

Miami Valley Women's Center **Moral Conduct Policy**

This document describes the expectations for moral conduct for the employees and volunteers of the Miami Valley Women's Center (MVWC). The expectations pertain to all persons currently employed by or volunteering at the MVWC, and may be useful to inform those considering future employment with the MVWC of what is expected of them.

POLICY

The Miami Valley Women's Center seeks to be an organization that bases its values, beliefs, policies, and actions on the whole truth of Scripture. Therefore, all staff and volunteers understand that they are representatives of the MVWC, and more importantly, representatives of our Lord Jesus Christ. For this reason, the organization believes that how employees and volunteers conduct themselves, both at work, and away from the work environment, is relevant to their continued ministry with the MVWC. The Miami Valley Women's Center exists as a fellowship of Christians across a wide variety of denominations and church traditions whose staff members and volunteers sign a common Statement of Faith. While the Miami Valley Women's Center offers help to people in need, regardless of their religious beliefs, employees cannot separate who they are from what they do, and seek to work in a manner that draws people to Christ. Words clarify the meaning of our deeds, deeds verify the integrity of our words about Jesus Christ, and signs are the acts of God in the midst of what we do and say.

Through all of life, in word and deed, Miami Valley Women's Center staff and volunteers must be committed to glorifying God and witnessing to His love in the person of His Son Jesus Christ. We seek to value and honor our staff and volunteers through abiding by biblically-sound standards that bring honor to God and one another. We desire to model behavior that is consistent with our Christian commitment and witness, calling others to a life-changing commitment in the name of Christ.

It is impossible for the Miami Valley Women's Center to identify every form of behavior that we understand the Bible defines as acceptable or unacceptable to our God. Therefore, we have provided the following guidelines. Our hope is that these guidelines will help clarify expectations for those wanting to minister at the MVWC.

Guidelines and Standards

- 1. How can I know what the Miami Valley Women's Center considers "biblically-sound standards" and behavior "consistent with our Christian commitment and witness"?**

The Miami Valley Women's Center acknowledges that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus" (Romans 3:23-24). The Miami Valley Women's Center is not looking for "perfect" human beings, but repentant followers of Jesus. Indeed, when we sin, we must repent and turn from our sin because ongoing and unrepentant sin is not acceptable to God. We recognize that singling out certain behaviors as unacceptable requires drawing a line based on the determination of whether that particular behavior is: disruptive in the workplace, reflects poorly on the name of Christ or the Miami Valley Women's Center's reputation, distracts us from our core mission,

compromises the safety of oneself or others, or is likely to be offensive or off-putting to our donors and/or ministry partners. Christians may sincerely reach different conclusions on some behaviors; but for this private organization, the Board of Directors and Executive Director of the Miami Valley Women's Center discern and establish the standards to be upheld by employees and volunteers. Rather than trying to itemize behavioral "do's and don'ts," personnel should consider the following Biblical guidelines:¹

- A. *Does this behavior, wherever engaged in, glorify God? Does it cause others to praise your Heavenly Father? Is it worthy of Jesus Christ?* [See Matthew 5:16; Colossians 1:9-12; 1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1; Ephesians 4:22-24]
 - B. *Does it build up other Christians and encourage love and good deeds?* [See Hebrews 10:23-25; Ephesians 4:1-3; 15-16; Ephesians 5:3-4; Colossians 3:15-17]
 - C. *Is it loving?* [See John 13:34-35; Ephesians 5:1-2; Galatians 5:13]
 - D. *Does it advance truth and truthfulness?* [See 1 John 1:5-7; 3:18; Ephesians 4:25; 2 Timothy 2:15]
 - E. *Is it good stewardship, i.e., a responsible way to use God-given time, talent and resources?* [See 1 Peter 4:10; Ephesians 2:10; Colossians 3:23-24]
 - F. *Is this behavior consistent with the teachings of Scripture?* [See Philippians 1:27; Titus 2:11-12; Galatians 5:22-25; Romans 13:13-14; Matthew 19:4-5; Proverbs 26:20; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; 6:12-13; 17-19; Philippians 4:8]
2. **Does the Miami Valley Women's Center have the right to have such standards that address my behavior outside of, as well as during, my work hours?**

Yes, it does, under decades of well-established law. A church or religious association, such as the Miami Valley Women's Center, has the right to consider religious criteria in ministering matters, according to judicial interpretations of the religious freedom guarantee in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution as well as a number of federal statutes (including the Civil Rights Act of 1964). This includes the right to set and apply to job applicants and employees standards of conduct that are based on sincere religious belief.

3. **Do Miami Valley Women's Center standards apply to my private relationships or conduct outside of the workplace?**

Yes. We are Christian 24/7, not just while we are in the physical location of our work. While the Miami Valley Women's Center seeks to respect the privacy of its employees and volunteers, one's life away from work is an important component of one's witness as a Christian. As a Christian organization, the Miami Valley Women's Center expects biblically-faithful conduct both inside and outside the ministry. Such employee conduct reinforces the center's core mission, instead of distracting from it.

We expect employees and volunteers to conduct themselves honorably in their private lives. Any behavior inside or outside of the workplace which becomes: disruptive in the workplace, reflects poorly on the name of Christ or the Miami Valley Women's Center's reputation, distracts from

¹ Scripture verses mentioned in this policy are quoted in full in Attachment 1 of this document. Unless otherwise noted, Scripture is quoted from the New International Version.

our core mission, compromises the safety of oneself or others, or is likely to be offensive or off-putting to our donors and/or ministry partners, may be grounds for discipline or dismissal.

Examples of these behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- substance or alcohol over-use or abuse;
- harassment of any type;
- child or spousal abuse or neglect;
- theft, fraud, embezzlement, corruption, bribery, misappropriations, or inappropriate removal or possession of property belonging to the Miami Valley Women's Center, a co-worker, or a vendor;
- sexual conduct outside the biblical covenant of marriage between a man and a woman *;
- malicious gossip;
- physical aggression: fighting or threatening violence; etc.

The Miami Valley Women's Center expects that all individuals who minister with the Miami Valley Women's Center will try to the best of their abilities to conduct themselves according to these expectations. The Miami Valley Women's Center reserves the right to define acceptable conduct for Miami Valley Women's Center staff and volunteers and to end the ministry of any individual who fails to comply with these expectations.

*man and a woman – as demonstrated/revealed/shown at birth