



## **Code of Ethics for Unity Leaders**

In harmony with Unity Worldwide Ministries Ethics Policy, this Code of Ethics applies to the following:

- All credentialed leaders
  - Licensed or ordained Unity ministers
  - Licensed Unity teachers
- All non-credentialed leaders serving in the capacity of a credentialed Unity leader
- All ministerial candidates from all affiliated Unity schools
- All member ministries and expansion ministries
- All members of the UWM board of trustees
- All UWM staff members
- All individuals certified to serve as consultants to our ministries
- All members of UWM Ministry Teams

### **Introduction and Intention**

Foundational to Unity's principles and teachings is the belief that we are individualized expressions of God. This calls us, as Unity leaders to live from our Christ nature in all circumstances thereby being a harmonizing presence and a role model for those we serve. Because of this, it is our intention to be accountable to a high level of professional ethics.

Our Code of Ethics articulates a vision of ethical behavior grounded in our beliefs and teachings. Its purpose is to provide guidelines for behavior that is both ethical and authentic; and encourages us to give full expression to our Christ nature. This document also serves the purpose of holding one another accountable to this standard.

We also recognize that certain violations of our Code of Ethics must be addressed. Some behaviors are explicitly illegal, and such violations may require suspension of membership from Unity Worldwide Ministries. Some behaviors and attitudes are unethical by our standards and compromise our ability to perform and provide ministry. Other behaviors and attitudes harm our movement and interfere with our effectiveness in achieving our mission. Leaders who act in ways that are inconsistent with our Code of Ethics may be subject to review through our Ethics Review System. These violations will be addressed in a consistent and open manner which assists us all in living our highest potential.

**Section I and Section II Ethics are grounded in spiritual principles and self-care. It is recommended that all leaders aspire to follow these practices.**

### **I. Dedication to Truth Principles**

- A. As a Unity leader, I dedicate myself to the principles of Truth as taught and exemplified by The Christ and interpreted by Unity Worldwide Ministries [UWM], including:

1. God is Absolute good, everywhere present.
  2. Every human being is an expression of the Divine; the Christ spirit, by whatever name, indwells all people. Their very essence is of God, and therefore they are also inherently good.
  3. Human beings create their experience by the activity of their thinking. Everything in the manifest realm has its beginning in thought.
  4. Prayer is creative thinking that heightens the connection with God-Mind and therefore brings forth wisdom, healing, prosperity, and everything good.
  5. Knowing and understanding the laws of life, also called Truth, are not enough. A person must also live the truth that they know.
- B. I look to the indwelling Christ for inspiration, to guide, govern, and prosper me.
- C. I will, to the best of my understanding and ability, demonstrate Truth in my personal and professional life.
- D. I believe in the power of prayer.

## **II. The Relationship to Self – Self Care**

- A. I will articulate an awareness of the need for self-care by designing, implementing, and maintaining a plan for my life of regular renewal.
- B. I will care for my body with good nutrition and exercise and express an awareness for the need of physical self-care.
- C. I can say yes and am able to say no in order to prevent burnout by identifying strategies and taking action to avoid this condition.
- D. Leading by my strengths, I model and teach self-care and living a balanced life.
- E. I am comfortable asking for help when I recognize the need, and model and teach the value in doing so.
- F. I balance work, relationships, and recreation by developing and implementing a plan for balanced living; maintaining adjustments as required in any balancing practice.
- G. I exhibit a mindset of ongoing renewal and conscious evolution by developing, implementing, and maintaining an ongoing program of spiritual growth.
- H. I will keep in mind that the welfare of the ministry is paramount. Should I experience any personal crisis, the consequences of which could affect the ministry, I will confer with my board of trustees and a representative of Unity Worldwide Ministries. I may also choose to seek counseling or confer with colleagues.

See “Appendix Self-Care Standards and Rubrics” for further details applied to this section.

**NOTE:** Increasing virtual accessibility makes defining ministries only by geographical space obsolete and necessitates a higher call to *professional courtesy* rather than solely relying on ethics “rules.”

**Sections III through Section VII relate to standards of behaviors all are expected to demonstrate. Failure to do so could result in a review through the Ethics Review System.**

## **III. The Leader’s Relationship with Others**

The ministerial relationship pre-supposes certain role expectations; the credentialed leader is expected to make available certain resources, talents, knowledge, and expertise which will serve the best interests of the ministry.

- A. The role of leader carries with it authority and power. I will fulfill my responsibility and use this power to benefit the people who call upon me for service. I will offer acceptance and support to all

people with whom I have contact regardless of age, race, socio-economic status, creed, nationality, gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation. When people are angry, critical, or unkind, I will respond compassionately.

- B. I will conduct my work, private and public, after the standards and in accord with the teachings and ideals of Unity World Headquarters at Unity Village and Unity Worldwide Ministries without competition and contention, realizing that the more truly I practice the Principles of Unity, the greater will be the good to each and all immediately concerned, and to the community at large.
- C. I will maintain the boundaries of the leader's relationship, realizing that crossing boundaries is a betrayal of trust. In honor of that trust, I will not exploit nor violate the emotional, spiritual, or physical well-being of people who come to me for help or over whom I have any kind of authority. I will not use my authority to defame or manipulate individuals or groups, or foster division within the ministry. I will not create or cultivate dependencies. I will avoid situations and relationships which could impair my professional judgment or compromise the integrity of the ministry. I will not exploit situations or relationships for personal gain.
- D. As a leader, I shall work within my professional qualifications and limitations. People with needs beyond my expertise shall be referred to a qualified professional.
- E. Confidentiality:
  - 1. I am honor bound to hold sacred all confidences reposed in me, except if a confidence reveals that the person confiding may pose a threat to self or others; I will abide by law mandating or authorizing reporting to agencies. In addition, where law shields from liability voluntary disclosure of suspected possible child abuse, elder abuse, dependent adult abuse, or animal abuse, I will make a good faith report of such abuse to the appropriate agencies whether or not reporting is mandated by law.
  - 2. I will never mention, without permission, either privately or publicly, the name, residence, or locality of any person under treatment in the past or present in illustration or verification of Truth principles.
  - 3. I will not use privileged information for personal gain.
- F. I will refrain from sexual contact and/or sexualized behavior with a congregant, client, or employee with whom I have a professional and/or pastoral relationship, realizing it is unethical and is deemed sexual misconduct. (Sexual misconduct involving sexual abuse and/or sexualizing a professional relationship is defined as sexual activity or contact, not limited to sexual intercourse.) [Refer to Unity Worldwide Ministries [Sexual Conduct Policy](#).]
- G. I believe that more is taught by what a leader is than what s/he says. Therefore, I will seek to keep my morals above reproach. I will exercise good judgment in regard to my social conduct. My relationships will be such as to command only the highest respect. I am conscious of the fact that to be pure in heart is to be pure in conduct also.

#### **IV. Relating to Unity Ministers, Credentialed Leaders, Spiritual Leaders, Ministry Coordinators and Lay Leaders**

- A. I will hold all leaders in esteem and respectful regard, and use all rightful means to protect the personal and professional honor of all other credentialed or lay leaders.
  - 1. I will honor & support the work of other credentialed or lay leaders.
    - a. I will refrain from conversations with member(s) of another community that undermine the decisions or actions of the ministry's leadership. Should members of that community come to me for opinions, input, or advice about their ministry, I will encourage them to talk to the ministry's leadership.
    - b. I will reach out to the Regional Representative or UWM Member Services to process concerns I might have about the leadership of another ministry.
    - c. I will provide cooperative assistance to other leaders as they endeavor to do ministry or serve on a ministry team.

2. When assuming the leadership of an established ministry as a credentialed, lay, or Board of Trustee leader, I will avoid criticism of the former leadership or their work. In those rare times when an ethical lapse by a prior ministry's leadership has occurred, I will be truthful and compassionate while maintaining confidentiality.
  3. After leaving a ministry I will relinquish my work with that ministry. I will modify my relations with members of that ministry to support the highest interest of the current Unity ministry and its leadership.
    - a. I will not directly participate in that ministry in any way without the approval of the ministry's current credentialed leader (or leadership team in the absence of a credentialed leader).
    - b. I will refrain from actively soliciting the participation of this ministry's members in any new ministry endeavors I begin without the permission of the current credentialed leader (or leadership team in the absence of a credentialed leader).
  4. When I am disturbed by the activities of another credentialed or lay leader:
    - a. I will communicate directly with that leader.
    - b. If necessary, I will consult with my Regional Representative and/or UWM Member Services.
    - c. I will hold the situation in prayer.
    - d. If guided, I will file an Ethics Review System complaint.
  5. When I am disturbed by the activities of another Unity ministry:
    - a. I will communicate with the appropriate leaders of the ministry.
    - b. If necessary, I will consult with my Regional Representative and/or UWM Member Services.
    - c. I will hold the situation in prayer.
    - d. If guided, I will file an Ethics Review System complaint.
- B. As an assistant or associate minister or a licensed Unity teacher:
1. I will give the senior credentialed leader full support and cooperation.
  2. I will not criticize the credentialed leader in any way, or discuss the credentialed leader in a negative way with any ministry member, board member, or person outside the ministry.
  3. If a problem arises:
    - a. I will discuss it directly with the senior credentialed leader.
    - b. In cases of perceived violations of the Code of Ethics, I will consult with my Regional Representative and/or UWM Member Services.
    - c. If guided, I will file an Ethics Review System complaint.
- C. Ethics Review System members and relevant Unity Worldwide Ministries staff must be able to speak frankly about ethical violations in Ethics Review System reviews, in Ethics Review System training, and in evaluations of the Code of Ethics. Performing these activities is not to be construed as a violation of the Code of Ethics; nor is engaging in communications with the Ethics Review Team about a credentialed or lay leader when a review is in process to be construed as a violation of the Code of Ethics.

## **V. Relating to Ministries**

- A. I will not directly attempt to draw members or congregants away from any other established ministry or group without the permission of the ministry leadership.
- B. I will not use a ministry for personal gain. Any funds or assets that have been raised in the name of a Unity ministry will be registered in the name of that ministry and not in the name of an individual. I will not mishandle funds or give the appearance of mishandling funds.
- C. I will be ethical and respectful in my conduct and attitude toward other ministries or denominations, organizations, and metaphysical groups.

## **VI. Relating to Our Unity Worldwide Ministries**

- A. I will first seek the full approval of Unity Worldwide Ministries before initiating a Unity ministry (church or alternative).
- B. I will work in harmony and accord with Unity Worldwide Ministries.
- C. I will, to the best of my ability, communicate and embody the Unity Worldwide Ministries' values, mission, vision, and goals.
- D. I will adhere to the policies and bylaws of Unity Worldwide Ministries.

## **VII. My Pledge**

I sincerely devote myself to living in accord with this Code in letter and in spirit. I recognize our Unity Worldwide Ministries and this Code of Ethics as a framework in which I individually agree to function. I recognize that such an agreement augments our mutual and individual effectiveness.

## Appendix A: Self-Care Standards & Rubrics

	<b>BEGINNING</b>	<b>DEVELOPING</b>	<b>COMPETENT</b>	<b>EXCEPTIONAL</b>
<b>C.1 Takes time for renewal of spirit, mind, and body.</b>	Articulates an awareness of the need for self-care. (Exercise, sports, nutrition, fun, friends, counseling, vacations, regular time off, hobbies/passions, and spiritual renewal)	Designs a plan for self-care and begins implementing.	Maintains a self-care plan and is consciously aware of needs and how to address them. Listens and acts on feedback from others.	Models a life of regular renewal of spirit, mind, and body. i.e. sabbatical, vacations, and daily self-care
<b>C.2 Cares for the body with good nutrition exercise and rest.</b>	Expresses awareness of the need for physical self-care.	Describes one current area of physical self-care.	Describes 2 areas of current physical self-care.	Describes 3+ areas of current physical self-care.
<b>C.3 Says yes and also able to say no in order to prevent burn-out.</b>	Describes choices as well as competencies and capacities; identifies imbalances in self that can lead to personal burnout.	Verbalizes signs/symptoms of burnout and is developing skills and strategies to avoid burnout.	Describes making choices based on what will work and what will not work for them at the time. Takes action to avoid burnout.	Models and teaches self-care and living a balanced life. Leads by strengths. Follows through with commitments and declines what does not fit in. (no guilt)
<b>C.4 Able to ask for help.</b>	Expresses recognition for the need to ask for help, and identifies barriers to follow-through.	Expresses recognition of comfort levels in asking for help and cites examples of follow-through.	Describes concisely asking for help and expresses comfort in doing so.	Models and teaches the value in asking for help.
<b>C.5 Balances work, relationships, and recreation.</b>	Describes the importance for balance in life and cites examples of taking breaks from ministry to pursue other interests.	Describes development and beginning implementation of a plan for balanced living.	Describes continual awareness and adjustments needed to maintain balanced living.	Teaches and models continual awareness and adjustments needed to maintain balanced living.



## **POLICY ON CREDENTIALLED LEADERSHIP SEXUAL CONDUCT IN MINISTRY** **Appropriate Relationship Boundaries in Ministry**

### **I. Purposes**

This policy addresses the issue of sexual misconduct including, but not limited to, sexual molestation, sexual abuse/harassment, and sexual exploitation by Unity Credentialed Leadership. The policy also specifies procedures by which a Unity Credentialed Leader can ethically transition a pastoral relationship into a personal or romantic relationship.

### **II. Scope of Policy**

For simplicity, the term “Credentialed Leader” is used to apply to all a) ordained or licensed Unity Ministers (active and inactive), b) licensed Associate Ministers, c) Licensed Unity Teachers, d) Spiritual Leaders serving Unity churches under special dispensation from Unity Worldwide Ministries, e) Spiritual Leaders and Study Group Coordinators of churches and study groups affiliated Unity Worldwide Ministries, f) Ministerial Education Candidates, g) Ministers in the Field Program.

Individual Unity ministries are strongly encouraged to formally adopt their own separate policy on sexual conduct to include lay leaders or associate ministers from other faiths, or guest presenters that are not under the sanction of Unity Worldwide Ministries. (Examples of policies which could be adopted for use in local ministries are available on the Sacred Safety page at [www.unityworldwideministries.org/sacred-safety-background-checks-and-resources](http://www.unityworldwideministries.org/sacred-safety-background-checks-and-resources).)

### **III. Core Values in Sexual Misconduct Cases**

- 1.** Unity Worldwide Ministries is called to respond compassionately and directly to every allegation of sexual misconduct by a credentialed leader. Unity Worldwide Ministries has an intention to respond to the spiritual needs of all interested parties: the alleged victim, the complainant(s), the credentialed leader against whom accusations are made, as well as the congregation and the Unity Movement as a whole. This is a very different set of priorities than is commonly found within the private sector.
- 2.** Every allegation of sexual misconduct deserves careful consideration and a prompt appropriate response.
- 3.** Fair procedures for handling complaints of sexual misconduct need to provide due process to all parties in interest.

4. A uniform procedure of peer review for resolving allegations of sexual misconduct provides a sense of justice and impartiality for all concerned.

5. The Ethics Review System (ERS) Case Review Team and/or the Judicatory Representative may consult with other persons with expertise concerning the issues and unique concerns regarding alleged incidents of sexual misconduct in order to facilitate their review.

#### **IV. Definitions of Sexual Misconduct by Credentialed Leaders**

1. The term “sexual misconduct” in the context of credentialed leadership embraces several distinct yet interrelated concepts, a) sexual molestation, b) sexual harassment, and c) sexual abuse or exploitation.

- a. Sexual Molestation is the unwarranted sexualized touching of any person, including but not limited to, any sexual involvement or sexual contact with a person who is a minor or who is legally incompetent.
- b. Sexual Harassment by a credentialed leader may occur within any aspect of a credentialed leader’s roles and responsibilities, or in a pastoral relationship. It includes, but is not limited to, conduct such as sexually oriented humor or language; questions or comments about sexual behavior or orientation unrelated to legitimate employment qualifications; inappropriately sexualized comments about clothing or physical appearance; and/or repeated unwelcome requests for social engagements or dates. Sexual harassment may lead to a hostile work environment that compromises the integrity of the ministry.

The term “sexual harassment” also includes, but is not limited to, acts which constitute a violation of the sexual harassment as defined in the federal law of the country in which the ministry is located. For example, Title VII of the U. S. Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 provides a detailed definition of sexual harassment as follows:

- (1) “Quid pro quo” harassment refers to sexual harassment (requests for sexual favors, sexual remarks about an individual’s body or clothing, sexual stereotyping, unwelcome or offensive sexual comments, and other conduct of a sexual nature) by a supervisor or other person in authority which operates – either through submission or rejection by the victim – as the basis for any employment decision affecting the victim. Common examples of “quid pro quo” harassment are hiring, granting or denying a promotion, demotion, transfer, training, salary increase, discharge, work assignments and/or volunteer opportunities on the basis of the victim’s response to unwelcome acts of sexual harassment.
- (2) “Hostile work environment” harassment is any conduct that creates a hostile work environment even though the victim has not suffered a tangible employment injury as, for example, denial of raises or promotion or termination. To state a legal claim for “hostile work environment” harassment, the sexual harassment must be sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the victim’s employment and create an abusive working environment.
- (3) Under federal law, “sexual harassment” also includes any reprisal or retaliation against anyone by any co-workers or supervisors because that person in good faith, reports a violation or suspected violation of sexual misconduct, whether or not the reported violation is substantiated by an investigation.
- (4) Any pertinent state or common law definition of “sexual harassment” that is enacted would also apply.



- c. “Sexual Exploitation” includes but is not limited to, the development of or the attempt to develop a physical or sexual relationship between a credentialed leader and an employee, congregant, or volunteer as well as any person with whom he/she has any pastoral or professional relationship, whether or not there is apparent consent from the individual.
- d. Where political jurisdiction imposes a higher standard, credentialed leaders must adhere to that higher standard.

2. The term “pastoral relationship” or “ministerial capacity” means: a relationship between a credentialed leader and any person to whom such credentialed leader provides counseling, pastoral care, prayer support, spiritual direction or spiritual guidance, including that received from Sunday services and/or church-related classes, workshops, retreats, weddings, funerals, or any other church-related activity.

3. A “romantic relationship” includes dating and/or an expressed desire for personal, physical, and sexual intimacy with another person.

4. The term “minor” means anyone who has not attained eighteen [18] years of age or as defined by applicable local law.

5. The term “professional counseling” means counseling by an accredited professional in the area of psychiatry, psychology, social work, or family therapy which does not include any elements of spiritual direction or guidance.

## V. Sexual Misconduct

1. Child sexual abuse and/or molestation includes physical, sexual, and psychological harm to a minor or any person who is incompetent or who has a diminished mental capacity that is at the level of a child. It includes, but is not limited to, any act against a minor or incompetent person that constitutes a crime under applicable state and federal law. Allegations of child sex abuse or molestation shall be reported to proper authorities.

2. Any unwelcome or non-reciprocal sexualized overtures or conduct either verbal, non- verbal, or physical by a credentialed leader towards a co-worker or a member of his or her staff or congregation constitutes sexual misconduct. It includes, but is not limited to, acts, which constitute a crime under applicable law. It may include sexually oriented humor or language, questions or comments about one’s sexual behavior or preference, unwelcome or undesired physical contact, inappropriate comments about one’s clothing or body, or repeated requests for dates or social engagements.

Sexual harassment includes but is not limited to: **a.** Verbal sexual innuendo, suggestive comments, insults, degrading humor and jokes about sex or gender specific traits, threats. **b.** Non-verbal suggestive or insulting sounds; leering; whistling; obscene gestures; display of objectionable posters, cartoons, pictures and/or magazines. **c.** Physical touching such as pinching; brushing the body; coerced sexual relations; assault.

3. Sexual misconduct occurs whenever a credentialed leader has any sexualized or romantic contact, interaction and/or relationship with anyone whom the credentialed leader came into contact with while serving in any ministerial capacity. When there is an imbalance of power there cannot be meaningful consent for romantic or sexual relations between a credentialed leader and anyone the credentialed leader meets while in a ministerial role. One way to define "power" is the possession of one or more bases of power which include: formal authority, charisma, wealth, race, age, position or connections, emotional influence, rewards and punishment, expertise, physical appearance, gender or sexual influences, intellectual or verbal ability, and secrecy (withholding of pertinent information). Within a ministry, the credentialed leader possesses multiple bases and therefore more power than others in the ministry.

Even if the possibility of romantic or physical involvement appears to be initiated by the congregant, it is the credentialed leader's responsibility to maintain the boundaries of the pastoral relationship. The question of the intent of the credentialed leader is not a factor: romantic or physical involvement with an adult congregant is sexual misconduct until and unless the pastoral relationship has been discontinued by following the procedures specified in Section VI. Beyond the Pastoral Relationship.

## **VI. Beyond the Pastoral Relationship**

[**Note:** This is about helping the credentialed leader be responsible in reciprocal adult relationships, with provisions that protect the credentialed leader, church, Unity Worldwide Ministries and other individuals involved.] The rule is that no credentialed leader shall have a romantic relationship with any person with whom s/he has a pastoral relationship, or with whom s/he has had a pastoral relationship within the past 6 months. However, in circumstances in which a romantic relationship might develop, these are the procedures to follow to comply with Unity Worldwide Ministries' Sexual Conduct Policy:

- 1.** A relationship between a credentialed leader and a person with whom the credentialed leader has a pastoral relationship at the same time carries with it the risk of coercion, misuse of power, and consequently, sexual exploitation. As such, no credentialed leader shall have a romantic relationship with any person with whom he or she has any ongoing pastoral relationship, or with whom s/he has had a pastoral relationship within the past 6 months.
- 2.** Whenever a credentialed leader recognizes that a romantic relationship is developing in the course of a pastoral relationship, they will immediately terminate the pastoral relationship, while ensuring that the other person has been referred to another independent source for appropriate pastoral support.
- 3.** The credentialed leader should promptly advise the Chair of the Board of Unity Worldwide Ministries, and/or the President of Unity Worldwide Ministries, and/or the President's designee of the existence of the romantic relationship and keep them apprised of any developments and be willing to openly discuss with the Chair and/or the President and/or the President's designee the issues and dangers inherent in this type of romantic relationship. If the credentialed leader is an Associate Minister or LUT, they shall notify their Senior Minister and/or sponsoring minister as well.
- 4.** No credentialed leader shall pursue or encourage romantic relationship with any person with whom he or she has had a prior pastoral relationship within the past 6 months unless both parties meet for professional counseling, outside their regular areas of ministry and/or work involvement. The credentialed leader shall notify the same people as identified in the above paragraph before instituting a romantic relationship.

Before a credentialed leader pursues or encourages any sexual or romantic relationship with any person with whom he or she had any prior pastoral relationship they must: a ) contact those identified above to review the requirements of the sexual conduct policy and to familiarize themselves with the issues and dangers inherent in pastoral congregant relationships and b) if serving at a local church, must notify his or her board of a developing romantic relationship and c) before any sexualized contact occurs, arrange a meeting with their prospective partner and an independent professional counselor who can advise them both of the inherent issues and dangers in a pastoral congregant relationship. The credentialed leader and/or their church shall pay for this counseling.

## REVIEW PROCEDURES

**1. Decision to review.** The decision to initiate a review of a minister accused of sexual misconduct shall be made by the Judicatory Representative after consultation with the Executive Director of Member Services. The policies and procedures outlined here are guidelines. A decision to review may be made or not made based on all of the facts and circumstances known to the appropriate Unity Worldwide Ministries' officials.

**2. Preliminary Review.** The Judicatory Representative has the authority to conduct a preliminary review and to initiate an Ethics Review System (ERS) process.

In a preliminary review, the Judicatory Representative will determine the exact nature of the allegation and request the reviewee complete a written statement in response to the allegation.

In a preliminary review, the Judicatory Representative, after hearing from the complaining party and the party against whom the complaint is brought, and after consulting with two (2) other individuals trained in the Ethics Review System process, has the authority to propose a resolution of the complaint to the parties involved. If the parties are agreeable to the resolution, and if the Judicatory Representative concludes that the ministry leader shall be cleared, then the preliminary review will be concluded except for "notice of disposition" and "handling records and information" as required by, and outlined herein. If, however, the Judicatory Representative feels that a Plan of Action or suspension of the ministry leader might be warranted, then the Judicatory Representative will initiate an Ethics Review System process.

### **3. Receipt of complaint.**

**a. Involving an adult.** Complaints of sexual misconduct involving an adult must be received from the complainant, preferable in writing. In the event that the complainant(s) chooses not to submit a written allegation, the Judicatory Representative may still decide to initiate a review if in his/her judgment an Ethics Review System process is warranted.

**b. Involving a minor.** In addition to being reviewed according to the procedures outlined here, complaints alleging sexual contact between a minister and a child will be reported to state child protection agencies.

**c. Time sensitive.** Any complaint of misconduct within the past five [5] years will be considered a current complaint. A complaint more than five [5] years old will be considered a lapsed complaint. Depending on the nature of a lapsed complaint, the Judicatory Representative may decide to initiate an Ethics Review System process. Complaints of sexual contact between a minister and a minor will be considered current no matter how long ago the alleged behavior occurred.

**4. No promise of confidentiality.** Unity Worldwide Ministries makes no promise of confidentiality with respect to communications of complaints or other allegations of any form of sexual misconduct. Unity Worldwide Ministries reserves the right to disclose information for the protection of others, to ensure the adequacy of the review by Unity Worldwide Ministries, and the ability of Unity Worldwide Ministries to take appropriate action consistent with this policy. Nevertheless, Unity Worldwide Ministries shall intend to limit disclosure to those individuals who have a need to know, including Unity Worldwide Ministries' Board of Trustees and Leadership Team, among others, and shall proceed with due sensitivity to the protection of the legitimate privacy interests of the persons affected by the allegations.

- **Demand for confidentiality.** A complainant may demand confidentiality. In that case the person receiving the complaint should advise the complainant that in most cases the request denies Unity Worldwide Ministries the ability to take any action to discipline the accused or prevent a recurrence. The President and CEO of Unity Worldwide Ministries shall be advised of the situation.

**5. Commencement of review.** The Judicatory Representative will begin his/her preliminary review as soon as possible, but not later than twenty-one [21] days after receiving the complaint, unless documented circumstances exist for delaying the commencement of the preliminary review.

**6. Paid leave of absence without prejudice.** Within three days after determining that a complaint merits an Ethics Review System process and prior to the commencement of the Ethics Review System process, the Judicatory Representative will recommend to the church's board that the accused leader be placed on a leave of absence with pay and without prejudice of ministerial standing pending the outcome of the Ethics Review System process. This recommendation to the board for a leave of absence without prejudice occurs as a matter of policy.

**7. Non-interference and cooperation with civil agencies.** If the alleged misconduct must be reported to any civil agency for investigation (as in the case of child abuse), the Judicatory Representative and/or Ethics Review System Case Review Team will contact the Executive Director of Member Services and conduct the respective review(s) in a manner that does not interfere with a civil or criminal investigation carried out by local authorities.

**8. Procedures for Review.** Allegations of sexual misconduct will be reviewed under the provisions of the Ethics Review System policies and procedures.

**9. Unsubstantiated allegations.** If the Judicatory Representative finds that the allegation of sexual misconduct cannot be substantiated and does not warrant an Ethics Review System process, he/she will provide the written decision to the Executive Director of Member Services and share such written decision as widely as the original allegation. The Judicatory Representative will also provide a written recommendation to terminate the leave of absence without prejudice specifying a date to the ministry and to the Member Services Coordinator.

**10. Notice of disposition.** When an outcome has been determined, the Judicatory Representative will contact the complainant and inform him or her of the action taken. The complainant will also be advised that the accused may choose to appeal the decision.

**11. Handling records and information.**

- a. **Substantiated complaints.** As outlined in the Ethics Review System [ERS].
- b. **Unsubstantiated complaints.** A report of all unsubstantiated complaints and related recommendations, along with any statement submitted by the minister about the complaint, shall be kept and maintained indefinitely in the minister's personnel file at Unity Worldwide Ministries' home office.
- c. **Disclosure of facts.** Nothing in the policy or in these procedures will be deemed to preclude disclosure of facts and circumstances surrounding any complaint or allegation to any insurer, attorneys, or other individuals whose assistance is sought in connection with the preliminary review or defense of any complaint or allegation.

**UNITY WORLDWIDE  
MINISTRIES SEXUAL CONDUCT  
POLICY & CODE OF ETHICS**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM**

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of Unity Worldwide Ministries' Sexual Conduct Policy & Code of Ethics. I acknowledge that I am expected to know and be familiar with the contents. I understand:

**Sexual Conduct Policy**

- That as a credentialed leader, I am responsible to maintain the boundaries of the pastoral relationship.
- That a variety of behaviors, some of which do not include physical contact, constitute sexual misconduct.
- That sexual misconduct is grounds for disciplinary action, including termination of employment or suspension from service.
- That this policy may be updated from time to time and that I will be responsible for reading and complying with the updates.
- That this policy does not create or affect any contract of employment and in no way limits the rights of Unity Worldwide Ministries to change its policies or procedures described herein.

**Code of Ethics**

- I sincerely devote myself to living in accord with this Code in letter and in spirit.
- I recognize our Unity Worldwide Ministries and this Code of Ethics as a framework in which I individually agree to function.
- I recognize that such an agreement augments our mutual and individual effectiveness.

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Signature

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Date