



Explanation of Updated Youth Ministry Forms: Youth Ministry Annual Emergency Medical Care Form Field Trip Permission and Release Form

The Office of Youth Ministry is excited to announce updated medical and permission forms for use beginning Jan. 1, 2018. The updated forms seek to streamline permission and release forms to aid students, ministers, and parents retain up-to-date, accurate, and easily accessible waiver information.

The current (old) forms used by youth ministries for field trips required waivers to be filled out for each trip that included a parental release and emergency medical information. Parents were required to sign and fill out emergency medical information for every event.

The updated forms keep information concise and clear. Parents fill out an Annual Emergency Medical Care Form at the beginning of each youth ministry year (July 1). Individual events that require parental permission and release are given a "Field Trip Permission and Release Form." Our Diocesan attorney requested that the release protecting a parish and our diocese be signed on the Field Trip Permission and Release Form for each field trip rather than simply one time a year.

In short, emergency medical information is completed at the beginning of the youth ministry year. A youth minister going on a retreat or field trip would carry an electronic or paper copy of the medical form with them for each student on the retreat or field trip. In addition to the medical form, the youth minister would have a completed Field Trip Permission and Release Form for every participant.

01/2018

Implementation of Updated Forms (Paper Versions):

Medical Form:

At the beginning of each school year (July 1 or first class/meeting following July 1), each student must have a parent/guardian complete the Annual Emergency Medical Care Form. This should be kept in a secured area, such as a youth ministry office that is locked at the end of the day, a secretary's office that is locked at the end of the day or in a locked file cabinet. This form is recommended, but not required, for students who ONLY participate at youth ministry events not requiring a Field Trip Permission and Release Form. It is required for everyone participating in field trips and retreats. Best practice is to have each student hand in an electronic or hard copy completed by a parent/guardian on the first day they attend a youth ministry event.

Youth minister must bring a copy of the Annual Emergency Medical Care Form on each field trip or event requiring parental permission for each student attending.

Field Trip Form:

The Field Trip Permission and Release Form must be completed for each event taking place off parish grounds, even if students drive themselves or are dropped off by a parent at the off-campus location. It is important to list in the field trip details the form of transportation to be used if parish will be providing transportation. In the situation of a YDisciple group or similar series of meetings off parish grounds, it is recommended that one Field Trip Permission and Release Form be signed for the entire series of meetings for that youth ministry year (July 1-June 30).

Driver Information Form:

Volunteer drivers need to complete a Driver Information Form before transporting youth for a youth ministry event. This form should be completed for each event in which they are transporting youth. Please be sure to follow age and insurance requirements. Form is on youth ministry website www.fwsbym.com

Online Forms:

Parishes are welcome to allow parents to fill out both the Annual Emergency Medical Care Form and the Field Trip Permission and Release Form online.

Security:

For the Annual Emergency Medical Care Form completed online, it is important that the same guidelines listed for security of paper forms be followed. Whatever server or email platform is used to gather the Annual Emergency Medical Care Forms, it must be password protected and accessible only to a youth minister and other staff personnel or volunteers who should have access to such information. A google form on a password protected email account is acceptable, as well as a form on a third-party registration system that allows parish to keep information secure through login and password.

Accessibility:

It is important that this information be available to youth ministers during youth field trips. In the case of parish retreats, field trips, or short outings, it is acceptable for the youth minister to not carry paper forms with them if:

- 1) For the duration of the field trip, the Youth Minister will have easy access to forms through login to the medical form /permission form online platform
- 2) At least one other staff person / volunteer on the field trip has access to the medical information
- 3) At least one additional staff person at the parish has access to the information online should they need access in an emergency
- 4) Forms should be accessible from any device by logging into the medical form/permission form online platform.

Acceptable Means to Prove You Have Verifiable Parental Consent for Online Waivers:

To use online waivers it is essential to have verifiable parental consent before accepting any forms on behalf of a student.

Here are approved means of obtaining verifiable parental consent:

(see Title 16, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 312.5)

Recommended forms of verification are **bolded**:

- 1) Providing a paper form that is signed by the parent and returned via postal mail, fax, or electronic scan.
- 2) Requiring a parent, in connection with a monetary transaction, to **use a credit card, debit card, or online payment system in the parent's name** that provides notification of each discrete transaction to the primary account holder.
- 3) **Having a parent call and speak to your youth ministry office** to verify consent given online
- 4) Having a parent connect to your youth ministry via video conference
- 5) Having your youth ministry verify a parent's identity by checking a form of government-issued identification against databases of such information, where the parent's verification is deleted by the operator from its records promptly after such verification is complete.

Additional Means to Obtain Verifiable Parental Consent:

- 1) **Have a pre-event meeting** which parents must attend. Any parent not attending, would be given a phone call to obtain verifiable consent. This verification must be done for every online waiver or form completed.
- 2) **Having a parent meeting with parents to give them an annual "security code"**. When parents fill out a waiver or form for their child during the youth ministry year, the parent can give verifiable parental consent by providing a "security code." This code, unique to each parent, should be given annually and in person by a youth minister to each parent and not in an email. Care must be taken to prevent children from having access to their parent's unique security code.

Electronic Waivers: Wording and Layout

Please organize your online waivers and forms to be replicas of the diocesan approved paper forms. It is important that we are consistent as a diocese. Please take precautions against "word creep" by following a few simple suggestions:

- 1) Simply print out the Waiver PDFs on your parish letterhead. This saves you time and makes sure you have the approved waiver format
- 2) If you need to reset the type to fit your letterhead, copy the text in the Wavier doc. This will prevent any typos in the legal wording of the document
- 3) For online waivers, follow the example of our sample Annual Emergency Medical Care Form; and Field Trip Permission and Release Form
- 4) If your online registration is an exact replica of the paper form, has the same wording, and is on a password protected, and secure server, it is approved.

- 5) If you are having trouble formatting your online registration, please contact the youth ministry office to confirm best practices to make your online forms simple, easy, and effective for you, your youth, and your parents.