

CRITERIA FOR VALIDATING MINISTRIES AND CONTINUING MEMBERSHIP

Teaching Elders in the Presbytery of Cincinnati

Adopted November 8, 2005 (editorial changes made to conform to the *Book of Order* 7/10/11)

VALIDATED MINISTRIES

The Presbytery of Cincinnati has adopted the following criteria for validating ministries of teaching elders.

Validated ministry in general

In order for a teaching elder's service to be designated as "validated ministry," it must meet the standards listed in G-2.0503a without exception.

Validated ministry within congregations of this church (G-2.0504)

Installed pastoral relationships (G-2.0504a) and temporary pastoral relationships defined by the presbytery shall be considered to be validated ministries. Upon recommendation by the Committee on Ministry, the presbytery may approve other relationships between a session and a teaching elder as "validated ministry in other service of this church." The designation of a teaching elder as a parish associate or pastor emeritus/emerita shall not be considered to be a validated ministry.

Validated ministry in other service of this church

Ordinarily, the following shall be considered to be validated ministries:

- service as a staff member of a presbytery, a synod, or the General Assembly of this church or of an organization related to one of these governing bodies. Organizing pastors shall ordinarily be included in this category.
- service to an organization sponsored by two or more denominations, one of which is this church, such as a federated church, a specialized ministry, an administrative office, or an interdenominational agency.
- service in a PCUSA-established partnership in mission with a church outside the United States of America.

Upon recommendation by the Committee on Ministry, the presbytery may approve the following as validated ministry:

- service within a congregation of the presbytery other than those defined above as "validated ministry within congregations of the church."

Validated ministry in service beyond the jurisdiction of the church

Prior to engaging in this form of service, a teaching elder shall submit in writing an explanation as to how it meets the standards listed in G-2.0503a without exception. COM shall review the rationale and, if satisfied that the requirements are met, recommend that the presbytery validate the ministry.

With regards to specific forms of services beyond the jurisdiction of the church, the presbytery may designate service within a denomination in correspondence with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as validated ministry; it shall not designate service within an independent congregation or in a denomination that is not in correspondence with the PCUSA as validated ministry. A self-employed teaching elder in private practice cannot be considered as being engaged in a validated ministry unless he or she is accountable to an organization, agency, or institution in addition to the presbytery.

When a teaching elder is engaged in service beyond the jurisdiction of the church as a chaplain, pastoral counselor, or campus minister, he or she shall ordinarily be considered as being engaged in a validated ministry, provided the requirements for accountability, mentioned above, are met. Teaching elders engaged in work as educators, administrators, social workers, consultants, or other specific tasks appropriate to the ministry of the church, may be required to provide additional evidence that a substantial

proportion of their work is devoted to exercising pastoral care of those for whom they are responsible. This evidence may be requested by COM in addition to the requirement to show accountability to the sponsoring organization, agency, or institution.

Honorably Retired (G-2.0503c)

An Honorably Retired teaching elder may, with the presbytery's permission, engage in a validated ministry.

CONTINUING MEMBERSHIP

Continuing members of the presbytery include

- Members engaged in Validated Ministry (G-2.0503a)
- Members-at-large (G-2.0503b)
- Members who are Honorably Retired (G-2.0503c)

Members engaged in Validated Ministry and Members-at-Large

shall be responsible for participation in the life of the larger ministry of the church. This responsibility shall be fulfilled by:

- Praying for the church
- Attending presbytery meetings
- Serving the presbytery on a regular basis in an official capacity in addition to her or his primary call (e.g., presbytery committee, commission, council, or task group; mentor and supervisor to a ruling elder commissioned to pastoral service; Lay School faculty).

In addition, teaching elders whose ministries are not within a congregation shall regularly worship with a congregation in the PCUSA or a congregation of a denomination in correspondence with the PCUSA. They shall also engage in the ministry of a PCUSA congregation from time to time when invited to do so by appropriate parties. Examples of this service include but are not limited to:

- Serving as a Parish Associate
- Leading a worship service
- Moderating a meeting of the session or congregation
- Facilitating an opportunity for education, leadership development, or spiritual formation
- Counseling
- Serving as a consultant

Teaching elders who labor or reside outside the bounds of the presbytery and teaching elders whose physical or mental abilities limit their full participation shall fulfill the above expectations as they are able.

The Committee on Ministry shall counsel with each teaching elder who consistently fails to meet the above expectations. When appropriate, the COM may encourage her or him to apply for release from the exercise of ordained office. (G-2.0507)

Honorably Retired

The presbytery membership of Honorably Retired teaching elders is defined by G-2.0503c.