

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS  
OFFICE OF THE FIRST PRESIDENCY  
47 EAST SOUTH TEMPLE STREET, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH 84150-1200

May 6, 2019

To: General Authorities, General Officers, and the following leaders outside the United States and Canada: Area Seventies; Stake, Mission, and District Presidents; Bishops and Branch Presidents; Stake and Ward Councils; Stake and Ward Young Women, Young Men, and Primary Presidencies

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

Safety in Church Activities

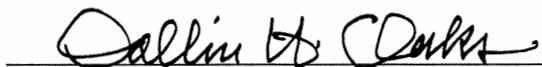
Stake presidencies, bishoprics, and auxiliary organization leaders are responsible to oversee the planning of Church-sponsored activities. When considering activities, leaders should use good judgment and approve activities that are planned effectively and follow established safety precautions.

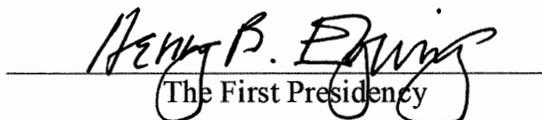
Stake and ward council meetings and bishopric youth committee meetings provide opportunities to prayerfully plan activities and to discuss safety guidelines and practices to ensure the safety of participants and protect the Church and its volunteers from liability. Leaders of youth and children should be mindful that parents trust them with the safety of their sons and daughters.

Safety guidelines are included with this letter and at [safety.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](http://safety.ChurchofJesusChrist.org). Please ensure that all leaders review and follow these guidelines as they plan and carry out activities in your stakes and wards.

Sincerely yours,

  
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The First Presidency

This letter is being translated and will be distributed to units identified as Albanian, Armenian, Bislama, Bulgarian, Cambodian, Chinese, Chinese (Simplified), Croatian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, Estonian, Fijian, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Icelandic, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Kiribati, Korean, Lao, Latvian, Lithuanian, Malagasy, Malay, Maltese, Marshallese, Mongolian, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Samoan, Serbian, Sinhala, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish, Swedish, Tahitian, Thai, Tongan, Ukrainian, and Vietnamese. If leaders need this letter in additional languages, they may contact the Area Presidency. Area leaders can forward requests to the Priesthood and Family Department at ext. 2-2933. 16871

# Reaffirming Safety Guidelines for Activities (Outside the United States and Canada)

May 6, 2019

THE CHURCH OF  
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OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

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Following are general guidelines for planning Church activities, especially those that include children, youth, and young single adults. Additional guidelines, policies, and training resources are provided in the following places:

- “[Activities](#),” chapter 13 in *Handbook 2: Administering the Church* (2010).
- The Church Safety and Health website ([safety.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](http://safety.ChurchofJesusChrist.org)).
- *Safety Recommendations for Church Activities*, found on the Youth Activities—Training website.

## General Guidelines

1. Care should be taken to promote the spiritual, moral, emotional, and physical safety of those who participate. Leaders should be as careful with the safety of participants as they would be with the safety of their own children. All conduct and interactions should be consistent with Church standards and exemplify Christlike behavior.
2. Leaders, parents, youth, and children should understand that participation in an activity is a privilege, not a right, and can be revoked if participants behave inappropriately or if they pose a risk to themselves or others. Leaders should communicate these expectations to parents and participants. Leaders should also counsel about how to address concerns that may arise.
3. At least two adults must be present at all Church-sponsored activities attended by youth or children. To protect youth and children, leaders should always avoid one-on-one situations with a youth or a child unless the leader and young person are clearly visible to nearby adult leaders (see *Handbook 2*, [13.6.2](#)).
4. Adult leaders are encouraged to be alert to any signs of abuse and neglect. If these leaders become aware of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, they should report it to appropriate legal authorities and contact the bishop immediately. For more information, see *Preventing and Responding to Abuse* (2018).
5. Leaders should prayerfully plan safe activities. Good safety planning not only protects participants, but it also protects the Church from significant liabilities. When activities require specific physical skills or experience, additional planning, organization, and preparation are required. It may be necessary to obtain specialized training or to use professional guides. Leaders instruct all participants in safety practices unique to the activity. Activities should be appropriate for the participants’ ages, abilities, and maturity. Leaders

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and youth should have fitness levels appropriate for the activity, and individual medical risk factors should be carefully considered.

6. All ward activities are planned under the direction of the bishopric and ward council. The stake presidency and stake council oversee the planning of stake activities, which must be approved by the stake presidency (see *Handbook 2*, [13.2.1](#), [13.3.1](#)). Activity leaders identify applicable requirements, plan carefully, and verify that appropriate safety measures are in place before presenting a plan to priesthood leaders for approval. The [Event and Activity Plan](#) form should be used when planning an event or activity that includes an overnight stay (see *Handbook 2*, [13.6.12](#)), travel outside the local area (see *Handbook 2*, [13.6.24](#)), or an activity with higher than ordinary risks. Use the form to create, outline, and present activities for review according to these guidelines.
7. Prepare for emergencies that may occur. Know in advance how to contact parents, Church leaders, Scout leaders (if applicable), law enforcement, and emergency services. In areas where there is limited communication, determine the best way to contact emergency services.
8. Stake and ward leaders who plan, conduct, and supervise activities should be knowledgeable about members' access to personal, local, or national health benefits. They should also be knowledgeable about personal liability insurance guidelines. If an accident occurs, the Church will look to all available sources of coverage and protection for its volunteers and the Church. Such sources may include personal automobile liability insurance coverage, personal homeowner's liability insurance coverage, excess or umbrella liability insurance coverage, and so forth (see *Handbook 2*, [13.6.9.4](#)).
9. Provide parents with adequate information about outings or activities so they can make an informed decision about their child's participation. Use the [Permission and Medical Release Form](#) for each event or activity involving an overnight stay, travel outside the local area, or an activity with higher than ordinary risks.
10. All leaders should be familiar with and follow all vehicle- and travel-related guidelines (see *Handbook 2*, [13.6.24](#)). Drivers should not use mobile phones or engage in other distracting behaviors while driving.
11. Notify the bishop and stake president if an accident, illness, or injury occurs on Church property or during a Church-sponsored activity. Promptly report all incidents online at [incidents.churchofjesuschrist.org/](http://incidents.churchofjesuschrist.org/). If the accident involves a fatality or overnight hospital stay, immediately notify the area office.