



1. Where do I find the Presbytery's sexual misconduct policy?

- ❖ <http://pbygenval.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/47/2016/02/Policy-on-Sexual-Misconduct-Policy-revised-May-2010.pdf>

2. Is the Policy current?

- ❖ Despite not being updated since 2010, some sections (such as III. Principles and IV. Terms and Definitions) remain very current.
- ❖ Some sections are not current, because:
 - Social and digital media are not included.
 - Certain Church roles – deacons, ruling elders, teaching elders, commissioned ruling elders, Certified Christian Educators – are now Church-mandated reporters of sexual abuse. The *Policy* has not been updated to reflect this reality.
 - As of June, 2015, the *Book of Order* requires each council to “adopt and implement a sexual misconduct policy and a child protection policy.” Our *Policy* has nothing regarding PGV-sponsored events, e.g., Youth Triennium, and whether and how background checks of chaperones are conducted. PGV has no dedicated *child protection policy*.

3. Is the policy comprehensive?

- ❖ There are some notable ways the *Policy* is comprehensive:
 - Attachment C., Safe Sanctuaries: Protecting Children in Our Congregation, identifies core values – e.g., child safety “is always the church’s primary concern” – and specific actions for responding to allegations of child sexual abuse.
 - Attachment E. is a procedure for preserving records in Church disciplinary cases following renunciation of the Church’s jurisdiction by a PGV member accused of sexual misconduct. (The *Book of Order* is silent on this circumstance.)
- ❖ However, there are gaps. The language regarding reporting would benefit by being strengthened and addressing situations involving minors and adults who lack mental capacity. The *Policy* would be improved by including a continuous emphasis on protecting children and youth, especially section I., Preamble, A. Purpose.

4. Is there anything in the Policy to which a newcomer should be especially alert?

- ❖ The *Policy* has a strong commitment to, and rationale for, disclosing the truth of sexual boundary violations, and contains practices to implement this commitment. (Those practices have been tested in this Presbytery and are proven to be effective.)
- ❖ Section VI., Intervention Procedures, D. Separation Practices, #1d. This cross-references PGV’s, *Policy on Automatic Administrative Leave in Cases of the Accusation of ‘Sexual Abuse of Another Person.’* PGV requires “imposition of automatic administrative leave” when a teaching elder has been formally accused of “sexual abuse of another person,” as defined by the *Book of Order*. See: <http://pbygenval.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/47/2016/02/PGV-COM-Policy-on-Automatic-Administrative-Leave.pdf> See: 1. Introduction, 1a. Scope.

Document reviewed by Mel Olver, attorney for Presbytery of Genesee Valley.