



# PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH LOUISIANA

## SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY

Approved at the 155<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting,  
November 4, 2023

**PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH LOUISIANA  
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

	<u>PAGE NO.</u>
I. POLICY STATEMENT	3
II. DEFINITIONS	3
III. STANDARDS OF CONDUCT	5
IV. CHURCH RESPONSE TO ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT	5
V. PREVENTION AND RISK MANAGEMENT	10
VI. EDUCATING AND TRAINING-AWARENESS	12
APPENDIX A – Overview for Reporting and Investigating Sexual Misconduct	13
APPENDIX B – Terms and Definitions	15
APPENDIX C – Employment Procedures	18
Sample Form 1: Reporting of Suspected Sexual Misconduct	20
Sample Form 2: Potential Employee Questionnaire	22
Sample Form 3: Employment Reference	25
Sample Form 4: Acknowledgement of Receipt of Sexual Misconduct Policy and Guidelines For Use of Social Media and Electronic Communications	26
Sample Form 5: Potential Employer Questionnaire	27
APPENDIX D – Guidelines for Use of Social Media and Electronic Communications	28
APPENDIX E – Compliance and Expectations	30

**PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH LOUISIANA  
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

**INTRODUCTION**

**Sexual misconduct between someone in ministry, employed by the church, or representing the church and church members or others will cause harm. This harm arises from the exploitation of someone else in an attempt to fulfill one’s own needs or desires, resulting in an abuse of power. This type of behavior is at worst illegal, at best unethical.**

**Ministers, church staff, and church volunteers are often trusted because they represent the church. Because of their positions, it is not uncommon for others to feel attracted to them. The expression of these feelings through sexual behavior violates the ministerial relationship. This kind of behavior is abusive and causes harmful, long-lasting, emotional, psychological, and spiritual wounds.**

**I. POLICY STATEMENT**

It is the policy of the Presbytery of South Louisiana that all church members, church officers, non-member employees, and volunteers of congregations, councils, and entities of the church are to maintain the integrity of the ministerial, employment, and/or professional relationship at all times, including online. Persons who engage in sexual misconduct are in violation of the principles set forth in Scripture as well as the ministerial, pastoral, employment, and/or professional relationship. It is never permissible or acceptable for a church member, officer, employee, or volunteer to engage in sexual misconduct.

This is a policy of the Presbytery of South Louisiana which governs and protects members of the Presbytery and its member congregations, unless the member congregation has opted of its coverage and specifically adopted their own Sexual Misconduct policy. This policy is meant to implement the provisions in the Book of Church Discipline, a part of the PC(USA) Book of Order. If any conflict arises between this policy and the Book of Church Discipline, the Book of Church Discipline shall prevail.

Copies of this policy and its procedures shall be made available to all council and entity offices. It is intended as guidance for churches and related entities and, if properly implemented by them, can be used by church members, church officers, employees, and volunteers. This policy and its procedures should be made available to persons who accuse others of misconduct, including those who are or claim to be victims of sexual misconduct and their families.

**II. DEFINITIONS**

**A. Sexual Misconduct**

Sexual misconduct is the comprehensive term used in this policy to cover the following:

- 1. Child sexual abuse** is any contact or interaction between a child or youth under the age of 18 or someone who does not have the capacity to consent (vulnerable adult) when that person is being used for sexual stimulation of adults. The behavior may or may not involve touching. Sexual behavior between an adult and a child is always considered coerced whether or not consensual. Please refer to the Presbytery of South Louisiana’s “Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy” approved at the 153<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Presbytery of South Louisiana on February 14, 2023.

**PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH LOUISIANA  
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

2. **Inappropriate sexual conduct** is inappropriate contact or communication of a sexual nature. **Inappropriate sexual conduct** is also language, visual contact, touching, or other behavior judged by the person to be injurious to his or her physical or emotional health. It involves crossing a boundary the person was attempting to set. This includes the touching of an intimate body part of another person, including sexual intercourse. “Touching” is defined as physical contact with another person either through the person’s clothes or directly with the skin.
3. **Rape** is sexual contact by force, threat, intimidation, or coercion. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, the definition is, “The penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim.”
4. **Sexual malfeasance** is sexual conduct within a ministerial or professional relationship (e.g., minister with a parishioner, counselor with a client, church employee with a church member, Presbytery staff person with a volunteer or employee). It includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or conduct of a sexual nature, as well as consensual romantic relationships (see Section II.B, below). Note that this policy will not apply retroactively to persons who may have met through church and who have married prior to this policy being enacted.
5. **Sexual harassment** is an unwelcome sexual advance, verbal or physical contact, or display of sexually related material when:
  - a. the affected party has previously rejected those advances;
  - b. submission is explicitly or implicitly made a condition of future employment, service, or care;
  - c. such conduct affects morale or performance of the individual or others involved in the situation; or
  - d. persons in the work setting claim to find the material sexually offensive.
6. **Single party conduct** is that where no other party is involved, such as use of computers, reproduction machinery, or other office equipment belonging to a governing body.
7. **Inappropriate use of the Internet** to communicate with another to commit sexually abusive activity, including but not limited to the activities listed above.
8. **Warning signs.** Sexual misconduct is usually preceded by inappropriate behavior which is a warning sign. Inappropriate behaviors include telling sexual jokes or stories; sending inappropriate images via social media; unwanted physical contact; confiding about personal problems; giving extravagant gifts; providing drugs or alcohol; among other things.

Further terms and definitions related to this subject can be found in Appendix B.

**B. Presumed Consent**

Presumed consent is the assertion that a particular act was between consenting adults. It may apply to relationships where there is no disparity of power, such as spouses or single adults functioning as peers or colleagues. Within this policy presumed consent does not apply between ministers and parishioners, supervisors and supervised, or with anyone involved with performance review, compensation, promotion, or continued employment, even though the parties claim that a consensual agreement exists. The inherent imbalance of power between the

**PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH LOUISIANA  
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

minister and the person undermines the validity of such consent. If a minister and person or supervised person wish to pursue a consensual romantic relationship, one or the other must change churches/jobs so that the professional relationship is no longer in place.

**III. STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

**As [God] who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct;  
Tend the flock of God that is in your charge, not under compulsion but willingly,  
not for sordid gain but eagerly.**

**Do not lord it over those in your charge but be examples to the flock.**

**You know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.**

**1 Pet. 1:15; 5:2–3; Jas. 3:1, NRSV**

The ethical conduct of all who minister in the name of Jesus Christ is of vital importance to the church because it is through these representatives that an understanding of God and the gospel's good news is conveyed. "Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world" (*Book of Order*, G-2.0104a). The basic principles of conduct guiding this policy are as follows:

1. Sexual misconduct is a violation of the role of pastors, employees, volunteers, counselors, supervisors, teachers, and advisors of any kind who are called upon to exercise integrity, sensitivity, and caring in a relationship of trust. Sexual misconduct breaks our covenant to act in the best interests of parishioners, clients, co-workers, and students.
2. Sexual misconduct is a misuse of authority and power that breaches Christian ethical principles by misusing a relationship of trust to gain advantage over another for personal pleasure in an abusive, exploitative, and unjust manner. If the parishioner, student, client, or employee initiates or invites sexual content in the relationship, it is the pastor's, counselor's, officer's, or supervisor's responsibility to maintain the appropriate role and prohibit a sexual relationship.
3. Sexual misconduct takes advantage of the vulnerability of persons who are less powerful to act for their own welfare, including children and vulnerable adults. It is antithetical to the gospel call to work as God's servant in the struggle to bring wholeness to a broken world. It violates the mandate to protect the vulnerable from harm.

**IV. CHURCH RESPONSE TO ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT (BO D-7.09)**

**A. Principles**

Church discipline is the church's exercise of authority given by Christ, both to guide, control, and nurture its members, and for the constructive criticism of offenders. The church's judicial process does not exist as a substitute for the secular judicial system, but to do what the secular judicial system cannot do. The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is infused with principles and standards to which all active members of congregations and ministers of the Word and Sacrament voluntarily submit. D-1.02

Church discipline in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is accomplished through judicial processes of accountability. Accountability of councils is accomplished through remedial process. Accountability of individuals is accomplished through disciplinary process. D-2.0101

Disciplinary process is the process by which active members of congregations and ministers of the Word and Sacrament are held accountable to the church and to each other, and may be

**PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH LOUISIANA  
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

censured for an offense for the purpose of restoring the wholeness of the body of Christ. D-2.0301

In responding to allegations of sexual misconduct, members, officers, and employees of the church should seek healing and justice, and assure the protection of all persons. While this process will require openness and honesty, the privacy of persons should be respected, and confidentiality of communications should be maintained.

In responding to allegations of sexual misconduct, members, officers, and employees of the church should seek to uphold the dignity of all persons involved, including persons who are alleging harm, persons who are accused of sexual misconduct, and the families and communities of each.

The PC(USA) has jurisdiction over its members, officers, and employees such that if a member, officer, or employee is alleged to have committed sexual misconduct, the church has the duty to inquire into the allegations and, if the allegations are proven, to correct the behavior of the member, officer, or employee and ensure the safety of others in the community. Allegations of sexual misconduct trigger the disciplinary processes of the PC(USA) set forth in the *Book of Order*. In the case of an active non-member who is employed or volunteers with the church, the individual will be covered by the procedures of the written personnel policies of the council or entity.

Jurisdiction in a disciplinary process ends when a church member or a minister of the Word and Sacrament against whom an allegation has been filed renounces the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in accordance with G-2.0407 or G-2.0509. In this case, the clerk of session or stated clerk of the presbytery shall report to the council both the renunciation and the status of the matter at that time, including the name of the accused, the date and fact of renunciation during an investigation or trial, and the charges, if filed. If no charges have been filed, the report shall include the nature of the alleged offense.

- (1) A person alleged to have been harmed may make the request for a pastoral inquiry in accordance with G-3.0109 b (6) at any time to the clerk of session or stated clerk, and it shall be brought to the council for consideration. In the interest of continuity, the council, by its rules may appoint members of a former investigating committee to the membership of any subsequent committee or commission appointed to make inquiry into the matter.
- (2) For instances of alleged sexual abuse of another person, if an accused has died or is no longer under the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the investigating or prosecuting committee shall ask the accuser, and if reasonably possible, those alleged to have been harmed, if they request the council to continue a pastoral inquiry under the provision in G 3.0109 b (6). If they choose to make that request, the investigating or prosecuting committee shall communicate it to the clerk of session or stated clerk, who shall bring the matter before the council for consideration. D-7.0302e

**B. Reporting Requirements**

**1. Reporting Sexual Misconduct**

The disciplinary process begins when a *written statement* alleging that a member of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has committed an offense is submitted to the clerk of session or stated clerk of the presbytery having jurisdiction over the member. If, after investigation by an investigating committee and trial by a session or permanent judicial commission, the

## PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH LOUISIANA SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

offense is proved true, the person found guilty is subject to censure by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The written statement may be submitted by:

- a. the person under the jurisdiction of a council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) who is making an accusation against another;
- b. a member of council receiving information from any source that an offense may have occurred which should be investigated for the purpose of discipline; or
- c. a person under jurisdiction of a council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) coming forward in self-accusation.

After a written complaint has been received, the following bodies will begin the investigation process:

**Congregation:** The report of allegations should be made to the clerk of session. If the person who is accused of committing sexual misconduct is a volunteer or nonmember employee of the church or presbytery, the church will respond by using procedures set forth by the session of the congregation.

**Presbytery:** The report of allegations should be made to the stated clerk of the presbytery. If the person who is accused of committing sexual misconduct is a volunteer or nonmember employee of the presbytery, the presbytery will respond by using procedures set forth by policy or bylaws of the presbytery.

**Higher Council or Entity of the General Assembly:** If the person who is accused of committing sexual misconduct is an employee or volunteer of the higher council or entity, contact the stated clerk or entity directly for the appropriate person to receive the report of allegations. The report of allegations may be made to any person with supervising capacity. The entity will respond by using procedures set forth by policy or bylaws of the entity.

**All:** Once the report of allegations is placed in writing, the presbytery will respond by using the procedures set forth in the Rules of Church Discipline of the *Book of Order*.

### 2. **Receiving Reports of Sexual Misconduct**

Upon receipt of a **written statement** of an alleged offense, the clerk of session or the stated clerk of presbytery, without undertaking further inquiry, shall then report to the council only that an offense has been alleged without naming the accused or the nature of the alleged offense, and refer the statement immediately to an investigating committee.

In the event that a report of allegation of sexual misconduct is received by any person other than the clerk of session or the stated clerk of the presbytery, the report should immediately be referred to the appropriate clerk of session or stated clerk having jurisdiction over the member making the allegation. It is the duty of these officers to see that any allegation of sexual misconduct is reported appropriately keeping in mind the *mandatory reporting requirements* for allegations of child abuse or the abuse of vulnerable adults. (See PSL Child, Youth, and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy)

Reports of allegations of sexual misconduct should never be taken lightly or disregarded and allowed to circulate without concern for the integrity and reputation of the alleged victim, the accused, and the church. Reports of allegations should be dealt with as matters of

## PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH LOUISIANA SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

highest confidentiality, both before and after they have been submitted to appropriate authorities as outlined below.

- a. The first person to learn of a sexual misconduct incident in the Presbytery should not undertake an inquiry alone or question either the accuser or the accused. Special attention should be given to inform the accuser of the process of reporting and to make available the sexual misconduct policy of the Presbytery, while respecting the needs of the victim (See Appendix D).
- b. The clerk receiving the initial report of allegations of sexual misconduct shall determine the relationship of the person accused of sexual misconduct with the Presbytery and shall make sure that the allegations of offense are filed with the council with jurisdiction over the person accused.
- c. If the report is made orally, the person receiving the report of allegations should request that the person making the report of allegations place it in writing and submit it to the appropriate clerk. A report of allegations of sexual misconduct in writing from a member of the PC(USA) alleging another member or officer of the PC(USA) committed an offense must be acted on according to the Rules of Church Discipline of the *Book of Order*. If the person who makes the report is unwilling or unable to place it in writing, any member of the PC(USA) may make the written statement that will automatically trigger the Rules of Church Discipline of the *Book of Order*. When possible, such a statement should be attested to by the accuser for accuracy.

### **3. Mandatory Reporting of Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Abuse**

Please refer to the Presbytery of South Louisiana’s “Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy” approved at the 153<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Presbytery of South Louisiana on February 14, 2023.

In Louisiana, anyone who suspects that a child (who is unmarried and under 18 years of age) has been or is in danger of being abused or neglected must report that not only to the Presbytery or governing council, but also to the **Louisiana DCFS Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline @ 855-4LA-KIDS (855-452-5437)** and/or call 911 if a person is in immediate danger. “Any person 18 or older who witnesses the sexual abuse of a child and knowingly and willfully fails to report to law enforcement or DCFS, as required by Children’s Code Article 610, shall be fined not more than \$10,000, imprisoned, with or without hard labor, for not more than five years or both.

<sup>1</sup> Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services. (2019, June) *Mandated Reporter Brochure*.

[https://dcfs.la.gov/assets/docs/searchable/Child%20Welfare/DCFS\\_June2019\\_MandatedReporterBrochure.pdf](https://dcfs.la.gov/assets/docs/searchable/Child%20Welfare/DCFS_June2019_MandatedReporterBrochure.pdf)

Adult Protective Services (APS) is responsible for investigating reports and arranging for services to protect vulnerable adults ages 18-59 and emancipated minors who are at risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation, or extortion. Reports of adult abuse may be made 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to **1.800.898.4910** (toll-free). If you witness a life-threatening situation involving an adult with disabilities, immediately call 911. Report incidents of abuse, neglect, and exploitation involving adults **60 and older to Elderly Protective Services at 1-833-577-6532 or 225-342-0144.** <https://ldh.la.gov/page/120>



## **PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH LOUISIANA SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

State law protects the identity of all mandated reporters, and you are given immunity from legal liability as a result of reports you make in good faith.”<sup>1</sup>

The provisions of the *Book of Order (Published July 9, 2023)* attempts to balance conflicting moral duties for officers of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

### **C. Responding**

The appropriate council or entity response will vary according to the relationship of the Presbytery with the person who is accused of sexual misconduct. Church members and officers are subject to inquiry and discipline (censure and correction) under the *Book of Order*.

#### **1. Accused Covered by Book of Order**

When an allegation of offense of sexual misconduct has been received by the Clerk of Session or Stated Clerk of the presbytery, the clerk of the council will report to the council that an offense has been alleged and that the council will proceed according to the procedures set forth in the Rules of Church Discipline of the *Book of Order*. The Moderator of presbytery should appoint an investigating committee to inquire into the allegations. The investigating committee must promptly begin its inquiry into the allegations; delay may cause further harm.

Councils and entities must cooperate with civil authorities in an investigation of child sexual abuse or other criminal sexual misconduct. Church disciplinary proceedings cannot interfere with a criminal investigation by civil authorities and may have to be suspended until these are completed.

The session has original jurisdiction in disciplinary cases involving members, ruling elders, and deacons of the church, each congregation having jurisdiction only over its own members. Resources are available from the presbytery office.

A presbytery has original jurisdiction in disciplinary cases involving Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and Commissioned Pastors. A presbytery may dissolve a pastoral relationship when the “Word imperatively demands it” (G- 2.0904). Following a risk evaluation, a Minister of the Word and Sacrament or a Commissioned Pastor may be placed on administrative leave when allegations of sexual abuse have been received and the presbytery has followed the *Book of Order* procedures (Chapter 7 of the Book of Discipline). It is recommended that the Permanent Judicial Commission (PJC) members, who conduct this risk evaluation based upon the allegations and a hearing, should also take into account secular legal advice.

When a church officer renounces jurisdiction, the clerk or stated clerk shall report the renunciation at the next meeting of the council and shall record the renunciation in the minutes of the council. The status of any pending charges may be shared with the council at that time.

#### **2. Accused Not Covered by Book of Order**

When a council or entity of Presbytery of South Louisiana receives an accusation of offense of sexual misconduct against a nonmember employee or volunteer, the procedural response of the council or entity will be guided by the written personnel policies of the council or entity. Usually, the council or entity will have a personnel committee that will be

**PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH LOUISIANA  
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

responsible for the inquiry. If a council does not have a personnel committee, it may appoint either a committee or administrative commission for the review of the allegation.

The committee or commission that will respond to the allegation of offense of sexual misconduct will do the following:

- a. Determine whether the allegation gives rise to a reasonable suspicion of sexual misconduct by the accused.
- b. If so, gather additional information necessary to make a decision about correcting the behavior.
- c. Determine any remedies, including limiting ministry, suspension, or termination necessary and advisable under the circumstances. If the accused is a member of another denomination, that denomination will be notified of the allegations and the response.
- d. Inform the victim and the accused of the remedy.
- e. In all cases, the personnel committee shall prepare a written report, which shall be included in the accused's permanent personnel file. The accused shall be allowed to attach any written statements to said documents, also for permanent inclusion in the permanent file.

All procedures shall follow the guidelines set forth by the council, employing agency, or entity of the Presbytery.

**3. Council or Entity Record Keeping**

The council or entity shall keep detailed records of its actions and minutes of its deliberations and its conversations with the accuser, the accused, and other parties involved, correspondence, and copies of the reports received from committees or commissions. Such records will be kept confidential as far as possible. In Case # 208-6, the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) interpreted the Rules of Church Discipline to say that a council or entity may share the contents of inquiry reports with other councils or entities of the PC(USA) when necessary. The clerk of the council or director of the entity will maintain the records while the inquiry is in process.

**V. PREVENTION AND RISK MANAGEMENT**

**A. Implementation**

The Book of Order requires that all councils adopt and implement a sexual misconduct policy (G-3.0106). The General Assembly urges all councils and related entities including colleges, universities, and theological institutions to establish policies, and procedures, that make it a violation of the employer's work rules to engage in sexual misconduct and that encourage reporting of sexual misconduct. Councils and entities are strongly encouraged to take appropriate steps to inform members, employees, volunteers, and students of the council's sexual misconduct policy and the standards of conduct and the procedures for effective response when receiving a report of sexual misconduct. All councils shall have an annual review of both the church's and Presbytery's sexual misconduct policy.

**B. Liability and Insurance**

A council or entity can be held liable for harm caused by sexual misconduct of an officer, Minister of the Word and Sacrament, Commissioned Pastor, or employee based on a number of

**PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH LOUISIANA  
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

legal theories. Councils and entities should take such potential liability into consideration when establishing hiring and supervisory practices.

Councils and entities should regularly inform their liability insurance carriers of the activities and programs they operate or sponsor and of the duties and responsibilities of officers, employees, and volunteers. The standard insurance policy should usually be enhanced by endorsements to cover specific exposures such as camps, daycare operations, shelters, or other outreach programs.

It is also recommended that councils and entities obtain an endorsement to their general liability insurance policy specifically covering sexual abuse and molestation. Such coverage may provide for legal defense expenses and judgments in civil suits brought against the council or entity, its officers, directors, or employees.

**C. Employment Practices**

**1. Record Keeping**

Accurate record keeping is an essential part of hiring and supervision practices of churches, middle governing bodies, and related entities. Every council and entity should maintain a personnel file on every employee, including Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and Commissioned Pastors. The file should contain the application for employment, any employment questionnaires, background checks, references' responses, and all other documents related to an employee's employment, except records which may be required, by law, to be kept in separate files.

**2. Prescreening Applicants**

Councils and entities are urged to establish thorough and consistent hiring practices. If an applicant is unknown to the employer, the employer should confirm the applicant's identity by requiring photographic identification such as a driver's license. The council shall perform a background check, including a national criminal background check on all applicants for employment. Part of pre-employment screening should include specific questions related to discovering previous complaints of sexual misconduct. (*See, Appendix C, Sample Form 1*).

**3. References**

The employing council or entity should contact references for prospective Ministers of the Word and Sacrament, Commissioned Pastors, employees, or volunteers. A written record of conversations or correspondence with references should be kept in the Minister of the Word and Sacrament's, Commissioned Pastor's, or employee's personnel file. (*See, Appendix C, Sample Form 2*).

The person within the council or entity authorized to give a reference is obligated to give truthful information regarding allegations, inquiries, and administrative or disciplinary action related to sexual misconduct of the applicant.

If false or misleading information is given by the applicant or relevant information is withheld, the applicant should be eliminated from consideration.

Applicants should be informed of negative comments regarding sexual misconduct and shall be given an opportunity to submit additional references or to give other evidence to correct or respond to harmful information obtained from a reference.

**PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH LOUISIANA  
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

**VI. EDUCATING AND TRAINING-AWARENESS**

Since the issue of sexual misconduct has become an ever more present reality, there is an emerging need to educate and train a wide variety of persons. Persons needing this specific education include: Ministers of the Word and Sacrament; volunteers; Commissioned Pastors; officers; nonprofessional and professional staff; ministerial candidates; professionals who will be working with this issue within the denomination; members of the congregation; and council staff including supervisors, employees, and stated clerks.

Education for these persons and groups will be different on a group-by-group basis. A primary requirement for all persons should be common knowledge regarding professional and ministerial boundaries, the Presbytery of South Louisiana Sexual Misconduct policy and their own specific council or entity policy.

The Presbytery of South Louisiana shall provide training for all Ministers of the Word and Sacrament, Commissioned Pastors, inquirers, candidates, newly ordained pastors, and new pastors to the Presbytery regarding sexual misconduct, especially including education on this specific policy and procedures. This training shall be renewed every three years. The Stated Clerk shall keep records of the completion of this training and report to CPM and COM (see Appendix F).

Much of a congregation's education currently happens in response to an actual case of sexual misconduct. However, it is recommended that the congregation be as proactive in this area as possible offering education in a variety of settings. There are already numerous resource materials available that could be adapted to a congregation's setting.

Employing entities need to make sure all employees are well acquainted with, understand, and abide by their policy and procedures. Employing entities should offer additional training and resources. Any professional (therapists, attorneys, advocates, mediators, arbitrators) used by a council should be qualified in the field of sexual misconduct.

**PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH LOUISIANA  
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

**APPENDIX A**

**Overview for Reporting and Investigating Sexual Misconduct within the Presbytery of South Louisiana**

- I. Presbytery of South Louisiana members, and all congregations within the Presbytery shall be familiar with the Presbytery of South Louisiana Sexual Misconduct Policy. Sessions shall implement their own sexual misconduct policies for their congregations. Appropriate boundary training shall be required of all Presbytery members, and shall be encouraged for all church officers.
- II. Reports of sexual misconduct in the Presbytery of South Louisiana will not be taken lightly, disregarded, or allowed to circulate without concern for the accuser, the accused, and the church or presbytery. All reports will be handled with confidentiality.
- III. **Anyone who suspects that a child (who is unmarried and under 18 years of age or a person who lacks the capacity to consent) has been or is in danger of being abused or neglected** must report immediately not only to the Presbytery or governing council, but also to the **Louisiana DCFS Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline @ 855-4LA-KIDS (855-452-5437)** and/or call 911 if a person is in immediate danger. “Any person 18 or older who witnesses the sexual abuse of a child and knowingly and willfully fails to report to law enforcement or DCFS, as required by Children’s Code Article 610, shall be fined not more than \$10,000, imprisoned, with or without hard labor, for not more than five years or both. State law protects the identity of all mandated reporters, and you are given immunity from legal liability as a result of reports you make in good faith.”
- IV. **Reporting Process**—an allegation of sexual misconduct shall be reported as follows. The supervisory person receiving an allegation will encourage the accuser to put the allegation in writing, using the form: Report of Suspected Sexual Misconduct. If the alleged victim is unable or unwilling to submit a written allegation, any member of the PC(USA) may submit a written allegation, which, when possible, should be attested to by the alleged victim for accuracy.
  - A. If the accused is **a church member, employee, or church volunteer**, the allegation should be submitted in writing to the Minister of the Word and Sacrament, Commissioned Pastor, Clerk of Session, or the Chair of the Personnel Committee.
  - B. If the accused is **a Minister of the Word and Sacrament or a Commissioned Pastor**, the written allegation should be submitted to the Stated Clerk of Presbytery of South Louisiana.
  - C. If the accused is **an employee or volunteer of a higher council or entity**, the allegation should be made to a supervisor of that entity.
- V. **Accused Persons Covered by the Book of Order (church members, officers, Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and Commissioned Pastors)**—when an allegation is received by the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery, or Clerk of Session, that clerk will report that an offense has been alleged, and that council will proceed according to the Rules of Church Discipline of the Book of Order. An acknowledgment of the allegation will be sent as soon as possible to the accuser.
  - A. The Presbytery or Session will appoint an Investigating Committee.

**PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH LOUISIANA  
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

- B. The Presbytery or Session will cooperate with any civil authorities, and church discipline will not interfere with civil and criminal investigations.
- C. The Presbytery may dissolve a pastoral relationship or place a Minister of the Word and Sacrament or Commissioned Pastor on administrative leave, once a PJC (Permanent Judicial Commission) makes a risk evaluation of that leader remaining in their position.
- D. The alleged victim and the accused will be notified of the response.
- E. If a church officer renounces jurisdiction, the Clerk will report that in the minutes of the council, as well as the status of any pending charges.

VI. **Accused Persons Not Covered by the Book of Order (non-members, non-member employees, or volunteers)**—when an allegation is received by the council, the procedure will be guided by the personnel policies of that council.

That personnel committee will appoint an administrative commission to review the allegation, which will determine whether the allegation gives rise to reasonable suspicion of sexual misconduct.

- A. If so, they will gather additional information, and determine remedies such as limited ministry, suspension, or termination.
- B. If the person is a member of another denomination, that denomination will be notified of the allegation and response.
- C. The alleged victim and the accused will be notified of the response.
- D. A written report will be placed in the permanent personnel file, and the accused will be allowed to attach written statements, to also be included.

VII. **Record Keeping**—The stated clerk of councils shall keep detailed records of actions and conversations with the alleged victim, the accused, and other parties involved, as well as correspondence and copies of reports received from committees and commissions. Such records will be kept confidential as far as possible. A council may share the contents with other councils when necessary.

VIII. **Overview**—This document is intended as an overview. Please see full PSL Sexual Misconduct Policy for additional details.

**PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH LOUISIANA  
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

**APPENDIX B**

The following words/terms are defined for use in this *Sexual Misconduct Policy*. To the extent any word in the policy is not defined by this Appendix B, that word/term should be given its normal, dictionary defined and commonly understood meaning, given the context of the word within the policy.

**Definitions**

***Accused*** is the term used to represent the person against whom a claim of sexual misconduct is made.

***Accuser*** is a term used to represent the person claiming knowledge of sexual misconduct by a person covered by this policy. The accuser may or may not have been the victim of the alleged sexual misconduct. A person such as a family member, friend, or colleague may be the accuser.

***Child Sexual Abuse***; includes, but is not limited to, any contact or interaction between a child and an adult when the child is being used for the sexual stimulation of the adult person or of a third person. The behavior may or may not involve touching. Sexual behavior between a child and an adult is always considered forced whether or not consented to by the child. In the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the definition of a child in cases of sexual abuse includes children and youth under the age of 18 as well as vulnerable adults over the age of 18.

***Church*** when spelled with the initial capitalized refers to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Church when spelled with the initial in lowercase refers to local churches. The word congregation is used loosely for members and participants.

***Civil Authorities*** are the governmental bodies, whether city, county, state, or federal, who are given the responsibility to investigate, criminally prosecute, and/or bring civil charges against individuals accused of sexual crimes or offenses against adults and children.

***Council*** is a representative body composed of ruling elders and Ministers of the Word and Sacrament, Commissioned Pastors, sessions, presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly. A council may establish entities such as daycare centers, conference centers, camps, or homes for the aged. A council may have both church members and nonmembers as employees.

***Employee*** is the comprehensive term used to cover individuals who are hired or called to work for the Church for salary or wages.

***Entity*** is the term used to refer to any program or office managed by a board, committee, council, or other body whose membership is elected by a council.

***Inquiry*** is the term used in the Rules of Church Discipline to determine whether charges should be filed based upon allegations of an offense received by a council. See Book of Order, D-10.0000.

***Mandated Reporter*** includes a person under the PC(USA) constitution who is mandated to report to the civil authorities any reasonably held belief that there will be future harm and is also described by some states' laws as a person who is required to report any and all suspected incidents of child abuse, including child sexual abuse that come to their attention. In Louisiana, anyone who suspects that a child (who is unmarried and under 18 years of age) has been or is in danger of being abused or neglected must report that not only to the Presbytery or governing council, but also to the **Louisiana DCFS Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline @ 855-4LA-KIDS (855-452-5437)** and/or call 911 if a person is in immediate danger. "Any person 18 or older who witnesses the sexual abuse of a child and knowingly and willfully fails to report to law enforcement or DCFS, as required by Children's Code

## PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH LOUISIANA SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Article 610, shall be fined not more than \$10,000, imprisoned, with or without hard labor, for not more than five years or both. State law protects the identity of all mandated reporters, and you are given immunity from legal liability as a result of reports you make in good faith.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services. (2019, June) *Mandated Reporter Brochure*. [https://dcfs.la.gov/assets/docs/searchable/Child%20Welfare/DCFS\\_June2019\\_Mandated\\_ReporterBrochure.pdf](https://dcfs.la.gov/assets/docs/searchable/Child%20Welfare/DCFS_June2019_Mandated_ReporterBrochure.pdf)

**Misuse of Technology**; use of technology that results in sexually harassing or abusing another person, including texting or e-mailing suggestive messages and/or images to persons with whom one has a ministerial relationship. It is never appropriate to view pornography on church property. When this includes a person under the age of eighteen, it is considered child abuse. There is never an expectation of personal privacy when using technological equipment owned by a church or church entity or within the context of ministry (See Appendix E).

**Persons Covered** by this policy includes church members, church officers, Ministers of the Word and Sacrament, Commissioned Pastors, and nonmembers who are employees or volunteers of the General Assembly of the PC(USA).

**Preliminary Review** is the term used in the Rules of Church Discipline to determine whether charges should be filed based upon allegations of an offense received by a council. See *Book of Order*, D-7.1101.

**Response** is the action taken by the council or entity when a report of sexual misconduct is received. It may include (1) inquiry into facts and circumstances, (2) possible disciplinary action (administrative or judicial or both), (3) pastoral care for alleged victims and their families and others, and (4) pastoral care and rehabilitation for the accused and care for their families.

**Secular Law** is the body of municipal, state, and federal laws and is often referred to collectively as civil and criminal law. Prohibited behavior addressed by this policy may result in criminal and/or civil charges filed under secular law.

**Sexual Abuse** as defined in the *Book of Order* (D-7.0901), is any offense involving sexual conduct in relation to any person under the age of eighteen years or anyone without the capacity to consent, or any person when the conduct includes force, threat, coercion, intimidation, or misuse of ordered ministry or position. Sexual abuse is contrary to the Scriptures and the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and is therefore always an offense for the purpose of discipline.

**Sexual Assault** is sexual contact by force, threat, or intimidation.

**Sexual Harassment**; defined for this policy is as follows: unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- A. submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s employment, or their continued status in an institution;
- B. submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such an individual;
- C. such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment; or
- D. an individual is subjected to unwelcome sexual jokes, unwelcome or inappropriate touching, or display of sexual visuals that insult, degrade, and/or sexually exploit adults or children.



**PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH LOUISIANA  
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

***Sexual Malfeasance***: is defined by the broken trust resulting from sexual activities within a professional ministerial relationship that results in misuse of office or position arising from the professional ministerial relationship.

***Sexual Misconduct*** is offensive, obsessive, harassing, or suggestive language or behavior, stalking, flashing, unwanted visual contact, unwelcome touching or fondling. Sexual Misconduct includes, but is not limited to: Child Sexual Abuse, Misuse of Technology, Sexual Abuse, Sexual Assault, Sexual Harassment, and Sexual Malfeasance.

***Victim*** is a person claiming to have been harmed and/or abused by a person covered under this policy.

***Volunteer*** is the term used for those who provide services for the Presbytery of South Louisiana. Volunteers include persons elected or appointed to serve on boards, committees, and other groups. For purposes of this policy, volunteers are treated the same as employees.

**PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH LOUISIANA  
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

**APPENDIX C**

**Employment Procedures**

Each "Employing Entity" should have already established and implemented entity personnel policies that include employment procedures for the search, selection, and call of entity staff. The employment procedures should spell out the process to be followed during the election of chief administrative officers and other staff, the appointment of exempt and nonexempt staff, and the call of Ministers of the Word and Sacrament, Commissioned Pastors, chief administrative officers, and elected staff. These employment procedures should also include candidate/applicant reference checks prior to employment. Employing entity personnel policies should contain a clearly defined grievance process, a periodic performance review process, and a section that prohibits sexual misconduct (including sexual harassment). These provisions should be applicable to all full-time, part-time, temporary, and interim staff. The personnel policies should also provide for confidential communication channels whereby staff members can voice concerns or apprehensions without fear of retribution.

Church-wide and public advertisement of vacant positions as a part of an employing entity's search procedures to fill vacant positions is required of General Assembly entities and related bodies and is recommended as a guideline for councils by the church-wide personnel policies as well as the Church-wide Plan for Equal Employment and Affirmative Action. In support of this policy and its procedures on sexual misconduct, all vacant positions of religious leadership forwarded to publications for advertisement, distributed to units of the church, as well as posted on local bulletin boards will include the following statement:

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is an equal opportunity employer. In addition, the church has a strong policy opposing sexual harassment or abuse. References and records will be checked during the employment process.

This statement will also be included in all information distributed through the Personnel Referral Services of the Church Vocations Ministry Unit.

The following forms are included in this Appendix C:

Sample Form 1: Report of Suspected Sexual Misconduct, is for gathering basic information to be passed along to the appropriate person or group handling sexual misconduct cases for a unit or other entity.

Sample Form 2: Potential Employee Questionnaire; and

Sample Form 3: Employment Reference.

These two forms will be used by General Assembly entities and institutions and are recommended for use by all other employing units of the church.

Sample Form 4: Acknowledgement of Receipt of Sexual Misconduct Policy, is to be used by each employing entity as it distributes its sexual misconduct policy to employees and others.

Sample Form 5: Potential Employer Questionnaire, provides a list of example questions to be asked during the interview process.

As required by acceptable personnel procedures, an employee handbook should be written, published, and distributed to each employee of church employing entities. All existing personnel policies and employee handbooks should be updated to include a sexual misconduct policy.

**PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH LOUISIANA  
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

It is advisable to seek legal advice as other councils, related bodies, and entities develop and publish policy and procedures on sexual misconduct. All forms should be checked for compliance with state laws.

**PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH LOUISIANA  
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

**SAMPLE FORM 1: REPORT OF SUSPECTED SEXUAL MISCONDUCT**

This Sample Form provides entities with a sample Report of Suspected Sexual Misconduct. It provides space for the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of victims, the accused, possible witnesses, and others involved. It also provides space for a description of the offending behavior as well as other pertinent information. This form or a revision of it should be filed with the appropriate supervisor, office, or administrator of an entity who is required to file this with the constituting authority (See section on Subsequent Reporting in this policy and its procedures.)

***Report of Suspected Sexual Misconduct***

Reported by: \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, and Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Method of Communication \_\_\_\_\_

May we leave a voicemail? \_\_\_\_\_ (We will not leave confidential information on email or phone)

Date of Report: \_\_\_\_\_

Person suspected of misconduct:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Other person(s) involved (witness or victims):

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Gender \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, and Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

**PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH LOUISIANA  
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

Describe incident(s) of suspected sexual misconduct, including date(s), time(s), and location(s):

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Identify eyewitnesses to the incident, including names, addresses, and telephone numbers, where available:

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**PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH LOUISIANA  
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

Employed by \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor's Title \_\_\_\_\_

Employed from (month/year) \_\_\_\_\_ to (month/year) \_\_\_\_\_

Why did you leave? \_\_\_\_\_

Employed by \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor's Title \_\_\_\_\_

I certify that (a) no civil, criminal, ecclesiastical complaint has ever been sustained or is pending against me for sexual misconduct; (b) I have never resigned or been terminated from a position for reasons related to sexual misconduct.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date

Note: If you are unable to make the above certification you may instead give in the space provided a description of the complaint, termination, or the outcome of the situation and any explanatory comments you care to add.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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**PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH LOUISIANA  
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

**Release**

The information contained in this questionnaire is accurate to the best of my knowledge and may be verified by the employing entity. I hereby authorize (*Name of Employing Entity*) to make any and all contacts necessary to verify my prior employment history, and to inquire concerning any criminal records or any judicial proceedings involving me as a defendant. By means of this release I also authorize any previous employer and any law enforcement agencies or judicial authorities to release any and all requested relevant information to the (Name of Employing Entity).

I have read this release and understand fully that the information obtained may be used to deny me employment or any other type of position from the employing entity. I also agree that I will hold harmless the employing entity or judicial authority from any and all claims, liabilities, and cause of action for the legitimate release or use of any information.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Witness \_\_\_\_\_

Witness \_\_\_\_\_



**PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH LOUISIANA  
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

**SAMPLE FORM 3: EMPLOYMENT REFERENCE**

This is a sample form that may be used to keep a record of all face-to-face or telephone reference checks. Additions that have to do with sexual misconduct or child abuse may be needed by the entity to justify to a court of law that they have done reasonable and prudent screening before hiring a person for a position within that entity.

*Employment Reference Form*

1. Name of applicant \_\_\_\_\_

2. Reference or church contacted (if a church, identify both the church and person contacted)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Date and time of contact \_\_\_\_\_

4. Person contacting the reference or church \_\_\_\_\_

5. Method of contact (phone, letter, personal conversation) \_\_\_\_\_

6. Summary of conversation (summarize the reference's remarks concerning the applicant's fitness and suitability for the position, any convictions for or actions pending related to sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, or child abuse)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH LOUISIANA  
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

**SAMPLE FORM 4: ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT  
POLICY AND GUIDELINES FOR USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND ELECTRONIC  
COMMUNICATIONS**

This is a sample form designed to implement the sexual misconduct policy. It is necessary that all employees acknowledge being in receipt of the sexual misconduct policy and the Guidelines for Use of Social Media and Electronic Communications. The policy (and social media guidelines) provide protection and empowerment for the employee. A similar acknowledgement should be signed by each person covered by the policy and/or guidelines after any amendments to the policy are made.

***Acknowledgement of Receipt of Sexual Misconduct Policy and Guidelines for Use of Social Media  
and Electronic Communications***

I hereby acknowledge that on \_\_\_\_\_(date), I received, a copy of the PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH LOUISIANA SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND ITS PROCEDURES, including the *GUIDELINES FOR USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS*.

I affirm by my signature below that I have read the policy, I understand its meaning, I have had the opportunity to ask questions regarding the policy and seek guidance if necessary before signing this Acknowledgment, and I hereby agree to conduct myself in accordance with the policy.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH LOUISIANA  
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

**SAMPLE FORM 5: POTENTIAL EMPLOYER QUESTIONNAIRE**

*Employment Questions to ask of potential employees:*

In addition to other questions asked during an interview process, Councils and entities shall ask persons seeking ministerial calls or employment in non-ordained positions questions such as:

- a. Has a civil, criminal, or ecclesiastical complaint ever been sustained against you involving sexual misconduct by you?
- b. Have you ever resigned or been terminated from a position for reasons relating to allegations of sexual misconduct by you?
- c. If so, indicate the date, nature and place of these allegations, and the name, address, and telephone number of your employer at that time.
- d. Have you been required to receive professional treatment, physical or psychological, for reasons related to sexual misconduct to you?
- e. If so, please give a short description of the treatment including the date, nature of treatment, place, and name, address, and telephone number of the treating physician or other professional.

A sample Potential Employee Questionnaire is attached as Sample Form 2 for adaptation by churches and entities. The questions included in this sample may be integrated into a standard employment questionnaire along with other necessary questions.

**PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH LOUISIANA  
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

**APPENDIX D**

**Guidelines for Use of Social Media and Electronic Communications**

***A. Online Presence and Transparency***

No Minister of the Word and Sacrament, Commissioned Pastor, employee, contractor, or volunteer of the Presbytery of South Louisiana and its entities shall create or use a media site (web, Facebook, YouTube, or similar) in the name of or purporting to represent the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) or the Presbytery of South Louisiana without the explicit written permission of the sponsoring council, Presbytery of South Louisiana entity, or event leadership.

When clergy or staff, acting in their capacity as a representative of the Presbytery of South Louisiana or its entities, lead or coordinate a group activity using social media, each may use only official Presbytery of South Louisiana sites/channels when they have been made available by the council or entity of the Presbytery of South Louisiana. These may include webpages, Facebook, e-mail, and any other form of electronic communication.

***B. Misuse of Technology***

Misuse of technology constitutes any use of any communications technology that results in sexual harassment or abuse of another person, including, but not limited to, the internet, telephones and smartphones, computers and tablets, cameras and other electronic recording/playback media or devices or applications used to send or receive messages or images.

It is never appropriate to view pornography on church property. When this includes a person under the age of eighteen, it is considered child abuse.

There is never an expectation of personal privacy when using technological equipment owned by a church or church entity or within the context of ministry. It is advised to keep all digital communications used in a pastoral setting.

***C. Social Media Communications***

Persons who create public pages on behalf of Presbytery of South Louisiana programs are encouraged to monitor communications on those pages to strive for communications free of inappropriate content, and to remove inappropriate content as soon as possible.

When using Facebook or other social media, e-mail, text messaging or other electronic means to communicate with minors or vulnerable adults, the authorized Minister of the Word and Sacrament, Commissioned Pastor, employee, or volunteer shall inform parents/guardians of each minor or vulnerable adult, prior to initiating such communication, so that a parent/guardian may grant permission to communicate with the person. The parent/guardian must have the opportunity to disapprove or to participate in a group or individual communication.

If a minor or vulnerable adult reveals abuse or inappropriate interactions with another person, whether minor or adult, the person who receives this report must in turn report this information in the same manner as any other “suspected abuse.”

**PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH LOUISIANA  
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

***D. Digital Communication Code of Conduct***

Believing that our “manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world” (Book of Order, G-2.0104a), each person who uses the resources of social media should apply this Digital Communication Code of Conduct:

1. Do not use comments that are or could be objectively construed by any reasonable observer to be cruel, coercive, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning or humiliating.
2. Do not engage in sexually oriented conversations or discussions about sexual activities for the purpose of harm, arousal or gratification.
3. Do not use private messages between employees/volunteers and minors/vulnerable adults that are not subject to third party monitoring.
4. Do not post inappropriate links or pictures (for example, sexually suggestive, exploitive, or voyeuristic images), or inappropriate comments on pictures.
5. Provide minors and vulnerable adults and their parents/legal guardians with this Digital Communication Code of Conduct and consent form.
6. Encourage parents and guardians to play a role in monitoring their minors’ and vulnerable adults’ interactions with employees and volunteers.
7. Frequently remind minors and vulnerable adults how to interact appropriately through social networking sites.
8. When possible, limit or deny participation on monitored sites by individuals who violate the code of conduct.

Before the use of social media, the authorized Minister of the Word and Sacrament, Commissioned Pastor, employee, volunteer, and participant shall receive this Digital Communication Code of Conduct.

Each adult engaged in leadership within Presbytery of South Louisiana shall familiarize themselves with the PSL Guidelines for Use of Social Media and Electronic Communications and shall acknowledge receipt of this policy and its implementation. In addition, each person engaged in the leadership of Presbytery of South Louisiana shall consent to all comprehensive background checks required and shall comply with any consequence of a reported violation to this policy.

**PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH LOUISIANA  
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

**APPENDIX E**

**Compliance and Expectations**

The power that Jesus Christ has vested in God's Church, a power manifested in the exercise of church discipline, is one for building up the body of Christ, not for destroying it, for redeeming, not for punishing. It should be exercised as a dispensation of mercy and not of wrath, so that the great ends of the Church may be achieved, that all children of God may be presented faultless in the day of Christ. D-1.01

The Presbytery of South Louisiana has established the following program to encourage its members to stay in compliance with the training requirements of the Presbytery of South Louisiana Sexual Misconduct Policy. This program is an encouragement to fulfill our pastoral responsibilities. The following positions in the Presbytery are required to undergo Boundaries Training according to this policy:

- All active pastors (Commissioned Pastors, Ministers of Word and Sacrament, Stated Supply, Temporary Supply, Transitional and/or Interim [while active], Christian Educators) that are serving congregations.
- All members currently serving on Presbytery Committees, both Ruling Elders and Teaching Elders.
- All Presbytery Staff
- Persons on the PSL Pulpit Supply List
- All persons in Validated Ministry in the bounds of PSL
- All persons under the care of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, including all Inquirers, Candidates, and Seekers in the Commissioned Pastor training process.
- Any exemptions to these training requirements must be approved by COM.

While the Presbytery will strive to remind its members of their obligations, it is each Minister, Commissioned Pastor, and person under care of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry's responsibility to keep track of their own training, which must be renewed every three years or 36 months. Trainings will be offered annually; online training will be available for those unable to attend in-person sessions.

Upon notification that their training has expired, Presbytery members will have an additional 90 days to finish their training, in compliance with the policy. After the allotted time has elapsed, the Presbytery will take the following steps:

- A. **One Year Beyond Compliance:** Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and Ruling Elders, who are not within compliance of the Presbytery's Training Requirements after the 90-day grace period:
  1. Will have their names published in the Presbytery packet.
  2. Will be reported to their congregation's Personnel Committee as being out of compliance and informed of the consequences of further non-compliance.
  3. Will not receive their clergy ID cards
- B. **Two Years Without Training:** In addition to the consequences listed above, those who are two full years out of compliance with the Presbytery's Training Requirements:
  1. Will be reported to the congregation's insurer.
  2. Will not receive a statement from the Presbytery attesting to their good standing.

**PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH LOUISIANA  
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

3. Will not have their Personal Discernment Profile attested to by the stated clerk.
  4. Will not receive a favorable recommendation from the Presbytery staff.
- C. **Three Years Without Training:** In addition to the consequences listed above, those who are three full years out of compliance with the Presbytery’s Training Requirements will be classified as no longer engaged in a validated ministry. Such persons “shall not have voice or vote in meetings of the presbytery” (G-2.0508)
- D. **Four Years Without Training:** In addition to the consequences listed above, those who are four full years out of compliance with the Presbytery’s Training Requirements will be declared to be released from the exercise of the ordered ministry. “Release from the exercise of ordered ministry requires discontinuance of all functions of that ministry. The designations that refer to ministers of the Word and Sacrament shall not be used.”(G-2.0507).

**Reconciliation:** Any Minister of the Word and Sacrament or Ruling Elder who has been classified as no longer engaged in a validated ministry, or who has been released from the exercise of ordered ministry, may, upon completion of boundary training and any steps COM may deem necessary, reapply for admission. Upon approval by the Committee on Ministry, and “upon the reaffirmation of the ordination questions, and the resumption of a ministry that qualifies that person for membership in the presbytery, [the person] shall be restored to the exercise of the ordered ministry as a teaching elder without re-ordination” (G-2.0507).

**Exceptions and Waivers:** Any retired Minister of the Word and Sacrament or Commissioned Pastor who is no longer engaged in the exercise of ordered ministry may request a waiver to be excused from the Presbytery’s Training Requirements. Any Minister of the Word and Sacrament or Commissioned Pastor who cannot participate in the Presbytery Training for health or other personal reasons, may also request alternate training or a waiver of the boundary training requirements if no alternative can be found. This waiver will be reviewed annually for those in active service, and every 3 years for those no longer engaged in ordered ministry. If still appropriate, waivers may be renewed. Training shall be required for retired persons who re-enter into ordered ministry. All waivers shall be reviewed by the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery.