

These samples are demonstrative only: there is no magic language that must be copied verbatim. Each organization should tailor the statement to suit the needs of its particular group and faith tradition. Including scriptural references is encouraged, although not legally required.

Protestant — Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Gen. 1:26-27) Rejection of one’s biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

We believe that the term “marriage” has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Gen. 2:18-25.) We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. (1 Cor. 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb. 13:4) We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God. (Matt 15:18-20; 1 Cor 6:9-10.)

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of [the organization] as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the [the organization] members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by [the organization] in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality. (Matt. 5:16; Phil. 2:14-16; 1 Thess. 5:22)

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (Acts 3:19-21; Rom. 10:9-10; 1 Cor. 6:9-11)

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31.) Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of [the organization].

Sample Church Facility Use Policy

Purpose Statement

The church's facilities were provided through God's benevolence and by the sacrificial generosity of church members. The church desires that its facilities be used for the fellowship of the Body of Christ and to bring God glory. Although the facilities are not generally open to the public, we make our facilities available to approved non-members as a witness to our faith, in a spirit of Christian charity, and as a means of demonstrating the Gospel of Jesus Christ in practice.

But facility use will not be permitted to persons or groups holding, advancing, or advocating beliefs or practices that conflict with the church's faith or moral teachings, which are summarized in, among other places, the church's constitution and bylaws. Nor may church facilities be used for activities that contradict, or are deemed inconsistent with, the church's faith or moral teachings. The pastor, or his official designee, is the final decision-maker concerning use of church facilities.

This restricted facility use policy is necessary for two important reasons. First, the church may not in good conscience materially cooperate in activities or beliefs that are contrary to its faith. Allowing its facilities to be used for purposes that contradict the church's beliefs would be material cooperation with that activity, and would be a grave violation of the church's faith and religious practice. (2 Cor. 6:14; 1 Thess. 5:22)

Second, it is very important that the church present a consistent message to the community, and that the church staff and members conscientiously maintain that message as part of their witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Allowing facilities to be used by groups or persons who express beliefs or engage in practices contrary to the church's faith would have a severe, negative impact on the message that the church strives to promote. It could also cause confusion and scandal to church members and the community because they may reasonably perceive that by allowing use of our facilities, the church agrees with the beliefs or practices of the persons or groups using its facilities.

Therefore, in no event shall persons or groups who hold, advance, or advocate beliefs, or advance, advocate, or engage in practices that contradict the church's faith use any church facility. Nor may church facilities be used in any way that contradicts the church's faith. This policy applies to all church facilities, regardless of whether the facilities are connected to the church's sanctuary, because the church sees all of its property as holy and set apart to worship God. (Col. 3:17)

Approved Users and Priority of Use

The pastor or official designee must approve all uses of church facilities. Generally, priority shall be given to church members, their immediate families, and organized groups that are part of the ministry, organization, or sponsored activities of the church. Church facilities and equipment will be made available to non-members or outside groups meeting the following qualifications:

1. Groups or persons requesting facility use must affirm that their beliefs and practices and planned uses of the facilities are consistent with the church's faith and practice.
2. The group or person seeking facility use must submit a signed "Church Facility Reservation Request and Agreement" form.
3. The group or person seeking facility use must be willing to take responsibility for the facilities and equipment used and must agree to abide by the church's rules of conduct for facility use, as stated below and as described in any additional instructions by church staff.

Facility Use Hours

Facilities are available between the hours of ____ a.m. and ____ p.m. Use outside these hours may be approved by the pastor or official designee.

Scheduling Events

Facility use requests shall be made to _____ [e.g., pastor, secretary, events coordinator] by submitting the "Church Facility Reservation Request and Agreement" form. The event will be reserved and placed on the church calendar only when the pastor or official designee approves the use.

Fees

Use of church facilities is subject to a use and maintenance fee of \$_____ to pay for the upkeep of church facilities. Church members are not required to pay a fee for usage because maintenance of the facilities are derived from member tithes and offerings. *[Note: Whether a church charges a fee for facility use is up to its discretion. But charging below-market rates, or no fee at all, helps churches avoid being considered a public accommodation under local or state law. Public accommodations are generally subject to a variety of laws, including laws regarding nondiscrimination. Because there is greater risk of being subject to these laws when a church charges market rates for facility use, we advise either charging no fee (except for perhaps a cleaning or other incidental fee) or charging a below-market fee. In any event, the church may also wish to require a refundable security deposit to pay for any damages to the facilities].*

Facility Use Guidelines [OPTIONAL]

1. Alcohol Policy: No alcohol may be served in church facilities. *[Note: If a church allows alcohol, it should be aware that it is exposing itself to additional liability, especially involving claims that could arise on the premises or from intoxicated drivers afterward. Banning alcohol is also more consistent with the limited-use policy of the church. But if alcohol is allowed in a banquet hall or other facilities, the church should note that serving alcohol to minors is prohibited, and that the group using the facilities must not allow open and unsupervised serving of alcohol at events in which minors are present.]*
2. Smoking Policy: [e.g., smoking in any indoor church facilities is prohibited.]

3. Groups are restricted to only those areas of the facility that the group has reserved.
4. Food and beverages in classrooms, worship space.... [e.g., not allowed, not allowed without lid, restricted to certain areas, etc.]
5. Church equipment, such as tables and chairs, must be returned to original placement, unless arranged otherwise prior to the event.
6. All lights must be turned off and doors locked upon departure.
7. Clean-up [address whether it is the responsibility of the group using the facility, and if so, what constitutes satisfactory clean-up. The church may also wish to include a clean-up fee].
8. Abusive or foul language, violent behavior, and drug or alcohol abuse are strictly prohibited on church premises. Any person exhibiting such behavior will be required to leave the premises.
9. Any person or group must sign the “Church Facility Reservation Request and Agreement” form prior to reservation of church facilities.

Insurance

For all non-church-sponsored events, the group or person using the facilities must obtain liability insurance coverage in the amount of at least \$_____. The user must also sign a “Facility Use and an Indemnity and Hold Harmless Agreement.”

Church Facility Reservation Request and Agreement

Name of person or organization requesting use of facilities: _____

Please state whether you are a:

Church Member Church-Sponsored Ministry Non-Member Non-Member Group/Organization

Contact Information:

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

If the requested use is by an organization not affiliated with the church, please briefly state the organization’s purpose and mission: _____

Please list the organization’s website, if any: _____

Please list the names of the organization's office-holders and leaders: _____

Regardless of type of user, please describe which church facilities you are requesting use of and the purpose for which you intend to use the facilities: _____

What date(s) and time(s) are you requesting to use the facilities: _____

If you are requesting use of the church's facilities for a wedding and/or wedding reception, please list the names and contact information of the bride and groom:

Bride:

Groom:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Please list the name, contact information, and religious affiliation of the person officiating the wedding:

Please describe the marriage preparation counseling or training undertaken by the bride and groom:

I affirm that:

1. I understand that the church does not allow its facilities to be used in a way that contradicts its faith or by persons or groups holding beliefs that contradict the church's faith.
2. To the best of my knowledge the purpose for which I am requesting use of church facilities will not contradict the church's faith, and I commit to promptly disclose any potential conflict of which I am aware or become aware to church staff.
3. I am not aware of any beliefs that are professed by me or the organization I represent and which is requesting use of the church's facilities that contradict the beliefs of the church. I agree to promptly disclose any potential conflicts in belief to church staff.
4. I understand that upon approval of my facilities use request, I will need to provide a security deposit in the amount of \$_____, a certificate of insurance for at least \$_____of coverage, and any other fees required by the church.
5. I understand that the church does not allow its facilities to be generally available to the public, and that my use of these facilities is subject to the pastor's approval, which is conditioned in part on my agreement to the requirements in the "Church Facility Use Policy," a copy of which I have read and understood.
6. I understand that I will be responsible for any damages to the church facilities resulting from this proposed use of facilities.
7. The church believes disputes are to be worked out between parties without recourse to the courts. See, generally, Matthew Chapter 18 and 1 Corinthians Chapter 6. Accordingly, users of the facility agree to attempt resolution of any disputes through Christian mediation.

 Name

 Date

Sample Church Membership Agreement

We believe that to carry on the religious mission of the church, to preserve the function and integrity of the church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons who associate with the church as members should abide by and agree to the following statements and conduct themselves in accordance with them.

_____ A. Statement of Faith

(initial)

We believe [insert Church's Statement of Faith here].

_____ B. Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality

(initial)

[If not included within the Church's Statement of Faith, insert Church's Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality here.]

_____ C. Statement on Church Discipline

(initial)

The threefold purpose of church discipline is to glorify God by maintaining purity in the local church (1 Cor. 5:6), to edify believers by deterring sin and promoting purity (1 Tim. 5:20), and to promote the spiritual welfare of the offending believer by calling him or her to return to a biblical standard of doctrine and conduct (Gal 6:1).

The Lord Jesus Christ has entrusted the local church with the authority and responsibility to discipline members for flagrant sin or serious doctrinal error, with the goal of the restoration of the offender. This discipline is entrusted to the Pastoral Staff [Board or similar body] and is to follow the biblical pattern as set forth in Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5; 2 Corinthians 2:7-8; Galatians 6:1; 2 Thessalonians 3:6; Titus 3:10-11; and 2 John 7-11. Any member of this church who practices or affirms a doctrine or conduct that, in the judgment of the Pastoral Staff [Board or similar body], is opposed to the teaching of the Word of God, or is threatening to the testimony of this church, or is divisive to the body, shall be subject to church discipline.

Discipline will follow the said biblical pattern, and is an effort to bring the individual to repentance and protect the church from unrepentant sin. Discipline may involve exclusion from participation in ministry and communion, as well as dismissal from the fellowship of this church. An individual may

be disciplined by the Pastoral Staff [Board or similar body] short of dismissal from the fellowship, as they deem appropriate for the specific circumstance (for example, an individual may remain in certain circumstances a member of this church but be denied the privilege of serving in a particular ministry). The Pastoral Staff [Board or similar body], as is required by Scripture, may report to the congregation the names of those who have lost membership by reason of church discipline, and the reason for that discipline, as described in Matthew 18:15-20.

[Optional provision] The members of this church further knowingly and voluntarily agree that a member cannot voluntarily withdraw or resign his or her membership in the midst of the discipline process, and may only voluntarily withdraw or resign his or her membership if they are not the subject of a discipline proceeding at the time or only after a disciplinary process, of which they are the subject, has been concluded as determined by the Pastoral Staff [Board or similar body].

_____ **D. Statement on Mediation**

(initial)

Members of the church agree to submit any legal dispute with the church for mediation before a mutually agreed-upon mediator, or if none can be agreed upon, one selected by Peacemaker Ministries. Lawsuits between believers, or threats of lawsuits between believers, are a matter of grave concern for the church, are contrary to biblical and church teaching, and mediation is an effort to resolve disputes in a biblical fashion. (1 Cor. 6: 1-7)

Mediation will be governed by the *Rules of Procedure for Christian Conciliation* of the Institute for Christian Conciliation (ICC Rules), unless modified as stipulated by the parties. (Visit: http://www.peacemaker.net/site/c.nuIWL7MOJtE/b.5335917/k.D8A2/Rules_of_Procedure.htm to access the ICC Rules.) In particular, subject to the more detailed provisions of the ICC Rules, mediator(s) will attempt to assist us in reaching a voluntary settlement of any disputes through mediation. The confidentiality of the mediation process will be protected and these matters will not be discussed with people who do not have a necessary interest in them. If settlement can be agreed upon, the conciliators may, at their discretion, issue an advisory opinion. Neither the opinion, nor any communications exchanged in the mediation process, will be admissible for any purpose in any subsequent legal proceeding.

_____ **E. Statement on Life**

(initial)

We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life. (Ps. 139)

_____ F. Statement of Final Authority on Matters of Faith and Conduct

(initial)

The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of [the organization]’s faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our [minister/executive committee/board of directors] is [the organization]’s final interpretive authority on the Bible’s meaning and application.

I have reviewed the statements above as indicated by my initials before each of them, and agree to be governed by all the provisions herein.

Name_____
Date

Sample Introductory Letter to Prospective Parent

Dear Parents:

Thank you for your interest in our school. We have adopted an admissions policy that opens the school to families who are like-minded spiritually, who are supportive of our philosophy, objectives, and standards of education, and whose children meet our enrollment standards. Our purpose is to serve families who desire not simply a private education, but a distinctively Christian education for their children.

Before applying for admission to our school, please read the Student Handbook provided in this introductory packet. The Student Handbook will introduce you to many of the school's policies, procedures, and expectations for both parents and students.

The first several pages of the Handbook explain our religious purpose, mission, and beliefs. This school unashamedly believes, teaches, and practices a literal interpretation of the Word of God. If you do not agree with our religious mission and beliefs, enrolling your child in our school will likely cause him or her confusion. For example, if a question regarding biblical lifestyles arises in chapel or your child's classroom, the teacher will answer from a biblical viewpoint consistent with our mission and belief statement. If your beliefs and lifestyle choices are not in agreement with our doctrinal stance, that answer will likely create conflict in your child's heart and mind. This internal conflict could drive a wedge between you and your child, cause your child to negatively judge you as a parent, or force your child to choose between our teaching and what he or she learns at home. We respect your desire to place your child in the best possible learning environment, but if you are not in full agreement with our doctrinal positions, it will be best for all concerned if you do not enroll your child at our school.

Biblical principles are integrated into every subject taught at our school. Our staff is committed not only to academic excellence, but also to teaching students how to apply the truths of God's Word to every aspect of life. If you are in agreement with the teachings of God's Word, this school will complement the beliefs and ideals your child is taught at home. We look forward to partnering with you to educate your child in God's truth.

Sample Standards for Evaluating Prospective Students

A. Spiritual Considerations

1. Personal Christian commitment of parents and student.
2. Willingness of parents and student to be supportive of the school's Christian philosophy of education.
3. Willingness of parents and student to support the administration and faculty in carrying out the goals and programs of the school.

B. Behavioral Considerations

1. History of acceptable citizenship in previous school experience.
2. Agreement of parents and student to abide by the behavior standards established by the school.

C. Academic Considerations

1. Documented record of acceptable grades in previous school experience.
2. Acceptable scores on achievement tests.

D. Personal Considerations

1. Student's special interests, talents, and skills.
2. School makes no distinction in its admission policy on the basis of race, color, or national and ethnic origin.

Sample Handbook Agreements for Parents and Students

Parents: Please read the following statements carefully and sign below to indicate your agreement.

I hereby affirm that I have read the Student Handbook and discussed its policies with my student. I certify that I consent to and will submit to all governing policies of the school, including all applicable policies in the Student Handbook.

I understand that the standards of the school do not tolerate profanity, obscenity in word or action, dishonor to the Holy Trinity and the Word of God, disrespect to the personnel of the school, or continued disobedience to the established policies of the school.

I understand that the services of the school are engaged by mutual consent, and that either the school or I reserve the right to terminate any or all services at any time. I understand that this Handbook does not contractually bind [School] and is subject to change without notice by decision of [School]'s governing body. Admission to the school is a privilege, not a right, and admission for one school year does not guarantee automatic admission for future school years.

Signature of Mother

Date

Signature of Father

Date

Students in Grades 7-12: Please read the following statement carefully and sign below to indicate your agreement.

I hereby affirm that I have read the Student Handbook. I certify that I consent to, and will submit to all governing policies of the school, including all applicable policies in the Student Handbook.

I understand that this Handbook does not contractually bind [School] and is subject to change without notice by decision of [School]'s governing body.

I understand that admission to the school is a privilege, not a right, and that any behavior, either on or off campus, which is not consistent with the school's standards could result in the loss of that privilege.

Signature of Student

Date



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