

4. Procedures for Ordained Ministry

Ordained ministry within Cooperative Ventures is governed by the Partner Church courts. It is important for local churches to respect and follow the processes of the appointing church. The appointing church oversees, according to their own processes, the appointment of ministers, their induction to the local church, ministry review, discipline and also the stipend package. However, Cooperative Ventures are a partnership and decisions about ordained ministry should be made with the local church partners all participating (including any Regional Forum).

4.1 APPOINTMENT

- 4.1.1 The Coordinating Partner, Participating Partner(s) and the local church need to meet together and decide which local church partner will be the Coordinating Partner. This decision should be notified to the UCANZ office.
- 4.1.2 The Coordinating Partner runs the appointment/call process according to their tradition, but with Participating Partner(s) involved (see 9.3.3 for Guidelines).
- 4.1.3 All local church partners should have input into the development of a local church profile, job descriptions, interviews (by whatever title or process) and final approval.
- 4.1.4 It is appropriate for local church partners to be notified of the pending appointment/call after local church confirmation and before regional/national court approval of the appointment/call by the Coordinating Partner.
- 4.1.5 The initial term of appointment will normally be for five years, with review.
- 4.1.6 When the appointment/call is formally made by the local church partners, the UCANZ office should be notified of the appointment/call, the date of induction, and the terms of ministry.
- 4.1.7 Where a minister is from a different church than the Coordinating Partner, care should be taken in consulting with the appropriate national administrators. A statement of good standing will always be sought by the Coordinating Partner from the church/es in which the minister has been ordained and previously employed. It is usual for the stipend package (leave entitlements, etc) to be consistent with the appointing church, but there may be exceptions to this.
- 4.1.8 Care should be taken in making a part-time appointment in ensuring that any other work is consistent with the role of ministry. If a minister is taking on two part-time positions there should be consultation with all local church partners about the nature of the work.
- 4.1.9 If there is a multiple ministry team, care should be taken to consult fully with others within the team – ordained or lay.
- 4.1.10 The appointee should be made aware of the nature of the Cooperative Venture and be made familiar with the local church partners. UCANZ has a brochure on ministry in a Cooperative Venture that might be helpful.

4.2 INDUCTION

- 4.2.1 The induction service is the responsibility of the Coordinating Partner, the minister being inducted as a minister of their national church. However, the service should reflect an ecumenical ethos and involve participants from Partner Churches.
- 4.2.2 The traditional rites and practices of the appointing church should be followed, including any affirmation or documentation required.
- 4.2.3 A Letter of Appointment should be signed by representatives of all the local church partners and the local church council. The Letter should clearly state the term of the initial appointment.
- 4.2.4 A Code of Pastoral Ethics should be signed – either the UCANZ Code of Ethics (see 9.2.5) or one approved by the Coordinating Partner.

4.3 MINISTRY SUPPLY

There are times when a local church will want to appoint a person to a short term (1-12 months) ministry appointment.

- 4.3.1 The Coordinating Partner oversees the processes leading to the appointment of any ministry supply, including checks on standing and status.
- 4.3.2 When a person is appointed the Coordinating Partner should inform the Participating Partner(s) about the appointee, the terms of supply, and any ongoing concerns for the local church or ministry.
- 4.3.3 The UCANZ office should be notified of the appointment and terms.

4.4 RELATIONSHIPS

- 4.4.1 The minister has a primary responsibility to their appointing church – normally the Coordinating Partner.
- 4.4.2 A minister in a Cooperative Venture is also encouraged to become involved in the life and work of the Participating Partner church courts as appropriate.

4.5 MINISTER REVIEW

- 4.5.1 A minister's performance and pastoral care is primarily the responsibility of the Coordinating Partner. If the local church or the Participating Partner(s) have any concerns with the performance or health of a minister they should firstly notify the Coordinating Partner.
- 4.5.2 A simple review of a new ministry should be conducted 6-9 months after the induction/appointment and should involve all the local church partners.
- 4.5.3 Regular reviews of ministry are carried out according to the practices of the Coordinating Partner – with the involvement of the local church and Participating Partner(s).

4.6 REVIEW OF APPOINTMENT

- 4.6.1 The review of a ministry appointment should occur about a year before it is to be completed – with a minimum period of 9 months.

- 4.6.2 The Coordinating Partner convenes a meeting of the partners and the local church to consider the ongoing options for the ministry. That meeting seeks to discern the call of the Holy Spirit upon the ministry and will reflect on a variety of issues.
- 4.6.3 Where any partner to the local church has an objection to re-appointment for another term **these objections should be discussed with all the partners before** alternative options are considered.
- 4.6.4 If an extension of appointment is agreed (usually for another 5 year term) the partner church courts and the UCANZ office should be notified.

4.7 RESIGNATION OR TERMINATION OF MINISTRY

- 4.7.1 The resignation of a minister is handled by the Coordinating Partner.
- 4.7.2 When the resignation is received the partners and local church council meet to consider the reasons for the resignation and to decide if there needs to be a change of Coordinating Partner.
- 4.7.3 If a ministry needs to be terminated, a meeting of the partners should consider the reasons for the termination and ensure that ongoing pastoral care is offered to the minister and local church.

4.8 DISCIPLINE

- 4.8.1 Discipline of ministers is the responsibility of the minister's church of membership.
- 4.8.2 Relevant Partner Churches should be consulted, where appropriate, with pastoral sensitivity for all parties involved.
- 4.8.3 Any complaints of illegal activities should be notified to the Coordinating Partner (and ordaining church, if different) authorities and to the police.
- 4.8.4 Complaints about sexual impropriety, financial irregularities, inappropriate behaviour, breaches of church discipline or ethical standards, or failures of ministry, should be notified to the appropriate Partner Church authorities. This is especially important if there are possible implications for liability insurance.

4.9 TERMS OF MINISTRY

- 4.9.1 A stipendiary package includes the regular stipend, allowances, holiday entitlement, study leave and any other conditions associated with ministry.
- 4.9.2 Each partner church has its own stipend package. Generally a minister will receive the stipend package of the appointing church, but there may be exceptions. The local church partners need to confirm the stipend package at the time of appointment.
- 4.9.3 All aspects of a stipendiary package are paid at a percentage of the full time allowance when a position is less than 100%, unless there are specific exemptions agreed by the appropriate church courts.

4.10 DEACONS, RETIREES AND SELF-SUPPORTING APPOINTMENTS

The Partner Churches have a diverse expression of ministry. The Methodist and Anglican Churches have specific paths for people ordained to serve as Deacons and others may also be locally ordained to serve in a ministry capacity.

- 4.10.1 The regulations above (4.1 – 4.9) should, wherever possible, apply to those people ordained as Deacons or to self-supporting ministries and retirees.
- 4.10.2 Where such appointments are made, they must be consistent with the processes of the appointing Partner and be acceptable to all local church partners.
- 4.10.3 The Coordinating Partner ensures that proper reviews are undertaken with all partners participating.