

DISCIPLINARY ACTION DESCRIBED

The Nature and Purposes of Discipline

Discipline is an exercise of scriptural authority for which the church is responsible. The purpose of discipline is that the purity and welfare of the ministry may be maintained, and that those under discipline may be brought to repentance and restoration. Discipline is to be administered for the restoration of the minister. It is to be redemptive in nature as well as corrective, and is to be exercised with grace and mercy.

The Credentialing Committee

The Credentialing Committee is the licensing committee of West Coast Bible College & Seminary. It shall have the final authority in matters of doctrine and the personal conduct of all Christian Workers, Licensed Ministers, and Ordained Ministers.

Causes of Disciplinary Action

Violations of W.C.B.C.S. ministerial licensing principles as stated may give cause for disciplinary action by the Credentials Committee. Among such causes for action shall be:

- a. Moral failure involving sexual misconduct.
- b. Moral failure involving pornography.
- c. Any moral or ethical failure other than sexual misconduct.
- d. General inefficiency in the ministry.
- e. A failure to represent our Pentecostal testimony correctly.
- f. A non-cooperative spirit.
- g. An assumption of dictatorial authority over a church.
- h. An arbitrary rejection of the Credentialing Committee.
- i. A declared open change in doctrinal views.
- j. Immoral, unethical, or illegal practices related to personal, church, or ministry finances.
- k. Violations of ministerial courtesy.
- l. The use of vulgar or profane language, in addition to gossip.

The Credentialing Committee may recommend that no discipline be administered when, in view of all the circumstances, it would appear that such discipline would serve only as punitive in nature. In all such cases, the Credentialing Committee shall make final determination.

Right of Initiative

a. Authority. Occasions sometimes arise which make it necessary to deal with ministers who for some reason seem to have reached the place where, in the opinion of the leaders, endorsement can no longer be given. Credentials Committees that have the authority to ordain ministers and to recommend them for credentials also have the right to withdraw their approval and to recommend the recall of credentials.

b. Responsibility of West Coast Bible College & Seminary Credentialing Committee. In the event that the Credentialing Committee fails to take action within 90 days after a matter has been referred to it, it shall be the responsibility of the West Coast Bible College & Seminary Board of Directors to see that action is initiated.

Investigation of Reports or Complaints of Alleged Violations or Confessions of Violations of Credentialing Committee Principles

a. Reports or complaints of alleged violations of West Coast Bible College & Seminary Credentialing Committee principles or confessions of such by a minister shall be investigated. The Credentialing Committee office shall conduct the investigation to determine their source and validity. It is the responsibility of the Credentialing Committee office to safeguard the church and the minister. In the event such reports or complaints against a minister are filed with the West Coast Bible College & Seminary Board of Directors, they shall be referred to the Credentialing Committee office for investigation. A copy shall be sent to the church with which the minister is affiliated.

- (1) **Interview with person involved.** The persons involved shall be interviewed to ascertain the facts in the case and the reasons underlying the persistence of the reports or complaints.
- (2) **Interview with accused minister.** The accused minister shall be given an opportunity to be interviewed to discuss the complaints received in the hope that the matter can be resolved.
- (3) **Signed complaints.** In the event the investigation so warrants, a signed complaint shall be filed with the Credentialing Committee office by each complainant describing the alleged offense.
- (4) **Conditions for ministry during investigation.** Continuing ministry may be subject to restriction during the time of investigation at the discretion of the Credentialing Committee on the basis of evidence at hand and the nature of the alleged offense.

b. Outside United States. In case the alleged misconduct occurs outside the United States, the Credentialing Committee shall take the initiative to file complete data with the church officers of the minister's affiliation in the country that the misconduct took place. Any hearing or trial affecting that individual's ministerial credentials shall convey all information available to Credentialing Committee.

Preparation and Filing of Charges

If after due investigation it is determined that charges should be made, proper charges shall be filed with the Credentialing Committee office. The Credentialing Committee office making the investigation may file charges based on the evidence in their possession. The person against whom charges have been filed shall be informed in writing at the last address furnished to Credentialing Committee office, of the charges made.

a. Discipline

(1) **Cause for discipline.** A minister who has been found guilty of violating any of the Credentialing Committee principles, either by a confession of the minister involved or by deliberation of the Credentialing Committee office, shall be subject to disciplinary action.

(2) **Determination of discipline.** It shall be the responsibility of the Credentialing Committee office to determine whether the circumstances of the case merit rehabilitation or dismissal. The Credentialing Committee shall weigh decisions on: (a) the basis of the offense itself, (b) the manner and thoroughness of repentance, (c) the attitude of the offending minister toward the discipline, and (d) the willingness manifested to cooperate.

(3) **Administering discipline.** If the Credentialing Committee office determines that guilt has been established, discipline shall be administered prayerfully and in the fear of God, in accordance with the Scriptures.

b. Surrender of credentials. Disciplined ministers shall be required to surrender their ministerial credentials and their current card to the Credentialing Committee office. In the event of dismissal, the Credentialing Committee office shall forward the credentials to local church. Refusal to surrender ministerial credentials and current card may result in placing an additional charge against the minister.

Rehabilitation Process

The following provisions for rehabilitation shall apply.

a. Basis. Those found to have violated any of the Credentialing Committee principles may request rehabilitation as an alternative to dismissal. Rehabilitation is a privilege and not a right to be expected or demanded. This request shall be at the discretion of the Credentialing Committee.

b. Procedure and requirements. The following procedure shall be used by the Credentialing Committee office to determine the specific requirements for rehabilitation for the individual minister.

(1) **Suspension.** The minister shall be considered to be under suspension during the entire period of rehabilitation.

(2) **Period of time.** The program for rehabilitation shall continue for a time frame set by the Credentialing Committee.

(3) **Authority.** The Credentialing Committee shall be authorized to establish guidelines and policy in regard to terms and conditions of rehabilitation.

(4) **Ministry Permitted.** The extent to which ministry may be permitted, if any, shall be determined by the Credentialing Committee.

(5) **Annual Renewal.** The minister shall renew his or her credentials annually in the regular manner.

(6) **Oversight.** In the event his or her ministerial activity has been terminated, the minister must become established in a local church working under the supervision of a lead pastor or Credentialing Committee member.

(7) **Reporting.** The minister must submit reports to the Credentialing Committee office.

(8) **Completion of Rehabilitation.** When the rehabilitation program has been satisfactorily completed, the suspension shall be lifted and the minister shall be restored to good standing.

c. Eligibility of previously dismissed. In the event a minister who has been dismissed requests reinstatement, the dismissed minister shall not be eligible for reinstatement until the requirements for rehabilitation have been completed. Consideration may also be given to a minister if in the opinion of the Credentialing Committee, that he or she has had rehabilitation.

Reinstatement of Credentials

a. Authorization. Application for reinstatement may be made to the Credentialing Committee office. The application shall be considered subject to the approval of the Credentialing Committee.

b. Rehabilitation obligatory. When a minister has been dismissed and applies for reinstatement, he or she shall comply with the procedures for rehabilitation.

b. Reinstatement fee. When applying for reinstatement the minister must include a \$75 reinstatement fee with the application.

Notice

Notice shall be deemed to have been given to a minister by mail from the Credentialing Committee office on the basis of the last address furnished by the minister. In the event the letter is returned as undeliverable for any reason, notice will have been deemed to have been given in view of the fact it is the minister's responsibility to furnish the Credentialing Committee office with his or her address, and to accept lawful mail.