

Sample Policy—Morals Clause

Personal Conduct

The purpose of this policy is to state the lifestyle expectations for employees. You are strongly encouraged to modify this policy in accordance with the standards set by your organization.

One key to any personal conduct policy of a Christian ministry is referencing Scripture as a basis for any behavior that's prohibited or discouraged. From a legal standpoint, citing supporting Scripture will strengthen your ministry's First Amendment (freedom of religion) position in the event of litigation.

Consistency is important when applying this policy. For example, if you terminate an employee who has become pregnant out of wedlock because she's violated the policy against premarital sex, this is legally permissible so long as it is applied consistently. In other words, the same discipline should be taken against a male employee who engages in extramarital sexual relations.

SAMPLE POLICY

Ministry Purpose

(Name of ministry) is a non-profit religious organization and is substantially controlled and supported by a religious body, your denomination, or church. More importantly, our organization is a community of believers who have joined together to meet the spiritual and academic needs of the greater community. Our organization promotes behavior consistent with the Holy Scriptures. Consequently, when joining (name of ministry's) staff, you freely and willingly agree to the standards of behavior outlined in this policy. The standards included in this policy are not exhaustive; rather, they provide a guideline of conduct we believe is in accordance with biblical standards.

As representatives of (name of ministry), it is imperative that our actions are above reproach in all things. Consequently, the following standards of conduct shall apply to all employees. Violations of these standards are regarded as a serious breach of integrity and could result in discipline, up to and including termination.

- God's Word teaches us that certain attributes are desired, including: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-24). These attributes are to be sought, encouraged, and demonstrated in our relationships.
- Scripture further teaches us that certain behaviors should be avoided, including: theft, lying, dishonesty, gossip, slander, backbiting, profanity, vulgarity, sexual promiscuity (including adultery, homosexual behavior, and premarital sex), drunkenness, and immodesty of dress.
- Employees are expected to show Christian concern in their interaction with others, and to join together with a body of believers for worship and fellowship on a regular basis.
- (Name of ministry) recognizes the danger to one's physical and psychological well-being in the use of certain products. Therefore, employees are to refrain from the use of tobacco in any form, alcoholic beverages, hallucinogenic drugs and substances, or narcotics not authorized by a physician.

Note: This sample policy should be carefully reviewed and fine-tuned, expanded, or otherwise revised so that it accurately reflects the beliefs of your ministry. Including appropriate scripture references is strongly encouraged. When reviewing and revising organizational documents, it's always advisable to involve a local attorney.

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