

**PRESBYTERY OF EAST IOWA
POLICY ON PASTORAL SUCCESSION
(Approved 11-14-2015)**

Co-Pastors

It is the policy of the Presbytery of East Iowa that when a congregation has two pastors serving as co-pastors, and the relationship of one of them is dissolved, the other remains as pastor. If the congregation desires to continue with a co-pastor relationship then, with the approval of COM, it must elect a pastor nominating committee and conduct a full search for the second co-pastor, such co-pastor to be called as provided by G-2.08 of the 2015/2017 Book of Order.

It is the policy of the Presbytery of East Iowa that if a church with a single pastor wishes to establish a co-pastor relationship then, with the approval of COM, it must elect a pastor nominating committee and conduct a full search for the second co-pastor, or both co-pastors if the current pastor is not to remain as one of the co-pastors, such co-pastor(s) to be called as provided by G-2.08 of the 2015/2017 Book of Order.

Temporary Pastoral Relationships

In accordance with G-2.0504b of the 2015/2017 Book of Order, "A Teaching Elder employed in a temporary pastoral relationship is ordinarily not eligible to serve as the next installed pastor, co-pastor or associate pastor." However, according to G-2.0504c of the 2015/2017 Book of Order, exceptions may be made, in which case the person must be approved by a three-fourths majority vote of the congregation and then by three-fourths majority of the Presbytery. It is the policy of the Presbytery of East Iowa that a pastor in a Temporary Pastoral Relationship (Temporary Pastor) may be considered as a candidate for the called Pastor or Co-Pastor position in the church currently being served on the condition that the church shall conduct a full search to fill the called pastoral position and that the person must be approved by a three-fourths majority vote of the congregation and then by three-fourths majority vote of the Presbytery.

Intentional Interim Pastor

It is the policy of the Presbytery of East Iowa that if a Session in consultation with the Commission on Ministry determines that an Intentional Interim Pastor is the preferred option for their church that person shall not be a candidate for the called Pastor, Co-Pastor or Associate Pastor position in the church he or she currently serves.

Note: Intentional Interim Pastor defined as per policy – March 2015

Associate Pastor

It is the policy of the Presbytery of East Iowa that an Associate Pastor is not eligible to succeed immediately a Co-Pastor to serve as a Co-Pastor of a church in which the Associate Pastor and Co-Pastor have served together, except in churches which currently have a co-pastor model which has been in effect for at least three years and the congregation desires to continue such model. In such churches, an associate pastor may be called to serve as co-pastor of that church with approval by a three-fourths majority vote of the congregation and then by three-fourths majority vote of the Presbytery.

In accord with G-2.0504a in the 2015-17 *Book of Order*, it is the policy of the Presbytery of East Iowa that an Associate Pastor is ordinarily not eligible to be a candidate to succeed immediately the Pastor in a church which they have served together. In accord with G-2.0504c in the 2015-17 *Book of Order*, exceptions may be made on a case by case basis. When an exception to this policy is made, it functions to make the individual who has served or is serving as Associate Pastor eligible to be a candidate in the search process for the Pastor position (G-2.0504c). If such an Associate Pastor wishes to be considered for the position of Pastor, the PNC and the Associate Pastor must consult with COM requesting that an exception be granted. COM, seeking to faithfully fulfill its responsibility to uphold the peace and unity of the church, will discern on a case by case basis if such an exception would be wise for the congregation and the Associate Pastor.

Any exceptions to this policy require that the following conditions be met:

- COM shall satisfy itself that the overall quality of the congregational and pastoral relationships are such that the individual currently serving as the Associate will function in a healthy way, regardless of the outcome of the search process.
- COM shall satisfy itself that the inclusion of this individual as a candidate for the Pastor position will not interfere with nor shortcut transitional processes associated with a change in pastoral leadership in which the congregation needs to engage.
- The individual in question is exploring this transition from a sense of calling rather than career advancement, and can clearly articulate this sense of calling to COM.
- COM shall satisfy itself that the PNC will be able to conduct a complete and fair search process in accord with Presbyterian polity, making a full and impartial review of all applicants without outside pressure to select or reject any applicant. Any attempt to influence the PNC of the church either in favor of or in opposition to the candidacy of the individual currently serving as Associate may result in the immediate cessation of consideration of the Associate Pastor as a candidate for the Pastor position at the discretion of the PNC and/or COM.

- Before recommending any exception, COM will counsel with the Pastor (if possible) and the Associate Pastor both individually and jointly. COM will also counsel with the PNC regarding the impact of this candidacy on the relationships and expectations of the PNC and congregation during and after the search process.
- At the conclusion of this process, COM may conclude that an exception is warranted and so notifies the PNC and the Associate Pastor. Consideration of the Associate Pastor for the position of Pastor will then be treated the same as any other person who makes application to be considered for the position.
- If the decision is not to grant an exception, the PNC and Associate Pastor will be so notified, including the reasons for the decision. In such case, the PNC and/or the Associate Pastor may appeal the decision to the Presbytery at any of its subsequent meetings.
- If the PNC selects the current Associate Pastor as the choice to take up the call as Pastor, the relationship shall be established by a vote of the congregation indicating strong affirmation of this call and by three-fourths vote of the members of the Presbytery present and voting in accord with G-2.0504c.