

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)



SYNOD OF THE TRINITY CODE OF CONDUCT

Personnel Adopted January 2005 and Reviewed June 2005
Synod Approved February 24, 2005 and June 30, 2005
Revised by Synod February 21, 2008 and June 10, 2009
Revision adopted by the Governing Commission September 29, 2016

**The Synod of the Trinity
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**

**Code of Conduct
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INTENT OF CODE OF CONDUCT

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The Synod's goal in formulating this Code of Conduct is to be proactive in its effort to prevent abuse and inappropriate behavior from occurring. These requirements are in anticipation that all participants in Synod functions and activities are aware of expectations regarding personal behavior.

All persons, employed staff, elected members of Committees, Advisory Teams and Commissions, Synod Mission Networks, and other affiliated persons and organizations involved with the Synod are to comply with state and federal laws, and the *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Fair treatment of all individuals is required to encourage full participation in the work of the Synod.

The Synod's position regarding violation of this Code of Conduct is Zero Tolerance.

PERSONS COVERED

This Code of Conduct applies to all persons elected as Commissioners and Officers of the Synod, employed staff, members of Committees, advisory teams, Advisory Teams and Commissions, as well as Synod Mission Networks, and anyone acting on behalf of the Synod. Some customers, organizations, vendors, and others doing business with the Synod of the Trinity will also be covered.

Ministers of Word and Sacrament are ultimately accountable to their Presbytery of membership; Elders and Deacons are accountable to their Sessions; employees and all others who are not covered by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) *Book of Order* disciplinary process are accountable to the Synod Policy Governance Commission through the Synod Executive.

DISTRIBUTION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Distribution and confirmation of receipt of the Code of Conduct shall be as described in this document.

- A. All employed staff of the Synod shall receive a copy of the Code of Conduct and shall be required to sign the Acknowledgment and Acceptance Form located at the end of this document.
- B. Synod Commissioners shall receive a copy of the Code of Conduct prior to their first Synod meeting as a Commissioner. The Acknowledgement and Acceptance Form is to be signed and returned to the Synod Stated Clerk before the Commissioner is seated.
- C. When Elders, Ministers or others are appointed to, or elected to, participate on Synod Committees, Advisory Teams or Commissions, the Synod Stated Clerk, at the time of notification of appointment or election, shall include a copy of the Code of Conduct and an Acknowledgement and Acceptance Form and shall

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advise those who are appointed or elected of the requirement that it be signed and returned to the Synod Stated Clerk before the person will be allowed to participate.

- D. When a Synod Mission Network is created, the Synod Stated Clerk shall include a copy of the Code of Conduct and an Acknowledgment and Acceptance Form to the primary contact person advising that all Network members should be made aware of the Code of Conduct and expected to adhere to it. The primary contact person shall sign the form and return it to the Synod Stated Clerk on behalf of the Synod Mission Network.
- E. The Stated Clerk shall have authority under this policy to decide which businesses, organizations, vendors, and others doing business with the Synod are to receive a copy of the Code of Conduct and which shall be required to sign an Acceptance and Acknowledge Form. The Clerk will consult with other Synod staff or Officers in reaching this decision.
- F. The Stated Clerk shall provide a current copy of the Code of Conduct to each Presbytery within the Synod, so that the Presbyteries, as they seek nominees to serve as Commissioners or in other Synod positions, are aware of the requirements of the Code of Conduct.
- G. Should the Code of Conduct be amended, redistribution of the amended policy is to be made and Acknowledgement and Acceptance Forms secured.
- H. If an individual is required, but unwilling to sign the required Acknowledgement and Acceptance Form, that individual may not serve on a Committee or Advisory Team or represent the Synod in any capacity. An employee or elected Synod Officer unwilling to sign may jeopardize his or her employment or status with the Synod.

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

Sexual misconduct is prohibited by the Synod of the Trinity and will never be condoned nor tolerated. All facets of definitions, reporting and responding to sexual misconduct, harassment, abuse, child, youth and vulnerable adults shall be governed by policies as adopted by the Synod Governing Commission or the Synod Assembly.

FIDUCIARY RESPONSIBILITIES AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST

It is the policy of the Synod of the Trinity to maintain high standards of integrity, honesty, and impartiality in its financial relationships. Therefore, the Synod will not tolerate any impropriety in the exercise of its direct fiduciary responsibilities nor in its financial relationships with the Presbyteries or their member churches.

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Persons involved in the financial decisions and operations of the Synod are subject to the limitations indicated below and are responsible for ensuring that these criteria are enforced. They must promptly report any identified or suspected unrecorded asset or liability, prohibited financial activity, or financial misconduct to the Synod Executive, Synod Treasurer, Chairperson of the Synod Personnel Committee, or Chairperson of the Synod Finance and Budget Committee.

- A. Persons directly involved with Synod finances may not be related to each other either by blood or marriage (for example: Treasurer/Bookkeeper; auditing or accounting firm staff; Finance and Budget Committee members).
- A. The use of the Synod's assets for any unlawful or improper purpose is strictly prohibited.
- C. No undisclosed or unrecorded asset may be established for any purpose.
- D. No false entries may be made in the financial records of the Synod for any reason and no staff member or Officer may engage in any arrangement that results in such prohibited acts.
- E. No payments may be approved or made with the intention that any part will be used for any purpose other than that described in supporting documents.
- F. Transactions involving officials of the Synod must be adequately controlled and disclosed in Synod records.
- G. Financial transactions may occur only in the normal course of business and must be approved by the Synod Commissioners or by others identified in the adopted financial policies of the Synod.
- H. Synod Officers and staff members are prohibited from accepting a gift, honorarium, or payment for providing a service that would normally fall within the duties of his or her Synod position. Synod Officers and staff may accept a gift, honorarium, or payment for a service if such service **is** considered outside the scope of his or her position with the Synod.
- I. The Synod shall not do business with a company with which an Officer, staff member, Commissioner, or member of the Finance and Budget Committee is associated.

Should an elected or appointed Synod participant be called upon to participate in a decision in which the interests of the Synod may conflict with his or her personal interests, he or she shall refrain from participating in the discussion or vote on the decision to avoid even the appearance of conflict of interest or special interest. A vote to abstain will be recorded for that person.

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Officers and employees shall avoid even the appearance of conflict of interest or special interest. If an employee discovers that he or she may be in a position of conflict of interest, he or she should abstain from discussions and report the potential conflict to the Synod Executive, Synod Treasurer, or Stated Clerk.

EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

The Synod shall maintain a confidential personnel file containing documents related to this policy for every employee.

The Synod shall include questions in pre-employment screenings concerning any previous complaints of any kind of misconduct. All applicants shall be informed of any reports of misconduct and given the opportunity to respond and explain. All records shall be maintained by the Synod.

All persons considered for employment at the Synod shall pass a Criminal Background Check, a Child Abuse Clearance, and an FBI Clearance. These reports will be done at the expense of the Synod. Reports shall be updated every five years.

Falsification of any information including the record of any previous complaints or allegations of misconduct on the employee's application is grounds for immediate dismissal.

RECORDS RETENTION AND REPORTING

All records relating to this Code of Conduct will be stored in the office of the Synod Stated Clerk and will be made available by the Stated Clerk as needed. Copies of signed Acknowledgement and Acceptance Forms will be retained for each Synod staff member in his or her individual personnel file for as long as he or she is employed and for seven additional years after having ended employment with the Synod.

Signed Acknowledgment and Acceptance Forms required of persons participating in the work of the Synod as members of Committees, Advisory Teams, Commissions, Networks, or other groups, as well as businesses or organizations, are to be stored in a separate file maintained by the Synod Stated Clerk and retained for three years following completion of service or termination of activity with the Synod.

At the ~~first~~ annual Synod meeting, the Synod Stated Clerk shall call Commissioners attention to the contents of the Code of Conduct and note who has not signed the Acknowledgment and Acceptance Form.

The Synod of the Trinity
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

CODE OF CONDUCT

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND ACCEPTANCE

This is to be signed and forwarded to the Synod Stated Clerk:

I hereby acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Code of Conduct of the Synod of the Trinity of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). I have read the Code of Conduct, understand its meaning and agree to conduct myself in accordance with it. I further understand that the Synod of the Trinity has a policy of ZERO TOLERANCE regarding the issues covered in this Code of Conduct and the policies of sexual misconduct, and child/youth/ vulnerable adult protection as adopted by the Governing Commission or Synod Assembly.

(Signature)

(Date)

(Print Name)

(Received by an Officer of the Synod)

(Date)

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