

Eastside Church of Christ

Sexual Misconduct and Harassment Policy

Preamble

Sexual misconduct is a breach of Christian ethical principles through or by the misuse of trust, authority, or power to gain advantage over another for personal pleasure in an abusive, exploitative, or unjust manner. In the case of church professionals (whether they are in ministerial, counseling, or other such relationships), no personal sexual relationship, either public or private, is permitted with anyone with whom the individual has a professional relationship. It is always the responsibility of the church officer or church worker to maintain appropriate sexual boundaries and limitations to ensure that sexual misconduct does not occur.

Policy

It is the policy of the Eastside Church of Christ, of Midwest City, Oklahoma, (hereinafter referred to as "EASTSIDE") that all ministers - ordained elders, deacons and licensed ministers, (hereinafter referred to as Ministers) church professionals, church officers, church members, non-member employees and volunteers of EASTSIDE are to maintain the integrity of ministerial, employment and professional relationships at all times. Sexual contact or sexualized behavior with another person, other than an individual's spouse while in EASTSIDE's volunteer service, ministerial, employment or a professional relationship, and whether or not such behavior is consensual or not, is never permitted. Likewise, sexual harassment of any kind is strictly prohibited.

Purpose

The purpose of this Sexual Misconduct and Harassment Policy (hereinafter "Policy") is to make explicit EASTSIDE's intention:

1. To prohibit the creation of an oppressive or degrading environment;
2. To provide for a policy to be followed in the placement of all who serve in the work of, or function on behalf of EASTSIDE; and

3. To provide for the imposition of appropriate remedies in cases of violation of this Policy.

TEACHERS/VOLUNTEERS AND EMPLOYEES

Teachers, volunteers and employees will be required to provide references which will be checked and verified. EASTSIDE requires that a teacher be a member of EASTSIDE for a minimum of six (6) months before being allowed to teach. The teacher will have an assistant in the classroom or will have a roving supervisor who checks in each classroom during the lessons. This can be accomplished by entering the classroom or by observing through the glass windows in the door or room. The teacher should vacate a classroom if alone with a student and an assistant is not present and conduct any visiting or discussions in the public hallway.

REFERENCES

Because EASTSIDE strongly opposes sexual misconduct, and because of the high moral and ethical character and conduct expected of volunteers and employees of EASTSIDE, candidates for any position within the EASTSIDE congregation are to provide sufficient information in writing to EASTSIDE so as to assure EASTSIDE of the suitability of the person for work with or for children or youth. In the event there exists any civil, criminal or prior church complaint, action and/or judgment regarding sexual misconduct and its disposition, the elders of EASTSIDE may make any inquiries as may be judged prudent and necessary to assess the suitability of the candidate for service in or on behalf of EASTSIDE. These inquiries shall include, but may not be limited to, a criminal records check through federal, state or local police departments or other criminal justice agencies.

SELECTION OF TEACHERS, HELPERS AND OTHER WORKERS

1. Persons desiring to work with children and youth will complete a staff application form. The applications will be kept on file and remain the property of the church and not the individual.
2. Personal interviews will be conducted with each volunteer or employee before being allowed to work in settings involving children and youth.
3. Criminal records checks will be made through appropriate agencies on church employees and volunteers who work with

children and youth. Any applicant with a conviction or plea for any kind of abuse with a minor or vulnerable adult will not be approved to be in contact with children, youth or vulnerable adults.

4. Unless there are certain, acceptable circumstances, these volunteers will be Members of EASTSIDE for a period of at least six months prior to participation.

TRAINING

1. Volunteers and employees will be required to attend an orientation meeting of the Children's and/or Youth Ministries of EASTSIDE.
2. Volunteers and employees will be required to review EASTSIDE's safety policies and this Policy.
3. Additional training will be provided for volunteers on an ongoing basis.

REPORTING PROCEDURE WHEN SEXUAL MISCONDUCT IS DISCOVERED OR SUSPECTED

There shall be no time limitation for EASTSIDE to take appropriate action in cases in which sexual abuse is alleged. No negative response shall be given to, nor negative action taken against, any person who reasonably and responsibly reports conduct in violation of this Policy.

Any person who has reasonable belief that a violation of this Policy has occurred by a person to whom this Policy is applicable is required to make report thereof in a prompt and timely manner to the administrative minister and/or elders of The Congregation. Failure to provide notification of reasonable belief of violation of this Policy is itself a violation of the Policy. In order that confidentiality be maintained and that the procedures of EASTSIDE not be compromised, any person that has reasonable belief that a violation of this Policy has occurred is to make report thereof to EASTSIDE and/or the civil authorities as may be required by statute, but is not to propagate rumor by further repetition of hearsay, allegations, or suspicions. It is then the responsibility of EASTSIDE to exercise ecclesiastical jurisdiction with regard to its policy.

Therefore, there will be zero tolerance for any kind of retaliation against anyone making a good faith complaint or raising a good faith concern.

SUBSEQUENT REPORTING

Any person notified of an alleged violation of this Policy is to record the names of the accused and accuser, together with a brief description of the alleged offense, and shall forward such record to the administrative minister of EASTSIDE for the initiation of appropriate procedures. An investigation will be conducted. The depth of the investigation will depend on the information provided. If information or a report is made to the administrative minister, the elders should be notified as soon as possible.

When a violation of a criminal statute has occurred (as in the case of child abuse or when otherwise required by civil law), any person who has direct personal knowledge of such violation is to make report to the appropriate governmental agency in addition to making report to the pulpit minister or elders.

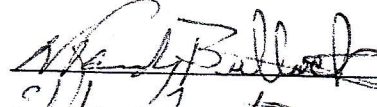
The goal of EASTSIDE with regard to accusations of violation of this Policy and procedure on sexual misconduct is to ensure that an effective, caring and expeditious response is made to persons, institutions and entities which may be affected by either a violation or professional ethics or the allegation of a violation. In all cases, all persons shall be treated with respect, and personal integrity shall be presumed.

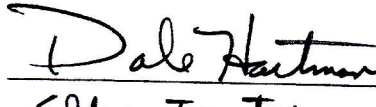
ROLE OF STAFF

The role of the administrative minister is limited to receiving complaints, serving as consultant/resource to the judicial process. The elders will respond to media inquiries, should such occur, designating the administrative minister to be the spokesperson for, and on behalf of, EASTSIDE. (It is to be understood that only the administrative minister, or elders, or an attorney acting on behalf of, and representing EASTSIDE is limited to providing appropriate support and counsel to the judicial process, but is not intended to include responsibility for either counsel or management. These roles are to provide a channel for communication and to describe existing process.

Approved by the Eastside Church of Christ elders on
12 June, 2011.


Elder - Trustee


Elder - Trustee


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