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Credentialed Leader/Ministry Review System [CLMRS]

Policy and Procedures

I. INTRODUCTORY STATEMENTS

- A. Purpose of CLMRS:** The Credentialed Leader/Ministry Review System [CLMRS] will provide compassionate peer adjudication of complaints of ethical and/or sexual misconduct by Unity credentialed leaders and/or ethical violations of Unity ministries as needed to aid in the healthy transformation of credentialed Unity leaders and affiliated ministries. The intent behind the CLMRS is to foster a greater expression of our ethical standards in our credentialed leaders and affiliated ministries. A secondary purpose is to support spiritual and professional growth in our credentialed leaders and ministries through a process that helps them understand our ethical standards and how adhering to them will bring better and more successful results in their lives and in their ministry.
- B. Intent of the Credentialed Leader/Ministry Review Team [CLMRT]:** The intent of the CLMRT with regard to credentialed Unity leaders is to provide a peer review process of allegations of ethical and/or sexual misconduct. The intent with regard to the Association of Unity Churches International and to its affiliated ministries is to aid in implementing and enforcing the ethical and general policies relating to church operations.
- C. Function of the Credentialed Leader/Ministry Review Team [CLMRT]:** The CLMRT will be investigatory and determinative in character. It will conduct reviews of Unity credentialed leaders and affiliated ministries. Based on the results of its review the CLMRT will determine whether an ethical violation has occurred and if so the remedy.
- D. Decisions:** Final decisions of the CLMRT will be considered to be decisions in effect under the authority of the Board of Trustees of the Association of Unity Churches International.
- E. Appeals:** The CLMRS will have a process providing for appeals of CLMRT decisions. The CLMR Appeals Panel will remain separate from the CLMRT but will be included within the CLMRS.
- F. Legal Counsel:** CLMRT reviews and appeals to the CLMR Appeals Panel are considered purely religious and ecclesiastical in nature. In this regard, legal and other counsel may not be physically present during the face-to-face or telephone interview process. Credentialed leaders and ministries being reviewed have the right to retain private legal counsel to advise them of any legal rights they may have.

- G. Documented Evidence:** Reviewee(s) will be given the opportunity to see and examine copies of documentation that prompted the review. A true and correct copy of the complaint initiating the review shall be promptly made available to the reviewee. Material furnished to the reviewee(s) and the Case Review Team members is considered to be relevant to the CLMRT review only and should not be shared or copied for any purpose other than the review.
- H. Expert Evidence:** The CLMRT may seek assistance from experts to help them make a full and fair determination of the case. The CLMRT may request psychological and/or medical evaluations. The CLMRT may seek a financial audit prepared by an independent professional [which may include a full review of internal controls, policies and procedures] or a forensic accountant to prove or disprove accusations of theft. The CLMRT may want other expert assistance to support their review. Failure to fully cooperate with requests for gathering expert evidence will be taken into consideration as a factor in the review.
- I. Cost of the Process:** The Association and the reviewee(s) will be responsible for their own respective costs in the review process as well as any costs related to any appeals or complying with a Required Plan of Action [RPOA]. The CLMRT may request a reviewee to undergo a) psychological evaluations, b) to prepare a financial audit, or c) request some other assistance or testing in completing their review. In these instances, the reviewee will bear the costs of complying with these requests.

II. PROCEDURAL OVERVIEW

A summary of the basic steps in this peer-conducted process are:

- A.** Reports of unfulfilled responsibilities or ethical lapses are received by the Association, either at the home office or through complaints to the Regional Representative. These reports are then forwarded to the affected region's Judicatory Representative, who has been elected by their region to serve in this capacity and who has been trained to evaluate and address questions related to unethical conduct.
- B.** The Judicatory Representative conducts a preliminary review as to whether the charges presented warrant further action. Typically before making this determination the Judicatory Representative will consult with two other Judicatory Representatives from other regions. Often the representative will contact the credentialed leader involved and perhaps Association staff to gather more details before making a decision. After this preliminary review the Judicatory Representative will either dismiss the matter, or initiate a CLMRS review.
- C.** In those cases where a CLMRS review is needed, a team of at least two currently qualified CLMRS members will conduct the review. Additional team members may be utilized at the discretion of the CLMRS Chair.

- D. The review team will gather information and consider pertinent testimony and evidence from parties and other witnesses. The results of their review of a credentialed leader will result in a determination of one of three outcomes: Clearance, Required Plan of Action [RPOA], or Suspension. The outcomes available for a ministry under review include: clearance, Required Plan of Action [RPOA], suspension, as well as “reclassification” to a Study Group if circumstance warrant. The review team’s decision will be prepared in a written report which will include the sources from which information was gathered, factual findings, weighting of the evidence, conclusions reached, and the outcome determination [as noted above] as well as other items pertinent to their decision.
- E. Where the allegations are not substantiated and a Required Plan of Action [RPOA] is not indicated, clearance will be immediate.
- F. A Required Plan of Action [RPOA] will include any activities the reviewee must accomplish in order to be cleared. Examples are changes in operational procedures, counseling, refresher courses, additional education, visioning, interpersonal relationship training, peacemaking training, or other professional growth activities. Each will be specified and a schedule for completion established. The CLMRT Case Manager will retain oversight in helping the credentialed leader or ministry successfully complete these activities. When the conditions of the Required Plan of Action [RPOA] are successfully completed, the reviewed parties will be cleared to continue without oversight or conditions. If they are not completed, then suspension is likely.
- G. On some occasions it is necessary to suspend a credentialed leader’s ordination or ministry whose actions fail to meet the ethical standards and/or policies of the Association and who show insufficient willingness to accept personal responsibility for their part in the situation or who are unwilling to complete the Required Plan of Action [RPOA].
- H. A reviewee has the right of appeal. The CLMR Appeals Panel will convene as deemed necessary by the CLMR Appeals Panel Chair. The CLMR Appeals Panel will review the CLMRT report and all pertinent documents relating to the issue(s) raised on appeal, the submissions from the reviewee, the written report of the Judicatory Audit Team (if any), and relevant submissions from other parties.

III. COMPOSITION OF CREDENTIALLED LEADER/MINISTRY REVIEW TEAM AND JUDICATORY MINISTRY TEAM

- A. CLMRT members will not be –
 1. Members of the staff of the Association of Unity Churches International.
 2. Senior manager level of the staff of Unity®.
 3. Members of the CLMR Appeals Panel.
 4. Members of the Association Board of Trustees or Unity Board of Trustees.

- B.** The Chair and Vice Chair of the CLMRT will be appointed by the Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Association.
- C.** The members of the CLMRT and CLMR Appeals Panel will be appointed by the Chair of the Board of Trustees and will be qualified persons who meet the membership requirements outlined herein. There is no term limit.
- D.** The Judicatory Ministry Team will consist of a Judicatory Representative from each region elected by the region.
- E.** The Chair of the Judicatory Ministry Team will be selected by the Judicatory Ministry Team members.
- F.** The Chair of the CLMR Appeals Panel will be selected by the CLMR Appeals Panel members.

IV. QUALIFICATIONS

- A.** Qualifications of members for credentialed leader [all types] and ministry reviews –
 1. Will have served successfully for at least five [5] years as a minister or spiritual leader in the field.
 2. Will be recommended by the regional Judicatory Representative subject to final approval by the Chair of the Board.
 3. A credentialed leader cleared for employment.
 4. Will have post grad credits up to date.
 5. Will have been trained in peacemaking or a recognized equivalent approved by the Association’s Director of Peacemaking & Transitional Services.
 6. Will attend initial CLMRS training and refresher training at least once every two [2] years and remain current in CLMRS policy and procedure at all times.
 7. Demonstrated commitment and loyalty to the Association and its programs through a combination of involvement in a) regional or national ministry team work, b) regular attendance at regional and national conferences, c) regular financial support of the ministry they serve and/or the Association, d) have previously served at Unity Institute, Silent Unity, and/or Unity Village, and e) compliance with Association policies, bylaws, and ethical standards.
- B.** Qualifications of members for licensed teacher and ministry reviews –
 1. Is either a) a licensed Unity teacher with license renewed yearly for the past five [5] years, b) an active lay leader of a member ministry of the Association for a minimum of five [5] years, or c) have a minimum of five [5] years of substantially continuous service to the Association.
 2. Will be recommended by the minister or spiritual leader of the ministry they are serving and the regional Judicatory Representative subject to final approval by the Chair of the Board.

3. Will have completed fifty [50] hours of SEE credits or equivalent basic Unity classes as determined by the CLMRS Chair.
 4. Will have successfully served in a leadership capacity in the ministry, i.e. team leader, board member, licensed Unity teacher, or staff member.
 5. Will have attended board training or Integral Leadership Thriving Ministry training.
 6. Will have been trained in Peacemaking or a recognized equivalent approved by the Association's Director of Peacemaking & Transitional Services.
 7. Will attend an initial CLMRS training and refresher training at least once every two [2] years and remain current in CLMRS policy and procedures at all times.
 8. Demonstrated commitment and loyalty to the Association and its programs through involvement in regional or national ministry team work, regular attendance at regional or national ministry team work, regular attendance at regional and national conferences, regular financial support of the ministry they serve and/or the Association, and compliance with Association policies, bylaws, and ethics.
- C. Judicatory Representative qualifications -**
1. Must meet the above qualification requirements to review all credentialed leaders and will have case review team experience.
 2. Will be elected by their respective regional Board of Trustees.
 3. Have successfully served as a member of the CLMRT.
 4. Willing to serve on a Case Review Team outside of their region.
- D. CLMR Appeals Panel members' qualifications -**
1. Must meet the above qualification requirements to review all credentialed leaders.
 2. Will be appointed by the Chair of the Association Board of Trustees from a list jointly recommended by the Chairs of CLMRS and Judicatory Representative Ministry Team.
 3. Have served as a member of the CLMRT with case review team experience.
- E. Ad Hoc CLMRS guests -**
1. Anyone with some, but not all, the above qualifications are welcome to attend and participate in the Credentialed Leader/Ministry Review System Training and be an ad hoc member of the CLMRS provided they receive permission from the CLMRS Chair prior to the training. However, until all the above qualifications are met they can not serve as a member of a Case Review Team.

V. OPERATING PROCEDURES – Conduct of the CLMRS Process

A. Roles and Responsibilities

1. **Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Association** [as pertains to the CLMRS] –
 - a. Appoint a Chair and Vice Chair for the CLMRT.
 - b. Appoint qualified members to the CLMRT and CLMR Appeals Panel from a list jointly recommended by the Chair of both CLMRT and the Judicatory Representative Ministry Team.

2. **Judiciary Representative.** When circumstance arise that may require CLMRS action -
- a. Upon receipt of a written complaint, or notice of possible ethical or policy violation – conduct a preliminary review of the matter and consult with two [2] other Judiciary Representatives as well as others with pertinent information to determine whether a formal review of any credential leader or ministry is warranted. Communicate this decision as per the operating procedures.
 - (1) If a formal review is not warranted provide a written narrative outlining the basis for this determination to the Association’s Vice President Minister & Ministry Services.
 - (2) If a formal review is warranted – contact the reviewee(s) by telephone and follow up in writing, notifying them that a review has been initiated. Include in the letter a written narrative of the reasons for initiating the review, applicable policy or Code of Ethics citation(s), a copy of the CLMRS Policy and Procedures and, if applicable, the Association’s policy on Sexual Conduct. Provide a copy of the letter of notification to the CLMRS Chair, Director of Ministry Employment, and the Vice President Minister & Ministry Services.

It is suggested that the credentialed leader under review be reminded that ethical conduct is expected for the duration of the review and thus they should not disrespectfully treat those who filed the complaints, nor disparage them to others.

- b. Consider possible alternatives to a review so long as within established Association policies prior to initiating a CLMRS review. When in doubt a review should be initiated.
- c. Assist the CLMRT Chair in providing annual CLMRS training to experienced and prospective members of the Credentialed Leader/Ministry Review System.
- d. Participate in on-going professional development in Peacemaking, CLMRS, and leadership skills.
- e. Assist in conducting an audit of CLMRT decisions as assigned by the CLMRS audit team.
- f. Be willing to consult with other Judiciary Representatives as needed in discerning the need for a review.
- g. Be willing to serve on CLMRT for cases outside their region.
- h. Notify complainants’ in sexual misconduct cases of the outcome of the review.
- i. When reviewing a ministry without a credentialed leader, consider allowing the ministry to hire a temporary or transitional minister as per these procedures.

3. **The CLMRT Chair.** Upon receipt of the request of a review by the Judicatory Representative, the CLMRT Chair will –
 - a. Appoint two or more Case Review Team members and name one of them as the Case Manager. If the review involves an allegation of sexual misconduct, ensure the Case Review Team is comprised of at least one man and one woman and document the reason if this is not possible. Mentor the CLMRT as warranted. [All CLMRT members are to be objective and neutral and uphold the highest and best interest of all concerned. No team member shall represent or advocate for any party to the review.]
 - b. Contact the reviewee with names of the Case Review Team members. Address any perceived bias by reviewee and consider revoking the appointment of a review team member.
 - c. Send a copy of the appointment letter to all CLMRT members, Judicatory Representative, and the Vice President Minister & Ministry Services.
 - d. Establish and maintain a case record including a chronology documenting any delays by date and with reasons. Track ongoing progress of cases with a Required Plan of Action [RPOA].
 - e. Notify the Vice President Minister & Ministry Services and the Director of Ministry Employment and request pertinent information be provided to the CLMRT members.
 - f. Review Case Review Team draft reports for substance/content before sending to the Chair of the Judicatory Representatives for audit.
 - g. Submit Case Review Team reports to the Chair of the Judicatory Representatives for audit.
 - h. Notify the Case Manager of determination and/or input from the audit team.
 - i. Upon receipt of the final report the CLMRT Chair will annotate the case record to indicate that the review has been completed or is pending completion of the Required Plan of Action as appropriate.
 - j. Submit a quarterly written report to the Association's Vice President Minister & Ministry Services summarizing CLMRS actions.
 - k. Recommend policy changes and submit a timely written report to the Board of Trustees twice yearly concerning issues of policy with a copy to the Standards Ministry Team Chair.
 - l. Organize, promote, and conduct CLMRS Training and inform members of updates as necessary.

4. **CLMRT Case Manager.** Upon appointment the Case Manager will –
 - a. Establish a case record including:
 - (1) A chronology documenting any delays by date and with reasons;
 - (2) A list of all parties interviewed by name, role in ministry, and;
 - (3) Relevance to the review if not obvious.

 - b. Make prompt contact with the reviewee and organize receipt of the reviewee's initial statement. Review all of the documentary information provided.

- c. Contact the other Case Review Team member(s) to discuss the logistics of the review and determine if an on-site visit is required.
- d. If it is determined that an on-site visit is not required, arrange for bridge line interviews and team meetings.
- e. Contact the reviewee(s) to negotiate the time and date of either the bridge line call or to negotiate the logistics of an on-site visit. Confirm in writing to the reviewee(s) the agreements concerning the logistics of the review.
- f. If the Case Manager is unable to contact the reviewee(s) within thirty [30] days, contact the other team member(s), then make a decision based on the data available and notify the Judicatory Representative and the CLMRS Chair. Compose and forward a copy of the report to the last known address of the reviewee(s) by registered mail with a return receipt requested.
- g. Together with the other Case Review Team member(s) conduct the review using the established guidelines for interviews.
 - (1) Interview the accused, the complainant, witnesses, and all other parties with pertinent information; or clearly report a reason for not doing so. The Case Review Team will not meet with the accused and accuser(s) at the same time.
 - (2) Review all written information or statements provided to the team. Any party or witness shall be permitted to submit a statement in writing if he or she asks to do so.
 - (3) The Case Review Team will advise the reviewee if additional allegations or concerns arise during the review. The reviewee will have the opportunity to respond to these allegations or concerns.
- h. The scope of the review may be expanded to include additional party/parties if, in the Case Review Team's judgment, review of additional party/parties is warranted.
 - (1) If the scope of review is expanded, the Case Review Team will notify the Judicatory Representative who will formally initiate the additional review.
 - (2) If the scope of the review is expanded, the Case Review Team will notify the CLMRT Chair to appoint an additional review team or team member if warranted.
 - (3) The Case Review Team may begin the review of the additional party/parties immediately if an additional team or team member does not need to be appointed.
- i. Together with other Case Review Team member(s), analyze all information gathered and write a report stating whether the reviewee(s) is/are cleared or suspended. Ministries may also be reclassified as study groups. If neither clearance, nor suspension applies, a scheduled Required Plan of Action [RPOA] will be presented.

- (1) The report will include details of the original complaint, summaries of the steps taken to undertake the review process and results of interviews along with the Case Review Team's impressions of the credibility of witnesses and findings/conclusions based on the weight of the evidence.
 - (2) The standard to be used in weighing the evidence is "a preponderance of the evidence," which means that a reasonable person evaluating the totality of the evidence would decide that it is more likely than not that the questioned behavior occurred.
 - (3) If the Case Review Team finds that an allegation of sexual misconduct cannot be substantiated, or an evaluation of the evidence does not indicate that sexual misconduct has occurred, the Case Review Team will provide written documentation that the allegation was not substantiated. [They may also need to deal with written documentation of the termination of the leave of absence without prejudice.] The finding that the allegations were not substantiated will be shared as widely as the original allegation.
 - (4) When two co-ministers serving at the same ministry are reviewed, a separate report must be written for each individual. A report regarding one co-minister will not be provided by the CLMRT to the other co-minister.
- j. Prior to announcing any decision, provide the Judicatory Representatives Ministry Team Chair, via the CLMRT Chair, all of the written data including summaries of oral testimony used in reaching the decision. The Judicatory Representatives Ministry Team will conduct an audit of the proceedings for the purpose of assuring policies and procedures were followed.
 - k. If a decision of Required Plan of Action [RPOA] or suspension is made, advise the party/parties in writing of their right to file written notice of their intent to appeal the decision within ten [10] days. [NOTE: Appeler must file all papers in support of their appeal within thirty [30] days from the date the decision is published.]
 - l. If a decision of Required Plan of Action [RPOA] is made, monitor the terms of the plan. If the requirements are not met by the reviewee(s) in a timely manner, consult with the other members of the case review team and take agreed upon action.
 - m. Dispose of all material relevant to the review except that which is to be retained in the Association's office files. Interview notes and other material received during the review, which is pertinent to the case, should be forwarded to the Association office for the archive files.
 - n. When the report is completed, send a copy of the final report to the Judicatory Representative, Regional Representative, CLMRT Chair, Director of Ministry Employment, and the Vice President Minister & Ministry Services.

- o. When the Required Plan of Action [RPOA] is successfully completed a decision of clearance will be made and copies of the letter of release will be sent to the reviewed party, the Judicatory Representative, CLMRT Chair, Director of Ministry Employment, and the Vice President Minister & Ministry Services. If the RPOA is not completed on schedule, a decision of suspension may be made.
5. **Case Review Team Members.** Upon appointment the Case Review Team members will review the information, participate in the logistical negotiations, the review of the party/parties, and participate in the making of the decision and the preparation of the report as co-equal members of the team.
 6. **Vice President Minister & Ministry Services.**
 - a. Provide resource services to the Judicatory Representatives, CLMRT Chair, and Case Review Team members as required.
 - b. Provide pertinent information to the CLMRT, from the file of the credentialed leader or ministry being reviewed, upon the request of the CLMRT Chair or review team's Case Manager.
 - c. Maintain copies of reports of CLMRS action and attendant information.
 7. **Director of Ministry Employment.**
 - a. Provide CLMRT with pertinent information when needed concerning employment history and other employment related details.
 - b. Provide relevant support to the Standards Ministry Team, CLMRS and others dealing with an application for Restoration of active status for a credentialed leader and/or a ministry that has been suspended and then subsequently requests Restoration.
 - c. Attach the signed statement provided by a credentialed leader under a Required Plan of Action to their resume when sending it to member Unity ministries for employment considerations.
 - d. Track credentialed leader and/or ministry job changes and/or other employment related ethical issues and report as needed to CLMRS Chair or regional Judicatory Representatives.
 - e. Track and report as needed Unity ministries that have been disaffiliated.
 - f. Upon receipt of the final report the Director of Ministry Employment and/or Vice President Minister & Ministry Services will file all correspondence, including the final report in an archive file at the Association home office.

VI. CRITERIA FOR REVIEW

A. A credentialed leader may be subject to review -

1. If he or she leaves two [2] ministries during any five [5] year period.
2. If he or she leaves any ministry prior to completing two [2] years in that ministry.
3. If he or she is absent, from active ministry for a period exceeding one [1] year.
4. If a signed statement is received by an Association official alleging that a Code of Ethics violation has occurred.

5. If the credentialed leader fails to follow policies and procedures of the Association.
 6. A decision to review a credentialed leader may be made or not made based on all of the facts and circumstances known to the appropriate Association official as communicated to the proper Judicatory Representative who actually makes the decision to initiate a review.
- B. A Field Licensing Candidate may be subject to review -**
1. If he or she does not complete the Field Licensing Program.
 2. As well as on any other grounds that would apply to a credentialed leader.
- C. A licensed teacher may be subject to review -**
1. If a signed statement is received by an Association official alleging that a Code of Ethics violation has occurred.
 2. If he or she fails to follow policies and procedures of the Association and/or the ethical standards for licensed Unity teachers.
 3. May be made or not made based on all of the facts and circumstances known to the appropriate Association official as communicated to the proper Judicatory Representative who actually makes the decision to initiate a review.
- D. A student on the Unity Institute ministry path may be subject to review -**
1. If a signed statement is received by a Unity® or an Association official alleging that a Code of Ethics violation has occurred.
 2. If the student fails to follow policies and procedures of the Association and/or the ethical standards for students.
 3. May or not be made based on all of the facts and circumstances known to the appropriate Unity® or Association official as communicated to the proper Judicatory Representative who actually makes the decision to initiate a review.
- E. A ministry may be subject to review -**
1. If the ministry “loses the service” of two [2] credentialed leaders during any five [5] year period.
 2. If the ministry “loses the service” of a credentialed leader prior to him/her serving at least two [2] years in the ministry.
 3. If a signed statement is received by an Association official alleging that a Ministry Code of Ethics violation has occurred as communicated to the proper Judicatory Representative who actually makes the decision to initiate a review.
 4. If the ministry has been without an Association approved leader for one [1] year.
 5. If the ministry under special dispensation terminates the employment of the spiritual leader.
 6. If the ministry fails to follow policies and procedures of the Association.
 7. If the ministry hires a spiritual leader who is not currently approved for ministry employment by the Association.
 8. If a Field Licensing Program [FLP] candidate leaves or the ministry loses the service of an FLP candidate and/or fails to fulfill its FLP commitment.

9. If the ministry was started without regard to the policies and procedures of the Association concerning affiliation and/or pioneering a new ministry.
10. A decision to review a ministry may be made or not made based on all of the facts and circumstances known to the appropriate Association official as communicated to the proper Judicatory Representative who actually makes the decision to initiate a review.

VII. CATEGORIES OF DECISIONS

Following are the only four categories of decision that can be made by a Credentialed Leader/Ministry Review Team -

- A. **Clearance.** The decision that contains no stipulations where -
 1. Credentialed leaders are cleared for Unity ministry employment
 2. Unity ministries are cleared for credentialed leadership employment.
 3. Licensed Unity teachers are cleared for active service in a Unity ministry.
 4. Unity Institute ministry path and FLP students are cleared to continue pursuing licensing and ordination as a Unity minister.

- B. **Required Plan of Action [RPOA].** The decision where specific tasks or achievements must be attained before a reviewee(s) can be cleared. Consequences of a decision of RPOA are -
 1. A credentialed leader may not pursue ministerial employment at Association churches while under a RPOA unless stated otherwise in the RPOA and without notifying the prospective employer of the RPOA and its terms.
 2. Ministries may not seek to fill ministerial vacancies unless stated otherwise in their RPOA. This includes the hiring of either a temporary or Transitional Ministry Specialist. The Review Team will advise the Director of Ministry Employment of the ministry's employment status.
 3. A licensed Unity teacher may not teach Unity courses for credit or otherwise serves as a licensed Unity teacher in a Unity ministry unless authorized in the RPOA.
 4. A student on the Unity Institute ministry path may not be licensed or ordained unless authorized in the Required Plan of Action. The RPOA for a student on the Unity Institute ministry path shall be submitted to the appropriate Licensing & Ordination Ministry Team and they will provide parallel supervision of the student on the Unity Institute ministry path's progress.
 5. The decision of a Required Plan of Action is a public designation.
 6. A CLMRT must consult with the Director of Peacemaking & Transitional Services before recommending or requiring a ministry to participate in peacemaking. A CLMRT Case Manager must advise the Director of Peacemaking Services when the team plans to require a ministry to undergo peacemaking programs even if the peacemaking is not to be provided by the Director of Peacemaking & Transitional Services.

- C. Suspension.** Suspension is required when the CLMRT finds that the reviewee(s) cannot be cleared and no tasks or achievements can be prescribed that would allow them to be cleared. These cases are typically, but not limited to, cases when the reviewee - a) egregiously violated ethical standards, b) repeatedly violated ethical standards, c) failed or refused to cooperate with the CLMRS process in good faith, d) refused or failed to comply with and/or complete a RPOA, or, e) is otherwise found to be unfit to serve as a credentialed leader.

Consequences of suspension –

1. Credentialed leaders on suspension may not serve as ministers/spiritual leaders in Association ministries.
2. Ministries that employ suspended credentialed leaders risk suspension and loss of membership in the Association.
3. Licensed Unity teachers on suspension may not teach Unity courses for credit or otherwise serve as a licensed Unity teacher in a ministry.
4. Students on the Unity Institute ministry path and Field Licensing Program [FLP] candidates may not be licensed or ordained and may be expelled from the licensing and ordination and FLP process.
5. Suspended reviewees who have exhausted their appeals may be eligible at a later date to seek restoration under the Association of Unity Churches Restoration Policy.
6. Suspension is a public designation and will be published in accordance with the Association Board of Trustees Policy Manual.

- D. Reclassification.** A ministry that has been reviewed may be reclassified as a study group affiliated with the Association's Expansion Department if any of the following are true –

1. No Association approved spiritual leader has been leading the ministry in the past year.
2. An Association approved spiritual leader is not being diligently sought and there is little reason to believe that one would be found.
3. Regular Sunday services are not being offered.
4. Services are held in a private home, not a public setting.
5. A quorum of the board has met less than ten [10] times in twelve [12] months.
6. There has not been an annual meeting in twelve [12] months.
7. Does not meet minimum requirement for new member status as defined by the Association's Expansion Department.

VIII. CONSIDERATIONS FOR DECISIONS

A. Clearance.

1. **Clearance for a credentialed leader is warranted when -**
 - a. A decision for clearance will contain no stipulations.
 - b. If allegations of Code of Ethics and/or Sexual Conduct Policy violations are disproved.

- c. Other – as necessitated by unique situations.
- d. When a credentialed leader is deemed ready to assume active ministry. Applies in cases when a minister has been without a ministry or left a ministry or ministries before serving as per the Association policy.
- e. When a Required Plan of Action [RPOA] has been successfully completed.

2. **Clearance for a ministry is warranted when -**

- a. A ministry, in violation of Association Policy has been without a credentialed leader, and is deemed ready to employ a new credentialed leader.
- b. If allegations of the Code of Ethics or Association policy violation are disproved.
- c. Other – as necessitated by unique situations.
- d. When a Required Plan of Action [RPOA] has been successfully completed.

B. Required Plan of Action [RPOA] for a credentialed leader or ministry.

- 1. A Required Plan of Action is warranted when the criteria for clearance have not been met but there is a possibility that clearance could be granted if the credentialed leader or ministry takes certain actions or fulfills certain requirements as specified by the CLMRT Case Review Team to improve the conditions that led to the ethical and/or policy lapse.
- 2. **Character and conditions of a RPOA.** A reviewee(s) given a decision for RPOA will have specific directions in writing regarding -
 - a. Duration.
 - b. Special tasks and accomplishments prescribed by the CLMRT for the reviewee(s) to complete oriented to helping the reviewee(s) transform their consciousness surrounding their ethical lapse(s).
 - c. In the case of a credentialed leader as reviewee, the RPOA must include a statement of whether the individual may or may not seek employment as a credential leader while fulfilling the RPOA.
 - d. In the case of a ministry as reviewee, the RPOA must include a statement of whether the ministry may or may not seek employment of a credentialed leader while fulfilling the RPOA.
- 3. Reviewee(s) given special tasks and achievements that must be completed shall provide written documentation to their Case Manager. Timeline for reporting progress and completion of the terms of the RPOA and reports shall be sent by the Case Manager to the appropriate regional Judicatory Representative who initiated the review process.
- 4. **Eventual outcomes after a Required Plan of Action.**
 - a. **Clearance -**
 - (1) The reviewed party will be cleared when written documentation of completion of all required tasks and outcomes are provided to the Case Manager and in the judgment of the Case Review Team, the requirements of the RPOA have all been successfully completed.

- (2) The Case Manager will send a letter of release indicating that all conditions of the RPOA have been fulfilled to the reviewed party, Judicatory Representative, CLMRT Chair, Director of Ministry Employment, and the Vice President Minister & Ministry Services.

b. **Suspension -**

- (1) If the RPOA is not completed within the designated timeframe then suspension will be instituted unless the Case Review Team extends the timeframe for good cause shown.
- (2) If suspension is instituted because the RPOA has not been fulfilled, then the RPOA must be completed before application for restoration can be made.

C. Suspension.

1. When allegations of Code of Ethics violations are substantiated, a RPOA or suspension must follow.
2. Suspension is warranted when –
 - a. A credentialed leader or ministry whose actions fail to meet the ethical standards and/or policies of the Association and who shows insufficient willingness to accept personal responsibility for their part in the situation to the degree that the CLMRT determines that RPOA would not assist in improving the conditions that led to the ethical and /or policy violation(s).
 - b. The reviewee has been found to have committed a pattern of repeated ethical and/or policy lapses such that the CLMRT determines that a RPOA would not be helpful in furthering the goals of the CLMRS and/or the mission of the Association.
 - c. The reviewee's conduct was found to be egregious such that it would be a material risk to the Association and/or its affiliated ministries to allow the reviewee to remain in good standing with the Association.
 - d. The reviewee fails to adequately and promptly cooperate with the review.
 - e. The reviewee cannot be located.
 - f. Other - as necessitated by unique situations.
3. Membership in the Association is revoked when suspension is upheld on appeal.

D. Reclassification.

1. A ministry that has been reviewed may be reclassified as a study group affiliated with the Association's Expansion Department if the criteria as outlined in the categories of decisions apply.
2. A ministry may voluntarily request this status if any of the criteria outlined in the categories of decisions apply.
3. Any reclassified ministry must follow the guidelines of the Expansion Department's policies and procedures.

IX. CLMRS AUDIT

- A. Judicatory Ministry Team.** The Judicatory Ministry Team will conduct an audit of all CLMRS Case Review Team decisions.
- B. Audits.** Audits will be completed within fourteen [14] days of receipt of a written request for audit. The audit will take place before the reviewed party is notified of the CLMRT decision.
1. Audit proceedings and all feedback given to the CLMRT are confidential.
 2. For purposes of the audit, three [3] members of the Judicatory Ministry Team constitutes a quorum.
 - a. The Judicatory Representative that initiated the review may not serve on the audit team.
 - b. The three [3] will be appointed by the Judicatory Ministry Team Chair.
 - c. Communication among the audit team members will be by the most expeditious manner possible [bridge line, email, fax, personal meeting, etc.].
 3. The appointed audit team members will have access to all data used by the review team with the purpose of determining whether or not the policies and procedures were followed.
 4. If the audit team determines that CLMRS policies and procedures were not followed, and the breach(s) of policies and procedures impacts the due process rights of the reviewee the case will be remanded to the review team for reconsideration or the CLMRT Chair will be notified that a new team needs to be appointed.
 - a. Specific comments pertaining to the basis of the remanding will be made.
 - b. If the breach(s) of policies and procedures were technical or trivial such that the fundamental due process of the review is not impacted in a substantial manner, then the case may be remanded to the review team with instructions on how to remedy the breach(s) of policy and/or procedure.
 5. The case will be remanded to the review team along with specific comments if the audit team has questions or concerns regarding the content of the report including due process, analysis of evidence, conclusions reached, or the overall decision.
 6. Within five [5] business days after the decision by the audit team is reached, the Judicatory Ministry Team Chair will provide written notification of the outcome of the audit team decision and the CLMRT decision to the CLMRT Chair, Director of Ministry Employment, and the Vice President Minister & Ministry Services.
- C. Audits must be completed before an appeal may be made to the CLMR Appeals Panel.**

- D.** Audit decisions of the Judicatory Ministry Team will be considered to be decisions in effect under the authority of the Board of Trustees of the Association of Unity Churches International.

X. CLMRS APPEALS

A. Appeal Process.

1. Only a reviewee may appeal a CLMRS decision of a Required Plan of Action [RPOA], suspension, or reclassification.
2. The notice of appeal must be filed within ten [10] days of the date the CLMRT decision was announced. Notice of appeals must be made in writing to the Chair of CLMR Appeals Panel with a copy to the CLMRT Chair and specify in simple and straightforward language the grounds for the appeal. If no notice of appeal is filed within ten [10] calendar days, the CLMRT decision becomes final.
3. The full appeal may accompany the notice of appeal or it may be served as outlined above at anytime within thirty [30] days of the date the decision was announced. The full appeal will contain the facts and circumstances upon which the reviewee seeks to have the CLMRT decision overturned along with any documents the reviewee believes are pertinent to the grounds for appeal.
4. Grounds for overturning and/or remanding a CLMRT decision on appeal will be based solely on any or all of the following –
 - a. Significant lack of procedural due process which fundamentally undermines the fairness of the proceedings.
 - b. Violation of fundamental inherent rights which renders the outcome of the case unjust.
 - c. Improper weighting of evidence by the CLMRT which renders the outcome of the case unjust.
 - d. Newly discovered evidence that would justify a new review or change in outcome.
 - e. Manifestly inappropriate penalty that renders the proceedings fundamentally unjust when compared to other CLMRS cases.
5. The CLMR Appeals Panel will convene as deemed necessary by the CLMR Appeals Panel Chair. The CLMR Appeals Panel will review the CLMRT report and all pertinent documents relating to the issue(s) raised on appeal; the submissions from the reviewee, the written report of the Judicatory Audit Team [if any], and relevant submissions for other parties of interest as determined in the discretion of the CLMR Appeals Panel.
6. The standard of review on appeal will be - would a reasonably sound and spiritually mature minister, upon reviewing the reported facts and circumstances of the case, and taking note of the process and procedures followed find that the proceedings and the result were more likely than not fair and just. It is not a “de novo” review.

7. Appeal process notes –
 - a. The CLMR Appeals Panel will issue a written ruling in response to an appeal within thirty [30] days of its filing provided all pertinent documents are provided with the appeal.
 - b. The CLMR Appeals Panel, at its discretion, may invite the reviewee(s) to meet face to face with the CLMR Appeals Panel or communicate directly with them on a conference call.
 - c. All appellate proceedings and deliberations are confidential.
 - d. All parties are responsible for their own respective costs.
 - e. When a decision on the appeal is reached, it will be prepared in written form and all parties will promptly be informed of the decision.
 - f. The written decision of the CLMR Appeals Panel will be sent to the reviewee(s) and the CLMRT, as well as the CLMRS Chair, pertinent regional Judicatory Representative, Director of Ministry Employment, and the Vice President Minister & Ministry Services.
 - g. If the appeal is overturned on procedural grounds, then a copy of the decision of the CLMR Appeals Panel will be sent to each member of the audit team that reviewed the report prior to its being published.
 - h. Reports and all materials used in the appeal process will be sent to or returned to the Vice President Minister & Ministry Services of the Association of Unity Churches.
 - i. Once a reviewee has filed an appeal of the CLMRT findings, a minister reviewee may not seek placement as a minister and a ministry reviewee may not seek a minister [temporary or permanent] until the appeal is resolved.
 - j. The filing of the appeal stays enforcement of the CLMRT decision, thus the reviewee is not required to fulfill conditions of the Required Plan of Action [RPOA] while the appeal is being adjudicated.
8. The CLMRS Appeals Panel may decide any of the following –
 - a. To remand the case to CLMRT with instructions as to further proceedings.
 - b. To affirm the decision of CLMRT.
 - c. To overturn the decision of CLMRT.
 - d. Separately, and/or in addition to the above, to make recommendations to the Board of Trustees via the CLMRS Chair for policy adjustment.
9. The ruling of the CLMR Appeals Panel is final.
10. Decisions of the CLMR Appeals Panel will be considered to be decisions in effect under the authority of the Board of Trustees of the Association of Unity Churches.

XI. EMPLOYMENT PROCESS DURING CLMRS PROCESS

A. Credentialed Leaders.

1. If a credentialed leader has submitted an application for employment in good faith before a review is instituted then the leader may complete the interview and placement process subject to the notice provisions [in paragraph #4 below] as reasonably modified to their situation provided the Director of Ministry Employment and the CLMRT believes it would be in the best interest of the Association for the employment process to go forward.
2. From the time of notification of review a credentialed leader can not seek employment as a minister / spiritual leader in an Association member or affiliated church or begin a new Unity ministry until the review process is complete and he/she is cleared or until he/she has been placed on a Required Plan of Action [RPOA] that provides for a modified employment process.
3. The Required Plan of Action [RPOA] for a credentialed leader will state whether or not the credentialed leader can seek employment while the RPOA is being fulfilled.
4. If a credentialed leader under a Required Plan of Action [RPOA] seeks employment, he/she must provide the Director of Ministry Employment with a signed statement to accompany their resume. This statement will include the following –
 - a. I have been reviewed by a panel of my peers and I am bound by a Required Plan of Action with a completion date of _____.
 - b. A copy of the Case Review Team report including my Required Plan of Action is available from the Case Manager [include name and contact information her]. I hereby grant permission for you to discuss the report with the Case Manager.
 - c. Should I be selected to serve as a credentialed leader while under the Required Plan of Action, I will sign a conditional contract until such time as I am cleared for employment in a Unity church. Should I subsequently be suspended, I will immediately resign my position and the employment contract will be null and void.

B. Ministries.

1. Prior to initiating a review of a ministry that does not then have a current credentialed leader serving as spiritual leader the Judicatory Representative may after consultation with other Judicatory Representatives according to this policy, and after consultation with the Director of Ministry Employment, allow a ministry to hire a credentialed leader in a temporary or transitional capacity provided the credentialed leader hired is made aware of the pending review.

2. A ministry being reviewed can not seek the services of a full-time or permanent part time credentialed leader until the review process is complete and the ministry is cleared except as allowed herein. After consulting with the Regional Representative, Judicatory Representative, and the CLMRT Chair, the Director of Ministry Employment may, if in the best interests of the Unity movement, allow a ministry being reviewed to hire a full-time or permanent part-time credentialed leader. [Notice to the prospective credentialed leader as outlined in paragraph #4 listed below is required.]
3. The Required Plan of Action [RPOA] for a ministry will state whether or not the ministry can seek the services of a credentialed leader or a Transitional Ministry Specialist while the Required Plan of Action [RPOA] is being fulfilled and if so, what conditions if any need to be completed prior to the commencement of the employment process.
4. Should a ministry under review or under a Required Plan of Action wish to hire a credentialed leader, the ministry board must provide a signed statement to the Director of Ministry Employment. This statement will include the following –
 - a. This ministry is being or has been reviewed under the CLMRS process and is or could be bound by a Required Plan of Action.
 - b. A copy of the Case Review Team report including the ministry’s Required Plan of Action is available from the Case Manager [include name and contact information here]. We hereby grant permission for applicants to discuss the report with the Case Manager.
 - c. We are only able to offer a conditional contract until such time as clearance is granted. Should we subsequently be suspended, the employment contract will be null and void.
5. Once the Required Plan of Action [RPOA] is successfully completed and the ministry is cleared, then the Director of Ministry Employment would resume their role and responsibility in the hiring process.

XII. TIME FRAMES FOR PROCESSING CLMRS REQUESTS

1. When the Judicatory Representative receives the signed complaint related to the possibility of a CLMRS review they will have twenty-one [21] days until the completion of their preliminary review subject to extensions based on good cause shown or additional letters of complaint being submitted.
2. When the CLMRT Chair receives the request for a CLMRS review to the time a Case Review Team is appointed – fifteen [15] days. This time can be longer if there is agreement among all parties or if justifiable circumstances prevent the immediate appointment of a Case Review Team. In the meantime, the reviewee shall file their responsive statement within this same fifteen [15] day period attaching copies of pertinent documents.

3. From the time the CLMRT Chair appoints the Case Manager to the time the reviewee(s) is/are contacted by the Case Manager – thirty [30] days.

[NOTE: If the reviewee(s) has/have not been contacted by the CLMRT in writing within the forty-five [45] day notification period outlined above – fifteen [15] days to appoint a team plus thirty [30] days to begin the review process – they may immediately request the Judicatory Representative for a dismissal for failure to activate the review. The Judicatory Representative shall either re-initiate the review to CLMRS or dismiss the charges within ten [10] days of receipt of the request to dismiss and shall document their reasoning and sending the documentation to the CLMRT Chair and the Vice President Minister & Ministry Services.]
4. From the time a reviewee is contacted by the CLMRT Case Manager to the time of the first interview [bridge line call or on-site visit] – thirty [30] days or less provided that all pertinent documents are produced in a timely manner. Interviews may occur in less than [30] days if all parties are agreeable or if circumstances warrant.
5. From the completion of the review until the completion and forwarding of the draft report to the CLMRS Chair and/or audit panel [by email, fax, or regular mail] – thirty [30] days. If the case is unusually complex and/or there are multiple charges then this time may be extended for good cause shown.
6. The audit panel will have up to fourteen [14] days to audit the draft report.
7. Notification to the Judicatory Representative, CLMRT Chair, Director of Ministry Employment, and the Vice President Minister & Ministry Services and the reviewee(s) should be done concurrently with the report being published to the reviewee(s).
8. In all cases, reviews are to be accomplished within the recommended timeframes whenever possible. However, every effort should be made to be thorough as well as sensitive to the needs of the party/parties, witnesses and to the competing demands on the time of the CLMRT. When a review cannot be completed within the recommended timeframes the reasons will be documented and made a part of the report.

XIII. PRODUCTIVITY AND COMMUNICATION

1. The CLMRT Chair will advise the CLMR Appeals Panel Chair whenever a CLMRT decides that a minister or ministry is suspended or has a Required Plan of Action [RPOA] to complete [by email, letter, and /or copy of the report].
2. The CLMR Appeals Panel Chair will advise the CLMRT Chair whenever an appeal is received by the Appeals Panel [be email, letter, or phone call].

3. The CLMRT Chair will advise the Vice President Minister & Ministry Services whenever information is gained from a review that might have implications in other areas [by copy of the report, phone call, or email].
4. The Vice President Minister & Ministry Services will advise the CLMRT Chair whenever information regarding a minister or ministry being reviewed is received that might be pertinent to the review [by email or phone call].
5. The CLMR Appeals Panel members will attend and provide input for the CLMRS Training.
6. The CLMRT Chair will notify the CLMR Appeals Panel and the Judicatory Representatives Ministry Team of new members appointed to the CLMRS promptly after they are appointed.
7. The CLMR Appeals Panel Chair will advise the CLMRT Chair whenever a new member is added to the CLMR Appeals Panel promptly after they are appointed.
8. Both the CLMRT Chair and the CLMR Appeals Panel Chair will be advised of appointments made by the Association's Chair of the Board of Trustees that may effect the respective team's composition.
9. The CLMR Appeals Panel Chair will also advise the Judicatory Representative, Regional Representative, Director of Ministry Employment, and the Vice President Minister & Ministry Services when an appeal is pending.

XIV. CONSIDERATIONS FOR INTERVIEWS AND MEETINGS

1. Proceedings of the interview meeting will be confidential.
2. Legal counsel and/or other counsel may not be present during the interview process.
3. Reviewee(s) will have an opportunity for rebuttal of all allegations and will be given a reasonable amount of time to organize their response.

XV. CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING DISPOSITION OF MATERIAL

1. Copies of material regarding the reviewee(s) sent by the Association to the CLMRT be destroyed and/or deleted when the review decision becomes final.
 - a. Case Review Team notes made during the review process and original letters, emails, statements or other documents provided to the Case Review Team should be retained by the Case Manager until any appeal has been decided upon and then sent to the Vice President Minister & Ministry Services at the Association's home office. The reviewee(s) will be advised that the material provided to them by the Association office should not be shared with anyone other than the Case Review Team members. The reviewee(s) will be requested to return the materials to the Case Manager when the review is final.

- b. When an outcome of a sexual misconduct complaint has been determined the Judicatory Representative will contact the complainant and inform him/her of the action taken.
- c. A report of all substantiated complaints and the disciplinary action taken shall be kept and maintained indefinitely in a CLMRS file at the Association home office.
- d. In cases of a Required Plan of Action [RPOA], during the period the RPOA is being fulfilled, information including the complaint, the findings, and the disciplinary action taken will be provided to the minister selection team of Unity churches if the minister is permitted by the RPOA to seek employment.
- e. A report of all unsubstantiated complaints and related recommendations, along with any statement submitted by the minister about the complaint, shall be kept and maintained indefinitely in the minister's personnel file at the Association home office.
- f. Nothing in the policy or these procedures will be deemed to preclude disclosure of facts and circumstances surrounding any complaint or allegation to any insurer, attorneys, or other individuals whose assistance is sought in connection with the CLMRT review or defense of any complaint or allegation.
- g. All material other than that to be retained in the Association's home office files should be disposed of when the review is completed. Material retained by the Association home office shall include the final report, interview notes, and any documentation received by the review team during the review process.