



### Why Does the Presbytery of Donegal Require Boundary Training?

The Presbytery of Donegal believes that healthy boundaries are part of healthy ministry. In accordance with our Book of Order (G-6.0103) and holding to our commitment to engage in ministry that is safe and trustworthy, The Presbytery of Donegal requires Boundary Training for all Teaching Elders, Commissioned Ruling Elder Pastors, and Certified Church Educators. Boundary Training includes training in PC(USA) mandated policies:

- Presbytery Sexual Misconduct and Prevention Policy
- Template for congregational Child, Youth, and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy
- Requirements for Clearances
- Presbytery Anti-Harassment Policy, and template for congregational policy
- Antiracism Policy model for congregations

In addition, Boundary Training provides training and peer reflection on navigating the boundaries that shape the intersections of ministry. Conversation on “gray areas” and “sticky” situations with no one “right” answer is always engaging.

Presbytery of Donegal Boundary Training requirements fulfill the Book of Order mandate for certification:

#### **G-3.0106 Administration of Mission**

*All councils shall adopt and implement the following policies: a sexual misconduct policy, a harassment policy, a child, youth, and adults with vulnerabilities protection policy, and an anti-racism policy. Each council's policy shall include requirements for boundary training, which includes the topic of sexual misconduct, and child sexual abuse prevention training for its members at least every thirty-six months.*

Because there is a denominational mandate, our presbytery insurance provider requires that all Teaching Elders and Commissioned Ruling Elder pastors in service in our jurisdiction complete boundary training. Your insurance provider may also have similar requirements.

### I am a Retired Teaching Elder or Previously Commissioned Ruling Elder. Must I Attend Boundary Training?

Retired Teaching Elders and previously Commissioned Ruling Elders who serve as preachers, or in any type of leadership in a congregation, or in paid positions in the presbytery are still required to fulfill Boundary Training requirements. Retired Teaching Elders and previously Commissioned Ruling Elders who are not providing any type of leadership or pulpit supply services are excused from Boundary Training requirements.

### **How Often is Boundary Training Required?**

Boundary Training is mandatory every three years (defined as thirty-six months) for all Teaching Elders, Commissioned Ruling Elder Pastors, and Certified Church Educators. Once the initial Level 1 training is completed, the certification is valid for thirty-six months. Before the certification expires, an individual must attend a Level 2 in-person Boundary Training event to be re-certified.

### **What is the Focus of Level 1 Boundary Training?**

The in-person event begins with training and peer reflection led by David Miron of the Samaritan Counseling Center. Among the essential topics covered in this training is the presbytery policy for preventing and responding to sexual misconduct. This policy governs each of us, and it is also the model for the training that sessions must arrange for their church officers and leaders. Presbytery personnel then provide training on the presbytery policies and implementation of policies at the congregational level.

### **What is the Focus of Level 2 Boundary Training?**

David Miron and Dr. Lesley Huff from the Samaritan Counseling Center are the event leaders. They facilitate a lively discussion based on real-world case studies, with further exploration of boundary situations. The event includes a refresher on laws and policies in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and in the presbytery. It is NOT a “repeat” of the Level 1 comprehensive basic training in all policies and procedures.

### **What Happens After I’ve Completed the Level 2 Boundary Training?**

Once the Level 2 Boundary Training has been completed, the Book of Order mandate for re-certification every thirty-six months may be fulfilled by attending additional in-person Level 2 trainings. Since Level 2 training is dynamic, with conversation largely directed by the current needs and interests of the participants, each event is a unique experience. Alternatively, individuals may opt to complete a presbytery-approved online training, with the cost of such training to be paid by the ministry professional or their session.

### **What if I’ve Completed a Boundary Training in Another Presbytery?**

Even if a person has attended Boundary Training in another presbytery, attending Level 1 training in the Presbytery of Donegal is a requirement, because our training covers presbytery-specific and state-specific information that everyone needs.

### **I Serve in a Validated Ministry Which Requires Boundary Training. Does this Count?**

Teaching Elders in a validated ministry who have participated in boundary training at their place of employment may work with the Connecting Our Ministry Commission (COM) to see if their training matches presbytery requirements for recertification. Contact the COM Chair and/or the Executive Presbyter/Stated Clerk to evaluate options on an individual basis.

### **Is There a Cost for Boundary Training?**

There is no charge to you to attend the in-person boundary training events sponsored by the Presbytery of Donegal Connecting Our Ministry Commission, thanks to our congregations' support of the mission of the Presbytery of Donegal. If, instead, you choose to fulfill a Boundary Training requirement through a presbytery-approved online training, you are responsible for the cost.

### **What Happens If I Do Not Complete the Required Boundary Training?**

Level 1 Boundary Training must be completed within the first twelve months of ministry in the Presbytery of Donegal. It is offered twice per year. Level 2 Boundary Training and subsequent recertifications must be completed prior to the expiration of the thirty-six-month certification period, in compliance with G-3.0106 of the Book of Order. If Boundary Training certification is not completed within the required time periods, the Connecting Our Ministry Commission may impose administrative leave until it has been completed. For pastors, COM would work with the session to make coverage arrangements during the leave period, and the session would determine whether the leave is paid or unpaid.