



Shared Pastoral-Care Expectations Template

Use this template to establish the expectations that apply to everyone who serves in pastoral care at your church, regardless of individual role. Once approved, this becomes your church's shared standard for how people should be treated and how pastoral care should be carried out.

AT OUR CHURCH, EVERYONE SERVING IN PASTORAL CARE IS EXPECTED TO:

Church name:

☐ **Treat people with dignity and respect.**

Listen without shaming, dismissing, embarrassing, or unnecessarily judging the person seeking care.

☐ **Do not diagnose or provide professional services you are not qualified or**

Pastoral care must remain within the role, training, qualifications, and authority established by the church.

☐ **Stay within the responsibilities of your assigned role.**

Provide only the care your role has been approved to provide. Do not take on responsibilities simply because someone asks you to.

☐ **Follow the church's established pastoral-care process.**

Use the approved intake, care, crisis, referral, documentation, follow-up, and other procedures in this Manual rather than creating your own process.

☐ **Protect privacy and confidentiality.**

Do not casually discuss someone's personal situation. Share information only with authorized people or when church policy requires it.

☐ **Document care when church policy requires it.**

Complete required forms or records accurately and according to the church's documentation procedures.

☐ **Never promise absolute confidentiality.**

If safety concerns, abuse, threats, legal reporting requirements, or another policy-covered situation arises, follow the church's approved procedure.

☐ **Follow through on responsibilities you accept.**

If you agree to make a call, provide information, contact another leader, arrange a handoff, or take another care action, make sure it is completed.

☐ **Ask for guidance when you are unsure.**

Do not guess or improvise. Use the church's approved Consultation & Escalation Pathway.

☐ **Never assume someone else has taken responsibility.**

When care is handed off, confirm that the receiving person or approved process has accepted responsibility for the next step.

☐ **Respond appropriately when a situation exceeds your role.**

Stop, consult, escalate, hand off, or use another approved care pathway when the situation moves beyond what you are authorized to handle.

☐ **Treat consistency as part of good pastoral care.**

People seeking care should not receive completely different treatment simply because they spoke with a different member of the pastoral-care team.

ADDITIONAL EXPECTATIONS OUR CHURCH HAS APPROVED

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LEADERSHIP APPROVAL

Approved by:

Effective date:

Review date:

Signature: