year. In order to be sure that we are protecting our students, families, and volunteers, the organization conducts background checks on all volunteers who work directly with the students. The background checks are required to be renewed each year that a volunteer is working with the students.

It is acceptable to submit a current background check when available from another organization. Leadership Akron recognizes that many volunteers are already being screened with other organizations. If you are able to obtain a copy of a current background check from another organization, and submit it to Leadership Akron, 54 E. Mill Street, Suite 201, Akron, OH 44308, it will be submitted to the current provider for their review and approval for our use.

**Definitions:**

For purposes of this policy, the terms “student(s)” include all persons under the age of eighteen (18) years. The term “worker” includes both paid and unpaid persons who work with the students.

**Selection of volunteers:**

All persons who desire to volunteer with the JLA Students participating in our programs and activities is subject to a background check.

**a) Criminal Background Check**

A national criminal background check is required for all “workers” as defined above.

Before a background check is run, prospective volunteers will be asked to sign an authorization form allowing Leadership Akron to run the check. If an individual declines to sign the authorization form, s/he will be unable to work with the JLA students. Also, volunteers and employees are required to report any convictions and relevant charges, arising after the completion of the background check. These charges or convictions include those involving

children and/or offenses involving violence, dishonesty, illegal substances, indecency and any conduct contrary to the mission of Leadership Akron. For relevant charges, no final action will be taken until the disclosed charges are adjudicated.

A disqualifying offense that will keep an individual from working with the JLA students will be determined by the Leadership Akron President, or his/her designee, on a case-by-case basis in light of all the surrounding circumstances. Generally, convictions for an offense involving children and/or for offenses involving violence, dishonesty, illegal substances, indecency and any conduct contrary to our mission will preclude someone from being permitted to work with students.

The background check authorization form and results will be maintained in a confidential file at Leadership Akron.

#### Supervision Requirements for all Volunteers: **Two Adult Rule**

- There will be at least one male and female worker present for all co-ed day trips and events.
- There will be at least two female and two male workers present for all trips and events where JLA students are present during overnight retreats.
- Separate accommodations will be made for male and female JLA students and adult female and male workers will each have a separate accommodation from students for all overnight retreats.
- Emergency contact and medical forms will be carried by the JLA Program Coordinator for all trips and events with JLA students.

#### **Accidental Injuries to Students**

In the event that a student is injured while under our care, the following steps shall be followed:

1. For minor injuries, scrapes, and bruises, workers will provide First Aid (Band-Aids, etc.) as appropriate and will notify the JLA student's parent or guardian of the injury at the earliest convenience.
2. For injuries requiring medical treatment beyond simple First Aid, the parent and/or guardian will immediately be summoned in addition to the Vice President of Programming. If warranted, an ambulance will be called.
3. Once the JLA student has received appropriate medical attention, an incident report will be completed.

#### **Communication with students to include use of technology:**

Communication between JLA students and workers, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, text/emails, digital cameras, videos, web-cams, online gaming devices, blogs and websites, etc.

Workers should not share any personal information with the students, nor should they request or respond to personal information shared by the student other than that which is appropriate for their professional role. *It is often important for volunteers to share aspects or experiences from life in order to build a trusting relationship with a student.* Workers should also be clear in their communications with students so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of their motives or behaviors which could be construed as inappropriate. They should not give or use their personal contact details to students including email, home or mobile telephone numbers, unless the need to do so is agreed with Leadership Akron's President as well as the parents/legal guardians. Email or text communications between a worker and a student outside of approved protocols may lead to internal or criminal investigations. This includes communications through internet based sites. Internal email systems should only be used in accordance with the school or Leadership Akron policies.

**Social Contact:**

Workers should not establish or seek to establish social contact with students for the purpose of a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. If a student or parent/legal guardian seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, a Leadership Akron staff member should exercise professional judgement in making a response. There will be occasions when there is social contact between students and workers, where, for example the parent and teacher may be part of the same social circle. These contacts should be disclosed to the Program Coordinator by the worker in advance of the program day or JLA opening retreat.

There must be awareness on the part of those working with the JLA students that social contact be transparent and professional at all times.

**Communication and Confidentiality:**

Staff of Leadership Akron will be the only workers that will have contact information, or personal contact through email, text, phone, or another platform with the students for the current or subsequent years.

It is understood that over the course of the program year that some workers may learn some aspects of personal information from the students either through sharing at the Opening or Closing retreats, or another program day. This information should be kept in confidence unless the student may be harmed if not shared with proper authorities. Such information should be shared with Leadership Akron staff for follow-up with a parent or guardian, school counselor, or appropriate law enforcement.



**LEADERSHIPAKRON**  
EXPAND YOUR VISION

**Acknowledgement of Junior Leadership Youth Protection Policy**

This certifies that I have read, understand and will comply with the policies outlined in the Junior Leadership Akron Youth Protection Policy.

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

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

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