



## **Code of Ethics for Unity Ministries Policy**

(8-19-2025 reviewed by Standards Team; 8-26-2025 approved by UWM Board of Trustees)

The Unity Worldwide Ministries (UWM) Ministry Code of Ethics applies to all member ministries, alternative ministries, and expansion ministries, represented by their Boards of Trustees/Steering Committees. Each ministry shall require all teams and their leaders within the ministry, including but not limited to prayer chaplains, music, small group, and youth ministry teams, to adhere to this Code of Ethics. It is the expectation that a ministry's leaders, teams, and representatives are accountable for their ministry's behaviors, values, code of ethics, and membership requirements.

### **Introduction and Intention**

Foundational to Unity is the principle and teaching that we are individualized expressions of God. This calls us, as Unity ministries, to live from our Christ nature in all circumstances, thereby being a harmonizing presence and a role model for those we serve. Because of this, it is our intention to be accountable to one another and to UWM in maintaining a high level of professional ethics.

Our Code of Ethics articulates a vision of ethical behavior grounded in our teachings. Its purpose is to provide guidelines for behavior that is both ethical and authentic; and encourages us to give full expression to our Christ nature.

We also recognize that certain violations of our Code of Ethics must be addressed. Some behaviors are explicitly illegal, and such violations may require suspension of membership. Some behaviors are unethical by UWM standards and compromise our ability to perform and provide ministry. These behaviors harm our movement and interfere with our effectiveness in achieving our mission.

This document describes the process of how we hold one another accountable to this standard. Ministries who act in ways that are inconsistent with our Code of Ethics, Policies, Procedures, and Branding Guidelines may be subject to review through our Ministry Employment Assessment System and/or Ministry Competency & Ethics Support System Policy (CESS). These violations will be addressed in a consistent and open manner which assists us all in living our highest potential.

This Code of Ethics applies in conjunction with the Sexual Conduct Policy and Social Media Policy.

**Section I and Section II Ethics are grounded in spiritual principles and self-care. It is recommended that all leaders adopt the pledges stated in Section I and Section II as statements of intention and commitment.**

### **I. Dedication to Truth Principles**

- A. As a Unity ministry, and as members of the Board of Trustees/Steering Committees, or leaders, we dedicate ourselves to the principles of Truth as follows:
  - 1. God is Absolute good, everywhere present.
  - 2. Every human being is an expression of the Divine; the Christ spirit, by whatever name, indwells all people. Their very essence is of God, and therefore, they are also inherently good.
  - 3. Human beings create their experience by the activity of their thinking. Everything in the manifest realm has its beginning in thought.
  - 4. Prayer is creative thinking that heightens the connection with God-Mind and therefore brings forth wisdom, healing, prosperity, and everything good.
  - 5. Knowing and understanding the laws of life, also called Truth, are not enough. A person must also live the truth that they know.
- B. We look to the indwelling Christ for inspiration, to guide, govern, heal, and prosper us.
- C. We demonstrate Truth in our personal and official roles.
- D. We maintain a consistent prayer practice.

### **II. The Relationship to Self – Self Care**

- A. We keep in mind that personal self-care is paramount to the welfare of the ministry.
- B. We consciously seek to prevent burnout by developing and implementing policies that teach and support self-care.
- C. We demonstrate self-care by designing, implementing, and maintaining a plan of regular renewal and spiritual growth for our lives.
- D. We consciously say “yes” or “no” and ask for help when needed to prevent burnout.
- E. We lead by our strengths.
- F. As an individual ministry leader, should I experience any personal crisis, I will seek the counsel of the board president and/or minister. If necessary, I will seek spiritual counseling or coaching from a licensed professional outside Unity.
- G. Should our ministry experience a crisis, we will confer with our regional representative, and a representative of Unity Worldwide Ministries (UWM).

**Sections III through Section VII relate to standards of behaviors all UWM Member Ministries are expected to demonstrate. Failure to do so could result in a review of the ministry's status as a member in good standing of UWM.**

### **III. The Ministry Board Member's Relationship with Others**

All ministry leaders serving in the capacity of a Unity Ministry Board member or leader within the spiritual community are responsible for holding one another accountable to one another and UWM to maintain ethical expectations, described as follows and in other UWM policy documents:

- A. The role of a Board/Steering Committee member or leader carries with it authority, power, and accountability. Such positions shall be held to benefit and be accountable to the people. A Board Member or leader ought to accept and support all people regardless of age, race, socio-economic status, creed, nationality, political affiliations, gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation. When people display unhealthy behaviors, a Board Member or leader ought to respond compassionately.
- B. More is taught by what a leader does than what they say. A Board Member or leader ought to seek to keep their morals above reproach. A Board Member or leader ought to exercise good judgment regarding their social conduct. Their relationships ought to command only the highest respect. They are conscious of the fact that to be pure in heart is to be pure in conduct also.
- C. A governing Board and leaders conduct their work, private and public, in accord with the teachings, standards, and ideals of Unity World Headquarters at Unity Village and Unity Worldwide Ministries without competition or contention.
- D. A Board Member or leader ought to maintain appropriate leadership boundaries, realizing that crossing boundaries is a betrayal of trust. In honor of that trust, a Board Member or leader does not exploit nor violate the emotional, spiritual, physical, or financial well-being of people or institutions that come for help, or over whom the Board Member or leader has authority. A Board Member or leader does not create or cultivate dependencies.
- E. A Board Member or leader does not use their authority to defame or manipulate individuals or groups, or foster division within the ministry. A Board Member or leader ought to avoid situations and relationships that could impair the member's judgment or compromise the integrity of the ministry.
- F. A Board Member or leader ought to monitor both the ministries' and the Board Members' or leaders' personal social media presence and communications. (See Social Media Policy)
- G. When appropriate, refer to the Disruptive Behavior Policy as implemented by the ministry; if not, see the template as a recommended resource. <https://www.unityuwm.org/policies>
- H. Confidentiality:
  - 1. A Board/Steering Committee member or leader is honor-bound to keep all confidences shared individually or collectively, except if a confidence reveals that the person confiding may pose a threat to self, others, or property.
  - 2. A Board/Steering Committee member or leader ought never to mention, without permission, either privately or publicly, the name, residence, or locality of any person under treatment in the past or present as an illustration or verification of Truth principles.
  - 3. A Board/Steering Committee member or leader does not use privileged information for personal gain.
- I. Intervention in Abusive or Neglectful Situations/Mandated Reporting:  
 (NOTE: When a minister is not present, Board members will seek the assistance of the Regional Representative and a representative of Unity Worldwide Ministries.)  
<https://mandatedreporter.com/fag/>

1. It is imperative that Board Members understand the state's or province's applicable mandated reporting laws.
2. When a conversation reveals that the person confiding, regardless of age, may pose a threat to self, others, or property, a Board Member ought to make a good faith report of such abuse to the senior minister/acting spiritual leader, who will then inform the appropriate agencies. Regarding minors, it is important that the Board know the applicable state's or province's laws regarding minors' confidentiality expectations.
3. For additional information, contact the UWM Member Support Team.

#### **IV. Relating to All Ministers, Credentialed Leaders, Spiritual Leaders, Ministry Coordinators, and Lay Leaders, regardless of Denomination**

- A. A Board Member or leader ought to hold all leaders in esteem and respectful regard and use all rightful means to protect the personal and professional honor of all other credentialed or lay leaders.
  1. A Board Member or leader ought to honor and support the work of other credentialed or lay leaders:
    - a. Refrain from conversations with member(s) of other communities that undermine the decisions or actions of that ministry's leadership. Should members of that community seek opinions, input, or advice about their ministry, they are encouraged to talk to that ministry's leadership.
    - b. Reaches out to the Regional Representative, Member Support Team Lead, and/or the UWM Executive Officer, to process any concerns the Board Member or leader might have about the leadership of another ministry.
    - c. Provides cooperative assistance to other leaders as they endeavor to do ministry or serve on a ministry team.
  2. A Board Member or leader ought to avoid criticism of the former leadership and their work. In those rare times when an ethical lapse by a ministry's prior leadership has occurred, a Board Member or leader ought to be truthful and compassionate while maintaining confidentiality.
    - a. When a Board Member or leader is disturbed by the activities of a credentialed or lay leader, they ought to:
    - b. Hold the situation in prayer.
    - c. Communicate directly with that leader.
    - d. Consult with the minister or other members of the Board; if no minister is present, the Regional Representative, Member Support Team Lead, and/or the UWM Chief Executive.
    - e. If guided, file a Competency & Ethics Support System (CESS) complaint.
  3. When a Board Member or leader is disturbed by the activities of another Unity ministry they ought to:
    - a. Hold the situation in prayer.
    - b. Consult with their minister, the Regional Representative, Member Support Team Lead, and/or the UWM Chief Executive.

- c. File a Competency & Ethics Support System (CESS) complaint.
- B. A Board Member or leader ought to be ethical and respectful in-conduct and attitude toward other ministries, denominations, organizations, and metaphysical groups.
- C. Competency & Ethics Support System Policy (CESS), Ministry Assessment Team, and/or Competency & Ethics Support System (CESS) Team members and relevant Unity Worldwide Ministries staff must be able to speak frankly about ethical violations in Competency & Ethics Support System (CESS) Policy Competency & Ethics Support System Policy (CESS) reviews, in Competency & Ethics Support System (CESS) Policy, Competency & Ethics Support System Policy, (CESS) training, and in evaluations of the Code of Ethics and related policies. Performing these activities is not to be construed as a violation of the Code of Ethics and related policies.

#### **V. Leaders Relating to the Ministry Will:**

- A. Respect the free will of members to move or transfer membership away from the Unity ministry and will accept such requests without hesitation or inquiry.
- B. Not to use a ministry for personal gain. Any funds or assets that have been raised in the name of a Unity ministry are registered in the name of that ministry and not in the name of an individual.
- C. Not mishandle funds, give the appearance of mishandling funds, or ignore or enable the mishandling of funds.
- D. Ensure proper tracking and recordkeeping of all funds.
- E. Not directly attempt to draw members or congregants away from any other established ministries or groups without the permission of that ministry's leadership.
  - 1. Increasing virtual accessibility makes defining ministries only by geographical space obsolete and necessitates a higher call to *professional courtesy* rather than solely relying on ethics rules.
  - 2. Virtual ministries on the Internet are open to the World Wide Web and should not be seen as an attempt to draw members or congregants away from any other established ministry or group.
- F. Refrain from the unauthorized use of any ministry's email list.
- G. Be ethical and respectful in conduct and attitude toward other ministries, denominations, organizations, and metaphysical groups.

#### **VI. Relating to Unity Worldwide Ministries. Leaders will:**

- A. Work in harmony and accord with Unity Worldwide Ministries.
- B. Uphold, communicate, and embody the Unity Worldwide Ministries' mission, vision, values, and goals.
- C. Adhere to the policies and bylaws of Unity Worldwide Ministries.
- D. Seek the full approval of Unity Worldwide Ministries before initiating a Unity ministry (virtual, study group, church, or alternative/evolving, etc.).

**VII. My Pledge.**

The ministry ought to require its Board and Leaders to adopt the following policy:

I sincerely devote myself to living in accord with this Code of Ethics in letter and in spirit and to seeing it manifest in all others. I recognize Unity Worldwide Ministries (UWM), and this Code of Ethics provides a framework that holds me accountable to my colleagues, community, and UWM. I recognize that such an agreement is necessary for our mutual and individual effectiveness.

If I find myself contemplating or actually functioning outside of this framework, I agree to consult with my minister, the Regional Representative, Member Support Team Lead, and/or the UWM Chief Executive.

Failure to seek such help will mean I am functioning outside of the framework of this code and, consequently, placing myself outside of Unity Worldwide Ministries with associated consequences.

I hereby adopt and will sign the Code of Ethics, Sexual Conduct Policy, and Social Media Policy Acknowledgement & Signature Form (single-page document) and return it to Unity Worldwide Ministries.

## Appendix A: Self-Care Standards & Rubrics

C.1	Beginning	Developing	Competent	Exceptional
Takes time for renewal of spirit, mind, and body.	Articulates an awareness of the need for self-care.	Designs a plan for self-care and begins implementing it.	Maintains a self-care plan and is consciously aware of needs and how to address them.	Models and teaches a life of regular renewal of spirit, mind, and body.

C.2	Beginning	Developing	Competent	Exceptional
Supports self-differentiation through clear and appropriate boundaries.	Articulates awareness of need for clear sense of self and setting of healthy boundaries.	Demonstrates capacity to set healthy boundaries.	Establishes healthy boundaries while maintaining connections. Takes a stand when necessary.	Models and teaches skills for developing a clear sense of self and setting healthy boundaries while maintaining connections to others.

C.3	Beginning	Developing	Competent	Exceptional
Able to ask for help.	Expresses recognition for the need to ask for help and identifies barriers to follow through.	Expresses recognition of comfort levels in asking for help and cites examples of follow through.	Describes concisely asking for help and expresses comfort in doing so.	Models and teaches the value in asking for help.

C.4	Beginning	Developing	Competent	Exceptional
Maintains mutually enriching relationships.	Describes the differences between personal and professional relationships.	Develops healthy personal relationships outside of the ministry.	Active participant in non-church (spiritual) community activities, developing inter-professional and personal relationships.	Models and teaches skills for cultivating enriching relationships.