



## **Prohibition of One-to-One Contact Policy (1:1) of Boys and Girls Clubs of Puerto Rico**

Boys and Girls Clubs of Puerto Rico prohibits all individual interactions between Club Participants and staff or volunteers (including board members).

All staff and volunteers must comply with the following:

- Ensure that all meetings and communications between members and staff or volunteers are never private (see definition below).
- Ensure that in-person meetings are held in areas where other staff members and/or members are present.
- Communicate with another staff member whenever an emergency arises that requires an exception to this policy.
- Never initiate private or isolated one-to-one (1:1) contact with a Participant.
- Never have a private or isolated meeting or communication with a Participant in person, virtual communications such as text messages, video chat, or social media.
- Never transport a Club Participant alone at a time. This includes transportation in Club or rented vehicles.

Exceptions can only be made when medical or counseling services are provided by a trained and licensed therapist or similar professional. All exceptions must be documented and provided to the Club's management in advance.

If an emergency arises that requires an exception to this policy, the emergency exception will be communicated to Club management as soon as possible, and ideally prior to engaging in a one-on-one interaction.

## **1) Definition of One-to-One interaction (1:1)**

One-to-One interaction is defined as any private contact or communication (including electronic communication) between any Club Participant and an adult, including adult staff, minor staff, volunteers, board members, and others who may encounter Participants during regular programming and activities.

- Private places may include, but are not limited to, vehicles, lounges with no visibility to others, restrooms, private homes, hotel rooms.
- Prohibited private contact can also occur in public places such as buses, airports, shopping malls, restaurants or schools.

## **2) Impact on mentoring programs**

Mentorship is a key component of Boys & Girls Club programming and has a tremendous positive impact on our Participants. The prohibition of One-to-One interaction does not have to negatively affect mentoring programs and/or relationship building.

Mentors can adjust their practices to include:

- Conduct mentoring and coaching sessions in areas where other staff members are present or can see you, for example, in large rooms where meetings are visible but not heard.
- Copying parents, staff, or other members (when applicable) in written and/or electronic communications.
- Schedule meetings during Club hours and on the Club site.
- All local and external mentors must comply with Club policies, including background check requirements and a ban on One-to-One interaction.
- There must be a written agreement to determine how and when the outside organization assumes custody and responsibility for the Participant; These procedures must be clearly communicated to parents or guardians.
- Every interaction between the mentor and the youth will be documented and maintained

### **3) Impact on travel to off-site events and activities**

- When traveling to external events such as Keystone, Youth of the Year, or other off-site events, the one-on-one policy will continue to be adhered to.
- If the Club assumes responsibility for transporting members to and/or from an event, a member of staff must not transport a single child at any time in a vehicle. Accommodation shall be made so that at least three people (two staff members and one member; or one staff member and two members) are together when travelling. Alternatively, public transportation (e.g., taxi, Uber, public transportation) can be used.
- If this agreement presents staffing or budget challenges, consider the following:
  - Invite parents or guardians to attend and/or accompany their child.
  - Coordinate with other nearby Clubhouses to travel together.
  - Traveling with additional staff or members.
- When transporting Participants to or from a Club-sponsored event or activity, they must not be transported alone with a member of staff.
- Parents and guardians must also provide written consent in each instance where a member travels to any event outside the Club.

**NOTE: Parents or guardians can never consent to one-on-one interaction.**

### **4) Exceptions to the policy**

Exceptions to the One-to-One (1:1) policy may be made only in the following circumstances:

- When medical or counseling services are provided by a trained and licensed therapist or similar professional (e.g., counselors, social workers).
- When the emotional or physical safety of a member is at risk and the Club's management considers private and individual communication necessary.
- In emergency situations that could create a safety risk, exceptions may be made (e.g., if a member is not picked up by a parent and being left alone at the Club could be a safety risk).

If exceptions are necessary, the Club shall have policies in place to monitor interactions, including, but not limited to:

- Inform the Club Director of the meeting.
- Set time limits on conversations.
- Meetings in rooms with clear sightlines (e.g., rooms with windows or glass doors).
- Document the interaction.
- In case of emergency, notify another Leader of the situation before engaging in a personal interaction.