

Check List for Sessions in Developing a Manual of Administrative Operations

Administration of Mission: Each council shall develop a manual of administrative operations that will specify the form and guide the work of mission in that council. The Form of Government (G-3.0106)

1. INCORPORATION

a. Is the congregation incorporated?

G-4.0102 Where permitted by civil law, each congregation shall cause a corporation to be formed and maintained.

b. Do the Articles of Incorporation and Corporate Bylaws specify that the congregation is part of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and governed by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)?

c. Do the Articles of Incorporation and Corporate Bylaws specify Corporate and Ecclesiastical business may be conducted as part of the same meeting?

G-1.0503 Business Proper to Congregational Meetings-- Whenever permitted by civil law, both ecclesiastical and corporate business may be conducted at the same congregational meeting.

d. Do the Articles of Incorporation and Corporate Bylaws specify whether the session or a separate board shall serve as the Trustees of the Corporation?

G-4.0102 The ruling elders on the session of a congregation, who are eligible under the civil law, shall be the trustees of the corporation, unless the corporation shall determine another method for electing its trustees.

e. Do the Corporate Bylaws specify:

- i. An annual meeting of the Congregation/Corporation? (*G-1.05 thru G-1.0505*)
- ii. How special meetings may be called?
- iii. A quorum for meetings?
- iv. How much notice must be given in advance of a Congregational/Corporate meeting?
- v. Meetings are to be conducted in accordance with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised? (*G-3.0105*)

2. ORGANIZATION OF THE CONGREGATION

a. Membership Categories

- i. Baptized (G-1.0401)
- ii. Active (G-1.0402)
- iii. Affiliate (G-1.0403)
- iv. Inactive -- In the new form of government there are no inactive members. What do you do with those currently on your inactive roll? Continue with an inactive roll? Delete them from all membership rolls? Place them back on the active roll? What criteria do you use to make the determination of who is inactive or who should be deleted?

b. Nominating Committee (G-2.0401) -- ***Congregations may provide by their own rule for a congregational nominating committee, provided that the committee shall consist of at least three active members of the congregation, and shall include at least one ruling elder who is currently serving on the session.***

- i. How big is the committee?
- ii. How is the committee nominated?
- iii. Other criteria for composition of the committee?

c. Insuring fair representation and diversity (F-1.0403 & G-2.0401)

d. Session

- i. How many ruling elders on Session
- ii. Quorum (G-3.0203) -- ***Sessions shall provide by rule for a quorum for meetings; such quorum shall include the moderator and either a specific number of ruling elders or a specific percentage of those ruling elders in current service on the session.***
- iii. When are ruling elders elected
- iv. When are ruling elders ordained/installed
- v. One term or re-electable for a second term
- vi. Who will serve as Clerk (G-3.0104) ***The clerk of the session shall be a ruling elder elected by the session for such term as it may determine.***
 - A ruling elder in active service
 - A ruling elder not in active service
 - Length of term of service
- vii. How often does the Session meet?
- viii. What is considered as “reasonable notice” for a special meeting of the Session?
- ix. Commissioner to Presbytery ***G-3.0202 Relations with Other Councils It is of particular importance that sessions: a. elect, as commissioners to presbytery, ruling elders from the congregation, preferably for at least a year, and receive their reports...***
 - How is it decided who goes?
 - How are reports presented?

e. Deacons (G-2.0202) -- A congregation by a majority vote may choose not to utilize the ordered ministry of deacons. If the congregation has neither a board of deacons nor individually commissioned deacons, the function of this ordered ministry shall be the responsibility of the ruling elders and the session.

- i. Will there be a board of deacons?
 - When elected?
 - When ordained/installed?
 - How many deacons?
- ii. Individually commissioned
- iii. Session fulfill duties?

f. Finances

i. Treasurer (G-3.0205) -- The session shall elect a treasurer for such term as the session shall decide and shall supervise his or her work or delegate that supervision to a board of deacons or trustees.

- When is treasurer elected?
- What is the length of term?
- Re-electable?
- Who will supervise (session, trustees, deacons)?

ii. Budget

- Who prepares it?
- When is it presented to Session for adoption?
- When is the Congregation informed about it?

iii. Audit/Financial Review (G-3.0113) A full financial review of all financial books and records shall be conducted every year by a public accountant or committee of members versed in accounting procedures.

- Who will do the financial review?
 - ✓ Committee?
 - ✓ Professionally done?
- When will it be done?
- Reporting of finances of all organizations to the Session
 - ✓ When?
 - ✓ Format?

4. ORGANIZATION OF SESSION COMMITTEES

Councils may designate by their own rule such committees and commissions as they deem necessary and helpful for the accomplishment of the mission of the church...(G-3.0109)

- i. Does your session have committees? (Session committees are not required by the Form of Government)
- ii. What committees does your session have? (This is up to each session to determine)

- Worship
 - Mission
 - Stewardship and Finance
 - Christian Education
 - Personnel
 - Congregational Care
 - Strategic Planning/Long Range Planning/Visioning
 - Other Committees
- iii. How does the session determine who serves on committees?
- Terms of service?

3. SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY

All councils shall adopt and implement a sexual misconduct policy. The Form of Government (G-30106).

- i. Does your session have a sexual misconduct policy?
- Does your church have a child care center/pre-school?
 - Does your congregation have a youth group?
 - Does your congregation have a “Safe Place” policy?

4. OTHER POLICES

- i. Personnel Policies
- Family leave
 - Staff evaluation
 - Annual compensation review
 - Holiday/vacation
- ii. Facilities Use policies
- iii. Wedding Policies
- iv. Investment Policies
- v. Annual review of insurance coverage