

Temporary Minister Leaving Process Outline

This process is for pastors who were hired by contract with the session – interim pastors and stated supply pastors. Pastors who were called by a vote of the congregation should use the process of (link to [Pastoral Transition 1 Minister Leaves – Installed](#))

Who is Responsible	Action to be Taken
Pastor Session	As the end of the contract approaches, many temporary pastors and sessions choose to renew the contract for another year. Stated supply pastors can renew their contracts indefinitely. Interim pastor contracts can be renewed twice (for a total of three years). If the contract is renewed, the session should send the new contract and the terms of call to the Presbytery office.
Phase 1: Announcing the Departure	
Pastor Session General Presbyter	1. If the pastor decides to leave the church, s/he should alert the General Presbyter to that possibility in advance of a final decision. 2. When the decision is final, the pastor calls a meeting of the session, which the General Presbyter and/or Transitions Team Rep attends, to announce the departure. The General Presbyter talks with the session about their next steps and the support the presbytery will provide. 3. The General Presbyter then notifies the Transition Team head, to identify a Transition Rep for the church, and the Congregational Relations Team head to identify a moderator for the session. 4. If the session decides that they do not need or want to renew the contract, they should make sure that the pastor is aware of that decision well in advance. 5. The session notifies the COM Chair/Co-Chairs, who makes sure that a Transition Rep and session moderator are appointed. 6. In either case, the session and the pastor identify the last day of work for the pastor and the contract end date. The contract end date is when the church will cease paying the pastor and recognizes remaining vacation and study time.
COM Transition Team head	a. The Transition Team head will appoint a Transition Rep for the church, if there is not already a Transition Rep working with the church
COM Pastoral Relations Team head	a. The Congregational Relations Team head will be responsible for appointing a moderator for the church for the period between the current Pastor's departure and the arrival of a new pastor.

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	b. The Congregational Relations Team will ensure a turn over meeting takes place to fully inform the Transitions Representative of all relevant information that impacts the transition process.
Pastor	2. The Pastor sends a letter to the congregation notifying them of her/his pending departure
Pastor	3. The Pastor should become familiar with the Presbytery's policy on former Pastors. a. Appx C – Policy and Agreement for Pastors and Churches Following the Conclusion of a Pastoral Relationship 4. <u>The Pastor fills out an information form and sends it to the Presbytery office</u> a. Link to Minister Leaving Data Form
Session	5. The Session notifies the congregation of the next steps. The Session shares the Presbytery's policy on former pastors (Appx C) and publishes the policy in the church's bulletin and newsletter. a. Appx C – Policy and Agreement for Pastors and Churches Following the Conclusion of a Pastoral Relationship
Phase 2: Formalizing the Departure	
COM Pastoral Relations Team head	1. COM acts on behalf of the Presbytery to dissolve the pastoral relationship. If not already done, a moderator is appointed for the church.
Pastoral Relations Team Transition Rep Pastor	2. The Transitions Rep arranges and conducts an exit interview with the Pastor. The Presbytery's policy on former pastors will be reviewed during the interview, and if not already completed, the Pastor will complete and sign the form. The Transition Rep will submit a report of the interview. Appx D1 – Exit Interview with Pastor Appx D3 – Report on Exit Interview
Transition Rep Session	3. After the Pastor has departed, the Transition Rep will arrange and conduct an exit interview with the Session Appx D2 – Exit Interview with Session Appx D3 – Report on Exit Interview
Phase 3: Next Steps	

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Transition Rep Session	1. The Transition Rep will share the Pulpit Supply list with the Session, who are responsible for worship until the next pastor arrives. Pulpit Supply Policy ii. Pulpit Supply List
Session Transition Rep	2. The Session will meet with the Transition Rep to discuss the next steps for the church. a. The church will need to complete an assessment process unless one has been completed within the last three years. If significant changes have taken place in the church since the last assessment, it may be appropriate to conduct a new assessment even if the old one is within that time period. i. The assessment process consists of three parts: a survey or focus group; the interpretation of the results; and a document prepared by the church describing their strengths, challenges, and future direction. ii. That document must be reviewed and approved by selected members of COM before the church may start the search for a long-term pastor. <i>(Link to Pastoral Transition 3 Assessment Process)</i> iii. If an assessment process has been conducted recently and a search for a new pastor is underway, the session may choose to hire temporary pastoral leadership to cover the duration of that search or complete the process using pulpit supply and the session's leadership.

Approved by COM January 10, 2023