

**Presbytery of Lake Erie  
Committee on Ministry  
Interim Ministry Policy**

Re-Adopted by COM February 18, 2020

1. It is the policy of the Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery of Lake Erie that during the period following the dissolution of a pastoral relationship, it is recommended that all congregations will be served, either full-time or part-time, by certified and trained interim pastoral leadership before a new pastor is called (G-2.0504(b)).
2. The Committee on Ministry may require Sessions to secure the services of a Certified Interim Minister in any of the following circumstances:
  - a. Voluntary termination of a pastorate of more than ten years
  - b. Retirement of the previous called pastor
  - c. Patterns of pastoral neglect of congregational needs
  - d. Involuntary termination of the previous pastorate
  - e. Significant conflict and division within the congregation
3. The General Presbyter and the Committee on Ministry shall assist Sessions in securing the services of a trained Interim Minister and no Minister may be invited by the Session to serve without the prior approval of the Committee on Ministry (G-2.0504(b)).
4. It is highly recommended that a contract between a Session of this Presbytery and an Interim Minister shall be in writing, signed by the minister, the Clerk of Session, and the chairperson or designated representative of the Committee on Ministry.
  - a. The period of service shall be clearly stated, never for more than one year (subject to renewal), and with provision for the termination of service by either party with 30 days written notice
  - b. All parties must understand that the Interim Minister shall not be considered as a candidate for the pastoral office of the church under any circumstances (G-2.0504)
  - c. The goals for the Interim Minister shall be clearly stated with a position description for the Interim Minister, including an estimate of work time if it is a part-time position
  - d. The full compensation “package” shall be clearly stated and shall meet the Presbytery minimum, prorated for part-time positions
5. The search process for an Interim Minister shall follow these basic steps, after the position description has been drafted and approved by the Session:

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- A. The Session’s Personnel Committee (or special committee appointed by the Session) shall serve as the Interim Search Committee
- B. The General Presbyter shall provide the committee with the names of several available trained Interim Ministers
- C. Minister members of Presbytery and Commissioned Pastors may register their interest by providing a brief resume for the committee’s use. Ministers and CP’s are requested not to

approach sessions/churches directly, however, they may request the General Presbyter to submit their names to a session.

- D. The search committee shall review the brief resumes of potential Interim Ministers. The committee may wish to conduct interviews with potential candidates to determine availability, interest, experience and skills.
- E. Upon selection of a potential candidate, the committee shall invite the Interim Minister to visit for an additional interview and for preliminary compensation negotiation. The candidate shall also meet for an interview with the Committee on Ministry, and with the Session.
- F. With the approval of the Committee on Ministry, the Session may invite the Interim Minister to serve the congregation during the vacancy period.

A separate presbytery policy covers pastoral calls which are *not* specifically intended to involve an intentional Interim Pastor. The Committee on Ministry will consult early in the process with the congregation and potential pastors regarding which plan applies to the unique circumstance and the mission strategy of the congregation and of the presbytery. Any desire for an exception to this policy should be discussed in detail with the Committee on Ministry, although exceptions would rarely be approved.