

**A Program for the Restoration
and Reinstatement of
Disciplined Ministers**

Administration Manual

**Adopted by the National Conference of the
Assemblies of God in Australia – May 1999**

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United Constitution**

ADMINISTRATION MANUAL

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SECTION ONE

A STATEMENT ON RESTORATION AND REINSTATEMENT OF DISCIPLINED MINISTERS

THE NEED TO BE BLAMELESS—ABOVE REPROACH

Anyone who wishes to be a minister of the gospel must live a blameless Christian life and be of good report with those who are within and without the church (Titus 1:7, 1Timothy 3:7).

Such a qualification places high expectations on the ministry and also indicates that those in leadership are required to have a higher standard than others in the congregation.

“The word here used (blameless) does not mean that, as a necessary qualification for office, a bishop should be perfect; but that he should be a man against whom no charge of immorality, or of holding false doctrine, is alleged. Undoubtedly it means that if any charge could be brought against him/her implying moral obliquity, he/she is not fit for the office. He should be a man of irreproachable character for truth, honesty, chastity, and general uprightness.”

(Barnes Commentary)

Obviously, this does not mean the minister is sinless or perfect. First John 1:8 (Amplified) states: *“If we say we have no sin – refusing to admit that we are sinners –we delude and lead ourselves astray, the Truth...is not in us.”* Titus 1:7 implies and emphasizes that the focus is on remaining “unaccused.” This means that an individual does not have significant accusations of impropriety, immorality, or unethical behaviour, which would be in violation of various civil and spiritual laws. This admonition intimates something more weighty than mere differences of opinion, style, management, methods, preferences, or dislikes. First Timothy implies the same interpretation of one who has not been convicted, disgraced, nor defamed due to inconsistencies in lifestyle which contradict the Word of God.

How can a minister who has experienced failure be declared “blameless”? What is the test? Who applies the test? Is there a point or place at which a man can be restored to ministry and declared “blameless” and “above reproach”?

The scriptures call for a good reputation. This would seem to come back to the matter of community opinion. A ‘community’ could be defined as the body of believers to which an individual belongs or to the physical location in which he/she lives. Rehabilitation to the level of being considered ‘blameless - above reproach’ within these communities may mean taking whatever time is necessary for these communities to declare the man presently trustworthy or

blameless and above reproach. Otherwise, who has the authority to declare him/her above reproach?

Rehabilitation programs must deal with not only forgiveness, but the restoration of trust - trust that is established over time and which re-establishes the individual's character and reputation.

The burden of restoring trust is on the fallen minister, not the Australian Christian Churches, church, spouse, or family.

THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF DISCIPLINE

Discipline is an exercise of scriptural authority for which the Church is responsible. The aims of discipline are that God may be honoured, that the purity and welfare of the ministry be maintained, and that those under discipline may be brought to repentance and restoration.

Discipline is to be administered for the restoration of the minister, while fully providing for the protection on the spiritual welfare of our local assemblies. It is to be redemptive in nature as well as corrective and is to be exercised as under a dispensation of mercy.

It is agreed that however badly a minister may have fallen he/she can, upon genuine repentance (as far as we can judge), be restored to fellowship in the local Church. However, this does not guarantee restoration to ministry.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF DISCIPLINE

The discipline of all ministers within the Australian Christian Churches is the responsibility of the National Executive of the Australian Christian Churches. The National Executive has delegated some of its functions to the State Executives as described in this policy.

UNITED CONSTITUTION

Article 11 of the United Constitution of the Australian Christian Churches lays down the conditions for the discipline of ministers. It reads as follows:

Article 11.1 Certificates

The Movement recognises four certificates with respect to ministry, namely:

- Ordained Minister's Credential (OMC)
- Provisional Minister's Credential (PMC)
- Specialised Ministry Certificate (SMC)
- Overseas Associate Minister's Certificate (OAMC)

Article 11.7 Issuance and Suspension of Credentials and Certificates

- 11.7.1** All credentials and certificates are issued by the National Executive.
- 11.7.2** The National Executive may establish such procedures as it considers just and necessary to investigate any complaint against a credential or certificate holder prior to consideration of such complaint by the National Officers.
- 11.7.3** Credentials and certificates may be suspended or withdrawn on the grounds of improper conduct or false teaching by decision of a majority of the National Officers either on their own motion or upon recommendation of a State Executive. The National Executive may appoint other persons in particular cases to comprise a panel to assist the National Officers in the task of deciding whether or not to suspend or withdraw a credential or certificate in such cases.
- 11.7.4** All applications for credentials and certificates shall be made on the application forms and according to the processes prescribed by the National Executive.
- 11.7.5** The administration of the application and processing of credentials and certificates may, at the discretion of the National Executive, be delegated to the states but the responsibility for setting standards and required qualifications shall remain the responsibility of the National Executive. States may not change application procedures and requirements for the holders of these credentials and certificates except on a uniform national basis with the approval of the National Executive.
- 11.7.6** In extreme and emergency cases, where there is sufficient evidence of improper conduct or false teaching on the part of a credential or certificate holder, the National President (or his appointee), on the advice of the appropriate State President, shall have the power to suspend a Minister's Credential or Ministry Certificate for a period of up to thirty days, pending investigation by the State Executive, who will then make recommendation to the National Officers.
- 11.7.7** The National President should be immediately informed of a formal complaint against a credentialed minister that may, in the opinion of the State President, lead to the suspension of the minister's credential or ministry certificate.

Article 11.8 Right of Appeal

All credential/certificate holders who have their credentials or certificates suspended or withdrawn shall have right of appeal to the National Executive.

11.8.1 The right of appeal to the National Executive shall be granted, provided that written notice of appeal is lodged with the National Secretary, not later than thirty days after notification of the suspension or withdrawal of his/her credential or certificate.

11.8.2 The right of hearing shall, in such cases, be before the National Executive or any persons they may appoint.

11.8.3 The decision of the National Executive shall be final in relation to substantial outcome of, and procedure to be adopted upon, the appeal.

Article 11.9 Right of Appeal for National Executive Personnel

If the credential/certificate holder whose credential/certificate is suspended or withdrawn is a member of the National Executive:

11.9.1 The right of appeal shall be to an appeals board, consisting of the State President of each state (or his appointee if the State President is a member of the National Executive)

11.9.2 The right of appeal to the appeals board shall be granted, provided that written notice of appeal is lodged with the National Secretary, not later than thirty days after notification of the suspension or withdrawal of his/her credential/certificate.

11.9.3 The decision of the appeals board, in relation to the appeal, shall be final.

CAUSES OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION

A very high standard of behaviour is required of ministers of the gospel. When an Australian Christian Churches minister violates scriptural principles in his/her behaviour it is the responsibility of the Australian Christian Churches Movement to take appropriate disciplinary action and to attempt to bring about restoration in the minister's life.

Specific causes of disciplinary action include:

- a. Any moral failure involving sexual misconduct.
- b. Inappropriate behaviour in relation to church or personal finances.

- c. Behaviour unbecoming of a minister. This can be assessed on the basis of 1 Tim 4:12; 1 Peter 5:1-3; 1 Tim 3:2-12; Titus 1:6-11 and Gal 5:19-21.
- d. Heretical teaching.

EXTENT OF DISCIPLINE

In many areas of discipline, State Executives will exercise correction and/or discipline at their discretion. However, in relation to “moral failure involving sexual misconduct”, there are particular legal and moral constraints that require a detailed policy. This policy document can be used as a guide for all cases of the discipline of ministers but it is mandatory for those cases relating to serious sexual misconduct.

‘Sexual misconduct’ covers a whole range of behaviours from inappropriate speech and communication to intercourse and perverse activities such as those listed in Appendix One. Sexual misconduct of all kinds is inappropriate for a minister and requires correction and change. The steps listed below however, are appropriate for ‘serious’ sexual misconduct. State Executives may choose to exercise another form of correction or discipline for other forms of sexual misconduct. The National Executive has the right to intervene if it considers this discipline inappropriate.

Whether sexual misconduct is defined as ‘serious’ may be determined by the State Executive but sexual intercourse (and activities approaching or similar to intercourse) and perverse activities including (but not exclusive to) those listed in Appendix One will always be considered as ‘serious’ and must be dealt with according to this policy.

1. EXCLUSION FROM MEMBERSHIP

In the case of prolonged or perverse sexual misconduct which has been brought to light and which appears to be clear from the evidence available, and in the event of no acknowledgment of guilt, a person may be excluded from membership in an Australian Christian Churches church.

2. DISMISSAL FROM THE MINISTRY

In cases where sexual misconduct has been admitted or appears highly likely from the evidence available and the complaints procedure described in Article 11.7 of the United Constitution has been undertaken, a minister may be dismissed from ministry. All effort should be made to restore such persons in their relationship with God, their church, their spouse and their family but restoration to ministry may not be possible due to the extent or perversity of the sexual misconduct. (See the sections on ‘Screening Process’ and ‘A suggested approach to evaluating the fallen minister for placement in a program of rehabilitation’ – Appendix One for further details).

3. ADMISSION TO A PROGRAM OF REHABILITATION

In some cases (following the procedure as set out in Articles 11.7 and 11.8 of the United Constitution) the State Executive may recommend that a minister apply for admission to a program of rehabilitation to ministry. The following is a summary of some of the major conditions of rehabilitation:

- (a) The minister's life, up to the act of misconduct, has been above reproach.
- (b) The minister's confession, upon being confronted with the action of misconduct, is immediate and complete and his/her repentance is judged to be genuine.
- (c) The minister hands in his/her credential.
- (d) The minister faithfully attends a local assembly for a period of two years.
- (e) After one year, the minister may be permitted to minister the Word in the local assembly during the second year.
- (f) At the expiration of the two years, during which the disciplined minister has fulfilled the required conditions, the officers of state may consider such for recommendation to restoration of his/her ministerial certificate.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Background

This procedure applies where a person issued with a certificate by the Australian Christian Churches is alleged to have engaged in improper conduct or heresy, contrary to Article 11.2 of the United Constitution.

This procedure has been put in place;

- To provide a uniform procedure to be followed in all States across Australia
- To alleviate the difficulties faced in negotiating the moral, legal and ministry minefields which emerge as allegations are made
- To ensure a safe environment for the children under our care in accordance with guidelines for Child Protection
- To support certificate holders in the midst of significant allegations
- To provide natural justice for the certificate holder
- To provide support and ministry for the complainants
- To ensure that serious allegations are treated seriously and investigated fully

- To maintain and ensure high moral and ethical standards for certificate holders
- To minimize the movement's exposure to legal action.

There are four types of certificates issued by the Australian Christian Churches (Assemblies of God in Australia):

- Ordained Minister's Certificate
- Probationary Minister's Certificate
- Specialised Ministries Certificate
- Overseas Associate Minister's Certificate

All credentials and certificates are issued by the National Executive and the power to suspend or withdraw those certificates rests with the National Officers.

This procedure is for guidance only. The State or National Executive may decide not to follow the Procedure, or apply a truncated version of the procedure, where they consider it necessary.

Confidentiality

Throughout the Grievance Procedure, the relevant Executive will seek to maintain the confidentiality of all the parties involved, and the content and nature of the complaint that has been made. However, this will not always be possible, especially where the information is already outside of the Executive's control, completing duties require the release of the information, or it is otherwise in the interests of Australian Christian Churches to release the information. In such circumstances, the Executive may decide to release the information as it deems appropriate.

Step One – Receipt of Complaint

Where a person alleges that a Certificate Holder has committed improper conduct or heresy, that person (the "Complainant") must fully document the allegation in writing and forward it to the State Executive. Whilst another person may forward it to the State Executive on the Complainant's behalf, the Complainant must still be clearly identified.

For the purposes of this Procedure, this document is referred to as the "Complaint".

The Complaint must include the Complainant's contact details.

It should be made clear to the Complainant that the written complaint will be made available to the Certificate Holder against whom the complaint is being made. This is a requirement of natural justice.

In the event that a Regional Leader receives the Complaint, they must forward it to the State Executive within 72 hours.

If there is any possibility of litigation in relation to the Complaint, the State Executive's insurer should be notified as soon as possible.

The State Executive will consider the Complaint. If the State Executive considers (in its absolute discretion) that the complaint is frivolous, or that further action against the Certificate Holder is not necessary, the State Executive may decide to dismiss the complaint.

Note: If the Certificate Holder who is the subject of a Complaint is considered to have a prominent national ministry and the National or State Executive consider it to be appropriate, the National Executive may assume responsibility for the Grievance Procedure from this point. In such a case, all references to the State Executive in the steps below should be read as applying to the National Executive.

Step Two – Mandatory Reporting

Upon receipt of the Complaint, the State Executive will determine whether the Complaint must be reported to the relevant authorities under State or Territory legislation (i.e. for child safety reasons).

Whilst the 'mandatory reporters' vary across different States and Territories, the Australian Christian Churches has decided that it will voluntarily report all cases of child abuse regardless of various state based requirements.

Step Three – Suspension

The State President will consider whether there is sufficient evidence of a serious breach of ministerial conduct to justify suspension of the Certificate Holder's certificate pending the investigation and final decision. In this regard, the State President, in consultation with the National President, has the power to suspend all certificates for a period of 30 days pending investigation by the State Executive.

If the State President is considering suspending the Certificate Holder's certificate, it will:

- Provide the Certificate Holder with a copy of the Complaint
- Advise the Certificate Holder that it is considering suspending the Certificate Holder's certificate
- Invite the Certificate Holder to respond in writing within 48 hours regarding why the certificate should not be suspended; and
- Consult with the National President regarding the decision, taking into account the Certificate Holder's written response (if any).

The State President will advise the Certificate Holder in writing of its decision, including the period of the suspension.

If the investigation is not complete within the suspension period, the State President may decide to renew the suspension for a further period. The State President will provide the Certificate Holder with a further opportunity to respond before renewing a suspension period.

Step Four – Consider whether a full investigation should be delayed pending criminal proceedings

If there is an ongoing criminal investigation into the circumstances of the Complaint, the State Executive will contact the relevant authorities before further investigating the Complaint. Care must be taken not to prejudice the criminal proceedings. In this regard, further investigation by the State Executive will generally not proceed unless the criminal proceedings have concluded or the Certificate Holder otherwise consents to the investigation proceeding.

However, where the State Executive investigation is delayed pending the criminal proceedings, the State President may still decide to suspend the Certificate Holder's credentials, and to continue to renew those suspensions.

Step Five – Investigation by the State Executive

The State Executive will appoint a person or persons (the Investigator(s)) to investigate the Complaint. The Investigator may be a member of the State Executive.

The Investigator will consider the Complaint and may contact the Complainant or any other person as he/she considers deems necessary, for further information.

The Investigator will provide the Certificate Holder with a copy of the Complaint and details of any other statements he/she has obtained during the investigation.

The Investigator will then invite the Certificate Holder to provide a response to the Complaint. The Certificate Holder is not obliged to provide a response at this time.

The Investigator will prepare a report for the State Executive, documenting the evidence it has obtained during the investigation (including statements by the Complainant and the Certificate Holder). The Investigator may comment on the credibility of the Complainant, Certificate Holder or other witnesses in this report, but **will not** conclude whether the Complaint has been proved.

Step Six – Consideration of the Investigator’s Report by the State Executive

The State Executive will nominate a number of its members (the Committee) to consider the Investigator’s Report and make a preliminary determination as to whether the Certificate Holder may have engaged in improper conduct or heresy.

If the Committee’s preliminary determination is that the Certificate Holder may have engaged in improper conduct or heresy, it will request the Certificate Holder provide a written response for further consideration before making a final decision.

The request to the Certificate Holder will:

- Set out each Complaint in which it is alleged that the Certificate Holder has engaged in improper conduct or heresy. Where a Complaint contains separate allegations of improper conduct or heresy, the Complaints will be separately identified;
- For each Complaint, particulars will be provided indicating the evidence on which the Complaint is based;
- Enclose a copy of the Investigator’s Report;
- Enclose any other material that the Committee intends to consider when making its decision; and
- Invite the Certificate Holder’s written response within 21 days.

Step Seven – The Committee’s Final Decision

The Committee will consider the Investigator’s Report and the Certificate Holder’s response (if provided) with a view to determining whether the Certificate Holder has, on the balance of probabilities, engaged in improper conduct or heresy.

If the Committee considers the Certificate Holder has engaged in improper conduct or heresy, it will proceed to Step Eight.

If the Committee considers that the Certificate Holder has not engaged in improper conduct or heresy, it will advise the Certificate Holder, Complainant and the National Executive in writing. If a certificate has been suspended, it will be reinstated.

The written report from the investigator shall be kept on file by the State Executive but it must be kept in strict confidence.

Step Eight – Determination regarding appropriate disciplinary action

Where the Committee decides that the Certificate Holder has engaged in improper conduct or heresy, it will consider possible action that might be taken in response to the breach.

Action that might be taken includes discipline and restoration (in accordance with 'A Program for the Restoration and Reinstatement of Disciplined Ministers'), suspension of the certificate or cancellation of the certificate.

The Committee will provide the Certificate Holder with a written summary of the action it is considering recommending through the State Executive to the National Officers and provide the Certificate Holder with an opportunity to respond.

The Committee will take that response into consideration before deciding on a final recommendation through the State Executive to the National Officers.

Step Nine – Recommendation through the State Executive to the National Officers

The Committee will make a recommendation on the appropriate action to be taken through the State Executive to the National Officers. The National Officers will advise the Certificate Holder of the final decision.

Step Ten – Right of Appeal

Pursuant to Article 11.8 of the United Constitution, the National Executive will consider any appeal by a Certificate Holder, provided written notice of the appeal is lodged by the Certificate Holder with the National Secretary within 30 days of notification of the suspension or withdrawal of the certificate.

The Certificate Holder must, at the time of lodging the Appeal, provide its reasons in writing for why the certificate should not be suspended or withdrawn.

The National Executive will consider the submission by the Certificate Holder and any other material available to it before making its decision. The decision of the National Executive will be final.

NOTIFICATION BY MINISTER

If a minister is involved in any action warranting disciplinary action or if he becomes aware of a complaint against him, he must report it immediately. The report should be made to the State President or the person nominated to deal with such issues.

PUBLICATION OF EXCLUSION OR DISMISSAL

No publication of a dismissed minister's name, or details of his/her offence, shall be made until all rights of appeal have expired and the State Executive has been authorised to do so by the National Executive. Any such publication will then be at the discretion of the State Executive as the circumstances demand. All other State Executives will be informed that the minister has been dismissed.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF ADMISSION TO A PROGRAM OF REHABILITATION

As much as possible, the names of ministers admitted to a program of rehabilitation should not be made public. However, all State Executives should be informed of relevant information on a confidential basis and may respond to inquiries with a simple statement that the minister has been admitted to a rehabilitation program.

SECTION TWO

SCREENING PROCESS

Who will be considered for rehabilitation? Should everyone be rehabilitated or restored to ministry? There is no question that all need restoration and rehabilitating to God, family, and the community.

First, the National Conference has determined that no rehabilitation should be considered in the case of a minister who offends in the area of: (1) homosexuality; (2) paedophilia; (3) incest; (4) 'second misconduct'. 'Second misconduct' relates to a misconduct committed after a minister has been previously disciplined and restored to ministry.

Second, before rehabilitation is determined suitable, the following questions and concerns need to be addressed by the State Executive:

1. How long ago did the misconduct occur?
2. What was the duration of misconduct? Rehabilitation may be considered less effective as an option as the duration of the misconduct increases.
3. How many other persons have been involved? Rehabilitation may be considered less effective as an option as the number of persons involved increases.
4. What is the attitude of the offending minister? Does the individual express genuine remorse and repentance over his/her behaviour, or simply remorse at being caught? What is his/her attitude toward the other person(s) involved and toward the State Executive or others in authority?
5. How was the misconduct discovered? Did the minister confess voluntarily, or was the individual caught? If there is a confession, is it complete?
6. What was the prognosis of a professional counsellor? In many cases, this prognosis should be secured.
7. Has the minister sought forgiveness from the other person(s) involved in his/her impropriety?
8. Has there existed any deception or half-truths during the course of discovery? State leaders are encouraged to seek and exercise spiritual discernment in these cases.
9. Is a support structure in place? Does the minister, upon entering

rehabilitation, have a support network of friends and family to walk with him/her during this time?

10. Has advice in relation to liability been obtained from a solicitor? Officers of the State Executive must exercise care in deciding to select a minister who has offended in a sexual manner for the rehabilitation program that enables him/her to return to ministry. This is because the position of a minister places him/her in a particular relationship of trust with the people under his/her care and in some cases these people are particularly vulnerable.

The State Executive could be regarded as negligent if it failed to exercise a due standard of care in this decision making process. The standard is that of the reasonable person exercising judgement in this position and the test which is applied by the courts would be whether it was reasonably foreseeable by such person that a further incident could occur.

Dr Richard Dobbins has stated: *“We have come to the point where we cannot provide a democratic approach to rehabilitation. It is not a right, but a privilege. It is necessary that we become more restrictive in who becomes a part of the rehabilitation program.”*

In conjunction with the above screening process, adequate testing should be done.

These tests could determine the type of help needed:

1. Physical testing or checkups.
2. Psychological testing.

The State President is requested to review with the State Executive Appendices One and Two as part of the process for evaluating whether or not a minister should be recommended for rehabilitation.

Appendix One provides *‘A Suggested Approach to Evaluating the Fallen Minister for Placement in a Program of Rehabilitation.’*

Appendix Two, *‘Personally Characteristic Rating Scale for Admission to Ministerial Rehabilitation Program,’* developed by Dr Richard Dobbins, elaborates Section IV, F, of Appendix One. This scale is designed to help determine the type of person who would be a potential candidate for the rehabilitation or someone who should not be considered. This or a similar rating system, should be put in place, done by an outside agency which can be objective and not influenced by friendship or peer relationships.

THE DECISION: TO DISMISS OR REHABILITATE?

On completion of these investigations and after consideration by the State Executive, a decision must be made. If, on the basis of the evidence available, disciplinary action against the minister is considered necessary, a further decision must be made on whether to recommend that he/she be:

rehabilitated

or

dismissed, or (in extreme cases) excluded from membership.

If the State recommendation is to dismiss or exclude from membership, the State President is asked to write down the reasons for not recommending rehabilitation and forward them to the National Executive. The State President is asked also, in the case of a minister recommended for dismissal, to note Sections V and VI in Appendix Four, *A Suggested Ministry to the Fallen Minister and His/Her Family.*"

If the State recommendation is to rehabilitate, the State President is asked to review with the State Executive and the minister the following Appendices:

Appendix Three *'A Biblical Theology for the Rehabilitation of Ministers'*

Appendix Four *'A Suggested Ministry to the Fallen Minister and His/Her Family'*

SECTION THREE

REHABILITATION CHECKLIST

Minister's name _____

1. Ways ministerial discipline originates:
 - a. State President hears the minister's confession
 - b. State President receives accusation from complainant(s).
 - c. State President hears the minister's response.
 - d. State President evaluates complaint.
2. In the event the minister does not confess to any wrongdoing, the State President will notify, in writing, the minister of any complaints and set a date for meeting with the minister and their spouse.
3. State President considers credential restrictions within the guidelines of the policy.
4. At some point, in order for rehabilitation to be offered, guilt must be established and the minister must confess.
5. In the event of sexual misconduct, the State President will generally talk with 'the other party.' Helpful guidelines for such contact are given in Appendix Five.
6. State President or his/her representative meets with the minister and his spouse:
 - a. State President reviews relevant materials from Appendices Three and Four with minister and spouse.
 - b. Minister signs confession (use form on Appendix Seven).
 - c. Minister and spouse sign Rehabilitation Request Agreement (Use form on Appendix Eight).
 - d. Minister signs Limited Disclosure Agreement (use form at Appendix Ten).
 - e. Minister is informed that if rehabilitation to ministry is desired, a psychiatric and/or psychological evaluation may be required.
 - f. Minister is informed about the evaluation process and his/her status in the meantime.

16. The National Executive considers the State Executive's recommendation, makes a decision and the National Secretary notifies the minister and State Executive in writing of that decision and the reasons for it.
17. The supervising pastor is available for restoring those ministers who are not being returned to ministry, as well as those who have been approved for suspension with rehabilitation.
18. The supervising pastor submits to the State President reports (monthly for the first 6 months, quarterly thereafter) on the minister being rehabilitated to the ministry (Appendix Twelve).
19. The minister in rehabilitation submits monthly reports to the State President and supervising pastor (Appendix Thirteen).
20. The State President gives the State Executive regular reports of the minister's progress.
21. The State President or Secretary reports to the National Executive twice yearly (prior to regular Executive meetings) on the minister's progress.
22. In consultation with the supervising pastor, the State Executive recommends to the National Executive a date at which rehabilitation should be complete. Such a recommendation should be forwarded, together with a copy of every item in the rehabilitation file (correspondence, reports, evaluations, etc.) to the National Secretary for action.
23. The National Secretary notifies the minister in writing of the date approved by the National Executive for the completion of the rehabilitation program, the lifting of the suspension, and the minister's restoration to good standing.
24. The minister meets with the State Executive for prayer as he/she is released afresh into ministry.

APPENDIX ONE

A SUGGESTED APPROACH TO EVALUATING THE FALLEN MINISTER FOR PLACEMENT IN A PROGRAM OF REHABILITATION

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. People are the church's greatest assets.
- B. Saving people from sin—unbelievers and believers—is the primary mission of the church (Mark 16:15,16; 1 John 1:7-9).
- C. Today, this often requires the minister to deal with the sexual sins of others within the local church.
- D. In this licentious society, sexual sins are prevalent among believers.
 - 1. In 1988, Leadership magazine polled 1,000 non-clergy subscribers to Christianity Today and found that 23 percent admitted to sexual intercourse outside of marriage.
 - 2. In that same survey, Leadership polled nearly 1,000 pastors and found that:
 - a. 12 percent of the pastors confessed to extramarital intercourse, and 23 percent admitted to some form of sexually inappropriate behaviour while in local church ministry.
 - b. 69 percent of those with whom the pastor was sexually involved came from his/her congregation.
 - c. Only 17 percent of these were the pastor's counselees.
 - d. In 78 percent of the cases, pastors gave physical and emotional attraction as their primary motivation.
 - e. In 41 percent of the cases, marital dissatisfaction was given as the primary motivator.
- E. When ministers get sexually involved with congregants, employees, or counselees, the legal implications can be staggering for the minister, his/her local congregation, and his/her credentialing body.
- F. A most common sexual sin among ministers is an involvement with pornography that ranges from infrequent viewing to addiction.

- G. Nevertheless, fallen ministers need a redemptive gospel.
 1. The minister is human and subject to all the temptations this implies(1 Corinthians 10:1-13).
 2. Therefore, when ministers fall into sexual sin, they need to discover their denominational fellowship reaching out to them with the same gospel of redemption they have extended to others.
- H. However, this does not necessarily mean that the minister will be rehabilitated to public ministry.

II. **FORGIVENESS AND RESTORATION OF TRUST ARE SEPARATE ISSUES**

- A. Nevertheless, in the rehabilitation of a fallen minister, one must distinguish clearly the difference between:
 1. Forgiving the fallen minister of his/her sins.
 2. Trusting him/her to enter public ministry again.
- B. Many believers mistakenly assume the immediate restoration of trust is biblically necessary to show that forgiveness has been extended.
- C. These people insist that Jesus' teachings require this and appeal to the following passages for proof:
 1. *"For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins"* (Matthew 6:14,15).
 2. *"Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, 'Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?' Jesus answered, 'I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times'...This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart"* (Matthew 18:21,22,35).
 3. Although both of these passages place believers under an obligation to forgive those who have wronged them, neither passage deals with trusting them again.
- D. These people also misconstrue the turn-the-other-cheek passage from the Sermon on the Mount to mean that if people really forgive they will turn the other cheek.

- E. Even a casual glance at these passages indicates they are not related to forgiveness at all, but rather to the passive resistance of evil.
1. *“But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him/her the other also. And if someone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him/her have your cloak as well”* (Matthew 5:39,40).
 2. *“If someone strikes you on one cheek, turn to him/her the other also. If someone takes our cloak, do not stop him/her from taking your tunic.”* (Luke 6:29).
- F. Forgiving someone of sin and trusting that person again are two very different issues.
1. Paul and John both unmistakably illustrate this in their epistles.
 2. Even though Paul had already forgiven Alexander (in 2 Timothy 4:14), the reader clearly sees Paul’s continued distrust of the man: *“Alexander the metalworker did me a great deal of harm. The Lord will repay him for what he has done.”*
 3. Failing to forgive Diotrephes would have been totally out of character for John, but his continued distrust of the man is obvious from 3 John 9,10: *“I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to be first, will have nothing to do with us. So if I come, I will call attention to what he is doing, gossiping maliciously about us. Not satisfied with that, he refuses to welcome the brothers. He also stops those who want to do so and puts them out of the church.”*
- G. The clarification of these issues is important.
1. From the very beginning, those in charge of the minister’s restoration and rehabilitation should make the separation of these distinctly different issues unmistakably clear to the minister, his/her spouse, and any church they have served.
 2. Forgiveness of the fallen minister’s sin should be extended and acknowledged immediately upon evidence of repentance and confession.
 3. But, the minister and his/her spouse must know that rehabilitation to public ministry is a step leadership must not take routinely.

4. The minister must understand:
 - a. That he/she has deliberately and deceptively broken the trust placed in him/her by his/her spouse, other family members and the body of Christ and, in most cases, the person with whom he/she has become sexually involved.
 - b. That the body of Christ should not feel guilty for losing their trust in him/her.
 - c. That the primary responsibility for rebuilding broken trusts rests upon him/her—not on the body of Christ.

- H. 1 Timothy 3:7 declares trustworthiness is an obligation every minister assumes as a qualification for entering public ministry: *“He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil’s trap.”*

- I. This requirement should be even more understandable for one hoping to re-enter the ministry after falling into sexual sin.

- J. Therefore, accepting primary responsibility for rebuilding the public’s broken trust should be an expected obligation any minister assumes upon admission into a program of rehabilitation.
 1. Only after the fallen minister submits to responsible supervision over a period of time, and displays clear evidence of godly changes in his/her attitude and behaviour, should he/she be declared trustworthy for public ministry again.

 2. Until then the privileges and responsibilities of ministry should and must be withheld.

III. SHOULD ALL FALLEN MINISTERS BE REHABILITATED TO PUBLIC MINISTRY?

- A. History and experience teach us that restoring to the ministry all ministers who fall into sexual sin is not a practical goal.
 1. In some cases, because of the nature and/or history of a minister’s sin, it may not be possible or advisable to rehabilitate him/her to the ministry (1 Corinthians 9:25-27; 1 Timothy 1:18-20).

 2. However, every effort should be made to restore the minister to:
 - a. Fellowship with Christ.
 - b. The local church.
 - c. The minister’s marriage.

- B. Before attempting to rehabilitate a minister to public ministry, a thorough inquiry into the present problem, the person's past ministerial history, the person's character, and mental status should be launched.
1. This will require the minister and his/her spouse to sign a Rehabilitation Request Agreement that will allow any professional evaluations to be shared with the State Executive.
 2. The result of the inquiry and psychiatric or psychological evaluation should be presented to the State Executive at the earliest opportunity.
 3. Those charged with the investigation should be instructed to look for the kinds of critical factors mentioned in the following section.

IV. WHAT ARE SOME CRITICAL FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED IN REHABILITATING MINISTERS TO PUBLIC MINISTRY?

- A. Is the minister still able to give clear evidence of a call into the ministry?
1. The minister should be asked to submit in writing an account of his/her call into the ministry.
 2. Those interviewing the minister should give strong consideration to this review of his/her divine call to ministry.
- B. What is the nature of his/her sin?
1. Is it perverse?
 - a. Paedophilia (children and minors preferred as sexual partner).
 - b. Child molestation (sexual involvement of adults with adolescents or children).
 - c. Homosexuality (same sex preferred as sexual partner).
 - d. Sexual masochism (experiencing pain essential to orgasm).
 - e. Sexual sadism (inflicting pain essential to orgasm).
 - f. Menage a trios (sexual involvement of three people).
 - g. Transvestic fetism (cross dressing).
 - h. Apendixionism (imposing genital display on others).
 - i. Voyeurism (sexual excitement through viewing others disrobing or in sexual activity).
 - j. Frotteurism (sexual excitement by pinching others' buttocks).

- k. Fetishism (sexual excitement through the use of objects, panties, bras, shoes, feather, etc).
 2. When did it begin?
 3. How long has it gone on?
 4. How many people are involved?
 - C. When there is no perversity, no previous history of sexual sin, the time frame of the misconduct is confined to a year or less, and only one other person is involved, the chances for a successful return to ministry are optimal.
 - D. Has there been previous discipline?
 1. Any history of a failed disciplinary process should be viewed with grave concern.
 2. The credentialing body could assume considerable legal risk if it chooses to return to ministry someone with this kind of history.
 - E. How does the spouse feel about the minister returning to ministry?
 1. Once released from the obligations of ministry, some spouses are reluctant to return.
 2. The spouse should have an opportunity to respond privately to this issue.
 - F. Ministers exhibiting eight or more of the following character traits (*) should be considered high risks for being successfully restored to public ministry:
 1. Lacking remorse.
 2. Repeatedly failing to honour financial obligations.
 3. Protesting, without justification, that others make unreasonable demands on him/her.
 4. Avoiding obligations by claiming to have forgotten.
 5. Believing that he/she is doing a much better job than others think is being done.
 6. Resenting useful suggestions from others concerning how he/she could be more productive.
 7. Unreasonably criticising or scorning people in positions of authority.

8. Reacting to criticism with feelings of rage, shame, or humiliation (even if exposed).
9. Taking advantage of others to achieve his/her own ends.
10. Having a grandiose sense of self-importance; eg. exaggerating achievements and talents.
11. Believing that his/her problems are unique and can be understood only by other special people.
12. Being preoccupied with fantasies of unlimited success, power, and brilliance.
13. Having a sense of entitlement: unreasonable expectation of especially favourable treatment.
14. Requiring constant attention and admiration.
15. Being preoccupied with feelings of envy.
16. Expecting, without sufficient basis, to be exploited or harmed by others.
17. Questioning, without justification, the loyalty or trustworthiness of friends or associates.
18. Reading hidden demeaning or threatening meaning into benign remarks or events.
19. Bearing grudges or being unforgiving of insults or slights.
20. Being reluctant to confide in others because of unwarranted fear that the information will be used against him/her.
21. Being easily slighted and quick to react with anger or to counterattack.
22. Becoming sulky, irritable, or argumentative when asked to do something he/she does not want to do.
23. Putting things off that need to be done so that deadlines are not met.
24. Being uncomfortable in situations in which he/she is not the centre of attention.

25. Being self-centred with actions directed toward obtaining immediate gratification, with no tolerance for the frustration of delayed gratification.

V. CONCLUSION

- A. The risk in rehabilitating a person to the ministry will vary according to how many of the above complicating factors are involved.
- B. Out of concern for the reputation of the ministry and for the sake of deserving ministers who will enter the program later, care should be taken to reserve the privilege of restoration to ministry for those who are most likely to be successfully restored.
- C. A person who has been refused rehabilitation may appeal to have his/her case heard according to Article 11.8 of the United Constitution

(* American Psychiatric Association: Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder, Third Edition, revised. Washington, D.C., American Psychiatric Association, 1987.

APPENDIX TWO

Personality Characteristic Rating Scale for Admission to Ministerial Rehabilitation Program

Minister's Name _____

- | | | | |
|-----|--|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1. | Lacking in remorse. | Not Evident | Very Evident |
| | | 0 1 2 | 3 4 5 |
| 2. | Repeatedly failing to honour financial obligations | Very Evident | Not Evident |
| | | 5 4 3 | 2 1 0 |
| 3. | Protesting, without justification, that others make unreasonable demands on him/her | Not Evident | Very Evident |
| | | 0 1 2 | 3 4 5 |
| 4. | Avoiding obligations by claiming to have 'forgotten' | Very Evident | Not Evident |
| | | 5 4 3 | 2 1 0 |
| 5. | Believing that he/she is doing a much better job than others think is being done. | Not Evident | Very Evident |
| | | 0 1 2 | 3 4 5 |
| 6. | Resenting useful suggestions from others concerning people in positions of authority. | Very Evident | Not Evident |
| | | 5 4 3 | 2 1 0 |
| 7. | Unreasonably criticising or scorning people in positions of authority. | Not Evident | Very Evident |
| | | 0 1 2 | 3 4 5 |
| 8. | Reacting to criticism with feelings of rage, shame, or humiliation (even if not expressed). | Very Evident | Not Evident |
| | | 5 4 3 | 2 1 0 |
| 9. | Taking advantage of others to achieve his/her own ends. | Not Evident | Very Evident |
| | | 0 1 2 | 3 4 5 |
| 10. | Having a grandiose sense of self-Importance, e.g. exaggerating achievements and talents. | Very Evident | Not Evident |
| | | 5 4 3 | 2 1 0 |
| 11. | Believing that his/her problems are unique and can be understood only by other special people. | Not Evident | Very Evident |
| | | 0 1 2 | 3 4 5 |
| 12. | Being preoccupied with fantasies of unlimited success, power, and brilliance. | Very Evident | Not Evident |
| | | 5 4 3 | 2 1 0 |

| | | | |
|-----|---|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 13. | Having a sense of entitlement: unreasonable expectation of especially favourable treatment. | Not Evident 0 1 2 | Very Evident 3 4 5 |
| 14. | Requiring constant attention and admiration. | Very Evident 5 4 3 | Not Evident 2 1 0 |
| 15. | Being preoccupied with feelings of envy. | Not Evident 0 1 2 | Very Evident 3 4 5 |
| 16. | Expecting, without sufficient basis, to be exploited or harmed by others. | Very Evident 5 4 3 | Not Evident 2 1 0 |
| 17. | Questioning, without justification, the loyalty or trustworthiness of friends or associates. | Not Evident 0 1 2 | Very Evident 3 4 5 |
| 18. | Reading hidden, demeaning or threatening meaning into benign remarks or events. | Very Evident 5 4 3 | Not Evident 2 1 0 |
| 19. | Bearing grudges or being unforgiving of insults or slights. | Not Evident 0 1 2 | Very Evident 3 4 5 |
| 20. | Being reluctant to confide in others because of unwarranted fear that the information will be used against him/her. | Very Evident 5 4 1 | Not Evident 2 1 0 |
| 21. | Being easily slighted and quick to react with anger or to counterattack. | Not Evident 0 1 2 | Very Evident 3 4 5 |
| 22. | Becoming sulky, irritable or argumentative, when asked to do something he/she does not want to do. | Very Evident 5 4 3 | Not Evident 2 1 0 |
| 23. | Putting things off that need to be done so that deadlines are not met. | Not Evident 0 1 2 | Very Evident 3 4 5 |
| 24. | Being uncomfortable in situations in which he/she is not the centre of attention. | Very Evident 5 4 3 | Not Evident 2 1 0 |
| 25. | Being self-centred with actions directed toward obtaining immediate gratification, with no tolerance or the frustration of delayed gratification. | Not Evident 0 1 2 | Very Evident 3 4 5 |

APPENDIX THREE

A BIBLICAL THEOLOGY FOR THE REHABILITATION OF MINISTERS

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. The Bible presents God as one who lovingly creates and endows His creation - inanimate and animate, angelic and human - with freedom.
 - 1. In nature, this freedom is expressed by certain atoms responding in unpredictable ways—contrary to the predictable nature of their element.
 - 2. Among angels and human beings, this liberty is expressed by the freedom of choice.
- B. God, in love, relates redemptively to His entire creation.
 - 1. Christ's death on the cross paid the price of redemption for all of creation—and all of creation will be redeemed (Romans 8:19-23).
 - 2. No intelligent being will perish as an act of God's will (2 Peter 3:9).
- C. God anticipated the fall of Lucifer and all those angels who chose to fall with him/her.
- D. God redemptively limited Lucifer's power by casting him/her out of heaven and preparing hell for him/her and his/her angels (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10; Luke 10:18).
- E. Before He created man, God made provision for the redemption and salvation of all those He foreknew would respond to His grace and choose to be saved (Revelation 13:8; 17:8; Ephesians 1:4; Romans 8:29).
- F. Throughout the history of this planet, God has revealed His redemptive love for fallen mankind:
 - 1. The Old Testament shows a loving God pursuing a rebellious and stiff-necked Israel, determined to chastise them, redeem them, and restore them.
 - 2. The new Testament reveals a loving Lord redemptively relating to those who have fallen into sin, unbelievers and believers alike.

II. REDEEMPTIVELY REHABILITATING MINISTERS

- A. Paul's statement speaks generally of a ministry to fallen Christians: *"Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him/her gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ."* (Galatians 6:12).
- B. Then, he refers to a specific procedure the Early Church was to use in dealing with elders who sinned:
"Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses. Those who sin are to be rebuked publicly, so that the others may take warning" (1 Timothy 5:19,20).
- C. Therefore, by providing a program of restoration for all ministers who have yielded to temptation and pursuing a program of rehabilitation to the ministry for those who biblically qualify, the Australian Christian Churches is pursuing a cause close to the heart of her Lord.

III. HOW SHOULD SUCH A PROGRAM BE ADMINISTERED?

The three requirements of the Lord found in Micah 6:8 seem particularly appropriate as biblical guidelines for administering a program of restoration and rehabilitation for ministers. "He/she has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

A. Act justly.

- 1. Respect for the integrity of the ministry and the body of Christ requires that we act justly when brothers or sisters disqualify themselves from the work of the ministry.
- 2. If the character of the church is to be preserved, then the conscience of the minister who has fallen must be confronted—for his/her sake and that of the church.

B. Love mercy.

- 1. Compassion for our fallen brother or sister and others who have been hurt by their sin requires that the justice of such a program be administered through our love for mercy.
- 2. In all cases, the restoration of the minister should be pursued with compassion and, whenever possible, he/she should be rehabilitated to ministry.

C. Walk humbly.

1. Being aware of our own temptations should compel us to walk humbly through such a program with the fallen minister.
2. Paul reminds us that there is no place for an air of superiority or condescension when attempting to restore and rehabilitate ministers who have fallen.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 10:12 *“So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don’t fall!”*
 - b. Galatians 6:2 “carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ.”

IV. WHO SHOULD BE HELPED BY SUCH A PROGRAM?

- A. When the minister falls into sexual sin, many other people are affected.
- B. A comprehensive program of restoration and rehabilitation should address the needs of:
 1. The fallen minister, spouse, and family.
 2. The board and congregation betrayed by the fallen minister when he/she is a pastor or staff minister.
 3. The individual(s) hurt by the fallen minister.
 4. The minister who follows the fallen minister.
 5. Those pastors responsible for supervising the restoration and rehabilitation of the fallen minister and his/her family.

APPENDIX FOUR

A SUGGESTED MINISTRY TO THE FALLEN MINISTER AND HIS/HER FAMILY

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. In any program of restoration and rehabilitation, the fallen minister's primary focus is on getting back into public ministry as quickly as possible because:
1. It is his/her livelihood.
 2. Usually, he/she enjoys it.
 3. He/she believes he/she is called.
- B. However, in defending its priorities for the restoration process, the state must take into account how the reputation of the ministry in the local church, community, and fellow ministers have been affected by the minister's sin, the fallen minister's possible spiritual blindness, and any state of denial.
- C. Therefore, this program is designed to help local congregations, fallen ministers, and those responsible for their restoration and rehabilitation to reach the highest redemptive goal possible in each case. The program's priorities are to:
1. Protect the church from disreputable ministers and maintain the character of the ministry in the community.
 - a. In 1 Timothy 3:2, 4, 5, 7, Paul says the minister is to be an example to the church and to the community of unbelievers.
 - b. The witness of the local church in the community is largely dependent upon the behaviour of its members, and particularly its minister.
 - c. Therefore, when the minister falls into temptation and sin, the State must act to protect the local church and to restore respect to the position of the pastor in the local community.
 2. Quicken, if necessary, the conscience of the minister.
 - a. In the process of sinning, the fallen minister has damaged his/her conscience.
 - b. This is evident in the minister's denial or playing down of the evil involved in his/her fall.
 - c. This is the most difficult barrier to the restoration and rehabilitation process.

- d. As long as denial persists there is no reason to believe that repentance has yet to be expressed.
 - e. A major purpose for removing the minister from public ministry is to quicken his/her conscience, in order to restore the ability of the conscience to respond correctly according to the Word of God when the minister is tempted to misbehave again.
 - f. Only when this is done does the Holy Spirit have the means within the minister to warn him/her of temptation and to deliver him/her from evil.
 - g. This is why the restoration and rehabilitation process must focus on the healing of his/her conscience.
 - h. Because of the pain involved, the fallen minister can be expected to resist this focus.
 - i. Hebrews 12:11 *"No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it."*
- 3. Restore the minister's marriage.
 - a. In most cases, the minister's marriage can be restored.
 - b. When this is not possible, serious consideration must be given to the effect marital failure will have on the person's future in the ministry.
 - 4. Whenever possible, rehabilitate the minister to public ministry.
 - a. In some cases rehabilitation to public ministry is not a realistic goal.
 - b. Evaluating requests for rehabilitation to public ministry will be dealt with in a separate section.
- D. Since some forms of misconduct reflect more adversely on the character of the minister than others, a comprehensive program of restoration and rehabilitation needs to provide a variety of levels that will equitably address each situation.
- E. Therefore, in this program, provision is made for the minister who is:
- 1. Placed under the supervision of his/her State President.
 - 2. Placed under suspension and admitted to the restoration and rehabilitation program.
 - 3. Dismissed and later placed in the restoration and rehabilitation program.
 - 4. Dismissed and not placed in the rehabilitation program.

II. THE MINISTER WHO IS PLACED UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF HIS/HER STATE PRESIDENT

- A. From time to time, complaints come to the State office about behaviours of a minister which reflect poorly on his/her character, but are not serious enough to warrant suspension of his/her credentials or dismissal from the Movement.
- B. In cases where the minister voluntarily admits to these errors of judgement or exaggerated behaviours, the State Executive shall have the authority to place this minister under the supervision of the State President without taking the matter to the National Executive.
- C. The State President shall:
 - 1. Appoint a supervising pastor to meet with the minister for the purpose of confronting the spiritual issues related to his/her misbehaviour.
 - 2. Require additional Christian professional counseling when the need is indicated.
 - 3. Receive monthly reports of these meetings from the supervising pastor.
 - 4. Propose to the State Executive that the period of supervision be ended when he/she and the Supervising Pastor agree that the minister under supervision has satisfactorily addressed the matters involved.

III. THE MINISTER WHO IS UNDER INVESTIGATION

- A. At times, State officers may receive serious allegations about a minister, which he/she denies.
 - 1. In such an event, the State President may, in consultation with the National President, exercise his/her discretion to restrict the minister's ministry or suspend the minister's credential for 30 days while a thorough investigation of the allegations against the minister can be made and the minister either be exonerated or a determination be made by the National Executive.
- B. Since such an investigation is very unsettling for the minister and his/her family, the following care should be provided for them during the process.
 - 1. The State President shall place the minister, spouse and family under the care of a supervising pastor who shall

meet with the minister and spouse on a regular basis throughout the period of restriction.

2. The supervising pastor shall send reports of these meetings to the State President.
3. If the investigation results in the exoneration of the minister, then the restriction will be lifted immediately.

IV. THE MINISTER WHO IS SUSPENDED AND PLACED IN THE REHABILITATION PROGRAM

Follow the Screening Process, given earlier in this manual.

Follow the Rehabilitation Checklist, given earlier in this manual.

V. THE MINISTER WHO IS DISMISSED AND LATER PLACED IN THE REHABILITATION PROGRAM

- A. If the minister's conduct blatantly offends biblical requirements for ministry, or if a minister denies charges that he/she later reluctantly acknowledges under the weight of the evidence, the State Executive (at some later date), upon satisfactory evidence of repentance, may recommend to the National Executive that the dismissed minister be placed in a program of rehabilitation.
- B. Follow the Rehabilitation Checklist, given earlier in this manual.

VI. THE MINISTER WHO IS DISMISSED AND NOT PLACED IN THE REHABILITATION PROGRAM

- A. Follow the Screening Process, given earlier in this manual.
- B. Even though rehabilitation to ministry may not be a possible goal, the Australian Christian Churches will want to compassionately help the minister restore fellowship with Christ and, if at all possible, restore his/her marriage and family relationships.
- C. Therefore, if the dismissed minister desires the help of the State in attempting to reach these goals, the State President shall:
 1. Place the dismissed minister, spouse, and family under the care of a supervising pastor who shall help him/her with his/her job search and meet regularly with him/her and his/her spouse for pastoral counselling throughout the period of their recovery.
 2. Be authorised to assist the dismissed minister, if appropriate, with moving expenses (within limits to be

set) required for relocating him/her to the area of his/her supervising pastor.

3. Receive regular reports from the supervising pastor and review those reports with State Executive at their regular meetings.
 4. When the supervising pastor believes his/her work with the dismissed minister and his/her family is done, he/she shall submit a final report summarising his/her work and the results to the State President.
 5. The State President shall share this report with the State Executive at their next regular meeting.
- D. Even though the dismissed minister may refuse help for him/her, the State President may choose to extend the help of the State as defined above to the minister's spouse and their children.

VII. IMPORTANT MATTERS TO COVER IN COMMUNICATING WITH THE MINISTER AND SPOUSE

- A. In the first hours after the discovery, nothing is more important than communication from the state members.
- B. Telephone contact by the State President and/or his/her representative should be established immediately.
 1. Make the family aware of your love and prayers.
 2. Assure them of any provision for emergency assistance the State provides.
 3. Remember the couple's early concerns may be economic.
- C. What is done in the first few hours after the crisis breaks will affect the minister, his/her wife, and family for months, if not years, to come.
- D. A visit in the home by some representative of the State within 24 hours is critical.
- E. The first representative of the State to talk with the minister should provide him/her with some guidance in making his/her confession.
 1. Helping the minister unburden his/her soul is very important.

2. Successful rehabilitation begins with total honesty before God.
 3. However, the need to know should determine how much is shared with whom.
 - a. Everything must be poured out before God.
 - b. The State and the church board, if the minister is a pastor, need to know enough to determine the nature of the transgression.
 - c. The spouse should know what the district knows and particularly any information that would pose a threat to his/her health.
 - d. The age of the children will determine how much they should be told.
 4. The minister should be helped to write a confession of sufficient detail as to leave no doubt about the appropriateness of any discipline administered.
 5. This confession needs to be shared at three levels:
 - a. With the State Executive.
 - b. With the local church.
 - c. With his/her family.
- F. As soon as possible, appoint a supervising pastor.
- G. The State President, or his/her representative should keep close contact with the supervising pastor for the first 60 to 90 days.

APPENDIX FIVE

STATE PRESIDENTS CONTACT WITH THE OTHER PARTY

Most cases of ministerial sexual misconduct involve another person, though not always (ie. pornography, voyeurism etc). Often the other person is another Christian with whom the minister has had regular contact, ordinarily someone in the congregation. Where possible, the State President should make every attempt to follow biblical principles in dealing with the other party.

LEGAL EXPOSURE

Though ministerial sexual misconduct may create significant legal exposure and potential liability, the church must be guided by biblical principles. Nevertheless, leadership should remain very sensitive about any references to litigation, and any such comments should be referred for advice to a qualified solicitor acting on behalf of the State. Leaders must follow the advice Jesus gave His disciples: *“I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves”* (Matthew 10:16).

NEGLECT OF THE OTHER PARTY

Usually, restoration ministry focuses almost all its energy upon the minister, frequently to the neglect of the minister spouse, family and former church. Even more rare are any attempts to practically facilitate the healing of the other party and family. However, the failure to take action may not be through fear of the legal implications. A greater hindrance to offering assistance may well be simple embarrassment and a lack of knowledge about what action may be appropriate. The guidelines that follow are offered primarily to assist in dealing with the other party in a spiritual, redemptive manner. These suggestions are descriptive, not prescriptive. That is, they are offered as samples of the kinds of things that should be considered, not a requirement for what must be done.

A BIBLICAL PRINCIPLE

In dealing with the other party, there is a helpful statement, both a biblical principle and a requirement found in Christ's words: *“So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets”* (Matthew 7:12). That rule applies here. By mentally placing themselves in the position of each of the parties involved, leaders should determine what they would want others to do. Admittedly, this will not answer all of the questions, but it will answer most. Further, it will also make it clear that a non-response is just biblically impossible. In applying details, leaders

will have to ask God for wisdom, but His Word says He will not refuse that request. (James 1:5).

TYPES OF RELATIONSHIPS

There are three types of relationships in which a minister may have become involved with another party. Two are unequal: one where a minister dominates a reluctant participant: the other where a minister is the dominated, reluctant participant. In the third, the parties are relative equals. All are grievous; none excuses the minister. Certainly the worst case is that of the dominant, manipulating minister. The other party in this relationship may suffer the emotional and spiritual damage. From the evidence, the President should try to determine the type of relationship in which the minister has been involved and modify the response accordingly.

DIFFERING ASSUMPTIONS

There are a number of possible variations involving the other party, and each merits a different response. For instance:

- Is the other party married?
- Is the sinful relationship terminated?
- Has the other party repented?
- Has the minister repented?
- Has the minister asked forgiveness? Of whom?
- Does the spouse know of the sin? Everything?
- Does the spouse know the minister?
- Does the spouse profess Christianity?
- Does the family know of the sin? Everything?
- Is the failure generally known in/outside the congregation?

Usually the other party is married and has been part of the congregation, along with the spouse. By the time the President is typically involved, the spouse, family, and the congregation are generally aware of the failure, who is involved, and at least a descriptive extent of involvement.

A HYPOTHETICAL PRESIDENT'S CONTACT WITH THE OTHER PARTY

The hypothetical response that follows is based upon the most common scenario: a minister has been discovered to be involved with another party in the congregation; the other party's spouse also attends the church, knows the minister, knows what has happened, and knows that his/her spouse is involved; the sinful relationship may or may not have yet been terminated. There are several objectives to accomplish.

1. Communicate love and concern. Initiate a joint conversation with the other couple. The first message they both need to hear is that they are loved, and that you regret their pain. There should be no accusation; offer unconditional love.

2. Repentance. If the sinful relationship still exists, attempt to encourage the sinning spouse toward repentance. If the relationship has been terminated, the couple should be encouraged that God can bring healing in this couple's marriage.
3. Offer assistance. Try to determine the spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical states of all family members. Create a sense of your availability. Offer to arrange counselling as seems appropriate. Encourage the couple to maintain consistent worship habits, whether in the same church or elsewhere.
4. About the minister. If the relationship has been terminated, inquire whether the minister has apologised to both parties. If not, try to sense if and when they may be prepared to hear his/her personal apology. At an appropriate time, a representative of the State Executive could arrange a brief, private meeting with the other couple for this purpose. Under no circumstances should the minister contact the couple without a State representative also being present. Ask the couple to call you if the minister contacts them.
5. A further conference. Finally in this call, try to arrange a personal conference. If they are reluctant, try again, perhaps even several more times. They may not immediately sense the need, but may realise it over time.

FORMAL CONFERENCE WITH THE OTHER PARTY

1. Determine their present need. The President (or designated State official) may want to invite the local pastor to join in this session. It should be held at a location comfortable for the couple, perhaps at their home. Again inquire about the spiritual, emotional, mental and physical state of all family members. Assure the couple of Christ's love, other's sorrow for them, and the hope of seeing them fully renewed in wholeness.
2. Offer practical help. The couple almost always needs intense counselling but may be reluctant to secure it, whether for reasons of embarrassment or cost.

Caution them about the common experience of recurring waves of anger, guilt, loss, and blame. Again encourage formal counselling. Perhaps share information about upcoming marriage enrichment seminars or retreat centres.

POST-CONFERENCE CONTACT WITH THE OTHER PARTY

1. Two months later. Initiate another phone call to the couple, again inquiring about the spiritual, emotional, mental and physical states of all family members. Ask how marriage counselling is progressing and where they are attending worship. If they acknowledge continuing difficulty, identify with their pain and offer appropriate resources. Again try to determine whether there has been any contact with the fallen minister.

2. Six months later. Write the couple a letter, affirming love for them, continued prayers, and continued availability should they need to talk. If the marriage is healing, wish them continued grace. If the marriage is dissolving, inquire about what assistance might be needed. Offer to arrange counselling and/or help as seems appropriate.

APPENDIX SIX

STATE PRESIDENTS CONTACT WITH THE MINISTER'S CHURCH

The State President or his/her appointee is encouraged to have the following interactions with the disciplined minister's church:

1. Preside over a board meeting in which the fallen minister may be required to read his/her open confession of sin and be challenged by his/her brothers/sisters.
2. Explain in a message to the church body (if applicable):
 - a. The predictable states of crisis through which they will pass.
 - b. The need for the former pastor's family to move away and for closure of their relationship with the body.
 - c. The restoration and rehabilitation process and what will happen to the fallen minister and his/her family. (Assure them that the State will give pastoral care for their former pastor and family.)
 - d. The challenge they will face in trusting their new pastor.
3. Set the agenda with the board for the fallen minister's departure.
4. Suggest the possible wisdom of seeking an interim pastor to nurse the church through the most turbulent stages of the crisis process.
5. Offer to sit in on a portion of the board meetings for the first few weeks to answer questions and provide information.
6. During the first 6 to 8 weeks, have various members of the State team visit the church services, lead in prayer, be introduced, and be available for questions.

APPENDIX EIGHT

REHABILITATION REQUEST AGREEMENT

I, _____, hereby acknowledge and admit that I am in violation of the principles of the Word of God and the principles set forth in the United Constitution of the Australian Christian Churches and am rightly subject to discipline by the Australian Christian Churches because of this violation which is detailed in writing on the attached and signed confession.

I hereby request consideration for rehabilitation whereby I may eventually be restored to ministry in the Assemblies of God. I understand that my request for rehabilitation will be presented to the State and National Executives. In consideration of this request, presented to National Executive, I hereby voluntarily agree to the following:

1. An immediate suspension of all ministry for a period of time to be determined by State and National Executives. My credential certificate and card are attached to this Agreement, to be held pending final determination of my case.
2. I agree to submit to spiritual and psychological evaluation as determined necessary by the _____ State Executive. I authorise the release of the results of any report prepared for these purposes or other information related to the subject of this evaluation, to the State Executive and National Executive of the Australian Christian Churches. I understand that any of the above described material will be released to the State Executive and the National Executive on a confidential basis and I specifically waive any rights that I might have to inspect or access such material.
3. If granted rehabilitation status, I agree to conform to the terms of the rehabilitation, which I have read, and such other terms as may be specified by the _____ State Executive and the National Executive of the Australian Christian Churches.
4. If granted rehabilitation status, I agree to provide monthly progress reports to my supervising pastor, and State President on forms provided and to counsel with my assigned supervising pastor on a weekly basis or as otherwise directed by the State President.
5. I also agree that my spouse's consent and agreement are incorporated as part of my rehabilitation request agreement.

6. I recognise this agreement to be in accord with the teaching of Scripture (1Timothy 6:3-4, Galatians 6:1, 1 Corinthians 9:27, 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13, and Hebrews 13:17).

Witness _____

Signature

Witness _____

Signature

APPENDIX NINE
SPOUSAL CONSENT AND AGREEMENT

I, _____, the spouse of _____
hereby express my affirmation of my spouse's request for rehabilitation.

Further, I agree to submit with my spouse to counselling as determined necessary by the State Executive. I authorise the release of the results of any report prepared for these purposes or other information related to the subject of this counselling, to the State Executive and National Executive of the Australian Christian Churches.

I also agree that my consent shall be considered as incorporated within my spouse's signed rehabilitation request agreement.

Signature of spouse

Witness _____

Date

APPENDIX TEN

AGREEMENT FOR THE LIMITED DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION

In consideration of my acceptance in rehabilitation program offered to me by the State and National Executive of Assemblies of the Australian Christian Churches, (“**the said State and National Executive**”)

I, _____

of _____

AGREE AS FOLLOWS:

1. **I HEREBY GRANT PERMISSION** for the said State President and State Secretary, jointly or individually, in their sole discretion to release any information, including personal details which concern the reason or basis for my discipline as a Minister by the **said State and National Executive** to the following persons:
 - a. any other State President or State Secretary of the Australian Christian Churches;
 - b. any officer of the National Executive of the Australian Christian Churches;
 - c. an elder or board member of the local church where I was engaged in ministry immediately prior to my suspension;
 - d. a person acting in a professional advisory capacity to the said State or National Executive;
 - e. a minister acting in an official capacity as a representative of the governing body of another denomination; and
 - f. any other person, who they consider should be informed, or who is required to be informed by law.

2. **I ACKNOWLEDGE** that this information may be released on the initiative **of the State President and State Secretary**, or in response to an inquiry by another person.

3. **I UNDERSTAND** that **the State President and State Secretary** have the sole discretion to decide whether the release of this information is appropriate, but they shall, as far as is possible, maintain the confidentiality of any information provided by me relating to the subject

of my discipline as a Minister, except where they consider that the disclosure of such information is necessary, as specified above.

4. **I HEREBY RELEASE the said State and National Executive with the said State President** from any and all liability for any expense, loss or damage which may be sustained by me at any time as a result of or arising from the disclosure of any information authorised by this Agreement.
5. **I EXPRESSLY AGREE** that:
 - a. this release contains the entire agreement between the parties, the terms of which are contractual and not a mere recital; and
 - b. it is intended to be as broad and inclusive as permitted by law and that if any portion of this release is held invalid, the balance shall continue in full legal force and effect.
6. **I FURTHER STATE** that I have carefully read and understand the nature of this release and am aware that it is a legally binding agreement that I sign of my own free will.

DATED this day of

20

(Signature of Minister)

(Signature of Witness)

(Please print names clearly below signatures)

APPENDIX ELEVEN

CONDITIONS OF REHABILITATION

FOR _____

1. I agree that the period of rehabilitation shall be for not less than 2 years.
2. I agree that my ministerial credentials shall be under suspension during the entire period of rehabilitation.
3. I agree that no preaching or pulpit ministry shall be engaged in during the entire period of rehabilitation.
4. I agree that a staff position may be permitted upon the approval of the supervising pastor and State President during the second year of rehabilitation. No senior pastor position shall be permitted during the entire period of rehabilitation.
5. I agree to become established in _____ (name of local church), under the supervision of _____ (name of supervising pastor).
6. I will attend church regularly and meet with the supervising pastor on a monthly basis to determine progress and to receive counsel.
7. I agree that I may have limited ministry in the church to which I am assigned, and at the invitation of the pastor during the second year of rehabilitation.
8. I agree that I and my spouse (where appropriate), will submit to a program of counselling, with a counsellor approved by the State President.
9. I will submit clear evidence that, in the event of sexual misconduct, I have severed all contact with the person(s) with whom I associated in the violation. Any recurrence will terminate the rehabilitation program and require dismissal from the ministry.
10. I agree to give a written report monthly, due the first of each month, to the State President and supervising pastor. I will meet once a quarter with the State President.
11. I agree to attend meetings of the District, State and National Conferences (as much as practicable) but will not have the privilege of voting in the business sessions.

12. I agree that, during the period of rehabilitation, my minister's credential shall be held in the State office.
13. I agree to renew my ministerial credentials annually.
14. I agree that my responsibility to pay dues to the National and State offices shall continue during the rehabilitation program.
15. I agree to remain within the _____ State during the entire period of rehabilitation. (In some extenuating circumstances, when approved by the National Executive, where removal to another State is necessary, that State may be requested to act as the agent for the State administering discipline.)
16. I agree that while my credential is under suspension, my name will not be removed from the ministerial list.

Signature of Minister

Date

Signature of Minister's Spouse in Support

Date

APPENDIX TWELVE

SUPERVISING PASTOR'S REPORT FORM TO THE STATE PRESIDENT

(Send copy to State President: report monthly
For the first 6 months, quarterly thereafter)

CONFIDENTIAL

Name of Minister Under Rehabilitation

Please circle and/or comment as specifically as possible

1. Describe the number/length of contacts with your minister:

Phone calls

Counseling sessions

Social contacts

2. Does your minister:

| | | | | | |
|----------------------------|-------|--------|-----------|---------|--------|
| Keep the appointments? | Never | Seldom | Sometimes | Usually | Always |
| Complete assignments? | Never | Seldom | Sometimes | Usually | Always |
| Do reading bibliography? | Never | Seldom | Sometimes | Usually | Always |
| Respond to your counsel? | Never | Seldom | Sometimes | Usually | Always |
| Faithfully attend worship? | Never | Seldom | Sometimes | Usually | Always |

3. Describe relationship/attitude:

| | | | | | |
|----------------------------|------|------|---------|------|-----------|
| With spouse? | Poor | Fair | Average | Good | Excellent |
| With children? | Poor | Fair | Average | Good | Excellent |
| With other church members? | Poor | Fair | Average | Good | Excellent |
| With you? | Poor | Fair | Average | Good | Excellent |

4. Describe how minister has taken ownership of failure.

5. How is the minister responding spiritually?

Poor Fair Average Good Excellent

6. How is the spouse responding spiritually?

Poor Fair Average Good Excellent

7. What new spiritual insights has the minister shared?

8. What new spiritual insights has the spouse shared?

9. What is the minister's present attitude toward the failure?

Bitter Defensive Indifferent Remorse Godly sorrow

10. What is the spouse's present attitude toward the failure?

Bitter Defensive Indifferent Remorse Godly sorrow

11. What is the minister's present attitude toward the future?

Despair Negative Hopeful Unrealistic

12. What is the spouse's present attitude toward the future?

Despair Negative Hopeful Unrealistic

13. Has there been any improper contact of which you are aware?

14. What is your present estimation of restoration possibility?

Poor Fair Undetermined Good Excellent

15. Is there anything else you think I should know?

16. Do you need me to call you? YES NO

Supervising Minister's Signature

Date

APPENDIX THIRTEEN**REHABILITATION MINISTER'S MONTHLY REPORT**

Respond specifically to the following areas. Send a copy to your supervising pastor, and State President:

1. Describe your devotional pattern in the following areas:
 - a. Prayer: _____

 - b. Bible reading: _____

 - c. Journaling: _____

 - d. Circle and comment about which of these spiritual exercises you are finding most beneficial:

| | | |
|-------------------|------------|-----------------|
| Bible reading | Confession | Retreats |
| Spiritual reading | Prayer | Small groups |
| Journaling | Fasting | Bodily exercise |
| Other | | |
2. As applicable, please describe your relationship with:
 - a. Spouse: _____

 - b. Children: _____

 - c. Pastor: _____

 - d. Church family: _____

