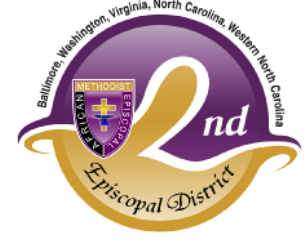


AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY 2012



The African Methodist Episcopal Church (AMEC) has a zero tolerance for sexual misconduct. The AMEC does not tolerate sexual abuse of any child with or without consent under any circumstances. Sexual abuse of a minor is a crime in all states, towns, provinces and districts and must be reported immediately to civil authorities and to the church administrative authorities. Rape or sexual assault is a crime in all states, towns, provinces and districts, and must be reported to civil authorities. Anyone who knows or has reason to suspect that rape or sexual assault has occurred or is occurring should report to civil authorities as required by law, and to the church administrative authorities as designated herein.

I. Definitions

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or non-verbal conduct of a sexually offensive nature. The AMEC prohibits unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or non-verbal conduct of a sexually offensive nature when submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or his/her continued status in an institution, or request for sexual favors, whether or not accompanied by promises or threats with regard to the employment relationship when submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is the basis for subsequent decisions affecting the promotion, transfer, assignment, and/or appointment; or such conduct has the purpose of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Examples of sexual harassment include:

- Sexually oriented jokes or humor
- Sexually demeaning comments
- Verbal suggestions of sexual involvement or sexual activity
- Questions or comments about sexual behavior
- Unwelcome or inappropriate physical contact
- Graphic or degrading comments about an individual's physical appearance

Rape or sexual assault is a crime in all states, towns, provinces and districts, and must be reported to civil authorities. Anyone who knows or has reason to suspect that rape or sexual assault has occurred or is occurring should report to civil authorities as required by law, and to the church administrative authorities.

Sexual misconduct includes sexual abuse of children (with or without consent) or adults, rape, or sexual assault, and sexual harassment, by either male or female persons and may involve same sex or opposite sex encounters. Sexual misconduct occurs whenever a person in a position of trust engages in a sexual act or sexual contact with another person to whom he or she owes a professional responsibility.

II. Reporting a Complaint

The African Methodist Episcopal Church encourages reporting of all concerns relating to sexual misconduct. A person who believes that sexual misconduct has occurred may report such misconduct to any person in the supervisory line of authority of the accused. When the procedure below is properly followed, allegations of sexual misconduct will be reported promptly, taken seriously, and thoroughly investigated. When making reports under the procedure below, dependent upon the person being accused, the persons in supervisory authority are as follows:

- If the accused serves at a local church, in any legally constituted capacity, then the person in supervisory authority is the pastor of the church where the accused serves.
- If the accused is the pastor, then the person in supervisory authority is the presiding elder of the district within which the pastor serves.
- If the accused is the presiding elder, then the person in supervisory authority is the bishop of the district within which the presiding elder serves.
- If the accused is the bishop, then the person in supervisory authority is the President of the Council of Bishops.
- If the accused is the President of the Council of Bishops, then the person in supervisory authority is the Senior Bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, Inc.

Statute of Limitations: The accuser must make a report under these procedures within one hundred eighty (180) days from the date of the last act of misconduct, or in accordance with applicable federal, state and local law, whichever is longer.

There shall be no statute of limitations for allegations for a child or childhood sexual abuse.

The accuser may make a verbal complaint to the person in supervisory authority. At the time the verbal complaint is made, the person receiving the complaint must make a written record of the reported incident not later than forty-eight (48) hours from his or her receipt of the complaint. The accuser has seven (7) days to submit a written and signed statement of the alleged misconduct to the supervisor to whom the verbal complaint was made. The supervisor shall immediately inform the accuser in writing that the complaint was received and refer the accuser to this Section of *The Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012*.

The accuser must prepare a written record of what happened. The written record should include: a) accuser's name, address, telephone number and local church; b) the name, position, and local church (if any) of the person who is alleged to have committed Sexual Misconduct; and c) a detailed description of the act(s) and/or incident(s) that are the basis for the complaint. It must be sworn under penalty of perjury. At the end of the document the accuser must state, "I declare these statements to be true under penalty of perjury under the laws of the" state, town, province or district of which the complaint is brought. Thereafter, the accuser must affix his or her signature. This written record is the official complaint of the accuser.

The Accuser must send the completed complaint via certified mail, return receipt requested, to the following persons: the person in supervisory capacity; and the Chairperson of the Judicial Committee for the Conference within which the incident(s) underlying the allegations occurred. If the accused is not a clergy person, the Pro Tem of the Steward Board of the Local Church, and the General Counsel of the AME Church.

III. Responding to Complaints of Sexual Misconduct against Clergy

When the accused is a member of the Clergy who is not a Bishop, the Judicial Committee shall investigate, report and respond to the accuser's complaint. Confidentiality is mandatory in matters relating to all complaints of sexual misconduct. Disclosure of the receipt of a complaint or any matter or detail related thereto is restricted solely to the process and individuals identified within this Policy. Any person making any unauthorized disclosure of any matter pertaining to any allegation or hearing of the same, pursuant to the provisions described and particularized herein, is a breach of *The Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012* and order of the AME Church and shall be charged and tried pursuant to the relevant provisions of *The Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012*.

Complete policy contained in *The Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012*