



OKUMC VOLUNTEER IN MISSIONS

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Regarding Safe Sanctuaries and national insurance policies.

October 26, 2014

TO: OKVIM Team Leaders

We are deeply grateful for your faithful service as OKVIM team leaders and your diligence in ensuring that your teams observe best practices and are appropriately prepared for their mission experiences. In support of this, our office is constantly reviewing, refining and improving our practices and policies. Two such changes have now become necessary in the light of our experiences with past teams.

Firstly, we are instituting immediately a fee for domestic mission insurance. It will amount to \$1 per person per day. Up until now, the policy we have held for this coverage has been the Conference's liability policy. However, we have become aware that, to claim under this policy, an injured person need to sue the conference to obtain relief. In other words, it is not a "no fault" coverage. The only reason we have been able to cope with this type of coverage for so long is that most people were able to claim from their own health insurance, which is primary in such incidents.

We believe it is a far better arrangement to have immediate coverage available in the event of a claim, especially for those without any or adequate health insurance of their own. It also enhances co-ordination of benefits for those with their own health insurance. For example, this new policy covers any deductible required by the person's own insurance.

Secondly, we now need to ensure that all our OKVIM team leaders comply with the Conference's Safe Sanctuary policies and are screened through a background check. Going forward, all team leaders will be asked to undergo such a screening, at their own expense, through our Conference process, or produce proof that they have such a background check that is up to date from another source. If any issues are discovered on such checks, there will need to be some discussion between our office and the person affected to determine the issues at stake. Please know that there is no such thing as "failing" a background check. We do not have any automatic actions we take; every check that raises "flags" will be discussed. Thus, it is most helpful for a person, prior to us performing such a check, to disclose any issues they believe might be present on such a report.

Furthermore, we are now including basic mission-related Safe Sanctuary information in the Leaders' Manual and the Participant's brochure. This will require team leaders to share this information with their team members and to sign off on their accountability forms that they have done so prior to each and every mission.

Clearly, this arises from the sadly increasing prevalence of abuse by adults in all types of situations with children and vulnerable adults, and it is simply incumbent upon of to observe best practices in this regard and to comply with the emerging standards for this. I know we will have your total cooperation in this as we know you share our belief in ensuring that OKVIM leaders operate at the highest of standards and mission practices.