

Position Statement Development

While the Identity Statement is a summary of our internationally shared biblical convictions, mutual commitments, and common practices, it is not intended to address the specific issues that may need to be stated within each national context.

Position Statements provide biblical clarification of specific issues of culture, theology, or practice within the ministry context of North America. Position Statements are different from conference Resolutions. Resolutions, exclusive creations of the Social Concerns Committee, address social issues and are non-binding. Some resolutions may become Position Statements, particularly those that have been designated Continuing Resolutions.

Position Statement Form

Part One – Title

An appropriate title in less than 5 words. Shorter is better.

Part Two – Position Statement

A brief and concise statement of 5 or less sentences (100 words or less) that accurately summarize the Position without references—Bible or otherwise.

Part Three – Position Explanation

An expanded explanation of the Position Statement (Part Two) with Bible references (no more than one page), taking each sentence of the Statement and briefly explaining it. This explanation will be made available per request.

Optional: References shall be included as needed for further study and research such as books, papers, dissertations, articles, etc.

Position Statement Team

Purpose: The purpose of the Position Statement Team is to serve the Fellowship Council under the leadership of the Executive Director by overseeing and guiding the preparation of desirable Position Statements for the Fellowship Council approval and eventual delegate acceptance.

Formation: When there are desirable Position Statements identified, the Executive Director shall select three people to serve on this team with the approval of Fellowship Council.

Operation: Under the authority of the Fellowship Council, the Executive Director shall lead the team and decide when a Position Statement is ready for

presentation to the Fellowship Council. Each Position Statement presented will have all three parts of the Form described above completed. Each Position Statement will be submitted to the Fellowship Council at least two weeks prior to their semi-annual meetings for review. When the Council meets they will discuss the proposed Statement and vote to accept, reject, or send back to the Position Statement Team for recommended changes.

Path of Development

Step one: Here's how Position Statements may originate:

- A topic arises at a Fellowship Council meeting.
- A person or group contacts the Executive Director, leader of the Position Team, along with a suggestion of who might author the statement.
- A recommendation comes from the Social Concerns Committee.
- The Position Statement Team may see what other members of the Charis Community are adding that seem appropriate for North America.

Step two: The Position Statement Team will secure permission from the Fellowship Council to proceed (see Guidelines for Selection). The Fellowship Council may need to prioritize the recommended ideas if there is more than one under consideration.

Step three: The Position Statement Team will secure a person to take the lead of authoring this position statement and putting it in the proper Form (see above).

Step four: The development of the Position Statement will be led by the author of the statement. The author may recruit the help of others in the writing and research of the Statement to fit the Form.

Step five: The author will submit their work to the Position Statement Team for acceptance, who will bring the material to the Fellowship Council for approval if they deem that it is ready to be presented.

Step Six: Secure delegate approval at the next National Conference.

Step Seven: Post/distribute information of the posting to the district leaders and pastors.

Position Statement Guidelines

Each position statement should be developed according to the following guidelines:

For Selection

- ❖ **Must address a necessary issue** – Each Position Statement must address an issue that the Fellowship Council representatives agree is necessary and helpful for churches in the FGBC.
- ❖ **Must express what we hold in common** – Each Position Statement must respond to the issue in such a way that it builds unity by only expressing what is broadly held in common by churches within the FGBC.

For Evaluation

- ❖ **Must be developed with input from experts** – Each Position Statement must be developed by or with significant input from men and women who have demonstrated experience, knowledge, and the ability to speak into the issue being addressed.
- ❖ **Must be written concisely and be easy to read** – Each Position Statement must be written concisely, and only use language and words that are easy to read and understand.
- ❖ **Must reference additional documents only when necessary** – Each Position Statement must make sense on its own, but can reference further supporting documents as additional resources if necessary. Such resources are not to be considered part of the adopted position.
- ❖ **Must point to Scripture for support** – Each Position Statement must point to at least one clearly related Scriptural passage that supports or speaks into the content or intent of the position.
- ❖ **Must have a healthy tone that balances grace and truth** – Each Position Statement must be written in a way that deliberately seeks to balance Grace and Truth, avoiding harsh reactionary wording or negative tones.
- ❖ **Must harmonize with our Identity and Mission statements** – Each Position Statement must be in harmony with, and where possible affirm the contents of both our Identity Statement and our Commitment to Common Mission.

For Recognition

- ❖ **Must be initiated and approved by Fellowship Council** – Each Position Statement must be developed at the request of the Fellowship Council and approved by that body before being distributed or presented to the delegates for a vote of affirmation.
- ❖ **Must be reviewed and reaffirmed every five years** – Each Position Statement must be reviewed and presented to the delegates for a reaffirmation vote every five years (or less as needed). If no action is taken, the Position Statement will be dropped.

SUMMARY CHECK LIST:

- ✓ Does it address a necessary issue?
- ✓ Does it express what we hold in common?
- ✓ Was it developed with input from experts?
- ✓ Was it written concisely and is it easy to read?
- ✓ Does it reference additional documents only when necessary?
- ✓ Does it point to Scripture for support?
- ✓ Does it have a healthy tone that balances grace and truth?
- ✓ Does it harmonize with our Identity and Mission statements?