

Sovereign Grace Churches First Steps In Matters of Sexual Misconduct

This document is intended to serve Sovereign Grace Churches in pastoral situations involving sexual misconduct. This is not a comprehensive guide, but a checklist for the first steps of navigating pastoral situations involving sexual misconduct. It is our recommendation that your local church consider legal counsel in addition to what is listed below. The RCSM remains available to provide counsel or help in determining the need for legal counsel.

The Book of Church Order (BCO) outlines in greater detail the process that is outlined below. Our encouragement is that you thoroughly review section 17.2 of the BCO for your own review and benefit. This document has taken what the BCO says and laid it out as a first steps checklist to serve your church in pastoral situations involving sexual misconduct. The BCO defines two broad categories and pathways for Sovereign Grace Churches to follow when encountering accusations or allegations of sexual misconduct. These two broad categories are REQUIRED and INVITED.

I. Required:

- a. When any of the following occur, you are required to engage the Review Committee for Sexual Misconduct (RCSM) and follow the guideline below:
 - i. When an elder or former elder is accused of or criminally charged with sexual misconduct
 - ii. When a church employee or volunteer working with minors is accused of or criminally charged with sexual misconduct
 - iii. When an elder or former elder is accused of mishandling a case of sexual misconduct
- b. Step 1: Reporting to appropriate authorities
 - i. If the appropriate authority has not been contacted, then contact immediately
 - ii. Date contacted: _____
 - iii. Case/File # _____
 - iv. Ask for any special recommendations they would give to you for right now: _____
- c. Step 2: Contact the RCSM
 - i. Date Contacted: _____
 - ii. Sent Formal Email to the Chair [RCSM@sovereigngrace.com]: _____
 - iii. Ask for any special recommendations they would give to you for right now: _____
- d. Step 3: Contact the Chairman of the Regional Judicial Review Committee
 - i. Date Contacted: _____
 - ii. Ask for any special recommendations they would give to you for right now: _____

- e. Step 4: Contact Regional Leader
 - i. Date Contacted: _____
 - ii. Ask for any special recommendations they would give to you for right now: _____
- f. Consider: Does this situation require you to notify your insurance agency? If so, inform them in writing and ask for a receipt confirmation.

II. Invited:

- a. When any of the following occur, a church is invited to engage the RCSM:
 - i. When a church member / attender or their child is accused of or criminally charged with sexual misconduct.
 - ii. When a church member / attender or their child alleges sexual misconduct.
- b. In these categories, it is recommended that the local church contact any member of the RCSM.
- c. Consider: Does this situation require you to notify your insurance agency? If so, inform them in writing and ask for a receipt confirmation.