

Personnel Committee Resources

This section contains three resources:

Shared Equity Agreement

This document provides legal documentation that a church can use for entering into a shared equity agreement with a minister. Such agreements allow a church to help a minister buy a house. The church provides a percentage of the down payment. When the minister leaves and sells the house, the church receives back a percentage of the proceeds. In an increasing market, the church will receive more back than they provided. In a declining market, the church will receive less. The church shares both the risk and the benefits with the minister. A church, which enters into this kind of agreement or any other financial agreement, should be aware that such agreements ought to be a part of the Terms of Call and a copy of the agreement should be provided the presbytery. The presbytery's Committee on Ministry also requires that churches, which enter into financial agreements regarding housing with a minister, are to have the presbytery run a credit check on the minister. The church is also cautioned against entering into agreements that provide financing that equals 100% of the cost of the housing. One reason for caution is that at the time of sale, the commission paid the realtor may make it impossible for the church to be repaid fully.

Resources

This is a short bibliography of useful books and videos that are available for personnel committees.

Guidelines for Session Personnel Committees

These guidelines are very useful for any personnel committee. They provide direction on how to form a committee, write a personnel policy, and create position descriptions. There are several elements in these guidelines that we wish to highlight.

The Minister as Head of Staff

In most cases the minister is the Head of Staff and, therefore, is responsible for day to day supervision of the staff and should also take the lead in evaluating staff work performance. The role of the committee is to recommend to session policy and to participate in creating position descriptions. It serves a supportive function to the Head of Staff and does not take attempt to supervise the staff directly.

Role of Head of Staff on the Committee

The Head of Staff, who is normally the moderator, is an *ex officio* member of the personnel committee. The committee chair and the Head of Staff should work together to form the agenda for the meetings and the Head of Staff should be present for the whole meeting. A successful and productive personnel committee is one in which the Head of Staff and the personnel committee see themselves as partners sharing a common cause.

It is also appropriate for the personnel committee and minister to work together to create the evaluation tools that will be used to evaluate the minister. During the evaluation process, it is appropriate for the committee to prepare and review its evaluation without the minister present prior to actually conducting the evaluation with the minister. Having such time on an annual basis is both appropriate and sufficient in most cases.