

**PASTORS**

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**DEFINITION AND SCOPE OF THE MINISTRY**

**Core competencies** means those competencies determined by the Ministerial Education Commission as essential for all persons that exercise the Ministry of Pastor.

- 2.14.1** Pastor is a specified lay ministry of the Church and means a lay person commissioned by a Presbytery, (or a Synod in the case of a Synod appointment, or the Assembly in the case of an Assembly appointment), to minister within a Congregation, community or Church based organisation for the purpose of undertaking one or more of the tasks outlined in Regulation 2.14.2.
- 2.14.2** The ministry of Pastor includes:
- a) teaching the beliefs and practices of the Church; and / or
  - b) pastoral oversight of members and / or groups operating under the auspices of the Uniting Church; and / or
  - c) leadership of worship in congregations or faith communities of the Church; and / or
  - d) evangelism or service beyond a gathered congregation but which is exercised under the auspices of the Uniting Church.
- 2.14.3** No appointment of a person to a remunerated position, which involves the exercise of the responsibilities outlined in Regulation 2.14.2, shall be made without prior consultation with the Presbytery (or the Synod in the case of a Synod appointment, or the Assembly in the case of an Assembly appointment).
- 2.14.4** From the effective date of the Regulations on the Ministry of Pastor, lay persons who are contributing their gifts to the Uniting Church by fulfilling any of the tasks set out in Regulation 2.14.2 in ministry locations designated as appropriate for the ministry of Pastor (see Regulation 2.14.5), particularly if receiving remuneration for doing so, shall be subject to the operation of these Regulations.

**DESIGNATING AN APPOINTMENT AS APPROPRIATE FOR THE MINISTRY OF PASTOR**

- 2.14.5** (a) A ministry location shall be designated as an appropriate appointment for the exercise of the ministry of Pastor for the purposes of these Regulations when
- (i) The position description of the role the person undertakes includes one or more of the tasks named in Regulation 2.14.2; and the Presbytery, (or Synod in the case of a Synod appointment, or Assembly in the case of an Assembly appointment) designates that the position description and ministry location are suitable for the exercise of the ministry of Pastor; or
  - (ii) a lay person is appointed to fill an approved placement; and
- (b) When the Presbytery, (or Synod in the case of a Synod appointment, or Assembly in the case of an Assembly appointment), has resolved to recognise a ministry location as appropriate for the exercise of the ministry of Pastor, it shall advise the faith community, congregation(s) or other appropriate body and the Placements Committee.

**METHOD OF APPLICATION AND APPOINTMENT**

- 2.14.6** A person may make application for the ministry of Pastor by
- (a) applying for a ministry appointment that is designated by the Presbytery, (or the Synod in the case of a Synod appointment, or the Assembly in the case of an Assembly appointment), as appropriate for the exercise of the ministry of Pastor; or

- (b) offering to serve the church in an approved placement, through a written application to the Synod.

**2.14.7** In considering and determining applications made under Regulation 2.14.6 (a) the appointing body shall have reference to:

- (a) confidential testimonials, supplied at the request of the appointing body, from the Minister of the applicant's Congregation and the Church Council;
- (b) the gifts and graces appropriate to the particular expression of the ministry of Pastor for which the person is applying;
- (c) the applicant's spiritual maturity and sense of call;
- (d) the applicant's capacity for exercising this ministry and perceived potential to meet the required competencies for the ministry of Pastor;
- (e) the applicant's personality and character; and
- (f) the applicant's willingness to accept the doctrine, polity and discipline of the Church;

**2.14.8** A Synod body designated by the Synod shall have responsibility for considering and determining applications made under Regulation 2.14.6 (b). The procedures to be followed by the Synod body shall be approved by the Synod and shall include:

- (a) requests for confidential testimonials from the Minister of the applicant's Congregation and the Church Council;
- (b) an interview with the applicant;
- (c) consideration of:
  - (i) the gifts and graces appropriate to the ministry of Pastor;
  - (ii) the applicant's spiritual maturity and sense of call;
  - (iii) the applicant's capacity for exercising this ministry and perceived potential to meet the required competencies for the ministry of Pastor;
  - (iv) the applicant's personality and character; and
  - (v) the applicant's willingness to accept the doctrine, polity and discipline of the Church.

**2.14.9** (a) Before making an appointment

- (i) the appointing body in the case of an application made under Regulation 2.14.7 shall obtain advice from the Presbytery that the applicant has been able to demonstrate the core competencies; and
- (ii) the Synod body in the case of applications made under Regulation 2.14.8 shall satisfy itself that the applicant can demonstrate the core competencies for the ministry of Pastor.

(b) Where an applicant cannot demonstrate the core competencies the Presbytery (or the Synod in the case of a Synod appointment, or the Assembly in the case of an Assembly appointment), may grant permission to make the appointment subject to a three month probation period by the end of which time the person shall have demonstrated the core competencies.

## **CONDITIONS OF APPOINTMENT**

- 2.14.10** (a) The Presbytery, (or the Synod in the case of a Synod appointment, or the Assembly in the case of an Assembly appointment), shall approve the terms and conditions of appointment.
- (b) The appointment shall be subject to regular evaluation by the Presbytery, (or the Synod in the case of a Synod appointment, or the Assembly in the case of an Assembly appointment), in consultation with the Pastor and the Congregation or other appropriate body.
- (c) Pastors are subject to Regulations 2.14.1 – 2.14.17.

## **RECOGNITION**

- 2.14.11** A person shall be recognised as a Pastor when
- (a) s/he has been a confirmed member or member in association of the Church for a period of twelve months prior to being recognised as a Pastor; and
- (b) the Presbytery, (or the Synod in the case of a Synod appointment, or the Assembly in the case of an Assembly appointment), is satisfied that the applicant can demonstrate the core competencies; and
- (c) when the person is appointed to a ministry location designated as appropriate for the ministry of Pastor (see Regulation 2.14.5).

At the time of recognition the Presbytery, (or the Synod in the case of a Synod appointment, or the Assembly in the case of an Assembly appointment), shall advise the Placements Committee.

## **SERVICE TO MARK THE COMMENCEMENT OF AN APPOINTMENT**

- 2.14.12** The Presbytery, (or the Synod in the case of a Synod appointment, or the Assembly in the case of an Assembly appointment), shall be responsible for conducting a service of commissioning. The commissioning service shall be conducted on the commencement of an appointment of a Pastor and in accordance with a form authorised by the Assembly.

## **COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT**

- 2.14.13** (a) A Pastor shall develop the general competencies identified by the Ministerial Education Commission as appropriate for the particular ministry in which the Pastor is engaged.
- (b) The Presbytery, (or the Synod in the case of a Synod appointment, or the Assembly in the case of an Assembly appointment), shall identify the general competencies yet to be developed by the Pastor and the time frame within which they shall be acquired.
- (c) The Presbytery that has oversight of the Pastor, (or the Synod in the case of a Synod appointment, or the Assembly in the case of an Assembly appointment), shall monitor the progress of the Pastor to ensure that the relevant competencies are being developed.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

- 2.14.14** (a) A Pastor shall be answerable to the Presbytery which has oversight of the Pastor in matters of faith and discipline and to the appointing body for the exercise of their ministry;
- (b) Pastors are subject to the Code of Ethics and Regulations 7.1.1 – 7.13.1.

## **TERMINATION OF APPOINTMENT / DISCIPLINE**

**2.14.15** The recognition of a Pastor shall cease upon:

- (a) the acceptance by the appointing body of the Pastor's resignation from a ministry location which has been designated as appropriate for the ministry of Pastor; or
- (b) the determination by the Presbytery, (or the Synod in the case of a Synod appointment, or the Assembly in the case of an Assembly appointment), that the general competencies identified by the Ministerial Education Commission as appropriate for the particular ministry in which the Pastor is engaged have not been demonstrated within the period of time determined by the Presbytery, (or the Synod in the case of a Synod appointment, or the Assembly in the case of an Assembly appointment); or
- (c) the termination of the appointment of the Pastor for whatever reason;
- (d) the determination of the Committee for Discipline pursuant to Regulation 7.8.16(f), subject to the Regulations relating to review and appeal.

**2.14.16** Where a lay person, other than those in the Specified Ministries of Youth Worker, Lay Pastor or Community Minister, is appointed to an approved placement the Regulations related to the termination of a placement shall not apply.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

**2.14.17** A Pastor shall be:

- (a) included on the roll of confirmed members, or members in association, of a Congregation in which the Pastor is serving, or, where the appointment is other than in a Congregation, included on the roll of confirmed members, or members in association, of the Congregation with which the Pastor chooses to be actively involved;
- (b) a member of the Church Council of the Congregation in which the Pastor is serving, if serving in a congregational context unless the Presbytery, after consultation with the Congregation, determines otherwise;
- (c) a member of the Presbytery [refer Regulation 3.4.15(c)(i)], and eligible for election as a lay member of the Synod and the Assembly.

**Consequential amendments:**

**1. Regulation 2.14.1**

~~2.14.4~~ 2.15.1 Ministers, Community Ministers, Lay Pastors, Pastors and Youth Workers shall exercise their ministries in accordance with the Code of Ethics.

**2. Definition in the Code of Ethics**

## Uniting Church in Australia



### Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice

for Ministers of the Word, Deacons, Deaconesses,  
Youth Workers, Community Ministers,  
Lay Pastors and Pastors in the Uniting Church in Australia  
(whether in approved placements or not)

Approved by the Ninth Assembly July 2000

*In this Code, "Minister" refers to Community Ministers, Deacons, Deaconesses, Lay Pastors, Ministers of the Word, Youth Workers and Pastors.*

**3. Definition in the Discipline Regulations.**

## 7. CHURCH DISCIPLINE

### INTRODUCTION

**7.1.1** In Regulations 7.1.1 to 7.13.1 unless the context or subject matter otherwise indicates:  
**Complainant** means the person who is making a complaint;  
**Complaint** means a complaint about the conduct, teaching or ministry of a Minister;  
**Minister** means a Minister as defined in clause 3 of the Constitution, and includes a Community Minister, Lay Pastor, Youth Worker, Pastor, Synod Secretary, Moderator, Assembly General Secretary, President, and Presbytery Minister;

**4. Regulations re Placements Committee**

1. change regulation 2.7.4(a)  
from "Ministers and ordinands"  
to "Ministers, ordinands and Pastors"
2. add a new clause (m) to Regulation 2.7.4 as follows

Recommend to JNCs the names of Pastors considered suitable for placement under Regulation 2.14.8.

and renumber subsequent clauses.

**5. Amend the following Regulations by adding the word "Pastor"**

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| 3.1.9(a)(i) & (iv) | Membership of meeting of the Congregation                                      |
| 3.1.12(a)(i)       | Membership of Church Council   |
| 3.1.13(b)(vi)      | Responsibilities of Church Council<br>re applications for specified ministries |

3.4.4(j)	Responsibilities of Presbytery for Placements
3.4.4(k) and(o)	Responsibilities of Presbytery
3.4.5	Consultation on life and witness
3.4.13	Quorum of Presbytery
3.4.15(c)(i)	Membership of Presbytery
3.5.37(b)(d)	Promotion and encouragement of mission