

Pastor Safety Protocol for Central Conference

If a pastor reaches out to Central Conference or Central Conference become aware of a pastor who is in danger because of a potentially violent or abusive individual (or group of individuals) whether it be a family member, colleague, congregation member, or member of the community at large, here is the suggested way to proceed:

When talking with pastor in danger:

1. Ask them if they are safe right now - if they are not, tell them to call 911 immediately and contact you as soon as they are in a safe spot.
2. Assure them that you believe them and validate what they are feeling.
3. If necessary, stay on the phone with them until they have calmed down. You may need to stay on the phone with them and dispatch 911 from another extension.
4. If they are safe for the time being but are afraid for their future safety; have them explain, in detail, their situation. Tell them to start keeping a log of all incidents that have led them to believe their safety is being compromised.
5. Give them number to the DV hotline closest to them to set up a safety plan.
6. Have them notify other pastoral staff at the church and the church chair.
7. Have them notify the Director of Pastoral Care at Ordered Ministry.
8. Offer to send a Central Conference rep. to accompany them to police station to file a report, if need be.
9. Offer to send a Central Conference rep. to accompany them to any kind of legal proceedings, if need be.
10. Offer to send a Central Conference rep. to speak to church leadership about suggested ongoing safety precautions
11. Central Conference rep. should also follow up with Ordered Ministry.

When talking with Church Leadership:

1. Make sure that communication has been clear and that everyone is understanding the same thing about the situation.
2. Suggest that the leadership help ensure that the alleged perpetrator not be able to be physically near or contact the alleged victim (or anyone else that could possibly be in danger, i.e. don't invite an alleged stalker to the next church potluck).
3. Discuss the need for safety devices (cameras, locks, etc...) and if it seems like a responsible next step, discuss possible budget for them (if church does not have the budget for individual safety measures for the pastor, suggest the pastor crisis fund)
4. Suggest a "check in" schedule so that there are regular ways and times the victim will be checked on regarding this specific situation.
5. Discuss "leave of absence" possibility if remaining at the location poses too much of a danger for the pastor