



Code of Ethics for Unity Ministries Policy

(5-1-2024 reviewed by Standards Team; 5-28-2024 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. It is the expectation that a ministry's elected leaders support the congregations in supporting their own ministry, behavior, values, code of ethics, or membership accountabilities.

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 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 aspire to follow these practices.

I. Dedication to Truth Principles

- A. As a Unity ministry, and as members of the Board of Trustees/Steering Committees, 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.

Sections III through Section VII relate to standards of behaviors all are expected to demonstrate. Failure to do so could result in a review through the Ministry Employment Assessment System and/or Ministry Competency & Ethics Support System Policy (CESS).

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 accountable to one another and UWM to maintain ethical expectations as described in this and other UWM policy documents.

- A. We understand the role of a Board/Steering Committee member carries with it authority, power, and accountability. We will use our positions to benefit and be accountable to the people we serve. We will 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 we will respond compassionately.
- B. We recognize that more is taught by what a leader does than what they say. We will seek to keep our morals above reproach. We will exercise good judgment in regard to our social conduct. Our relationships will be such as to command only the highest respect. We are conscious of the fact that to be pure in heart is to be pure in conduct also.
- C. We will conduct our 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. We will maintain appropriate leadership boundaries realizing that crossing boundaries is a betrayal of trust. In honor of that trust, we will not exploit nor violate the emotional, spiritual, physical, or financial well-being of people or institutions who come to us for help or over whom we have any kind of authority. We will not create or cultivate dependencies.
- E. We will not use our authority to defame or manipulate individuals or groups, or foster division within the ministry. We will avoid situations and relationships that could impair our judgment or compromise the integrity of the ministry.
- F. We will monitor both the ministries' and our personal social media presence and communications in such a way that represents our role as Board/Steering Committee members. (See Social Media Policy)
- G. When appropriate, we will refer to the Disruptive Behavior Policy.
<https://www.unityuwm.org/policies>
- H. Confidentiality:
 - 1. As a Board/Steering Committee member, we are honor bound to hold sacred all confidences shared with us individually or collectively, except if a confidence reveals that the person confiding may pose a threat to self, others, or property.
 - 2. As a Board/Steering Committee member, we will never 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. As a Board/Steering Committee member, we will 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/faq/>
 - 1. It is imperative that we, as a Board, understand our state's mandated reporting laws.
 - 2. When a conversation reveals that the person confiding, regardless of age, may pose a threat to self, others, or property, we will make a good faith report of such abuse to the senior minister/acting spiritual leader who will then inform the appropriate agencies.
 - 3. Regarding minors, as a Board it is important to know our state laws regarding minors' confidentiality expectations.
 - 4. For additional information contact UWM Member Support.

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

- A. We 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. We will honor & support the work of other credentialed or lay leaders.
 - a. We refrain from conversations with member(s) of another community that undermine the decisions or actions of the ministry's leadership. Should members of that community come to us for opinions, input, or advice about their ministry, we will encourage them to talk to the ministry's leadership.
 - b. We reach out to the Regional Representative, the UWM Operating Officer, and/or Member Support Team Lead to process any concerns we might have about the

- leadership of another ministry.
- c. We provide cooperative assistance to other leaders as they endeavor to do ministry or serve on a ministry team.
2. As elected leaders of an established ministry we 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, we are truthful and compassionate while maintaining confidentiality.
 3. As an elected leader when I am disturbed by the activities of a credentialed or lay leader:
 - a. I will hold the situation in prayer.
 - b. I will communicate directly with that leader.
 - c. If unresolved, I will consult with my minister, or other members of the Board of Trustees if no minister is present, the Regional Representative, the UWM Chief Operating Officer, and/or Member Support Team Lead.
 - d. If guided, I will file an Ethics Review System complaint.
 4. When I am disturbed by the activities of another Unity ministry:
 - a. I will consult with my minister, the Regional Representative, the UWM Operating Officer, and/or Member Support Team Lead.
 - b. I will hold the situation in prayer.
 - c. If guided, I will file an Ethics Review System complaint.
- B. I will be ethical and respectful in my 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 I Serve

- A. I respect the free will of members to move or transfer membership away from the Unity ministry I serve and will accept such requests without hesitation or inquiry.
- B. As an elected leader I will not use a ministry for personal gain. Any funds or assets that have been raised in the name of a Unity ministry will be registered in the name of that ministry and not in the name of an individual. I will not mishandle funds, give the appearance of mishandling funds, or ignore or enable the mishandling of funds. I will ensure proper tracking and recordkeeping of all funds.
- C. I will not directly attempt to draw members or congregants away from any other established ministries or groups without the permission of the ministry leadership.
- D. 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." 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; however, unauthorized use of a ministry email list is unethical.
- E. I am ethical and respectful in my conduct and attitude toward other ministries, denominations, organizations, and metaphysical groups.

VI. Relating to Our Unity Worldwide Ministries

- A. As an elected leader and congregant, I will work in harmony and accord with Unity Worldwide Ministries.
- B. As an elected leader and congregant, I will uphold, communicate, and embody the Unity Worldwide Ministries' values, mission, vision, and goals.
- C. I adhere to the policies and bylaws of Unity Worldwide Ministries.
- D. I first seek the full approval of Unity Worldwide Ministries before initiating a Unity ministry (study group, church, or alternative/evolving).

VII. My Pledge

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 and this Code of Ethics provides a framework that holds me accountable to my colleagues 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, the UWM Chief Operating Officer, and/or Member Support Team Lead.

Failure to seek such help will mean that by my own choice, I am functioning outside of the framework of this code and consequently placing myself outside of Unity Worldwide Ministries.

Please 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.	