

BYLAW AMENDMENT

Authority to Suspend or Place a Minister's Search on Hold

PURPOSE: This proposal is for amendment of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) Bylaws and Rules, Article XI Ministry, Section 11.5. Termination of Fellowship and Administrative Suspension, to limit the authority to place a minister on hold from settlement, interim, or contract searches to the Ministerial Fellowship Committee (MFC) or Board of Trustees (BoT).

TEXT OF PROPOSED AMENDMENT: Section 11.5 of Article XI of the Bylaws shall be amended by adding the following sentence at the end, stating:

“Notwithstanding Bylaw Section 11.2 that reserves to the Board of Trustees the exclusive power to approve proposed rules of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee governing ministerial fellowship, the Ministerial Fellowship Committee shall have the exclusive authority to suspend or place a minister's search on hold, and may establish policies and rules to effectuate this authority.”

IMPACTED RULES: UUA Rules and Policies of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee, Section 22, Administrative Hold from Settlement:

When a minister experiences conflict or a difficult parting with a congregation or other institution, UUA Ministries and Faith Development Staff Group or Congregational Life staff (collectively, “MFD or CL staff”) may refer that minister to participate in a process of assessment by the UUA review team. MFD or CL staff may also refer ministers who show a pattern of conflicted ministries and/or inability to maintain positive congregational, collegial, staff, and/or community relations for a process of assessment by the UUA Review Team. MFD or CL staff have the right to place the minister on hold from settlement until the assessment process has been concluded, or for a period of not more than three years.

EXISTING BYLAWS TEXT Article XI, Section 11.5:

1417 The fellowship of a minister may be terminated by the Ministerial
1418 Fellowship Committee for unbecoming conduct, incompetence or
1419 other specified cause. Full fellowship may be terminated only after
1420 notice by the Committee and opportunity for a Fellowship Review
1421 before the Committee. During an investigation or the pendency of a
1422 complaint, the Ministerial Fellowship Committee may suspend a
1423 minister until a final determination can be made on the minister's
1424 fellowship status.

PROPOSER: Ed Klein of First Parish Brewster Unitarian Universalist in Brewster, MA

REFERENCES:

Unitarian Universalist Association Bylaws and Rules: https://www.uua.org/files/2025-07/uua_bylaws_12082025.pdf

UUA Rules and Policies of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee:
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/188Y4UzNLNTBdzkjYsDnYsRUpcMwOVeG6hs0cDsDNmZs/edit?tab=t.0>