

MINISTER SUCCESSION IMPLEMENTATION PLANNING GUIDELINES
within the Requirements of the EPC Book of Order

The Office of the Stated Clerk of the EPC has developed the following for those churches desiring to implement a “Succession Planning” approach to the replacement of their Pastor while recognizing the constraints imposed by the Pastor Calling process defined by the EPC Book of Order (BoG 10-4).

*Book of Government: **The Call of a Pastor by a local church** (BoG 10-4)*

When a local church desires to call a Pastor, the procedure shall be as follows:

- a. The Session shall call a congregational meeting for the purpose of electing a Search Committee. The Session shall nominate a Search Committee to the congregation, although the floor must be open for other nominations. The congregation shall proceed to determine how many persons are to serve and to select them.**
- b. The Search Committee shall carry on its work in regular consultation with the Ministerial Committee of the Presbytery.*
- c. Upon agreeing on a person they feel led of God to nominate, the Search Committee shall secure the consent of the Ministerial Committee. Should the Committee decline to consent, the Search Committee may persist with the nomination, recognizing that the Presbytery has the right to reject the Call.*
- d. Ordinarily, an Associate Pastor is not eligible to succeed the Pastor. However, should a Search Committee desire to consider an Associate Pastor as Pastor, approval by a three-fourths vote of the Session and a three-fourths vote of the Ministerial Committee shall be required for the Search Committee to proceed.**

The Recommended Process:

1. The Session calls a congregational meeting for the purpose of forming a Search Committee.
 - a. Session may nominate a Search Committee, however the floor must also be open for other nominations.
 - b. Session may suggest (encourage or make a motion) that the Search Committee be of a certain size. However, the congregation ultimately decides the size of the Search Committee.
2. The Search Committee meets and decides it would like to pursue an Associate Pastor of this local church as a potential applicant.
3. The Session, by a three-fourths vote, approves the consideration of the Associate Pastor as a potential applicant.
4. The Ministerial Committee of the Presbytery, by a three-fourths vote approves the consideration of this Associate Pastor as a potential applicant.
5. The Search Committee now engages the Associate Pastor as a potential candidate.

GUIDELINES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PASTOR SUCCESSION PLANNING

within the Requirements of the EPC Book of Order

(continued)

Important Considerations:

1. No Associate Pastor can be a candidate until after:
 - a. The Congregation has voted to form a Search Committee,
 - b. The Search Committee has requested that an Associate Pastor of the this church can be a candidate for the Pastor position,
 - c. The Session has approved the request of the Search Committee, and
 - d. The Ministerial Committee has approved the request of the Search Committee.

To honor the process: The Session may disclose to the congregation that the Constitution of the EPC provides a process that allows for Associate Pastor XX to become a candidate to succeed the current Pastor.

2. The current Pastor is not a part of this constitutional process.

To honor the process: Keep the current Pastor out of the formal process and ensure that the local church's deliberation on this is under the guidance of it's Session.

(Adopted by Presbytery 01/23/2015)