



Lutheran Youth Organization Northeastern Iowa Synod Policies for Synod Youth Ministry Events



When youth and adults participate in events sponsored by the Northeastern Iowa Synod's LYO spiritual growth and Christian fellowship are always the purpose. However the health and safety of all participants must also be a primary concern. Therefore:

General

- It is the recommendation of the Board of the Synod LYO that all adults, who are designated congregational youth leaders, complete criminal/child abuse clearance checks through the State Police. It is recommended that all adults who participate in a synodical overnight event complete such clearance. Both of these forms are enclosed with this policy packet. The criminal record check form can also be found at <http://www.state.ia.us/government/dps/dci/crimhist.htm>. It is also recommended that adult youth leaders be checked against the Iowa Sex Offender Registry which can be found at <http://www.iowasexoffenders.com>. We suggest that the congregation keep these records on file. All information received is confidential and will not be shared with others in the congregation or synod. A person needs to submit these forms only once, as long as their membership remains in the same congregation.
- It is recommended that a minimum ratio of one adult per seven youth must be maintained for all overnight events. For example, fifteen youth registering for an event requires three adults to attend. This ratio requirement must hold true for each sex as well, due to separation of sexes for sleeping arrangements.
- There should be no one-on-one contact between a youth and adult except in view of other adults and youth. If confidential conversation needs to occur, it should be done in proximity to the rest of the group with doors open and lights on.
- The possession or use of illicit drugs, alcohol or tobacco by youth at a synodical youth event is strictly prohibited. Adults are prohibited from using illicit drugs and alcohol at a synodical youth event. Tobacco products are not to be used in front of youth and/or during activities of an event. Adults must also maintain proper supervision of their youth at all times.
- There are to be no weapons, firearms, fireworks or paintball guns at any youth event.
- Youth participants of a synodical event are not allowed to use cell phones or beepers during the event. Adults who feel they must have access to their cell phones or beepers are asked to keep the instruments on silent and only check messages during designated free time.
- Physical discipline is never an option. No one is to strike or hit anyone at any time. Verbal harassment or threats are also not to be tolerated.

Transportation*

- Only drivers aged 21 or over are permitted to transport youth during any synodical youth event.
- All drivers for synodical events should have and provide a photocopy of a valid driver's license and qualify for the vehicle being operated.
- They must provide proof of vehicle insurance for the vehicle being driven.
- Seat belts must be worn by all passengers in vehicles which are equipped with seat belts.

* These transportation policies are in affect for drivers from the time they arrive at the event to the time they leave the event.

Medical

- A first aid kit must be available and maintained at all functions. For more information about first aid kits, please contact the synod office.
- A medical release form must be provided and fully completed for each participant of a synodical youth event.
- Information on dietary concerns and allergies must be indicated on consent /medical forms.

Housing

- It is preferred that youth and adults are not housed together. If they must be, there must be at least two adults and at least two youth in each housing area.
- There will be no housing of mixed genders, excluding married couples. In large room accommodations, male and female sleeping areas are to be clearly defined.

Registration

- The event name, location and dates will be listed on registration material.
- Completed event registration forms must designate the contact person and adult leaders for the congregation.
- Special individual concerns should be communicated to the event planner and be included on the medical release form.
- All youth, adults and event staff are required to agree and sign the Covenant for any synodical youth event.
- No image of any youth (video, photograph, digital photo) will be published without the consent of both youth and parent.
- No image of any youth will be identified by name, home congregation, or home community.

Privacy

- Participants in LYO events have a right to privacy. The Northeastern Iowa Synod LYO will not sell, share or purchase individual information acquired from registration forms, health care forms, or background checks.
- Photographs and electronic images of youth and accompanying descriptions will not reveal the youth's hometown, address, phone number, or email without express consent.