

Policy #14  
**PASTORAL DESIGNATIONS**

**COM Approval: September 15, 2022**

**PGA Approval: February 3, 2024**

The Form of Government allows for flexibility around mission concerns with our churches. Because of this new flexibility, the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta has made the following policies regarding pastoral designations:

**Permanent Pastoral Positions...hereby called, Installed Pastoral Positions (G-2.0504a)**

All Installed Pastoral Positions of the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta require meeting the Presbytery's Guidelines for Minimum Compensation Standards and the requirements of Policy 20 on Paid Family Medical Leave. Installed positions serve at least twenty hours per week.

In the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta, there will be three Installed Pastoral Positions:

1. **Pastor or Co-Pastor** shall be called through the normal process of a pastor nominating committee elected by the congregation.
2. **Associate Pastor** shall be called through the normal process of an associate pastor nominating committee elected by the congregation.

If an Associate Pastor Nominating Committee in their search process comes across an individual who is already a Candidate in the ordination process but is not yet certified ready to receive a call, the church may hire that individual for the position and then move towards ordination and installation of that person when the process for ordination has been complete. If the ordination process takes more than 2 years, a new search will need to be undertaken.

In the case of a church wishing to move forward with an installed associate search while the head of staff position is vacant, such a decision should be carefully considered and discussed with the Presbytery's congregational consultant.

3. **Designated Pastor (or Associate Pastor)** shall be instituted in conversation with the Committee on Ministry, the church, and the congregational consultant. Designated pastors shall be for specific situations where a congregation has gone through a significant situation (conflict with the former pastor, the death of a pastor, spilt in the church, to name a few), or where the congregation is in an extreme place of vulnerability and viability. All candidates for designated pastor positions shall apply through the presbytery and be reviewed by a PNC elected by the congregation. The designated period may be between two and four years with a detailed contract outlining the expectations for the designated period in order to have something measurable at the end of the designated time period.

The Designated Pastor or Associate Pastor is installed for the approved designated term. At the end of the designated term, the call may be renewed for an additional designated term or the pastor installed to the same position for an indefinite period.

**Temporary Pastoral Positions...hereby called Non-Installed Contracted Call Positions**

In the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta, there will be three Non-Installed Contracted Call Positions:

**Contract Call Pastor**

\*\*This position is for churches that cannot afford an installed pastor (including for positions less than twenty hours per week) or need the additional flexibility provided by a limited term.

The search for a contract call pastor is conducted by a search committee appointed by the session.

- a) This position requires a contract approved by the congregational consultant and the COM. Contract terms shall be admitted to the presbytery's record under the Committee on Ministry Report
- b) This position requires a job description as well as a selection process that includes interviews with at least two candidates.
- c) This position ordinarily shall be for a term of 12 months and may be renewed with Session and COM approval beyond the initial 12-month period.
- d) This position is ordainable.
- e) This designation is not intended as a substitute for an interim pastor.

**Contract Call Associate Pastor**

The search for a contract call associate pastor will be conducted by a search committee appointed by the session.

- a) This position requires a contract approved by the congregational consultant and COM. The contract terms shall be admitted to the Presbytery's record under the Committee on Ministry Report.
- b) This position requires a job description.
- c) This position ordinarily shall be for a term of 12 months and may be renewed with Session and COM approval beyond the initial 12-month period.
- d) This position is ordainable.
- e) The person must be ordained in the PCUSA or a Formula of Agreement Church.
- f) The person serving in this position is not eligible to apply for an installed position as the head of staff of the church.

**Interim Pastor** shall be procured by an interim search committee appointed by session.

- a) This position (See Policy #5) requires a contract approved by the congregational consultant and the COM and which terms shall be admitted to the presbytery's record under the Committee on Ministry Report.
- b) This position requires a job description pertinent to the interim tasks needed by a congregation in transition.
- c) This position shall be for a term of 12 months and may be renewed with Session and COM approval beyond the initial 12-month period.
- d) An interim will ordinarily be previously ordained as a Minister of Word and Sacrament and have served in a pastoral setting.
- e) The decision as to whether or not an interim is the desired route for a particular church will be made in consultation with the congregational consultant and the co-chairs of COM and its subcommittees.
- f) If the interim is not from the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta, the interim must first be approved by the Examinations Commission to serve the church.

- g) Any person serving as an interim, shall have interim training. If the training has not yet been completed, it shall be completed at the first opportunity. The church calling the interim shall pay for the training.
- h) Interim associate pastors are not used in the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta.

### **Changes in status of Pastoral Positions**

- a) Interim pastors shall NOT become the Head of Staff in the church where they are serving, in the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta.
- b) Associate pastors shall NOT become the Head of Staff in the church where they are serving, in the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta.
- c) A Contract Call Pastor may become the installed pastor in churches that have discerned they can move towards an installed pastoral relationship. This situation is possible under the following conditions:
  - i) The COM, in consultation with the congregational consultant, must approve that this is the best vehicle for mission in this congregation.
  - ii) Pending approval by the COM, a congregational meeting is required to elect the contract call pastor to the installed position. The quorum for this meeting shall be no less than 25% and notice of this congregational meeting shall be distributed for three weeks prior to and not to include the Sunday the congregational meeting is held. The contract call pastor shall NOT moderate the congregational meeting. The congregational consultant or their designee shall serve as the moderator of the congregational meeting.
  - iii) The name of the contract call pastor must receive a  $\frac{3}{4}$  vote in the congregational meeting in order for the call to be extended. The vote shall be taken by ballot.
  - iv) Following approval of the congregation, the full presbytery must approve the relationship by a  $\frac{3}{4}$  vote (G-2.0504c).
- d) Contract Call Associate Pastor may become the Installed Associate Pastor. When the associate pastor, head of staff, session, and congregational consultant agree that a permanent relationship is beneficial for the mission of the church and there is no evidence of active conflict in a congregation, the presbytery may permit the contract call associate pastor to be installed through the following process.
  - i. The session requests through the congregational consultant that the Committee on Ministry permit the congregation to engage in a closed search process that may result in the contract call associate pastor becoming installed.
  - ii. The Committee on Ministry considers the request of the session. If the request to begin the closed search process is approved, a current member of the Committee on Ministry is appointed as the COM liaison to the search process.
  - iii. The session calls a congregational meeting to elect an associate pastor nominating committee for the purpose of considering the current contract call associate pastor to become an installed associate pastor and negotiating any appropriate changes in the terms of call.
  - iv. If the associate pastor nominating committee determines that it wishes to move forward toward installation of the contract call associate pastor, then the COM liaison and congregational consultant join the committee and the contract call associate pastor for a suitability of call interview.
  - v. If the associate pastor nominating committee determines that it does not wish to move forward toward installation of the current contract call associate pastor, then they report

this to the congregation and request dissolution of the committee without pursuing other candidates.

- vi. If the suitability of call interview gives clearance to proceed, then the associate pastor nominating committee requests that the session call a congregational meeting to request that the presbytery approve that the contract call associate pastor be installed as associate pastor.
- vii. The associate pastor nominating committee reports to the congregational meeting, and the congregation is asked to vote on moving the contract call associate pastor to be the installed associate pastor. The vote is taken by ballot, and a three-fourths vote is required.
- viii. If the congregation approves the contract call associate pastor to be the installed associate pastor, the request is forwarded to a meeting of the full Presbytery, where a three-fourths vote is required to grant the exception and approve the installation of the contract call associate pastor, in accordance with G-2.0504c.

### **Parish Associates:**

In the Form of Government, there is no mention of Parish Associates. The Presbytery of Greater Atlanta chooses to continue to permit parish associates under the following guidelines:

- The church will request an Executive Reference Check by the Presbytery Office on the considered Parish Associate.
- Parish associates will be confirmed by the pastor and the session.
- Upon the above confirmation, the COM will add its confirmation.
- Parish Associates are not compensated except for the occasional honorarium.
- When a pastor leaves the church, the session must re-address the invitation to continue the Parish Associate relationship in order to confirm or change the relationship.