

Presbytery of the Western Reserve
Committee on Ministry

APPROVED November 28, 2005

**Policy on Validation of Ministry for Continuing Membership in the Presbytery of
the Western Reserve**

In addition to the “Criteria for Ministry of Continuing Members” found in G-6.0100, G-6.0200 and G-11.0403 (*), the following shall apply:

1. Validated ministries in the Presbytery of the Western Reserve include all ministries under the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), including those cited in G-11.0409 and G-11.0410 of the “Form of Government”, *Constitution, Part II*, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The validation of such ministries is automatic upon initial approval of the call by the presbytery and does not require further review of the validation.
2. Ministries in service beyond the jurisdiction of the church will be reviewed by the Committee on Ministry in order to ascertain:
 - a. If the ministry itself is “consonant with the mission of the presbytery” (G-11.0411);
 - b. The status of the minister in the ministry being reviewed pertaining to sense of call, suitability for the position, and capacity to fulfill all Constitutional criteria while serving in the ministry;
 - c. If the ministry makes active and effective use of the biblical and theological training that is required for ordination;
 - d. If the ministry is carried out in accountability for its character, conduct and performance to a board of directors, a management committee, or others responsible for the total ministry program.
3. Each minister in a validated ministry in service beyond the jurisdiction of the church shall complete the report requested by the Committee on Ministry annually. In addition, there shall be a face-to-face review with the minister at the discretion of the Committee on Ministry, which shall ordinarily seek to conduct such reviews on a triennial basis.
4. By constitutional authority, the presbytery determines those ministers who are to be its continuing members. If the decision of the presbytery is not to validate a ministry, the presbytery has the authority to designate the member as member-at-large (G-11.0406b.) or inactive member (G-11.0406c.). The presbytery may consider validating a ministry beyond the jurisdiction of the presbytery as part of the process of examining and credentialing an applicant to be received as a minister member of the presbytery. If the decision is not to validate the ministry, such an applicant may be received as a member-at-large.

Process:

1. Ordinarily, the minister seeking to have a ministry in service beyond the jurisdiction of the church will request a hearing of the Committee on Ministry.
2. The Committee on Ministry will refer the request to an appropriate sub-committee which will conduct a face-to-face interview with the applicant.
3. At the initial meeting, the minister seeking to validate a ministry shall provide a mission statement from the employing organization, a job description, and a contract for service or other document which states expected terms of the call.
4. The sub-committee will make a recommendation to the entire Committee on Ministry.
5. The Committee on Ministry, following deliberation, will make its recommendation to the presbytery for final action.
6. If the Committee on Ministry's recommendation is not to validate the ministry, the minister may request an additional hearing before the full Committee on Ministry prior to consideration by the presbytery.
7. The Committee on Ministry will provide applicants with an opportunity to be heard by members of the Committee on Ministry, and with notice of at least three weeks of the date of the meeting, unless shorter notice is mutually agreed upon.
8. At any meeting with members of the Committee on Ministry, "the burden remains with the minister to demonstrate that the proposed ministry should be validated" and the review may include the review and consideration of "relevant materials from prior years for the purpose of showing a pattern that has continuity with present" circumstances. (GAPJC decision in *Williamson v. Presbytery of Western North Carolina*, Remedial Case 217-7, 2006)
