

INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES FOR THE LIVING WORD ALLIANCE



Our God Reigns, Isaiah 52:7

DISCIPLINE AND RESTORATION POLICY

THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Executive board are the highest administrative, legislative and policy making body for the Alliance. They have administrative powers to make and amend rules and regulations in the constitutions or governing document by setting a motion for change a clause to suit the Alliance operations. Each nation or country shall elect its own executive board members. They shall be answerable to the founder. The founder of the Alliance, the national overseer and the secretary general shall be automatic members of every national Executive Board. There shall be a possibility of electing Regional or district as may be determined by the National Executive Board. The national board member shall comprise the chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary, treasurer and 3 executive members. The board is temporal for one year period and elections should be done on a yearly basis or as may be determined by the executive council to elect new officers. Please note; the executive board changes to be executive council whenever the founder or together with the secretary general is in attendance, The executive council shall meet at least once a year at the Alliance Annual Conference

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP QUALIFICATIONS

1. Must be over 18 years
2. Must be born again
3. Must be without any criminal record
4. People with administrative and organisational skills
5. Must be business minded with legal skills
6. Must be knowledgeable and submissive
7. Caring and loyal.
8. God fearing

DUTIES

1. They shall be responsible for the administrative and management of the Alliance.
2. They shall arrange for meetings and Annual conferences.
3. They shall be responsible for the finances , budgeting , forecasting , allocating and reviews.
4. They shall vet and receive new alliance members.
5. They shall be responsible for the discipline and welfare of the Alliance churches.

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WHEREAS The International Ministries for the Living Word Alliance in UK has stated its recognition and intent with respect to the discipline of members of our alliance churches. AND WHEREAS the following scriptural references have been reviewed and relied upon as the biblical basis for the regulations which follow: (Matthew 18:15-20; I Corinthians 5:9-13, 6:1-11; I Timothy 5:19-21; II Thessalonians 3:14- 15); AND WHEREAS The International Ministries for the Living Word Alliance in UK desires to establish clear, fair and scriptural regulations for the implementation of Alliance churches discipline; The following Uniform Regulations shall be used by all Alliance churches of International Ministries:

1. Uniform Regulations

1.1. It shall be a condition of all Alliance members that, each member accept and comply with the authority of the national alliance executives to discipline members in accordance with these Uniform Regulations.

1.2. If a member church is alleged to be in violation of scriptural moral standards, doctrinal truth or improper Christian behaviour, that Alliance member church may be subject to the following inquiry and discipline procedure.

The term "violation of scriptural moral standards" as used by The Alliance in United Kingdom shall include, but not be limited to, sexual activity outside of a monogamous heterosexual marriage, sexual harassment or assault, homosexuality, misappropriation of funds, dishonesty or fraud in business and legal transactions, and guilt in a criminal offense.

2. General Directives for Investigation and Discipline

2.1. Ecclesiastical law permits proceedings on the presumption of innocence, but it does not endorse hasty action on the basis of rumour. It is therefore necessary that one or more responsible persons substantiate charges by signing their names to a written statement or by giving personal testimony with full consent that they may be identified before proceeding with an investigation.

2.2. Since negative criticism is very serious, it is essential that the testimony of accusers or witnesses be confirmed by reliable evidence to ascertain the possibility of malice or revenge. Witnesses should be reminded that, while they are not under oath, and therefore not subject to charges of perjury, they are not immune from civil suit for defamation of character if their testimony is proven to be malicious or grossly imaginative.

2.3. The offenses for which the member church may be given a hearing include violation of a scriptural moral standard, promulgation of doctrines that are contrary to the basic tenets of the Christian faith as set forth in the Statement of Faith of International Ministries for the Living Word Alliance in the United Kingdom and any violation of the law of which he/she has been found guilty.

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2.4. All investigations shall be conducted with Christian sincerity. Rumours must be verified by reliable evidence to determine what substance may be behind them. False accusation is contrary to the Ten Commandments. Damage to one's reputation is very difficult to repair. Proper restitution can be made only in part to one who has lost the confidence of good people through unfounded charges of wrong conduct.

2.5. The integrity of the church demands, however, that personal feelings shall not prevent thorough investigation of alleged wrongdoing. Where there is sound and reliable evidence of guilt, justice requires the pursuit of unbiased inquiry. Where there is proof of violation of a scriptural moral standard, there is required also the application of suitable discipline.

2.6. Since ecclesiastical law permits the respondent to testify on behalf of himself/herself, such evidence shall not be released to use in any civil proceeding in which the accused may become involved. It is essential that all records, whether of investigation or of discipline, be guarded carefully lest they become the basis of gossip or unauthorized use. All records shall be filed with the Executives . The Executives shall report all disciplinary matters to the Head quarters.

2.7. The use of tape recordings or any other type of magnetic recordings shall be permitted only if such recordings are made with the full knowledge of those whose testimony or charges are given. No secret recordings shall be admissible as evidence. The names of all whose voices are recorded shall be given clearly at the beginning of their testimony. Recordings may be made of any sessions of investigation or discipline.

2.8. THE NATIONAL OR DISTRICT EXECUTIVE BOARD has exclusive authority and jurisdiction to exercise the powers conferred on it pursuant to these Uniform Regulations. The Executive board has exclusive authority and jurisdiction to determine all questions of fact, scriptural moral standards, doctrinal truth and proper Christian behaviour for the purposes of these Uniform Regulations. The Executive board decision is final and binding on all parties. No decision or ruling of the Executive board shall be appealed, judicially reviewed, reconsidered or overturned by any court or tribunal whatsoever.

2.9. PROVINCIAL STATUTES AND LAWS that govern the procedures of administrative tribunals and courts in the jurisdiction shall not apply and shall not bind any party affected by these Uniform Regulations and, in particular, the Executive board in the carrying out of its duties pursuant to these Uniform Regulations.

2.10. THE UNIFORM REGULATIONS shall be followed and implemented in accordance with the highest level of integrity and scriptural moral standards; and shall be consistent with the purposes of church discipline as stated in the Alliance Constitution of International Ministries for the Living Word.

3. Amendments

This policy may be amended by a majority vote of General Assembly at written notice having been given prior to General Assembly at an executive council general meeting.

DISCIPLINARY /GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Dealing with conduct and other disciplinary matters is one of the most difficult for any organisation. Even if you have a good reason to take action, tribunal demands that you follow the right procedure to the letter.

International Ministers for the Living word (Living Word Temple Alliance) has adopted the latest version of the Disciplinary and Procedure Version with ACAS guidelines to include the previous amended Disciplinary policy and Procedures to highlight discrimination including the 1st October 2006 Regulatory changes in respect of Age Discrimination. We operate a fair and minimum disciplinary procedure for all our members churches in determining whether a disciplinary action is procedurally fair.

Our disciplinary policy and procedure contains the following sections

1. Formal or Internal
2. Suspension
3. poor Performance Capability
4. written and final warning
5. Dismissal with notice (Misconduct)
6. Dismissal without Notice (gross Misconduct)

1. FORMAL OR INFORMAL

Before we even think about some kind of discipline sanctions, we need a good reason e.g. Misconduct. We would make sure the evidence before us is strong. We would make the necessary detailed investigations before we decide to tackle the matter through informal counselling or whether to opt for the formal disciplinary route.

Cases of minor misconduct or unsatisfactory performance are usually dealt with through informal counselling or coaching and this is reflected in our disciplinary procedure.

However, there are situations where matters are more serious or where informal approach has not worked, when this happens, the situation is considered to be too serious to be classed as minor. We would therefore be taking formal disciplinary action in accordance with our disciplinary procedure.

2. SUSPENSION

In case of gross or very serious misconduct, we shall give careful consideration to suspending the member church for a brief period pending our disciplinary investigation.

If there is an allegation of very serious or gross misconduct, the member church needs to be off our fellowship so that we can carry out full and fair investigation, for example seeking evidence

from witnesses or so to avoid the risk of being seen to condone the actions of the member church which if proved would amount to gross misconduct.

Suspension letter will be issued to suspend the member church from our meetings. The letter will indicate that the suspension is a neutral act and does not indicate guilt and is not a disciplinary action. To maintain the independence of the investigation, it is important to warn the member church not to contact fellow executive members or try to return to attend meetings.

3. POOR PERFORMANCE & CAPABILITY

The poor performance and capability formal warning letter is issued the event of the member church performance is unsatisfactory following reasonably training, evaluation, suspension and using own initiatives. Notice will be given for the member church to explain why the poor performance. If the situation does not improve, poor performance and capability Notice of Dismissal letter will be issued stating unsatisfactory performance despite, training, suspension and counselling and according to the decision dismissal.

The member church should be informed of the right to appeal and the number of days within which the appeal is made.

4. WRITTEN AND FINAL WARNING.

Following a disciplinary hearing, if we want to warn the member church we will issue either a written warning or final written warning. The written warning is usually the first disciplinary sanction in case of misconduct or poor performance following informal counselling. The final written warning follows the written and its usually a last chance for the member church to improve their conduct or performance.

Alternatively , the final written warning might be used where the member church's misconduct or performance is so serious that a final warning is the appropriate course of action taking into account all the circumstances of the particular case for example , there has been an act of gross misconduct but there are circumstances mitigating against a dismissal.

5. DISMISSAL WITH NOTICE LETTER (MISCONDUCT)

We would follow the warnings procedures to its natural conclusion which means dismissal is going to be inevitable but again only after disciplinary hearing. To confirm a dismissal on grounds of misconduct, a dismissal notice will be issued. This is the final disciplinary sanction for misconduct that is not gross in nature. The notice should state the reason of dismissal explaining the nature of that conduct and how this has been dealt with on an ongoing basis and it should include the right of appeal.

6. DISMISSAL WITHOUT NOTICE LETTER (GROSS MISCONDUCT)

If after a disciplinary hearing, we decide to dismiss a member church because they have committed an act of gross misconduct, such as theft, wrong doctrines etc, a dismissal without a notice letter will be issued for dismissal with immediate effect.

A dismissal without Notice Letter should set out the reasons of dismissal, explaining the nature of gross misconduct and include the right of appeal. In case of gross misconduct, we are not obliged to give the member church notice of termination.