

**This policy was revised September 19, 2012 at the Quarterly Business Meeting**

## **Policy & Procedures on Sexual Harassment Poplar Springs Baptist Church**

In accordance with the more particular terms set forth below, Poplar Springs Baptist Church ["Church"] ratifies and confirms its policy against the sexual harassment of Church employees or applicants for employment, designated leaders, volunteers, members or guests associated with the ministries, works or other activities of the Church. Following a thorough and confidential investigation, conduct found to violate this Policy may result in appropriate disciplinary action of the offending party, to include but not be limited to written or verbal reprimand, demotion, removal or termination of elected or appointed representative(s) of the Church, and discharge of employee(s), in each case, as appropriate under the circumstances found to exist. This Policy covers all employees, designated leaders and volunteers acting on behalf of the Church. The Church will not tolerate, condone or allow sexual harassment by such persons or by others who conduct business with the Church.

Sexual harassment is any repeated or unwanted verbal or physical advance, a sexually explicit derogatory statement, or sexually discriminatory remark that is offensive, objectionable, and /or which may cause discomfort including sending messages or photos electronically (sex(t)ing), primarily between mobile phones, such as:

- (a) submission to, or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for promotion, compensation or other employment decisions pertaining to a staff member;
- (b) conduct adversely affects in a material manner, the relationship between the Church and a member or guest who attends Church sponsored ministries, functions or activities;
- (c) the conduct unreasonably interferes with an individual's performance as an employee or with the performance of a Church volunteer engaged in ministry functions for the Church; or,
- (d) while engaged in activities on behalf of the Church, employees, leaders, volunteers, members and guests are entitled to function within an environment that is free from sexual harassment or hostile and offensive conduct.

No one with actual authority to represent the Church shall threaten or imply that refusal by an employee or other person associated with the Church to submit to sexual advances will adversely affect that person's employment, compensation, advancement, assigned duties, authority or relationship with the Church. Sexual joking, lewd pictures and any conduct that tends to make persons of one gender "sex objects" are prohibited.

Employees or others within the Church who have complaints of sexual harassment should (and are encouraged to) report such complaints to the **Chairman of Deacons**. If this person is the cause of the offending conduct, the complaint may be reported to **the Pastor or Vice Chairman of the Deacons**. Any such complaint will be promptly and thoroughly investigated by the party

who receives the report and, if desired by such person, such other discrete, qualified person(s) as the party receiving the report shall select to assist him/her. Strict confidentiality of reports and investigations of sexual harassment will be maintained at all times during and subsequent to an investigation. Reports and other records of the investigation of a reported incident shall, at all times, be maintained in a separate file created for that purpose and shall not be commingled with records or reports of the investigation of other reported incidents. Any person who, after appropriate investigation, is found to have engaged in sexual harassment of another person covered by the terms of this Policy will be subject to reasonable disciplinary action as contemplated above.

Any party to a sexual harassment investigation aggrieved by the outcome or resolution thereof may appeal the decision by submitting a written statement containing the basis for appeal to the **Pastor or the Chair of Trustees**, within 30 days of the date the decision is first communicated to the aggrieved party. The person who receives the written statement of appeal shall promptly appoint two other discrete, qualified, but disinterested persons who are also members in good standing of the Church to consider with him/her, in confidence, the merits of the appeal. The majority decision of this three-person panel shall be reported to the appealing party.

The Church will not in any way take any official action to retaliate against either an individual who makes a report of sexual harassment or against any other party to the investigation and it will take such reasonable steps as may be necessary to prevent retaliation by any of its employees. Retaliation is a serious violation of this sexual harassment policy and should be reported to any of the persons named above. Any Church official or employee found to have taken or initiated retaliatory action against another individual for reporting sexual harassment will be subject to removal from the position held by such person, if an official of the Church, or to such other appropriate disciplinary action as the Church shall deem appropriate, if a Church employee.