ADCOM/ADCOM/ADCOM/PreC/GCDO18AC/18AC to MLR(DIV)

113-18G REGARD FOR AND PRACTICE OF GENERAL CONFERENCE
SESSION AND GENERAL CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE ACTIONS

VOTED, To approve the document, Regard for and Practice of General Conference Session and General Conference Executive Committee Actions, which reads as follows:

A sacred trust exists between church members and their elected Church leaders. Unity and trust are strengthened as church members and organizational leaders commit to being led by the Spirit to regard and honor the constituted decisions made by fellow church members and leaders.

“Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.”—Eph 4:3. “We are coming to a time when, more than ever before, we shall need to press together, to labor unitedly. . . . in unity there is strength.”—2SM 373, 374.

Where regard for and practice of General Conference Session and General Conference Executive Committee actions have not been followed, these principles shall apply:

1. Process for Reporting Perceived Non-Compliance—The Administrative Committee of any conference and/or union and/or division and/or the General Conference which identifies an entity they perceive to be non-compliant, shall report the matter in writing to the administrative level of the Church immediately above the perceived non-compliant entity, beginning with the administrative level of the Church closest to the matter. If any level of organization does not report an issue of non-compliance, it becomes the responsibility of the next higher organization.

2. Organization Closest to the Matter—Planning for and ensuring compliance shall initially be the responsibility entrusted to the administrative level of the Church closest to the matter. This organization is responsible for notifying the entity perceived as non-compliant. With sound judgment and prayerful discernment, administrators may use existing General Conference working policies and guidelines as tools for resolving matters of non-compliance.

3. Process for Addressing Perceived Non-Compliance—Administrators dealing with any matter of perceived non-compliance shall exercise Christian due process which will (a) include much prayer and dialogue, (b) provide a clearly written statement defining the perceived non-compliance, (c) upon receipt of the written statement, provide 60 days for the executive officers of the perceived non-compliant entity to provide evidence of compliance or a plan to achieve sustained compliance, (d) create a supportive atmosphere by which to achieve compliance and unity, and (e) provide a reasonable timeframe (30 days) to provide evidence of compliance or a plan to achieve sustained compliance.

If, in the opinion of the executive officers of the conference and/or union and/or division and/or General Conference, compliance has been requested but has not been made evident or has not been sustainably achieved, the General Conference Administrative Committee may request the appropriate General Conference Compliance Review Committee to implement its terms of reference. The appropriate General Conference Compliance Review Committee shall evaluate the matter and (1) deem the perceived non-compliant issue to be resolved, (2) make recommendations to the appropriate
Administrative Committee, and/or (3) consider and recommend to the General Conference Administrative Committee, General Conference officers, all division officers, and for final determination by the General Conference Executive Committee at Annual Council, that disciplinary measures be taken.

If, in the opinion of a General Conference Compliance Review Committee, reasonable time has been given for discussion and review, the General Conference Compliance Review Committee may directly make recommendations to the appropriate Administrative Committee.

4. Process for Appeal—An entity seeking to appeal a recommendation may do so in writing directly to the assigned General Conference Compliance Review Committee. The appeal process made by the non-compliant entity shall be considered part of the work of the General Conference Compliance Review Committee as defined by its terms of reference. The General Conference Compliance Review Committee shall respond in writing to the appeal made by the reporting organization, within 60 days of delivery of the final written appeal. If there is no satisfactory resolution following the appeal to the General Conference Compliance Review Committee, the entity may appeal the matter further directly in writing to the General Conference Administrative Committee.

5. Process for Unresolved Matters—If a matter of non-compliance continues to be unresolved, the next higher level of Church organization is tasked with the responsibility to resolve the matter or facilitate the initiation of a process leading to consequences.

6. Disciplinary Measures—In the event the due process referenced above does not bring about compliance and does not result in the reversal of the action taken by the non-compliant entity and/or the constituency-elected leader of that body (the union president, who serves as both the voice of the union constituency and the voice of the world Church and who is an ex officio member of the General Conference Executive Committee), the entity and its duly elected leader may be subject to the following disciplinary measures:

a. Warned—By vote of simple majority of the General Conference Executive Committee, unions/unions of churches/organizations that have complied with General Conference Executive Committee and/or General Conference Session actions but have taken actions that are not in compliance with the practices of the Church as defined by the General Conference Constitution and Bylaws and/or the General Conference Working Policy may be “warned.” Being “warned” applies generally to a non-compliant entity and does not intend to identify individuals for further action or mention.

b. Public Reprimand—By vote of simple majority of the General Conference Executive Committee, the president of such unions/unions of churches/organizations that have not complied with General Conference Executive Committee actions and/or General Conference Session actions, including Working Policy, which have been voted by the General Conference Executive Committee.
c. Placed on Removal for Cause and Subject to Policy Application—When non-compliance continues after public reprimand, the relevant General Conference Compliance Review Committee,* by virtue of prior General Conference Executive Committee actions and/or General Conference Session actions, shall have authority to consider and recommend to the General Conference Administrative Committee, General Conference officers, all division officers, and the General Conference Executive Committee at Annual Council, for final determination and for the application of existing General Conference working policies and guidelines, such as removal of the representative member “for cause” by a two-thirds majority vote.—General Conference Bylaws Article XIII Sec. 1. c. and f., and GC B 95.

In the event that entities that have been “warned” or their president “reprimanded” take actions that bring their entities into compliance with the practices of the Church as defined by the General Conference Constitution and Bylaws, the General Conference Working Policy, and voted actions of the General Conference Executive Committee and/or General Conference Session, the relevant General Conference Compliance Review Committee* shall recommend to the General Conference Administrative Committee that these entities or their president be reinstated to regular standing by the General Conference Executive Committee. In the event that entities that have been “warned” or “reprimanded” continue in non-compliance with voted actions of the General Conference Executive Committee and/or General Conference Session, the relevant General Conference Compliance Review Committee* may recommend to the General Conference Administrative Committee to pursue other actions that may be available in the General Conference working policies and guidelines or the Constitution and Bylaws of the General Conference. If, after the organization closest to the matter has been unable to resolve a compliance issue and the General Conference Compliance Review Committee* has recommended consequences, only the General Conference Executive Committee and/or the General Conference in session has authority to implement the recommendation.

Presidents of conferences/missions whose union president has been “reprimanded” shall continue to exercise voice, as provided by the General Conference Bylaws, and the body will be notified that the invitee requesting voice is a constituent representative of a conference/mission of a union whose president has been “reprimanded” due to a matter of non-compliance.

In instances where a union president has been removed from the membership of the committee “for cause,” other members of the General Conference Executive Committee from that union shall continue to exercise full privileges without mention of reprimand.
Entities desiring reconsideration of a General Conference Executive Committee and/or General Conference Session action may seek recourse through processes already provided for in the General Conference Working Policy. The process of seeking recourse and the “Regard for and Practice of General Conference Session and General Conference Executive Committee Actions” shall run concurrently.

As circumstances warrant, this process may be used as a model by other levels of Church organization.”

The count of the secret ballots was as follows:

Yes 185
No 124
Abstained 2

*As per General Conference Administrative Committee actions July 17, 2018, and August 14, 2018.

**When considering compliance matters, local churches should refer to the process described in the Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual.