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## XII. Multi-Staff Considerations

Larger congregations may wish to call a second or third minister, whether to add a new or to fill an existing ministry position. Often such a position is specialized, with particular responsibility for religious education, membership growth, social action, ministry with youth and young adults, or counseling and pastoral care. When a new position is being contemplated, essential questions for a congregation's Governing Board to resolve include:

1. What expectations can we reasonably have for the new minister? A common mistake is to finance a new ministry position by "cashing in" one or more long-standing lay staff positions (e.g. the Director of Religious Education), and then to expect that a minister will do the work of these positions and also satisfy a range of new wishes. It is often wiser to keep the lay positions and add a minister when the money can be raised separately.
2. To whom will this new minister report? A balance needs to be struck between the need for a harmonious and unified staff, and the reality that each minister has different skills and perspectives and attracts different supporters. It is not desirable for ministers to contend constantly for the Board's support. The congregation is responsible for structuring its staff. Vague lines of accountability often reflect unresolved conflicts in the congregation. Unless they are resolved ahead of time, the ministers may wind up as proxies, fighting out the congregation's conflicts.
3. How much will the new minister be paid? It is almost never wise to base a minister's compensation on projected increases in income. The current congregation should be able to afford its staff. Another issue is the relative pay levels of staff members. If there are large discrepancies it should be clear how these are justified and whether they are intended to be permanent.

### **Assistant or Associate?**

The Assistant Minister is normally a recent seminary graduate who works under the supervision of a more experienced minister on the congregation staff. An Associate Minister may have considerable ministerial experience, and carries considerable independent responsibility as part of a staff team. Like senior and sole ministers, associate ministers are called by vote of the congregation after a normal search process. Assistant ministers may be called or, if permitted by the congregation's by-laws, hired by the Board. In the latter case, the ministry agreement ought to include a specific date, generally no more than three years hence, by which the Governing Board recommends to the congregation that the minister be called, or extends to the minister a terminal contract year.

### **Which Category of Ministerial Fellowship?**

Ministerial Fellowship is granted by the Ministerial Fellowship Committee of the UUA in three categories: Parish Ministry, Ministry of Religious Education, and Community-Based Ministry. Your ministry position should be defined according to the

needs of your congregation. The Ministerial Transitions Director gives priority to ministers who hold Fellowship in the appropriate category, and who have the specific skills and qualities you specify in your Profile Statement. If you select a minister whose Fellowship is in a category other than the one that best matches your position, the minister will be required to apply for Fellowship in the new category.

### **Search for Assistant Minister: Time and Task Checklist**

#### **Phase I**—six weeks for steps 2-10

1. Previous minister (if any) announces resignation.
2. District Executive conducts transition interview with governing board (if #1 obtains).
3. Governing board decides how to proceed with search.
4. Ministerial Settlement Representative (MSR) meets with board.
5. Board selects search committee, e.g. one board member, one or more members from each committee with which assistant minister will share responsibility, one or more members at large, senior minister ex officio without vote. [Senior minister to have veto power over selection of pre-candidates and final candidate but may not insist on specific pre-candidates or candidate.] See also guidelines for selection of a search committee in the *UUA Settlement Handbook*.
6. District Compensation Consultant (DCC) makes visit.
7. Board adopts search committee budget, commits to Salary plus Housing Allowance amount and plus standard array of benefits and professional expenses.
8. MSR makes second visit, meeting with the Search Committee.
9. Search Committee goes on retreat.
10. Board appoints negotiating team: one board member, one at large member, one SC member.

#### **Phase II**—six weeks

1. Search committee conducts focus groups and/or semi-structured interviews with applicable committees, and may also conduct survey
2. Search committee completes Application for a Minister and Congregational Record (CR) and on line, asking UUA Transitions Office for the unveiling of the latter when it is complete.
3. Search committee begins to create informational packet.
4. Negotiating team prepares draft ministry agreement.
5. Negotiating team presents proposed ministry agreement to board for approval.
6. Search committee completes packet and sends to MSR for review.
7. Search committee sends survey results, Profile Statements and draft ministry agreement to Transitions Director.
8. Search committee requests the list and Ministerial Records (MRs) at least one month after completed CR was unveiled.

**Phase III**—eight weeks

1. MSR determines in consultation with the Transitions Director whether to deliver list and MRs to the committee in person, or whether the materials can be sent directly.
2. Upon receipt of the list and MRs, search committee members call ministers and exchange packets with those with whom interest is mutual.
3. Search committee receives, circulates, and evaluates ministers' packets, conducts group phone interviews and checks references.
4. Search committee receives additional names (if any) on a regular basis.
5. Search committee selects pre-candidates, requests interpretative file summaries from Transitions Office, and schedules and conducts pre-candidating interviews.

**Phase IV**—four weeks

1. Search committee selects and contacts proposed candidate, checks additional references extensively, may conduct criminal and other background check.
2. Candidate and negotiating team conclude ministry agreement; candidate and board chair sign.
3. Search committee presents candidate's name and qualifications to governing board, schedules meeting between board and candidate.
4. Board executes final agreement with the candidate.
5. Board announces new hire to congregation; search committee announces hiring of minister to MSR and Transitions Office.

**Phase V**—as the ministry begins

1. Search committee arranges a small celebration to introduce the new minister to the entire congregation.
2. District Executive conducts start-up meeting with other minister(s), board, search committee, and applicable committees.