

# **East Ohio BOM Policy and Procedure Handbook**

*Updated July 2023*

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**\* All Policies and Procedures listed below have been approved by the Board of Ordained Ministry.**

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**Candidate Files Policy  
Approved by BOM,  
9/18/2014**

Candidate files will be divided by the appropriate BOM Registrar into two sections, an open section and a closed section. The open section will be available for candidates to view. The closed section will be considered confidential BOM material for the use of the BOM only.

The closed section will contain the following items:, Superintendent's report (DS), Field Education report, academic report, Pastors, Pastor Parish Relations report, flagged notes, DCOM material and internal communications.

The open section would contain transcripts, medical record, background check, self-disclosure, mentor report, official BOM communications, public emails to the candidate, letter from DCOM, Ministry Assessment Specialist's (MAS) report and biographical form.

This statement will be added to documents: "All documents of the BOM are proprietary!"

Updated 1/15/2020

**EAST OHIO CONFERENCE  
BOARD OF MINISTRY  
PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT POLICY  
(Revised September 2, 2010, Revised 12/9/14, Revised 1/15/2020)**

(See Chapter 8 of BOM Handbook for background information and requirements)

1. Psychological assessments are helpful to the district committees, the Conference Board of Ministry and mentors who are interviewing, approving and mentoring candidates for clergy careers.

Assessment at the time of candidacy is to assist in determining fitness and competency for ministry; at the time of provisional membership interviews determining readiness; and at the time of full membership interviews determining effectiveness.

2. A psychological assessment must be completed and a report forwarded to the East Ohio Conference Board of Ministry Psychological Assessment Representative at the following times:
- a. Before a candidate becomes a certified candidate and/or is appointed as a local pastor.
  - b. When a candidate applies for a change of status to provisional or associate membership . The assessment completed for provisional or associate membership is valid for four years, but a new one is required prior to application for full membership. (effective 10/1/2011, revised 12/9/14)
  - c. When a candidate applies for full membership they must have a new psychological assessment completed by a new MAS. The assessment completed for the full membership process is valid for four years. (effective 10/1/2011, revised 12/9/14 and 4/28/15)

The Conference Board of Ministry reserves the right to require additional testing at any time in the process.

At the time of a new assessment, the previous report(s) may be provided to the MAS by the Psychological Assessment Representative.

3. Required tests are completed in the presence of the mentor and shall include:
- a. Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-2,
  - b. Sixteen Personality Factor (completed online), and
  - c. Incomplete Sentences Blank
  - d. Personal and Professional Reference List will be provided by the candidate with envelopes enclosed with name and completed mailing addresses of a minimum of three references. The mentor will send them to Candidacy Assessment office in Nashville. They will then mail a recommendation form to the persons for whom an envelope is addressed.

The tests are scored by GBHEM in Nashville and the results are forwarded to a Ministerial Assessment Specialist (MAS) selected by the candidate from those approved by the East Ohio Conference Board of Ministry. The references are returned directly to the MAS. When the test scores and a minimum of three references have been received the MAS will schedule an interview with the candidate. If references are not returned, it will be the responsibility of the candidate to make necessary contacts to have these sent to the MAS.

4. The Ministerial Assessment Specialist (MAS) is required to complete the following:
  - a. Face-to-face Interview of candidate.
  - b. Interpretation of scores provided from psychological testing.
  - c. Written reports are viewed as written consultations to interview committees for use in the formulation of questions they may need to raise with the candidate in their face-to-face interviews. The reports should use non-technical language understandable to the candidate, the district committee and the Board of Ministry. The report should include the following areas:
    - Current Status in the Candidacy Process
    - History of the Candidate
    - Clinical Interview Summary (Mental Status and Personal Presentation)
    - Interpretation of Test Results and Recommendation Forms
    - Areas of Strength and Growth Needed
    - Recommendations including questions to be explored in interviews and implications for ministry.
  - d. Recommendations pertaining to the fitness, competency, readiness and effectiveness of the person for ministry are requested following the suggestions of the attached addendum "Psychological Reports as Evaluation".
  - e. The written report is to be completed within two weeks of the interview and mailed to the East Ohio Conference Board of Ministry Psychological Assessment Representative.

5. The Board of Ministry shall be the owner of the report. The raw test data shall be kept by the MAS's according to professional standards. The BOM Psychological Assessment Representative will send the report to the registrar who is relating to the candidates and keep a copy of the report until it is placed in the permanent file when a candidate is ordained.

No report or test results will be released to others by the BOM.

6. If a candidate desires to have a second opinion report for their assessment, this may be secured by the candidate at their cost. This opinion will be based on the same test data and the previous report which will be provided to the second MAS by the original MAS.

7. The district committee on ministry shall review the report prior to conducting face-to-face interviews with the candidate for certification and provisional membership. The report will be kept in the file of the district committee on ministry.

The district committee on ministry shall encourage the candidate to review their psychological report. The report shall be reviewed with the candidate in a personal meeting with the district registrar or district chair. The candidate's mentor will be encouraged to attend this review with the candidate to facilitate follow-up with the mentor. The candidate shall sign a statement that they saw the report on a specified date and who was present at that meeting.

8. When the candidate is recommended for interview by the Board of Ministry, the report shall be forwarded to the appropriate Registrar of the Board of Ministry. The candidate may review their file including the psychological assessment report in the presence of the Registrar. The interview team of the Board of Ministry shall review the report prior to conducting face-to-face interviews with the candidate.

9. The testing cost is the responsibility of the candidate. The candidate shall pay \$375. From this amount:

- \$75 shall be paid to the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry in Nashville, Tennessee, to cover the testing cost.
- \$300 shall be paid to the MAS at the time of the face to face interview.

Those candidates who are in financial need are encouraged to contact their local churches and/or district committee on ministry for financial assistance. Some candidates are helped with this cost: they pay 1/3, district pays 1/3 and their local church pays 1/3.

The Conference Board of Ordained Ministry has a limited amount of scholarships available. Candidates need to be referred by their district committee on ministry. The Committee send a request to the Board Psychological Assessment Representative. Contact information can be found on the East Ohio Conference website under Pathways to Ministry/Board of Ordained Ministry. The BOM Treasurer will then forward the scholarship to the MAS or appropriate service.

The Conference Board of Ministry may, upon request, pay 1/2 of the cost of a psychological assessment required prior to applying for full membership. Requests for reimbursement of 1/2 the cost of the psychological assessment may be submitted to the Conference Board of Ministry Treasurer.

The MAS will not release the report until payment is made. Payment to be made from district or conference sources may be verified in writing to the MAS.

10. The BOM will remain in regular dialogue with the specialists regarding what is needed for the psychological reporting. Ministerial Assessment Specialists should report to the boards any suggestions they may have for facilitating the process.

11. The Board of Ministry will provide training to Board members, district committee members and mentors in the interpretation and use of psychological assessment reports.

**Names and Contact Information for Approved Ministerial Assessment Specialists in East Ohio Conference:**

**Ministerial Assessment Specialists**

**Dr. Dennis Marikis, Neuro Advantage**  
788 Lexington Avenue  
Mansfield, Ohio 44907  
419-333-1101. [neuroadvantage@aol.com](mailto:neuroadvantage@aol.com)

**Dr. Lee Wetherbee**  
910 Center Street  
Ashland, Ohio 44805. [lwetherb@ashland.edu](mailto:lwetherb@ashland.edu)

**Dr. Robert Humphries**  
1201 S. Main Street, Suite 100  
North Canton, Ohio 44720  
330-244-8782. [bhumphries@vistapcc.com](mailto:bhumphries@vistapcc.com)

**Amy Avery Weese**  
[amy@a2counseling.com](mailto:amy@a2counseling.com)  
614-905-1868 cell

**For more information, see Chapter 6 of the Candidacy Mentor's Manual or contact:**

The Candidacy Registrar or Psychological Assessment Coordinator as listed on the EOC website under the BOM page.

## ADDENDUM

### **Psychological Reports As Evaluation**

Psychological reports consist primarily of a clinical description and evaluation of personality. They are typically based on test data as well as data from a diagnostic or history-taking interview.

The focus of the psychological report is on description rather than prediction. The personality description is set in the context of psychological role requirements of professional ministry in The United Methodist Church. Evaluation occurs throughout the report.

There will be predictive statements of a general nature about the long-term effect of the trends and patterns of a given personality style as that relates to the psychological role requirements of ministry. It is not predictive with reference to specific behaviors in specific situations. Predictive statements are typically beyond the competence of psychological assessment given the present state of the science of psychological prediction.

The following seven categories may be used as a summary evaluative statement under the rubric of mental health and interpersonal functioning. These categories should be used to clarify for the MAS the nature of the statements included in the report, as representatives of the category, rather than the MAS using the category name in the report. The categories are not to be placed in the report since nothing in the report should be seen as tying the selection committee's hands. The selection committee makes the decision, not the MAS. However, selection committees can benefit from a professional opinion properly stated at the conclusion of a descriptive report.

As noted, the name of the category should not be included in the report. However, a descriptive sentence that would communicate a professional opinion to the selection committee is added as an example for each category and may be used in the test of the MAS reports.

The lead phrase for the bottom line professional opinion may be phrased as follows: Based on the data made available at the time of this review, when seen from the perspective of mental health and effective interpersonal functioning, the applicant appears to be:

1. Highly regarded. For this category the conclusion might be, "in robust mental health and evidences rather exceptional interpersonal skills. These personal gifts should enable the individual to move through the formation process provided in seminary and achieve a point of readiness for the beginning practice of professional ministry."
2. Recommended. The MAS might conclude the report with the statement, "Based on the data made available at the time of this review, when seen from the perspective of mental health and effective interpersonal functioning, the applicant appears to have developed the intrapsychic structures and interpersonal styles that can provide a good foundation for the development of effectiveness in full-time professional ministry."
3. Acceptable with the following notations. Use the same language as in (#2 above) but add a sentence or more as appropriate indicating the substance of the notation. For example, "This candidate appears to be too hard on him/herself and will need to attend a regular observances of days off and vacations, along with keeping a reasonable schedule, in order to avoid burnout."



4. Acceptable if the following conditions are met. A sample statement would be, “Based on the data made available at the time of this review, when seen from the perspective of mental health and effective interpersonal functioning, the applicant appears to be in need of some focused work on problems with authority figures. The applicant could benefit from a year of administrative supervision with a firm but caring experienced senior supervisor, from whom this individual can learn the value of promptness in the completion of work assignments, the necessity of keeping appointments on a regular schedule, and other such matters of significance to the effective functioning of a professional. At the end of the training period of one year, reports from the administrative supervisor and others may be utilized to evaluate for progress in candidacy.”

5. Marginal, with the following areas of concern needing attention and remediation specified or as need to be described such as, “The applicant appears to be in need of significant therapeutic work in areas of gender identity development, need for a greater degree of autonomy and individuation, further development of a positive sense of self and a higher level of self-esteem, and the resolution of some chronic depressive features in his/her personality structure. This process is likely to take some time, such as a year or more, in individual psychotherapy, plus an additional period of time beyond the individual counseling, working in group therapy. Without a successful therapeutic experience in which these and other related areas are successfully addressed, the applicant would not appear to have the emotional resources with which to cope with the demands of professional ministry, whether in a parish or setting beyond the local church. Subsequent to the applicant’s therapeutic work, another review of the present sort would need to be held, as an independent evaluation about progress to that date, and prospects for the future adjustment and growth.”

6. Not acceptable as he/she presents at the present time. If improvement occurs in the areas noted, the applicant may be encouraged to reapply at a later time. “The applicant presents with significant emotional and/or, cognitive and/or conduct difficulties of a psychiatric nature. It is recommended that this individual be referred for psychiatric evaluation, and for ongoing psychotherapy. This intervention is likely to involve more than one year of work, and possibly as much as three or four years of sustained work, before the individual would be ready for the stresses and strains of preparation for professional ministry, let alone be ready to cope with functioning in parish or agency ministries.

The nature of these difficulties are sufficiently intricate and complex that the applicant would need to have successfully completed two-thirds to three-fourths of the work before a subsequent application could be evaluated with any confidence. Nevertheless, given a successful therapeutic experience of some intensity and duration, a subsequent review would seem to be in order, to further establish his/her readiness to begin preparation for a possible career in professional ministry.”

7. Not acceptable at this time, and not likely to be so in the foreseeable future, hence the applicant is encouraged to consider the following alternatives: “The applicant presents with significant hindrances to effective service in this annual conference and denomination, and possibly in ministry as a vocation as well. Given the applicant’s need for interpersonal and emotional distance, his/her tendency to be self-absorbed, the tendency to personalize all incoming messages, the tendency to displace anger onto others and then experience them as being angry, the tendency to utilize fantasy as the criterion for whether problems are solved or not, and the like, it would be important for this individual to engage in a structured experience which would enable them to, in light of God’s call, reconsider their vocational call. The applicant would need to be aware that even if he/she engages in the foregoing process, that there is no point in submitting a reapplication in this process, should the committee so decide.”

The foregoing language which interprets each of the major categories of the rating scale is intended as suggestive only. Naturally each MAS will want to select the language which fits the particular report, so that the selection committee does receive a professional opinion about the entire report, but in language which is nontechnical and nonbinding. That is, the professional opinion of the MAS should be made in language that provides consultation with and information for the selection committee to arrive at a decision regarding the candidate.

**East Ohio Conference  
United Methodist Church  
Board of Ministry  
Policy on Candidacy for Conference  
Membership Updated June, 2022**

## **Rationale of the Board of Ministry for Recommendation of Applicants for Orders and Membership:**

The standards used as the basis for an applicant's recommendation include:

### **A Clear Call to Ordained Ministry**

While it is true that all Christians are called to ministry, scripture and tradition teach that God calls and the Church sets apart individuals for specialized ministry of service, word, sacrament, and order. The Board of Ministry assumes that an applicant for ordination will be able to articulate his/her calling in a clear and specific manner.

### **Gifts and Graces for Ordained Ministry**

Those whom God calls, God also equips. The apostle Paul said, "God gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors, and teachers...to the building up of the body of Christ." We believe that those who have been called and equipped by God for ministry will display evidence of those gifts and graces in their lives. The Board of Ministry examines such information as autobiographical statements, personal references, evaluations, criminal background checks, and psychological assessments as part of the recommendation process.

### **Academic Preparation**

Paul exhorted Timothy to "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a worker who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth." We believe that adequate academic preparation is the foundation for "handling accurately the word of truth." The Board of Ministry uses academic records and evaluations, submitted assignments, and the interview process to determine the level of academic preparation of an applicant. The applicant should be able to communicate the Christian faith in an articulate and consistent manner.

### **Pass/fail option policy**

Candidates in the East Ohio Conference should follow their seminaries guidelines for pass/fail options. United Methodist classes required for ordination must receive a letter grade.

### **Suitability for Ministry in the United Methodist Tradition**

While we recognize and rejoice in the pluralistic nature of our particular community of faith, we also recognize the strength and unity that is provided by our great tradition and polity. The Board of Ministry expects applicants to be well-read and conversant in Wesleyan thought and tradition, as well as supportive of our unique system of organization and governance. In our evaluation, the Board examines closely such things as doctrinal statements, sermons, attitudes about connectionalism and itinerancy, and collegiality. The goal of the entire process is to recommend those who are truly called, gifted, and prepared for ordained ministry in the United Methodist Church.

### **Assignments Requirement**

The Board of Ministry gives careful attention to the applicant's assignments. Although this is not the only criteria by which evaluations and recommendations are made, the assignments is a significant part. Applicants, therefore, are strongly advised to take the assignments very seriously, giving careful attention to preparation, presentation, form, content, grammar, and inclusive language.

Assignments that are hastily and shoddily prepared merely to meet a requirement are a poor representation of the applicant. Attention to form and style, proper footnoting, and neatness will not only make a good first impression, but will also facilitate a better presentation of qualifications. All applicants are required to consult and use the suggested format of Kate Turabian's "A Manual of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations" for work submitted. Each candidate has the responsibility to ensure that all required paper work is in their file. Each candidate is welcome to look at the contents of their file by contacting the Registrar.

### **Policy:**

**It is the expectation of the Board of Ministry of the East Ohio Conference of the United Methodist Church that candidates for ministry shall display high standards of professional abilities such as: oral and written communication, relationship skills, listening skills, the ability to follow directions, the ability to work independently, the ability to initiate resource seeking, etc.**

**Therefore, it is the policy of the East Ohio Conference, Board of Ministry, that all candidates applying for interviews with the Board of Ministry shall complete all assignments required by the Board of Ministry and shall submit all required assignments in full by the time deadline set annually by the Board of Ministry (BOM). The specifics of assignments are posted on the East Ohio Conference website ([www.ecumc.com](http://www.ecumc.com)) under "Pathways to Ministry".**

**Failure to meet the specific requirements, or failure to submit all required assignments and forms by the deadline, shall result in the candidate being prohibited from moving forward to interviews in that Annual Conference year. The BOM shall have the sole responsibility for setting requirements and determining if those requirements have been met.**

**It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure that they are aware of all requirements of the Board of Ministry. Candidates may consult with the Registrar of the Order and/or view requirements on the East Ohio Conference website for details. The Board of Ministry Registrars will ensure that the website is updated on a regular basis.**

### **Requirements of the Board of Ministry:**

1. Provisional members who are applying for admission into full connection must have served as a provisional member at least two years and no more than eight years before being ordained.
2. Candidates for full ordination shall have served under Episcopal appointment for at least two full annual conference years following completion of educational requirements.
3. Required documentation and assignments shall be submitted by the deadlines.
4. Candidates who are applying for provisional membership shall have been a certified candidate for at least one year and no more than twelve years and shall have completed seminary education prior to commissioning.
5. Candidates for associate membership shall meet all requirements of ¶ 322 of the 2016 Book of Discipline.

## **Requirements for Local Pastor Interviews with the District Committee on Ministry**

*Effective July 1, 2014*

### **Annual Local Pastor Interviews**

1. A. At the next DCOM interview following completion of the first year in ministry or the first full year of ministry in a new District, Local Pastors must submit copies of an entire worship service on DVDs to the District Registrar. The number of copies needed will be determined by the Registrar. A copy of the DVD will become a permanent part of the Local Pastor's file. An electronic copy of the video stored on a removable storage device ("flash drive") in the file is considered in compliance with this policy.  
B. Local Pastors must submit a bulletin along with a manuscript or transcript of a sermon each year. Sermon outlines will not be accepted in lieu of a manuscript or transcript.
2. Submit a written response (3-5 pages) to one Disciplinary Question from ¶324.9 in the 2016 Book of Discipline selected annually by the Conference Registrar for Local Pastors.
3. Submit a Course of Study or seminary transcript that shows progress in meeting educational requirements in accordance with ¶318.1,2,3 in the 2016 Book of Discipline. Note that no transcript will result in no interview, which will mean discontinuance. Local Pastors are responsible to ask GBHEM or seminary to send their transcript to the DCOM Registrar.
4. Submit a written response (3-5 pages total) to the following questions:
  - A. How are you making and maturing disciples for Jesus Christ?
  - B. What went well in that regard the past year?
  - C. What did not go well? Why?
  - D. How does this experience inform how you will do ministry in the coming year?
5. Submit a Course of Study or seminary paper from the body of work you completed this year.
6. The DCOM will share with Local Pastors information about the Fellowship of Local Pastors (FAMLAP), contact information for the Conference Registrar, the Conference website which includes information on Pathways to Ministry, and contact information for the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM) in Nashville.

### **Interviews with Those Who Have Completed the Educational Requirements**

1. At the very least those who have completed the Course of Study or their MDiv will be contacted personally, either by phone or in person, by a member of the DCOM before the pastor is recommended to have their license renewed.
2. There is no mandatory paperwork required unless the DCOM decides circumstances warrant it or a District Superintendent requests it.

**BOM.05. East Ohio Conference BOM. “Policy and Procedure  
for Background Checks”. 12/1/15  
Policy on Background Checks**

The background check for candidates and those seeking commissioning or ordination is a critical part of the journey toward becoming a clergy in the United Methodist Church, East Ohio Conference. All requests for background checks should come through the District Committee on Ministry, where the journey begins.

By motion of the full Board of Ministry on 09-17-13 the policy for background checks shall be the same as for psychological assessments. A background check for commissioning cannot be older than four years, and a new background check must be done for ordination.

1. Background checks are helpful to the district committees, the Conference Board of Ministry and mentors who are interviewing, approving and mentoring candidates for clergy careers.

Background checks at the time of candidacy is to assist in determining fitness and competency for ministry; at the time of provisional membership interviews determining readiness; and at the time of full membership interviews determining effectiveness.

2. A Background checks must be completed and a report forwarded to the East Ohio Conference Board of Ministry Background check Coordinator at the following times:

- a. Before a candidate becomes a certified candidate and/or is appointed as a local pastor.
- b. When a candidate applies for a change of status (provisional or associate membership) . The background check completed for provisional or associate membership is valid for four years, but a new one is required prior to full membership. (effective 10/1/2011, revised 12/9/14)
- c. When a candidate applies for full membership they must have a new background check. The background check completed for the full membership process is valid for two years. (effective 10/1/2011, revised 12/9/14)

The Conference Board of Ministry reserves the right to require a new background check at any time in the process.

At the time of a background check, any previous report(s) will be provided to the BOM by the Background check Coordinator.

BOM.05. East Ohio Conference BOM. “Policy and Procedure for Background Checks”. 12/1/15

Procedures:

Information Required:

A. A request should be emailed to Coordinator from district office (assures that D. S. knows the candidate is applying/has applied). This request should include the following information:

**Name:**

**Address:**

**Telephone**

**Number: Email**

**Address:**

**District:**

**Status being sought:**

- **Local Pastor**
- **Provisional Member**
- **Full Membership**

B. The method of payment should be arranged before the request is sent, and communicated with the request. Currently, some districts pay for the background check, while others have the candidate pay for the background check. The background check will be initiated at the time the request is sent, trusting the check will be mailed soon after the email request is sent. Payment of \$150.00 should be made out to East Ohio Conference and mailed to the person listed on the conference website as the background check coordinator.

C. The Coordinator sends request to Oxford Document Management Company.

D. In approximately 5-10 business days, the candidate will receive a packet from Oxford requesting information necessary to complete background check. The candidate should complete this promptly in order to assure quick processing of the background check.

E. As information is gathered, Oxford sends reports to the Coordinator on the 15th and last day of the month. If a reference form comes back with any yes answers, whether from the candidate or a reference, the form is sent immediately to the Coordinator.

F. Upon receipt of any information from Oxford that information will be converted to a password-protected pdf file and emailed to the appropriate registrar. Registrars will be provided the password upon adoption of this procedure, upon their assumption of the role of registrar, or when the password is changed. The original document will be filed as a hard copy in the Coordinator’s permanent file.

**PROCESS FOR TRANSFER IN OF MINISTERIAL  
MEMBERS FROM OTHER DENOMINATIONS**  
*2016 Book of Discipline ¶347.3 and ¶347.4 and ¶347.5*

¶347.3a. On recommendation of the Board of Ordained Ministry, the clergy members in full connection may recognize the orders of ordained clergy from other denominations and receive them as provisional members or local pastors. They shall present their credentials for examination by the bishop and Board of Ordained Ministry and give assurance of their Christian faith and experience. They shall give evidence of their agreement with and willingness to support and maintain United Methodist doctrine, discipline, and polity and present a satisfactory certificate of good health on the prescribed form from a physician approved by the Board of Ordained Ministry. The Board of Ordained Ministry, in consultation with the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, shall determine whether they meet the educational requirements for conference membership. A psychological report, criminal background and credit check, and reports of sexual misconduct and/or child abuse shall be required.

They shall submit, on a form provided by the conference Board of Ordained Ministry:

- (1) a notarized statement detailing any convictions for felony or misdemeanor or written accusations of sexual misconduct, of child abuse; or
- (2) a notarized statement certifying that the candidate has not been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor, or accused in writing of sexual misconduct or child abuse.

b. Ordained elders or ordained clergy from other Christian denominations shall serve as provisional members for at least two years and complete all requirements of ¶335, including courses in United Methodist history, doctrine, and polity, before being admitted into full conference membership.

c. Following the provisional member's election to full conference membership as a deacon or elder as provided in ¶326, the bishop and secretary of the conference shall provide a certificate of full membership in the annual conference.

**¶347.4**

The Board of Ordained Ministry of an annual conference is required to ascertain from an ordained clergy person seeking admission into its membership on credentials from another denomination whether or not membership in the effective relationship was previously held in an annual conference of The United Methodist Church or one of its legal predecessors, and if so, when and under what circumstances the ordained minister's connection with such annual conference was severed.

**¶347.5**

Ordained clergy seeking admission into an annual conference on credentials from another denomination who have previously withdrawn from membership in the effective relation in an annual conference of The United Methodist Church or one of its legal predecessors shall not be admitted or readmitted without the consent of the



BOM 06. "Process for Transfer in of Ministerial Members from other Denominations"  
annual conference from which they withdrew or its legal successor, or the annual  
conference from which the major portion of their former conference is a part, such  
consent to be granted upon recommendation of its Board of Ordained Ministry.

¶347.6, Recognition of Orders of Clergy from Other Denominations

After the orders of an ordained minister of another church shall have been duly  
recognized, and the minister has been approved for full membership, the  
certificates of ordination by said church shall be returned to the minister with the  
following inscription written plainly on the back:

*These orders are recognized by the \_\_\_\_\_ Annual Conference of  
The United Methodist Church, this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_,  
(year).  
\_\_\_\_\_, President \_\_\_\_\_,  
Secretary*

The ordained minister also will be furnished with a certificate of recognition of  
orders signed by the bishop.

For Clarity: This policy covers Transfer from other Denominations. For Transfers from  
Other Annual Conferences of the United Methodist Church, see Policy #307.(Do we  
mean para 347.1 or is there a separate policy?)

Revised 1/15/2020

BOM 07 “Process for Ordained Clergy or Provisional Members from other Annual Conference to receive an appointment in EOC”

**Ordained Clergy or Provisional Members from Other Annual Conferences and  
Other Methodist Denominations**

***2016 Book of Discipline, ¶346.1***

Ordained clergy or provisional members from other annual conferences and Christian denominations may receive an appointment in the annual conference in the following manner:

I. Ordained Clergy or Provisional Members from Other Annual Conferences and Other Methodist Denominations—

With approval and consent of the bishops or other judicatory authorities involved, ordained clergy or provisional members of other annual conferences or other Methodist churches may receive appointments in the annual or missionary conference while retaining their home conference membership or denominational affiliation. Appointments are to be made by the resident bishop of the conference in which the clergy person is to serve. If appointment is to a missionary conference, the terms of the appointment shall be as provided in ¶ 586.4. Otherwise upon the recommendation of the Board of Ordained Ministry, clergy in such appointments may be granted voice but not vote in the annual conference to which they are appointed. Their membership on conference boards and agencies is restricted to the conference of which they are a member. They shall be compensated no less than the equitable salary provisions of the annual conference in which they serve and participate in the pension and insurance programs of that annual conference. Such appointments are renewable annually. Furthermore, it shall be the responsibility of the board of pensions of the annual conference in which the appointment is received to enroll such clergy in the Clergy Retirement Security Program or any successor retirement plan and the Comprehensive Protection Plan or any successor welfare plan (see ¶ 1506.17).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Judicial Council Decision 554 Revised

1/15/2020

## **PROCESS FOR FORMER CONFERENCE MEMBERS WISHING TO RETURN TO THE EAST OHIO ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

The person wishing to return to the EOC and requesting an appointment must submit her/his request in writing to the Bishop. The letter should also include their reason(s) for having left their last appointment in the EOC as well as their reason(s) for wishing to return to the EOC and be considered for an appointment.

An updated psychological report, criminal background and credit check, and reports of sexual misconduct and or child/abuse shall be required of any clergy person re-entering the annual conference. They shall submit, on a form provided by the conference Board of Ministry:

1. A notarized statement detailing any convictions for felony or misdemeanor or written accusations of sexual misconduct or child abuse; or
2. A notarized statement certifying that this candidate has not been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor, or accused in writing of sexual misconduct or child abuse. (BOD2016, ¶347.2 “From Other Methodist Denominations”)

The Bishop, at their discretion, may choose to respond in writing to the person making the request and indicate one of the following options:

- Deny the person’s request to return and be considered for an appointment.
- Inform the person that their request will be discussed with the Cabinet and a decision made in regards to their request.
- Inform the person that he/she will be considered for an appointment. The person making the request should also be informed that they will need to comply with all other relevant provisions of *The Book of Discipline*.

The Bishop may also direct that the person wishing to return to the EOC and to be considered for an appointment must meet with a team of District Superintendents and/or the Conference Pastoral Advisory Committee or a team of the Board of Ministry.

Revised 1/15/2020

**TRANSFERS INTO AND OUT OF EAST OHIO CONFERENCE FROM  
OTHER ANNUAL CONFERENCES OF THE UMC**  
**¶347.1 2016 Book of Discipline**

**Transfers:**

**1. From Other Annual Conference:**

Ordained clergy or provisional members from other annual conferences of the United Methodist Church may be received by transfer into provisional or full membership in the East Ohio Conference with the consent of the bishops involved. Recommendation by the executive committee of the Board of Ordained Ministry and approval of the clergy session shall take place prior to the transfer.

a. It is the policy of the Board of Ministry of East Ohio to require that the person being transferred be in good standing in the Annual Conference from which they are transferring.

b. Evidence of credentialing which meets or exceeds the East Ohio Board of Ministry credentialing requirements shall be given at the time of transfer. These requirements shall include but not be limited to:

1. current Background Check
2. current Psychological testing
3. current Credit check

**2. Transfer to Another Annual Conference:**

The procedure and process when one of East Ohio Conference's clergy is considered for a transfer to another annual conference may be expected to be the same unless receiving conference requests an immediate transfer. If such a case arises, the resident bishop of East Ohio may consult with the cabinet, the Conference Pastoral Advisory Committee, and the chairperson or the executive committee of the Board of Ministry about the advisability of such an immediate transfer.

Revised 1/15/2020

## **THE ITINERANT SYSTEM: FULL-TIME AND LESS THAN FULL-TIME SERVICE**

### **2016 Book of Discipline ¶338, 338.1, 338.2**

#### **The Itinerant System:**

The itinerant system is the accepted method of the United Methodist Church by which ordained elders, provisional elders, and associate members are appointed by the bishop to fields of labor. (Judicial Council Decision 713) All ordained elders, provisional elders, and associate members shall accept and abide by these appointments. Bishops and cabinets shall commit to support open itinerancy and the protection of the prophetic pulpit and diversity. Persons appointed to multiple-staff ministries, either in a single parish or in a cluster or larger parish, shall have personal and professional access to the bishop and cabinet; the committee on pastor-parish relations, as well as to the pastor in charge. The nature of the appointment process is specified in ¶¶425-429 BOD.

#### **¶338.1: Full-Time Service**

Full-time service shall be the norm for ordained elders, provisional elders, and associate members in the annual conference. Full-time service shall mean that the person's entire vocational time, as defined by the district superintendent in consultation with the pastor and the committee on pastor-parish relations, is devoted to the work of ministry in the field of labor to which one is appointed by the bishop.

#### **¶338.2: Less than Full-Time Service**

On occasion, less than full-time service is requested by or required of an elder, provisional elder, or associate member. A clergy member may be appointed in one-quarter, one-half, or three-quarter time increments by the bishop to less than full-time service without loss of essential rights or membership in the annual conference. Division of Ordained Ministry-endorsed appointments beyond the local church may be for less than full-time service. At the initiative of the bishop and cabinet or at his or her request, an elder, provisional elder, or associate member may receive a less than full-time appointment under the conditions stipulated in this policy:

1. Less than full-time service shall mean that a specified amount of time less than full-time agreed upon by the bishop and the cabinet, the clergy member and the annual conference Board of Ordained Ministry is devoted to the work of ministry in the field of labor to which the person is appointed by the bishop.
2. At the initiative of the bishop and cabinet or at his or her own initiative, a clergy member may be appointed in one-quarter, one-half, or three-quarter time increments by the bishop to less than full-time service without the loss of essential rights or membership in the annual conference. See General Board of Health and Pension policies for additional information regarding health benefits for the part-time clergy.
3. Division of Ordained Ministry endorsed appointments beyond the local church may be for less than full-time service.
4. Appointment to less than full-time service is not a guarantee, but may be made by the bishop provided that the following conditions are met:
  - a.

BOM 09 “Transfers into and out of EOC from other Annual Conferences of the UMC”

The ordained elder, provisional elder, or associate member seeking less than full-time service should present a written request to the bishop and the chairperson of the Board of Ordained Ministry at least 90 days prior to the annual conference session at which the appointment is made.

Exceptions to the 90-day deadline shall be approved by the cabinet and the executive committee of the Board of Ordained Ministry.

- b. The bishop may appoint an ordained elder, provisional member elder, or an associate member to less than full-time service. The clergyperson shall be notified at least 90 days prior to the annual conference at which the appointment shall be made. Special attention shall be given to ensure that the values of the itineracy are preserved.
- c. Following appropriate consultation, as established in ¶¶338 and 425-429 and upon joint recommendation of the cabinet and the Board of Ordained Ministry, the less than full-time category shall be confirmed by a two-thirds vote of the clergy members in full connection of the annual conference.
- d. Reappointment to less than full-time service shall be requested by the ordained elder, provisional elder, or associate member and approved annually by the bishop and cabinet and shall not be granted for more than a total of eight years, except by a three-fourths vote of the clergy members in full connection of the annual conference.
- e. Ordained elders, provisional elders, and associate members who receive appointment at less than full-time service remain within the itineracy and, as such, remain available, upon consultation with the bishop and cabinet, for appointment to full-time service. A written request to return to full-time appointment shall be made to the bishop and cabinet at least six months prior to the annual conference session at which the appointment is to be made.
- f. The bishop may make *ad interim* appointments at less than full-time service upon request of the ordained elder, provisional elder, or associate member following consultation as specified in ¶¶424-428 and upon recommendation of the cabinet and executive committee of the Board of Ordained Ministry, the same to be acted upon by the next regular session of the annual conference. (See Judicial Council Decision 579)
- g. Upon request of the bishop, cabinet or clergy a meeting with the Conference Pastoral Advisory Committee and the clergy shall be held prior to the part-time appointment.

5. Note: Please refer to Book of Discipline, 2016, ¶359 for “Administrative Location” and issues of effectiveness.

6. If the clergy requesting less than full time service appointment is seeking ordination and full membership a less than full-time appointment will be recognized by the Board of Ordained Ministry as follows:
  - a.  $\frac{3}{4}$  time service equals  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a year towards provisional membership requirement
  - b.  $\frac{1}{2}$  time service equals  $\frac{1}{2}$  of a year towards provisional membership requirement
  - c.  $\frac{1}{4}$  time service equals  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a year towards provisional membership requirement

Revised 1/15/2020

## VOLUNTARY LEAVE OF ABSENCE

### ¶352 Change of Relationship and 353 Voluntary Leave of Absence

#### ¶ 352. Provision for Change in Conference Relationship—

When a change in conference relationship is deemed necessary or desirable by a provisional or associate member, clergy in full connection, district superintendent or bishop, whether for a short or long term, the person(s) requesting the change shall make written request to their Board of Ordained Ministry stating the reasons for the requested change of relationship. In addition, the Board of Ordained Ministry may request personal interviews with the provisional or associate members and members in full connection named in the requested change, except where personal appearance results in undue hardship.<sup>1</sup> Clergy appointed to a general agency of The United Methodist Church shall be covered by the policies of the agency in relation to family leave, maternity or paternity leave, and medical leave.

#### ¶ 353. Voluntary Leave of Absence—

1. Provisional, associate, or members in full connection of the annual conference who for sufficient reason choose to temporarily take leave from their ministerial appointment may request in writing with a copy to the bishop and their district superintendent a voluntary leave through the Board of Ordained Ministry. This leave is granted or renewed by vote of the clergy members in full connection upon recommendation by the Board of Ordained Ministry.
2. A voluntary leave of absence may be taken for a variety of reasons:
  - a) Personal Leave—A relationship that is granted to clergy who self-determine for personal reasons that they are temporarily unable or unwilling to continue in a ministry appointment.
  - b) Family Leave—A relationship that is granted to clergy who, because of an immediate family member’s need for full-time care, are temporarily unable to continue in a ministry appointment.
  - c) Transitional Leave—A leave granted for up to twelve months with approval of the bishop and the Board of Ordained Ministry Executive Committee to provisional and associate members and full clergy members in good standing who are temporarily between appointments,.

A transitional leave of absence may be granted for the following reasons:

- (1) A provisional or full member deacon needs to seek and secure an appointable primary position—compensated or non-salaried.
- (2) A provisional or full member elder, or an associate member needs to transition from an extension ministry to another appointment, or from a local church appointment to an extension ministry appointment.

During transitional leave, the clergy person shall provide quarterly substantiation of his or her effort to obtain such an appointable position to the bishop and to the Board of Ordained Ministry Executive Committee.<sup>1</sup>

3. Written request for a voluntary leave of absence should be made at least ninety days prior

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<sup>1</sup> See Jurisdictional Decisions 450, 459, 508, 1226.



BOM 11. "Voluntary Leave of Absence"

to the annual conference session giving specific reasons for the request.<sup>2</sup> Representatives of the annual conference Board of Ordained Ministry may interview the clergy member to determine sufficient cause.<sup>3</sup> Personal leave and family leave shall be approved annually upon written request of the clergy member and personal or family leave shall not be granted for more than five years in succession, except by a two-thirds vote of the clergy members in full connection.<sup>2</sup> Transitional leave shall not be renewed beyond a twelve-month period. Voluntary leave shall be counted as a part of the eight-year limit for provisional members (§ 327).<sup>3</sup>

4. Between sessions of the annual conference, voluntary leave of absence may be granted or terminated by the executive committee of the Board of Ordained Ministry after consultation with and approval by the bishop and district superintendents. This interim action shall be subject to the approval of the clergy session of the annual conference at its next session.<sup>4</sup>
5. Should there be active complaints or charges, a request for voluntary leave of absence shall not be permitted until those complaints or charges have been resolved.
6. Clergy on voluntary leave of absence shall have no claim on the conference funds. Notwithstanding the foregoing, where the conference has made certain elections under applicable benefit plans that require continued participation by clergy on voluntary leaves of absence, the clergy shall continue to participate in such plans. They may participate in the conference health program through their own contributions, if applicable. However, in exceptional circumstances, on recommendation of the bishop and district superintendents, salary and/or other benefits, subject to the terms of the applicable benefit plans, may be granted to a clergy member, if applicable, by vote of the clergy session of members in full connection with the annual conference. In an interim between sessions of the annual conference, by vote of the bishop, cabinet, and executive committee of the Board of Ordained Ministry, salary and/or benefits, subject to the terms of the applicable benefit plans, may be granted, if applicable.
7. Clergypersons on voluntary leave shall be eligible for membership on annual conference committees, commissions, or boards. They may vote for other clergy delegates to general or jurisdictional conferences and may be elected to serve as delegates themselves.<sup>5</sup>
8. After consultation and with the written consent of the pastor in charge, and with the approval of the district superintendent and the staff-parish relations committee of a local church, clergy members on leave of absence shall designate a charge conference within the bounds of the East Ohio Annual Conference and they shall submit an annual report to that charge conference. They shall report all marriages performed, baptisms administered, funerals conducted and other ministerial activities to the charge conference, pastor in charge, and Board of Ordained Ministry Conference Relations Registrar. The exercise of this ministry shall be limited to the charge conference in which their membership is held and with the written permission of the pastor in charge unless special permission is granted by the bishop of the conference where membership is held. With the permission of the bishop of the conference where membership is held, under

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<sup>2</sup> See Judicial Council Decision 689.

<sup>3</sup> See Judicial Council Decision 1216.

<sup>4</sup> See Judicial Council Decision 689.

<sup>5</sup> See Judicial Council Decision 473.

BOM 11. "Voluntary Leave of Absence"

the supervision of the district superintendent, the clergy member may preach, teach, perform marriages, and, if holding sacramental privileges, administer the sacraments outside of the charge where membership is held.

Each time that there is a change in the pastor of the church where the charge conference relationship is held, or a change in the District Superintendent of the District where the church where the charge conference of a person on Leave of Absence is held, it is the responsibility of the clergy person on leave to request a new letter be sent to the Conference Relations Registrar acknowledging that the clergyperson is known to be affiliated with that charge.

9. Those on voluntary leave of absence shall be held amenable to the annual conference for their conduct and the performance of their ministry. In case of failure to report to the Board of Ordained Ministry, the complaint procedures may be invoked (§ 363).
10. Clergy members on voluntary leave of absence may, with the permission of the bishop and with the approval of the United Methodist Endorsing Agency, continue to hold an existing reserve commission as an armed forces chaplain, but may not voluntarily serve on extended active duty.
11. When an end to voluntary leave of absence is requested, it shall be by written request at least six months prior to the session of annual conference.<sup>6</sup> The Board of Ordained Ministry shall review the circumstances surrounding the granting of the leave for the purpose of determining whether those circumstances have been alleviated or resolved. When the board has determined that the circumstances of the voluntary leave have not been alleviated or resolved and the request is denied, the board will inform the person of the remaining options, which include:
  - a) remaining on voluntary leave of absence;
  - b) taking honorable location;
  - c) being recommended to the bishop and district superintendents to be placed on involuntary leave, administrative location, or involuntary retirement,<sup>7</sup> using the fair process of § 362.1; or
  - d) such other action as deemed appropriate.
12. When clergy members on voluntary leave of absence do not request an annual extension of the leave of absence during the five-year period or do not indicate willingness to receive an appointment at the end of the five-year period, following documented efforts to make contact with the clergyperson, the provisions of location (§ 359)<sup>8</sup> or the complaint procedures of § 363 may be invoked.

For Clarity:

1. A person requesting a Voluntary Leave of Absence (VLOA) will meet with the Conference Pastoral Advisory Committee (CPAC) giving specific reasons for the request. CPAC will then make a recommendation to the Cabinet and the Board of Ordained Ministry. Neither body is bound by the action of CPAC. All motions of the Board of Ordained Ministry concerning status are recommendations and subject to the action of the Clergy Executive Session of East Ohio Annual Conference.
2. While on VLOA a clergyperson must have a charge conference relationship with a church within East Ohio conference (§354.7)

The Conference Relations Registrar must receive a letter from the pastor of the

BOM 11. “Voluntary Leave of Absence”

- clergy person’s designated charge conference verifying that they are truly related to that charge conference. The Conference Relations Registrar must also receive a letter from the District Superintendent over that charge stating that they are aware that the clergy person is holding their charge conference relationship at the charge. Whenever either the District Superintendent or the pastor of the charge changes, it is the responsibility of the clergy person to initiate the sending of a new letter to the Conference Relations Registrar.
3. The exercise of ministry by the clergy on leave status shall be limited to the charge conference in which their membership is held and with the written permission of the pastor in charge unless special permission is granted by the bishop.
  4. They shall report annually to their charge conference and to the Conference Relations Registrar all marriages performed, baptisms administered, funerals conducted, and other ministerial activities.
  5. A clergy person on Voluntary Leave of Absence will receive annually a form from the Conference Relations Registrar. That form will indicate the date by which the annual form must be completed and returned to the Conference Relations Registrar. Failure to complete this form and return it in a timely manner may cause the Board of Ordained Ministry to end the Voluntary Leave of Absence (VLOA) status.
  6. Conference Relations Registrar will make a recommendation to the Board of Ordained Ministry or the Board of Ordained Ministry Executive Committee to grant continuation of the Voluntary Leave of Absence status for the ensuing conference year after receiving appropriate annual forms from the clergy member requesting that Voluntary Leave of Absence status continue.
  7. Failure to return the annual form, and to make written request for continuation of VLOA may result in a change of status.
  8. Any consecutive combination of voluntary or involuntary leave of absence shall be counted in the total limitation of five years. Extension of the five-year period takes special vote by the executive session.
  9. When a person requests an end to Voluntary Leave of Absence (§354.9) they must submit a written request six months prior to Annual Conference and request an interview with the Conference Pastoral Advisory Committee. CPAC shall review the circumstances surrounding the granting of the relationship for the purpose of determining whether those circumstances have been alleviated or resolved
  10. Because an interim leave of absence is subject to the approval of the clergy session, the first full Conference year of the Leave of Absence following the action of the clergy session shall constitute year one for the purposes of determining the limitation of number of years on Leave.

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<sup>1</sup> See Judicial Council Decisions 524, 530

<sup>2</sup> See Judicial Council Decision 782.

<sup>3</sup> See Judicial Council Decisions 581, 782

<sup>4</sup> See Judicial Council Decision 689

<sup>5</sup> See Judicial Council Decision 689

<sup>6</sup> See Judicial Council Decision 721

<sup>7</sup> See Judicial Council Decision 689

<sup>8</sup> See Judicial Council Decisions 450, 459, 508, 524, 530

## HONORABLE LOCATION

### ¶ 358. Of the 2016 Book of Discipline

#### Honorable Location—

1. An annual conference may grant clergy members in full connection certificates of honorable location at their own request, provided that the Board of Ordained Ministry shall have first examined their character and found them in good standing, and provided that the clergy session shall also pass on their character after the request is made. A person seeking Honorable Location status must send a written request to the Bishop and copy that request to the Chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry and the Conference Relations Registrar.
2. A person requesting Honorable Location will meet with the Conference Pastoral Advisory Committee giving specific reasons for the request. CPAC will then make a recommendation to the Cabinet and the Board of Ordained Ministry. Each of those bodies will consider the CPAC recommendation and formalize their own recommendation for approval at the clergy executive session at Annual Conference.
3. This relation shall be granted only to one who intends to discontinue service in the itinerant ministry.
4. The Board of Ordained Ministry shall provide guidance and counsel to the locating member and family as they return to a new relationship in the local church.<sup>1</sup> Upon recommendation of the Board of Ordained Ministry, an annual conference may offer transition assistance.
5. Associate members or clergy members in full connection located according to the provisions of this paragraph shall not continue to hold membership in the annual conference, and they shall surrender their certification of conference membership for deposit with the conference secretary.
6. After consultation and with the written consent of the pastor in charge, and with the approval of the district superintendent and the staff-parish relations committee of a local church, located clergy members shall designate the local church in which they shall hold membership. Documentation of this consent and approvals shall be filed with the Conference Relations Registrar of the Board of Ordained Ministry of the annual conference that granted them honorable location. Whenever there is a change in the District Superintendent or the pastor of the charge where they hold membership, it is the responsibility of the person on Honorable Location to ensure that new letters of consent are filed with the Conference Relations Registrar.
7. As clergy members of the charge conference, they shall be permitted to exercise ministerial functions only with the written permission of the pastor in charge. They shall have all the privileges of membership in the church where they elect to hold charge conference membership, except as set forth in the Book of Discipline.
8. When approved by the executive committee of the Board of Ordained Ministry, a person on honorable location may be appointed ad interim by the bishop as a local pastor. A copy of the annual report to the charge conference shall be forwarded to the Conference

- Relations registrar of the Board of Ordained Ministry of the annual conference that granted them honorable location in order for location to be continued. They shall report to the charge conference and the pastor all marriages performed, baptisms administered, and funerals conducted and shall be held amenable for their conduct and the continuation of their ordination rights to the annual conference that granted them honorable location.
9. Failure to submit the annual report for two consecutive years may result in termination of orders upon recommendation of the Board of Ordained Ministry and vote of the clergy session. The provisions of this paragraph shall not apply to persons granted involuntary location prior to the General Conference of 1976. The names of located members after the annual passage of their character shall be printed in the journal.
  10. Ordained ministers on honorable location may request the annual conference to grant them the status of honorable location-retired.<sup>2</sup> Requests for retired status shall be stated in writing to the bishop, cabinet, and registrar of the Board of Ordained Ministry at least ninety days prior to the annual conference session. Those granted honorable location retired status shall be accountable for all ministerial services performed to the charge conference in which they hold membership. If such services have been performed, they shall report to that charge conference and exercise their ministry under the supervision of the pastor in charge therein as outlined in ¶ 359.2. They shall continue to be held amenable for their conduct, through accountability to their charge conference, to the annual conference in which charge conference membership is held.
  11. Persons desiring to end honorable location to seek an appointment must:
    - a. Must make written request to the Bishop no later six months prior to the beginning of the Annual conference session.
    - b. Will be required to take the battery of psychological instruments and complete the interpretation interview . The testing and assessment will be at the expense of the person making the request. In addition, the person must submit a background check and credit check according to the East Ohio Conference process, and any reports of sexual misconduct and/or child abuse shall be required. They shall submit , on a form provided by the conference Board of Ordained Ministry:
      1. A notarized statement detailing any convictions for felony or misdemeanor or written accusations of sexual misconduct; or
      2. a notarized statement certifying that this candidate has not been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor or accused in writing of sexual misconduct or child abuse.
    - c. Must submit a certificate of good health to be prepared by their primary care provider (MD or DO).
    - d. They must serve at least two years as local pastor prior to restoration.
    - e. To be restored, after serving under appointment for two years, a person will meet with the Conference Pastoral Advisory Committee for an interview, and may be required to meet with the Board of Ordained Ministry for an interview.

BOM 12. “Honorable Location”

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<sup>1</sup> See Judicial Council Decision 366

<sup>2</sup> See Judicial Council Decision 717

Revised 1/15/2020

**¶ 354. Involuntary Leave of Absence—**

1. The bishop and the district superintendents may request an involuntary leave of absence without the consent of the provisional, associate, or full member. They shall give to the clergy member and the Board of Ordained Ministry in writing specific reasons for the request. The fair process for administrative hearings as set forth in ¶ 361.2 shall be followed in any involuntary leave of absence procedure.
2. An involuntary leave may be requested by the bishop and the district superintendent. The request shall be referred to the Board of Ordained Ministry and follow procedures for a fair process hearing as set forth in ¶ 361.2 when:
  - a) A written or signed complaint is not resolved through the supervisory (¶ 362.1b, c), complaint (¶ 362.1e), or trial process within 90 days, or clearly cannot be resolved within 90 days.
  - b) Action pursuant to ¶ 363 (Involuntary Status Change) is required to address allegations of incompetence, ineffectiveness, or inability to perform ministerial duties.
  - c) Should there be complaints or charges pending at the time of a request for involuntary leave of absence, they should be placed in the personnel file of the clergyperson. All subsequent actions concerning such entries should be duly noted and placed in the file.
3. East Ohio Conference Board of Ordained Ministry requires that a Conference Relations Committee (CRC) review be held prior to the full Board of Ordained Ministry approval of placement of a clergy on Involuntary Leave of Absence. Procedures for a fair process hearing shall as set forth in ¶361.2 shall be followed in any involuntary leave of absence procedure.
4. Involuntary leave of absence shall be approved by two-thirds vote of the clergy session of members in full connection with the annual conference.<sup>1</sup> Involuntary leave shall be approved annually upon written request of the district superintendents and shall not be approved for more than three years in succession.
5. Between sessions of the annual conference, an involuntary leave of absence may be granted or terminated, with the approval of the bishop and cabinet, by the executive committee of the Board of Ordained Ministry. This interim action shall be subject to the approval of the clergy session of members in full connection with the annual conference at its next session.
6. Clergy on involuntary leave shall have no claim on the annual conference funds. The annual conference assumes no financial responsibility for salary, pension, or other benefits for clergy on involuntary leave of absence. Notwithstanding the foregoing, where the conference has made certain elections under applicable benefit plans that require continued participation by clergy on involuntary leaves of absence, the clergy shall continue to participate in such plans. They may participate in the conference health plan through their own contributions, if applicable. In exceptional circumstances, with the recommendation of the bishop and cabinet, salary and/or other benefits, subject to the terms of the applicable benefit plans, may be granted by vote of the clergy session of the annual conference. Between sessions of the annual conference, in unusual circumstances, the bishop and cabinet may recommend and the executive committee of the Board of Ordained Ministry may approve funding of pensions and other benefits, subject to the terms of the applicable benefit plans, pending approval by the annual conference.

7. Clergy placed on involuntary leave shall designate a charge conference within the bounds of the annual conference. Ministerial service shall be limited to that charge and shall only be provided with the written consent of the pastor in charge and with the approval of the district superintendent, bishop, and pastor/staff parish relations committee.
8. Clergy on involuntary leave shall not participate in the boards and agencies of the annual conference, be delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conferences, or vote on other clergy delegates.
9. When an end to the involuntary leave of absence is requested by the bishop and district superintendents, it shall be by written request at least six months prior to the session of annual conference. The Board of Ordained Ministry shall review the circumstances surrounding the granting of the relationship for the purpose of determining whether the conditions of the leave have been met. If the board determines that the conditions of the involuntary leave have not been resolved, it may continue involuntary leave of absence for up to the three-year limit or it shall pursue administrative location (see §2 above).
10. If the district superintendents and bishop do not intend to appoint a person after three (3) years on involuntary leave, they shall notify both the Board of Ordained Ministry and the clergy person at least six months prior to the session of the annual conference and pursue administrative location or initiate the complaint process, if it has not already been initiated.
11. The administrative review committee (§ 636) shall ensure that the disciplinary procedures for involuntary leave of absence were properly followed. The entire process leading to the recommendation for involuntary leave of absence and its resolution shall be reviewed by the administrative review committee, and it shall report its findings to the clergy session of members in full connection with the annual conference.

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<sup>i</sup> See Judicial Council Decision 782



## **BOM 14. East Ohio Parental Leave Policy**

### **Statement of Purpose**

**“We believe the family to be the basic human community through which persons are nurtured and sustained in mutual love, responsibility, respect, and fidelity”<sup>1</sup>. While recognizing that families take on different shapes and sizes, and the needs of each family are unique, we seek to love one another and enable all members of the body of Christ to grow and flourish. The East Ohio Conference supports families and advocates for parental leave for all persons welcoming a child into their home, both clergy and lay. Further, we encourage all parents who are welcoming a child into their home to make full use of parental leave policies.**

**The World Health Organization and the International Labor Organization advocate for “at least 14 weeks of parental leave”<sup>2</sup> and *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* allows for up to 13 weeks of parental leave for clergy families<sup>3</sup>. The East Ohio Conference has developed this policy in order to assist clergy families, local churches, district superintendents, and the Annual Conference in caring for family and advocating for parental leave in the church and beyond the church.**

### **BOD Foundations**

**¶ 355. *Maternity or Paternity Leave* - Maternity or paternity leave, not to exceed one-fourth of a year, will be available and shall be granted by the bishop and the Cabinet, and the Executive Committee of the Board of Ministry to any local pastor, provisional member, associate member, or clergy member in full connection who so requests it at the birth or arrival of a child into the home for purposes of adoption.**

- 1. Persons desiring maternity or paternity leave should file their request with the committee on pastor-parish relations after consulting with the district superintendent at least 90 days prior to its beginning to allow adequate pastoral care for the churches involved to be developed.**
- 2. During the leave, the clergy member’s annual conference relations will remain unchanged, and the health and welfare benefit plans will remain in force.**
- 3. A maternity or paternity leave of up to one-quarter of a year will be considered as an uninterrupted appointment for pension purposes.**
- 4. Compensation will be maintained for no less than the first eight weeks of leave.**
- 5. During the leave time, pastoral responsibility for the church or churches involved will be handled through consultation with the committee on pastor-parish relations of the local church(es) and the district superintendent.**
- 6. Special arrangements shall be made for district superintendents, bishops, and those under special appointment.**

### **EOC Policy for Births and Adoptions**

- 1. All clergy in the East Ohio Annual Conference who are expecting the birth or adoption of a child are eligible for Parental Leave (maternity or paternity leave in *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church 2016*, ¶ 355). This policy applies to all clergy, regardless of their part-time or full-time status. Parental leave is guaranteed to all clergy who request it within the guidelines of this policy.**
- 2. Clergy are encouraged to begin communication with their district superintendent as soon as they are able to publicly share the anticipation of a**

child's arrival. Families giving birth are encouraged to begin planning as soon as they are public about their pregnancy. Adoptive parents are encouraged to make a plan as soon as they are approved for adoption/foster parenting. Parental leave must be requested at least 90 days in advance of the anticipated beginning of the leave, in accordance with *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*.

3. Parental leave shall be encouraged and permitted for up to 13 weeks with full pay and will not affect the clergy person's pension, health benefits, and appointment status.

4. Churches will maintain their regular compensation for clergy on leave for the duration of the leave.

5. The district superintendent will consult with the pastor to arrange coverage for the duration of leave.

6. The annual conference will assist local churches with additional funding for pastoral coverage and compensation, in consultation with the pastor and the SPRC, up to \$10,000 per leave.

7. Parental leave may be taken consecutively or non-consecutively, full- or part-time, according to the needs of the family. All parental leave must be taken within nine months of the placement or birth of the child.

8. Parental leave is not vacation. The use of parental leave does not affect the clergy person's use of their annual vacation granted in the Annual Conference Rules.

9. Churches will make reasonable accommodations for breastfeeding and pumping parents, as well as for the feeding of infants. This can include private space, access to an outlet, and time/space to feed according to the infant's needs.

10. Churches will also examine their personnel policies for lay staff and are encouraged to ensure adequate and equal parental leave for all.

11. Clergy in the annual conference will support and promote parental leave, including by providing pastoral care coverage if asked and needed, in accordance with their schedule.

**Policy 318: Medical Leave Due to Medical and Disabling Conditions that Prevent Performance of Ministerial Duties—**

**¶ 356. Of the 2016 Book of Discipline**

**Medical Leave Due to Medical and Disabling Conditions that Prevent Performance of Ministerial Duties—**

For the purposes of this policy as it relates to the East Ohio Conference of the United Methodist Church the "joint committee on clergy medical leave of the annual conference, or the party responsible for managing clergy medical leaves in accordance with the annual conference's policies" shall be the East Ohio Conference Board of Pensions and Health Benefits.

¶ 356. When clergy who are members of an annual conference (¶ 369) are unable to perform their ministerial duties because of medical and disabling conditions, upon recommendations of the conference Board of Ordained Ministry and the conference board of pensions, and by a majority vote of the executive session of clergy members in full connection with the annual conference who are present and voting, they may be granted annual medical leave without losing their relationship to the annual conference; provided, however, that such leave may be granted or renewed upon reasonable and appropriate investigation of the case by the joint committee on clergy medical leave of the annual conference, or the party responsible for managing clergy medical leaves in accordance with the annual conference's policies, which will report its findings to the conference Board of Ordained Ministry and the conference board of pensions.

1. This relationship may be initiated by the clergy member or cabinet with or without the consent of the clergy member through the Board of Ordained Ministry. When medical leave is given without the clergy member's consent, reasonable accommodation shall be offered whenever possible.
2. When a clergy member is granted medical leave by the annual conference, if the medical evidence has not yet met the standards for the receipt of benefits as set forth in the Comprehensive Protection Plan, section 5.04, the conference board of pensions may authorize payment of the benefits in the amount that would otherwise be payable from the Comprehensive Protection Plan. The payments shall be made by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits as a charge to the annual conference granting the medical leave. If payments from the Comprehensive Protection Plan are subsequently approved, the annual conference will be reimbursed for benefits already paid, not to exceed the amount otherwise payable from the Comprehensive Protection Plan. Each medical leave granted by the annual conference shall be recorded in the conference minutes.
3. When clergy who are members of an annual conference are unable to perform their ministerial duties between sessions of the annual conference on account of medical conditions, with the approval of a majority of the district superintendents, after consultation with the executive committee of the conference Board of Ordained Ministry and the executive committee of the conference board of pensions, a medical leave may be granted by the bishop for the remainder of the conference year; provided, however, that such leave may be granted upon reasonable and appropriate investigation of the case including accommodation provisions by the joint committee on clergy medical leave of the annual conference, or the party responsible for managing clergy medical leaves in accordance with the annual conference's policies, which will report its findings to the conference Board of Ordained Ministry and the conference board of pensions. When a

## BOM 15. "Medical Leave"

clergy member is granted medical leave by the bishop, if the medical evidence has not yet met the standards for receipt of benefits as set forth in the Comprehensive Protection Plan, section 5.04, the conference board of pensions may authorize payment of the benefits in the amount that would otherwise be payable from the Comprehensive Protection Plan. The payments shall be made by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits as a charge to the annual conference granting the medical leave. If payments from the Comprehensive Protection Plan are subsequently approved, the annual conference will be reimbursed for benefits already paid, not to exceed the amount otherwise payable from the Comprehensive Protection Plan.

4. When clergy members on medical leave provide medical evidence that they have recovered sufficiently to resume ministerial duties, or are able to return through reasonable accommodation, in consultation with the appointive cabinet, upon recommendation of the joint committee on clergy medical leave, Conference Pastoral Advisory Committee (CPAC) or the conference relations committee, and with the approval of the executive committee of the conference Board of Ordained Ministry, they may receive an appointment from a bishop between sessions of the annual conference, thereby terminating the medical leave. Such appointment shall be reported immediately by the cabinet to the conference board of pensions, the conference Board of Ordained Ministry, and to the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits. Such termination of leave, together with the effective date, shall also be recorded in the minutes of the annual conference at its next regular session.<sup>i</sup>
5. A person under consideration for medical leave shall have the right to appear before the joint committee on clergy medical leave or to designate someone to meet with the committee on his or her behalf. In the event of unresolved issues, a person will be ensured of fair process per the guidelines for administrative hearings in ¶ 361.2.
6. Any person eligible to receive an appointment from a bishop and able to perform ministerial duties may not be placed on involuntary medical leave solely because of a medical condition. All reasonable accommodations should be made to enable qualified clergy with disabilities to serve in ministry settings compatible with their gifts and graces. (See 2016 Book of Resolutions, 3002.)

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<sup>i</sup> See Judicial Council Decisions 473, 1012.

## **Administrative Location**

### **¶ 359. of the 2016 Book of Discipline**

#### **Administrative Location—**

1. When an associate or full member clergy person's effectiveness is in question, the bishop shall complete the following procedure:
  - a) Identify the concerns. These can include an associate or full member clergy person's failed professional responsibilities or vocational ineffectiveness.
  - b) Hold supervisory conversations with the associate or full member clergy person that identifies the concerns and designs collaboratively with the associate or full member clergy person a corrective plan of action.
  - c) Upon evaluation, determine that the plan of action has not been carried out or produced fruit that gives a realistic expectation of future effectiveness (¶ 334.3).
2. If the process defined above (§1) has been completed and has failed to produce sufficient improvement, the bishop and the district superintendents may request that an associate or full member be placed on administrative location without the consent of the clergy member. They shall provide to the clergy member and the Board of Ordained Ministry, in writing, specific reasons for the request. The conference relations committee of the Board of Ordained Ministry shall conduct a fair process hearing as set forth in ¶ 361.2 in any administrative location procedure. The committee shall report the result of the hearing to the full Board of Ordained Ministry for its action. Any recommendation to administrative location shall be presented from the Board of Ordained Ministry at the next following meeting of the clergy session for final action. Between sessions of the annual conference, an associate or full member may be placed on administrative location by the Board of Ordained Ministry. This interim action shall be subject to the approval of the clergy session of members in full connection with the annual conference at its next session.
3. Administratively located clergy shall not continue to hold membership in the annual conference, and they shall surrender their certification of conference membership for deposit with the conference secretary. After consultation and with the written consent of the pastor in charge, and with the approval of the district superintendent and the staff-parish relations committee of a local church, clergy placed on administrative location shall designate a charge conference within the bounds of the annual conference that placed them on administrative location. Conference Relations Registrar of the Board of Ordained Ministry shall receive copies of written consent from the District Superintendent, pastor in charge and staff-parish relations committee. Ministerial service shall be limited to that charge and shall be provided only with the written consent of the pastor in charge and the district superintendent and with the approval of the bishop and pastor/staff-parish relations committee. An annual report shall be made to the charge conference that includes all marriages performed, baptisms administered, and funerals conducted. A copy of the report shall be forwarded to the Conference Relations registrar of the Board of Ordained Ministry in order for location to be continued. They shall be held amenable by the annual conference within which the charge conference membership is held for their conduct and the continuation of their ordination rights. Failure to submit the report to the Conference Relations Registrar of the Board of Ordained Ministry for two consecutive years may result in

## BOM 16. "Administrative Location"

termination of orders upon recommendation of the Board of Ordained Ministry and vote of the clergy session.

4. Ordained ministers on administrative location may request the annual conference to grant them the status of administrative location-retired. Requests for retired status shall be stated in writing to the bishop, cabinet, and registrar of the Board of Ordained Ministry at least ninety days prior to the annual conference session. Those granted administrative location-retired status shall be accountable to the charge conference in which they hold membership for all ministerial services performed. Ministerial service shall be limited to that charge and shall be provided only with the written consent of the pastor in charge and the district superintendent and with the approval of the bishop and pastor/staff-parish relations committee. If such services have been performed, they shall report to that charge conference and exercise their ministry under the supervision of the pastor in charge therein as outlined in ¶ 358.2. They shall continue to be held amenable for their conduct, through accountability to their charge conference, to the annual conference in which charge conference membership is held.

Revised 1/16/2020

## ¶ 360. Of the 2016 Book of Discipline

### Withdrawal—

1. Withdrawal to Unite with Another Denomination<sup>i</sup>—When ordained members in good standing withdraw to unite with another denomination or to terminate their membership in the denomination, their certification of conference membership, and their written request to withdraw shall be deposited with the conference secretary.
2. Withdrawal from the Ordained Ministerial Office—Ordained members of an annual conference in good standing who desire to leave their ministerial office and withdraw from the conference may be allowed to do so by the annual conference at its session. The ordained minister's certifications of ordination and conference membership, and their written request to withdraw, shall be given to the district superintendent for deposit with the secretary of the conference, and his or her membership may be transferred to a church which he or she designates, after consultation with the pastor, as the local church in which he or she will hold membership.<sup>ii</sup>
3. Withdrawal Under Complaints or Charges—When clergy members are named as respondents to a complaint under ¶ 362.1(e) and desire to withdraw from the membership of the annual conference, it may permit them to withdraw under the provisions of ¶ 2719.2. The clergy member's certifications of ordination and conference membership shall be surrendered to the district superintendent for deposit with the secretary of the conference, and their membership may be transferred to a local church that they designate, after consultation with the pastor.<sup>iii</sup>

Withdrawn under complaint or withdrawn under charges shall be written on the face of the credentials.

4. Withdrawal Between Conferences<sup>iv</sup>—In the event that withdrawal by surrender of the ministerial office, to unite with another denomination, or under complaints or charges, should occur in the interval between sessions of an annual conference, the clergy member's credentials, under the provisions of ¶ 360.1 and .3, shall be surrendered to the bishop or district superintendent along with a letter of withdrawal from the ordained ministry. Both the credentials and the letter of withdrawal shall be deposited with the secretary of the conference. This action shall be reported by the Board of Ordained Ministry to the annual conference at its next session.<sup>v</sup> The effective date of withdrawal shall be the date of the letter of the letter of withdrawal.<sup>vi</sup>

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<sup>i</sup> See Judicial Council Decision 696

<sup>ii</sup> See Judicial Council Decisions 552, 1055

<sup>iii</sup> See Judicial Council Decisions 552, 691

<sup>iv</sup> See Judicial Council Decision 696

<sup>v</sup> See Judicial Council Decision 552.

<sup>vi</sup> See Judicial Council Decision 691

BOM 18. "Participation in Retirement Service at East Ohio Conference"

Policy on Participation in the Retirement Service and Related Activities for Retirees at East Ohio Annual Conference

1/15/2020

Policy: The following have been adopted by the East Ohio Conference Board of Ministry as the policy for who shall and who shall not be included in the Retirement Service and related activities for retirees at East Ohio Annual Conference:

A. Involuntary Retirement/Administrative Location: It is the policy of the East Ohio Conference Board of Ministry that clergy who are being retired through Involuntary Retirement/Administrative Location are not eligible to be honored at the retirement service or related activities, and shall not participate in same.

B. Local Pastors who are currently under appointment (full or part-time) shall be invited to participate in the retirement service and related retirement activities only if they have met the following requirements:

1. The local pastor has completed the five year Course of Study (or)
2. The local pastor has completed ten years of service without interruption as an episcopal appointed local pastor.

C. In the event that a clergy member chooses to retire after very brief service, the Episcopal office in conjunction with the Retirement Coordinator for BOM shall determine whether the term of service has been sufficient to merit recognition.

D. Extenuating factors for local pastors may come before the BOM for appropriate action.

Guidelines for the Retirement Service:

A. Different gifts shall be chosen for Ordained Deacons, Ordained Elders, Associate Members and Local Pastors which are appropriate for the various offices.

B. Local pastors will be addressed as "Pastor" and ordained persons as "Reverend" when being introduced.

C. Persons who do not complete the forms sent to them for the retirement information will simply not have a complete introduction. Excessive efforts to track them down and obtain the forms will no longer be made.

D. The office of the Assistant to the Bishop will not invite those who are not eligible according to the above policy.

E. The current policy does not affect the attendance at the banquet in March for those who are ineligible to participate in the retirement service. The Board of Pensions determines who to invite to the banquet and will continue to do so. BOM does not give a gift to those attending the banquet, that is done by the Board of Pensions. BOM supplies the entertainment for the banquet and will continue to do so.



**Policy**  
**“ Submission of Interview Materials to**  
**Registrars” September 25, 2014**

**Policy: It is the policy of East Ohio Conference, Board of Ministry that candidates MUST submit only one set of written work as a completed packet to the appropriate Registrar.**

**Approved 9/25/14 by BOM**

BOM. 21. Policies. "Sexual Ethics Policy." 6.8.23

**Ethical Standards and Training Policy Board of Ministry  
East Ohio Conference December 9, 2014**

In ¶ 635.2(s) The United Methodist Book of Discipline 2012 charges the Board of Ordained Ministry: "To interpret the high ethical standards of ordained ministry set forth in the *Discipline* and to study matters pertaining to character (¶605.7)."

Therefore, the Board of Ordained Ministry of the East Ohio Conference will coordinate and provide clergy ethics training to be offered each quadrennium. This training will be required for all clergy, licensed or ordained, and serving under episcopal appointment.

Created 12/9/2014

## East Ohio Sexual Ethics Policy

### Statement of Purpose & Theological Foundation

All human beings are created in the image of God, and are beloved of God, deserving of love and respect. In the East Ohio Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, we honor God and one another by pursuing healthy and life-giving relationships with each other. Jesus said, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." (Matthew 22:37-39)

Our relationship with and knowledge of God guides and illuminates our reflections on human sexual behavior. Together we affirm that:

- God calls us to honor our bodies and gives us responsibility over our own bodies (I Corinthians 6:12-20).
- God calls us to honor the integrity of our neighbors, and their authority over their own personhood (Deuteronomy 22:25-30).
- God calls us into covenant with each other within the family of God (Deuteronomy 14:1-2; Ephesians 4:14-16).
- God calls us to support each other (I Thessalonians 5:11, NRSV).
- God, through the church, calls leaders (whether ordained, consecrated, elected or appointed) to witness to the preciousness of bodies, our own and others; and to declare that each person is unique and of divine worth (I Corinthians 6:19-20; Ephesians 4:1). 18

In light of these understandings, the East Ohio Conference is committed to honor the complete integrity of one another, and in doing so, we honor and remember the Body of Christ. 21

This policy exists to safeguard relationships, to build up the Body of Christ, and to provide guidelines for the prevention and reporting of sexual and professional misconduct to the East Ohio Annual Conference. This policy applies to all ministry professionals working in East Ohio Annual Conference churches and shall become a part of local church policies. The East Ohio Annual Conference is committed to responding to all violations of this policy in a way that promotes true justice and accountability and in such a way that promotes healing. 28

### Definitions

*Ministry Professionals* - ministry professionals (paid and unpaid) are those persons (clergy and lay) serving in positions of power and authority. Ministry professionals are charged with the sacred trust of creating and maintaining environments where all can encounter the living Christ and grow in their knowledge and love of God. 35

*Sexual Misconduct* - Sexual misconduct within ministerial relationships is a betrayal of sacred trust. It is a continuum of sexual or gender-directed behaviors by either a lay or clergy person within a ministerial relationship (paid or unpaid). It can include child abuse, adult sexual abuse, harassment, rape or sexual assault, sexualized verbal comments or visuals, unwelcome touching and advances, use of sexualized materials including pornography, stalking, sexual abuse of youth or those without capacity to consent, or misuse of the pastoral or ministerial position using sexualized conduct to take advantage of the vulnerability of another. It includes criminal behaviors in some nations, states, and communities and is a chargeable offense in The United Methodist Church. (2016 Book of Resolutions, #2044)

*Sexual Harassment* - sexual harassment is a form of sexual misconduct, defined as unwanted sexual or gender-directed behavior within a pastoral, employment, ministerial (including volunteers), mentor, or colleague relationship that is so severe or pervasive that it alters the conditions of employment or volunteer work or unreasonably interferes with the employee or volunteer's performance. It can create a hostile, offensive environment that can include unwanted sexual jokes, repeated advances, touching, displays, or comments that insult, degrade, or sexually exploit women, men, elders, children, or youth. (The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church 2016,

## **Reporting & Responding to Complaints of Misconduct**

1. Violations of this policy may be reported to your SPRC, pastor, any United Methodist clergy person, the district superintendent, or the bishop.
2. All persons who have knowledge of alleged misconduct are encouraged to come forward.
3. Keep a journal to document specifics surrounding all incidents in question. Include conversation and contacts with the person, dates, times, witnesses and descriptions of the incidents.
4. When the alleged conduct constitutes a criminal act, report it to the police. A complaint which involves a child under the age of 18 must also be reported to the nearest agency charged with child protection.
5. In order for a violation of this policy to become an official complaint (subject to ¶362 of *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church 2016*) it must be presented in writing and signed by the person making the complaint.
6. All complaints will be dealt with promptly and in confidence according to ¶362. All investigations of clergy will be conducted according to ¶¶2701-2706 of *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church 2016*. All appropriate legal reporting practices shall also be followed.
7. Confidentiality is an important part of this process. Confidentiality means that information will only be shared on a need to know basis, at the discretion of the bishop. In the event of a signed complaint, information will be shared as outlined in ¶362, for the purposes of accountability and repairing the harm that has been done.
8. Remember that you are not alone in this process. All persons who bring forward complaints will be heard, affirmed for coming forward, given access to support persons, and prayed for throughout the process.
9. The East Ohio Annual Conference takes seriously any violations of the sacred trust by ministry professionals.

## **Policy Against Retaliation**

The East Ohio Annual Conference has a zero tolerance policy for retaliation against those who report misconduct or submit a complaint.

## **Updates to the Sexual Ethics Policy**

COSROW shall update this policy at least once every four years. If any provision of this policy is in conflict with the current *Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*, the Discipline shall prevail. Such conflict shall not be grounds for invalidating this policy. 44

## **Additional Resources**

1. UM Sexual Ethics: [www.umsexualethics.org](http://www.umsexualethics.org)
2. The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women: [www.gcsrw.org](http://www.gcsrw.org)
3. Do No More Harm: <https://donomoreharm.org> 50

## **CONFERENCE POLICIES AFFECTING CLERGY**

### The Covenant

I. Members in full connection with an annual conference by virtue of their election and ordination are bound in special covenant with all the ordained ministers of the annual conference. In the keeping of this covenant they perform the ministerial duties and maintain the ministerial standards established by those in the covenant. They offer themselves without reservation to be with their fellow ministers in mutual trust and concern and seek with them the sanctification of the fellowship. Only those shall be elected to full membership who are of unquestionable moral character and genuine piety, sound in fundamental doctrines of Christianity, and faithful in the discharge of their duties. (The 2016 Book of Discipline, ¶¶340, 328, 321 and Judicial Council Decision 406)

### Professional Standards

2. Clergy shall observe the following professional standards:
  - a. We respect the parish of another clergyperson and perform a service in that parish only at the invitation of the assigned clergyperson (¶341.4).
  - b. A clergyperson who has retired or been appointed to a new charge shall not return to the former charge for at least one year and with the invitation of their successor(s).
  - c. Clergy who attend, but are not appointed to a charge (who may be retired or serving in extension ministry) are to respect the work of the clergyperson appointed to that charge. At the invitation of the appointed clergyperson, credentialed clergy may preside over sacraments, funerals, and weddings at that charge. At all times, clergy are to seek to enhance, not undermine, the pastoral authority of the clergyperson under appointment at charge.
  - d. We deal honorably with the record of our predecessor and successor.
  - e. We give endorsement only to those movements, agencies, or individuals who have been thoroughly investigated and have our full personal approval.
  - f. We respond to community calls for our service as a part of our ministry to the church.
  - g. We promote the entire program of the church.
  - h. Makes effective use of social media to Do No Harm and Do Good.

### Retirement

3. A retiring clergyperson shall complete the following:
  - i. Prior to announcing their retirement, clergy shall contact their Superintendent, Bishop, and the Board of Ministry with their request in writing (¶357). Retirement requests should be submitted by December 1<sup>st</sup> in order to better care for the church. Clergy are expected to retire as of June 30<sup>th</sup> unless there are extenuating circumstances.
  - ii. Prior to their retirement, clergy shall engage in Conference provided transition training.
  - iii. Prior to their retirement, clergy shall provide clear written communication, in consultation with their successor and Superintendent, to the congregation establishing clear boundaries to include at least (1.) social media contact and (2.) the expectation that all pastoral services will be conducted by the newly appointed clergy.
  - iv. Prior to gaining charge conference membership for retirement, clergy should request approval from the current pastor of that appointment.
  - v. Local Pastors who are currently under appointment (full or part-time) shall be invited to participate in the retirement service and related retirement activities only if they have met the following requirements:
    - I. The local pastor has completed the five year Course of Study (or)

**2. The local pastor has completed ten years of service without interruption as an episcopally-appointed local pastor.**

### **Sabbath Day**

**3. Clergy** are expected to take one day a week for Sabbath and inform the congregation of that day. **In addition, one day per week should be reserved for personal and family responsibilities.**

### **Annual Time Away**

4. The **clergyperson** shall work with the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee each year to plan as far in advance as possible concerning the needs of the **clergyperson** to be away for vacation, continuing education and professional responsibilities. Such advance planning will help to ensure adequate coverage of responsibilities during the **clergyperson's** absence and to provide for a balance of time spent between serving the local church and providing for other professional opportunities and responsibilities.

#### **Vacation**

a. The minimum annual (July 1- June 30) vacation schedule for clergypersons be (weekly Sabbath day **and personal day** not to be counted as a vacation day):

1) 25 days paid vacation for clergy appointed full-time.

2) Conference members serving in less-than-full-time appointments shall be entitled to vacation in proportion to the percent of time they are serving. The minimum shall be:

Appointed at 75%: **18** days

Appointed at 50%: **13** days

Appointed at 25%: **6** days

**3) Clergy shall be entitled to five Sundays of vacation regardless of full-time or less than full-time appointment status.**

4) Service in a leadership capacity at a Conference-sponsored event or attendance at Annual Conference shall not be considered a part of the clergyperson's vacation time.

5) The completion of ministerial education requirements such as seminary or the Course of Study shall not be considered a part of the clergypersons' vacation time.

### **Continuing Education**

b. **A** clergyperson serving a local church, who has graduated from the Jurisdictional Course of Study or from an accredited seminary, having completed the requirements for associate, probationary, or full Conference membership, shall be granted up to 14 days, including two Sundays, annual study time for continuing education with full remuneration and benefits. A request for further study time, with plan of scholastic study, should be made in writing to the Pastor Parish Relations Committee and district superintendent and carry approval of each. This time segment granted for continuing education is an addition to that provided for vacation. The local church is encouraged to share in the cost of continuing education.

c. For the completion of the education requirements of licensed and ordained ministry, an appointed clergyperson shall be granted an additional up to fourteen days, including two Sundays, time away.

d. In our connectional church, part of the leadership responsibility must be filled by pastors and lay persons working in district and conference agencies, including Conference Camping program, and in other connectional tasks. Clergy time away from the parish for this kind of ministry will be negotiated with the Pastor Parish Relations Committee with consultation with the District Superintendent.