

Paper R1

Revision to Appendix D of the Process for dealing with cases of discipline involving Ministers of the Word and Sacraments or Church-Related Community Workers (Section O of the Manual) – Moderator’s Recorded Warning

Ministries Committee

Basic information

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|---------------------------------------|---|
| Contact name and email address | Nicola Furley-Smith nicola.furley-smith@urc.org.uk |
| Action required | Assembly Executive adopts the changes in wording to Appendix D of the Process for dealing with cases of discipline involving ministers of the Word and Sacraments or Church-Related Community Workers (Section O of The Manual) – Moderator’s Recorded Warning. |
| Draft resolution(s) | |

Summary of content

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| Subject and aim(s) | The appendix makes several references to no central record, and to the warning being recorded locally. Since we have now amalgamated Synod and Church House files on ministers, and they are appended to the minister's entry in the database, there are no 'local' files or records, and everything is 'central'. The Church's record keeping needs to accord with the process. A simple rewording of Appendix D would resolve this. |
| Main points | Paragraph 1: Removal of the words 'no central record will normally be made unless a safeguarding concern is involved'; Paragraph 3: Removal of the words 'the issue of such a warning is to be recorded locally'; Paragraph 3: Those who have access to all minister records are the Synod Moderator and their PA, the General Secretary, the Deputy General Secretary (Discipleship), the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Secretary for Ministries; Additions are in blue text. |

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| Previous relevant documents | Appendix D. |
| Consultation has taken place with... | Legal Adviser CDAG. |

Summary of impact

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| Financial | None. |
| External (eg ecumenical) | None. |

Appendix D Moderator's recorded warning

1. If a concern which comes to the notice of a Synod Moderator or the Assembly Representative for Discipline is not considered by that person to amount to an allegation of misconduct within the meaning of the paragraph two of the Framework, the Moderator or Assembly Representative for Discipline may speak to the minister concerned, giving such advice and pastoral support as seems appropriate. [This is a pastoral and not a disciplinary step.](#)
2. Such advice may, however, include a warning that repeated allegations in the same field may have to be treated as disciplinary. [Such a warning is pastoral and is not disciplinary in nature.](#)
3. Both the conversation with either the Synod Moderator or the Assembly Representative for Discipline and the issue of such a warning is to be recorded on the Minister's [file to which only the Synod Moderator and those who need to have access shall have access](#). Should misconduct on the part of that minister later to be alleged, of a nature to which the recorded warning is relevant, the Synod Moderator or Assembly Representative for Discipline may inform the Investigation Team that a pastoral conversation took place, a warning was issued, and the reasons for it. The giving of such factual information will not disqualify a Synod Moderator or Assembly Representative for Discipline from exercising their role on the Assembly Standing Panel on Discipline.
4. As a pastoral step no formal procedure is required before the issue of a Moderators warning, nor need to be proceeded by any proof or admission [in respect of the matters involved](#). This means that the facts on which the warning was issued remain unproven at the time when they are reported to the investigation team. It lies in the Team's discretion whether or not to make the existence of a Moderators warning part of the case, and if it does so the accused minister will be free to dispute either the alleged facts underlying the warning or to present their own view of their seriousness.