

PRESBYTERY OF WEST VIRGINIA GUIDELINES FOR INTERIM PASTOR COVENANTS AND AGREEMENTS

“Temporary pastoral relationships are approved by the presbytery and do not carry a formal call or installation. **Interim pastors serving congregations within the Presbytery of West Virginia are ordinarily not eligible to serve as the next installed pastor in that same congregation. See policy for exceptions.**

“Titles and terms of service for temporary relationships shall be determined by the presbytery. A person serving in a temporary pastoral relationship is invited for a specified period not to exceed twelve months in length, which is renewable with the approval of the presbytery. A teaching elder employed in a temporary pastoral relationship is ordinarily not eligible to serve as the next installed pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor.” (Book of Order, G-2.0504b)

1. In order for an interim pastor to be approved by the Presbytery of West Virginia's Ministry Committee, he/she must be an ordained Presbyterian minister in good standing with some council and answerable to that Presbytery through its Committee on Ministry. An interim pastor from another denomination which maintains the integrity of the Word and Sacraments may be approved to serve a church within the Presbytery of West Virginia with special permission and arrangements with the Ministry Committee.
2. In accordance with the definitions of the *Book of Order*, Section G-2.0504b, a minister is designated as an "interim pastor" when the church served is searching for (or intends to search for) an installed pastor.
3. The interim pastor is expected to be a certified interim pastor or willing to pursue certification using the continuing education time and funds provided by the church for certification as an interim pastor.
4. The interim pastor is directly responsible to the Presbytery through its Ministry Committee as it relates to the carrying out of his/her responsibilities within the congregation.
5. The interim pastor is to confer with representatives of the Ministry Committee concerning his/her responsibilities before beginning a specific work.
6. The Session will establish specific expectations and duties for the interim pastor, acceptable to the Session, the Interim Pastor, and the Ministry Committee. During this time the interim pastor and the congregation will work on the following five ‘developmental tasks’ of interim ministry:
 - (a) coming to terms with history,
 - (b) discovering a new congregational identity,
 - (c) facilitating shifts in lay leadership and changes in congregational power structures,
 - (d) rethinking and renewing denominational linkages, and
 - (e) preparing for new pastoral leadership and a new future.

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These expectations and duties, along with terms of compensation, expense allowances and other provisions, will be reflected in a covenant agreement provided by the Presbytery's Ministry Committee and signed by the clerk of Session, the Interim Pastor, and the chair of the Ministry Committee.

7. The interim pastor, when a member of this or another Presbytery, ordinarily will be appointed as moderator of the Session in which he/she is serving by action of the Ministry Committee.
8. The interim pastor is to be positive and cooperative in supporting the programs, emphases and processes of the Presbytery of West Virginia and its committees and agencies, as well as of the Synod and the General Assembly. An unalterable assumption is that the interim pastor is loyal to the Presbytery of West Virginia and to the Presbyterian Church (USA).
9. The interim pastor will encourage and enhance the search being conducted by the church's pastor nominating committee, in every way possible and appropriate. However, the interim pastor is to refrain from any involvement in the PNC's selection of the minister it will nominate to the congregation.
10. The church will provide adequate salary, allowances for travel and other expenses, housing or lodging if needed, space for a study or an office, telephone service, and other needed provisions for fair compensation. Consistent with Presbytery's compensation guidelines for ministers, the interim shall receive four weeks' vacation, including four Sundays and two weeks continuing education leave, including two Sundays. Any other time off shall be negotiated with the Session.
11. The interim pastor's covenant may be terminated by the initiation of the interim pastor, the Ministry Committee, or the Session of the church, upon 30, 60, or 90 days written notice. If termination is initiated by the session prior to the end of the covenant period, compensation will continue for the number of days after the date of the termination of ministry. This number shall be agreed upon between the Session, the interim pastor, and the Ministry Committee.
12. In order to help assure a good and productive interim pastorate, and to support the pastor nominating committee's efforts, it is imperative that the Session and the interim pastor always keep in mind the last sentence of *G-2.0504b*, above, which states, "A teaching elder employed in a temporary pastoral relationship is ordinarily not eligible to serve as the next installed pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor."