

Colorado General Baptist Convention Policy to Lose Credentials with CGBC for Indifference to Sexual Abuse Protocols

Adopted 2022

The Colorado General Baptist Convention (CGBC), its credentialed churches, and parachurch ministries believe in God's call to help the oppressed. As scripture says, we believe we must "do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God." (Micah 6:8) We also adhere to the Baptist Faith and Message which calls believers to combat "all forms of sexual immorality" and "work to provide for ... the abused."¹

With this in mind, CGBC urges its affiliated churches and ministries to protect the abused and those at risk of abuse. As stated in *Becoming a Church that Cares Well for the Abused*, Proverbs 31:8 "urges us to 'Speak up for those who have no voice; seek justice for those on the verge of destruction.' We serve a Savior who brings light into dark places—abuse is a dark place, a place where Satan can thrive by multiplying shame and doubt. We bring light—the gospel—to these places by prioritizing the suffering of victims, by validating their stories and the sin that has been perpetrated against them, and by being a refuge and safe haven."²

In addition, the national Southern Baptist Convention encourages all Southern Baptist churches to enhance prevention resources before abuse occurs. The national Southern Baptist Convention supports the increased use of background checks, review of sex offender registries, and creation of a code of conduct.

To that end, all churches and ministries associated with CGBC are expected to adhere to certain protocols that work to prevent sexual abuse, like those mentioned above. **One practice that will not be tolerated will be placing a convicted sex offender in a position of leadership at a church or ministry.** In this context, a leader is defined as a pastor, staff member, director of a particular ministry (i.e., children's, men's, or women's), or a teacher of any class or Bible study.³ Any church or ministry that becomes aware of a convicted or adjudicated sex offender in such a position and does not take appropriate action to remove the person in leadership, will lose their credentialing with the Colorado General Baptist Convention and no longer be a part of the convention.

Upon any knowledge of a convicted sex offender in a church or ministry position, the CGBC will follow Matthew 18 in an attempt to resolve the issue. First, a member of the convention's staff will meet with the church pastor, or designee. If the agreed upon action is not taken, 2-3 members of the convention staff will go to the pastor, or designee, for additional discussion. If after the second meeting, action is still not taken, the convention staff will submit the information to the Executive Board of the CGBC for review. The Executive Board will discuss the situation and vote whether to choose for the church to lose its credentials and participation in the CGBC. After the vote, the CGBC's executive director, or designee, will inform the church of the Executive Board's decision. If loss of credentialing is approved, the CGBC will follow the process outlined and the church will no longer be associated or credentialed with the CGBC.

¹ Baptist Faith & Message 2000. (2000). Retrieved from <https://bfm.sbc.net/bfm2000/>

² Hambrick, B. (2019). *Becoming a church that cares well for the abused*. B&H Publishing Group.

³ The CGBC reserves the right to add to or modify the protocols and the definitions of a leader.