



Updated: 3/11

Unity Worldwide Ministries

Restoration Policy

I. **Purpose**

This policy offers a reconciliation process by which a person who has been suspended by the Ethics Review System [ERS] or placed not in good standing can be restored to good standing in Unity Worldwide Ministries.

II. **Eligibility**

Time, usually a year or more, gives the offender and offended opportunities to see what has happened not only in terms of the other person's role, but in terms of one's own contribution to the situation. These opportunities to broaden perspective come through prayer, reflection, and dialogue with others.

Suspended reviewees may be eligible to seek restoration under Unity Worldwide Ministries' Restoration Policy no earlier than twelve months after their suspension and/or their last day of ministerial employment, whichever is later.

III. **Rationale**

Restoration of good standing depends on restoring or healing relationships. It will require that a person come back into right relationship with Unity Worldwide Ministries' Codes of Ethics, policies, and procedures. And it may require that a person establish or reestablish a harmonious relationship with one or more people and/or a ministry.

This policy is intended to be an expression of restorative justice which has as its focus the questions, "What harm has been done and how can the harm be repaired?" This policy is intended to avoid expressing attributes of retributive justice which seeks to blame and administer punishment.

Contrasts between restorative and retributive justice*

Restorative Justice

Crime is a violation or harm to people and relationships.

The aim of justice is to identify obligations, to meet needs and to promote healing.

Retributive Justice

Crime is a violation of the law and the state is the victim.

The aim of justice is to establish blame and administer punishment.

The process of justice involves victims, offenders, and community in an effort to identify obligations and solutions, maximizing the exchange of information (through dialogue and mutual agreement) between them.

The process of justice is a conflict between adversaries in which offender is pitted against state. Rules and intentions outweigh outcomes. One side wins while the other loses.

[* Material by Howard Zehr, Director of the Office on Crime and Justice of the Mennonite Central Committee]

IV. Procedure

- A.** When an individual desires reconciliation with Unity Worldwide Ministries, that person will contact Unity Worldwide Ministries' Director of Ministry Employment or the Vice President of Minister & Ministry Services. Reconciliation happens for individuals, not couples. If two persons were involved in the original incident, they need to apply for reconciliation as individuals.
- B.** Director of Ministry Employment or Vice President of Ministry & Ministers Services contacts the Chair of Standards.
- C.** Chair of Standards contacts Advocacy Chair who assigns an Advocate who will work with the individual seeking restoration throughout the process. [Per the Ethics Review process: "The Advocate is the member of the Ethics Review Team who connects with, assures, supports, and responds to the needs of the Reviewee while supporting the highest healing/resolution of the situation."]
- D.** The individual will be asked to write a letter reflecting on what occurred, what they have learned, and what choices they have made and actions they have taken as a result of this learning that have improved their life.
- E.** The letter and other pertinent material will be reviewed by Standards Ministry Team to determine whether steps toward restoration to good standing are warranted. Standards Ministry Team may decide to:
 - 1) Recommend that the person be restored to good standing/cleared status, or,
 - 2) Meet with the person by conference call, Skype, or face-to-face before making a recommendation, or,
 - 3) Refer to Judicatory Representative in the Region in which the minister making the request currently resides for a review, or,
 - 4) Decline to recommend restoration. In this case a letter will be written to the individual outlining specific actions the individual can choose to take that could lead to reconsideration for restoration at a later date. Or the letter might indicate that the individual is not a candidate for restoration to good standing/cleared status.

- F.** If an individual is recommended for restoration, Standards Ministry Team may require if applicable that the individual will be responsible to make things right by:
- 1) Agreeing that a written apology to colleagues will be reviewed and approved by the Standards Ministry Team and will be published in an appropriate internal media.
 - 2) Making amends to individuals or ministries that have been harmed through written or face-to-face apology.
- G.** Conditions of restoration may also require the individual to:
- 1) Work closely with a mentor or coach.
 - 2) Attend the Peacemaking Skills Institute.
 - 3) Receive psychological counseling.
 - 4) Accept clearance for limited placement.
 - 5) Fulfill other requirements as determined by the Standards Ministry Team.

V. Notice of Decision

- A.** Decisions of the Standards Ministry Team will be considered to be decisions in effect under the authority of the Board of Trustees of Unity Worldwide Ministries.
- B.** If the decision is made not to restore, the Chair of Standards will write a letter to the individual notifying them of the decision. A copy of the letter will be placed in the minister's permanent file.
- C.** If the decision is made to restore, the Chair of Standards will write a letter to individual who is restored to good standing/cleared status. A copy of the letter will be placed in the minister's permanent file.
- D.** An individual restored to good standing/cleared status will have the option of having an announcement of restored status published in *Minister's Update*.