

Pastoral Charge Supervisors

This resource should be available to all those who are asked by the Regional Council to serve as Pastoral Charge Supervisors and to all Pastoral Charges being supervised.

As mandated by The Manual 2021

I.2.5.2 Pastoral Charge Supervisor

a. Appointment: If a community of faith that is a pastoral charge has no called or appointed member of the order of ministry or designated lay minister who has been recognized by the regional council, the regional council is responsible for appointing a member of the regional council to the pastoral charge as a pastoral charge supervisor.

The regional council may also appoint a pastoral charge supervisor in any other situation where the regional council decides it is appropriate.

b. Responsibilities: The pastoral charge supervisor is responsible for

- i) supporting any ministry personnel serving the pastoral charge;
- ii) general supervision of the work of the pastoral charge;
- iii) ensuring that a chair is elected for the pastoral charge governing body, the trustees, and meetings of the congregation and pastoral charge;
- iv) ensuring that the sacraments are administered and new members are received following the requirements of these bylaws;
- v) if there are ministry personnel serving the pastoral charge, delegating responsibility for the functions of ministry in the pastoral charge to the ministry personnel as appropriate; and
- vi) reporting to the regional council on the state of the pastoral charge.

G.3.3.3 Automatic Trustee Membership

One of the following people is automatically a trustee because of their position:

- a) the member (or one of the members) of the order of ministry who has been called or appointed to the pastoral charge;
- b) the designated lay minister who has been recognized by the regional council and appointed to the pastoral charge; or
- c) the pastoral charge supervisor.

Quorum for Meetings of the Governing Body **B.7.7.4 Minimum Number of Members Present**

b. Who must be present: A meeting of the governing body may take place only if one of the following people is present:

- i) a member of the order of ministry who has been called or appointed to the pastoral charge;
- ii) a designated lay minister who has been recognized by the regional council and appointed to the pastoral charge;
- iii) the pastoral charge supervisor; or
- iv) another person appointed by the regional council to attend the meeting.

Situations Requiring Pastoral Charge Supervisors

The Manual states that a pastoral charge supervisor is appointed “if the pastoral charge has no settled or appointed member of the order of ministry or designated lay minister...”. In practical terms, there are a number of situations where this might occur:

(a) Pastoral Charge Vacancy:

This occurs when a pastoral charge is experiencing a change in pastoral relations and is without appointed supply ministry personnel. Smaller pastoral charges, especially those with part-time positions, often turn to pulpit supply during the transition period with the result that there is not a permanent ministry personnel presence in the pastoral charge. In a growing number of instances within the Regional Council, there are pastoral charges that are technically “vacant” but in fact have regularized their ministry by using Sunday pulpit supply. These pastoral charges must have pastoral charge supervisors named, and often require their services over long periods of time.

(b) Student Supply: When a student is serving as student supply in a pastoral charge, there must be a pastoral charge supervisor to oversee what is happening with the congregation, including attendance at meetings of the governing body (Board or Council). This person is separate and distinct from the educational supervisor who meets with the student to discuss learnings from this work/ministry experience. The pastoral charge supervisor might also officiate at the sacraments unless the pastoral charge has submitted a request to the Regional Council for the student to be able to do so.

(c) Ethnic Ministry: Pastoral charges that fall under the category of ethnic ministries are able to have ministry personnel who are ordained in another denomination and these persons are not required to transfer into The United Church of Canada. However, a pastoral charge supervisor is required to be in attendance at all Council/Board meetings.

(d) Temporary Absence of Ministry Personnel: From time to time, the called or appointed ministry personnel might be absent from a pastoral charge at the time of a regular Board/Council meeting. Since such a meeting cannot be held without the presence of ministry personnel, the Regional Council is likely to appoint someone on a limited basis.

(e) Sabbatical: The Regional Council supports the sabbatical leave of the serving ministry personnel by ensuring that a pastoral charge supervisor is appointed for the period of the sabbatical leave. This ensures that governance meeting can happen and give the connection of where any questions by the pastoral charge can be directed.

Appointment

Pastoral Charge Supervisors will be appointed by the Pastoral Relations Commission.

Length of Appointment

It has become the practice for appointed pastoral charge supervisors to continue to serve until: i) there is a “settled or appointed” ministry personnel in place; ii) the supervisor gives indication of their desire to conclude their appointment.

Responsibilities / Tasks

While The Manual outlines six different responsibilities, a number of these are broad in nature, such as “general supervision of the work of the pastoral charge”. In practical terms, the most frequent tasks for a pastoral charge supervisor are:

(a) Attendance at Council/Board meetings: this is probably the most common task. Pastoral charge supervisors are to provide oversight regarding the general functioning of the pastoral charge by being present at governance meetings that require a Regional appointee for the purpose of quorum. While it is good practice for pastoral charge supervisors to participate in Congregational Annual meetings, the Manual does not require the attendance of the pastoral charge supervisor in order for there to be quorum.

(b) Helping the pastoral charge arrange for the sacramental life of the charge: The pastoral charge supervisor is not necessarily the one presiding but may provide names of those who are available.

(c) Report to the Regional Council: In pastoral charges where there is an on-going relationship with a pastoral charge supervisor, the supervisor is asked to keep the Pastoral Relations Commission informed about issues and concerns related to the pastoral charge.

Other Responsibilities - Should the role of a pastoral charge supervisor be enlarged to include assisting a pastoral charge with pastoral care needs?

When a pastoral charge does not have appointed ministry personnel, there is often a question about how to handle funerals, weddings and/or pastoral care visiting. **The pastoral charge supervisor does not have responsibility for pastoral care and may not have the requisite training either.** The supervisor may assist the pastoral charge in helping to find those who can provide these services and may choose to respond to a specific requests but undertaking these services is not part of the task of being a pastoral charge supervisor.

Financial Implications

- 1. The Pastoral Charge is responsible for directly reimbursing the pastoral charge supervisor for all travel incurred in that role at the denominational rate (as of January 1, 2021 - 41 cents per km)**
- 2. The Pastoral Charge will forward to the Region a quarterly payment of \$90. The Region will then compensate pastoral charge supervisors in recognition of their commitment of time.**

Quarterly Invoices will be sent to the pastoral charge (community of faith) from the Regional Council.