

A. Suggested Questions for the Interview

The following are sample questions that may help you screen out someone who is unable to maintain healthy boundaries with adults.

1. Please tell me about the last time a member of your (congregation, youth group, office staff, etc.) demanded too much of your time. How did you handle that?
2. Please give an example of a time in your work or volunteer history when you thought the policies were too rigid. How did you handle that?
3. Please describe a time when you felt a special bond or friendship between yourself and a member of your (congregation, youth group, office staff, etc.).
4. Please give an example of a “boundary violation.” Has that ever happened to you, or has anyone ever said that you violated a boundary of some sort?
5. Has disciplinary action of any sort ever been taken against you by a licensing board, professional association, ecclesiastical body or educational or training institution? Have there been complaints against you that did not result in discipline? Are there complaints pending against you before any of the above-named bodies? If yes, please explain.
6. Have you ever been asked to resign or been terminated by a training program or employer? If yes, please explain.
7. Have you ever had a civil suit brought against you about your professional work or is any such action pending? Have you ever had professional malpractice insurance suspended or revoked for any reason? If yes, please explain.
8. Have you ever been charged (formally or informally) with any ethics violations, sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment? Are any such actions or complaints pending against you? If yes, please explain.
9. Are you now or have you ever had sexual contact or attempted sexual contact (sexual intercourse of any kind, intentional touching, or conversation for the purpose of sexual arousal) with any person you were/are seeing in any professional context or in a Pastoral Relationship (i.e. parishioner, client, patient, employee, student)? If yes, please explain.
10. Are you now or have you ever been involved in the production, sale, or distribution of pornographic materials? If yes, please explain.
11. Have you ever had a restraining order, injunction, order for protection or the like issued against you? Have you ever had your parental rights restricted, suspended or terminated or have any of your children ever been in foster care? Have you ever been accused of domestic violence? If so, please explain.

B. Suggested Questions for References

1. Please give me an example of how _____ maintains good boundaries with adults.
2. Have you ever heard _____ tell a joke or say something that made you or others uncomfortable?
3. Would you be comfortable referring a vulnerable friend of yours to _____ for pastoral counseling? Why? Why not?

4. The position for which _____ has applied requires that s/he be able to work closely with people whose lives may be in turmoil and who may not have good judgment at that point in time. Can you think of any reason that _____ should not be allowed to do this work?

C. Suggested Guidelines for Office Decor

Spaces where Pastoral Relationships occur should be a relaxing and productive setting ready at all times for use for Pastoral Relationships. The following are recommendations that will help create an environment that is peaceful and private while allowing appropriate supervision.

Furniture

Comfortable chairs set at a 45 degree angle from each other create a good area for conversation. Couches and loves seats are discouraged but if they are used Persons Who Have Pastoral Relationships should not sit on them with parishioners or other visitors. Having furniture that allows reclining can leave persons open to false allegations of inappropriate behavior.

Artwork

Artwork should be tasteful without offending the staff or other visitors.

Windows

Windows in walls or doors should be unobstructed by blinds, furniture, curtains, or posters so that the space is always available to casual monitoring. A sense of privacy can be maintained by arranging the furniture so that Persons Who Have Pastoral Relationships are always visible, but the parishioner or visitor does not feel exposed.

Entrances

If the space has a private entrance, and it is used, be sure staff knows when someone is in the space and when it is being used for Pastoral Relationships.

D. Suggested Guidelines for Providing Counseling

- Limited number of sessions, generally no more than 4 or 5 on any particular life issue
- Don't go outside your area of expertise. Refer to a psychologist, credentialed professional, medical doctor, or mental health professional.
- Even if you are separately credentialed and/or licensed as a mental health professional (psychologist, marriage and family therapist, substance abuse counselor, etc.) while you are functioning on behalf of the church you should:
 1. Make it clear to those you are serving that you are NOT serving in that role.
 2. If you function in that role while you are also functioning on behalf of the church, you should clearly separate those two roles by where you practice each and clearly communicate to all concerned of when you are functioning in each role.
 3. You must maintain in full force adequate professional insurance at all times for any work you do outside your church role covering general liability, including coverage for sexual misconduct, in an amount set by the Diocesan Board, and with an insurance company approved by the Diocesan Board and naming your church employer or church for whom you function in Pastoral Relationships as an additional insured.
 4. You must provide evidence of such insurance to your church employer or church for which you function in Pastoral Relationships annually.