

Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley Healthy Boundaries Training Policy

The ethical and responsible conduct of all who minister in the name of Jesus Christ is of vital importance to the church because through these representatives an understanding of God and the gospel's good news is conveyed. "Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world" (Book of Order, G-2.01014a).

In order to equip leaders and help prevent misconduct, the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley requires periodic training on healthy boundaries for Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and others in leadership. Mandatory training is part of our commitment to making our churches and ministries safe places where misconduct is not tolerated.

Who is required to participate?

Healthy boundaries training is required every three years for all minister members of the presbytery, including honorably retired ministers who are currently serving a church in the presbytery; Commissioned Ruling Elders; Certified Christian Educators serving a church in the presbytery; and members of the Presbytery staff.

Ruling Elders serving on a Presbytery Commissions are strongly encouraged to participate in healthy boundaries training. Other congregational staff and leaders, such as youth directors, are also encouraged to participate.

How often will training be offered?

The healthy boundaries training will cover topics such as sexual misconduct and abuse, sexual harassment, social media, professional ethics, and self care. At least two training opportunities will be offered each year, with the cost covered by the Presbytery. Those who cannot attend a Presbytery-sponsored training may attend an alternate healthy boundaries training with prior approval by the Commission on Ministry.

How long will people have to come into compliance?

Those covered by this policy must complete a healthy boundaries training within one year of the policy's approval. New members of the Presbytery must complete a training within the first year of membership in PSL or provide evidence to the COM of having already completed healthy boundaries training within the previous three years.

Non-compliance

The Commission on Ministry will track compliance with this policy. Those who have not attended one of the training events in the required year will be notified of their noncompliance and a notification letter will be sent to their clerk of session or other governing body/ supervisor. The Commission on Ministry will report annually to the Presbytery the list of those who are not in compliance. The Commission on Ministry will not commission CREs or attest or re-attest PIFs for ministers who are not in compliance.