

ANAHEIM DISTRICT
RECOVERY AND REINSTATEMENT PROCESS:

Recovery Team:

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This will be a two-step process of 1) RECOVERY and 2) REINSTATEMENT. The first step shall be the focus of the Recovery Team.

Potential Timeline:

1. Appointment of Recovery Team ASAP.
2. The Recovery Process will run for at least 2 years before the issue of reinstatement is addressed. The timeline begins at the first meeting with the recovery team. A District Licensed minister or an Elder in the disciplinary process would be eligible to apply for reinstatement any time after year 2, with the recommendation of the Recovery Team. If no recommendation is given after 4 years in the process, he may apply to the DAB for reinstatement without that recommendation after 4 years. (540.7)
3. For a **District Licensed minister**, the first step in Reinstatement would be a local license. If the 10-year window for completing the Course of Study is exceeded, the pastor is ineligible for Ordination.

I. RECOVERY PLAN:

- Without regard for the severity of the minister's misconduct, the likelihood of his or her eventual return to ministerial service, or his or her initial receptivity to grace and offers of help extended, the recovery of the minister's well-being (spiritually and otherwise) and that of his or her spouse and family is to be diligently, prayerfully, and faithfully pursued by the district in accordance with 540-540.2. Such recovery is to be the singular aim of this step.

1. The Recovery Process should be marked by grace and truth.

- While demonstrating compassion, the recovery team must insist upon absolute truth.

- If there is reason to doubt what the pastor is saying, he must agree to cooperate with verification, or be disqualified for consideration of reinstatement.

2. The Recovery Team shall first meet with the District Superintendent as a group and determine how to best implement the district-approved plan.

- The team and the DS should discuss the basic goals and methods of the recovery process, including:
 - Physical safety and well-being of the pastor and the family, including housing issues.
 - If there are medical issues, those should be addressed.
 - Emotional/psychological/relational health in the family relationship.
 - Stability of the marriage.
 - Spiritual condition of the pastor and his family, including where they will attend church, and an agreed-upon accountability group for the pastor, in addition to the Recovery Team.
 - Financial issues. When dealing with these issues, it should be understood that with the removal of the pastor from ministry, part of the consequences for his/her actions and choices will be financial in nature. Loss or reduction of income, the necessity of finding other employment, and even re-training for secular employment should be acknowledged.
 - *The District should not financially assist the pastor or his family unless there are unusual circumstances.* If that option needs to be considered, the consent of the DS and the DAB should be secured. Because consequences for poor choices are part of God's teaching methodology, it is not the role of the District to minimize financial consequences.
- The team should agree upon the basics of a plan to report regularly to the District Superintendent on the Team's efforts and interactions with the pastor.

- The team should decide how often to meet with the minister/spouse/family, and whether to meet individually, as a group, or some combination of the two.

3. The Recovery Team shall meet as a group with the minister, and explain the process to be followed, including:

- The team shall work to provide clarity to the minister and spouse on the process and purpose of Recovery.
- The Recovery Team should develop with the pastor and his family, goals and strategies to address financial, housing, medical, emotional, spiritual, and other needs that typically arise with urgency in situations where misconduct has become evident.
- The Recovery Team should explain to the pastor the restrictions to ministry outlined in 540.4
- The Recovery Team should explain the process for Reinstatement outlined in 540-540.12

4. In regular meetings with the minister and/or family the following areas should be explored:

- Is there a comprehensive understanding of the personal consequences of the misconduct? (initial meetings)
- Is there a comprehensive understanding of the effects of the misconduct on the family? (initial meetings)
- Is there a comprehensive understanding of the consequences of the misconduct to others, including the congregation, the District, the Denomination, and the church of God as a whole? (initial meetings)
- Is repentance evident?
- Is restitution appropriate? If so, has it happened?
- What is the state of the minister's spiritual health?
- What is the state of the minister's relational health?
- What is the state of the minister's physical and emotional health?

- What is the state of the spouse’s overall health?
 - Is the minister/spouse/family undergoing counseling?
 - Where are the minister/spouse/family attending worship?
 - What is the minister/spouse/family doing to strengthen their relationship with God?
 - What is the minister/spouse/family doing to strengthen their relationship with each other?
 - To whom is the minister accountable?
- Aside from the first three questions, these issues should be addressed one or two at a time, in successive sessions, to avoid overwhelming the candidate and the recovery team.
 - At regular intervals, the Recovery Team will communicate to the minister and his or her spouse, to the district superintendent, and to the Board of Ministry and the District Advisory Board, the progress of the process and the changes in the life of the pastor as a result of their work together. The team should also report to the above groups when it judges its work is nearing completion or has progressed as far as can be expected.

II. REINSTATEMENT:

- At the end of two years, the Recovery Team will submit to the Board of Ministry its recommendation as to whether consideration for reinstatement of the minister to good standing is appropriate. (*Manual 540.2*)
- The Recovery Process will run for at least 2 years before the issue of reinstatement is addressed. The timeline begins at the first meeting with the recovery team.
- A District Licensed minister or an Elder in the disciplinary process would be eligible to apply for reinstatement any time after year 2, with the recommendation of the Recovery Team. If no recommendation is given after 4 years in the process, he may apply to the DAB for reinstatement without that recommendation after 4 years. (*Manual 540.7*)

- **Response to an Application for Restoration to Good Standing.** The District Ministerial Credentials Board or District Board of Ministry, or a committee of the same appointed by the district superintendent, shall consider any application for restoration to good standing received by the district superintendent, and:
 1. verify that the application is valid, having met all conditions for submission;
 2. request and evaluate the recommendation of the recovery team;
 3. interview the minister seeking restoration to good standing and any other persons it deems appropriate to interview;
 4. determine whether to recommend the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of being a member of the clergy be reinstated to the minister and his or her credential returned. (*Manual* 540.8)

- When an application has been submitted at least 180 days in advance of the next scheduled district assembly, consideration of the application shall be completed and recommendation made to the district superintendent prior to that district assembly.

- A recommendation to reinstate the rights, privileges and responsibilities of a member of the clergy to a minister whose credential is surrendered due to sexual misconduct shall require a two-thirds approval of the District Advisory Board. The recommendation is to be submitted to the Board of General Superintendents within one year of the date of the minister's most recent application for restoration to good standing. Exceptions to any time frames specified in this paragraph must have the prior written approval of the general superintendent in jurisdiction. (540.2, 540.3, 540.6, 540.7, 540.12)

- An individual guilty of sexual misconduct involving minors should not be restored to good standing as a member of the clergy or permitted to hold any ministerial credential, serve in any position of responsibility for or ministry with minors, or be elected or appointed to any leadership role in the local church. A minor is defined as any human being under the age of 18, unless the age of majority is attained later under a state's or country's own domestic legislation. (129.30, 600, 606.1-606.2, 606.5, 606.11-606.12, 916) (*Manual* 540.9)

- The District Ministerial Credentials Board or District Board of Ministry or committee of the same, having considered an application for restoration to good standing submitted within the time frame allowed, may recommend to the district superintendent and appropriate district boards any one of the following:
 1. that the minister be restored to good standing and his or her credential returned;
 2. that the minister continue in a recovery process for a specified length of time before reapplying for restoration to good standing;
 3. that the recovery period be extended and the recovery plan revised (such as monitored re-engagement in ministry, assigning a new recovery team, or addressing personal, marital, or family concerns);
 4. that the minister continue under discipline;
 5. that the minister not be restored to good standing, but evidence of recovery be appropriately acknowledged and celebrated, and permission granted for the minister to resign his or her credential;
 6. that the minister be expelled from the membership and ministry of the Church of the Nazarene. (539.5, 540.7, 540.12) (*Manual* 540.10)
- Should two applications for reinstatement by a minister under discipline be denied, a request may be granted by the Board of General Superintendents to transfer responsibility for the recovery and possible restoration to good standing of the minister in question to another district where the application may be considered. (*Manual* 540.11)
- If a third application for restoration to good standing and reinstatement to the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of being a member of the clergy is denied, the minister may become a layperson upon approval of the District Advisory Board. (538.13, 539.6)
- **Reinstatement to the Rights, Privileges and Responsibilities of Being a Member of the Clergy.** A member of the clergy who has lost good standing and whose application for restoration to good standing has resulted in a recommendation for reinstatement to the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of being a member of the clergy, may be restored to good

standing and have his or her credential returned only by the following process:

1. approval of the district superintendent;
 2. approval of the District Ministerial Credentials Board or District Board of Ministry;
 3. a two-thirds approval of the District Advisory Board;
 4. approval of the Board of General Superintendents; and
 5. approval of the district assembly where good standing was lost. (606.1-606.2, 606.5, 606.11-606.12) (*Manual* 540.12)
- At any point in the process, if in the judgement of the District Superintendent, the pastor is obstructing the process, or ceases to cooperate, or if the DS concludes that no further progress can be made, the DS may terminate the Restoration process. (*Manual* 540.3)

Recommended reading:

- *Losing It All and Finding Yourself* by Richard Dortch
- *A Resilient Life* by Gordon McDonald
- *Ordering Your Private World* by Gordon McDonald
- *Rebuilding Your Broken World* by Gordon McDonald
- *The Utter Relief of Holiness* by John Eldridge
- *When Good Men Are Tempted* by Bill Perkins
- *Healing for Damaged Emotions* by David Seamonds