

New ECFA Leadership Standard Executive Summary

THE CONCERN

- Today, churches and ministries have an unprecedented opportunity **to proactively care for and support the integrity of their leaders.**
- **Far too many leaders are struggling in isolation** as they face the unique pressures, demands, and challenges of ministry leadership. There has been a notable rise in reports of burnout, leaders leaving the ministry, and other tragic integrity failures.
- All these have **devastating consequences** for leaders, their families and communities, and the trust and the gospel witness of the Church.
- **94% of board chairs and senior leaders of ECFA members believe** that leadership integrity failures are having a negative impact on donor trust... Yet, most have not implemented even basic, proactive measures to care for and support the leader's integrity as a whole person (Dec. 2021 survey).
- The ECFA community has expressed a desire to **adopt appropriate practices to encourage healthy leadership and to enhance trust** in churches and ministries, consistent with ECFA's mission.

THE SOLUTION

- ECFA's Board of Directors commissioned a **special board task force** that began meeting in August 2021 to prayerfully explore how ECFA might play a role in supporting leadership integrity consistent with our mission.
- The task force conducted 2 surveys of ECFA's full membership and consulted with ECFA's standards advisory committee and a variety of other outside experts on ministry governance and leader care.
- After this multi-year research and discernment process, the **ECFA board announced the new Leadership Standard in March 2024.**

ECFA'S NEW LEADERSHIP STANDARD

- The new Leadership Standard is focused on **supporting healthy leadership** through the board's proactive care for the integrity of the leader as a whole person.
- Very simply, this includes the board coming alongside the leader and **clarifying biblical character expectations** and **offering proactive care for the leader.**
- The standard gives members much latitude to implement a process that's best suited for their context and meets the spirit of the standard.
- The Leadership Standard has strong support across the diversity of leaders and ministries of ECFA. Local churches, large international ministries, pregnancy centers, rescue missions, media ministries, education, and more are all welcoming this new standard.
- Read more FAQs at [ECFA.org/LeadershipStandard](https://ecfa.org/LeadershipStandard).

TIMING

- In March 2024, ECFA announced the new Leadership Standard and is **inviting feedback through May 31, 2024** on what resources will be helpful in effectively implementing the new standard.
- After carefully considering all feedback, the ECFA board will communicate the final draft standard and allow ample time for member education, training, and support in implementation of the standard before it becomes a requirement for accredited members.

