

**NATIONAL CAPITAL PRESBYTERY'S
POLICY and PROCEDURES FOR VALIDATED
MINISTRIES (OTHER THAN
CONFREGATIONAL MINISTRIES) MEMBERS
AT LARGE, AND HONORABLY RETIRED
TEACHING ELDERS**



Revised October, 2015

NATIONAL CAPITAL PRESBYTERY'S POLICY and PROCEDURES FOR VALIDATED MINISTRIES (OTHER THAN CONFREGATIONAL MINISTRIES) MEMBERS AT LARGE, AND HONORABLY RETIRED TEACHING ELDERS.

Revised October 26, 2015

G-3.0306 gives to each presbytery the determination of who will be its continuing members (i.e., its minister members). There are three categories of teaching elder membership:

- (1) Engaged in a Validated Ministry (includes congregational ministries),
- (2) Member-at-large
- (3) Honorably Retired

G-2.0503 The Specialized Ministry Team handles matters related to validated ministries (other than congregational ministries) members-at-large, and honorably retired teaching elders and makes recommendations for action to the Committee on Ministry Coordinating Commission.

Validated Ministries

Presbytery is required to develop written criteria for the validation of all ministries carried on within its bounds which are not pastoral positions related to a particular congregation; or are not presbytery staff positions G-3.0306 and G-2-0503a.

- A Validated Ministry:
 - Must be in demonstrable conformity with the mission of God's people set forth in scripture and our constitution, specifically G-2.01 (Ordered Ministries of the Church). While the ministry is one, specific forms of ministry may emphasize special tasks and skills and the ordering of the offices of ministry shall reflect this variety. There may be forms of ministry in which primary emphasis is given to proclamation of the Word and the celebration of the Sacraments, forms that stress deeds of love and mercy, forms that are primarily educational, administrative, legislative, or judicial, and forms that are primarily prophetic.
 - Must be a ministry that serves others and fits within the definitional parameters set by G3.0306: educators, chaplains, pastoral counselors, campus ministries, missionaries, evangelists, administrators, social workers, consultants, or other specific tasks appropriate to the ministry of the church.
 - Must give evidence of theologically informed fidelity to God's word in effect this means the minister must have a degree from an acceptable seminary and must have met the requirements for ordination if not already ordained. (In our Presbytery an "acceptable" seminary is one accredited by the Association of Theological Schools).
 - Must be carried out in accountability to the presbytery and other organizations, agencies or institutions.

- Accountability to the presbytery is routinely achieved by the filing of a Validated Ministers Report annually with the Stated Clerk's office. Validated ministers who do not report on their work annually may be re-designated by the Committee on Ministry as At-Large members.
 - Because of the requirement of "accountability to other organizations, agencies, or institutions", no validated ministry which does not clearly describe accountability to a supervisor, a Board of Directors, etc. will be approved.
 - Must include proclamation of the Word and administering Sacraments.
- The minister will be responsible participant in the life of the presbytery to the extent possible and, unless the type of validated ministry (e.g., chaplain) prevents it, will be part of the worship life of one of presbytery's congregations. Parish Associate relationships are encouraged for all ministers engaged in validated ministry, and ministers engaged in validated are commended to the attention of pastors and sessions for consideration as Parish Associates. (For more information, please see the definition of a parish associate in the Committee on Ministry documents).
- The Minister must take Healthy Boundaries training every three years.
- This policy may apply to candidates who have been certified ready to receive a call and are seeking validation of a specialized ministry. Permission to be ordained to a validated ministry will be on a case by case/person by person basis. The ministry being considered must include proclamation of the Word and administering Sacraments.
- A minister engaged in a validated ministry who has been received on the basis of a particular ministry may not take up a different ministry without presbytery's approval given through the Specialized Ministry Team and the Committee on Ministry Coordinating Commission. Validation attaches to a particular approved work of ministry and is not a status conferred on the minister.
- When a minister engaged in a validated ministry leaves that work, he/she is automatically designated as an At-Large member of presbytery pending further changes; this is an action taken by the Stated Clerk of Presbytery and does not require any action by COM.
- The Process:
 - An ordained minister (or, in special cases, a candidate certified ready to receive a call) who wishes to be received as a minister member of presbytery on the basis of his/her Validated Ministry will communicate with the Chairperson of the Committee on Ministry (COM) or the Chairperson of the Specialized Ministry Team of COM. The Specialized Ministry Team or one of the assigned staff will send this policy statement to the applicant and request a written explanation of how the proposed ministry meets the criteria. This response will be returned to and acted upon by the Specialized Ministry Team.

If the recommendation is to validate the ministry and receive the minister on that basis, this recommendation must be approved by the COM's Specialized Ministry Team and concurred in by the COM Coordinating Commission. The action will

then be reported to presbytery as an action taken on presbytery's behalf, and the minister will be received in accordance with the current procedure.

- If the COM's Specialized Ministry Team declines to validate a ministry or decides to withdraw approval previously given, the minister must be provided an opportunity to appeal to the COM Coordinating Commission and if the Coordinating Commission sustains the Specialized Ministry Team; the presbytery the presbytery's decision will determine and settle the matter except for the minister's access to judicial process.

Members-At- Large:

- A member-at-large is a teaching elder previously engaged in a validated ministry who, without intentional abandonment of the exercise of ministry is no longer engaged in validated ministry.
- A member-at-large shall comply with as many of the criteria for validated ministries as possible and shall actively participate in the life of a congregation.
- A member-at-large must file an annual report with the Stated Clerk. G-2.0503b.
- A member-at-large must take Healthy Boundaries training every three years.

Honorably Retired:

- Upon request of a member of presbytery, the presbytery may designate the member honorably retired because of age or physical or mental disability. G-2.0503c
- Current minister members of National Capital Presbytery must make a request for Honorably Retired status to the Specialized Ministry Team.

Notes for information, not part of the policy.

- Ministers in validated ministry are not required to be enrolled in the Board of Pensions plan. A minister who wishes to enroll must be employed at least 20 hours/week and have presbytery's approval of the ministry, which must be conveyed to the Board of Pensions in writing so that coverage can be obtained.
- The compensation agreement of a minister in validated ministry is not subject to approval by Committee on Ministry, unless the minister is a staff member of presbytery, synod, or GA.
- Either the minister in validated ministry or his/her employer may submit to the Committee on Ministry a request for designation of a Housing Allowance for income tax purposes.