

## South Elkhorn Christian Church

### Anti-Bullying Policy

Approved Feb 19, 2019

- 1) **Preface.** South Elkhorn Christian Church seeks to promote a safe and welcoming environment for all people to grow in faith and carry out mission and ministry.
  - a) Jesus taught the Greatest Commandment: first, love God with all of your heart, mind, and strength, and secondly, to love your neighbor as you love yourself. (Matthew 22:37, 39)
  - b) Further, Jesus has given the Golden Rule as direction: "Treat others just as you want to be treated." (Luke 6:31)
- 2) **Bullying.** South Elkhorn will not tolerate the mistreatment or abuse of any staff member, church member or ministry participant by another, including any behavior that is classified under the definition of bullying. To the extent that such actions are disruptive, we will take steps needed to eliminate such behavior.
  - a) ***Bullying is aggressive behavior that is hostile, intentional, is repeated over time, and involves an imbalance of power or strength.*** Bullying includes the following elements:
    - i) ***Imbalance of power.*** The bully can be older, bigger, stronger, more verbal, higher on the social scale, a different race, the opposite sex, or a large number of kids banded together.
    - ii) ***Intent to do harm.*** The bully means to inflict emotional harm and/or physical pain, expects the action to hurt, and takes pleasure in witnessing the hurt.
    - iii) ***Threat of further aggression.*** Both bully and bullied know that the bullying can and probably will occur again.
  - b) Bullying can take on various forms, including:
    - i) ***Physical bullying.*** When one person engages in physical force against another person, such as by hitting, punching, pushing, kicking, pinching, or restraining another.
    - ii) ***Verbal bullying.*** When someone uses their words to hurt another, such as by belittling or calling another hurtful names.

- iii) **Nonverbal or relational bullying.** When one person manipulates a relationship or desired relationship to harm another person. This includes social exclusion, friendship manipulation, or gossip. This type of bullying also includes intimidating another person by using gestures.
- iv) **Cyberbullying.** The intentional and overt act of aggression toward another person by way of any technological tool, such as email, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings (including blogs and social media). Cyberbullying can involve:
  - (1) Sending mean, vulgar, or threatening messages or images.
  - (2) Posting sensitive, private information about another person.
  - (3) Pretending to be someone else in order to make that person look bad.
  - (4) Intentionally excluding someone from an online group.
- v) **Hazing.** An activity expected of someone joining or participating in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers that person regardless of that person's willingness to participate.
- vi) **Sexualized bullying.** When bullying involves behaviors that are sexual in nature. Examples of sexualized bullying behaviors include sexting, bullying that involves exposures of private body parts, and verbal bullying involving sexualized language or innuendos.
- c) **Reporting.** It is the responsibility of those who witness victimization to stop it and/or to speak to a trusted adult/pastor. The leadership of the church will intentionally seek to prevent and deal with bullying by
  - i) responding to incidents in a prompt manner
  - ii) seeing that both the bullied and bully are dealt with in a responsible and caring manner.
- d) **Workplace Bullying.** South Elkhorn will protect an employee who reports bullying conduct from retaliation or reprisal, and encourages all employees to report any instance of bullying behavior. Any reports of this type will be treated seriously, investigated promptly and impartially. South Elkhorn further

encourages all employees to formally report any concerns of assault, battery, or other bullying behavior of a criminal nature to the local Police Department. South Elkhorn requires any supervisor who witnesses any bullying, irrespective of reporting relationship, to immediately report this conduct to the Personnel Chair .

i) Workplace bullying includes but is not limited to:

- (1) Staring, glaring or other nonverbal demonstrations of hostility
- (2) Exclusion or social isolation
- (3) Excessive monitoring or micro-managing
- (4) Work-related harassment (work-overload, unrealistic deadlines, meaningless tasks)
- (5) Being held to a different standard than the rest of an employee's work group
- (6) Consistent ignoring or interrupting of an employee in front of co-workers
- (7) Personal attacks (angry outbursts, excessive profanity, or name-calling)
- (8) Encouragement of others to turn against the targeted employee
- (9) Sabotage of a co-worker's work product or undermining of an employee's work performance
- (10) Stalking
- (11) Unwelcome touching or unconsented-to touching
- (12) Invasion of another's person's personal space
- (13) Unreasonable interference with an employee's ability to do his or her work (i.e., overloading of emails)
- (14) Repeated infliction of verbal abuse, such as the use of derogatory remarks, insults and epithets

- (15) Conduct that a reasonable person would find hostile, offensive, and unrelated to the employer's legitimate business interests

ii) **Reporting.** South Elkhorn encourages all employees to report any instance of bullying behavior. Any reports of this type will be treated seriously, investigated promptly and impartially. South Elkhorn further encourages all employees to formally report any concerns of assault, battery, or other bullying behavior of a criminal nature to the local Police Department. South Elkhorn requires any supervisor who witnesses any bullying, irrespective of reporting relationship, to immediately report this conduct to the Personnel Chair.

- (1) Early reporting and intervention have proven to be the most effective method of resolving actual or perceived incidents of bullying. Therefore, while no fixed reporting period has been established, South Elkhorn strongly urges the prompt reporting of complaints or concerns so that rapid and constructive action can be taken. South Elkhorn will make every effort to stop alleged workplace bullying before it becomes severe or pervasive, but can only do so with the cooperation of its employees.
- (2) Individuals who believe they have experienced conduct that they believe violates this policy, or who have concerns about such matters, should report their complaints verbally or in writing to his or her supervisor, the Senior Minister, the Personnel Chair, or the Moderator before the conduct becomes severe or pervasive. Individuals should not feel obligated to report their complaints to their immediate supervisor first before bringing the matter to the attention of one of the other designated representatives identified above.
- (3) The availability of this complaint procedure does not preclude individuals who believe they are being subjected to bullying conduct from promptly advising the offender that his or her behavior is unwelcome and requesting that such behavior immediately stop.