Flowchart for Receiving Reports of Sexual Misconduct

See [www.spas-elca.org/report-misconduct](http://www.spas-elca.org/report-misconduct) for additional detail.

**Report against a Rostered Minister** (Pastor or Deacon)
- Contact the Office of the Bishop of the Saint Paul Area Synod promptly.
  - The synod has sole responsibility for following up on claims. Congregations do not have the authority to take action, or decide not to refer complaint.
  - Discuss with the synod, what if any action is needed to protect the person making the complaint or others.
  - Contact local law enforcement if reporting is mandated, such as maltreatment of a child or vulnerable adult.
- Keep the report confidential except as directed by the synod, or as required to meet other responsibilities, including contacting the congregation’s insurer.
- Do not advise the person against whom the claim has been made that a complaint has been received- the synod will make a determination about notification.
- Provide the person making the report with referrals as needed, including victim support, counseling or therapy, etc., to persons outside the congregation.

**Report against a person who is not a Rostered Minister**
- Consult the congregation’s policy of reporting sexual misconduct for further steps and information.
- Do not advise the person against whom the report has been made that a report has been received, until a determination has been made regarding what information will be provided and when.
- Person in authority who receives the complaint from the complainant or other person initiates the congregation's response.
  - Contact the congregation’s insurer to report the complaint made.
  - Contact the office of the Bishop of the Saint Paul Area Synod.
  - Determine the level of inquiry or investigation is warranted and will conduct the inquiry or investigation.
  - Contact local law enforcement if reporting is mandated, such as maltreatment of a child or vulnerable adult.
  - Take steps to prevent retaliation against person making the report, or breaches of confidentiality.
- Provide the person making the report with referrals as needed, including victim support, counseling or therapy, etc.
- Notify the congregation’s person in authority about the complaint, unless that person is the target of the complaint.
  - The person in authority should be identified in the congregation’s policies, website, etc.
  - If no person in authority has been identified, notify the lead pastor or council president.
  - Keep the report confidential except as required (such as to meet other responsibilities, including completing an inquiry or investigation).

Appropriate recordkeeping should document the report and actions taken in response. These records should be maintained as confidential files in accordance with congregational policy.