



**Compass Youth Volunteer Handbook**

**Policies and Procedures**

Updated: July 2025

## **Welcome to Compass Youth!**

Hello, and thank you for your interest in serving at Compass Youth! As you may already anticipate, our Volunteers are a vital part of our ministry. Through our Volunteers, students can grow to know Christ & follow Him and learn & develop life skills & values that we all share, providing students a safe environment where they feel like they belong.

This handbook is designed to help you create that safe environment. We ask that you read this handbook thoroughly and follow all of the policies and procedures found within it.

## **Mission**

### **Compass Mission**

Leading people to find and follow Jesus.

### **Compass Youth Mission**

Leading students to find and follow Jesus.

## **Core Values**

These are the things we value most in Compass Youth:

- Relevant Bible Teaching
- Authentic community and belonging
- Discovering, developing, and sharing faith
- Serving the local church, community, and world

## **Compass Youth Staff**

### **Next Gen Pastor**

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### **Youth Administrative Assistant**

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## **Important Communication Tools**

1. Youth Leader Linktree ([linktr.ee/CompassYTHLeaders](https://linktr.ee/CompassYTHLeaders))
2. Convos app
3. Planning Center Online (Services app)
4. GroupMe

## **Safety Standards**

### **Events & Services**

- All Staff and Volunteers must have a background check on file with Compass in order to assist with any major, minor, or special events
  - Always ask a pastor first before inviting any visiting adults to a Youth event or service
- There must be at least one Staff/Volunteer for each biological sex for any event or service
- There must always be two Staff/Volunteers for any event
- Permission slips from a parent/guardian must be provided for any overnight event or an event that requires transportation
- There will be no co-ed sleeping arrangements made for any event

### **Check-in/ Check-out**

- All students participating in a church activity must be checked-in. This most commonly occurs during Life Groups at Youth on Wednesday nights.
- All Staff and Volunteers must also be checked-in through the church registration system and wear appropriate identification while serving during a church activity (Volunteer lanyard).
- Closed Door Policy: Every effort will be made to place all students in rooms with view windows for all on-campus activities—doors to rooms without windows must remain **open** at all times.

### **Online Policies**

- Staff and Volunteers should use all social media to their discretion.
- By serving in Compass Youth, understand that you are choosing to live life beyond reproach in all areas, including what you choose to post on your social media platforms.
- Posting: Please use discernment with your posts/stories on all of your platforms to ensure that they are clean and appropriate (**regardless if you choose to allow students to follow you or not**).
  - Do not post anything that is disparaging of Compass, Compass Youth, The Bridge, church leadership, other Volunteers, or students.
- Following: You are allowed to follow and allow students to follow you on social media platforms (**with the exception of Snapchat and other quick delete apps**).

- Volunteers who are age 18 or older are not allowed **any** students on Snapchat or any other quick delete apps.
- Volunteers under the age of 18 are allowed to follow their peers on Snapchat, but not any students whom they are in an official leadership position over (like a Life Group Leader).
- Though you are allowed to follow students on Instagram, refrain from direct messaging **any** photos to students that cannot be saved.

### **Physical Touch**

- Physical touch with a student should be brief and appropriate.
- Students must never be physically disciplined.
- No kissing a student or coaxing a student to kiss you.
- No touching a student in any area that would be covered by a swimsuit.
- Make attempts to avoid front-facing hugs with students—side hugs are more acceptable.

### **Supervision**

- There will be at least two Staff/Volunteers present with students at all times during church activities.
- Any home groups, lunch, coffee, and other meet-ups with Volunteers and students must be communicated to a Youth Ministry Staff member as well as the student’s parent/guardian beforehand.
- No student will be left to wait for a ride home without Staff/Volunteers present.
- **Never be alone with a minor**—Staff/Volunteers cannot be alone with a student of the **same** sex or the **opposite** sex.
  - This includes public spaces, church activities, and vehicles.
  - Must haves:
    - Another background checked adult from Compass, or
    - The parent/guardian of the minor, or
    - A second student from Compass (this is the least desirable situation, strive for A or B as much as possible)
  - In **all** situations, do not meet with a student (or students) of the opposite gender if a student of your same gender is not also present.
  - Adult Volunteers may use the Bridge or Café Journey during their operational hours to meet with a student one-on-one.

### **Transportation**

- Staff/Volunteers must never give a student of either sex a ride home alone—if it is an emergency, please see a Youth Ministry Staff member first.
- All drivers of church-owned vehicles must go through Compass policy for driving the vehicle (including vans and golf carts).
- Drivers must require seat belts to be worn at all times (passengers cannot exceed the number of seatbelts in the vehicle).
- Drivers must not use cell phones for texting while driving.
- If a student is left at church for an extended period of time:
  - **Two** Staff/Volunteers must be present to wait with the student until the arrival of their ride.
  - Locate a Youth Ministry Staff member to call the parent to assess the situation.
  - If the nearby Burger King is open and the parent allows the student to go there to wait, the student may do so.
  - If the parent needs assistance in transportation, **both** Staff/Volunteers who are giving the student a ride must have parent permission to do so.

### **Other Expectations**

- Commit to the appropriate use of language.
- Commit to not using excessive alcohol.
- Do not drink underage or smoke underage.
- Do not use recreational or illegal drugs.
- Do not use pornography.
- Do not cohabit outside of marriage.
- Do not engage in sexual activity outside of marriage.
- Do not pursue or engage in a same-sex romantic relationship.
- Model the type of clothing you would want students to emulate. Set a good example for what is appropriate to wear—comfortable, modest clothing and shoes.
- No dating minors (this includes any student within our ministry).
- Maintain appropriate timeframes when communicating with students.
  - For example, if a student texts at 10 PM at night with a question about the Bible or an upcoming event, do not respond until morning. If a student texts that they are worried they will hurt themselves, respond and contact the authorities immediately.

## **Interacting with Students via Media**

### **Video Game Guidelines**

It is encouraged for you to connect with students through online gaming, but please be mindful of:

- Your language used within online play.
- Your attitude/competitive nature.
- Including as many students as possible.
- What time it is (students often want to play late into the night; please do not play video games past 10 PM with students).

Ratings of video games are only used for the games themselves. The online interaction portion of any and all games remain unrated. All games played with students must follow the designated ratings and guidelines.

### **Ratings Allowed**

- E (Everyone)
- E 10+ (Everyone 10+)
- T (Teen)—use discretion with this rating

### **Ratings Not Allowed**

- Anything rated M (Mature) or higher

Games including any of these items are automatically prohibited at sanctioned gatherings and/or online gaming:

- Offensive Language
- Blood and Gore
- Intense or excessive Violence
- Glorification of theft or murder
- Drug Reference
- Alcohol Reference
- Objectification of men/women
- Nudity
- Sexual themes or contact

### **Movies, TV shows, YouTube, Music, and other Media**

Ratings of movies and TV shows are only used for the games themselves. The online interaction portion of any and all games remain unrated. All movies, TV shows, YouTube, Music, and other media watched or listened to with students must follow the designated ratings and guidelines.

#### **Ratings Allowed**

- Y (Young Audience)
- Y7 (Everyone 7+)
- G (General Audience)
- PG (Parental Guidance suggested)
- PG-13 (Parental Guidance suggested 13+)—use discretion with this rating
- T-14 (Teen 14+)—use discretion with this rating

#### **Ratings Not Allowed**

- Anything rated M (Mature) or higher
- Anything rated R (Restricted) or higher
- Anything rated E (Explicit)

Movies, TV shows, YouTube videos, Music, and all other Media including any of these items are automatically prohibited at gatherings and interactions with students:

- Offensive Language
- Blood and Gore
- Intense Violence
- Glorification of theft or murder
- Drug Reference
- Alcohol Reference
- Objectification of men/women
- Nudity
- Sexual themes or contact

## **First Aid**

It is very important that Staff/Volunteers follow Universal Precautions in an effort to ensure a safe environment for everyone.

- Always wear rubber gloves when:
  - Administering first aid
  - Cleaning up any bodily fluids
  - You have any cuts, scrapes, or skin conditions
- Do not touch your mouth, nose, or eyes while administering first aid.
- Always wash hands thoroughly after removing rubber gloves.
- Dispose of the contaminated items properly and clean the area with a cleaning solution.
- **We do not administer medications** except any emergency medication such as an EpiPen or seizure medicine. A consent form must be completed prior to leaving the pen with a Volunteer or Staff Member.
- A **General Incident Report** must be filled out for a student if **ANY** first aid is administered.

### **Medical Issue**

- If necessary for an extreme medical emergency contact 911.
- Contact a Youth Ministry Staff member.
- Contact the student's parents.
- Complete a **General Incident Report**.
  - Include in your report any steps taken to address the issue (retrieved inhaler, topical anesthetic, etc.)

### **Injury**

- If necessary for an extreme medical emergency contact 911.
- For most common injuries, provide appropriate medical attention as trained (ice, band-aids, elevation of limb, etc.)
- Contact a Youth Ministry Staff member.
- Complete a **General Incident Report**.
  - Include in your report any steps taken to address the issue (retrieved inhaler, topical anesthetic, etc.)

## Reporting Guidelines

### General Incident Report:

- <https://rock.compassaz.church/page/864>

### Mandated Incident Report:

- <https://rock.compassaz.church/page/865>

You can also find links to these forms at [linktr.ee/CompassYTHLeaders](http://linktr.ee/CompassYTHLeaders).

### Information needed for ALL report types

- It is important to know when and where a situation occurred.
  - For example, if not volunteered, pull the student aside and ask them when this occurred, and where. “Hey, I’m sorry to hear that you went through that. When did that occur? Where did it happen?”
- You will need the contact information for the primary person of concern.
  - This includes address, birthdate, age, phone number and minor’s parent contact. A Youth Ministry Staff member will be able to provide this for you.

### General Incident Report

- Examples of General Reports:
  - Injuries or medical issues
    - Any injury that requires more than a Band-Aid.
    - *All* head and face injuries, regardless of injury.
  - Harassment
  - Suicide Threats
  - Physical threats
  - Any criminal activity (for example: theft, criminal damage, disorderly conduct)
  - Welfare Check (for example: concerns over someone's safety)
- Reports must be filled out on the day of the incident.
- Include as much information as possible so we can follow up with appropriate resources.

### **Mandated Reporting**

- Parents, Staff, Volunteers, and any person who has care or custody of a minor (under 18 years old) at the time of the report who reasonably believes the minor has been or is a victim of a crime is required by ARS law 13-3620 is to report the incident immediately to Department of Child Safety (DCS) and/or law enforcement, depending on the situation.
- Examples of Mandated Reports:
  - Neglect
    - Denial or deprivation of necessary medical treatment or basic necessities for life.
  - Physical Abuse
    - Any non-accidental injury including bruises or more serious injuries.
  - Any Sexual Abuse
    - Sexual Contact with a Minor: anyone 18+ years old having sexual relations with someone 17 years of age or younger.
    - Child Pornography: photos or video recording of sexually exposed minor.
    - Sexual Exploitation of a Minor: distribution of photos or videos of a minor in a sexual manner.
- All reports are considered confidential and should only be discussed with a YTM Ministry Staff member.

## Criminal Activity: Drugs and Alcohol

Any student using drugs and/or alcohol presents an immediate concern for the student. While this DOES NOT require a *Mandated* Report, we will take these situations seriously. As a ministry designated to support the health and welfare of students, we will address each situation accordingly.

Please follow these steps:

- Contact a Youth Ministry Staff member immediately.
- Complete a **General Incident Report**.
  - Include when the drug or alcohol use occurred—if you don't know, ask.

Social Media Posts:

- The **General Incident Reporting** guideline steps should also be taken if you see drug or alcohol abuse from a student on social media.

Second-hand Reports

- If a student reports drug or alcohol use of another student, you should reach out to the student in question and begin a dialogue about their use of these substances. If they are engaged in these activities, follow the reporting guidelines.

## Suicide Threat / Activity or Injuries to Self

Any student that references a desire or need to either cause self-harm in any way, including suicide, will be treated as an emergency situation. While this DOES NOT require a *Mandated Report*, we will take these situations seriously and act immediately to ensure student safety. We want to provide the best possible care and support to students, parents, and families.

Please follow these steps:

- If you believe the student to be in immediate danger, call 911.
- Do anything you can to ensure the student's immediate safety, including contacting the student's parents.
- Contact a Youth Ministry Staff member immediately.
- Complete a **General Incident Report**.
  - Include when the attempt or threat occurred.
  - Include where the attempt or threat occurred.
  - Are there any visible injuries seen?

Social Media Posts:

- If a post on social media alludes to, or makes direct reference to an attempt or threat of self-harm, immediately contact a Youth Ministry Staff member and follow the **General Incident Reporting** guidelines.

Second-hand Reports:

- If a student reports a suicide threat/attempt of another student, you should reach out the student in question and begin a dialogue about these concerns. If they are engaged in these activities, follow the above reporting guidelines.

## **Proper Use of Corrective Discipline**

We want to make it clear that we want students to come to Youth who do not yet know how to behave at Youth. The order is **Belong, then Believe, then Behave**, not the other way around. At the same time, any well-organized ministry has a set of expectations that they hold people to so that everyone can feel safe and have a good experience there. How we hold them to those expectations is key.

### **Demeanor**

1. Lead with **grace** and assume the best. Keep in mind there are a myriad of factors that could be causing negative behavior in a student.
2. Be stern, but **remain calm** and do not yell. If you need to excuse yourself to calm yourself down before speaking with the student, do so.
3. Do not name-call, label, shame, or threaten a student. Do not give ultimatums.

### **Steps for Discipline in your own Life Group**

1. Remind the student of the Life Group's expectations. Keep in mind the instructions above on "Demeanor".
2. Utilize your Co-Leader to sit by that student, hold them accountable to expectations, or to briefly remove them for a talk, walk, or breather.
3. Call a staff member and ask for extra assistance.

### **Steps for Discipline during Large Group**

1. Be with your students before and during Youth service—talk with them beforehand, worship with them, and sit with them during the message, especially the students you know from your group who need the most supervision. Limit your conversations with other Leaders to after Youth service and to other times during the week.
2. Inform/remind students of expectations. Keep in mind "Demeanor".
3. Find the student's Life Group Leader and ask for extra assistance.
4. Call a staff member and ask for extra assistance.

Please deal with all discipline issues in as **discreet** a way as possible. If the situation allows you to pull the student aside, do so. And do not complain about students to other students or other Volunteers. If you are having repeated issues, speak with one of the Youth Staff Members directly.