

Policy to Receive Ministers from Other Denominations

Approved by COM: May 13, 2010

Revised by COM: April 30, 2013

Revised By COM: May 19, 2015

Revised by COM: November 17, 2015

Revised by COM: April 16, 2019

The following policy applies to previously ordained clergy from other denominations. This does not apply to "formula of agreement" pastors of those denominations who have dual standing while they are serving a PC(USA) congregation. Any person can also follow the standard inquiry/candidacy process outlined in the Book of Order through the Commission on Preparation for Ministry.

1. The applicant must have been ordained at least 5 years.

2. The General Presbyter or the Stated Clerk will review the applicant to ensure he/she meets the constitutional conditions as listed in G-2.0607. The applicant's educational background will be reviewed as required in G-2.0607b and G-2.0607c concerning graduation from a regionally accredited college or university and from an acceptable theological institution. In the case of an immigrant minister, if our strategy for mission within that immigrant fellowship or congregation requires it, the minister may be received under G-2.0505a (1) before educational criteria are satisfied.

3. The General Presbyter or the Stated Clerk will then check with the applicant's judicatory concerning the candidate's standing within that judicatory and the COM Coordinating Commission will determine whether the evidence of good standing is acceptable.

4. A preliminary examination will be conducted to assess basic theological and collegial fit. This will be performed by a special Interview Team (appointed by Examinations Team Chair), or one of the regular Examination Teams. (See #6 below.) The applicant will submit a Statement of Faith and a PIF or resume to the Examination Team.

5. Upon the successful completion of the preliminary examination, the Committee on Ministry will then ask the Commission on Preparation for Ministry to do the following as required in the specific case.
 - a. See to the administration of the standard psychological exams administered to all inquirer/candidates for ministry, or some other appropriate assessment. (Costs will be shared by the applicant, congregation [if applicable], COM and CDC [if applicable].)

 - b. Facilitate the applicant's registration for the national administration of all five ordination exams. (see notes c and d)

- c. Conduct a "Final Assessment" examination in the ordinary manner.

Following the satisfaction of all these steps the applicant is then "certified ready" to receive a call.

6. If and when the "certified ready" applicant receives a call to an installed position, a call as a Specialized Minister to an immigrant fellowship endorsed by the CDC of NCP, a call to a specialized ministry position approved by the COM, or a call as an organizing pastor in National Capital Presbytery, then the applicant will have a formal Examination Team interview following the established exam process. When the process is complete, the applicant is received as a minister of Word and Sacrament member of NCP and the PC(USA).

Notes

- a. Immigrant ministers may be admitted as minister members before educational criteria are satisfied. (See G-2.0505a (1))
- b. See the May 2014 Advisory Opinion from the PC(USA) on Receiving Ministers of Other Denominations (<http://oga.pcusa.org/media/uploads/oga/pdf/advisory-opinion14.pdf>).
- c. Per G-2.0505 (2) ministers of Reformed churches with more than five years of ordained ministry may be exempted from some or all of the ordination exams by a two-thirds vote of the presbytery.
- d. Per G-2.0607 The ordination exams may be repeated up to three times. Accommodations will be made for language and/or cultural barriers. CPM works closely with the Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Ordination Exams regarding such barriers and will consult with COM and CDC as necessary.