

**BIG COUNTRY EMMAUS/CHRYSALIS COMMUNITY  
POLICY ON DISCRIMINATION, SEXUAL HARASSMENT, OR MISCONDUCT**

**Preamble**

The two great commands are these: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart...soul...and mind” and, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Matt. 22:37,39). As man and woman are made in the image of God (Gen. 1:27), so in Christ there is neither male nor female (Gal. 3:28). Followers of Jesus are not to lord over one another (Matt. 20:25-27) but are to be in mutual submission (Eph. 5:21). Christians manifest these truths by their mutual service and love in the Body of Christ.

Discrimination, sexual harassment, and misconduct are violations of Christ’s commandment to love our neighbor as ourselves. It denies the image of God in the other, and it negates our oneness in Christ. Discrimination, sexual harassment, and misconduct regularly involves an abuse of power. It invariably interferes with shared ministry and rends the Body of Christ.

With these things in mind, together with the realization that when one member suffers all suffer together (1 Cor. 12:26). Big Country Emmaus Community (BCEC) establishes the following policy with regard to discrimination, sexual harassment, and misconduct with the intent to maintain an environment for team members, pilgrims, and community members that is free from abuse, intimidation, or misconduct, and allows for the Spirit of the Lord to work without such conflict.

**Statement of Policy**

It is the policy of BCEC that discrimination, sexual harassment, or misconduct of any sort shall in no way be tolerated. Any complaint will be dealt with quickly and confidentially. Our Policy applies to all participants of a Walk to Emmaus weekend event or any other BCEC sponsored activity. The intent of this Policy statement is to make certain that responses to any allegation of discrimination, sexual harassment, or misconduct be just and compassionate for all involved, and that all parties be heard.

**Definition**

BCEC expects that the dignity of all people, female and male, will be revered and celebrated in behavior, attitude, and the use of language by each member of the Big County Emmaus community. This expectation is grounded in the belief that Scripture affirms mutuality and care for the other, explicitly forbids certain behavior, which arises from the abuse of power, and teaches that men and women together are created in God’s image and for God’s glory. Every member of BCEC should be aware that BCEC is strongly opposed to discrimination, sexual harassment, or misconduct and that such behavior is prohibited both by policy and by law [cf. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, 1964, 42 U.S.C. Sections 2000e et seq. (1992)]. It is the intention of BCEC to take whatever action is needed to prevent, correct, and if necessary, discipline behavior which violates this policy.

Discrimination includes showing bias in actions as regard to race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. BCEC will not tolerate discrimination in any form and will reject any attempt by anyone to be discriminatory in the fulfilling the Emmaus mission.

Misconduct is generally understood to be behavior that is unacceptable but does not violate criminal statutes but includes bullying, use of inappropriate language, or coercive behavior. BCEC will not tolerate either Emmaus community members or new Pilgrims who resort to any form of misconduct while conducting Emmaus business or at any Emmaus event or activity.

Sexual Harassment is any unwanted sexual comment, advance or demand, either verbal or physical, that is reasonably perceived by the recipient as demeaning, intimidating, or coercive; unwelcome touching, fondling, and all other offensive verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment must be understood as an exploitation of a power relationship rather than as an exclusively sexual issue. Sexual harassment or misconduct includes but is not limited to one of the following:

1. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, and other unwanted touching, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical contact, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:
  - a. Submission (on the part of the recipient) to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual's (recipient's) involvement in a BCEC event or activity.
  - b. Submission (on the part of the recipient) to or rejection of such conduct by an individual (recipient), is used as the basis for involvement in a BCEC event or activity.
  - c. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.
2. Sexual misconduct includes but is not limited to:
  - a. Overt or covert sexual advances or contact.
  - b. Mental abuse (which may include risqué jokes, innuendos, unacceptable visual contact, seductions).
  - c. Physical abuse/assault (which may include fondling, unwelcome hugs and kisses, intentional touching of such areas of the body as genitals, buttocks or breast).

## **Reporting**

1. In the event that someone at a Walk to Emmaus/Chrysalis weekend event or other BCEC sponsored activity feels that he/she has been discriminated against, sexually harassed or feels that they have been treated unfairly, should report the incident to two persons. He or she shall be urged to speak to the Big County Emmaus Community Spiritual Director and the Community Lay Director. Should someone observe or hear of discrimination, sexual harassment, or misconduct on a Walk to Emmaus

weekend or other BCEC sponsored event, that person shall be urged to report it to the Big County Emmaus Community Spiritual Director and the Community Lay Director.

2. The BCEC Community Spiritual Director shall talk to the parties involved in the alleged incident and work to mediate the relationship in the spirit of Jesus Christ. The Big County Emmaus Community Spiritual Director may need to take appropriate action (including contacting appropriate authorities when warranted) to resolve the situation. If the Big County Emmaus Community Spiritual Director is a party in the alleged incident, the Big County Emmaus Community Lay Director and another BCEC clergy member selected by the Big County Emmaus Community Lay Director shall together attempt the mediation and pursue appropriate action when warranted. If the Big County Emmaus Community Lay Director is a party in the alleged incident, the Big County Emmaus Community Spiritual Director and Vice Chair of the BCEC Board of Directors shall together attempt the mediation and pursue appropriate action when warranted.
3. In the event any clergy has committed discrimination, sexual harassment, or misconduct, in addition to the above procedures, the inappropriate action will be reported to the board to which or persons to whom that clergy is responsible outside of the BCEC organization.
4. The attached form is to be completed by the investigation parties with one copy being retained by the appropriate board member and the other copy being sent to the proper local authority if appropriate.

**Adopted by the Big County Emmaus Community, Board of Directors on June 14, 2016.**

