GuideOne Center for Risk Management
Fact Sheet: Responding to A Sexual Misconduct Allegation

Many churches and religious organizations have never had a serious claim, legal concern or allegation of inappropriate sexual conduct. However, when an organization finds itself on the receiving end of either of these situations, it's helpful to know what to do. Responding correctly and in a timely manner can often reduce or eliminate the concern. Even if it does not, a proper and planned response can save the church thousands of dollars and protect the vitality of its ministries.

Should a misconduct claim or allegation take place, the following steps will assist you in responding in an appropriate way that will not only respect the victim and accused, but your organization as well.

- Immediately contact GuideOne's Claims Team by calling (888) 748-4326, or contact your insurance agent directly.
- Review any written policies or procedures that relate to a sexual misconduct allegation. Using these procedures as a guide, follow the steps that have been put in place to address the situation.
- If the person being accused of the incident is an employee or volunteer, it is recommended that the individual be temporarily placed on administrative leave or removed from all job duties until the allegations are dismissed.
- If the reported victim is associated with your organization, you may want to consider a pastoral contact with the person or family. Do so only after contacting your insurance company's claims department.
- Become familiar with the mandatory reporting laws for your state. If the situation warrants reporting, follow your state guidelines as to which agency should be notified.
- Fully cooperate with local law enforcement members and their investigation process.
- Seek the advice of legal counsel before responding to media inquiries or releasing information to the congregation. All media responses should be well prepared and given by a designated spokesperson.
- Immediately forward any related documents to GuideOne or your insurance agent.

By planning ahead and having the above information readily available, you may be able to limit the severity of an allegation or claim, while safeguarding the resources and people that have been entrusted to your care.

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