



# McCurdy Ministries

## VIM Team Leader Handbook

Revised March 2025

We are excited you are praying about and exploring bringing a Volunteer in Mission Team (VIM) or Emergency Response Team to **McCurdy Ministries!** We believe you will be inspired to be a part of our ministry and enjoy our climate, our mountains, and our culture.

### History

United Brethren Deaconess Mellie Perkins founded McCurdy School in 1912 with four Hispanic students in Velarde, just north of Española. Over the next century, McCurdy educated thousands of outstanding students, including many who became doctors, nurses, teachers, social workers, scientists, counselors, and engineers. McCurdy has been at its current location in Santa Cruz since 1915. Through the years, additional properties and buildings were added to the campus. Maintaining our buildings and our ministries provides opportunities for Work Teams to make significant contributions to our mission and to the community. The help of our volunteers lifts our hearts, helps carry our load, and makes a difference for our children, youth, adults, and families as well as saves us thousands of dollars in maintenance and program costs each year.

In August of 2012, we launched the McCurdy Charter School (MCS), a public school which currently has 560+ students and is directly responsible to the New Mexico Public Education Department. Then in 2017, McCurdy Ministries helped the charter school build their own campus on our western boundary and at the same time we became **McCurdy Ministries Community Center (now McCurdy Ministries).**

The programs and ministries we provide include:

- Pre-K (free program)
- After School Care (low-cost program)
- Project Cariño (mental health counseling)
- Camp Stars (6-week VBS/STEM summer camp)
- Family Resource Center
- LEER Children’s Literacy Initiative
- The Light House (clothing bank)
- Volunteer programs

We changed our name to **McCurdy Ministries** because we are expanding our ministries and programs to help children, youth, adults, and families in the Española Valley and opened the McCurdy Family Resource Center in the fall of 2024. We also have expanded our Volunteers in Mission Program to include mission trips, long term volunteers, and retreat ministries all year long.

Our ministry is rapidly changing and expanding so it is an exciting time for our volunteers to plan a VIM experience at McCurdy! Our programs are based on our Christian faith and our desire to be the hands of Christ to the students and their families in the Española Valley. McCurdy Ministries’ mission is to “create hope and empower the lives of children, youth, adults, and families through education, life skills, and faith-based programs.”

### Volunteering at McCurdy

There are three main areas our volunteers make a difference for our ministry while on campus:

- Maintenance and grounds work
- Administrative tasks
- Assisting with McCurdy Ministries’ programs

Included in this packet are all the instructions and resources that you need to plan your VIM experience at McCurdy. In addition, there is a McCurdy VIM Team Member Handbook for all participants which can be downloaded by going to the **VOLUNTEER** tab at the top of the page on our website at [www.mccurdy.org](http://www.mccurdy.org). On the next page is a **CHECK LIST** of all the items you must complete and return to our **Volunteer Registrar Eufemia Romero** via email at [eromero@mccurdy.org](mailto:eromero@mccurdy.org) or mail to her attention at 362A S. McCurdy Road, Española, NM 87532 **BEFORE** your trip to McCurdy. If you have questions, you also can call Eufemia at 505-753-7221, ext. 210.

## VIM Team Leader Packet

The following forms can be completed and/or downloaded online at [www.mccurdy.org](http://www.mccurdy.org) under the VOLUNTEER tab:

- Team Application
- Team Member Contacts
- Driving Instructions
- Team Member Application
- Medical & Liability Release
- VIM Skills Survey

The following handbooks and materials also are available under the VOLUNTEER tab:

- Team Leader Handbook
- Team Member Handbook
- Safe Gatherings Instructions
- Safe Gatherings Training Standards

Please review the content of this packet carefully before sending in your team application as it contains:

- VIM Checklist
- Fee Schedule
- Safe Gatherings Training Standards
- Steps to Organize a VIM Team
- Proof of Insurance/Certificate of Liability

## McCurdy Ministries' VIM Checklist

**Initial Reservation and dates** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date submitted** \_\_\_\_\_

To make your initial reservation for a VIM week at McCurdy please call Eufemia Romero at 505-753-7221, ext. 210, or email her at [eromero@mccurdy.org](mailto:eromero@mccurdy.org). Please note we host many VIM teams each year. Making your reservation early will help ensure you can come to McCurdy on your preferred date.

**VIM Team Application, deposit and date submitted** \_\_\_\_\_

Due one month after initial reservation for a VIM trip to McCurdy is made. Please note if we do not receive your deposit and application within one month, we cannot continue to reserve your VIM week. If you have not submitted your application and deposit to hold your date and another team requests your date, we will give you a courtesy call alerting you to the potential loss of your reserved date.

**VIM Skills Survey and date submitted** \_\_\_\_\_

Due TWO WEEKS before arriving on campus. If we do not receive the VIM Skills Surveys two weeks before your trip, we cannot prepare ahead of time for your arrival. If your VIM Skills Surveys are not submitted in a timely manner, the start of your team's work may be delayed while our staff makes the necessary preparation for your projects.

**VIM Team Member Contact Information** \_\_\_\_\_

Due one week before arriving on campus.

**Certificate of Liability and Trip Insurance for your VIM Team provided to McCurdy** \_\_\_\_\_

As of January 1, 2014, McCurdy Ministries is requiring all VIM Teams to provide a Proof of Liability Certificate from the company insuring your local church which lists McCurdy Ministries as an additional insured. If your local church does not provide trip insurance, then each group must purchase accident and health insurance coverage for your trip. We recommend that you purchase your insurance through your local church's insurance agency or through your Annual Conference VIM office.

If your church insurance or your annual conference do not provide Health and Accident Insurance for mission trips, then any United Methodist group can purchase lowcost insurance through:

- the North Central Jurisdiction VIM Office at <http://umvimncj.org/insurance/>,
- the Southeastern Jurisdiction VIM office at [http://umvim.org/send\\_a\\_team/insurance\\_faq.html](http://umvim.org/send_a_team/insurance_faq.html), or

- the Northeastern Jurisdiction VIM office at <http://umvimnej.org/mission-insurance/insurance-faqs.html>.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Parental Consent Forms** for all team participants under age 18. The form is in the VIM Team Member Packet.

***Please note: keep your own copy of each of these documents for your records!***

## **McCurdy Fee Schedule**

***Please note that all fees and meal information are subject to change due to economic circumstances.***

### **Meals**

VIM teams cook their own meals and are welcome to use the Retreat Center kitchen or the Hovermale kitchen (larger teams) for cooking for their group. The group leader is asked to ensure that the kitchen you use is thoroughly cleaned at the end of your stay. Please reserve the Retreat Center or the Hovermale kitchen ahead of time with **Eufemia Romero** at [eromero@mccurdy.org](mailto:eromero@mccurdy.org).

### **Housing**

Volunteers are housed in Pilling-Robinson Retreat Center which can house up to 30 volunteers. The Retreat Center has a small kitchen, a movie room, and several living areas, including a game room with a pool table. Our retreat center is affectionately referred to as the “McCurdy Hilton”. Most of the rooms feature two twin beds per room in a suite arrangement with two rooms sharing one bath. The cost for housing is \$35\* per person per night.

Please note our Safe Gatherings standards demonstrate that we value our children and youth and want to do everything possible to ensure their safety. Youth must be housed in rooms with other youth of the same sex. Adults can only share a room with a youth to whom they are related. Therefore, the configuration of your group may affect the number of persons that can be housed in our retreat center.

***\*Note: Fees are subject to change. Any increase will not affect groups that have paid the registration fee in advance. Teams who have rolled over their deposit to the next year are subject to fee increases.***

### **Drinking Water Concerns**

The water on the McCurdy Ministries campus has uranium content higher than normal. It is safe to use, **but not safe to drink** and should not be used for cooking or making coffee. We recommend purchasing bottled water for your VIM team to drink while living and working on the campus. A 5-gallon bottled water dispenser is available in the Pilling-Robinson Retreat Center near the small kitchen. We ask that VIM teams refill these water containers, if used, prior to departing at the end of their mission week for the next mission team.

Teams may want to purchase 5-gallon bottled water for use with the dispenser at Walmart when purchasing groceries for the week. Walmart is located at 1610 N Riverside Drive in Española. Please note that the empty bottles can be refilled at the pump in front of the store for a minimal cost.

Food King also has an automated water dispenser in their parking lot that is open 24 hours per day. The current cost to refill a 5-gallon water bottle is \$1.75 (cash only). Food King is located at 930 Riverside Drive.

## Steps to Organize Your VIM Trip to McCurdy

1. **Contact Eufemia Romero** at 505-753-7221, ext. 210, [eromero@mccurdy.org](mailto:eromero@mccurdy.org), 362A S. McCurdy Road, Española, NM 87532 to reserve your desired week at McCurdy. Please note your reservation is not firm until you return the VIM application and deposit.
2. **Download the McCurdy VIM Leader and Team Member Handbooks** from the McCurdy website at [www.mccurdy.org](http://www.mccurdy.org) under the **VOLUNTEER** tab at the top of the page.
3. Complete the VIM Team Application online at the McCurdy website at [www.mccurdy.org](http://www.mccurdy.org) under the **VOLUNTEER** tab at the top of the page.
4. Please send the \$250 deposit for every 15 volunteers by mail. Send the deposit to Eufemia Romero at McCurdy Ministries, 362A S. McCurdy Road, Española, NM 87532. This deposit reserves your place on our VIM schedule and assures us workers for our projects. **Please note if you cancel your trip within 30 days of your arrival, you will forfeit your deposit.**
5. **As soon as possible begin promoting your McCurdy Ministries VIM Team** with your local church, district, and conference by sharing the McCurdy Ministries story and the difference we make in the name of Jesus. For information to use in promoting your McCurdy mission, go to the McCurdy website at [www.mccurdy.org](http://www.mccurdy.org) on the top of the page you will see a **NEWS** tab. There you will find the latest newsletters, weekly devotionals, McCurdy blog, and other information to share with your congregation and recruitment meetings for your team. We have volunteers and board members from across the country that may be able to travel to your church to promote McCurdy Ministries and your McCurdy VIM Team. To explore this possibility, please contact **Eufemia Romero** at 505-753-7221, ext. 210, or email her at [eromero@mccurdy.org](mailto:eromero@mccurdy.org).
6. **Begin recruiting team members** as soon as you have confirmed your VIM date with McCurdy.
7. Create a VIM Trip Budget, make a fundraising plan, and set goals for the amount to be raised by group fundraisers and the amount each volunteer will need to contribute to the mission. We hope you will include a donation to McCurdy to defray the cost of purchasing materials and supplies for your work projects over and above trip costs.
8. McCurdy Ministries requires all VIM Teams to provide a **Proof of Liability Certificate** from the company that provides your local church insurance which lists **McCurdy Ministries** as an additional insured. In addition, each group should determine whether the church's insurance covers accident and health insurance for your VIM trip. If not, then we recommend you purchase trip insurance through your local church's insurance agency or through your Annual Conference VIM office. If they do not provide Health and Accident Insurance for mission trips, then any United Methodist group can purchase insurance through the North Central Jurisdiction VIM Office <http://umvimncj.org/insurance/>, through the Southeastern Jurisdiction VIM office at [http://umvim.org/send\\_a\\_team/insurance\\_faq.html](http://umvim.org/send_a_team/insurance_faq.html), or through the Northeastern Jurisdiction VIM office at <http://umvimnej.org/mission-insurance/insurance-faqs.html>. Each of these jurisdictions uses the Seven Corners Insurance Company for these policies and all three will insure any United Methodist mission team. The South Central and Western Jurisdiction do not provide this coverage. **Please note it is critical that your Proof of Liability Certificate and your proof of Accident and Health Insurance Certificate be forwarded to Eufemia Romero no later than two weeks before your arrival.**
9. **Have each team member complete the VIM Skills Survey** online and submit to McCurdy at least two weeks prior to your team's arrival.

10. **Make sure every adult leader/volunteer age 19 and over and every youth age 15-18** has completed their **Safe Gatherings Training** and you have sent your McCurdy Ministries (or equivalent such as a background from Ministry Safe or Safe Gatherings) Verification of Safe Gatherings Training form to **Eufemia Romero at least two weeks before your arrival on campus**. The link for this training can be found at [www.mccurdy.org](http://www.mccurdy.org) on the **VOLUNTEER** tab. Please note youth ages 15-18 are required to complete the Safe Gatherings Training but are not required to complete the criminal check. Adults 19 and over are required to complete the training and criminal checks for Safe Gatherings Certification lasts for two years.
11. **Arrange your transportation and travel schedule**. If possible, please plan to arrive at McCurdy between 4:00 PM and 6:00 PM on Sunday unless other specific arrangements have been made with our volunteer registrar **Eufemia Romero or Tiffany Hollums..**
12. **For youth teams, McCurdy Ministries' Safe Gatherings Policy** requires there be one adult for every four youth; and if there are boys and girls, there must be both a male and female adult. As of September 1, 2013, only youth who are 12 years or older and have completed sixth grade are allowed on a McCurdy VIM Team, unless other arrangements are made and approved by the McCurdy Executive Director.
  - **When leading a Youth VIM Team, the leaders should be experienced in dealing with youth**. The **McCurdy Ministries** staff is small, so it is critical for adults on every youth VIM Team to supervise the youth in their group. Our goal is for the youth to be the hands of Christ to make a difference, work hard, have fun, and learn about our area. Adults are expected to supervise youth and stop inappropriate behavior if necessary.
  - **McCurdy Ministries has reviewed, approved, and will accept MinistrySafe and Safe Ministries certifications** from the following Annual Conferences in lieu of our Safe Gatherings training:

*The Missouri, Oklahoma, Great Plains Annual Conferences, and the General Board of Global Ministries Individual Volunteer Program of the United Methodist Church have Safe Sanctuary (or similar) certification processes that are approved by McCurdy Ministries because their training meets all McCurdy's standards.*

**The Central Texas Annual Conference MinistrySafe Certification has been approved with the following requirements:** All McCurdy Ministries' volunteers over 18 must complete at least a level 3 MinistrySafe Background Check for their MinistrySafe Certification to be recognized by McCurdy. In addition, the church MinistrySafe Administrator and the Senior or Associate Pastor must sign the Central Texas Conference Ministry Safe Compliance for Conference Sponsored Events Form. On that form, the two persons signing the form must indicate that all persons listed have completed a Level 3 MinistrySafe Background Check. In addition, any team members from the Central Texas Conference who are 15 to 18 years of age must complete the MinistrySafe Training EXCEPT for the background check. And the local church MinistrySafe Administrator and the Senior or Associate Pastor must sign the Central Texas Conference Ministry Safe Compliance for Conference Sponsored Events Form for these youth. The Central Texas Conference Ministry Safe Compliance for Conference Sponsored Events Form must be provided to the McCurdy Ministries VIM Registrar, **Eufemia Romero**, no later than two weeks before the team's arrival on campus.

**The Susquehanna Conference Safe Sanctuary Training has been approved.** However, the McCurdy Ministries Safe Sanctuary Policy calls for a nationwide background check that covers felonies as well as misdemeanors. Therefore, volunteers from the Susquehanna Conference who are 19 or over will have to complete a background check through the McCurdy Safe Gatherings Training Module on our website at a cost of \$15. Please contact Eufemia Romero, volunteer registrar, for instructions on how to complete the background check.

*Also, certification through Global Ministries' Individual Volunteer Program is accepted. All certifications must show an expiration date.*

## Other Responsibilities as a VIM Team Leader

1. **VIM Required Forms:** There are a number of forms that the VIM Team Leader needs to keep with them at all times throughout the mission trip. They include:

- VIM Team Member Application
- Medical and Liability Release Form (notarized) for each team member
- Parental Release of Liability and Consent Form (notarized) for each youth team member

Other forms and information to keep with you include:

- VIM team member contact information
- Any Conference VIM medical and liability release forms
- A copy of the Certificate of Liability Insurance
- Additional emergency contacts (i.e., your VIM Conference contacts, your local church contacts, Española emergency numbers)

2. **Health Issues:** The Team Leader is asked to familiarize himself or herself with team members' allergies, medicines, and medical conditions and to make sure each Team Member brings the medicines needed for the trip. **The Team Leader should keep a file of each Team Member's forms readily available throughout the trip.**

3. **McCurdy Check Out:** At check-out time, all used linens are to be placed in the containers in the hallway at the head of the north and east wings. Team members are to set clean linens at the foot of the bed per the cleaning instructions posted in the room. (Clean linens can be found in the bottom drawer of the dresser of each room.) This will allow the retreat center to be ready for the next team. **The Team Leader also is responsible to see that all common areas in the occupied wing (including rooms, hallways, kitchens, and bathrooms) are clean and all trash is taken to the dumpster.** Each room must be swept and mopped, and the bathrooms cleaned before leaving. The keys to each room are to be left on the counter between the closet doors in the bedroom. **The Team Leader is asked to personally check each room for cleanliness and to ensure the room keys have been left in the room.**

# McCurdy Ministries' Safe Gatherings Training Standards

(Revised March 2025)

*McCurdy Ministries, along with the United Methodist Church, affirms that all children, youth, and vulnerable adults have the right to safe sanctuary. McCurdy Ministries is committed to providing an environment on our grounds and in our ministries, in which children, youth, and vulnerable adults are safe from neglect or abuse. The scope of the McCurdy's Safe Gatherings policy and its provisions shall apply to all staff, parents and volunteers, clergy or lay, who have direct or indirect contact with children, youth, or vulnerable adults in the context of our ministries. Most United Methodist annual conferences have instituted Safe Gatherings certification or similar programs. McCurdy Ministries will recognize certification from these annual conference programs provided they meet the standards we have set.*

These standards include:

1. Application
2. Training either through an online program or by an individual trainer certified by the annual conference.
3. Criminal Check including
  - SSN Verification & Address History Trace
  - National Criminal Database Search (with Re-Verification of positive records)
  - National Sex Offender Registry Search
  - County or Statewide Court Search for the state and county in which the individual resides
4. Pastoral/Professional Reference
5. Personal Reference

*How do I determine whether my annual conference Safe Gatherings (or similar) certification meets the standards stated above?* In order to have your annual conference Safe Gatherings certification recognized by McCurdy, you must request a description of your annual conference's certification process be mailed or emailed to **Eufemia Romero** at [eromero@mccurdy.org](mailto:eromero@mccurdy.org) from the annual conference staff member who administers your conference Safe Gatherings certification. Please note if your annual conference certification process is not approved, you must complete the McCurdy online Safe Gatherings training and be certified **before your arrival on campus**. (**Note:** The list of approved conferences are on page 5 of this document.)

*Once my annual conference Safe Gatherings (or similar) certification process is accepted what is next?* Each volunteer or team leader must provide a copy of their certification letter from their annual conference directly to **Eufemia Romero** at [eromero@mccurdy.org](mailto:eromero@mccurdy.org). If you complete the McCurdy Safe Gatherings certification this step is not necessary because your certification is on file until it expires.

**Please note:** It is the policy of the McCurdy Ministries Board of Directors that as of February 1, 2013, all volunteers and staff must be Safe Gatherings certified by McCurdy Ministries or the United Methodist Annual Conference in which they reside. McCurdy Safe Gatherings training can be found at [www.mccurdy.org](http://www.mccurdy.org), costs \$30 for individuals 19 and older and \$15 for 15- to 18-year-old youth and can be completed in an hour and a half.

*If you have questions about our Safe Gatherings training, please contact Eufemia Romero at [eromero@mccurdy.org](mailto:eromero@mccurdy.org) or at 505-753- 7221, ext. 210. You may write to Ms. Romero at McCurdy Ministries, 362A S. McCurdy Road, Española, NM 87532.*