

Called Pastor Search Process Outline

This is the search process for a pastor who will be called by vote of the congregation for an indefinite (Installed) or specific (Designated) period of time. For the search process for a temporary pastor who will be hired by contract with the session, see ([Pastoral Transition 2 Temporary Minister Search Process - 23 Dec 2022.docx - Google Docs](#))

Once you have a search committee, the committee will:

1. Meet for the first time, led by the Transition Rep, to get itself organized, by
 - a. Reviewing the process and important issues such as confidentiality and Equal Employment Opportunity policy
 - b. Determining who will fill specific roles:
 - i. Chair: holds the big picture of the process and keeps the committee on track; sets the agenda for meetings and manages them; ensures that the committee comes to unity around decisions (rather than voting); solves problems and coordinates within and outside the committee
 - ii. Computer Wizard: interacts with the Church Leadership Connection (CLC) database; consolidates and posts the MDP; retrieves PDPs and makes them accessible to the committee; keeps all materials organized and available to the committee
 - iii. Recording Secretary: documents all decisions made by the committee (and a rough reason for them); maintains the current status of the process; keeps these materials up to date and available to the committee
 - iv. Corresponding Secretary: manages all communications with candidates; schedules interviews; updates candidates on committee decisions; maintains contact info on candidates.
 - v. The Transition Rep is responsible for advising and supporting the committee. Typically the Transition Rep will join the committee meetings through preparation of the forms and the initial review of PDPs. The Transition Rep would then help set to process for further steps: interviews; in person meetings, negotiating terms of call, etc. The Transition Rep does not participate in the evaluation of candidates other than to help ensure that the process is fair, effective, and legally compliant.
 - c. Setting a regular meeting day, time, and place. (Many committees meet weekly for at least part of the search process.)
2. Prepare forms
 - a. Ministry Information Form (MDP): a description of the church and the position. [Church Leadership Connection \(pcusa.org\)](#)
 - i. The Assessment Response Report will contain most of the information needed to fill out the MDP. Read it carefully.
 - ii. If the position is part-time, use the Pastor Work Hour Guidelines for help determining how many hours your position should be. ([Link to Pastor Work Hour Guidelines](#))

Called Pastor Search Process Outline

- iii. The MDP indicates the salary range for the position. Once the session has approved the MDP, and the range, the search committee is empowered to negotiate terms of call within that range
- b. Terms of Call Worksheet:
 - i. A member of the search committee should talk to someone on the Congregational Relations Team of COM for help and advice with salary ranges and other terms of call for the position. [Appx P – Guidelines for Defining Terms of Call](#), [B. Terms of Call Worksheet](#)
 - ii. You should also prepare a Worksheet showing the terms of call for the most recent pastor.
- c. Financial Strength Worksheet: financial summary for the last few years [C. Financial Strength Worksheet](#)
- d. If you have a manse, you will need to get it inspected by the Presbytery Property Committee. You should contact them to make this happen.
3. Submit draft forms to Presbytery (through your Transition Representative). They will be checked by people who have seen a lot of these to identify any potential issues or questions. Your Transition Rep will let you know if there are any suggestions or concerns. This review and approval by COM representatives is required before submitting the MDP to the Session.
4. Update forms, if necessary
5. Get MDP approved by Session
6. Transitions Rep will contact COM Co-Chairs, where they will give the church ID and password that enable them to post their MDP to the Church Leadership Connection (CLC) database in Louisville. ([Appx K – Church Leadership Connection User's Guide](#)) The CLC will send resumes (Pastor Information Forms – PDPs) that match your MDP for type of position, salary, geography, and competencies.

Once you start receiving PDPs, the committee will

7. Review the PDPs to decide who they want to interview. [Appx L – Reading PDPs: What to Look For](#) Many pastors now have videos of their sermons and worship services online. You will want to review those as well.
8. Conduct initial interviews over video (Skype, Zoom, etc.) All initial interviews should follow the same protocol to be fair to all candidates. [Appx N – Conducting an Interview](#)
9. Decide which candidates you want to explore further and conduct second interviews with them. These interviews should reflect the open areas and concerns you have about that individual candidate. They will also give the candidate more information about your church.

When you are serious about a small number of candidates (and BEFORE you have met any of them in person):

10. Give their names and current presbyteries to your Transition Rep. They will work with the General Presbyter to do a quick check on the candidates to make sure there are no issues in their background.
11. Ask the candidates if you may contact their references and conduct reference checks. Because of the confidentiality of the candidate's search (a misplaced comment or question about the candidate can jeopardize the candidate's current job and your relationship with them), you

Called Pastor Search Process Outline

should ask the candidate (NOT a reference) for additional names, if you want to check other aspects of the candidate's background. [Appx M – Reference Questions – Phone/Electronic](#)

12. Arrange to interview the candidate in person. This is necessary for full spiritual discernment on the part of both the committee and the candidate; and it is required by the Presbytery. You should have the candidate see the church, the manse (if there is one), and the neighborhood. ([Link to "Considerations During a Pandemic"](#))
 - a. The candidate does NOT preach at your church, nor do you introduce the candidate broadly within the church. If you want, you can arrange for the candidate to preach at a neutral pulpit (another Presbyterian church of a similar size nearby); the search committee are the only ones who attend the service at the neutral pulpit.
 - b. This is usually the final interview at which you confirm whether there is a call to this person.

When you have decided on the candidate you want to call:

13. Tell the candidate and discuss the terms of call, including moving expenses and timing.
 - a. [Appx P – Guidelines for Defining Terms of Call](#)
14. Tell your Transition Rep, who will contact the candidate to:
 - a. Obtain a copy of their Statement of Faith [Appx O4 – Statement of Faith](#)
 - b. Schedule a Clearance Interview with the General Presbyter, the Transition Rep, and someone from COM.
 - i. Your church is responsible for paying the candidate's travel expenses to that interview, if they are close enough to come in person.
 - c. Ask the candidate to sign the Clergy Sexual Misconduct Policy. [Appx O5 – Clergy Sexual Misconduct Policy & Certification](#)
 - d. Obtain the information needed to conduct a background check. [Appx O6 – Clergy and Employee Background Check Policy, Employee Questionnaire & Authorization](#)
 - e. Obtain general information about the person. [Appx O7 – Ministers Being Received Information Form for PHR](#)
15. Tell your Session, who will approve the final terms of call and discuss dates for the candidating service and the start of the ministry.
16. Obtain COM approval (working through your Transition Rep) for
 - a. Final terms of Call [B. Terms of Call Worksheet](#)
 - b. Final EEO Policy Report [Appx R – Equal Opportunity Final Report](#)
 - c. Date for candidating service
 - d. Start date of the ministry
17. Conduct the candidating service and the election of the pastor
 - a. ([Link to Considerations During a Pandemic](#))
 - b. [Appx Q1 – Congregational Meeting Agenda for Election of Pastor/Associate Pastor](#)
 - c. [Appx Q2 – Pastoral Call Form & Certification of Call](#)
18. Celebrate!!!! (Following the congregation's call, the Presbytery will approve the call.)
19. The Transitions Team Representative will ensure a turn over meeting takes place to fully inform the Congregational Relations Team of all relevant information from the transition process. The

Called Pastor Search Process Outline

Congregational Relations Team will take over working with the congregation and incoming pastor at this point.

20. Congregational Relations Team will review and bring the AC and order of service for the Ordination/Installation service to COM for approval. [See Appx S1](#) and [Appx S2](#)

Approved by COM January 10, 2023