

# RCYW Application Form Guidance Notes

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*Sections 1 & 2 (pp. 1-2) to be completed by applicant*

## **SECTION 1**

**Date of Application/Date of Birth:** as requested (numbers only, please)

**Full name/Address/Telephone/Email:** as requested

**Criminal offense/Social Services Investigations/Administrative Actions:** If the answer is “yes” to any of these questions, the applicant must include additional background context information, including the date and nature of the offense or issue. The applicant should describe when it occurred, the underlying circumstances and the outcome, along with any other information the applicant wishes to share or feels would be relevant. If more room is needed for your description of the underlying circumstances, please attach additional sheets to the application. If further information is needed for reviewing the application, the mission center officer will be notified and will follow-up with the applicant.

**Congregational Membership or Affiliation:** Youth workers are NOT required to be members of Community of Christ. However, people who are new and unknown to our faith community will not be approved as youth workers and granted immediate access to children and youth. The six-month rule establishes a length of time for an individual to become better known to the congregation and allows an opportunity to evaluate that person’s suitability for becoming a youth worker.

If the applicant is currently associated with a Community of Christ congregation, they should indicate which congregation and the pastor. If the applicant has not been associated with a Community of Christ congregation for six months or more, they should mark “N/A” or “none” in that space and fill out the information for their current or most recent congregation or faith community, including the name and contact information for their current pastor or faith leader. As well, the applicant must then comply with the heightened requirements for character references discussed in the References section below.

If you are in doubt about this or any other criteria on the form, please contact the Office of General Counsel at (816) 833-1000, ext. 2220.

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## **SECTION 2**

**References:** Full address and contact details should be included in this section, but at minimum a phone number and/or email address for each reference. At least 3 references are required. To help expedite the review process, the references listed should be easy to contact and willing to respond quickly.

References must be 18 or older, must not be a relative, and must have known the applicant at least 6 months. Ideally each reference should be able to speak to the applicant's suitability to work with youth, but at minimum references should be able to speak to the applicant's character and judgment.

If the applicant does not satisfy the 6 month rule, at least one of their references must comply with one or more of the following criteria:

- Pastor or youth minister of the church the applicant regularly attends
- Community of Christ member who has known the applicant longer than 12 months
- A leader of the community where the applicant lives who knows the applicant well (e.g. School Principal/Teacher, Supervisor from work; Staff member or leader from an organization where the applicant has previously volunteered, especially a youth-serving organization)

The applicant should include a note on the form to indicate which of the references satisfies one of the required criteria.

**Applicant's signature:** Applicant should read the Applicant's Statement on the form and verify they understand and are willing to agree by signing and dating the form. If the applicant is younger than 18, a signature by a parent or guardian must be completed.

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*Sections 3 & 4 (pp. 3-4) to be completed by a church representative (interviewer)*

## **SECTION 3**

### **Reference Contact/Interview**

Please make sure the information provided is accurate and complete. The information provided in this section is crucial to decision making.

Interviewers cannot interview themselves, and best practice is that interviewers should not interview their own family members. If a person listed as a reference is the interviewer or a relative of the interviewer, please try to find another church representative to conduct that particular interview.

For each reference:

- List the name of the person contacted, the date the contact was made and name of the interviewer.
- Mark each box that applies to indicate whether the reference is speaking as a friend, member of Community of Christ or other. If other is marked, please indicate how the reference knows the applicant. For any applicant that does not satisfy the 6 month rule, please use this space to indicate which of the criteria is satisfied by that reference (see above).
- List how long the reference has known the applicant.
- Mark the appropriate box for the method used to interview the reference. In-person or verbal

interviews are recommended, but a letter or email response from the reference can be accepted in lieu of an interview, provided the response includes sufficient information. If the reference responds with a letter or email, a copy of that correspondence should be attached and submitted with the application.

- Mark the appropriate box to indicate whether the reference's comments were favorable, guarded or unfavorable.
- Provide a summary of the reference's comments. This summary should include any pertinent comments and sufficient detail about what they shared. If additional space is needed to summarize a reference's comments, please attach an additional sheet.

Interviewers should ask questions that will help identify how well the reference knows the applicant and what information the reference can provide about the applicant's suitability to work with youth and the applicant's character and judgment. The following are examples of questions that might be used for interviewing references.

### **Questions for Interviewer to ask references on Registered Children and Youth Worker application forms:**

- In what capacity and how long have you known the applicant?
- Describe whether you think the applicant would make responsible choices and use good judgment when caring for children and youth and why you think that.
- Share any relevant experiences when you've witnessed interactions between the applicant and children or youth.
- Share an example of how he or she models good behavior and judgment for children and youth.
- Share about any concerns you might have with the applicant working with children and youth.
- What types of life experiences (positive or negative) has this applicant had that would influence his or her ability to be a registered children and youth worker?
- Would you feel comfortable leaving your own children or grandchildren in the care of this applicant? Why or why not?

After interviewing all the references, the interviewer should review the information provided in this section of the form to ensure it is accurate and complete. The interviewer should then sign and date this section, as well as printing their name and title.

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## **SECTION 4**

### **Personal Interview – Applicant**

Interviewers cannot interview themselves, and best practice is that interviewers should not interview their own family members. If the applicant is the interviewer or a relative of the interviewer, please try to find another church representative to conduct the interview.

Prior to the interview, the interviewer should review the previous sections of the application. If there are responses in the prior sections that are incomplete or unclear, additional questions related to those issues may be appropriate to include in the interview. At minimum, please ensure the questions listed on the

application form are asked of the applicant during the interview, especially those regarding any previous experience, training and education the applicant may have related to youth work or ministry.

The interviewer should provide a summary of the applicant's relevant comments. For example, make a note of any gifts, education, training or prior experience that has prepared the applicant to work with children and youth. The summary should also note any comments that raise concern about the applicant's ability to work with children and youth. If additional space is needed to summarize a reference's comments, please attach an additional sheet.

**Statement of Personal Interviewer:** Based on the interview, the applicant's comments and the interviewer's knowledge of the applicant, the interviewer should mark the appropriate box that reflects the interviewer's best judgment regarding whether or not to recommend the applicant as suitable to be a youth worker. The interviewer should also enter any comments they might have to clarify or support the box they marked. The interviewer should then sign and date the form, as well as printing their name and title.

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*Section 5 (p. 5) to be completed by a church officer & MC officer*

## **SECTION 5**

### **Administrative Review & Approval**

**Statement of Church officer:** The top of page 5 should be completed by a church officer who has reviewed the form to verify it has been completed correctly. It may or may not be the person completing the interviews. The church officer should make an objective assessment, based on the information on the form and their knowledge of the applicant, and indicate whether or not they can recommend the applicant as suitable to be a youth worker.

**Mission Center Approval:** The bottom section of page 5 should be completed by a mission center officer. Before approving, the mission center officer should perform the following due diligence:

- Review the form to verify it has been completed correctly and there are no issues that raise concern.
- Verify that the applicant has completed the required Child Protection Core Training, or will be completing the training in the near future and before working with children and youth.
- It is also recommended that the mission center officer check the mission center's records to verify there are no prior incidents or reasons for concern related to the applicant on file.

If the mission center officer has questions about this process or the appropriateness of approving an applicant, they can contact the Office of General Counsel to discuss.

In addition to these guidance notes, a "[Mission Center Checklist](#)" is available online. This is a checklist that mission center officers should use prior to sending applications to the Office of General Counsel to ensure the application is completed correctly. This checklist can also help as a starting point for someone new to know what things to look for on the [application](#).

A signature by the mission center officer, indicating their approval of the applicant, is required in this section for the form to be processed, even if it is the same person that completed the top section of page 5.

Please note that it is best practice to have each section on this page completed by a different church officer. If a question arises at International Headquarters while processing the application, the applicable mission center officer will be the first point of contact.

**Prior to submitting the application, the mission center officer should verify the applicant has a Shelby profile created.** If the applicant does not have a Shelby profile, the mission center officer should work with their Recorder or other appropriate people to have a Shelby profile created for the applicant.

Completed applications should be submitted to [reywapps@cofchrist.org](mailto:reywapps@cofchrist.org). If sending by email is not feasible, completed applications can alternatively be sent to the Office of General Counsel via fax at (816) 521-3099 or mail at 1001 W. Walnut, Independence, MO 64050. Please note that processing paper applications may require some additional time.

The Office of General Counsel will review the application. If an issue is identified or further information is needed, OGC will notify the mission center officer. If the application is approved, OGC will update the applicant's Shelby profile with a youth worker code and notify the mission center officer of the outcome.