

Standards of Conduct for Missionary Workers

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD WORLD MISSIONS



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I. Preamble

As persons with whom Assemblies of God World Missions¹ has contracted to provide services and to represent AGWM in various capacities in AGWM's missional work throughout the world, missionaries of all categories, including, without limitation, fully appointed career missionaries, missionary associates, MAPS workers, and short-term ministers abroad, and whether on the overseas field or elsewhere (each, an **"AGWM Missionary Worker"**), are expected to uphold the highest standards of Christian conduct so that AGWM's Kingdom work is not impeded.

Because of its specifically Christian calling, the scriptural mandates relating to believers being persons of good report and of maintaining an unimpeachable Christian witness, as well as AGWM's sincerely and deeply held religious beliefs and convictions, including without limitation, those summarized in the Statement of Fundamental Truths and Position Papers of the General Council of the Assemblies of God, of which AGWM is a division, AGWM's standards of conduct apply to All Missionary Workers.

Unfortunately, there may be times when AGWM Missionary Workers will fall short of biblical standards or the principles and values that govern AGWM's mission, ministries, or operations (collectively, **"Improper Conduct"**). For the sake of clarity for AGWM Missionary Workers and to guide them during the time of their association with AGWM, this document is designed to explain AGWM's general standards for Christian conduct in the specific and unique context of those who serve as AGWM Missionary Workers.

II. Improper Conduct

It is impossible to provide a complete list of what might be Improper Conduct. But Scripture does provide ample guidance regarding Christ's expectations for His followers. Based on AGWM's understanding of the scriptural testimony and on AGWM's sincerely and deeply held religious beliefs and convictions, examples of Improper Conduct include, but are not limited to:

¹ Assemblies of God World Missions (**"AGWM"**) and The General Council of the Assemblies of God (the **"GC"**) are, together with their respective subsidiaries and affiliates, the officers, directors, employees, licensees, servants, staff, volunteers, independent contractors, other agents or representatives of any of the foregoing, or any one or more of them, referred to collectively in this document as the **"AGWM-GC Parties."**

- A. Sexual misconduct, other moral turpitude, or other conduct that leads to loss of Christian testimony;
- B. Substance abuse;
- C. Harassment (sexual and otherwise), other physically, verbally, or emotionally abusive behavior, or unlawful discrimination;
- D. Health and safety violations;
- E. A contentious, noncooperative spirit or other failure to submit to proper authority and leadership;
- F. Failure to properly manage missions funds, including, without limitation:
 - 1. Embezzlement or inappropriate or unauthorized use of mission funds;
 - 2. Failure to maintain adequate records regarding the use of mission funds, failure to account for or to provide required and accurate reports relating to the use of mission funds, or deliberate falsification of financial reports or documents; or
 - 3. Any other financial mismanagement of any kind.
- G. Theft, fraud, criminal activity, failure to comply with civil laws, vandalism, sabotage, or any unethical or dishonest behavior of any kind;
- H. General incompetence in the ministry or other failure by an AGWM Missionary Worker to comply with any of his or her responsibilities;
- I. Any other conduct by the AGWM Missionary Worker that jeopardizes in any way whatsoever his or her continuing ability, or the continuing ability of any other missionary (whether or not appointed by AGWM), to provide the services that the person in question was contracted by AGWM to provide;
- J. The AGWM Missionary Worker's engagement in conduct (including the missionary's words, acts, or deeds) that reflects, or that could reasonably be anticipated to reflect, negatively as determined by AGWM leadership, upon the reputation of any AGWM-GC Parties, or that subjects, or could reasonably be anticipated to subject, any AGWM-GC Parties to public disrepute, contempt, scandal, or ridicule;
- K. Retaliating against an AGWM Missionary Worker for making a Report in good faith under these Standards of Conduct;
- L. Making a Report in bad faith under these Standards of Conduct;
- M. Failure to conform to the standards and principles set forth in Article IX of the Bylaws of the GC (the "**GC Bylaws**") relating to Doctrines and Practices Disapproved;

- N. Loss of ministerial credentials with the GC² or any other disciplinary action taken by the GC or by any investigating District against the AGWM Missionary Worker or by any other organization that would also be considered grounds for disciplinary action if the Missionary Worker held credentials with the GC;
- O. Conduct that might jeopardize the nonprofit tax-exempt status of any of the AGWM-GC Parties pursuant to Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code;
- P. Open failure to support or disagreement with the doctrinal views or practices of the GC, including without limitation, its Pentecostal testimony or the Sixteen Fundamental Truths set forth in Article V of the Constitution of the GC, its position papers, or the missional values, purpose, or objectives of any AGWM-GC Parties; or
- Q. Any conduct otherwise unbecoming of an AGWM Missionary Worker as a representative of Christ, of any AGWM-GC Parties, or of the sincerely and deeply held religious beliefs and convictions of AGWM-GC Parties.

The foregoing list is not intended to be exhaustive and only comprises some examples of behavior that might constitute Improper Conduct.

III. Reporting and Non-Retaliation

To protect the integrity of the ministry and the cause of Christ, AGWM is committed to the promotion of an environment in which AGWM Missionary Workers are held to the highest Standards of Conduct. As such, AGWM encourages AGWM Workers to report promptly all concerns of potentially Improper Conduct (each, a **“Report”**):

- A. Although alleged Improper Conduct may come to AGWM’s attention in many ways, any person submitting a Report (a **“Reporter”**) should do so in writing unless doing so is impossible or impractical under the circumstances.
- B. Reports shall be treated as confidential consistent with the relevant provisions of these Standards of Conduct.
- C. Retaliation by any person against a Reporter for submitting a good faith Report or for participating in an Investigation pursuant to these Standards of Conduct is a serious violation of the Standards of Conduct and constitutes Improper Conduct. Acts of retaliation should be reported immediately and will be promptly investigated and addressed.
- D. Reports made in bad faith may constitute Improper Conduct and will be promptly investigated and addressed.

² If an AGWM Missionary’s GC ministerial credentials are terminated, then their AGWM Missionary Worker’s contract, services, and status shall automatically terminate and any appeal is governed by the GC Constitution and Bylaws rather than by the procedures set forth in these Standards of Conduct.

- E. A Reporter is not guaranteed to receive the results or outcome of any investigation of any Report (each, an **“Investigation”**) or any action taken as a result of the Report.

IV. Consequences of Improper Conduct

If, after appropriate investigation, an AGWM Missionary Worker is found to have engaged in Improper Conduct, then AGWM may take one of the following actions (each, a **“Consequence”**):

- A. Terminate the AGWM Missionary Worker’s contract or services immediately and without further action; or
- B. In keeping with its deeply and sincerely held religious belief and conviction that Christ wants His Church to exemplify His own redemptive nature,³ elect to allow the AGWM Missionary Worker an opportunity to preserve his or her contract or service with AGWM (a) by complying with such redemptive and/or corrective conditions, or (b) AGWM may take any other action as AGWM deems appropriate under the circumstances.⁴

V. The Investigative and Resolution Process

AGWM is committed to a complete review of all relevant facts and circumstances and to the preservation of the dignity and overall health and safety of all persons involved when there is a claim that an AGWM Missionary Worker may have engaged in Improper Conduct, and, if so, then what the consequences of such Improper Conduct should be.

A. The Investigative Process

- 1. Regardless of how a Report is brought to AGWM’s attention, AGWM shall investigate all good faith allegations of Improper Conduct.⁵
- 2. The primary person responsible for any Investigation will be the Regional Director to whose Region the AGWM Missionary Worker in question is assigned

³ Judgment is to be rendered in love with forgiveness as the hallmark and redemption as the goal (Matthew 18:15,21–22; 2 Corinthians 2:6–8; Galatians 6:1–2; James 2:12–13).

⁴ **NOTE:** It is only AGWM’s deeply and sincerely held religious beliefs and convictions, including without limitation, the desire that an AGWM Missionary Worker would be redeemed and restored to a right place before God and that those affected by any Improper Conduct would also find healing and peace, that might result in a Consequence that is not immediate termination of the AGWM Missionary Worker’s contract. It is for the same reason that any Investigation and any decision regarding allegedly Improper Conduct is to be conducted, in its entirety, within the ecclesial structure and based on principles arising from AGWM’s deeply and sincerely held religious beliefs and convictions (judgment among Christians is to be carried out within the body of Christ, not by civil courts (Matthew 5:25; 1 Corinthians 6:1–8); the leadership of the Church is authorized to exercise judgment over believers (Matthew 16:19, 18:18; John 20:23; Acts 15:6,28, 16:4; Hebrews 13:17)).

⁵ Sinful behavior is to be confronted and exposed (Proverbs 28:23; Matthew 18:15–17; Luke 17:3; Ephesians 5:11; 1 Timothy 5:20; 2 Timothy 4:2; Titus 2:15).

(the “**Supervising Regional Director**”) and all Reports of which AGWM becomes aware will be delivered to the Supervising Regional Director for resolution according to these guidelines. In the event the Report is against the Supervising Regional Director, then the Administrator of AGWM will be the primary person responsible for Investigation of any Report and all references to a Supervising Regional Director in these guidelines will be deemed to refer to the Administrator of AGWM.

3. Upon becoming aware of a Report, the Supervising Regional Director may, at his or her election: (a) a third party to conduct an independent investigation; (b) conduct an investigation with one or more other persons who meet the criteria for an AGWM Designee below; or (c) assign two or more appropriate persons at AGWM or other appropriate persons holding ordination credentials with the GC to conduct the Investigation. Persons selected by the Supervising Regional Director are referred to collectively as **AGWM Designees**” and each separately as an **“AGWM Designee.”** Any AGWM Designee should, among other things, be a person of demonstrated Christian spiritual maturity and of good report and who possesses such other skills determined by the Supervising Regional Director to be relevant to the subject matter and nature of any Investigation.
4. An Investigation may include whatever elements the AGWM Designee believes are relevant to complete the Investigation in a thorough manner that is designed to preserve the dignity, honor, and spiritual, emotional, and physical health and safety of all AGWM Missionary Workers.⁶
5. During the pendency of any Investigation, the Supervising Regional Director may restrict or suspend the AGWM Missionary Worker’s service with AGWM according to such terms as the Supervising Regional Director deems appropriate.
6. Upon completing the Investigation, the AGWM Designee should deliver to the Supervising Regional Director a written **“Investigation Summary”** describing:
 - (a) The allegations prompting the Report;
 - (b) How the Investigation was conducted, including the names of any persons interviewed and identifying any documents reviewed;
 - (c) The AGWM Designee’s conclusion regarding whether or not there are sufficient grounds to conclude that the AGWM Missionary Worker in question engaged in Improper Conduct; and
 - (d) All other facts and information the AGWM Designee deems relevant within the scope of the Investigation.

⁶ Revenge must not motivate correction (Proverbs 24:29; Matthew 5:40; Leviticus 19:18; Romans 12:17–19).

7. If upon receipt of a Report or during the course of any AGWM Investigation, the Supervising Regional Director determines that potential Improper Conduct could constitute cause for disciplinary action under Article X, Section 3 of the GC Bylaws against an AGWM Missionary Worker who holds a GC ministerial credential (a **“Credentialed AGWM Worker”**), then:
 - (a) The Supervising Regional Director shall report the potential Improper Conduct and provide a copy of the Report to the relevant District pursuant to Article X, Sections 4 and 5 of the GC Bylaws;
 - (b) The relevant District may then proceed, consistent with the GC Constitution and Bylaws, the District Constitution and Bylaws, and their own established processes to investigate the allegations of the Report as they deem necessary (the **“District Investigation”**);
 - (c) Any District conducting any District Investigation will have concurrent but independent jurisdiction with AGWM regarding the investigation of any supposed Improper Conduct by a Credentialed AGWM Worker and any District Investigation may commence and continue concurrently with any Investigation being conducted by AGWM according to these guidelines. Provided, however, that neither the District nor AGWM will be bound by the investigation, conclusions, or policies of the other and each retains the right to exercise its investigation and disposition or enforcement authority independently according to the relevant processes and procedures applicable to the District or to AGWM, as the case may be.
 - (d) The Supervising Regional Director shall remain in contact with the investigating District to determine the progress and results of the District Investigation; and
 - (e) If the District Investigation concludes before the conclusion of the Investigation by AGWM and results in the loss of credentials by the Credentialed AGWM Worker, then the Credentialed AGWM Worker’s contract, services, and status with AGWM will automatically terminate and any appeal of said loss of credentials the **“District Appeal”** is governed by the GC Constitution and Bylaws rather than by the procedures set forth herein. Provided, However, that notwithstanding the foregoing, AGWM may if it deems appropriate, continue its Investigation during the pendency of or after the resolution of any such a District Appeal and any appeal of the results of AGWM’s Investigation that is not implicated by the District Appeal will be governed by the procedures set forth herein.

B. Final Disposition by the AGWM Executive Committee

1. If upon receiving the Investigation Summary, the Supervising Regional Director believes that sufficient grounds exist to conclude that the AGWM Missionary

Worker in question engaged in Improper Conduct, then the Supervising Regional Director shall notify the AGWM Missionary Worker in question that:

- (a) The Supervising Regional Director has concluded that the AGWM Missionary Worker in question engaged in Improper Conduct and the Consequence that the Supervising Regional Director believes is appropriate under the circumstances; and
 - (b) The Supervising Regional Director will be presenting the matter and his or her recommendation to the AGWM Executive Committee (the “**EC**”) for final resolution.
2. For all matters submitted to the EC for final resolution:
- (a) The EC may, as an ecclesial body, take such action and impose such Consequence it believes are appropriate under the circumstances; and
 - (b) The Supervising Regional Director shall notify the AGWM Missionary Worker in question of the action taken by the EC (the “**EC Determination**”).

C. Appeal to the World Missions Board

1. Within thirty (30) days of receipt of the EC Determination, the AGWM Missionary Worker in question (the “**Appellant**”) may submit to the Supervising Regional Director a request to appeal (the “**Appeal**”) the EC Determination to the World Missions Board (the “**WMB**”).
2. Upon receipt of the Appeal, the Supervising Regional Director shall notify the EC, which shall then forward the Appeal, together with all relevant reports and other materials, to the WMB.
3. Upon receipt of the Appeal, the WMB may, among other things:
 - (a) Deny the Appeal if the WMB determines that:
 - (1) The Appellant did not submit its Appeal by the applicable deadline;
 - (2) In the Appeal, the Appellant has stated insufficient grounds for an appeal;
 - (3) Upon review of the Appeal and all relevant reports and other materials forwarded by the EC, the WMB determines the EC has adequately investigated the Report and that the EC Determination is proper; or
 - (4) There are other grounds for denial of the Appeal.
 - (b) Grant the appeal in whole or in part if the WMB determines, after a review of the Appeal and all relevant reports and other materials forwarded by the EC, that the EC Determination is incorrect or should be amended, in which case the WMB may:

- (1) Overrule and set aside the EC Determination in its entirety; or
 - (2) Modify and amend the EC Determination in such ways and on such terms as the WMB determines are appropriate; or
- (c) If the WMB believes that the record it has received is insufficient to make a proper determination regarding the Appeal, then remand the case back to the EC with specific requests and questions for the EC to cause to be investigated, after which investigation:
- (1) The EC shall prepare and submit to the WMB for its review the results of the additional investigation (the **“Supplemental Investigation Report”**); and
 - (2) The WMB shall review the Supplemental Investigation Report together with the original Appeal and all relevant reports and other materials originally forwarded by the EC and dispose of the appeal in accordance with the guidelines of Sections 3(a), (b), and (d) of this document; or
- (d) Take such other actions that it determines to be appropriate under the circumstances.
4. The WMB shall notify the Appellant of the WMB’s disposition of the Appeal.

D. General Provisions

1. The Report, identity of the Reporter, identity and testimony of interviewees, Investigation Summary, Supplemental Investigation Reports, and any other minutes, files, reports, summaries, notes, or other documents or materials prepared for the Supervising Regional Director, for the EC, for the WMB, or any other person necessary for compliance with these guidelines (the **“Report-Receiving Parties”**) during the course of, in connection with, or related in any way to the Investigation or to the subject matter of the Investigation are prepared and intended to be for the Report-Receiving Parties only and are not intended to, and should not, be shared with any person other than the Report-Receiving Parties and such other persons whom the EC deems appropriate.
2. AGWM and the WMB shall use their best efforts to keep all information and documents gathered in the course of any Investigation confidential.⁷ Despite this general commitment to confidentiality, during the course of, and to conduct properly any Investigation, AGWM or the WMB may be required to share certain confidential information with, among others, witnesses, interviewees, others with relevant knowledge, AGWM personnel, other members of the WMB, or other similarly situated people, or if required by law or

⁷ It is specifically forbidden to spread gossip or slander or to betray confidences (Exodus 23:1; Leviticus 19:16; Proverbs 6:19; 11:13; 16:28; 20:19; Romans 1:30; 1 Corinthians 6:10; 2 Corinthians 12:20; Titus 2:3).

court order or for reasons outside AGWM's or the WMB's control or for some other reason not currently contemplated.

3. AGWM shall maintain all Investigation files for a period of seven (7) years from the later to occur of the date: (a) of the EC Determination; or (b) of the final disposition of any Appeal to the WMB.
4. AGWM will aim to conduct and conclude all Investigations as expeditiously as reasonably possible under the circumstances, without compromising the thoroughness of the Investigation.
5. For all determinations, decisions, approvals, withholdings of approval, or any other actions whatsoever required or permitted to be made or taken by any person under the provisions of these guidelines:
 - (a) The person in question may make or take such determinations, decisions, approvals, withholdings of approval, or any other actions whatsoever in the exercise of his, her, or its sole and unfettered discretion; and
 - (b) Except as otherwise specifically referring to another person, all such determinations, decisions, approvals, withholdings of approval, or any other actions whatsoever required or permitted to be made or taken by AGWM under the provisions of this document are intended and will be deemed to refer to the EC.
6. Subject only to the provisions of Section V(C) above, all determinations, decisions, approvals, withholdings of approval, or any other actions whatsoever required or permitted to be made or taken by the EC, will be final and not subject to any further review or appeal.
7. All determinations, decisions, approvals, withholdings of approval, or any other actions whatsoever required or permitted to be made or taken by the WMB, in accordance with the provisions of Section V(C) above, will be final and not subject to any further review or appeal.