

# Paper R2

## Amendment to Section O Appendix J

### MIND Advisory Group

#### Basic information

<b>Contact name and email address</b>	Andy Braunston, MIND Training Officer andy.braunston@urc.org.uk
<b>Action required</b>	Adoption of resolution.
<b>Draft resolution(s)</b>	<p><b>Resolution 65</b> Assembly amends Section O Appendix J by inserting:</p> <p><b>A new paragraph 3:</b></p> <p><b>In deciding whether to impose a suspension or not, the Synod Moderator (in cases of urgency), the Assembly Standing Panel on Discipline, or the Assembly Commission for Discipline (as the case may be) must consider:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>i. the nature of the allegations made against the minister and/or any admissions made which, if proven, would indicate that serious misconduct had occurred,</b></li><li><b>ii. any ongoing risks to individuals or to the credibility of the Church's witness,</b></li><li><b>iii. any risk of interference with evidence or witnesses,</b></li><li><b>iv. the length of time which has elapsed since the occurrence of the alleged/admitted misconduct and the conduct of the minister during the intervening period,</b></li><li><b>v. advice from the Safeguarding Officer, and</b></li><li><b>vi. more generally whether it would be reasonable in the particular circumstances of the case to impose a suspension.</b></li></ul> <p><b>Amendment of existing paragraph 3:</b></p> <p><b>Any decision to suspend a minister must be communicated immediately by the Moderator making the decision, any member of the Assembly Standing Panel for Discipline making the decision, or the Secretary of Assembly Commissions for Discipline if the decision is made by a Commission. It must be accompanied by a brief statement of reasons. Suspension takes effect immediately upon notification by any method. If the</b></p>

	<p>decision is initially communicated orally, a note is to be made of the time of the communication, and a written confirmation <b>notice of suspension</b> signed by the person notifying the suspension must be delivered to the minister as soon as practical thereafter. <b>The written notice of suspension must contain the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. the reasons for the minister’s suspension,</li> <li>ii. that suspension does not imply any view about the correctness of any allegations made concerning the minister</li> <li>iii. that suspension does not affect any stipend or pension arrangements</li> <li>iv. that any conduct on the minister’s part during the suspension which breaches or contravenes either Paragraph 4 of Schedule E to the Basis of Union or the Paragraph 4 Part II of Schedule F to the Basis of Union (whichever is relevant) may be taken into account by the Assembly Commission or, in the event of an appeal, by the Appeals Commission.</li> </ul> <p><b>Add a new paragraph 4</b></p> <p><b>If, in the opinion of the Assembly Standing Panel for Discipline or the Assembly Commission for Discipline, and considering safeguarding advice, it seems wise, a minister may be suspended for only part of their role. (For example, when a minister is in a multi-church pastorate and the alleged misconduct does not impact the other churches or the credibility of the Church’s witness.) A clear notice of suspension will be drawn up with the statements outlined in paragraph 3, above, making clear which areas of ministry the minister is suspended from and which areas may continue, and served upon the minister.</b></p> <p><b>And renumbering the remaining paragraphs.</b></p>
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## Summary of content

<b>Subject and aim(s)</b>	To set out the criteria to be used when a minister is suspended.
<b>Main points</b>	<p>To write into the new process the Suspension criteria from the old as this was not carried over.</p> <p>To introduce a new partial suspension status where a minister is suspended from one aspect of their role but not all aspects.</p>
<b>Previous relevant documents</b>	Section O.
<b>Consultation has taken place with...</b>	The Synod Moderators.

## Summary of impact

<b>Financial</b>	None.
<b>External (e.g. ecumenical)</b>	None.