

MINSTERIAL REGULATIONS

Definitions

1. MINSPO – Minister and Spouses Forum
2. Pastor- a minister who is pastoring a church.
3. Minister- a person with ministerial qualification and ministering serving in a church or Para-church organization.
4. Student pastor-A person who is pastoring a church while pursuing theological studies.
5. Ordination- to be set apart for a special service for the Lord.
6. Probation- a trail period that leads to ordination.
7. Mentor- an advisor and counselor for a minister/pastor.

A. Intake of Students

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1. When a person desire to study for ministry, he/ she will first consult with his/ her immediate Pastor or the church-board/ leadership.
2. The church board/ leadership will interview the prospective candidate.
3. The church leadership/ board will inform the church of the interview and its financial commitment regarding the education of the prospective students.
4. The church will submit recommendation to the Region.
5. The Region and the Regional MINSPO will interview the prospective students.
6. The Region to declare its budget for theological studies/students
7. The prospective student must submit applications accompanied by church and regional recommendations to Baptist Convention College (BCC) or any other theological institution that is recognized by the BCSA.
8. All prospective students who apply to BCC from any theological college to follow the procedure.

B. **Monitoring of Students.**

1. The BCC Dean of students should liaise with the Regions regarding placement of students.
2. The Southern Gauteng Region and the Central Region should jointly take responsibility of placing all students irrespective of the Regions they come from
3. The Regional MNSPO should appoint the minister to co-ordinate the placement of students in the region.
4. The evaluation forms from BCC or any other theological institution must be completed in triplicate (a copy for the student, a copy for the college and one copy for the region).
5. Where possible student must do practical work in one church for a year.

C. **Probationary Ministers**

Probation status is a trail period for a minister who is aspiring to be an ordain pastor/minister of the BCSA. No minister shall be accorded the probation status unless he/she is actively serving in a church or Para church ministry. Such service must be recognized and be monitored by the REC and Regional MINSPO.

1. A minister will receive a probation status only when he/she starts serving in a local church or Para-Church ministry.
2. The probation period shall be two years.
3. Notwithstanding the above the above-mentioned period the probationary period for student pastors shall be one year (The student pastor has an advantage of training on the job thus the trail period is shortened to a year).
4. The church that receives a probationary minister must:
 - (i) Allow a probationary minister to serve in the leadership.
 - (ii) Prescribe the duties for a probationary minister who is not as yet called into full-time pastorate.
 - (iii) Must compensate the services of a probationary minister by paying a stipend. A probationary pastor shall be paid a full salary as per contract with the church.

- (iv) Work with the mentor for the minister/pastor to compile a progress report on the performance of the probation minister/pastor at the end of the year.
- 4.1 A probationary minister working for a Para-church organization shall forward a report from his/her organization on his/her performance.

D. Ordination procedure

1. At the end of the probation period the local church must submit a recommendation for ordination on behalf of their minister/pastor to the Regional MINSPO and Regional Executive Committee (REC).
2. The Regional MINSPO and Executive Committee will interview the candidate for ordination.
3. The Regional Executive Committee must submit a recommendation for ordination to the NEC.
4. The recommendation must be accompanied by a completed application form from National office and the letter from the local church and copies of all certificates for ministerial training.
5. Candidates who come from other institutions should submit a proof that they have completed their studies in Baptist Principles, Practices and History.
6. Criteria for ordination:

The candidate should:

- (a) Completed a basic required training for ministers (Certificate, Diploma or Degree in Theology from Baptist Institutions or any other recognized institution).
- (b) Should have completed the studies on the Baptist Principles, Practice and History.
- (c) Have served and completed the probation period as stipulated in C (1-4).

- (d) Have a valid recommendation from the local church and Regional Executive
- (e) Be a member of the regional and national MINSPO.
- (f) The candidate must write and pass the ordination test.

A. Managed Pastoral System

The BCSA desire that all churches viable and non-viable should have pastoral leadership. As a practice of all Baptist every local church should abide by the calling system. The church must extends a call to the pastor as they are led by the Holy Spirit. It is not a Baptist practice to advertise the position and invite applications. Clause F explains the procedure for calling a pastor.

The Resolution 5/2004 passed by the National Assembly 2004 stipulates:

1. Viable churches are given a period of six months to engage and call the pastor.
2. In case of small struggling church the grace period of a year is give whereby the church should engage and call a pastor.
3. The Regional Executive is empowered by the Assembly to place interim pastors or student pastors temporarily in churches that are struggling to call pastors.
4. Student pastors shall be under a mentor that is appointed by the REC.
5. The REC can also apply for a pastoral grant to the national office on behalf a small struggling church.
6. **Non-Baptist pastors can be call only through the approval of the REC and the NEC.**

F. Procedure to call a pastor.

1. The local church is responsible to set the process to call its pastor.
2. The REC and National Office will provide names and profile of pastors who are available for calling.
3. The church must appoint a special committee (search committee) consisting of deacons and elders to lead the process of calling a pastor.
4. After prayer and consultation the special committee should present several candidates to the church for prayer and selection.
5. The church must invite the selected candidates for trail preaching and interview.

6. After the trail preaching and interviews of all candidates the church must seek God's will prayerfully through voting by secret ballot.
7. When the church reaches an agreement on one candidate it must extend the invitation through a letter where it explains its intention to call the pastor.
8. The special committee must have a final interview with the candidate. The following matters are important in this interview:
 - Spiritual and natural gifts of the pastor
 - Package for remuneration
 - Housing
 - Date of commencement
 - The nature of the contract (fixed term or open ended term)
 - Costs for removal incase the candidate has to move house
 - The pastor's vision about ministry.
9. The candidate must be given time to pray and make a decision about the call.
10. When the church and the pastor have reached an agreement. The two parties must now enter into a written agreement that is mutually agreed upon. The REC and National Office must be involved incase the church needs help on matters that pertain to the contract of employment.
11. The church must send a letter to the REC and the National Office informing them about the decision of the church to call the pastor.
12. In consultation with the REC the church will then set up a date to welcome and induct the pastor.

G. Induction Service

This is the service where the newly called pastor is official place in the church by the Regional MINSPO and REC on behalf of the BCSA. It is a dignified and divine service that must be given its appropriate stature. Where possible the REC president and Regional MINSPO president should conduct the service.

1. The Induction service shall conducted by the Regional MINSPO and REC.
2. The Induction service must be part of the Sunday worship service.
3. The service must be conducted according to the dignity it deserves and the procedure as laid down the Pastors' Manual.

4. The church is responsible for the welcome celebration.
5. The welcome celebration can be organized on any day that suits the local church.

H. Procedure on Discipline and Reinstatement of Pastors

1. In case of misconduct by the pastor the church will first engage internal church procedure to assist the pastor.
2. If the misconduct is continuing or beyond the ability of the church to handle, the church leadership will refer the matter to the REC and MINSPO.
3. The REC and MINSPO will appoint a special committee that will hear the matter.
4. The special committee will not make any final decision but report to the REC and MINSPO the findings on the matter and make recommendations.
5. Only the REC and MINSPO have power delegated by the NEC to exercise discipline on pastors and church leaders.
6. All BCSA pastors and leaders have the right to appeal to the NEC for arbitration when wish to do so.
7. Pastors who are found guilty of misconduct shall be suspended from the ministerial duties for period that will be decided by the REC and MINSPO.
8. A suspended should pastor will be removed from the ministers roll depending on the level of misconduct. (MINSPO must table a resolution on the time frame for suspension).

I. Pastoral Counseling and Supporting Structure:

1. Every pastor shall have a mentor or a pastor for himself\herself and his\her family.
2. The mentorship shall be a personal matter arranged between the pastors.
3. The Regional MINSPO shall be responsible for mentorship and ensure that all pastors have mentors.

4. Pastors may have mentors who are members of the BCSA; however it should be a person with pastoral experience.
5. The REC and Regional MINSPO shall appoint a counselor mentor for a pastor or minister that has problems or under discipline.
6. The counselor shall submit progress report to the REC and Regional MINSPO regarding the pastor in his care.

J. Entry and Exit Procedure for Pastors

A minister who desires to join the BCSA shall be accepted on condition that he/she is a baptized born-again believer in God. Such a person must uphold the basic doctrines of the Baptists as laid down in the Statement of Faith.

(i) Entry procedure

All pastors/ministers who desire to join the BCSA must:

1. Apply to the REC and Regional MINSPO for membership. The following document must accompany the church application letter; Church Membership Certificate, Recommendation by the local church and all certificate of ministerial education.
2. Submit the ministerial qualification to BCC for verification and endorsement.
3. Serve the probation period of two years as stated in clause C.
4. Submit a recommendation and a certificate of service from his/her former church.
5. Must be interviewed by REC and Regional MINSPO.

(ii) Exist procedure

1. A minister/pastor who desires to withdraw membership from the BCSA shall give three months notice to his/her local church, REC and Regional MINSPO.
2. Shall submit his/her letter of resignation to the local church and send one copy to the REC and one to the National office.
3. Shall return back to the BCSA office certificates of Ordination and Ministerial recognition.
4. In case of a qualified marriage officer the BCSA office shall notify the Department of Home Affair about the resignation of the minister from BCSA.

5. The pastor who wishes to resign should not influence the church to leave the BCSA.
6. The REC and Regional MINSPO shall conduct an exit interview with pastor and the outcome of such interview will be presented to the NEC.

K. Regulation for Pastors coming with Congregation

1. The pastor shall follow procedures as prescribed in J (i).
2. The Congregation will apply to the Region for membership.
3. The Region shall interview the congregation.
4. The REC will recommend the congregation to the Regional Conference for membership.
5. The Regional conference will then make a recommendation to the Assembly for full membership

L. Interim pastor or moderator

The REC and MINSPO may place an interim pastor or moderator in a church that is without a pastor or a student pastor. The church must approach the REC and express its difficulty in finding a pastor within the specified period of the BCSA policy.

1. The REC and MINSPO will work with the church leadership to find an interim pastor/moderator.
2. The interim pastor shall serve a maximum period of one year while helping the church to call a pastor.
3. At the end of the year the REC, Regional MINSPO, moderator and church leadership will review the work and make a recommendation to the church.
4. The term of the interim pastor/moderator can be extended through a recommendation by the REC, MINSPO and church leadership.
5. Theological students and ministers without churches shall be given the first preference when placing interim pastors.
6. In regions where ministers are few the pastors who are already pastoring church may be placed as interim pastors.

M. Duties of the Interim pastor

The church and the interim pastor will draw up a schedule and contract. The church is also responsible to pay the stipend to the interim pastor. The interim pastor will be responsible for the following:

1. Preaching according to the schedule
2. Baptisms, dedication of children, solemnize marriages, and conduct burials.
3. Acceptance of new members
4. Attend church meetings and board meetings

N. Senior Pastorate Status

The BCSA seeks to recognize the services its employers both pastors and administration staff.

1. The Senior Pastor title shall be conferred upon a pastor who has an uninterrupted service of 20 years with the BCSA.
2. The Convention shall award certificates of long service and Senior Pastor at Annual Assembly to all qualifying candidates. The certificate shall be accompanied by a token of appreciation from the BCSA.
3. The local churches will be given an opportunity to honor their pastors at the Annual Assembly.

NB. This award is not a replacement for pastors' appreciation. All churches must observe Pastors appreciation day.

O. Retirement

1. Retirement age of male pastors shall be 65 years and 60 years for female pastors.
2. The retiring pastor shall submit a written notice to both the REC and NEC stating their decision to retire and commencement date of retirement.
3. Retired pastors will be used in the regions and national committees to assist as counselors, confidential consultants and in any other ministry where there is a need.
4. The BCSA has created a provision for retirement through a Provident Fund.
5. Churches must ensure that the pastors have a provision for retirement.

P. Evaluation of Pastors

The primary task of the pastor is to grow the church numerically and spiritually. It is priority of the BCSA to ensure that pastors fulfill their duties and that each congregation experiences growth. Our national theme is the church growing and glowing. The BCSA encourage pastors to work in teams to exchange pulpit, organize revivals, to do training and form prayer groups to enhance growth and stability.

1. The REC and MINSPO are responsible to evaluate the work of every pastor in its constituency.
2. REC and MINSPO will make visitation to all its churches every to monitor the work of the church.
3. The General Secretary and the BCSA officers will also make regular visitation to all BCSA churches to give pastoral support to the pastor and the church.
4. The church should also set up its own internal evaluation mechanism to ensure growth and stability. The Deacons Board must ensure that the environment of service is conducive for growth. Each pastor must have a clear job description (Acts 6:2-4).
5. MINSPO retreat and conferences shall be used as a forum for pastors to evaluate their work.
6. Each pastor shall complete and submit an evaluation form to the regional MINSPO and the National office.
7. The REC and MINSPO and the National office will give the pastor an advice in case the ministry is experiencing stagnation or decline.
8. The mentor will also give guidance incase the pastor is ministry is experiencing some challenges.
9. The General Secretary, Regional Executive Committees and MINSPO are responsible to the BCSA for the performance of pastors and church leaders.

15. MINSPO Forum in the BCSA

1. MINSPO comprises of pastors, spouses and theological students.
2. The Department of Ministers is comprised of all recognized and ordained ministers and student pastors.
3. The primary task of MINSPO is to provide leadership in churches, regions and the national assembly and to give spiritual direction and vision.
4. MINSPO as a department it is accountable to the Region, and National Assembly.
5. All pastors, ministers, student pastors and theological student are responsible to the BCSA through MINSPO.

