





Synod Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy

Synod Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy

Best practices for all organizations, including nonprofits and churches, recommend that a business ethics and conflict of interest policy be in place. A model Synod Operational Ethics Policy (available in [PDF](#)  and [MS Word](#) ) is provided. Synod Councils are encouraged to review this model and work to adapt the form or create their own policy.

Some Explanations

This policy contemplates coverage for all synod officers, synod council members, synod committee members, and synod staff. In some organizations, there are separate policies for staff. This policy is a combined policy designed to cover directors, committee members, and employees.


You will note that we have called it an *operational* ethics policy. The reason for this name is to be clear that our church has many ethical concerns that are certainly not covered in this short policy. This policy is to address the business side of your synod and its role as a nonprofit corporation.



Some ethics policies require that all those who are covered sign the policy at inception and then re-sign on a regular basis. There is no such a requirement in this draft but you may choose to require it. In any event, it is very important that all staff and directors be provided a copy when it is adopted, and a protocol should be in place to provide a copy to all new persons. It is also a good idea to consider having this as part of your website.



It is important to consult with your legal and financial advisors when adopting a business ethics policy.

Also available for your review is a short fiduciary duties primer for your Council (Board of Directors). It may also be helpful to share with committees or others in the synod.

Congregation Policy Also Available

A similar resource, a model [Congregation Operational Ethics Policy](#),  is available. Congregations are encouraged to consider adopting an ethics policy.

[Synod Operational Ethics Policy](#) 
[Synod Operational Ethics Policy](#) 

[Congregation Operational Ethics Policy](#) 
[Congregation Operational Ethics Policy](#) 

Legal Disclaimer

Information on this document does not constitute legal advice to anyone. In addition, the use of this document, and the sending or receipt of information through ELCA.org does not create attorney-client relationship of any sort. Visitors to ELCA.org should be aware that communication in this manner may not be considered as privileged or confidential. Individuals requiring legal assistance should engage a qualified attorney, licensed to practice law in the particular state or jurisdiction where the legal issues have arisen. Members of the ELCA, pastors, congregations, synods, and others affiliated with this church should always consult their own attorneys, accountants, or similar professionals whenever legal issues or problems arise. Neither the churchwide organization nor the general counsel is responsible for any loss, injury, liability, or damage related to your use of this document, whether from errors or omissions in the content of this document or any linked sites, from the site being down, or from any other use.