

**Proposed Amendments to Rules 21A, B and D of MFC Rules:  
Comments from Members of Congregational Boundaries Advisory Group**

The following are comments received from 2 members of the Congregational Boundaries Advisory Group:

1. *First let me say again how very grateful I am that the Board, MFC, and UUA staff are working on improving the response to clergy sexual misconduct (CSM). Every so often I get the sense that these enormous changes at the UUA are a miracle, and reading the proposed MFC amendments was one of those times.*

*In general, I'm very grateful for the respect and consideration for victim/survivors I see in the draft amendments. I believe it's a big step in the right direction.*

*I also have two reservations — one small and one large. The small one is around using secured teleconference software. In my experience, victims are often extremely fragile at this juncture in their lives. Many have not yet transitioned into being a survivor before they file a complaint. I wonder if the lack of full human connection that results from using computers instead of face-to-face when meeting the people who will sit in judgment of the case may be too much to ask of victims. On the other hand, having an official advocate (something I did not have) may adequately offset this. And from a budgetary standpoint, I certainly support saving costs where possible.*

*My large reservation has to do with the CSM policies and procedures (including the MFC Rules, MFC Policies, and the staff's Process) — how they fit together and the lack of involvement of UU CSM survivors who have broken the silence in formulating them. I am concerned that some on the Board and the MFC may think that these few amendments are close to enough. Hopefully that's no longer true. But I have seen a great deal of this in the past — where power people (including ministers) want to "move on." They find the suffering of CSM survivors inconvenient and want to dispense with issues related to us as quickly as possible.*

*Also, to my knowledge the formulation of UU CSM policies and procedures has always been exclusive, not inclusive. I've been involved in rewriting significant pieces of the policies related to CSM in my congregation, and from that have learned that **how** policies*

*are formulated is actually the most important piece — more important than specific end products. So we solicit and take seriously input from all interested. As far as I can tell, the UUA's CSM policies and procedures are formulated and reviewed only by those with the most power — not opening this work up to the powerless. At GA's I go to I hear seemingly endless talk of inclusivity and right relations, and I always think, "Wow. That's sure not my experience." More than anything I am remembering my 18 years of asking that victim/survivors have input on the MFC's policies. If you share this letter with the Board and MFC and they take my thoughts seriously, to my knowledge that will be the first time this has actually happened. And my voice is woefully inadequate. Somehow we must at a bare minimum find a way to have adequate representation of UU CSM survivors in the reformulation of CSM-related policies and procedures.*

*Overall, I support the Board approving these amendments. In addition, I urge the Board to call for inclusivity in the formulation of CSM policies and procedures henceforth.*

*Thank you again for asking for my thoughts. I hope this is helpful.*

*In faith,  
Anna Belle*

*Anna Belle Leiserson  
Safety Net Member  
First UU Church of Nashville*

*2. When I initially read Wayne's comments around their struggles with making room for victims at the table, I was confused. It seemed fairly straightforward to me. A person who files a complaint should be able to meet with and be heard by the Executive Committee but as I thought about it more, I think I came to understand that their concerns are for cases where there are multiple, perhaps many, victims. Does this match with other people's interpretations?*

*In those cases, it seems there are two distinct areas that cause them consternation:*

- 1) How victims (beyond the complainant) are identified*
- 2) The costs associated with having many victims appear before the MFC*

*Regarding #2, my thoughts are that the language they are using in the amended version is acceptable but that they could also add language that allows for flexibility (e.g., in cases where there are a large number of victims, the MFC Executive Committee may decide to travel to the location where the misconduct has occurred in order to hear from all victims). For many reasons, I think it is helpful if the language about what will and won't happen is explicit. However, I think it may also be challenging to plan for every possible scenario.*

*As far as how victims are identified, I don't know that that needs to be spelled out in the MFC policies. It would seem to me that that should be part of the work/process of the office that receives the complaint and/or would surface as part of the investigation by the external team. If the investigation uncovered more than one victim or the individual who filed the complaint stated that there were multiple victims, I do think it would be helpful for the MFC Exec to make clear (in some fashion--perhaps via the office receiving the complaint or with the help of the advocate) that they are open to hearing from anyone affected and will make accommodations as necessary to ensure that that happens.*

*Amanda*