

## **Appendix XI Written Abuse and Prevention Policy**

### **Purpose:**

Montana HOSA is committed to providing safe and respectful environments that support the well-being of all members. Montana HOSA seeks to institute guidelines and resources for staff, volunteers, chaperones, and guests of chaperones in direct contact with Montana HOSA members and enforce a zero tolerance policy for abuse for our organization.

### **Definitions:**

- A. **Grooming Behaviors:** Grooming is the process used by an abuser to select a child, win the child's trust and the trust of their parent or guardian to manipulate the child into sexual activity and keep the child from disclosing the abuse. Because sexual abusers "groom" children for abuse, it is possible a staff member or volunteer may witness behavior intended to "groom" a child for sexual abuse.
- B. **Physical Abuse:** Conduct by the abuser that is intentional or reckless, causing physical injury or serious or protracted impairment of the physical, mental, or emotional condition of the vulnerable person or causing the likelihood of injury or impairment. Examples: hitting, kicking, biting, slapping, shoving, throwing, punching, dragging, shaking, choking, smothering, burning, cutting or the use of corporal punishment. Note/Exception: physical abuse shall not include emergency interventions necessary to protect the safety of any person.
- C. **Psychological Abuse:** Conduct (verbal or non-verbal) that is intentional or reckless that adversely affects and results in or is likely to cause a substantial diminution of the vulnerable person's emotional, social, or behavioral condition. Examples include, but are not limited to: taunts, derogatory comments or ridicule, intimidation, threats, the display of a weapon or other object that could reasonably be perceived by a HOSA member as a means for infliction of pain or injury, in a manner that constitutes a threat of physical pain or injury.
- D. **Sexual Abuse:** Conduct that constitutes certain crimes under Montana Penal Law. Examples include rape (forcible compulsion or physical helpless or incapable of consent); forcible, inappropriate touching; indecent exposure; sexual assault; prostitution offenses (such as promoting, compelling, or permitting prostitution); and "sexual performance" offenses (such as inducing a HOSA member to engage in sexual conduct in any play, motion picture, photography or any other visual representation before an audience).

### **Policy Guidelines:**

**Screening and Training:** All employees, volunteers, chaperones, and guests of chaperones in direct contact with Montana HOSA members must submit to a yearly written background check, Sexual Abuse Prevention Training, and adhere to the Written

Abuse and Prevention Policy. The HOSA District Volunteer Screening and Training Certification Form must be filled out and submitted by appropriate district personnel at the start of each school year before HOSA activities commence.

**Employment Process:** Screening and hiring procedures provide safeguards to strive to eliminate from consideration any candidate who demonstrates behavior that indicates a high risk for violating this policy. Background checks will be done before an offer of employment is made and routinely throughout tenure of employment. Personal interviews and verification of employment related references will be conducted prior to an offer of employment.

**Mandatory Reporting Laws and Requirements:** Regardless of the Montana State Law requirements, staff members/volunteers/advisors of Montana HOSA are asked to report “grooming” behavior, abuse, any policy violations, or any suspicious behaviors to an executive board member who shall report to the appropriate agencies.

**Structural Guidelines:**

- All members, board members, employees, volunteers, chaperones, and guests of chaperones in direct contact with Montana HOSA members are expected to follow the HOSA Code of Conduct, HOSA Policies and Procedures, school district policies, as well as, all federal, state and local laws/regulations.
- Montana HOSA encourages the prompt reporting of complaints and concerns so that rapid and constructive action can be taken. While early reporting and intervention have proven to be the most effective method of resolving actual or perceived incidents of harassment, no fixed reporting period has been established.
- Any allegations will be investigated promptly and shall include the notification of appropriate authorities and providing appropriate services to those who have been impacted.
- Incidents requiring discipline will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Responsive action may include, for example, training, referral to counseling or disciplinary action such as warning, reprimand, withholding promotion or pay increase, reassignment as Montana HOSA believes appropriate under the circumstances.

**Statement of Acknowledgement and Agreement:**

I have read and understood Montana HOSA’s Written Abuse Prevention Policy and agree to abide by its terms and conditions of the policy requirements.

Signature:

Date: