

1 **OVERTURE 15** from Mississippi Valley Presbytery (to CCB, OC)
2 “Amend *BCO* 36-4 to Add Language for the Administration of Definite Suspension
3 from Office”
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5 **Whereas** the censure of definite suspension from office is “administered to an accused who,
6 upon conviction, satisfies the court as to his repentance and makes such restitution as
7 is appropriate” (*BCO* 30-1), and
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9 **Whereas** the censure of definite suspension from office is “administered when the credit of
10 religion, the honor of Christ, and the good of the delinquent demand it, even though
11 the delinquent has given satisfaction to the court” (*BCO* 30-3), and
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13 **Whereas** *BCO* 36-4 gives no specific language by which the censure of definite suspension
14 from office is to be administered and the offending brother is to be addressed,
15 necessitating Courts to determine for themselves how to communicate the censure,
16 and
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18 **Whereas** *BCO* 37-1 currently contains language to declare to a brother when he is “restored
19 by the court at the end of the term of his suspension,”
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21 **Therefore, be it resolved** that *BCO* 36-4 be amended by adding the following language
22 (underlining for additions):
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24 **36-4.** Definite suspension from office should be administered in the presence of
25 the court alone or in open session of the court, as it may deem best, and public
26 announcement thereof shall be at the court’s discretion. When the court has resolved
27 to pass this sentence, the moderator shall address the offending brother to the following
28 purpose:
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30 **Whereas, you, (here describe the brother as a**
31 **teaching elder, ruling elder, or deacon) are convicted by sufficient proof**
32 **(or are guilty by your own confession) of the sin of (here**
33 **insert the offense), and have satisfied the court as to your repentance by**
34 **the grace of God; yet for the credit of religion, the honor of Christ, and**
35 **your own good we the Presbytery (or Church**
36 **Session) in the name and by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, do now**
37 **declare you suspended from the exercise of your office, and all the functions**
38 **thereof, for (here state the definite period of time of**
39 **the suspension).**
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41 To this shall be added such advice or admonition as may be judged necessary,
42 and the whole shall be concluded with prayer to almighty God that He would follow
43 this act of discipline with His blessing.
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45 So that the amended section will read as follows:

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36-4. Definite suspension from office should be administered in the presence of the court alone or in open session of the court, as it may deem best, and public announcement thereof shall be at the court’s discretion. When the court has resolved to pass this sentence, the moderator shall address the offending brother to the following purpose:

Whereas, you, _____ (here describe the brother as a teaching elder, ruling elder, or deacon) are convicted by sufficient proof (or are guilty by your own confession) of the sin of _____ (here insert the offense), and have satisfied the court as to your repentance by the grace of God; yet for the credit of religion, the honor of Christ, and your own good we the _____ Presbytery (or Church Session) in the name and by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, do now declare you suspended from the exercise of your office, and all the functions thereof, for _____ (here state the definite period of time of the suspension).

To this shall be added such advice or admonition as may be judged necessary, and the whole shall be concluded with prayer to almighty God that He would follow this act of discipline with His blessing.

*Adopted by the Mississippi Valley Presbytery at its stated meeting, February 4, 2025.
Attested by TE Chris Wright, stated clerk*