

SEMINARY INTERN POLICY

Guidelines

A Seminary Intern is a person who is under care of a presbytery preparing for the ministry and who chooses to extend his or her formal educational preparation by seeking a placement in a congregation or other ministry setting as an intern; the internship must be arranged through a seminary. Such positions vary from a few months to year-long, and they are ordinarily compensated.

An internship should not be considered as a trial period to determine a person's suitability for a specific ordained position in the church or agency in which he or she serves as an intern.

Procedure

A person who serves as an Intern in a church or other ministry setting within the boundaries of the Presbytery of the James may not be called to an ordained position in that church or setting unless the following conditions are met:

1. position description reflects need for ordained person,
2. the Search Committee conducts an open search and considers three or more candidates,
3. intern has been absent from the church for a minimum of six months before being eligible for interview by the Search Committee.
4. intern agreement should clearly state:
 - a) the requirements of this policy,
 - b) conditions established by the individual church or agency for considering an intern for any future ordained position.

Holding a position open for a six-month period with the intent of calling the former intern is not permitted.

Individual churches or agencies in the Presbytery of the James may adopt a policy of not considering an intern for an ordained position within the particular church or agency.

Rationale:

- 1) The *Book of Order* states:
 - a. "...when a congregation does not have a pastor, or while the pastor is unable to perform her or his duties, the session, with the approval of presbytery, may obtain the services of a teaching elder, candidate, or ruling elder in a temporary pastoral relationship. No formal call shall be issued and no formal installation shall take place." (G-2.0504b)
 - b. "A presbytery may determine that its mission strategy permits a teaching elder currently called as an Associate Pastor to be eligible to serve as the next installed pastor or co-pastor, or a teaching elder employed in a temporary pastoral relationship to be eligible to serve as the next installed pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor. Presbyteries that permit this eligibility shall establish such relationships only by a three-fourths vote of the members of presbytery present and voting." (G-2.0504c) Such a request with rationale would be submitted to COM for consideration and possible recommendation to presbytery.
- 2) The relationship of the search committee and the intern may compromise the objectivity of a selection process and restrict the field of candidates being considered.