

EXAMINATION COMMITTEE POLICIES

A. Requirements and Preparation

1. Any person not currently a member of the presbytery who is seeking to be either a permanent or temporary member of presbytery shall be interviewed by the Examinations Committee prior to being elected to a pastoral position or prior to being received as a member of the presbytery. If the request for an examination comes directly from a minister or candidate, the chair shall contact the Stated Clerk or the COM as appropriate to ensure that proper process is being followed for presbytery membership prior to scheduling the interview. For those who are being considered by a Pastor Nominating Committee ("PNC") for an installed position, this interview shall normally be conducted when the minister/candidate first visits the church at which he or she is being considered and must be completed no later than the weekend of the neutral pulpit.

2. The interview will normally take place during a 90-minute block of time during which a three person delegation from the committee ("the Interview Team") will meet with the minister/candidate without others being present. For churches seeking an installed pastor, the PNC is responsible 1) for obtaining a location for the interview which is quiet and without distraction and which is suitable for a confidential discussion, and 2) for building time into their visit schedule for this interview to take place. The PNC shall contact the chair of the Examinations Committee at least 7 days in advance of the proposed interview date. If insufficient notice is given, it may not be possible to conduct the interview and the interview will have to be rescheduled at a later date. If there is additional cost involved in bringing the minister/candidate back at a later date, such cost will be the responsibility of the church seeking to call the person.

3. It shall be the responsibility of the PNC and/or the minister/candidate to make sure that the chair of the committee has been provided, at least 3 days prior to the interview, with a copy of the minister/candidate's Statement of Faith and, when applicable, the minister/candidate's PIF. These documents may be provided by e-mail, provided they are in a standard document format which is easily accessible and printable.

4. Failure of a minister/candidate or a PNC to fully cooperate with the interview process shall make the minister/candidate ineligible for further consideration for presbytery membership.

B. The Examination

1. The interview shall ordinarily be conducted by three (3) members of the Examinations Committee chosen by the chair.

2. The content of the interview shall be based upon and emerge from the material provided to the committee

by the minister/candidate or the PNC. The interview team shall focus on the minister/candidate's theology and his or her willingness to abide by the polity of our Constitution.

3. In addition to other questions asked by the interview team, the following question shall be asked of all being interviewed:

"Can you answer in the affirmative to the ordination/installation questions as found in the Book of Order, and are you in compliance with all ordination/installation standards as stated in the Book of Order, including but not limited to those found in G-6.000?"

If a minister/candidate is not able to answer yes to this question, the interview team shall ascertain the specific reason why not and include that information in their deliberations regarding suitability for presbytery membership.

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4. Time shall be provided for the minister/candidate to share any concerns with the interview team over the content or conduct of the interview; any such concerns shall be forwarded to the chair of the committee.

5. At the conclusion of the interview the interview team shall caucus among themselves, without the minister/candidate being present, to discuss the interview and come to an initial conclusion as to whether or not the examination is sustained. In making this decision the interview team shall be guided by the Constitution of the denomination, particularly those areas concerning ordination and installation, as well as any other specific guidance that the Presbytery Assembly may so enact.

If the interview team has no concerns and sees no barriers to presbytery membership, it shall take the following actions:

a) For an ordained Minister of the Word and Sacrament or a minister of another denomination seeking to serve in our presbytery, the interview team will inform the minister that the examination has been sustained and that they are cleared for membership in this presbytery. This will also be reported back to the chair of the committee, who will inform the COM, the Stated Clerk and, when applicable, the PNC.

b) For a candidate who has not yet been ordained as a Minister of the Word and Sacrament, the interview team will inform the candidate that, in the event that a call is extended, he or she would need to be examined by the full presbytery at a future assembly and that they would do so with the committee's favorable recommendation. The committee chair will inform the PNC of this action. In the event that a call is later extended, the presbytery itself, at a future assembly, will receive the committee's report and then examine the candidate for ordination and presbytery membership.

6. If, at the conclusion of the interview, there is any concern among the interview team that the person may not be suitable for presbytery membership, or if they have any other concerns about the wisdom of proceeding, they shall inform the minister/candidate

of their concerns and allow the minister/candidate a chance to respond. If, after his or her response, the interview team's concerns remain, they shall inform the minister/candidate that the examination has not been sustained. The interview team shall inform the committee chair of their concerns, and the committee chair will advise the COM, the Stated Clerk and, when applicable, the PNC that the minister/candidate is not cleared for presbytery membership.

7. If an examination is not sustained, the minister/candidate may request an examination before the full presbytery at a stated meeting of Presbytery Assembly. At that assembly the Examinations Committee shall present their report, including their concerns, prior to the person being examined. Any cost involved in returning the minister/candidate to the local area for this examination shall be borne either by the church seeking to call the person or by the person himself or herself.

C. Record Keeping & Reporting

1. The chair of the committee shall keep a record of all interviews conducted, recording the time, date and location of the interview, the name of the minister/candidate, the members of the interview team, and the result of the interview. In those cases when an examination is not sustained, the chair shall record a summary of the concerns leading to the decision. The chair shall also record any concerns expressed by the minister/candidate regarding the content or process of the interview. This record shall be transmitted at least annually to the presbytery office for storage and safekeeping.

2. At each meeting of the Presbytery Assembly the chair of the committee or the chair's designee shall report to the Assembly the number of examinations conducted since the last assembly and the results of those examinations. For those cases when the person examined is being extended a call or being accepted into presbytery membership, the name of the person shall be reported. For all other cases the name shall be withheld, for reasons of confidentiality. The full record of who has been examined and the results of each examination shall be available to the Stated Clerk and to any others duly appointed by the Assembly.