

Instructions for Petitions to the 2019 General Conference The United Methodist Church

“Any organization, clergy member, or lay member of The United Methodist Church may petition the General Conference...” (¶507, The Book of Discipline 2016)

Format for Petition Submissions

1. All petitions should be submitted digitally by e-mail, USB drive, or through the General Conference website following the format below. Typed petitions without digital media and handwritten or hand printed submissions will not be accepted.
2. Petitions must be typed, double-spaced. Microsoft Word files or any other software that allows files to be saved as rich-text format (RTF) may be used. Do not submit PDF files.
3. Do not use “Track Changes” at any point in the preparation of a petition. Do not use subscript or superscript, as is commonly used for footnotes and endnotes. Instead of footnotes and endnotes, use in-text citations.
4. The top of the first page of the petition should read as follows:
Total Number of Pages:
Suggested Title: (i.e., “Establish Quorum”);
Discipline Paragraph or *Resolution* Number, if applicable: (i.e. “*Discipline* ¶ 506” or “Resolution #42”);
General Church Budget Implications: (i.e. – “General Church Budget Implications: None or Yes”);
Global Implications: (i.e. – “Global Implications: None or Yes”)
(See Frequently Asked Questions – page 2 - for more information on Budget or Global designations)
5. The bottom of the final page of the petition should include:
Date:
Signature of the Petitioner:
Identification of the Petitioner: (i.e. – “Member of Local Church”; “Secretary of Annual Conference”; etc.)
Phone:
Fax Number: (if applicable)
E-mail Address: (if applicable)

“Each petition must be signed by the person submitting it, accompanied by appropriate identification, such as address, local church, or United Methodist board or agency relationship.” Telephone numbers must also be included. “Each petition submitted by fax or electronic mail must identify the individual submitting it, accompanied by identification as above, and must contain a valid digital electronic mail return address or return fax number by which the submitter can be reached. Electronic signatures will be accepted in accordance with common business practice (¶507.3, The Book of Discipline 2016).”

Content of Petition Text

“Each petition must address only one issue if the Discipline is not affected; if the Discipline is affected, each petition must address only one paragraph of the Discipline, except that, if two or more paragraphs in the Discipline are so closely related that a change in one affects the others, the petition may call for the amendment of those paragraphs also to make them consistent with one another.” (¶ 507.2, The Book of Discipline 2016)

1. State action desired, i.e., “Amend ¶ No. ___”; “Add new sub-paragraph after ¶ ___”; “Delete ¶ ___ and substitute the following...”; “Add new paragraph...; etc.”
2. Use single underlines for proposed additions and ~~strike through~~ for proposed deletions.
3. Do not use “Track Changes” at any point in the preparation of a petition. Do not use subscript or superscript, as is commonly used for footnotes and endnotes. Instead of footnotes and endnotes, use in-text citations as illustrated in the quote from *The Book of Discipline 2016* above.

Supporting Material

1. Anticipated financial requirements are to be included as an appendix to the petition text and should follow the final page of the petition text.

“All petitions submitted to the General Conference, except those submitted by individual members of The United Methodist Church and local church groups, which call for the establishment of new programs or the expansion of

existing programs will be invalid unless accompanied by supporting data that address the issue of anticipated financial requirements of the program.” (§1507.4, *The Book of Discipline 2016*)

2. Submitter may submit a rationale of any length, but only the first fifty (50) words of the rationale will be printed in the *Advance Daily Christian Advocate* or available in the online CALMS web site for each petition. The rationale should be a separate text file.

Sending Petitions to the Petitions Secretary

1. Petitions may be sent to the Petitions Secretary beginning **Wednesday, June 6, 2018**. Typed petitions without digital media and handwritten or hand printed submissions will not be accepted.
“Petitions must be postmarked by a national postal service no later than 230 days prior to the opening session of the General Conference (§1507.5, *The Book of Discipline 2016*).” That date is **Sunday, July 8, 2018**.
“If petitions are transmitted by a means other than a national postal service, they must be in the hands of the Petitions Secretary no later than 230 days prior to the opening session of the General Conference (§1 507.6, *The Book of Discipline 2016*).” This includes overnight carriers. Since the deadline is on a Sunday, the arrival deadline for overnight deliveries will be **Saturday, July 7, 2018**.

2. Petitions should be submitted within the GC2019 website <http://www.umc.org/contact/2019-general-conference-petition> or by email to petitionsecretary@umcgc.org

3. Petitions submitted by email should have a subject line which identifies the submitter by last name and the content of the petition. (i.e. Martin – BOD par. 508) The petition text should be in an attachment and the rationale, if included, should be a second attachment. Only one petition should be submitted per email.

4. All other correspondence, including questions about the petition process or about the status of particular petitions may be sent to ggraves@umcgc.org.

5. Petitions (1 signed hard copy and USB drive) may also be submitted via:

U.S. Postal Service

David Garvin, Petitions Secretary
United Methodist General Conference
P.O. Box 5100
Louisville, KY 40255

Overnight Carriers (FedEx, UPS, DHL)

David Garvin, Petitions Secretary
United Methodist General Conference
7400 Floydsburg Rd.
Crestwood, KY 40014

6. Petitions from annual conferences should be submitted by the annual conference secretary as soon after the annual conference session as possible, but no later than the July 8, 2018 deadline.

Frequently Asked Questions

What does it mean to say a petition has or does not have “General Church Budget Implications”?

A petition that causes the need of funding (i.e.; creation of new program, staff position, requirements of support, etc.) through the general Church apportionments has “Financial Implications” for the procedural purposes of General Conference. This requires a review by the General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA) to verify if the funding has already been included under the recommended quadrennial budget or if this requires new funding not currently in the quadrennial budget. A petition that does not cause the need of funding, or that causes the need of funding from some other source (local congregation, district, annual conference, jurisdiction, etc.) than general church apportionments does not have “Financial Implications”.

What does it mean to say a petition has or does not have “Global Implications”?

A petition that causes a change to the *Book of Discipline* or the *Book of Resolutions* or otherwise takes some action or position for the denomination has “Global Implications” if it:

- Is a constitutional amendment.
- Has a direct effect on the global work of general agencies.
- Places requirements or expectations on all annual conferences, districts, or churches regardless of whether they are located in jurisdictions or central conferences.
- Speaks to universal societal concerns, regardless of the particular form of secular government or cultural differences.

2019 SPECIAL SESSION PETITION REVIEW PROCESS

The purpose of the special General Conference 2019 stated in the Bishop’s call is limited to receiving and acting upon a report from the Council of Bishops based on the recommendations of the Commission on a Way Forward. Petitions to the special General Conference 2019 may be filed by any organization, clergy member and lay member of the United Methodist Church as long as the business proposed to be transacted in such petition is in harmony with the purpose stated in the call. It is the obligation of the General Conference to determine, in the first instance, through its committees, officers and presiders, acting in accordance with *The Book of Discipline 2016* and the rules and procedures of the General Conference, whether any such petition is “in harmony.” However, business not in harmony with the purpose as stated in the call is not permitted unless the General Conference by a two-thirds vote shall determine that other business may be transacted. See ¶ 14. [Judicial Council Decision 1360]