

Registered Sex Offender Attendance Policy

Rationale:

The elders of Cross of Grace Church realize in our efforts to reach lost people and see them brought to repentance, we will encounter people who are broken and in sin. Sometimes, this sin will have manifested itself in sexual sin that requires them to register as sex offenders (RSO). We desire to serve them, but also to seek the protection of the people at our church. While the Gospel serves even those caught in the deepest sins, we must prioritize protection of members and visitors at Cross of Grace; therefore, we have thought it best to spell out certain strictures and requirements for those whose sins have resulted in them being placed on the registry of sexual offenders.

Definition of terms:

1. Service(s): includes any regularly scheduled gathered event of Cross of Grace Church i.e. Sunday Morning Worship Service, whether held at a facility owned by Cross of Grace, a rented campus, or at an offsite location.
2. Small group: includes any meeting of a Cross of Grace Church small group under the authority and leadership of Cross of Grace Church, whether in a home, at a Cross of Grace Church location, or other location.
3. Activities: includes services, small groups, service events, retreats, conferences, or any other function sponsored by Cross of Grace Church, regardless of the event location i.e. any non-regularly scheduled service.
4. Supervising Elder: the elder of Cross of Grace Church designated to oversee the fulfillment of this contract with a given offender in fellowship with Cross of Grace Church.
5. Chaperone: an approved delegate of the supervising elder who signs in and signs out with an offender attending a Cross of Grace service who monitors the offender's movements, interactions, and restroom use while onsite.
6. Child or children: any person under the age of 18 years old.

Overall Assessment of RSOs:

While this policy provides general guidelines, it is necessary to assess each RSO that comes to the attention of the elders on a case by case basis, according to risk level, type of offense, time since the offense, and disposition of parole, probation, and any treatment mandated by the court system.

Any registered offender is expected to self-disclose his or her status as a registered offender (including his/her level designation) to an elder prior to attending any Cross of Grace Church services or activities. Whether through disclosure or discovery, as soon as the registered status of an offender is realized, the protocols of this policy will be expected to be honored or the offender may not attend any church services or activities.

Risk Level Assessment Guidelines:

What are the different offender levels and what do they mean?

Offender levels are generally determined by state and federal law and take into account several factors about the offender and the nature of his or her crime in order to determine possible risks to the general public.

In Texas, a juvenile can be charged with indecency with a child, even if the juvenile himself or herself is a child under the age of 17. Most sex offenses in Texas are considered the same for juveniles as they are for adults; however, those juvenile offenses are typically sealed and non-discoverable through a database search.

At Cross of Grace Church offenders will be categorized as:

<p>Category One</p>	<p>Category One sex offenders present the lowest risk for re-offense to the community at large. Some sample characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These individuals normally have not exhibited predatory type characteristics. • Most have successfully participated or are participating in approved sex offender treatment programs. • Many are first time offenders. <p>You may call law enforcement to ask about a specific individual if you suspect he or she might be a sex offender, but the law does not mandate community notification. Alternatively, one can check the Registered Sex Offender Database for Texas.</p>
<p>Category Two</p>	<p>Category Two sex offenders generally present a moderate to high risk to re-offend. Some sample characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These individuals may be considered a Category Two sex offender because of the nature of previous crime(s). • For some Category Two sex offenders, lifestyle (drugs and alcohol use, other criminal activity) may influence their potential to re-offend. • These individuals often have more than one victim and/or took advantage of a position of trust and authority, such as a teacher, coach, clergy or babysitter. • Most have prior sex crime convictions as well as other criminal convictions. • Some have predatory characteristics and may seek out victims unknown to the offender. • These individuals may have used violence in their crime. • These individuals may have refused or failed to complete approved sex offender treatment programs.

Disclaimer: Sex offender level is typically determined by the local law enforcement agency in which the sex offender resides. These categories, for the most part, mirror the state of Texas categorization in this way: Category One offenders will be those classified as low risk to reoffend, while Category Two offenders will be those listed as moderate to high risk to reoffend. Any questions regarding an RSOs level should be directed to local law enforcement. Under this policy anyone categorized as a Category Two offender will be disallowed from attending Cross of Grace Church, along with any and all services that may be a ministry of the church.

Basic Steps and Protocol:

- 1) INITIAL RESPONSE. Upon learning of the known attendance of a registered sex offender at church, a point pastor will be assigned to:
 - a) Establish contact with the individual and arrange a time to meet with them (preferably off-campus) to review their status and situation as soon as possible. In that communication, the pastor will restrict the offender's participation in any church-related function until such meeting takes place.
 - b) Report to the elders via email the person's name and what is known about their circumstances and involvement in the church.
 - c) Research available public information relevant to the sex offender's situation including Sex Offender Registry Database list, public judicial records, news accounts and name searches. This information will be combined with any other pastoral counseling files related to the offender to form an active file for the offender. The file will be kept by the point pastor.
 - d) The name of point pastor will be logged in the minutes of the next regularly scheduled elders meeting.

- 2) PASTORAL MEETING. At the pastoral meeting, the point pastor and one elder will:
 - a) Interview the individual to get a detailed history and current status of the offender's crime, judgment, sentence, probation history, and current legal status.
 - b) Seek to determine if anyone else in the church, past or present member or regular attender, is a victim of the offender, and whether charges have been filed.
 - c) Determine what restrictions the offender is aware of or acknowledging relative to proximity to minors or limits on travel or activity.
 - d) Determine who in the church, if anyone, currently functions as a relational network for the offender.
 - e) Obtain contact information and written permission to contact anyone who has a formal or official role in the sex offender's status and participation in open environments like a church. These should include, but are not limited to:
 - i) Present or past probation officer assigned to the case.
 - ii) Present or past social worker or treatment provider who has done assessment on or provided guidance to the individual.
 - iii) The Prosecutor who handled any legal proceedings on behalf of the state regarding the offender's case, when possible and feasible.
 - f) Request any relevant documentation that the offender may possess that might explain or substantiate their status and story.
 - g) Request that the RSO submit to a multi-jurisdictional background check.
 - h) Talk through the *Registered Sex Offender Agreement* and give the individual the opportunity to ask any questions of the purpose or clarity of this agreement. Every RSO must sign the Registered Sex Offender Agreement before the elders will consider their participation in on-premises church activities.

- 3) PASTORAL ACTION. Following the interview meeting, the point pastor will:
 - a) Take reasonable steps to ensure that the RSO does not attend any church functions until approved by the elders and at least two (2) chaperones are assigned.

- b) Contact church legal counsel as appropriate.
 - c) Report to the elders at the next regularly scheduled elders meeting and recommend participation with chaperones and restrictions from all attendance.
 - d) Communicate the outcome of the elder's decision to the RSO.
 - e) Follow up with the RSO for the purposes of answering any questions, personal care, and guidance as appropriate.
 - f) Communicate to appropriate church ministry leaders who will have regular interaction with the RSO or who are responsible for the protection of children and youth in the church.
- 4) **OUTCOMES OF THIS POLICY.** This policy envisions and is designed to procure one of the following outcomes.
- a) An RSO is able to attend services and functions at the church building with an approved chaperone with appropriate ongoing restrictions and care. They are able to pursue membership or retain their existing membership while actively listed on the sex offender registry. The following will be structures placed on offenders:
 - i) An offender may not attend any children or youth-oriented services or activities. However, the offender is allowed to attend services and activities that occur at the church building where children may be present, such as worship services, and is allowed to be in the church foyer or auditorium, for example, so long one of their assigned chaperones is present at all times.
 - ii) An individual that has at any time registered as an offender is prohibited from entering into Cross of Grace Church's children's ministry areas or participating as a part of Cross of Grace Church's children's ministry. This prohibition continues to exist regardless of whether the offender status is removed. This prohibition is non-negotiable, except in cases of proven false charges. In this case, the prohibition would be lifted, and full access would be granted.
 - iii) At such time as an individual ceases to be a registered offender, a copy of the "Certificate and Order of Discharge," or a similarly equivalent Court document, must be submitted to the individual's supervising elder to be included in the offender's file. At that time, an evaluation will be conducted to determine if and what continuing restrictions will remain in place.
 - iv) An offender may not attend any off-site activities (i.e. anything not on the real property of Cross of Grace Church) under the provisions of this policy without special and specific approval from the elder board. Any special approval will be in line with and under the provisions of this policy, i.e. in accordance with the chaperone policy along with other strictures put into effect by the elders. Activities include, but are not limited to:
 - (1) Community Groups;
 - (2) Community Engagement projects;
 - (3) Local outreach initiatives; and
 - (4) Any other activities taking place off site of Cross of Grace property.
 - v) The elders will establish an accountability team with 2-3 mature adults including the supervising elder (or his designee). At the discretion of the supervising elder, a member of the accountability team and offender will set up regular meetings, at least monthly. These meetings serve two functions:

- (1) Discipleship and further growth, since the offender will be prohibited from attending Community Groups and other offsite functions where children may be present.
- (2) Pastoral Care aimed at helping the offender walk through any and all requirements the state has on them, and to check how they are doing at abiding by the restrictions of this policy on their attendance.
- vi) At the elders discretion additional restrictions may be placed upon an offender at the outset of this policy taking effect. See page 7 for additional restrictions.
- vii) As a condition of entering into the Agreement, the offender agrees to give his/her testimony before the congregation. The congregation will be informed that the offender has entered into an Agreement with Cross of Grace Church that mandates attendance with at least one chaperone and precludes participation in any children's or youth ministries or activities.
- b) The elders unilaterally determine that it is not in the best interest of the church and its mission for an RSO to attend the Sunday service and any and all involvement in the church is restricted.
 - i) The following are examples of circumstances where this may be proscribed:
 - (1) If the offender is determined to be a Category Two offender.
 - (2) If any victim of the offender is a member of Cross of Grace Church or known to regularly attend any Cross of Grace campus.
 - (3) If the offender has a history of not following established contract agreements at other churches.
 - (4) If the offender does not agree to the conditions for fellowship at Cross of Grace Church.
 - (5) If the offender does not comply with the conditions for fellowship at Cross of Grace Church.
 - (6) For any other reason that the elders feel that the individual's attendance at Cross of Grace Church is not in the best interest of the church or its mission.
 - ii) Should the elders have cause to exclude the offender from the church community, his/her probation officer will be notified if the offender is still under probation or parole.

REGISTERED SEX OFFENDER CONDITIONAL ATTENDANCE AGREEMENT

As a registered sex offender, follower of Jesus Christ, and church attender of Cross of Grace Church, I agree to and will comply with the following:

1. I have/will fully disclose my sexual offense(s) to the pastor, elders, chaperones, and accountability team of Cross of Grace Church.
2. I will provide my contact information (please provide below) and hereby authorize and release the church to communicate with my prosecutor's office, probation officer, treatment provider and any others necessary to:
 - a. Confirm whether I'm allowed to be in a church with children and any other restrictions I may be under.
 - b. Verify my explanation/background involving my crime(s) to ensure full disclosure (e.g. review court public files/records).
3. I authorize the church to run a criminal history records check on me.
4. I will give a copy of this Agreement to my probation officer and treatment provider.
5. I understand that the following people will be aware of my registered sex offender status: all pastors, church staff as appropriate, Children's Ministry director(s), Usher Team Leader & other head ushers, Security Team, along with any other members or volunteers as deemed appropriate by the elders.
6. If approved, I recognize my participation in the church is limited to the church premises, and I will be required to abide by the chaperone policy.
7. I agree that I will inform the congregation of my identity and offense as part of by Christian testimony.
8. I will not make any inappropriate sexual remarks or gestures to anyone during services or activities.
9. I will not sit next to a child in church. If a child sits next to me, I will move to a different seat. I will attempt to sit on the aisle seat with my chaperone.
10. If I have to use the restroom, I will only use the second floor, office wing bathroom and only with my chaperone. If a minor should be present, I will promptly leave the restroom until they leave. I will always use the stalls rather than the urinals.
11. I will not attend any church activities or functions off premises without authorization from elders pursuant to Section 5(a)(iv).
12. I will not serve in or enter Children's Ministry or any other childcare areas and will avoid all contact with minors anytime I am on the Cross of Grace property.
13. I will not transport minors to or from church, or any church activity.
14. I will not attend church functions for children or youth (except those involving my children, at which I will be accompanied by a chaperone).
15. I will not take a child home with me or be alone with children unsupervised.
16. I will not kiss or hug a child at church. If a child tries to kiss or hug me at church, I will remove myself from the situation. I will not allow a child to sit on my lap, even with the approved chaperone present.
17. I will not place myself in a position of authority that the Church has not approved for me because these positions of trust may involve children at some time.
18. When asked to supervise or watch a child for a person or another person, I will decline because this puts me in a place of authority with children.
19. I agree to meet at least monthly with a member of my accountability team and yearly with a staff pastor to discuss my growth in Christ and struggles with sex and I agree to review this Agreement each time I meet with them.
20. I agree to meet regularly with a recovery group (i.e. Sex Addicts Anonymous, Celebrate Recovery) for continued recovery, healing, and accountability.
21. If I start to have any sexual thoughts or feelings toward any minor, I will immediately contact the point pastor, my chaperones, and my accountability team.
22. I understand that this Agreement will not take effect unless the church's insurer is informed and confirms that coverage will not be affected.

23. I understand that this Agreement will be reviewed regularly, possibly as often as every six (6) months and will remain in effect for an indefinite period of time. Continuation of this Agreement may be dependent upon by continuing participation in treatment, professional counseling, and/or a recovery program.
24. The individual terms of this Agreement may be changed by Cross of Grace Church at any time for any reason deemed appropriate by the elders.
25. **I understand that violating this Agreement, no matter how minor the infraction may be, will result in immediate termination of my privilege to attend church functions and the church's property.**

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS [as determined by the pastors - see section 5(a)(vi) above]:

I have read, understand, and voluntarily agree to follow this Conditional Attendance Agreement or be subject to immediate termination of the privilege of attending Cross of Grace Church.

I hereby waive any and all claims I may have against Cross of Grace Church or its agents in this process and will immediately indemnify and hold harmless Cross of Grace Church and its agents from any claim, lawsuit, or damages that I may cause directly or indirectly.

SIGNATURE _____ PRINT: _____ DATE _____

LEAD PASTOR _____ PRINT: _____ DATE _____

YOUTH MINISTRY _____ PRINT: _____ DATE _____
DIRECTOR

SUPERVISING _____ PRINT: _____ DATE _____
ELDER

ACCOUNTABILITY TEAM

SIGNATURE _____ PRINT: _____ DATE _____

SIGNATURE _____ PRINT: _____ DATE _____

State and county crime(s) were committed in _____

Prosecutor's office (contact & phone number): _____

Probation officer (contact & phone number): _____

Treatment provider (contact & phone number): _____

Other contact(s): _____

Registered Sex Offender (RSO) Sunday Morning Chaperone Safety Plan

Approved registered sex offenders may only attend the Sunday service with an approved chaperone. The purpose for the Sunday morning RSO chaperone provision is to allow approved RSOs to attend the Sunday service while maintaining strict safety standards for the families who attend.

Procedures:

Chaperone:

- RSO's are responsible to recommend at least two (2) chaperones for the pastor and elders' approval. A chaperone can be any spiritually mature member of Cross of Grace Church in good standing over the age of 21, of the same gender as the offender. A chaperone may **not** a member of the RSO's family.
- Chaperones will undergo a criminal background check and be approved by the pastor and elders for service.
- The chaperone must remain with the RSO **at all times** within the building and on the grounds of Cross of Grace Church.

Staging Area:

- RSOs who are attending should make arrangements to meet their chaperone in the general parking portion of the parking lot. If an RSO's chaperone fails to arrive within fifteen (15) minutes of the starting time of the service, i.e. 15 minutes into the service time, the RSO should leave and not attend the service. In cases of inclement weather, the RSO may wait in the foyer for their chaperone.

While on Church Premises:

- The RSO should sit next to their chaperone and remain with them at all times while on the property.
- The RSO is required to remain with the chaperone for the entire service including being chaperoned to and from the bathroom. The second floor, office wing bathroom will be used for this purpose.

Leaving the service:

- RSOs may remain in the service for the entirety of the service, including any prayer or response that takes place as a part of the ministry of the service. Once the service and or ministry has ended, the RSO may remain in the lobby area for fellowship with his or her chaperone until thirty (30) minutes after the end of the service.
- The chaperone should escort the RSO out the building via the main doors and to the RSO's vehicle.

I, _____, on this _____ day of _____ have read, understand, and agree to abide by all the restrictions of this agreement. I understand that failure to do so nullifies this agreement, forfeits my ability to attend Cross of Grace Church, and could result in reporting to local law enforcement, which could result in further prosecution.

Signature: _____

SUPERVISING ELDER FILE COVER FORM

Name of Registered Offender: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____ Home Phone Number: _____

Work Phone Number: _____ Cell Phone Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Name of Supervising Elder: _____

List of Approved Cross of Grace Chaperones:

Checklist of Obligations by Offender:

- Signed Registered Sex Offender Conditional Attendance Agreement.
- Placed the signed Agreement in case file of Cross of Grace supervising elder with other records and copy of this document provided to:
 - The Offender;
 - The Community Corrections Officer (If applicable);
 - The Sex Offender Therapist (If applicable);
- Provided contact information for their Community Corrections Officer (If applicable).
- Community Corrections Officer has:
 - Obtained a copy of Sex Offender Conditional Attendance Agreement and Registered Sex Offender (RSO) Cross of Grace Chaperone Safety Plan indicating the awareness of and permission for this individual to attend Cross of Grace Church. This agreement includes a release of information clause allowing church personnel to speak with the Community Corrections Officer and Sex Offender Therapist (if applicable).
- Sex Offender Therapist has:
 - Obtained a copy of Sex Offender Conditional Attendance Agreement and Registered Sex Offender (RSO) Cross of Grace Chaperone Safety Plan indicating

the awareness of and permission for this individual to attend Cross of Grace Church. This agreement includes a release of information clause allowing church personnel to speak with the Community Corrections Officer and Sex Offender Therapist. (if applicable).

Community Corrections Officer:

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-mail: _____

Sex Offender Therapist:

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-mail: _____

- Sex Offender Therapist has:
 - Committed to Regular Meetings with Supervising Elder.
 - Records of these meetings to be kept in the case file of the Cross of Grace supervising elder.

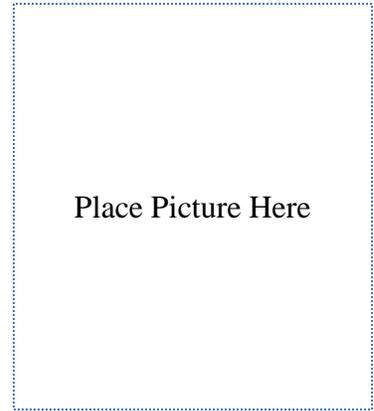
OFFENDER SIGN IN AND SIGN OUT SHEET

Name of Offender: _____

Offense Level: _____

Name of Supervising Elder: _____

Name of Approved Chaperone: _____



Date	Time In	Time Out	Offender Signature	Elder/Chaperone Signature

Name of Approved Chaperone: _____

A completed copy of this document will be sent to each member of the Cross of Grace pastoral staff with responsibilities at or over the offender’s campus. A completed copy of this document will also be sent to the security team and designated sign-in-sign-out person(s) at the offender’s campus.

SUPERVISING ELDER PASTORAL MEETING RECORD

Name of Offender: _____

Date of Meeting: ____ / ____ / ____ Time of Meeting: _____ AM / PM

Discussion Notes (overview of main points of conversation):

Points of pastoral assessment:

- Did this individual reveal any non-compliance with his/her sex offender status?
 - Yes // No (if yes, then contact Community Correctional Officer immediately)
Describe:

- Did this individual express any elevated levels of temptation to lust towards children?
 - Yes // No (if yes, require them to speak with their sex offender counselor)
Describe: