

PASTORAL TRANSITIONS

Procedures of Committee on Ministry

The purpose of this document is to provide the core information for the many steps of Pastors and Associates receiving a call and concluding a call in a local Congregation. Pastors, Sessions and Pastor Nominating Committees will need this document as well as the PCUSA's document called "On Calling a Pastor" which can be downloaded at <http://www.pcusa.org/ocap>.

Committee on Ministry (COM) of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos looks forward to partnering with the Session and the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) or Associate Pastor Nominating Committee (APNC) to be a guide through the process.

Contact the Office of Stated Clerk in the Presbytery office as early as possible to begin any of the steps. Committee on Ministry will provide a person to serve as LIAISON with your PNC or APNC. The liaison will be the link to Committee on Ministry and Presbytery staff and will serve to facilitate the process.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE PROCESS AND CHAPTER TITLES:

- I. CONGREGATION** votes to dissolve the Pastoral relation.

- II. SESSION** works with COM to obtain an Interim Pastor/Transitional Pastor

- III. SESSION** conducts a Congregational study, after the departure of the installed Pastor.

- IV. CONGREGATION** elects a Pastor Nominating Committee or Associate PNC.

- V. PNC or APNC** searches for new Pastor or Associate Pastor.

- VI. PNC or APNC** identifies a candidate and obtains COM approval.

- VII. CONGREGATION** elects the Pastor or Associate Pastor.

- VIII. PASTOR OR ASSOCIATE PASTOR** begins the call and is installed by Presbytery.

- IX. APPENDIX**

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CHAPTER V

PNC or APNC SEARCHES FOR A NEW PASTOR OR ASSOCIATE PASTOR

A. FIRST PNC or APNC MEETING

The first meeting is moderated by COM liaison who leads an orientation about the search process. At the end of the orientation, the PNC/APNC will elect its own officers. After this meeting, the COM liaison will attend committee meetings as an advisor, not a voting member.

B. COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

The primary responsibility of the committee is to nominate a candidate to become Pastor or Associate Pastor of the church. You are not responsible to fill the pulpit now or to search for the Interim, if that has not been accomplished.

It is very important that every member of the committee understand that **all matters discussed** shall be absolutely confidential. Do not reveal details, deliberations, names of ministers under consideration or any comments to anyone, inside or outside the church. It is important for family members of persons on the committee to understand the importance of this very strict confidentiality.

C. PREPARE MINISTRIES INFORMATION FORM (MIF)

This document may be obtained online at <http://www.pcusa.org/resource/ministry-information-form/> in Word or PDF format. Download Parts I and II and also the “Skills List” which will be useful in filling out the MIF. Become familiar with Church Leadership Connections (CLC) information on the website as many frequently asked questions are answered there. The CLC home page is <http://www.pcusa.org/clc> where you can download “On Calling A Pastor,” another helpful resource for this process.

1. Complete the MIF using information in the Congregational study of your church. Pay particular attention to the Skills choices as they are the “primary matching” characteristics used in choosing suitable candidates by the CLC system. Pages 28-33 of “On Calling A Pastor” offers additional instructions.
2. The completed MIF needs Session approval that also includes the approval of the maximum total compensation. The PNC/APNC will use this compensation maximum much later in the final negotiation process.
3. After Session approves the MIF, it is forwarded to Presbytery for approval by COM. Email a copy to the Stated Clerk at: [first initial last name@losranchos.org](mailto:first_initial_last_name@losranchos.org) or mail to Stated Clerk, P. O. Box 910, Anaheim, CA 92815-0910.
4. COM or Presbytery assigns a login ID and password to the PNC/APNC.
5. The PNC/APNC enters the MIF on-line; CLC generates an email message to the Clerk of Session and COM requesting their certification of the approvals of the MIF.
6. When all approvals have been certified, the MIF will appear on the Opportunities Search of the PCUSA website <http://www.pcusa.org/clc>. The first matchings will be appear on the church’s login page as a Referral List.

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D. CONVERSATIONS WITH SESSION ABOUT PASTOR COMPENSATION AND COMMITTEE EXPENSES

1. In submitting the MIF to Session for approval, consider carefully the total compensation package that is appropriate for a Pastor with the skills and experience you are seeking and the cost of living in your community. Research the median salaries in Los Ranchos on the website. In addition to salary and housing, will Social Security offset be offered or some type of deferred income? Conversations with Session also would include assistance with housing such as shared equity in the purchase of a home or capital contribution toward a down payment. Your committee must understand any limits the Session has on these expenditures.
2. Ask Session to set aside at least \$10,000 to \$15,000 for the work of the committee. Most of these expenditures will come near the end of the search, when inviting potential candidates to come for a week-end visit and interview. (Think airfare, hotels, car rental, meals) These funds should be moved to a separate account handled only by PNC members, with a full accounting given to Session after the Pastor is called. The funds do not include moving expenses for the new Pastor.

E. RECEIVING PASTORAL INFORMATION FORMS (PIFs)

1. While waiting to receive the PIFs, the PNC/APNC should discuss and determine how to evaluate the PIFs. Read again the Congregational study and MIF that was submitted to be reminded of the theological orientation, skills, experience, gifts and leadership style that you are searching for. Each member will be reading every PIF on their own time. During a meeting, how will each person share their perspective on each PIF? Remember, it is not unusual for a PNC to receive 200, 300 and more PIFs. Later discussions will become longer. Also determine how to track all the committee decisions.
2. One early communication to the Congregation should provide information on how church members could suggest a person to be considered for Pastor/Associate Pastor. The request should be in writing, with information about the person's qualifications and where they are currently serving. It is important to also communicate to the Congregation that you will NOT be able to report back to them the committee's actions on a name so suggested. Committee members must also not give verbal reports back to church members who have made suggestions.
3. The PNC/APNC will receive names of candidates from many sources beside members of the Congregation. Many PIFs will be "self-referrals" sent to the committee electronically and in the mail, from persons who saw the MIF online.
4. PIFs are prepared by ministers in a standard format, giving basic biographical information, theological view and particular strengths in various aspects of church leadership and life. The PIFs are maintained by Church Leadership Connection (CLC) in the denomination offices in Louisville, KY. This is a service provided by the denomination.
5. CLC does not endorse or recommend ministers to the committee. The responsibility for selection belongs to the committee and Congregation in conjunction with the Committee on Ministry and Presbytery, which must approve the selection.

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F. EVALUATE APPLICANTS

1. By a process of evaluating PIFs, holding telephone interviews, listening/watching sermon recordings, reference checks, visiting personal websites, etc. the list of candidates will be prioritized and a determination will be made as to which candidates will constitute the “short list” or top 2 to 4. Even as the evaluating process becomes more focused, the committee will still be receiving new PIFs to read.
2. During the first contact with a potential candidate who is rising toward the short list, the first question should inquire of their degree of interest in the position. The committee could make arrangements for a phone or SKYPE interview, or even send a list of supplemental questions that will be sent to all who are being considered for the short list. The questions are usually specific to the Congregation. The goal is to use consistent techniques to evaluate candidates to determine who will be invited for a personal visit with the committee.
3. Assign one or more committee members to begin checking primary references and report back to the committee at the next meeting.
4. The committee should decide if it will send a packet of “promotional” materials to the candidates that are interviewed by phone or SKYPE?

G. DEVELOP SHORT LIST

1. Of the finalists, the committee will conduct a thorough, face-to-face interview with them. The Pastor and spouse are invited for a week-end (usually) to visit the area, meet informally with the committee and formally for the interview. Much planning is involved to prepare for this:
 - a. Hotel accommodations
 - b. Planning informal meals or activities for the committee and the potential candidate to get to know each other. All committee members should be present for these important times with the interviewee.
 - c. PNC/APNC must carefully plan in advance the questions to be asked, so that most of the same questions can be asked with each potential candidate who comes for the onsite interview. Read their PIF again to be prepared.
 - d. Consider mailing a packet of information about the church and community well in advance to the person being interviewed. Think about ways to demonstrate positive aspects of the community and church.
 - e. Ask COM if they want to interview this candidate for membership while the candidate is in town. (COM prefers to interview only the final candidate.)
 - f. Schedule time for a realtor to show housing in the area.
2. Does the committee wish to use a neutral pulpit in Los Ranchos Presbytery to hear your candidate preach? The COM liaison with the help of the Stated Clerk, will give instructions on how to make these arrangements.
3. PNC/APNC is responsible for all transportation costs, housing (preferably a good hotel where they can have “private space”), meals and other costs for this visit. The spouse will not be part of the formal interview time, so think of possible activities for the spouse during the interview.

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Steps F-1 through G-3 will continue to be repeated throughout the process until the committee determines the final candidate. Keep the Congregation posted on the progress, but never mention names.

H. SELECT FINALIST

1. When the committee is seriously considering a particular minister, before she/he is asked or any negotiations have begun, contact COM and the Stated Clerk to request that the clearance check be completed.
2. The Presbytery requires formal police and financial background checks on all potential members of the Presbytery. Candidates need to be made aware of this policy. (The release form is on the next page.)
3. Also, the PNC/APNC and any candidate need to be aware of the Presbytery's procedures regarding whether the minister is unable or unwilling to comply with any of the denominations standards. If the minister has not already signed the release form, it must be done now and sent to the Presbytery office and Stated Clerk.

Instruction for final negotiations begins in the next chapter.

AUTHORIZATION & RELEASE
Please Read Carefully Before Signing the Authorization

DISCLOSURE

In considering you for employment and, if you are employed, in considering you for subsequent promotion, assignment, reassignment, retention, or discipline, **Presbytery of Los Ranchos** may request and rely upon one or more consumer reports or investigative consumer reports about you that we obtain from a consumer reporting agency, such as **IntelliCorp Records, Inc.**

For explanation purposes:

- A “consumer report” is a written, oral or other communication of any information by a consumer reporting agency bearing on your credit worthiness, credit standing, credit capacity, character, general reputation, personal characteristics, or mode of living which is used or expected to be used or collected in whole or in part for the purpose of serving as a factor in making an employment-related decision about you. Such information may include, for example, credit information, criminal history reports, or driving records; and

Under the Fair Credit Reporting Act (15 USC at 1681-1681u) as amended, FCRA, before we can obtain a consumer report or investigative consumer report about you for employment purposes, we must have your written authorization. Before we take adverse action on the basis, in whole or in part, of information in that report, you will be provided a copy of that report, the name, address, and telephone number of the consumer reporting agency, and a summary of your rights under the FCRA.

AUTHORIZATION

I have read and understand the foregoing Disclosure, and authorize the Company to obtain and rely upon consumer reports or investigative consumer reports in considering me for employment and, if I am employed, in considering me for subsequent promotion, assignment, reassignment, retention, or discipline. By my signature below, I authorize the Company to obtain any such reports and to share the information received with any person involved in the employment decision about me.

I do _____ do not _____ authorize you to contact *my current* employer for Employment and Reference Verifications

I also agree that this Disclosure and Authorization in original, faxed, photocopied, or electronic (including electronically signed) form will be valid for any consumer reports or investigative consumer reports that may be requested about me by or on behalf of the Company.

Applicant Signature

Date

Under California Civil Code 1786.16(a) (2) and 1782.33, the following disclosure is provided:

You have the right to request from **Intellcorp Records, Inc.**, upon proper identification, the nature and substance of all information in its files on you, including the sources of information, and the recipients of any reports on you, which the agency has previously furnished within the three-year period preceding your request. You may view the file maintained on you by the agency during normal business hours. You may also obtain a copy of this file upon submitting proper identification and paying the costs of duplication services. Upon making a written request, you may receive a summary of your report via telephone.

Personal Data

Last Name First Name Middle Name

Current Address Dates Lived Here

Addresses for the Past Seven Years: (include street, city, state, zip code) Dates of Residence:

Date of Birth Other Names Used (including maiden name)

Social Security Number Driver's License # State

Current Email Address

I certify that all elements of the personal data I have provided are true, accurate and complete. I understand and agree that any omission, false statement, misleading statement, or answer made by me on my application or any supplements to it and in any interviews will be sufficient grounds for rejection of employment and my discharge after employment.

Printed Name

Applicant Signature

Date