



Woodmen Valley Chapel Sexual Misconduct Policy

Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment

God gifted humans with gender and sexuality. God made humans male and female and saw that this was good. (Gn.1:27;2:21-23,5:1-2.) The Bible teaches that any good gift from God can become twisted or corrupted and that such disorder causes injury, shame, and humiliation. (Gn.3: 8-13 and II Sam 11:1-2:15.)

The Gospels call Woodmen Valley Chapel to minister to all of God's people specific to this ministry and to show special tenderness and care for children. Woodmen Valley Chapel's ministries cannot succeed unless the Church has taken care to ensure that they are safe while in our care.

Woodmen Valley Chapel, therefore, adopted this policy to reduce the likelihood of any sexual misconduct. This policy will clarify that the Church commits itself to responsible hiring, selection, training, and supervision in order to protect the people it serves and its own staff and volunteers from possible occasions of misconduct.

STATEMENT OF POLICY:

- I. **Prohibition.** Sexual misconduct is contrary to Christian principles. It is beyond the scope of the duties, engagement or employment of all Church workers. Woodmen Valley Chapel employees and volunteers must not commit sexual misconduct and must comply with the requirements which follows:

- II. **Definitions.** For the purposes of this policy:
 - A. "Sexual Misconduct" is any sexual conduct which:
 1. Arises from the work of the Church;
 2. Involves a Church employee or volunteer and another individual; and
 3. Constitutes either:
 - a. Unlawful activity;
 - b. Sexual harassment;
 - c. Youth peer sexual harassment; or
 - d. Activity contrary to the moral instructions or doctrines of the Bible as interpreted by the Elder board of the Church.
 - B. "Employee" means every Church employee.

- C. Uncompensated Church workers.
 - 1. "Unpaid Staff" generally refers to unpaid workers whose positions require regular and consistent duties, which involve decision making or directing the work of others. For the purposes of this policy unpaid staff includes only the following positions: Regular youth and college ministry leaders; all regular elementary, preschool and nursery leaders; and counselors approved to provide on-site counseling by the pastoral care counselor.
 - 2. For the purposes of this policy, "volunteer" refers to all uncompensated Church workers other than unpaid staff.
- D. "Sexual harassment" is any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:
 - 1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a condition of an individual's employment.
 - 2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting the individual; or
 - 3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.
- E. "Youth peer sexual harassment" is any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature by a minor or between minors which has the purpose or effect of intimidating, embarrassing, or humiliating the other person.

III. **Distribution of Policy.** The Personnel Administrator shall distribute this policy to all present and future Church employees and unpaid staff.

IV. **Background Questionnaires.** All present and prospective Church employees and unpaid staff shall complete a background questionnaire in the form attached as Appendix A. The Operations Director or his or her designee will review every completed background questionnaire and completed questionnaires will remain in employees' personnel files and in the confidential files of unpaid staff. Employees and Unpaid Staff working with children under the age of eighteen as their regular assignment will also complete a Colorado Bureau of Investigation screening.

V. **Education.** All Church employees must attend designated programs on methods of recognizing and preventing sexual misconduct involving children and others.

Obligation to Report.

- A. Employees or unpaid staff who know or reasonably suspect an incident of sexual misconduct and employees who believe that they are victims of sexual harassment shall immediately report to the Operations Director. In any circumstance in which the Operations Director is the alleged perpetrator or the Operations Director is unavailable, a verbal report shall be made instead to the Community Care Pastor or the Adults Coordinator.
- B. Whenever a facially credible allegation of sexual misconduct is received, the individual receiving the report shall immediately consult with the Church legal counsel and promptly form a misconduct investigation team appropriate for the circumstances.
- C. The Operations Director or his or her designee shall, in consultation with Church counsel, comply with the Colorado child abuse reporting statute. Any such reports should be made by telephone and in writing to the appropriate county department. To the extent possible, the report should include the following information:
 1. The name, address, age, gender, and race of the child;
 2. The name and address of the alleged perpetrator;
 3. The nature and extent of the child's injuries;
 4. The names and addresses of the person responsible for the suspected abuse or neglect, if known;
 5. The family composition;
 6. The source of the report and the name, address, and occupation of the person making the report;
 7. Any action taken by the reporting source; and
 8. Any other information which may help protect the child.

Subject to certain exceptions, Colorado law states that any person who participates "in good faith in making [such] a report...shall be immune from any liability, civil or criminal, or termination of employment that otherwise might result by reason of such reporting".

- VI. **Investigation of Incident Reports.** Each facially credible reported incident will immediately lead to an investigation, using the misconduct investigation team. The investigation team will take care not to interfere with any criminal investigation and to undertake its investigation with a high level of concern for the alleged victim, the family of the alleged victim, the person reporting the incident, and the alleged perpetrator.
 - A. The Operations Director or his or her designee shall immediately obtain legal counsel.
 - B. Upon receipt of a facially credible allegation, the alleged perpetrator will be immediately relieved of responsibilities to the Church and placed on administrative leave pending the outcome of the investigation. Such leave shall be with or without pay and benefits as the Operations Director or his or her designee decides.
 - C. The Operations Director or his or her designee and the misconduct investigation team shall take steps to preserve the confidentiality of documents created by their investigation.
 - D. When the accusations are made of sexual misconduct, contact by a member of the misconduct investigation team with the alleged victim and family should make contact

with the alleged victim, corroborating and other witnesses, and the alleged perpetrator as appropriate for the purposes of gathering information and offering assistance.

- VII. **Media Contact.** Any media contact regarding an incident of sexual misconduct must be directed to the Operations Director or his or her designee.
- VIII. **Action Where Guilt Determined.** Any Church employee, unpaid staff, or volunteer who admits to, does not contest, or is found guilty of an incident of sexual misconduct shall be immediately disciplined or terminated from employment or any position of responsibility with the Church. Anyone who admits to, does not contest, or is found guilty of an incident of peer sexual harassment shall be immediately disciplined and reported to his or her parents.
- IX. **Supersedes Previous Policies.** This policy supersedes previous policies.