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**Ethics Policy  
for Employees of the  
Presbyterian Mission Agency and  
the Office of the General Assembly  
of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**

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**Introduction**

10 This Ethics Policy for Employees of the Presbyterian Mission Agency (“PMA”) and the Office of  
11 the General Assembly (“OGA”) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (“Ethics Policy”) addresses  
12 business ethics and does not include the other ethical values and policies of the Presbyterian Church  
13 (U.S.A.) (“PCUSA”)<sup>1</sup>. The Ethics Policy applies to all employees of the PMA and the OGA in  
14 matters relating to the performance of their duties and responsibilities for the PMA/OGA. These  
15 employees have Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation as their legal employer. The term  
16 “PMA/OGA” collectively refers to those two ecclesial bodies, their elected members, their  
17 respective staff members, the corporation, and all subparts thereof.

18 All funds and property received and administered by the PMA/OGA are entrusted to the  
19 organization by God through the faithful financial support of PCUSA members and friends. The  
20 highest degree of stewardship and fiduciary responsibility is expected of all employees, including  
21 the receiving, reporting, and use of funds, property, and time. Employees are responsible for  
22 complying with laws, regulations<sup>2</sup>, and PMA/OGA and PCUSA policies and procedures.

23 *As a PMA/OGA employee, what does this Ethics Policy require of me?*

24 *The required standards of this Ethics Policy are set out in 1-6 immediately below. The forms and*  
25 *processes are set out in the four attachments.*

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**Standards of Ethical Conduct**

27 1. ***Duty of Loyalty and Care.*** The duty of loyalty and care as well as the obligation of good  
28 stewardship requires all employees to act first in the best interests of the PMA/OGA rather than  
29 in the employee's own interests or the interests of another entity or person. These responsibilities  
30 are set forth below.

31 2. ***Conflicts of Interest.*** All employees shall avoid conflicts of interest, potential conflicts of  
32 interest, and situations that give even the appearance of a conflict of interest.<sup>3</sup>

33 a. **Definition.** “Conflict of interest” means any situation in which the employee may be  
34 influenced or appear to be influenced in decision-making or business dealings by any motive

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<sup>1</sup>For other policies, see the employee handbooks of the PMA and OGA and the Standards of Ethical Conduct approved by the 210th General Assembly (1998) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as it applies to employees.

<sup>2</sup>Federal and state constitutional religious free exercise provisions, as well as laws and ordinances, exempt religious organizations from some laws. An employee should consult with the General Counsel if such questions arise.

<sup>3</sup> Personal investments with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc., or employee benefits provided by the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are not considered a conflict of interest.

1 or desire for personal advantage other than the success and well-being of the PMA/OGA.<sup>4</sup>  
2 Personal advantage means a financial interest or some other personal interest, whether  
3 present or potential, whether direct or indirect. This standard applies to both actual and  
4 contemplated transactions. When in doubt, the employee is to assume there might be a  
5 conflict and should raise the question pursuant to this Ethics Policy.

6 b. **Disclosure Deadlines.** All present and potential conflicts of interest issues must be disclosed  
7 in writing annually (See Attachment 1) and thereafter as they arise. If the conflict is known  
8 in advance of any meeting, business transaction, contract, or other activity at which issues  
9 may be discussed or on which the issues may have a bearing on the employee's approach,  
10 whether directly or indirectly, it shall be disclosed ahead of time and the employee shall  
11 abstain from any participation in the discussion or decision. If the conflict is not known in  
12 advance, it shall be disclosed when the actual or potential conflict becomes apparent. All  
13 disclosures are to be made promptly in writing to the employee's supervisor and to the  
14 General Counsel. (See Attachment 2).

15 c. **Potential Conflicts of Interest.** All employees are likewise to disclose promptly, in writing,  
16 matters and relationships that have the potential for giving rise to the appearance of a  
17 conflict in business dealings with the PMA/OGA. Examples include, but are not limited to,  
18 financial interests, leadership roles, or board membership with vendors and other  
19 organizations doing business with the PMA/OGA. PMA/OGA business dealings with an  
20 employee's friends and family<sup>5</sup> are particularly sensitive and are to be disclosed and  
21 carefully evaluated because of the potential for inferences of tangible or intangible personal  
22 advantage and the appearance of impropriety. All disclosures are to be made promptly in  
23 writing to the employee's supervisor and to the General Counsel. (See Attachment 2).

24 d. **Gifts and Relationship Building.** To avoid appearances of impropriety, any gifts,  
25 gratuities, special favors, and hospitality to an employee shall not be accepted by any  
26 employee from any person or organization that sells, delivers, or receives any goods,  
27 materials, or services to or from the PMA/OGA. This prohibition includes those persons or  
28 organizations that desire to enter into such relationships with PMA/OGA. In regards to  
29 employees being offered honoraria or being paid in a temporary pastoral relationship with a  
30 particular church (for example as a stated supply), see Section 105 of the Employee  
31 Handbooks of the PMA and the OGA. **There are four exceptions to this rule:**

32 1. **Gifts, meals, outings, and relationship-building activities provided by Presbyterian**  
33 **Church (U.S.A.) churches, middle governing bodies, partner churches or related**  
34 **organizations** in connection with PMA/OGA business. Employees shall not accept  
35 monetary gifts of any amount.

36 2. **Gifts that primarily benefit the PMA/OGA** and not an individual employee, such as  
37 gifts of complimentary rooms given to the PMA/OGA by hotels, conventions, and

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<sup>4</sup> Outside employment, including but not limited to serving in a paid, temporary pastoral relationship with a particular church, is permitted as long as it does not interfere with the performance of work duties for the PMA/OGA or result in a conflict of interest as that term is defined in this Ethics Policy.

<sup>5</sup> "Family" includes the employee's spouse, parents, siblings, spouses of siblings, children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, the spouses of children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, any other blood relative, and individuals who live in the employee's home.

1 conferences in relation to official PMA/OGA business. Employees shall not accept  
2 monetary gifts of any amount.

3 **3. Occasional small gifts (less than \$50.00 in value,** such as flowers or foodstuffs) to an  
4 individual employee. Where gifts are shared with the work area (e.g., foodstuffs set out for  
5 all to partake), then the gift is not deemed to be to an individual employee. Employees shall  
6 not accept monetary gifts of any amount.

7 **4. Meals, outings, and relationship-building activities in connection with PMA/OGA**  
8 **business may be received.** If an activity permitted under this section 4 results in a value of  
9 over \$100 to the employee and/or the employee's family member (See Footnote 5), the  
10 employee shall promptly report this in writing to the employee's supervisor and the General  
11 Counsel. Employees shall not accept monetary gifts of any amount. The written report will  
12 include a description of the activity, the dollar value, the name of the person/organization  
13 providing it, and the business that person/organization does with PMA/OGA. The General  
14 Counsel shall maintain a log that includes all of the written reports submitted under this  
15 section 4. This log will be available at all times to the PMA Board Chair, the PMA  
16 Executive Director, the COGA Moderator, the Stated Clerk and the Chair of the Audit  
17 Committee.

18 e. **Process and Resolution.** All conflict of interest disclosures, reports, or questions are to be  
19 made promptly and in writing to the employee's supervisor and the General Counsel. The  
20 General Counsel will consult with the supervisor and make a recommendation to the PMA  
21 Executive Director or the Stated Clerk, as appropriate. Those officers provide the final  
22 decision on any employee conflict of interest matters. Conflict of interest disclosures,  
23 reports, or questions related to activities of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly and/or  
24 the Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency are submitted in writing to the  
25 General Counsel who will submit for decision to their respective elected bodies (COGA  
26 Coordinating Committee or the PMA Board Executive Committee).

27 3. **Confidentiality of PMA/OGA Information.** Employees shall not disclose information about the  
28 PMA/OGA that is not known outside of the PMA/OGA or is not known by public means. Of  
29 course, it is within the duties of some employees to share PMA/OGA information with other  
30 parts of the PCUSA, related entities, and the public. Employee questions should be posed to the  
31 supervisor. If the supervisor needs assistance, the General Counsel should be consulted by the  
32 supervisor.

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34 4. **Transactions, Reporting, and Document Retention.** Each employee has a duty to prepare,  
35 process, maintain, and report complete, accurate, and timely records pertaining to their role,  
36 including, but not limited to, journal entries, expense reports, disbursement requests, time  
37 reports, and payroll transactions. This also includes safeguarding all physical, financial,  
38 informational, and other PMA/OGA assets and records. Employees shall comply with the  
39 Records Retention Schedule of the Office of the General Assembly's Department of History  
40 and related schedules as part of the normal course of business and use the schedules in a  
41 consistent and accountable manner for both records retention and destruction purposes. See  
42 [www.history.pcusa.org/national/schedules.html](http://www.history.pcusa.org/national/schedules.html). Also see the Electronic Records Policy for  
43 PMA and OGA (anticipated release in 2007). Any document relevant to actual or anticipated  
44 internal investigations, legal proceedings or governmental investigations (civil or criminal)  
45 must not be destroyed and must be preserved in a manner that would ease accessibility and

- 1 retrievability. In addition, no undisclosed or unrecorded fund or asset will be established, and no  
2 artificial or false entries will be made in the financial or other records of the PMA/OGA.
- 3 5. ***Duty to Disclose/Whistleblower Policy.*** Employees have a duty to report violations of this  
4 Ethics Policy, whether the violation is by themselves or by another. This includes, but is not  
5 limited to, financial, accounting, or auditing irregularities. See Attachment 2 for Self-reports.  
6 See Attachment 3 for Whistleblower Reports concerning others. See Attachment 4 for  
7 Procedures for processing a whistleblower report. Likewise, concerns about the appearance or  
8 the possibility of violations should be reported. Care must always be taken to be factual and  
9 objective. Violations shall be reported promptly in writing to the General Counsel, and may be  
10 reported anonymously. **Anonymous whistleblower reports can also be made by calling the  
11 hotline at (888) 236-6877 or by submitting a report at [www.ethicspoint.com](http://www.ethicspoint.com).** An anonymous  
12 whistleblower report must include sufficient corroborating evidence to justify initiating an  
13 investigation. (If the alleged violation involves the General Counsel or one of her staff  
14 members, it should be reported to the Internal Auditor.)
- 15 a. ***No Retaliation.*** There shall be no retaliation for good faith complaints, reports, for  
16 participation in an investigation or for providing truthful information relating to an alleged  
17 violation of this Ethics Policy. In addition, there will be no retaliation where an employee makes  
18 a good faith report of the commission or possible commission of any criminal offense to a law  
19 enforcement officer. Employees are protected even if the allegations are mistaken or  
20 unsubstantiated, as long as the employee reasonably believes the reported conduct constitutes a  
21 violation of the Ethics Policy. One who makes a claim or report under this Whistleblower Policy  
22 in bad faith, or knows or has reason to know that such claim or report is false or materially  
23 inaccurate may be subject to disciplinary sanctions.
- 24 b. ***Confidentiality of Investigation.*** Reports under this Whistleblower Policy will be treated  
25 confidentially with disclosures made on a need-to-know basis only to those directly involved in  
26 the investigation of the reported concern. To the extent possible within the limitations of law,  
27 policy, and the need to conduct a competent investigation, confidentiality will be maintained.
- 28 6. ***Violations.*** Violation or noncompliance with this Ethics Policy may result in discipline,  
29 including termination of employment under the employee handbook of the respective entity.
- 30 7. ***Amendments.*** The Ethics Policy may be amended from time to time. In consultation with the  
31 General Counsel, the PMA Executive Director and the Stated Clerk (as appropriate) are  
32 authorized to make reasonable and necessary changes to this Ethics Policy. Substantive changes  
33 must be reported back to the elected body approving this Ethics Policy. Editorial changes need  
34 not be reported back.
- 35 8. ***Designees.*** Where this Ethics Policy assigns a duty to a particular officer or staff position, that  
36 officer or staff position may use a designee to complete the duties.
- 37 9. ***No Waiver by PMA/OGA.*** Nothing in this Ethics Policy shall be construed to waive any claim,  
38 assertion or defense of the PMA/OGA to exemption or exclusion from applicability of a statute  
39 and/or regulation or lack of jurisdiction of a civil court or governmental agency.

1 10. **Training.** Trainings to familiarize the staff with this Ethics Policy and its related forms and  
2 procedures will be conducted for PMA/OGA staffs by the Legal Services Office as frequently as  
3 deemed necessary by the Executive Director of the PMA and the Stated Clerk, as appropriate.  
4 Each member of the PMA/OGA staffs will be required to attend such trainings.

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ATTACHMENT 1

**Annual Ethics Policy Representation by Employee  
(Annual Report)**

*This form is to be completed annually and signed by all employees of the PMA/OGA. Upon completion, send it to the General Counsel.*

- I acknowledge I have received a copy of the Ethics Policy for Employees of the PMA and OGA (*Ethics Policy*).
- I understand it is my responsibility to read and comply with the Ethics Policy and any revisions made to it.
- I understand:
  - I am subject to the Ethics Policy and am required to comply with it.
  - Any employees under my supervision are also subject to the Ethics Policy and I am responsible for *ensuring those employees are aware of the Ethics Policy and attend related trainings*.
  - I am responsible for reporting immediately in writing any possible violation of the Ethics Policy that involves me, is reported to me, or that I observe.
  - I am responsible for reporting immediately in writing any whistleblower reports I receive under the Ethics Policy, as well as any other violations of the Ethics Policy I observe.

Initial all of the following statements that apply:

\_\_\_ I am not aware of any violations of the Ethics Policy that involve me or that I have observed in regards to other employees or elected or appointed members.

\_\_\_ No employee has submitted a whistleblower report or self-report to me that I have not reported already to the General Counsel.

\_\_\_ I am aware of a possible violation of the Ethics Policy that involves me or that I have observed in regards to other employees or by elected or appointed members. By submitting the information immediately below, I am reporting the alleged violation.

Name of persons(s) with the possible violation:  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Facts of the possible violation:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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*Signature* *Date*

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*Name (Please print)*

ATTACHMENT 2

**Report of Ethics Policy question, violation, or possible violation in regards to the reporting employee**

**(Question/Self-report)**

*This form is to be completed, signed, and sent to the employee's supervisor and the General Counsel. It is important to report questions promptly. Generally, an employee's supervisor and the General Counsel will consult with the employee to resolve the conflict of interest, if any.*

I am aware of a possible violation of the Ethics Policy that involves me or I have a question about the Ethics Policy as it involves me.

1. Employee name:

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Facts about the employee's possible violation or the question presented:

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3. Date the employee became aware of the possible violation or question:

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*Signature:* \_\_\_\_\_ *Date:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Print name:*  
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ATTACHMENT 3

**Whistleblower Report of possible Ethics Policy violation in regards to another employee, elected member, or organization**

*This form is to be completed, signed (unless submitted anonymously), and sent to the General Counsel.*

*Anonymous whistleblower reports can also be made by calling the hotline at (888) 236-6877 or submitting a report at [www.ethicspoint.com](http://www.ethicspoint.com). An anonymous whistleblower report must include sufficient corroborating evidence to justify initiating an investigation.*

I am aware of a possible violation of the Ethics Policy that involves another employee, an elected member, or an organization.

1. Name of person(s) involved:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Name of organization(s) involved:

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3. Facts about the possible violation:

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4. Date the employee became aware of the possible violation:

\_\_\_\_\_

**(DO NOT SIGN BELOW IF SUBMITTING ANONYMOUSLY)**

*Signature:* \_\_\_\_\_ *Date:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Print name:*  
\_\_\_\_\_



ATTACHMENT 4

**Procedures for processing a Whistleblower Report of possible Ethics Policy violation in regards to another employee, elected member, or organization.**

A. All reports under the Whistleblower Policy (See Ethics Policy) shall be submitted in writing promptly to the General Counsel. Anonymous whistleblower reports may be made by calling the hotline at (888) 236-6877 or submitting a report at [www.ethicspoint.com](http://www.ethicspoint.com). An anonymous whistleblower report must include sufficient corroborating evidence to justify initiating an investigation. If the alleged violation involves the General Counsel or one of her staff members, it should be reported to the Internal Auditor. The General Counsel will decide if the reported activity, if confirmed, would be an Ethics Policy violation, a possible violation of a policy or procedure not covered by this Ethics Policy, or a matter to be processed through another avenue, typically supervisor review with a report to the General Counsel. If the General Counsel decides the report will not be processed under this Ethics Policy, the General Counsel will respond to the accuser unless the report was filed anonymously. The General Counsel shall keep a log of all reports received under the Whistleblower Policy. Whether or not an investigation was done, the log will include the resolution of all reports. The log will be available at all times to the Chair of the PMA Board, the Moderator of the COGA and the Chair of the Audit Committee. If the person reporting is simply confused about an issue and how it applies, the General Counsel will ensure clarification is provided by the supervisor or the General Counsel. The supervisor will provide a written response to the employee with a copy to the General Counsel.

B. All other reports shall be initially reviewed by a three-person committee (Investigative Committee) comprised of the General Counsel, the Internal Auditor, and a third person appointed by the PMA Executive Director or Stated Clerk (as appropriate). The Investigative Committee will first determine whether or not an investigation is warranted. If it is not, the Investigative Committee shall so report. If an investigation is warranted, the Investigative Committee shall proceed as set forth below.

C. The following processes shall apply to an investigation conducted by the Investigative Committee:

1. If the report alleges a violation by PMA employees, then the PMA Executive Director shall be notified an investigation has commenced. If the report alleges a violation by OGA employees, then the Stated Clerk shall be notified an investigation has commenced. If the report alleges a violation by either of these officers, then the Chair of the PMA Board or the Moderator of COGA, as appropriate, shall be notified an investigation has commenced.

2. If the report alleges a violation by an elected member, then the chair of the body and the PMA Executive Director or the Stated Clerk (as appropriate) shall be notified an investigation has commenced. If the report alleges a violation by the chair/moderator of the body, then the vice-chair and the PMA Executive Director or Stated Clerk (as appropriate) shall be notified an investigation has commenced.

3. The Investigative Committee shall be allowed to retain the services of experts it may need to conduct a reasonably thorough investigation.

1           4.     The Investigative Committee may recommend administrative leave for the accused,  
2 the accuser, or others while the investigation is in process.

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4           5.     The Investigative Committee will promptly conduct its work. The typical  
5 investigation will include the following steps:

6               a.     Interview all parties involved with relevant knowledge, including but not  
7 limited to the accuser and the accused (if possible). Secure and review any relevant documents or  
8 other communications (if available and appropriate).

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10              b.     Determine if there is a potential for risk to persons or property. If there is a  
11 potential risk, take reasonable measures as appropriate to protect employees and property.

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13              c.     Complete a written report of its findings and recommendations (including  
14 employee discipline or discharge). The Investigative Committee will provide a copy of its report  
15 (including all relevant documents) to the Audit Committee. At the same time the report is submitted  
16 to the Audit Committee, copies will be provided to the accused and the accuser. The PMA  
17 Executive Director or Stated Clerk (as appropriate) will also receive a copy. Generally, the accused  
18 and accuser will have seven business days to submit written comments to the Audit Committee in  
19 response to the Investigative Committee's written report. The Chair of the Audit Committee may  
20 extend this period if such an extension is reasonably necessary.

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22              d.     All employees are required to fully cooperate with these investigations and  
23 shall not be retaliated against by supervisors or anyone for cooperating and participating in the  
24 investigation.

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26           6.     The Audit Committee shall consider all the submissions promptly and reach a  
27 conclusion. The Audit Committee's conclusions shall be final and not subject to appeal. While the  
28 Audit Committee does not have the authority to discipline or discharge PMA/OGA employees, its  
29 conclusions may include recommendations in that regard. Management shall give great weight to  
30 the conclusion and recommendations of the Audit Committee. The Audit Committee shall make a  
31 full report of the matter to the PMA Board Executive Committee and the Executive Director or the  
32 COGA Coordinating Committee and the Stated Clerk (as appropriate). The PMA Board Executive  
33 Committee or COGA Coordinating Committee receives the report, and does not take further action  
34 other than to follow up with the PMA Executive Director or Stated Clerk to ensure appropriate  
35 action was taken. An employee who has received a disciplinary action (including employment  
36 termination) may appeal that action via the process set out in the applicable employee handbook.

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38           7.     PMA/OGA will ensure that whistleblower reports under this Ethics Policy by an  
39 employee are dealt with impartially and confidentially. To that end, information will only be shared  
40 on a need-to-know basis so as to fulfill the process. Any employee who violates the confidentiality  
41 of this process shall be subject to disciplinary action, including employment termination.

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43           8.     PMA/OGA prohibit retaliation, including but not limited to making any threatening  
44 communication by verbal, written, or electronic means, against any employee who reports in good  
45 faith or provides any information concerning violations of the Ethics Policy or applicable state or  
46 federal laws or who provides truthful information relating to the commission or possible  
47 commission of any criminal offense to a law enforcement officer. PMA/OGA will not discharge or  
48 discriminate against any employee with respect to compensation, terms conditions, or privileges of  
49 employment because the employee in good faith (or any person acting pursuant to the request of the

1 employee) reports, discloses, testifies, or otherwise informs PMA/OGA, pursuant to the  
2 Whistleblower Policy, of a violation by any employee, elected member, or organization.  
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4 9. Any employee found engaging in retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action,  
5 including termination of employment. Any elected member found engaging in retaliation will be  
6 subject to discipline by the PMA or OGA (as appropriate).  
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